

(Originally posted by <u>The Hockey News</u> November 30, Antropov's piece updated for relevency)

It's easy for a fantasy owner to determine which players are 'buy low' candidates – usually, players on his or her own team qualify. The 'sell high' players, well, that one's more difficult.

The bottom line is if a player on your team is doing exceptionally well, you attribute that to your fine drafting and evaluating skills. If a player on your team is performing poorly...that has to be just a slump.

Let's be realistic here. Anyone who has studied hockey stats for any length of time will tell you that hundreds of players over the years have had monster 25-game spurts of offense. Most of these hundreds of players have not turned into superstars.

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Here are some players who are over their head right now and it would make sense to trade them immediately for some fantastic return:

Cory Stillman, CAR: With 30 points in 22 games, the 33-year-old Stillman is clearly having a comeback season. After missing most of last year with a couple of different injuries, he is obviously back to the 156 points in 153 games that he posted in the two seasons before that. That would put him in the 75- to 80-point range by April. As he is currently on a 108-point pace, see if you can't get an 85-point player for him. It will pay off.

Mats Sundin, TOR: The 36-year-old is on a 98-point pace. He hasn't been in that territory since 1993. For nine straight seasons, Sundin has posted between 72 and 83 points. Don't count on him suddenly breaking that range this year. Count on him hitting the top part of the window and trade him for his current 95-plus value.

Mike Richards, PHI: A very talented, all-around player and leader in the dressing room, Richards will never see the 103 points that he is on pace for – don't kid yourself. He might be the most valuable player in Philadelphia, but that is because he has all the tools. The youngster projects to be a 70- or 75-point player who may occasionally reach as high as 85 points, so if you can get a young superstar who you feel more comfortable about getting to 90 points, pull the trigger.

Tomas Holmstrom, DET: He turns 35 in January and his career high is 59 points. Do you really see him continuing his current pace and ending the year with 85? If so, flip me an email and I'll invite you into my fantasy league. There are some trades I'd love to make with you. I'm hard-pressed to believe he'll hit 60, but let's give him the benefit of the doubt and say 65. He's producing at 20 points over that number, so dish him off and pick up a 70- or 75-point player if you can.

Paul Ranger, TB: I like Ranger and I think he'll round into a solid 45-point rearguard. With Dan Boyle out of the lineup (wrist surgery), it would seem that Ranger has taken over the production from the blueline. Not so. He may be on a 60-point pace, but he only gets 1:39 per game of power play time and is not a part of the first unit. His value is too high, so sell.

Nik Antropov, TOR: The same owners who believed that Antropov was a 100-point player now hang onto the belief that he can reach 80 points. After 15 points in 12 games, Nik hit a wall with just six in 13 – and he was a minus-9 in that span. He has since turned it back around, but if you can get a 70-point player for Antropov, go for it. Sure, he could reach that mark, but you've all seen his history with injuries.

Injuries, from a fantasy league perspective: Alexander Semin left Wednesday's contest in overtime after aggravating his ankle injury for the fourth time in two months. While he may be back within a couple of games, it is highly recommended that you wait until he completes three full games before activating him. The ankle is obviously fragile...

Farm Report: The Avs have recalled T.J. Hensick from their farm team in Lake Erie. After starting the season with just four points in 10 AHL games, Hensick has gone on a run with nine

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points in his past eight. The 21-year-old (he turns 22 next week) tore it up in training camp and nearly played his way onto the team. He's worth watching, as he is a future impact player.

Notes: since I submitted this, Semin has returned and his ankle seems fine. Hensick has looked good in the NHL, but the production hasn't been there, with only one goal.

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