

Boy Oh Boyes!

Written by Dobber

Friday, 09 February 2007 12:00 -

By Dobber - originally posted Jan. 22 by The Hockey News, ESPN.com, and MSN.ca You are not imagining things. I wrote an article with the very same title almost one year ago, back on March 29, 2006. The title meant something completely different then.

Brad Boyes finished his rookie campaign with 69 points in 82 games and sported an impressive plus-11. In what could be the biggest NHL sophomore slump of the season, Boyes finds himself on a pace to finish with 46 points. On top of that, he currently sits at minus-13.



With zero points (not to mention a minus-12) in his last 12 games, the NHL All-Star break could not come at a better time for the 24-year-old.

The 2006-07 season is shaping up in the opposite manner that 2005-06 did. Last season, Boyes progressed with a points-per-game average (PPGA) for each quarter like this: 0.57, 0.61, 1.05 and 1.15. In that order.

This year Boyes had a PPGA of 0.70 in the first quarter, 0.60 in the second quarter, and so far sports a 0.00 PPGA six games into the third quarter.

Poolies expect some rookies to fall into a sophomore slump, but Boyes is surprising given his undeniable chemistry last season with his linemates Patrice Bergeron and Marco Sturm. The line faltered, Sturm is having an even worse season than Boyes and the focus of the team's offense has been given to newcomer Marc Savard and Bergeron.

Boy Oh Boyes!

Written by Dobber
Friday, 09 February 2007 12:00 -

Recently, Boyes has been dropped to the third line. His ice time has dipped below 15 minutes on a consistent basis and his faceoff winning percentage has not been above 40 per cent in several games. His confidence is at an all-time low and unless he gets a lucky bounce you can expect it to continue for the remainder of the season. I would expect something to bounce his way – perhaps an injury to a key power-play forward, or perhaps a trade moving Glen Murray...something to inject a sense of purpose into Boyes' game. He is too good to be held down like this...

Injuries, from a fantasy pool perspective: The Carolina Hurricanes will be getting the power-play help they have been looking for all season long and it will not be via a trade. Frantisek Kaberle, out for the entire season so far after undergoing shoulder surgery in September, has been skating and hopes to return to the lineup as early as this weekend. By no means is Kaberle the second coming of Bobby Orr, but he is by far the most offensively-skilled rearguard that Carolina boasts. His return will pay immediate dividends on the power play.

Farm Report: Islanders' coach Ted Nolan had this to say about prospect Robert Nilsson: "I watched him play at least six times in Bridgeport, and I've seen him in rookie camp and in training camp," said Nolan. "His play really didn't warrant the opportunity to come here. The last little while, it's getting much better, and his determination is getting better. The

expectations of young kids coming from the farm team, we all have it. But we've got to make sure they're ready to play in the NHL. When you're relied upon to contribute, we want our players ready to contribute. So Robert's getting much better, but the kid has to earn the opportunity."

Nilsson is hovering at around a point per game in the American League, but will likely not be on this Islanders squad in the fall. Unless he is moved to a new team, Nilsson can expect more AHL games next season until he molds himself into the player that Nolan wants.