As the number of keeper league hockey pools increase each year, fantasy junkies are becoming more active in the off-season as they prepare for the coming year. Rebuild? Retool?

Tweak? Whatever your intentions, it helps to get all the information you can about your players. FPL will look at a pair of teams each week and give you the fantasy lowdown. This week, we'll look through our fantasy hockey goggles at the outlooks for Chicago and Colorado.

(Originally published by The Hockey News on **June 6, 2008** - Dobber archives some of his older THN articles here in case you missed them there!)

And don't forget, if you have an off-season hockey question, send it to the Fantasy Mailbag .

CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS
Potential UFAs – Kevyn Adams, Patrick Lalime, Yanic Perreault, Jason Williams, Andrei Zyuzin
Potential RFAs – Rene Bourque, Andrew Ladd, Jordan Hendry

Looking to Add - Rumor has it the team is on the lookout for a power play quarterback. I happen to think Cam Barker, Brent Seabrook, Duncan Keith and James Wisniewski are capable of combining for 150 points, which is more than a lot of teams can say about their top four rearguards.

Ready for full time – If Lalime moves on, Corey Crawford is more than ready to become the backup. Given Nikolai Khabibulin's injury struggles this season, don't be surprised if Crawford (or whoever the backup is) gets 30 starts or more. The Hawks have no shortage of players ready to stick full time. Jack Skille and Dave Bolland should both get looks on the third line and I think one or both will stick. Some longer shots are Petri Kontiola, who adapted well to the North American game this year, and Kris Versteeg. All four of those players have decent long-term upsides of at least 70 points.

Fantasy Outlook - Everything is starting to fall into place for the Hawks and they are not being coached to play defensive hockey. With Patrick Kane and Jonathan Toews leading the youth movement, the Hawks will be a high-scoring team for years to come. If you don't acquire some of these other guys for a reasonable price in your keeper league this summer, you will be

paying out the you-know-what in the near future.
Fantasy Grade: A- (last year was B)

COLORADO AVALANCHE
Potential UFAs – Joe Sakic, Jose Theodore, Andrew Brunette, J-M Liles, Jaroslav Hlinka, Kurt Sauer, Jeff Finger, Scott Parker, Adam Foote, Peter Forsberg.
Potential RFAs – Marek Svatos, Wojtek Wolski, Brad Richardson, Cody McCormick.

Looking to Add - The Avs will likely re-sign Sakic (who will almost certainly come back for one more year – I'd be shocked if he doesn't) and Theodore apparently wants to return to the fold. Hlinka has already fled for Europe and Liles will explore free agency. What all this means is the team will need a power play quarterback in the worst way and their goaltending situation will still need to be resolved – the answer is probably not Peter Budaj.

Ready for full time – David Jones should be a full-time winger this season. He had excellent college numbers, decent American League stats and he did not look out of place on a scoring line with the big club last season. He should be good for 35 to 40 points, but is a dark horse for 55. T.J. Hensick is also ready, but if (when!) Sakic signs Hensick may find himself on the third line, which would limit him to 30 points. If, by some surprising turn of events, Sakic retires, Hensick would be a candidate for 55 or 60 on the second line.

Fantasy Outlook - With Tony Granato at the helm, it should open things up more for the Avs, who have a lot of offensive potential. A healthy Paul Stastny will mean a return to 70-plus points for Milan Hejduk. Assuming Big Joe stays on for another year, the team should get into the post-season again and do it the way poolies like most – with their offense.
Fantasy Grade: C+ (last year was B-)