

## The Name Game

Written by Russ Miller

Thursday, 04 October 2007 17:14 - Last Updated Saturday, 06 October 2007 05:52

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What's in a name? Plenty I say.

There are several NHL players with two first names. Players like Duncan Keith, Chris Simon, Bill Thomas, Bryan Allen, Chris Kelly, Tom Gilbert and Ryan Craig. You would think their parents might have noticed that and given them a unique first name.

I don't feel sorry for them though. The guys I feel for are the ones who have to stitch these players' names on the back of their sweaters – Langenbrunner, Dubielewicz, Bouwmeester, Baumgartner and Ponikarovsky.

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We need more NHL players with names like Chuck, Vern and Jed.

Why the hell doesn't Satan play for the Devils, Hunter for the Predators or Burns for the Flames?

Potential line combinations fascinate me. There's the obvious Justin, Jason and Jeremy Williams. Naturally the Staal's would be listed here: Eric Staal, Jordan Staal, Jarret Stoll with Marc Staal on defence. A line of Marleau, Morrow and Moreau would tongue tie even the most veteran of play by play men.

Play by play announcer nightmare # 122 – Somehow both Tuomo and Jarkko Ruutu end up on Nashville and the line of Ruutu, Ruutu and Tootoo terrorize NHL players and announcers everywhere. I get flashbacks of the announcer from the classic movie Slapshot during a Hanson brothers shift.

This one isn't much of a stretch. The Swedish national team. Sedin, Sedin and Sundin. Too bad Mats' brother, defenceman Ronnie Sundin and one time Maple Leaf defence prospect Pierre Hedin aren't good enough to be able to join them.

Who could resist these two defensive pairings: Vishnevski & Visnovsky or Chara & Mara.

A few years back, many poolies mixed up the names Recchi, Ricci and Reekie. It would really stink if you drafted Joe Reekie instead of Mark Recchi.

Two blasts from the past – Zarley Zalapski and Moe Mantha. Who names their kid Moe? I can understand Zarley with a last name like Zalapski. Great handles.

I always like hearing those television sportscasters who are not hockey fans trying to pronounce names like Zbynek Michalek, Branko Radivojevic or Wade Dubielewicz.

To me, Karri Ramo sounds more porn star than NHL star. I don't even want to get started on guys named Jussi, Lubomir, Antti or Lasse.

Whenever I hear Umberger's name, I think of Steve Martin in the latest Pink Panther movie.

Here's hoping that these prospects can make a name for themselves in the NHL: Joey Crabb, Clayton Stoner, Cal Clutterbuck and my personal favourite Wacey Rabbit.

One line that would have potential to shine would be the Body Parts line. It would require defenceman Jeff Finger to convert to a forward and then he could play with Jonathan Toews and David Legwand (Finger, Toes and Leg line...sure, Toews is pronounced &quot;Taves&quot;;, but bear with me here).

Marketing nightmare # 104 – Putting Kessel, Krejci and Kobasew on a line together won't have the same acronymic harmony as the EGG or PPG lines

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### From the Desk of The Comish:

Redden in two fights in one game? I doubt that's ever happened before.

This from the PittsburghPenguins.com website, Sergei Gonchar has 104 points in his last 90 games as a Penguin. That's insane - has to be a typo. Pro-rated over 82 games, that's almost 95 points for the offensive defenceman. If it's true - thanks Sidney.

I came across an interesting statistic on Canadiens.com this week. Montreal's Michael Ryder is behind only Kovalchuk (61), Selanne (49) and Cheechoo (47) for power play goals over the last three years. He's tied with Dany Heatley and Marian Hossa. That's a pretty exclusive group to be in. Now if he could only turn that ugly plus minus into a positive.

The NHL has many teams that have a legitimate shot at winning the cup. Just look at the quality of the teams that miss the playoffs – Colorado had 95 points last year! Remember when a 100 point season was magical? Obviously the higher point totals can be attributed to those three point games. Still, 95 points and not making the playoffs just seems wrong.

The Isles Chris Simon is eligible to return to action October 13th.

New Jersey starts the season on a nine game road trip while the finishing touches are put on their brand spanking new arena.

Seven of the eight junior eligible players that broke camp with their NHL clubs are from Western Conference teams. The seven are: Jonathan Bernier LA, Steve Mason CBJ, Pat Kane CHI, Sam Gagner EDM, David Perron STL, James Sheppard MIN and Peter Mueller PHX. Only Milan Lucic BOS is from an Eastern Conference team. (thanks to Bob McKenzie of TSN)

Dany Heatley signed with Ottawa earlier this week for an average salary of \$7.5 million a season for six years. I hope he got it in Canadian dollars! With the Canadian dollar at a 30 year high against the US dollar, does anyone else out there find it funny that players are being paid in U.S. dollars? It's only a matter of time before we hear a player on a Canadian team demanding to be paid in loonies?