Their win percentage is better than that of the defending Stanley Cup Champions, yet everyone – fans and media alike – have already written them off. This is because the Phoenix Coyotes are approximately one year into a full-blown rebuilding plan and their team consists of Shane Doan, Ed Jovanovski and a whole bunch of kids.

But given the way the 'Yotes have played since the acquisition of goaltender Ilya Bryzgalov and how those wet-behind-the-ears kids have performed, perhaps they should be taken a little more seriously.

For the last several years, keeper-league owners have shifted their philosophy towards treating Phoenix players like the plague. And why not? The last time the team had a player reach the 70-point mark it was the 2000-01 season when Jeremy Roenick led the squad with 76. Since then, only once has a player tallied more than 63 and that was when Shane Doan had 68 a few years back.

Much like a lab rat is trained to push a certain button to score a wafer, poolies have been

trained to ignore Phoenix players when they appear next on their draft list. It's hard to undo that.

This will be yet another campaign in which not one Phoenix player will reach the 70-point mark, which makes it six seasons in a row. Mark my words though – it will be the last.

The team has finally put a solid GM in office with a true, full-out rebuilding plan – not one of those 'half-assed' ones that you've seen in the past. Don Maloney is continuing what Mike Barnett finally started prior to his being fired. The philosophy is simple: Doan stays and the kids play.

The centerpiece of the team – Kyle Turris – has yet to join them, but likely will next season or at the very latest in two years. Another U.S. college stalwart, Blake Wheeler, will join him. The two of them will be the finishing pieces to a puzzle that already includes Peter Mueller and Martin Hanzal.

In Mueller, Turris and Hanzal, the 'Yotes will boast the three centers with the best combination of size, skill and youth this side of Pittsburgh. Turris projects to be a Steve Yzerman-type capable of posting 100-point seasons. Mueller still looks on target to become a big 90-point power center. Hanzal is pushing his stock ever upwards and is now looking as if a point-per-game is not out of the question one day. In fact, the team will have to move him to the wing, because he is far too good for the third line.

In the meantime, this season, the young Coyotes are auditioning to become the other pieces of this great future puzzle. Radim Vrbata is looking a great a compliment on the wing, looking good for 55 points this season and 70 or more in future seasons as the sidekick of one of these great pivots. Daniel Carcillo, Phoenix's answer to Sean Avery, is looking like he'll be the perfect second or third line guy as he gains experience, and will probably put up 55 points and 200 penalty minutes a season.

The defensemen already seem to be falling into place. While Jovo-cop probably doesn't have a future in the organization, the likes of Zbynek Michalek and Keith Ballard certainly do. Ditto for rookie/prospect Keith Yandle. Prospects Chris Summers and Nick Ross look promising as well.

Two years ago I said to start scooping Penguins because they will be hard to get by 2008. Last year I said start scooping L.A. Kings because by 2009 they will be impossible. I'd like to make my statement for this year – the Phoenix Coyotes' players will be impossible to grab in 2010 so you'd better stop ignoring this team before it's too late.

Meanwhile…

Still with the Coyotes (no, they didn't pay me) Radim Vrbata, a notorious streaky scorer, has 13 points in his last nine games. He seriously clicked with Martin Hanzal and Fredrik Sjostrom Saturday, as the line combined for 10 points. All three of these guys will continue rolling for another three games or so before cooling off…

Comment on the future of Phoenix here...