Why these young centermen will clear 60 points this campaign

In with the old and out with the new. You see it every season. A young forward joins the ranks of 60-point players, replacing an older forward who habitually got there throughout his career, but now falls short. Don't underestimate these players at the draft table, as they are part of the next wave.

Tyler Bozak, Toronto – Last October, in his first career NHL game, Bozak picked up an assist. In his second career game three months later, he picked up another one. He would add three points in his next three games and never looked back. The late bloomer was not drafted, but there was a rush of NHL teams eager to sign him in April of 2009. But none of those teams saw this kind of potential. He does not look out of place on the first line, though he will have to put up big numbers to earn his stripes as a "legitimate No.1 center". He showed a lot of chemistry with Phil Kessel – and he played with him approximately 85% of his shifts. In 37 games, his point production extrapolates to 60 and there is little reason to think that he can't build on that.

However, there is a question about his durability that you should be cautious about. Not a very strong player, or a big one for that matter, Bozak missed most of his final season in college with a knee injury. He also missed some time in the American League as a rookie thanks to an ankle injury (and the flu, but that's not an injury concern). As with all young players, it is difficult to peg fragility, though some show more signs than others. Draft him with the other 60-point centers, but recognize that he could give you close to 70 if he remains healthy, or close to 40 if he doesn't.

Tomas Fleischmann, Washington – The production trajectory is clear: 0.14, 0.28, 0.40, 0.51, 0.74. Yes, that last number means the Flash would have tallied 60 points last season. He has been shifted to center again, where the Caps hope he'll mesh with Alexander Semin and Brooks

Laich. If his trend continues he'll be a 65- or 70-point player, which is exactly what a team wants from their second-line pivot.

Sam Gagner, Edmonton – Now entering his fourth NHL season, Gagner is primed to take the next step. It doesn't hurt that the Top four wingers on his team just went from Dustin Penner, Patrick O'Sullivan, Robert Nilsson and Andrew Cogliano…to Penner, Ales Hemsky, Taylor Hall and Jordan Eberle. The latter three make for a slight upgrade over a player now on a two-way contract, a player since fled to Europe, and a third-line center. Prior to hurting his knee on February 6, Gagner had 14 points in 16 games.

Joe Pavelski, San Jose – Like Fleischmann, Pavelski was also on track to top 60 last season but was held back by an injury. His numbers are still improving, although starting to show signs of peaking. His 17 points in 15 playoff games teased us of his potential, but it also opened his coach's eyes to what kind of player Pavelski can be. As such, more responsibility is in the cards and as such the points will come with even more frequency. Yes, he's a lock for 60 for the first time in his career and should actually flirt with 70.