As keeper league hockey pools increase in number each year, fantasy junkies become more active in the off-season as they prepare their team for the coming year. Rebuild? Retool? Tweak? Whatever your intentions, it helps to get all the information you can about your players.

Throughout the off-season, FPL will look at a pair of teams each week and give you the fantasy lowdown. Bucking the trend of past years, we will review alphabetically – in reverse. Just to be different.

(I originally posted this on The Hockey News, ESPN.com and MSN.ca on August 8)

Los Angeles Kings

Gone – Sean Burke, Mathieu Garon, Tom Kostopolous, Jamie Heward, Jamie Lundmark and Aaron Miller.
Arriving – Ladislav Nagy, Michal Handzus, Kyle Calder, Tom Preissing, Brad Stuart and Erik Ersberg.

Looking to Add - The Kings would love to settle their goaltending situation, but they will like be content with letting Dan Cloutier, Jason Labarbera and Ersberg battle it out for the one-two spots, with Cloutier the likely No.1.

Ready for full-time - We already caught a five-game preview of Jack Johnson's NHL debut. It was rough around the edges to say the least, but now that he has had a taste, he should be that much better for it this year. With Rob Blake, Lubomir Visnovsky, Preissing and Stuart ahead of him on the depth chart, the pressure will be off. Patrick O'Sullivan is, despite all the signings up front, ready to take on a full-time role on the third line this year.

Fantasy Outlook - The Kings will be an offensive force this season. Too bad they will let in as many as they'll score. However, poolies don't care about that (unless for some reason they own Cloutier). They care about the goals, which will be plentiful on this team. Down the road, with the kids that are in the pipeline, Los Angeles will be a team to be reckoned with and I would strongly advise that you start loading up on them now in your keeper league – it may be very difficult to do so next year. **Fantasy Grade: A- (last year was B)**

Florida Panthers
Gone – Martin Gelinas, Ed Belfour, Alex Auld, Juraj Kolnik and Chris Gratton.
Arriving – Richard Zednik, Radek Dvorak, Tomas Vokoun and Cory Murphy.

Looking to Add - The Florida roster is now set, other than the fact that Stephen Weiss is still unsigned.

Ready for full-time - I fully expect Cory Murphy to not only make this club, but to be a fixture on the first power-play unit and post 40 points. The offensive rearguard dominated the Finnish ranks last season and he impressed for Team Canada at the Worlds in May. The competition on the point will be stiff, but youngster Noah Welch should also crack the lineup.

Fantasy Outlook - As far as their skaters go, the Panthers did not see much improvement. Do not expect miracles (or even 45 points) from either Dvorak or Zednik. Weiss and Nathan Horton will post better numbers, but otherwise the skaters will produce the same as last year. It is between the pipes where they are most improved, but they had better hope that Vokoun can stay healthy, something that has been a question mark since the lockout. The pipeline is mediocre at best, so Florida doesn't look to be a powerhouse franchise anytime soon.
Fantasy Grade: C (last year was C-)

Dobber's article "The Contrarian Pick" can be found on the inside-back cover The Hockey News Ultimate Pool Guide