

If you haven't heard by now, Curtis Joseph is on the prowl for a team to join for the rest of the season and there's actually a number of organizations interested in the wily veteran's services. Considering his recent success with Team Canada at the Spengler Cup and the stability he brought to the Phoenix Coyotes last season, Cujo's stock is actually quite high right now. Add to it his ability to bring solid insurance in net and he has become very appealing to teams that desperately need a veteran presence as the playoff race starts to heat up.

In fact, don't be surprised if Cujo signs with a team at any given moment this week. The internet and newspaper reports are so numerous right now that it's more of a question of when and where than if. So for the fantasy hockey managers out there struggling in net right now, keep your eye on that free agent list, which has resulted in a pair of recent gems in Pittsburgh's Ty

#### Dog Fight

Written by Justin Goldman Monday, 14 January 2008 03:34 - Last Updated Monday, 14 January 2008 19:33

Conklin and Philly's Antero Niittymaki.

Joseph, an 18-year veteran, would instantly bring a myriad of experience to NHL teams with 913 total regular season games played and 131 playoff games to boot. But beyond his experiences, his leadership and a strong desire to win makes him a tremendous and viable backup who could be used to give a team's starter a rest and still win some big games and instill confidence in the players in front of him.

Obviously Cujo's overall fantasy value depends on which team he ultimately signs with, so here's a look at the teams reported to be very interested in his services and what result it would have on his fantasy value. If you're a gambling man, put your dough on Toronto or Calgary. But it looks more and more like he's expect to stay in the Western Conference.

There are a few other teams rumored to have been in the hunt for Cujo besides the ones listed below, including the Tampa Bay Lightning and the Ottawa Senators, but those seem to have lost steam over the weekend. In all honesty, you have to expect a return to Toronto or a trip to Cowtown. Either way, it's a fun situation for fantasy team owners because he's still a tremendous goalie with the capability to win games.

## **Toronto Maple Leafs**

Toronto is one of the two teams that inquired about his services just in the last couple of days. There's really no need to discuss the wretched play of the Leafs (I'll leave that you guys), but in the crease it seems as if Andrew Raycroft may have played his final game as a Leaf after allowing four goals on 11 shots against the lowly L.A. Kings. Similar to Peter Forsberg expressing an interest in playing for one of his former teams, Cujo would surely love to come back to Toronto and provide a spark and some stability for a team he played incredibly well for in the past. And what former team honestly needs him more than Toronto? Sure, his fantasy value would be much lower if he signs with the Leafs because the team has problems way beyond their on-ice product, but he would definitely log some good minutes and could be a big part in a swift turnaround.

# **Calgary Flames**

#### **Dog Fight**

Written by Justin Goldman Monday, 14 January 2008 03:34 - Last Updated Monday, 14 January 2008 19:33

No matter how well Miikka Kiprusoff is playing, he definitely needs someone there to back him up. Seeing as how Calgary has 32 games after the All-Star break, it's definitely time the organization took some of the pressure off the Finnish superstar. Although Cujo is not very fond of Mike Keenan from his days as the general manager of the St. Louis Blues, Keenan has reached out to Cujo and is looking to pull the ol' "forgive and forget" card. This makes Calgary one of the front-runners for Cujo, despite the fact they could probably just save themselves the money and stick with Curtis McElhinney. Either way, Cujo's fantasy value in Calgary would be pretty low considering who he is backing up. There's always that slim chance he could jockey for minutes with Kipper however.

## **New York Rangers**

Henrik Lundqvist is certainly starting to show signs of wearing down, as he is only 2-5-2 in his last nine games, but be rest assured the Rangers' interest in Cujo is not due to Lundqvist's struggles. It's more that Steve Valiquette is just not nearly enough insurance if Lundqvist does continue to struggle. Considering the slow start the Rangers had, a veteran goalie could help keep them in the hunt for a Division title. Cujo would be a great fit in New York considering his relationship with Brendan Shanahan from their days in St. Louis. Cujo's value would be higher in New York than in Calgary with similar stars in front of him and his stats would be solid despite not seeing many minutes in the backup role.

## San Jose Sharks

Similar to Calgary's situation, the Sharks could really use some insurance for Evgeni Nabokov. He's not slowing down and he's not hiding any type of injury, but considering he has played every single game this season, it would probably be a smart move to sign Cujo and save them the heart attack if something does happen to Nabokov. The latest news on this rumor is that contrary to Internet reports, the Sharks are not trying to lure him to California.

Discuss the Cujo situation here...