Scott Wedgewood is one of a few young goalies hoping for a chance to succeed Brodeur in New Jersey.

When a player involved in 'greatest of all-time' conversation occupies the No. 1 goaltending spot, it's usually bad news for those below him on the organizational depth chart. Over the past three seasons, New Jersey Devils goaltenders outside the 79-year-old tandem of Martin Brodeur and Johan Hedberg have combined for just four NHL games played.

The mind is willing for Brodeur who insists he will be back next season to play the final year of his contract. His 40-year-old body however, may not be so open to a 20th year of NHL duty. Although he is downplaying the injury, Brodeurs nagging back could bring an end to the four-time Vezina winner's career. Brodeur being placed on the IR provides a rare glimpse into the goaltending future of New Jersey where for the past 19 years, Brodeur has played an average of 66 games a season. The Devils may be entering the post-Brodeur era earlier than expected and for the first time, in a long time, Devils goaltending prospects begin to trickle in.

Whether the Devil's brass fill the Brodeur void through free agency this summer, a trade, or from within, a new starting goaltender for the Devils may come as early as next season.

The current goalie market is slim-pickings and the UFA goalies hitting the market July 5th. are a slew of aging veterans approaching their forties. The time has come for the Devil's to pump some young blood into the goalie rotation, even if it is to late. If they choose to build within, these three prospects could be starting in goal for the Devils in the next two to three years, and should be on the radar for poolies looking for a long-term investment.

3.) Jeff Frazee - New Jersey Devils (NHL)

Round 2, 38th Overall 2005 Entry Draft

Once touted as the heir to the Brodeur throne, the 25-year-old Minnesota native has struggled since knee surgery in 2011. His numbers have not been impressive, 72-81-15 in five American League seasons. Still young however, Frazee still has time to prove he is a NHL capable goaltender before being cast into minor-league obscurity. He is showing signs of improvement, maintaining a career high 2.33 GAA in 21 games this season with Albany, earning him a call up to The Show to backup Jonas Hedberg.

Frazee made his NHL debut Mar. 9, replacing Hedberg in the third period against the Hurricanes, making three saves on three shots. With no time frame for Brodeur's return, Frazee may get his first NHL start sooner than expected. Since taking over for Brodeur Feb. 23, Hedberg is a abysmal 2-6-1, 3.33 GAA in nine games, opening the door for Frazee's first NHL start. If he can rise to the occasion, the Devils will likely resign him when his contract expires this summer, and will have the opportunity to compete for a regular NHL gig.

2.) Keith Kinkaid - Albany Devils (AHL)

Undrafted

The second Devil's goaltender to make his NHL debut this season, Kinkaid allowed one goal on 13 shots Mar. 5, replacing Hedberg in the second period against Tampa Bay.

Like Frazee , 23-year-old Kinkaid has time on his side, posting a winning record of 17-12-5 with two shutouts for Albany this season. In addition to an age advantage over Frazee, the younger Kinkaid has the upper hand in terms of skill and size (6-3, 190 pounds), but lacks pro experience. Kinkaid has adjusted well making the transition from the college level to pro. Possessing great athleticism, Kinkaid has starter potential, but faces the long road to get there. If Brodeur retires early Kinkaid will likely battle Frazee for a backup job next season, and eventually overtake him in the depth chart.

1.) Scott Wedgewood - Albany Devils (AHL)

Round 3, 84th Overall 2010 NHL Entry Draft

The youngest fish in the Devils goalie tank is also the most exciting. Noted by scouts for his focus and athleticism, 18-year-old Scott Wedgewood made his pro-debut this season in the East Coast League after an impressive showing of 28-10-3 and three shutouts in the OHL last season, leading the Plymouth Whalers to a division title.

Wedgewood is climbing the ranks faster than expected. Frazee got the call up to the big club thanks to his pro experience, but you can bet Wedgewood will be there once he puts in his time in the minors. Frazee's call-up landed Wedgewood a promotion from Trenton to the AHL where he won his first two starts and posted a 1.44 GAA. While Kinkaid and Frazee duke it out next season, Wedgewood will have the opportunity to outplay them in the AHL and eventually emerge as the Devils undisputed goaltender of the future. Poolies need look at Wedgewood as a long-term piece, still early in development, but the best bet to land a full-time job with the Devils in the next two to three years.

Andrew is going to report on prospects for DobberHockey each Saturday. Welcome to the team, Andrew!