

Deadline Day – Atlantic Division

Written by Dobber

Sunday, 06 February 2011 12:21 - Last Updated Saturday, 19 February 2011 17:19



COMPLETELY REWRITTEN due to all the early deals - In this six-part series, we'll take a team-by-team look at the trade deadline. Buyers? Sellers? Who's available? How can you prepare your fantasy roster for the upcoming address changes for some of these guys? It's all here, and we'll start it off with the Atlantic Division. Cap numbers courtesy of CapGeek.com

Philadelphia

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Buyers or sellers: Buyers

Cap Situation: Very tight. They could only add a player making the NHL minimum. Salary would need to be moved.

Pending Free Agents:

UFA's – Nik Zherdev, Ville Leino, Sean O'Donnell, Brian Boucher

RFA's – Dan Carcillo, Andreas Nodl, Darroll Powe, Stefan Legein, Dan Syvret

Needs:

1. A checking forward/faceoff guy. Jeff Carter has been their only effective faceoff man at over 55%. Blair Betts is their checking-line guy, but he is sitting at 48%.
2. A depth defenseman. Granted, Matt Walker is in the minors and their top six are as good or better than any other team. But don't be surprised if they bring in another Matt Walker-type to stick in the press box or the minors, just to be safe.

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3. A proven stud goaltender. This won't be addressed, I can guarantee it. Sergei Bobrovsky has been great and frankly I don't blame them. If he implodes, they can always go to Brian Boucher or Michael Leighton, who got them to the Final last year.

Already done: The Flyers acquired Kris Versteeg for draft picks. That's a hardworking, energetic, clutch forward that they can certainly use.

The latest, from [Spector's Hockey](#) :

1. The Flyers are rumored to be shopping Jody Shelley and/or Dan Carcillo.
2. The Flyers could be targeting Erik Cole. With Carolina still in the hunt, this would seem doubtful. But if they fade in a week, then why not?
3. Ville Leino's agent believes he will re-sign with the Flyers. That would take him out of any trade talks. However, the addition of Versteeg ties the team's hands in terms of signing Leino before the summer.
4. The Flyers may be interested in goaltender Tomas Vokoun. That one would make more sense, but again, I think Bobrovsky has shown enough that they'll sink or swim with him.
5. The Flyers are shopping Nik Zherdev. Most feel they will find no takers for him, but I say - why not? A rebuilding club giving him an 18-game audition. If they like what they see, they can re-sign him. If not, no harm done. The Flyers would trade him away for very little I'm sure. A seventh round pick?

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Fantasy squad preparation:

1. Be cautious about acquiring any Flyers goaltenders for now. Just in case.
2. Zherdev is little used, carries a cheap price tag, and the Flyers won't be bringing him back next year. Could they move him for a draft pick and then use said draft pick in part of another deal to address another need? He may be someone to stash on your bench, as he will get ice time on a different team.
3. Cole is already playing well, so if you can acquire him and he remains where he is, he'll probably do just fine anyway. If he's dealt to the Flyers, well that would be a boon.
4. Versteeg should be treated as a 60-point player on this team.
5. I think the team will move Carcillo. Acquiring him cheap could get you a guy who will get nine points and 50 PIM in the final 20 games or so.

Pittsburgh

Buyers or sellers: Buyers

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Cap Situation: All of these expensive injuries have given them a lot of extra extended space thanks to the long-term IR. They can add an \$6 million player if they so choose, which is something that they've never had at recent deadlines. Thank you Mike Comrie, Evgeni Malkin and Jordan Staal.

Pending Free Agents:

UFA's – Pascal Dupuis, Max Talbot, Mike Rupp, Eric Godard, Arron Asham, Craig Adams, Chris Conner, Mike Comrie, Brett Sterling, Ryan Craig

RFA's – Tyler Kennedy, Dustin Jeffrey, Tim Wallace, Brad Thiessen, Nick Johnson

Needs:

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1. Two scoring wingers, preferably with a lot of experience. As per usual, every year at this time.
2. A No.6 defenseman with experience and grit. This would bump Deryk Engelland to the seventh spot and Ben Lovejoy to the press box.
3. A centerman. In March, the Penguins will have Sidney Crosby, Jordan Staal and Mark Letestu as their 1-2-3 pivots, with Dustin Jeffrey filling in at center or wing very nicely. But still, the loss of Malkin could put pressure on GM Ray Shero to add another body up the middle.

The latest, from [Spector's Hockey](#) :

The Malkin injury has really sparked the trade talk in Pittsburgh, after having virtual silence prior to that...

