

Top Shelf Eastern Talent – Part 2 of 3

Written by Russ Miller

Thursday, 23 July 2009 12:24 - Last Updated Friday, 24 July 2009 14:23



In this, the second of three installments, I'll give you my take on Eastern Conference teams top six talent and guys that might challenge for a spot this season.

With that role comes ice time and often power play opportunities, two things that are the key to fantasy success. I focused more on who should actually play in the top six and not so much on actual line combinations, so don't read too much into where I put the six.

Montreal

Cammalleri – Gomez - Gionta

A.Kostitsyn - Plekanec – S.Kostitsyn

Both Matt D'Agostini and Max Pacioretty will also be in the running for that final top six spot I put Sergei Kostitsyn in. With a new coach and such a large player turnover, much will depend on the chemistry that develops in camp.

A.Markov - Hamrlik

Spacek – Mara

Hal Gill may end up in the top four, but he isn't here for his offensive abilities. Yannick Weber won't line up as a top four defender, but his offensive abilities may give him a shot at power play

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duty. P.K. Subban is likely at least another year away from being with the big club full-time.

New Jersey

Parise – Zajac - Elias

Zubrus - Rolston - Langenbrunner

I don't see prospects Mattias Tedenby or Nicklas Bergfors making a run at the top six this season.

Martin – Oduya

C.White – Mottau

Matthew Corrente may be ready to make the move full-time to the NHL, but he won't play in the top four this season. Cory Murphy and Andy Greene are power play specialists.

NY Islanders

Comeau – Tavares - Okposo

Nielsen – Weight – T.Hunter

Will Tavares make a quicker transition to the NHL than Stamkos did with Tampa Bay? I think maybe yes, but Stamkos had Lecavalier, St. Louis and Prospal to help offensively, whereas Tavares has Doug Weight, Kyle Okposo and Blake Comeau.

Streit - Gervais

Martinek – Witt

Jack Hillen may have a shot at cracking the top four, but he might need some more experience before being ready for prime time.

NY Rangers

Avery – Dubinsky - Gaborik

Higgins – Drury – Zherdev

Artem Anisimov had 81 points in 80 AHL games last season. The 21-year-old center will have to really impress Tortorella to push Drury to the wing. Ryan Callahan was one of the coach's favourite players last year and could spend some time in the top six if only to provide some energy. If Zherdev does not return, then one of Callahan or Anisimov will end up on the second line.

Redden - Rozsival

Girardi – M.Staal

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Bob Sanguinetti might be set to debut on Broadway after scoring 42 points in 78 AHL games. Hobey Baker winner Matt Gilroy and Mike Del Zotto will battle it out along with Sanguinetti at training camp for the final big league spots.

Ottawa

Foligno – Spezza - Kovalev

Shannon – Fisher - Alfredsson

So much depends on what happens when the Heatley situation is dealt with. I can't see Heatley returning to the Sens. Ilya Zubov had 52 points in 63 AHL games last season and has a real shot at the Sens top six.

Kuba -Campoli

Volchenkov - Phillips

Depending on how Brian Lee, Erik Karlsson and Alexandre Picard perform at camp, one of them might have an outside chance to play in the top four.

In the final installment of this series, the Flyers, Pens, Bolts, Leafs and Caps will be featured.