Having participated in the same salary cap points-only league for over 12 years, I'm always looking out for the best "bargain" in the NHL. Everyone wants players like Alex Ovechkin, Sidney Crosby, or Henrik Lundqvist on their team (and rightly so), but you have to offset those high salaries with players earning considerably less. You want to find a few players who will give you a reasonable point-per-dollar ratio, so that you can afford a Brad Richards or two.

To that end, I have put together a list of 10 bargains.

(monetary values are actual NHL salaries for 2011-12 season and not cap hits)

John Tavares, $900,000: This is the last year of his ELC, but the way he played in the last two games (eight points) is all the proof you need that he is worth every penny of the raise he will be getting next season. Once that raise kicks in, he won't necessarily be a bargain, but if you are one of the lucky ones who own him this season in a salary cap league, he could finish the season with the best point-per-dollar ratio of anyone else in the NHL.

Claude Giroux, $2,750,000: There is something wrong with the NHL salary structure when a player like Giroux is making less than $3 million and Scott Gomez is making $7.5 million. Although his salary will go up next year and the year after, even then he will be a bargain, especially if he finishes top 5 in scoring this season (which he almost certainly will).

D. Sedin/H. Sedin, $6,100,000: It may seem odd to call anyone making over $6 million a year a "bargain", but when the top paid players in the league are making almost twice as much as that, you have to consider the perennial NHL scoring leaders a good deal in salary cap leagues. There aren't very many 100 pt players, so if you find yourself lucky enough to have either Sedin on your team, count yourself even more lucky that they aren't making as much as they should be.

Ryan Nugent-Hopkins, $925,000: Ok, I know it is early. And I also know that if you've read some of my posts in the forum recently, I haven't been the biggest RNH supporter. I regretted that the Oilers passed on Adam Larsson, and I didn't think Nugent-Hopkins was ready for prime time. I thought he was too small and that he'd take a while to adjust. That said, the way he has started the season, he is slowly starting to change my mind. If I was lucky enough to have him on my salary cap team, I'd likely already be convinced. At this point, even if he slows down and puts up a "modest" 65 pts, that is very good value for the money you are spending.

Jamie Benn, $670,000: Although he hasn't exactly lived up to the pre-season billing (yet), as one of the lowest paid players in the NHL, you must be thrilled if you have Benn on your team. He is getting top 6 minutes and loads of power play time. Although the vets in Dallas are the early season success story (Ribeiro, Morrow, and Ryder), you have to know that by season's end Benn will be among the top scorers on his team.

Kris Letang, $3,500,000: Even without Crosby and Evgeni Malkin, Letang is continuing what he did last season and showing us all that he can be one of the most dominate offensive weapons in the NHL. He might very well finish the season as the top scoring defenseman, and he makes a fraction of what the highest paid at his position make. Signed for another 2 years after this one for the same salary, Letang may just be the best bargain in the NHL. If Crosby and Malkin can ever be healthy at the same time, Letang could approach 75 pts some year.

Alex Pietrangelo, $787,000: There are a lot of young hot-shot offensive defensemen in the league right now making under $1 million a season, but I chose Pietrangelo over some of the others because, at least early on, he doesn't appear to be suffering from a sophomore slump. Mature and poised with a lethal shot, as the young St. Louis forwards continue to develop, Pietrangelo's numbers will only get better.

Erik Karlsson, $875,000: There aren't many offensive defensemen in the league better than Karlsson. He could finish top 10 in scoring for his position, on a very weak Senators team. Considering the paltry salary he is making, it is a no-brainer to consider him one of the best bargains in the NHL.

Tomas Vokoun, $1,500,000: Let's get one thing straight, Neuvirth won't be a problem for Vokoun. Not only is Neuvirth injury-prone and susceptible to inconsistent play, but the Capitals aren't the offensive power house they were a few years ago. They need the mature, level-headed presence of Vokoun backstopping them. They brought him in with the intention of making a deep run in the playoffs and hopefully winning a Stanley Cup. And he accepted a ridiculously low salary for those same reasons. After starting the season 4-0, I think it is safe to say both Vokoun and Washington are happy with their decisions so far.

Jonathan Quick, $1,800,000: Spending only $1.8 million on a starting goalie frees up a lot of cash to spend elsewhere. And the best part is that Quick is also signed for next year for even less money. Almost assured of getting 35 Wins for the improved Kings, don't be fooled into avoiding Quick because of Bernier. Quick is a battler and the Kings know they are a better team with him in the net.