

Kyle Quincey □ Blip or Stud?

Written by Dobber

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So how does a defenseman go from eighth on the depth chart on one NHL team to second on another? Every season, there seems to be a defenseman who is discarded either via waivers or as a throw-in in a deal and that rearguard ends up performing fairly well on his new team.

In 2005, Columbus had no use for Francois Beauchemin, so they sent him to Anaheim when the Ducks were shedding Sergei Fedorov's salary. Beauchemin went on to post 34 points in 61 games for Anaheim. He has since found a different sort of role for the Ducks, but were it not for the presence of Scott Niedermayer and Chris Pronger it could be argued that he would have been a 40-point defenseman today.

Later that same season, Ron Hainsey was waived by the Habs. The Blue Jackets picked him up and he posted 66 points over the last two seasons there, parlaying that into a big contract with the Thrashers.

Fantasy owners probably saw the biggest turnaround when Dan Boyle was dumped by Florida to Tampa Bay for a fifth-round pick in 2002.

This year, there was no room in Detroit for 23-year-old Kyle Quincey so they tried to sneak him through waivers to Grand Rapids. The Kings claimed him and what we have is some impressive production.

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Only fellow rearguard Drew Doughty has averaged more ice time per game on the Kings than Quincey. He is also fifth on the team in power-play ice time, averaging 3:33 per contest and seven of his 13 points have come with the man advantage.

So what is in store for Quincey? Granted, Jack Johnson is the future quarterback in Los Angeles, although he is still several years away. The team also has Thomas Hickey and Colten Teubert on the way. So including Doughty, the Kings already have their future top four set. But my theory on quality players still holds here – if the player is performing, the team will find room. Well, 13 points in 19 contests (and a plus-5 rating) is performing.

The Kings were hoping to get this kind of performance from Peter Harrold. Had they received it, they would have found a way to keep Harrold in the mix when all of their stud defensemen joined the roster in a couple of years. Now they'll be accommodating Quincey instead.

A former quarterback for the London Knights and Mississauga Ice Dogs of the OHL, Quincey is on pace to tally 54 points this season. That seems a little high for a player who up until now could not find regular work in the NHL. However, given his ice time and consistency (he has never gone three-straight pointless games this year), there is no reason to think he won't reach 45.

With the depth of blueliners in the Los Angeles system it is difficult to project how Quincey will fare in the long term, but if he tops 45 points this campaign he will be given every chance to succeed in future ones...

Meanwhile...

My favorite example of "if the player is performing, the team will find room" is Jeff Carter. Banished to the third line in the minds of many fantasy owners, he slipped through their grasp thanks to their narrow-mindedness. Carter is too skilled to toil on the third line by the usual definition of the term. We are seeing that now, given his 16 goals in 23 games and eight points in his last six. Those poolies who saw past the "third-liner" label are smiling...

One of the streakiest players in the NHL is Ryan Malone. Tampa Bay is finding that out first hand as they watched him struggle with three points in 14 games and then follow that up with eight in his last five. Ride the wave for another week or so. In the end, he's a 50-point player...