

Trading Preview Part One (East 2012)

Written by Tim Lucarelli

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Being only one week away from the trade deadline, it's easy to get antsy about speculating which players might find themselves in a new home and what the residual fantasy value will be. Ryan Ma has put together a nice recap of Western Conference players and below we will take a look at players who may be on the move in the East.

Chris Kelly, C, Boston – Kelly is having what could very well be a career year, but has slowed more recently, scoring only three points in his last 14 games. Kelly is a UFA and could be seeking a raise from his current \$2.125M salary. Boston is unlikely to dish out that pay raise, so Kelly may be a player who is being shopped.

David Krejci, C, Boston – Krejci was able to sign an extension, but it came much later than he would have expected. Boston has Bergeron, Seguin, and Peverley all capable of playing center as well, which would suggest Krejci may be expendable. It's unlikely he is moved at the deadline unless there is a significant return, but it still is a possibility. Krejci is a great playmaker, so his ideal home has him playing with a sniper. If Krejci were to skate with a true sniper, he could go from a 60-point player to a 70-plus-point player.

Ryan Miller, G, Buffalo – The rumors out of Buffalo are that Ryan Miller is done with the Sabres after no one stepped to his defense when Milan Lucic ran him over like a speed bump. Miller is one of the best goalies in the league, evidenced by his 5-0-1 run with two shutouts in the end of January and beginning of February. Fantasy owners should be patient, while those looking to acquire him should probably move quickly. Almost any new home should trigger a rejuvenated and refocused effort from Miller.

Brad Boyes, C/RW, Buffalo – Last season when Boyes arrived in Buffalo via trade from St. Louis, he scored 14 points in 21 games, a promising sign for 2011-12. Instead, Boyes has skated in 45 games and has only 13 points. There have been rumors that Boyes consistently performs strong in a new home, but eventually slides into a rut and the production plummets. If you see his name moved in the next couple weeks, he might make a great cheap pickup.

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Joni Pitkanen, D, Carolina – The odds of Carolina making the playoffs are slim to none at this point, and things have looked pretty bad all season long. Assuming he's healthy, Pitkanen, who's been out of the lineup since Dec. 7, could be a great fit for a team looking to add an offensive defenseman. In terms of fantasy relevance, Pitkanen won't be all that valuable this season unless he does indeed find a new home.

Chad LaRose, LW/RW, Carolina – LaRose is not a top player, but he is versatile enough to skate in the top six. LaRose is also currently out of the lineup with an upper body injury, sustained a week ago. The versatility that he brings though is something that every team loves to have as they enter the playoffs and his \$1.7 M salary for this year and next is small enough to be absorbed by most GMs.

Mike Santorelli, C, Florida – Santorelli burst on to people's fantasy radars last season, but an injury in training camp really derailed his momentum this year. Santorelli's production has been atrocious (nine points in 48 games this year vs. 41 points in 82 games last season), but that can primarily be attributed to his falling down the depth chart. It's not easy scoring points when skating with some combination of Skille, Barch, Sturm, and Bradley. If the Panthers are ready to move on, Santorelli owners could see a nice spike in production.

Andrei Kostitsyn, LW/RW, Montreal – Kostitsyn has struggled to find a home in Montreal's top six and even with Mike Cammalleri out of town and Brian Gionta on the shelf, Kostitsyn still is not being used in the top six. While his points are down, the pending UFA's shooting percentage (13.5) is higher than both of the last two seasons. His brother certainly got a huge boost when he moved out of Montreal. Will the same happen to Andrei this deadline?

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Travis Moen, LW, Montreal – Moen is also a pending UFA who has been hampered by an upper body injury all season. Most recently, he's missed the last four games, but he is a phenomenal two-way hockey player who will be attractive to plenty of playoff teams. Moen typically has little fantasy relevance, but he may be a nice pickup for a shorthanded point or two if you're in a roto league.

Zach Parise, LW, New Jersey – While the Devils haven't said they are shopping Parise, they would be wise to listen to offers. It's been rumored that Parise has not been happy in NJ since the acquisition of Kovalchuk and if that is true, the Devils might have an even harder time signing Parise this season than last. Parise is a pending UFA this time around, so arbitration is not an option. He has been on a tear lately, scoring 11 points in his last 10 games, and it's very likely he will be at or above a point-per-game the rest of the season.

Dainius Zubrus, C/RW, New Jersey – Zubrus is having his best year (33 points in 57 games) since 2006-07, but he is one of 10 pending unrestricted free agents. Entering last night's contest, Zubrus had nine points in his last nine games and could make a great depth pickup.

Evgeni Nabokov, G, New York Islanders – The Islanders are surprisingly in the race for a playoff spot, and most of the credit can go to Nabokov, who has found his game once again. It's unlikely that Nabokov re-signs in Long Island (he didn't want to go there to begin with), so the Islanders will almost certainly move him. Nabokov is 12-6 in his last 18 games, with both of his shutouts on the year coming during that stretch and four games with 37 or more saves.

P.A. Parenteau, RW, New York Islanders – Could the Islanders trade Parenteau? His presence on the Tavares line has hindered the production of Kyle Okposo, but Okposo's presence on the Tavares' line did just about nothing to slow Parenteau's production. P.A. has already reached last year's 53-point total, but he did so in 23 fewer games this season and is currently fifth in the league in assists. Parenteau is going to be looking for a big pay raise from the \$1.25M salary he is making now and although the Isles have the cap space, they may be looking for a big return. Another option could be to trade Kyle Okposo, though he is signed for the next four years at a mere \$2.8M contract.

Wojtek Wolski, LW, New York Rangers – Wolski has been a guy the Rangers have done without all season. His \$3.8M salary has limited potential suitors but with each passing day, that number could be more affordable for a team desperate for some help. He is a pending UFA, so the Rangers will likely be willing to get anything they can for him (as opposed to losing him to free agency for nothing) and other teams can take comfort knowing that there will be no commitment beyond this season.

I'll have Part Two for you guys next Sunday evening. Let me know in the comments what you think about the choices above and who you would have put on the list.