The Isles looked to be in trouble. Losers of seven in nine – and they didn’t own a winning record to start with, the team was flailing. John Tavares hit a wall and that brought fantasy-surprise Matt Moulson down as well. The strong play of goaltender Dwayne Roloson was being wasted. But things have changed lately because the focus on offense has shifted from one first round draft pick to another.

Josh Bailey, the ninth overall pick of 2008, has picked up the baton and run away with it. He has 12 points in his last 10 contests and he’s doing it without monster ice time – not once in that span has he played even 16 minutes. He’s a future 75-point player – the perfect second-liner and the perfect complement to Tavares’ star. But it is looking like J.T.’s day is still a year or two away. So while he’s in his little cold streak, Bailey is filling in admirably.

With this recent surge, Bailey is now on pace for 38 points. He’ll most certainly cool off again, but he’ll set a career high with 45 to 50 points regardless.

Isles’ fans can only hope that Tavares will get back into his zone by then. With just one goal and two points in his last 14 games (and every one of them with more ice time than the 20-year-old Bailey), he’s about due to come out of it. The slump has brought his pace down to finish at a projected 51 points, but I still think he’ll get to 60. It would mean 31 points in his last 36 games, but we’ve already seen him produce at that pace.

As for Moulson, even though he has been moved off the Tavares line and has seen a cut in ice time, he has three points in his last four games and showing some positive signs. When he or J.T. start to get hot again, there is a good possibility that they will be reunited. Great buy-low candidates right now.

Meanwhile, Kyle Okposo has been their most consistent player all season. Granted, he has gone four games without a point on two occasions, and five games without a point once – but that’s far better than any other player on this young team. His game is starting to iron out and he’ll top 60 points this year.

Next year, each one of these guys will take a big step forward. And I’ll add a dark horse to the

list – Rob Schremp. After exploding out of a string of healthy scratches with three consecutive games with a point, Schremp has been seeing 17 or 17 minutes of ice time. He has six points in his last five games and is really getting comfortable at this level. As his teammates improve around him, I think he will be a great complement to them. His hands are of elite quality and with better passes from and positioning by his teammates, he’ll see his production improve without even trying (not that he won’t, I’m just saying). So if we get the following production in 2010-11 from these guys:

Tavares – 75

Bailey – 65

Okposo – 65

Moulson – 65

Then we should see Schremp in that 65-point range as well.