

Heating Up

Written by Dobber

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If you do the fantasy hockey thing long enough, you learn to pick up streaky players when they start to light it up. You're not going to have a player get you a point each game, but the good ones are generally consistent.

However, there are glaring exceptions. Some players prefer to send you on a roller-coaster ride from October through April. These guys like to go 10 games with only a point or two and have you desperately shopping them around. Suddenly, they go on a tear and give you 17 points in 10 games and make you glad that you failed in your attempt to move them.

The king of the streaky players (pun intended) is Los Angeles forward Alexander Frolov. Last year, the 25-year-old winger kicked off the campaign with a dismal six points in 13 contests. He

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followed that up with 39 points in 29 games spanning from Oct. 30 through Jan. 3. From there, he posted just five points in his next 11 before ending the season with 12 in 22. Between those two slumps he had a solid run of 11 points in 10 matches.

Frolov does it year after year, so why should things change for 2007-08? The answer is, they haven't. The Moscow native kicked off the season with 10 points in 13 games. Once again, November seems to be the turning point as he has peeled off eight in his past four.

Get an early jump on this guy. If last season is any indication, this run will continue for another seven or eight weeks.

Another streaky player is Tampa's Michel Ouellet. The 25-year-old was legendary in Pittsburgh for disappearing over long stretches before piling up points for a few games. He kicked off his last campaign with 10 points in 11 games and later had a run of 12 in eight. Those little streaks made up for nearly half of his total point production last season.

Guess what? He's at it again. After starting his Lightning career with four points in 12 contests, Ouellet has tallied seven in his past six. If history has anything to say – and usually it does – he will continue his hot streak for another two to five games before it's time to bail. As soon as he goes a couple of games without a point, cut him loose. In the meantime though, enjoy the ride.

Injuries, from a fantasy league perspective: Anaheim's Todd Bertuzzi has gone several days without any concussion symptoms and he could be back in the lineup by the middle of next week. While Bertuzzi is on the shelf, the Ducks may recall newly acquired Geoff Platt. If they do, I would keep an eye on him since he's a sparkplug with a touch around the net...Philadelphia's Simon Gagne will be out for at least another 10 days and likely until the middle of December at the earliest with his concussion...

Farm Report: Philadelphia prospect Claude Giroux, who nearly made the team this season, is on a tear in the Quebec League. The 19-year-old has 41 points in 22 games to lead all QMJHLers in scoring. He is also on a 12-game point-scoring streak in which he has 13 goals and 12 assists.