1. They may be interested in Jason Arnott. This would actually be a pretty good fit, as he brings playoff experience and can play anywhere on the Top 3 lines. He is also a free agent in the summer, so makes a good quick fix.
2. They may be looking at Ales Hemsky. With all their cap room, this is also a viable option. His \$4.1 million for next season may be a deterrent though.
3. Another player they may be looking at: Alexei Kovalev.
4. Alex Goligoski is a player who is being asked about in a return package.

Fantasy squad preparation:

1. Look at the wingers on Toronto, Ottawa, the Islanders, New Jersey, Columbus and Edmonton. Any of them on contract years or middling-dollar contracts with one year after this one? I get: Kris Versteeg, PA Parenteau, Jarkko Ruutu, Alexei Kovalev, Ryan Shannon, Jason Arnott (another center, but could be moved to wing), Andrew Cogliano, Dustin Penner (a tad high for next year though) and Ryan Jones.

2. These guys have varying degrees of talent, but if you own any of them, hang onto them. I predict three of the above nine (Parenteau re-signed, Versteeg and Ruutu already traded) two of the above six will be dealt at or near the deadline and barring a bigger trade that shocks us all, the Pens will get one of those two.

3. Now look at the defensemen on those teams. Any in contract years who are gritty and/or experienced? I get Chris Phillips, Radek Martinek, Jan Hejda and Jim Vandermeer. None of these guys will help your fantasy squad, but I put the blurb in as more of an FYI and interest piece. Obviously Phillips would be higher up the depth chart, which would bump Alex Goligoski down, so be wary of that.

4. Dustin Jeffrey owners – much like Luca Caputi of a year ago, be prepared for a possible address change. The Penguins coveted Caputi (but I believe they covet Jeffrey a lot more), but all the same, you have to give a little to get a little. He is a bargaining chip who will be a common name mentioned by the other GM's whenever Ray Shero comes calling.

5. On a new team, Goligoski's upside drops significantly, but his short-term numbers/projection improves. Instead of being a potential 70-point player who will post 45 points for each of the next couple of years, he'll be a potential 55-point player who could reach that mark...almost immediately. He would need to be handled with a different mindset in fantasy circles.

6. Brett Sterling has shown enough that I think he'll continue to see ice time with the big club even after Chris Kunitz, Dustin Jeffrey, Arrom Ashom and Sidney Crosby return. This would reduce any scoring role given to Pascal Dupuis and Tyler Kennedy.

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N.Y. Rangers

Buyers or sellers: Buyers

Cap Situation: They can squeeze in another two salaries at \$4 million each, if need be. A Brad Richards at \$7.8 could now fit thanks to the Chris Drury injury.

Pending Free Agents:

UFA's – Alex Frolov, Vaclav Prospal, Ruslan Fedotenko, Steve Eminger, Todd White

RFA's – Ryan Callahan, Brandon Dubinsky, Artem Anisimov, Brian Boyle, Matt Gilroy, Mike Sauer, Tim Kennedy

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Needs:

1. A first-line center. Stepan will fit this bill in two years, I'm pretty confident. He has the makings of a 75-point star, with upside. Just not for this year, which makes Brad Richards perfect as a rental.

2. A No.2 defenseman who can quarterback a power play. Nothing against Dan Girardi, but...he would fit in better as a No.3 or No.4 guy. Michael Del Zotto will fit this bill in two years, but he's not consistent enough right now.

3. A No.5 defenseman with grit.

4. An experienced No. 6 defenseman. Let's push Steve Eminger down to their ninth option and keep Del Zotto in the minors. Yeah...the Rangers aren't going to add three defensemen. But they can certainly add two.

The latest, from [Spector's Hockey](#) :

1. Sheldon Souray? Wouldn't that be something? Edmonton has placed Souray on re-entry waivers and Rangers are the favorites to claim him. We'll know by Sunday, February 20.

2. Lyle "Spector" Richardson shoots down other rumors such as Mike Commodore and Kevin Bieksa. But if the Rangers land a Top 4 blueliner, then I think bringing in Commodore as a No.6 guy would help. The problem is, Commodore is locked in for another two years after this one at \$3.75 million. He's worth about half that.

3. Richardson believes that the Marian Gaborik trade rumors will only come to fruition - if

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they ever do - in the summer. I disagree. While I don't believe that Gabby will be moved at all, I think if he does go then there is no reason why it can't happen immediately.

4. Rangers are interested in Filip Kuba. There would be your experienced No. 6 guy.
5. Rangers are interested in Bryan McCabe. This won't happen if they claim Souray.

