All summer long I touted Mathieu Garon as the “surprise goalie of the year” because I truly felt he had all the elusive pieces in place. He not only has great positioning and the flexibility of a jellyfish, but he also got a big boost of confidence thanks to last year’s strong finish. Touted as the starter after training camp, it really was a picture-perfect setting for Garon to take charge as Edmonton’s go-to guy.

Three games into the season and three straight wins – the puzzle was complete, right? Not so much. Things went south in a slow and torturous manner, as Garon struggled to a 6-8-0 record and 3.17 goals against average. Sure enough, Garon was a fallen victim of the dreaded three-headed goalie monster. No team ever benefits from having three goalies in the lineup, so it was just a matter of when…and who.

It took a bunch of sputtering streaks by Dwayne Roloson and Jeff Deslauriers for the goalie situation to reach the point where it was totally out of control. It was so absurd that Deslauriers was finally sent down to the minors on a two-week conditioning stint and Garon was ultimately traded, just one day after he made 37 saves in a 3-2 win over the Avalanche on Friday.

Wait…you mean to tell me that Deslauriers just returned from a conditioning assignment, Roloson allowed five goals on 22 shots in a loss to the Wild, Garon puts up a huge win with 37 saves against Colorado and Garon is the one getting traded? That has to make you wonder just what really went wrong.

Part of me says Edmonton's coaching staff brutally mismanaged Garon's role in the rotation. Part of me blames Garon for lacking the focus needed to compete this season and for losing out in the work ethic department to Dwayne Roloson. And the last part of me says that none of it really matters anymore because another trade was exactly what Garon needed.

But honestly, how can you expect consistent goaltending on a team where one of three goalies doesn't even get a net for a full practice? A hard workout in practice is one of the most important aspects of a goalie's rhythm and development, so removing that from a goalie's routine is not a good idea. Working with a goalie coach every day is a necessary part of the daily grind – without it a goalie will struggle.

You also have to look at the fact that Garon didn't get an opportunity to play more than a few games in a row. Even after he strung together three straight wins in the team's first four games, Garon only started consecutive games two more times, in late-October and then early-December. Garon only played two games in all of November, one in which he was pulled and the other coming in relief for Roloson.

So regardless of how good or bad Garon played, it seemed like the Oilers couldn't say no to Roloson. Both goalies were heading into the final season of their contract, which could actually be seen as a major motivational factor for both goalies (see Jose Theodore). But does their age play a role in the trade?

Maybe Edmonton feels that Roloson will play more desperate hockey in the second half of the season, and ultimately better than Garon, because he's older and on the final desperate run of his career. That could be seen as more appealing to Edmonton than Garon, who still has time to develop his game.

So despite the fact that Roloson could be a better long-term solution for Edmonton, it's very tough to believe that Garon was given a fair chance to get into a rhythm. Some teams will ride a goalie game after game, even if they lose, in order to right the ship and get their goalies playing at a higher level. But for whatever reason, it seemed like Garon was never given that extra chance to work through the tough times. Instead it was right back to Roloson or Deslauriers. Call it a quick hook or a lack of faith, either way Edmonton was not really fair when it came to Garon's workload.

Either way, Garon is now a Penguin, case closed. At first glance, his stock and value goes up because he's no longer a part of a three-man system and Marc-Andre Fleury is prone to injury and inconsistency. Garon should fit in very nicely on the Penguins and act as better insurance for the team if Fleury goes down again. He also will give Fleury a nice little push to compete harder in practice and games thanks to some friendly competition. It will be interesting to see how Garon plays in his first game after having some consistent, tough practices under his belt.

With the trade and the chance to play more, you have to expect Garon to respond big-time and put together some nice numbers with the Penguins.

Jeff Deslaurier's stock goes up because he was originally sent down to Springfield for a two-week conditioning stint, most likely with the understanding that he is a possible long-term solution for the Oilers. He has played well enough as a rookie to warrant a real opportunity in the organization, so obviously with his play this season and the fact Roloson is in the final year of his contract, Deslauriers is in prime pouncing mode to do what a goalie like Dan Ellis did last year.

Not lost in all of this is Dany Sabourin, but reports seem conclusive that he will be dealt or ultimately sent down to Springfield. Sabourin has shown flashes of being a formidable goalie, but it looks like the Oilers are impressed with Deslauriers enough to move Sabourin. He could get another shot in next season's training camp, but either way, what little fantasy value he had has certainly been squashed like a bug.

It's tough to say where Garon goes from here. He's certainly better than a backup on Pittsburgh, but what team will be in the hunt for a true starting goalie and what team will actually give him a chance is yet to be seen. A lot could change in the second half of the season so all you can really point to is the fact that he's out of a horrible situation and will find the being a Penguin is a lot more fun and enjoyable.