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 Nashville and New Jersey.

(Originally posted by The Hockey News on **July 24th** - Dobber archives some of his older THN articles here in case you missed them there!)

Also – don't forget to send your off-season questions to the THN Fantasy Mailbag , which is posted the last Wednesday of each month during the summer.

Nashville Predators
Gone – Marek Zidlicky, Brandon Bochenski, Chris Mason and probably Alexander Radulov (awaiting resolution of the NHL, KHL and IIHF argument).

Incoming - Josh Gratton, Triston Grant and Ryan Jones.

Ready for full time – Preds fans are hoping 21-year-old Patric Hornqvist will step into the lineup and provide 20-25 goals to help stop the bleeding if Radulov is allowed to leave. The Swedish sniper had 41 goals in 102 Swedish Elite League contests over the past two years. Antti Pihlstrom had 27 goals in the American League and will also get a long look for a roster spot, although his upside isn't nearly as high as Hornqvist's.

Of the newcomers my personal favorite is Ryan Jones. He was acquired from the Wild in the Marek Zidlicky trade and has made huge strides over the past couple of seasons. Jones plays a power game and is responsible in his own end. He also scored 60 goals over his last two seasons of college hockey at Miami (Ohio), so you know he has a touch around the net.

Goaltender Pekka Rinne was on a two-way contract this past season, but that will become a one-way pact in 2008-09, so he will play backup to Dan Ellis. An interesting side note – Ellis' numbers in 2007-08 were similar to Chris Mason's numbers in 2006-07, though Ellis played in fewer games. Do not be overly confident with Ellis. In fact, if possible, try to make Rinne your third goalie if Ellis is one of your first two, just to be safe.

Fantasy Outlook – Despite having some promising rookies, the Preds may have trouble scoring without Radulov. The youngster's offensive game was steadily improving and he looked ready to surpass the 70-point mark next season. His loss will hurt Jason Arnott and J-P Dumont, who were Radulov's linemates for much of the last campaign. But there are a lot of good kids in the pipeline – particularly on the blue line – so the future is still bright in Nashville.
Fantasy Grade: C (last year was B)

New Jersey Devils
Gone – Sergei Brylin and Karel Rachunek.

Incoming - Brian Rolston, Bobby Holik, Fedor Fedorov and Anssi Salmela.

Ready for full time – Salmela will get a long look because the Devils are still looking for someone to quarterback the power play. The 23-year-old, undrafted Finn had 32 points in 56 games in the Finnish League this past season. The rest of the roster seems set, unless Nicklas Bergfors or Petr Vrana shock the Devils' brass in training camp.

The Devils expect Fedorov to take a roster spot, but he has consistency issues. Fedorov is also one of the players in the midst of the NHL/KHL/IIHF dispute.

Fantasy Outlook – No surprise here, the Devils are a team that wins a lot of games with a mediocre offense. However, with another year of experience under the belts of Zach Parise and Travis Zajac and with Patrik Elias finally becoming comfortable with coach Brent Sutter's system – as he showed at the end of last season – this team should score more next season.

Fantasy Grade: B- (last year was C)