Fantasy squad preparation:

1. Don't count on Del Zotto being a regular down the stretch.
2. Don't count on Girardi being 40-point player in the last six weeks.
3. Stepan may see a cut in his ice time and PP time. He's on pace for 45 points though, and I think he'll still get there.
4. You know what you're getting with Gaborik. If you pay accordingly to acquire him, there is a slim chance that you would get...oh so much more. That, of course, is if he gets traded to the perfect team. In fantasy circles, we can only dream of a Pittsburgh destination. So the downside in landing him is the downside at any other time of the year with this guy. But there is definite upside.
5. It may be too late, but Souray should provide early return for your fantasy team. Until he tears his MCL lacing up his skates, that is.

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N.Y. Islanders

Buyers or sellers: Sellers – and I do believe that the rebuild ends after this season. Crazy, I know, but wait and see. Save the ridicule for next December when I'm clearly wrong. Or, conversely, the pats on the back when I'm clearly right.

Cap Situation: Uh, they better be careful about the cap floor, not the ceiling.

Pending Free Agents:

UFA's – Doug Weight, Zenon Konopka, Trevor Gillies, Radek Martinek, Nathan Lawson, Andy Hilbert, Evgeni Nabokov

RFA's – Josh Bailey, Kyle Okposo, Michael Grabner, Rob Schremp, Blake Comeau, Jeremy Colliton, Ty Wishart, Bruno Gervais, Dylan Reese, Jack Hillen, Al Montoya, Michael Haley,

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Needs:

1. Any youngster with the potential to be a game-breaker. The Isles want to have 10 or 15 potential stars in the fold and hope that three or four of them pan out within two seasons.
2. Draft picks, so they can select a player described in my first point above.

The latest, from [Spector's Hockey](#) :

1. Radek Martinek is cropping up in a lot of rumors.

Fantasy squad preparation:

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1. There is nothing you can do with this roster. A lot of the young players are in great buy-low situations in keeper leagues. This team will get better, you can only have so many Top 5 picks every year without improving.

2. The Isles really wanted Lawson to be their starter, as he is a pet of the coach. But bottom line is, Al Montoya is playing better and in the end he'll get all the starts.

New Jersey

Buyers or sellers: Sellers – It wasn't supposed to be this way, but...here we are.

Cap Situation: The Devils have enough cap space to re-sign Zach Parise. They would just be unable to sign anyone else. More cap room for next season needs to be freed up. The fire sale has already begun with Jamie Langenbrunner going to Dallas.

Pending Free Agents:

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UFA's – Jason Arnott, Adam Mair, Andy Greene, Johan Hedberg. Not enough to save them from cap hell next summer. Something has to give.

RFA's – Zach Parise. No more need be said, but I'll mention the others anyway – Vladimir Zharkov, Tim Sestito, Matt Corrente, Anssi Salmela, Matt Taormina, Mark Fraser, Alexander Vasyunov, Ty Eckford, Jeff Frazee, Tim Sestito

Needs:

1. Bargains. This organization desperately wants to keep Parise and they have a history of keeping their players against all odds. They'll make it work. This means shedding anyone and everyone else (except Ilya Kovalchuk) to get that cap number down and keep Parise.

2. Shed some bodies. Dainius Zubrus (two years after this one at \$3.4 million), Travis Zajac (\$3.9 million for two years after this one), Patrik Elias (\$6 million for two years after this one), Martin Brodeur (\$5.2 million next year, and then a UFA), Brian Rolston (\$5 million after this year) have all been mentioned in rumors over the past two months. Elias is both too valuable and too expensive to move. Rolston didn't even get takes on re-entry waivers (half salary), but has played very well since the coaching change.

The latest, from [Spector's Hockey](#) :

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1. Lou Lamoriello has no financial constraints and will use that to re-sign Parise as opposed to trading him. This seems likely to me as well.
2. Rolston's contract was signed after he turned 35, so teams cannot get cap relief through a buyout, retirement or demotion.
3. Arnott has a no-trade clause, but is willing to waive it. I think he'll be moved somewhere. He is a proven playoff warrior, which is coveted by playoff teams.
4. Montreal, Washington and Pittsburgh are rumored to be interested in Arnott.

Fantasy squad preparation:

1. I think acquiring Arnott is a fairly solid move. It seems likely he will be traded and if that move ends up being to Washington or Pittsburgh, then cha-ching.
2. I don't think Rolston will be moved, but if you feel otherwise then make sure he's not on your team. He won't put up the kind of numbers he's been putting up lately on a new team.