That weird, seemingly hard to pronounce name that you have seen scattered all over the Chicago Blackhawks scoring summaries for the past month is Dustin Byfuglien (pronounced BUHF-lihn).

(originally published by the Hockey News on December 28, 2007)

The 22-year-old has been a fantasy surprise since being recalled from Rockford Nov. 3 and he doesn’t seem to be slowing down any. Trained and drafted as a defenseman, Byfuglien has

really picked up his offensive game over the past year and a half at the American League level and has proven to be a capable quarterback. He is build like a truck, at 6-foot-3 and 246 pounds, so the knock on him (naturally) has been his foot speed.

Coach Denis Savard, with the team going through some injury troubles early on, needed some more size up front and tried Byfuglien up on the wing in late November with great success. He has 13 points in his last 13 games and even picks up points when he's back on the blue line.

He also has 46 shots and 16 penalty minutes in that span, making him a solid contributor in all roto-categories. More importantly, he is still classified as a rearguard – and not many defenseman can claim a point-per-game over the last month.

In the end, I am sure Byfuglien will settle back in as a defenseman and start posting 35 to 40 points a season to go with 180 penalty minutes, but for the time being he is fantasy gold…

Detroit center Valtteri Filppula has been garnering more ice time lately and the result has been some really nice production. He has 11 points in his last 11 games and is a plus-8 in that span, while often topping 18 minutes of ice time per contest these days. Secondary scoring was something that Detroit needed and now they clearly have it. Filppula has upside in the low 70s…

Injuries, from a fantasy league perspective: Nashville defenseman Ryan Suter missed Thursday's contest with a leg injury he suffered Wednesday. He will miss another one to four games, the Preds figure. With Suter and Shea Weber both on the shelf (Weber also has a leg injury and is doubtful Saturday), Marek Zidlicky stepped up big time Thursday with three assists. He has 14 points in his last 18 games and the offensive stud that we saw a couple of years ago just might be back. Keep a close watch.

Farm Report: Atlanta prospect Brett Sterling is on a seven-game point streak for Chicago of the AHL. He has six goals and nine points in that span. The diminutive winger initially made the Thrashers out of camp, but was eventually sent down for more ice time. Despite missing a month of AHL action, Sterling ranks 20th in the league in points and his 19 goals are tied for first. However, he scored his goals in just 22 contests. He is still a very realistic fantasy option for next season or even the end of this one.

Discuss or comment on this article here...