With *The Current State of Predators Goaltending* being pushed back another week due to the free agent frenzy and my annual summer tournament here in Colorado,I wanted to quickly provide you with some fantasy advice pertaining to Mark Dekanich's bid for the backup job.

Nashville's prospect development camp just came to an end, which gavethe coachesareal "first glimpse" of where their glut of goalie prospects could land for the upcoming season.Predators General Manager David Poile also had some *interesting things to say* over the weekend about the decision between Dekanich, Chet Pickard or an unrestricted veteran. It sounds like if they don't sign an UFA before the middle of July, they will be fine entering training camp with the goalies they have right now.

Those goalies of course include the formidable force of Dekanich, Pickard, Anders Lindback, Jeremy Smith and Atte Engren. If the chips were to fall right now, Engren would presumably be back in Finland and Smith would log some heavy ECHL minutes. Lindback would certainly embrace the chance to stay in North America to start his AHL career, which in turn would allow Pickard to play plenty of games.

Due to experiences at Colgate, then paying his dues for the Milwaukee Admirals over the last two seasons, Dekanich is the logical “lock” to secure the job in training camp. The thing to keep in mind from a fantasy perspective,however, is that even if he struggles in camp, the final decision may not come down to who has the best camp or pre-season.

That’s because the role behind Pekka Rinne is a limited one. It’s much better suited for a veteran. But regardless of who wins the job, I’m led to believe that Rinne’s fantasy value is looking very similar to the same kind of value that Jon Quick and Craig Anderson had last year.Meaning they get to dictate how many games they want to play.

That being said, the failsafe plan for the Predators would be to pluck a grape off the unrestricted vine of goalies. Even Vesa Toskala would be a logical fit for a one-year, league-minimum, two-way contract. Leafs fans got a kick out of that, and I don’t blame them. But he’s got the Finnish connection on his side, and that’s it. Or if not Toskala, why not Manny Legace? He might find a way to beat his former team, the Red Wings, more than once next season.

And there you have it - the current state of Predators goaltending in a nutshell. A juicy decisionby Poile is coming up. Does he play it safe with a veteran for one year, or does he follow in the same order as the Washington Capitals and boost the value of all his goalie prospects? Either way, he's going to be plenty safe.

In my opinion, there'sno need to pour over stats, no need for detailed scouting notes. These are the facts: Dekanich is more than capable of handling the backup role behind Rinne. Pickard is in need of as many games in the AHL as he can possibly get. Lindback is ready to play in North America.

I saw a few minutes of video of Lindback running through drills at camp and was very impressed with his footwork. As is seen with other scouting reports, his glove side was weak and his upper body was really hunched over. He has a stance similar to Jonas Gustavsson with a slightly wider appearance and frame. He'll perform well in training camp and display a lot of skill, but he needs time to transition to the smaller ice and the speed of games in North America.

As you can see, Dekanich is a perfect and logical fit behind Rinne, but still may not get the job. If he does, however, you might expect him to play 15-20 games and post a very solid save percentage, anywhere from .917 to .927, and anywhere from a 2.30 to 2.60 goals against average. Although these are very early projections, it's good for fantasy managers to know what to expect if no UFA news comes through the Predators PR department this week.