

Fantasy Hockey and the Continental Hockey League (KHL)

Written by Dobber

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Some of you in keeper leagues have been left holding the bag as your player has flown the NHL coop and signed for big money in the Russian upstart KHL. Here is something that needs to be proposed to your league's commissioner.

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The biggest name to go is Jaromir Jagr. He is coming off a 71-point season, but has the upside for more. So his signing of a letter of intent with Omsk of the KHL makes it 95 percent certain that his fantasy owners will lose a 75- to 80-point player for nothing.

The other big name is Nashville's Alexander Radulov. He is still under contract in the NHL, but is confident that the new contract he signed in the KHL will hold and that he will play in Russia next season. The league is fighting it – and will probably win, but it has certainly opened a lot of eyes to the fact that the KHL should be taken seriously.

It is beginning to look as if this thing has some legs and could provide a WHA-like competition to the National Hockey League. At least for a few years. So what can you do if you are in a keeper league? Any player could leave for the KHL once their NHL contract runs out and so many contracts are set to expire that you can't trade all those players away in your league. Sure, most of the players leaving will be from Europe, but you can't exactly feel secure about your North American players.

Run your fantasy league team like normal – maybe stay away from the Russians a little bit if you can help it – but make a proposal to your league commissioner. Depending on the rules of your league, structure it as follows:

1. If a player is coming off of a season in which he tallied 76 or more points and he signs to play in the KHL, you receive a compensation draft pick after the first round similar to what NHL teams get when they can't sign a drafted player after two years. This would be in order of the highest points lost (in the event that a couple of teams lose a player of this caliber).
2. If a player is coming off of a season in which he tallied 61 to 75 points and he signs to play in the KHL, you receive a compensation draft pick after the second round.
3. If a player is coming off of a season in which he tallied 41 to 60 points and he signs to play in the KHL, you receive a compensation draft pick after the third round.
4. Any players who produced less than this threshold will give no compensation, as the player wasn't contributing anyway.

Some stipulations:

S1) Naturally, leagues that are run by roster position will need to further break this down in terms of defensemen and goaltenders.

S2) This rule should not be put in place for this summer. It is not fair to spring a rule like this and implement it in the same summer. Put it in place for next year.

This will give the owners in your league some security. Sure, there are only a handful of NHLers

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this year, but what if next year that number grows to 20? What if, of those 20 players, five belong to one team, three belong to another, and 12 of the 13 other teams lose just one player...but the other team loses none? Suddenly, your league is drastically impacted (one team loses five players and another team loses none).

A 16th overall draft pick does not compensate for the loss of an 80-point player, but it helps. This thing is not going to go away soon, so it is smart to prepare your fantasy league for it right now