

Written by Dobber

Sunday, 16 March 2008 09:32 - Last Updated Monday, 17 March 2008 07:30



As the 2007-08 campaign draws to a close, I've noticed some keeper-league owners growing increasingly sour over certain players. These players are almost certain to come back strong next season – or finally have that long awaited breakout.

Let's take a look:

Thomas Vanek, Buffalo: No surprise here. He is an 85-point player in a 65-point player's body right now. If you can get him for a 75-point guy, make the offer.

Production next season: 85 points

Rod Brind'Amour, Carolina: My favorite "sell high" player of the last three seasons is now a "buy low" player. His age (37) and his injury (ACL) have a lot of poolies jumping ship on this guy. If you own him – don't waste your time shopping him; you'll get nothing for him. If you don't own him and think you can contend next season, I have no doubt that he could be had for a pick. Keep this in mind: he has three years left on his big contract.

Production next season: 65 points

Gilbert Brule, Columbus: A bust? Sure, let's write a 21-year-old off as having no fantasy future and no upside. Or, we could be reasonable and give him a couple more years. Brule will show signs of what is to come next season, before a big breakout the following year.

Production next season: 35-40 points

Production 2009-10: 65-plus points

Jiri Hudler, Detroit: Fantasy owners don't have a lot of patience. If a player doesn't notch 60 points by his second season, he often gets dumped for cheap in fantasy leagues. You should be flying around Hudler's owner like a vulture.

Production next season: 65 points

Ales Hemsky, Edmonton: He had seasons of 77 and 53 points and is on pace for 69. His fantasy owner no doubt considers him an 80-point guy now. That's your cue to make the phone call. It may not be next year, or even the year after – but within three years this guy will explode like Vincent Lecavalier did last season. Remember, many people were starting to label Vinny as an 80-point player.

Production in one of the next three seasons: 100 points

Rostislav Olesz, Florida: Once upon a time, there was a top-10 draft pick who made the NHL full time as a 19-year old and put up seasons of 21, 21, 16 and 29 points. Almost every fantasy owner I know bailed on him and lived to regret it when Olli Jokinen posted 65 points. Now, Olesz will never be a Jokinen – he doesn't have that ability to avoid injury – but he could be just as adept a producer. With his third consecutive sub-35-point season, Olesz could be had for a song.

Production in one of the next two seasons: 70 points, health permitting

Andy McDonald, St. Louis: He's perfect for the second line, and with the arrival of T.J. Oshie and Patrik Berglund next season, he will at least be shifted down to a 1B or 1C type of pivot. His production as a Blue has dipped lately and he is looking like a 60-point player. That should improve with a better cast around him next year. His 50 points this year will be an eyesore on someone's team and they'll be looking to dump.

Production next year: 65 points

Alex Steen, Toronto: He doesn't have a whole lot of upside – perhaps 70 points at the very best – but Steen is showing signs of hitting his stride. With a re-vamped Toronto lineup (you know it's going to happen), Steen will be a top-six forward.

Production next year: 60 points

The Sedin Twins, Vancouver: I know one owner who is whining about these players every day they don't get a point. If the twins finish with fewer than 75 points, that will work out nicely if you don't own them. These two are 85-point players, so if you can offer a pair of 80-point forwards I am sure they can be had.

Production next year: Henrik 83 points, Daniel 84 points – or vice-versa

Eric Fehr, Washington: He missed most of the season with a back injury and is still trying to find his groove; the Caps need a natural right wing and also need his size up front. He will probably land on the first or second line full-time.

Production next year: 55 points, with upside

Miroslav Satan, Unrestricted Free Agent: It can't come soon enough for his owners. He is a 65-point player who has been languishing on the third line under Ted Nolan. He'll be 34 next year and still has a couple of good seasons left in him.

Production next year: 57 to 67 points, depending on which team he signs with.

David Vyborny, Unrestricted Free Agent: Languishing under Ken Hitchcock, and his value has not been helped by his injuries this year. While 65 points the last two seasons was probably over-achieving, Vyborny is still a serviceable 55 to 60-point player. He just turned 33, so he also has a couple of good seasons in him.

Production next year: 55 to 60 points, depending on which team he signs with.

Discuss the [underrated players right here in our forum.](#) ..