It's official. We have finally reached April and the fantasy hockey season is on its last legs. Most roto leagues have just about been decided and the H2H leagues are in the championship matchups. Essentially, there are only about 2-3 teams at most in each league that still have their foot on the gas pedal and are seeking that elusive championship. What about the rest of the league? Some will focus on the next draft, but that is months away. Perhaps there are a few notables who you might be able to keep an eye on, or depending on your league structure, even add to your roster now and stash away in a farm or prospect slot. Let's take a look at a few Eastern Conference faces.

Drayson Bowman, LW, Carolina Hurricanes – While Drayson Bowman has split time with Carolina and Charlotte the last two seasons (with just about full time duty in Charlotte the year before that), there are a few bright signs. Bowman has continuously showed signs of improvement each time he is sent down, while also playing a defensively responsibly game

while skating in Carolina. While occupying a spot on the third line, he is also shooting the puck more and ultimately finding his name on the scoresheet slightly more as well (13 points in 36 games, with only three points in 32 previous NHL games). Bowman will need a contract extension, but is quietly developing into a player who could be ready to score 30-40 points next season and even more in the future.

Blake Geoffrion, LW, Montreal Canadiens – Geoffrion, a once prolific collegiate scorer who shares a bloodline with Boom Boom Geoffrion and Howie Morenz, had to have been disappointed when he was traded away from his hometown Nashville earlier this season. Geoffrion had got into a rut though after not sticking with the Preds, and he scored only nine points in 20 AHL appearances. After the trade to Montreal, it was clear Geoffrion was revitalized, as he scored seven points in only five AHL appearances and continues to see time with the Canadiens, skating with one of either Lars Eller or Tomas Plekanec. Geoffrion has had only 52 games of NHL experiences in two professional seasons, but his future still looks bright.

Frédéric St-Denis, D, Montreal Canadiens – St-Denis is an undrafted, undersized defenseman who has slowly risen in the Montreal system. The Hamilton Bulldogs' top scorer this season has only 39 points, so St-Denis' 28 points in 54 games are a little more impressive than it may appear at first glance. St-Denis not only led the Bulldogs' blue line in scoring while there, but also posted an impressive 10 points in 20 playoff games a year ago as well. In 14 NHL games for Montreal this year, St-Denis has three points and 10 PIM. Don't expect him to contribute in the PIM category too often, but depending on how the rest of the season goes, the pending RFA may be able to secure a spot in Montreal for next season. At best he would be a second-pairing defenseman who can contribute on the second power play unit as well.

Nino Niederreiter, RW, New York Islanders – Niederreiter was once an extremely promising prospect, but his stock has fallen tremendously this season with only one point in 51 games. That's pretty impressive really to score only one point in that many games, even for the

Islanders. While everyone else is down on the Swiss winger, think about this – how frustrated must Niederreiter be and what will he do to improve? He will have pressure from AHL standout Rhett Rakhshani next season as well as from players like Casey Cizikas, and possibly Ryan Strome and Kirill Kabanov. The frustration could lead to an extremely motivated Niederrieter in 2011-12 and if his stock is low enough, he could be a great investment.

Brian Lee, D, Tampa Bay Lightning – For those who don't remember, Lee is a former ninth-overall selection who simply didn't live up to expectations in Ottawa. In 35 games this season, Lee had scored only eight points while averaging under 15 minutes of ice time per game. Steve Yzerman was willing to take a gamble on him though and Lee's ice time is now up to almost 17 minutes per game. The result has been five points in 16 games and 10 shots on goal during that stretch (he had only 15 in his previous 35 games). Lee has been paired primarily with Brett Clark, who may be able to provide veteran leadership and get Lee back on track. It's unlikely Lee provides a ton of offense, but he can provide value in hits, where he went from a 171-hit pace in Ottawa to a 220-hit pace in Tampa. If he can also figure out the defensive aspect of his game (plus/minus), he could be a solid depth fantasy option next season.

Carter Ashton, RW, Toronto Maple Leafs – Ashton is a Burke-type player. He can score but he also brings an element of sandpaper to his game. Ashton is noticeably nervous in his time with Toronto this season, but the fact of the matter is that he is still with the team. For a team that is definitely not going to make the playoffs, they are making a wise move in allowing Ashton to shake out the butterflies now. Depending on how hard Ashton trains this summer, he could become a strong third-line player who can be utilized in spot duty in the top six next season for the Leafs.

Joey Crabb, RW, Toronto Maple Leafs – Crabb is a less of a prospect than most of the others on this list (he was a seventh rounder in 2002), but he has still only played 141 total NHL games and he's spent the majority of the last two seasons with the Leafs, consistently improving his

game. Crabb was never a prolific scorer in the AHL, but he spent time with some very talented players (Krog, Sterling), even winning a Calder Cup in 2008. Between his time in Chicago and spending more time in the NHL, Crabb must have picked up a few things. His 25 points this season (in 64 games) is a career high and in the nine games he played with the Marlies, he scored an impressive seven goals and eight assists. In Saturday's 4-3 win against Buffalo, Crabb scored a SHG and an added an assist, while being named the first star of the game.

Spencer Machacek, RW, Winnipeg Jets – Who? Machacek, a 6'1", 195 lb. forward, was drafted in the third round of the 2007 draft by Atlanta, and has posted decent numbers in the AHL before this season, where he was named alternate captain. Machacek took the added responsibility and ran with it, leading the St. John's Ice Caps in scoring with 48 points in 58 games and finally earning some NHL time with the Jets. Machacek has made the most of that opportunity as well, scoring eight points in 10 games while averaging less than seven minutes of ice time per game. He is also plus-seven during that stretch with an impressive 12 shots on goal. Could Machacek stick with Winnipeg next season?

Hopefully this article allowed you to make a few tweaks to your roster without waiting for the draft. Let me know below if you would have added any names to this list.