

## Unrestricted Free Agency 2009 II

Written by Dobber

Sunday, 03 May 2009 11:18 - Last Updated Tuesday, 05 May 2009 02:53

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### [PART 1](#)

Part 2 in a four-part look at those players who may have played their last game for their respective team and what a move will mean from a fantasy hockey standpoint.

### Los Angeles Kings

UFA's – Kyle Calder, Derek Armstrong, Matt Moulson, Denis Gauthier

RFA's – Teddy Purcell, Brian Boyle, Kevin Westgarth, Jack Johnston

Outgoing – All the UFA's are gone, ensuring that Purcell and Oscar Moller have permanent spots on the team.

Of Fantasy Note – Boyle will battle Trevor Lewis for the last forward spot, although there are other contenders, depending on how the draft goes. Don't count out Brad Richardson possibly getting cut if another youngster really shines in camp.

### Minnesota Wild

UFA's – Marian Gaborik, Stephane Veilleux, Krys Kolanos, Martin Skoula, Marc-Andre Bergeron, Kurtis Foster, Tomas Mojzis, Nolan Schaefer

RFA's – Benoit Pouliot, Peter Olvecky, Dan Fritsche, Dan Irmann, Josh Harding

Outgoing – The post-Gaborik era begins and the team better hope they find a decent sniper to replace him or they'll never make the playoffs. Keep an eye out for a Josh Harding offer sheet. With the money they are already paying Niklas Backstrom, the Wild would be reluctant to pay Harding even \$3 million – and he'll be eager to jump ship given the grim outlook for his getting any starts in Minnesota.

Of Fantasy Note – It's wide open. With a new coach yet to be named and new star player – also yet to be named – it's difficult to peg how the Wild will look fantasy-wise. A new GM will mean that the coach will feel zero obligation to put Pouliot in the lineup, thus making him a dropsey. There will also be a different perspective on what to do with James Sheppard – if he won't be good enough to garner 14 minutes a game next year, the team will have no qualms about giving him some time in the AHL rather than sit at the end of the bench.

### Montreal Canadiens

UFA's – Alex Tanguay, Alexei Kovalev, Robert Lang, Saku Koivu, Tom Kostopolous, Francis Bouillon, Mathieu Dandenault, Mike Komisarek, Mathieu Schneider, Patrice Brisebois, Doug Janik, Alex Henry, Marc Denis

RFA's – Chris Higgins, Tomas Plekanec, Guillaume Latendresse, Matt D'Agostini, Kyle Chipchura, Greg Stewart

Outgoing – The Habs could really wipe the slate clean if they so choose. In order of likelihood, Koivu, Tanguay, Lang and Schneider are most likely to be back. Komisarek will be too hard to keep and they'll be outbid badly.

Of Fantasy Note – With a new coach and all new players, this is as wide open as it is with the Wild. The youngsters will play a more prominent role – Max Pacioretty, D'Agostini and even Ben Maxwell could make the team.

### **Nashville Predators**

UFA's – Steve Sullivan, Radek Bonk, Vern Fiddler, Scott Nichol, Joel Ward, Jed Ortmeyer, Greg DeVries, Greg Zanon, Ville Koistinen, Drew McIntyre

RFA's – Ryan Jones, Cal O'Reilly, Antti Pihlstrom, Alexander Sulzer

Outgoing – Sullivan will put up 60 points in 65 games no matter where he plays, if he goes anywhere. The rest of the guys on that UFA list are probably gone.

Of Fantasy Note – Pay attention to O'Reilly's contract, as if it is a one-way deal he makes a good dark horse. If Alexander Radulov returns (and we should know within two months), we may not see Sullivan back in Nashville.

### **New Jersey Devils**

UFA's – Brian Gionta, John Madden, Bobby Holik, Mike Rupp, Brendan Shanahan, Barry Tallackson, Niclas Havelid, Johnny Oduya, Kevin Weekes, Scott Clemmensen

RFA's – Travis Zajac, Petr Vrana, P-L Leblond, Patrick Davis, Andy Greene

Outgoing – The Devils have a habit of keeping the core of their team together, so I expect Gionta and Oduya to be back. They'll sign Clemmensen to be their backup if he can't find a starting job somewhere else. The rest are probably gone. By notching two assists in his last playoff game, Shanahan may have bought himself another year in the league...somewhere. As far as RFA's go, Zajac is an offer sheet candidate.

Of Fantasy Note – If Gionta does go, it leaves a huge hole that Niklas Bergfors or Mattias Tedenby will have a shot at filling. Oduya on a new team could be a 45-point rearguard.

### **New York Islanders**

UFA's – Mike Sillinger, Andy Hilbert, Dean McAmmond, Mitch Fritz, Ben Walter, Kurtis McLean, Mike Iggulden, Thomas Pock, Joe Callahan, Chris Lee, Joey MacDonald, Yann Danis

RFA's – Nate Thompson, Blake Comeau, Trevor Smith, Jeremy Colliton, Jack Hillen, Jamie Fraser, Peter Mannino

Outgoing – I could see all the UFA's going, although the Isles are partial to Sillinger and McDonald. Also, look for them to buy out Jon Sim. I have my doubts that the team is willing to qualify Hillen at such a high salary.

Of Fantasy Note – Kyle Okposo will be huge next year playing with John Tavares. If Hilbert signs with Pittsburgh, he'll be put on a line with Crosby. The two clicked in a big way at the end of 2006-07. Whoever the team brings in as a backup, he should be good for 40 starts, given DiPietro's Band-Aid Boy-ness.

### **New York Rangers**

UFA's – Blair Betts, Colton Orr, Nik Antropov, Patrick Rissmiller, Mark Bell, Paul Mara, Derek Morris

RFA's – Nik Zherdev, Lauri Korpikoski, Corey Potter, Fredrik Sjostrom, Brandon Dubinsky, Ryan Callahan, Joe Barnes

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Outgoing – Although the Rangers are interested in re-signing Antropov, he'll demand big money on the open market. When he signs big money, he'll be thrust onto the first line of whatever team he signs with and it will mean bigger numbers. Mara could also be back. They may buyout Dan Girardi. I can't see the Rangers qualifying Zherdev at those kinds of dollars, but they won't let him go for nothing – that situation will bear watching. Markus Naslund is foregoing his final year and retiring from the NHL.

Of Fantasy Note – If Antropov goes, Artem Anisimov will get 45 points next year. If he stays, Anisimov will get 35 points next year. With Naslund gone, the team will give star prospect Evgeni Grachev a very long look.

### **Ottawa Senators**

UFA's – Mike Comrie, Chris Neil, Luke Richardson

RFA's – Brendan Bell, Brian Elliott

Outgoing – The Sens won't be in a hurry to keep Comrie, but will keep Neil if the price is right. They don't have a lot of salary cap room though, so look for Neil to move elsewhere.

Of Fantasy Note – Ryan Shannon will be on the team and is a dark horse for 50 or more. They need his cheap \$600K salary on their roster. Unless they move Jason Spezza, it will be tough for them to sign any player for even \$2 million. Expect lots of cheap solutions like Shannon.