

NHL Picks (Pro-line) for November 15, 2008

Written by Dale McCarthy

Friday, 14 November 2008 10:27 - Last Updated Friday, 21 November 2008 13:04



What a great start to this gig I had last week. I'm afraid I may have set the standard too high. I managed to pick 8 of 12 winning teams and I was correct on 10 of 12 OVER/UNDERS. I know in the forum "joos" managed to pick a 4-game winner...hopefully a few more of you managed to cash in also. Good luck to us this week.

Philadelphia Flyers @ Montreal Canadiens

-Key Injuries-

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PHI - Daniel Briere, Derian Hatcher, Ryan Parent, Riley Cote, Randy Jones

MTL - Tom Kostopoulos (suspended)

-Notes-

Both these teams are averaging almost 3.5 goals for per game. Goals against is another story with the Habs giving up an average of 2.86 goals per game while the Flyers are surrendering an average of 3.53 goals per game. Counting this season's only matchup (a 5-3 Montreal win) and the five playoffs games they played against each other last season, five of the last six games have seen at least 6 goals scored.

-Prediction-

The Habs can't be happy with their play lately. Look for a Montreal win with a total of 6 or 7 goals scored between the two teams.

-Bet-

1 banana on MTL to win

2 bananas on the OVER (5.5)

Washington Capitals @ New Jersey Devils

-Key Injuries-

WAS - Sergei Fedorov, Shaone Morrisonn, Brent Johnson, Brian Pothier

NJ - Martin Brodeur, Bobby Holik, Brian Rolston, Andy Greene, Paul Martin

-Notes-

The Caps (4 wins in a row) are rolling right now with Semin leading the league in scoring and

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Ovechkin working his way up the leaderboard. Backstrom may have also turned the corner and if Theodore can give them some good goaltending then this team will be dangerous. At the other end of the ice, the Devils have lost three in a row and the injuries may be starting to take a toll.

Washington allows the third most power plays at 5.5 per game but everything about the Devils power play is hideous. They generate the fewest power play opportunities in the league (3.8 per game), they average the fewest PP goals per game (0.5) AND they have the worst PP% in the league (12.3%). Surprisingly, New Jersey also has the third worst penalty killing in the league but they can take comfort in the fact that Washington has only managed 2 PP goals in the last 5 games.

-Prediction-

Washington should keep right on rolling.

-Bet-

1 banana on WAS to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

Ottawa Senators @ New York Islanders

-Key Injuries-

OTT - Jarrko Ruutu (suspended)

NYI - Rick DiPietro, Brendan Witt, Nate Thompson, Radek Martinek, Mike Sillinger, Freddy Meyer, Mike Comrie

-Notes-

Ottawa is struggling to score goals. They are the league's third lowest scoring team and their

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power play has only managed 2 goals in 23 chances over the last five games. Normally I would suggest you ride a trend rather than predict the end but the Senators struggles just can't continue. Ottawa's power play is operating at 20% on the season and the Islanders give up an average of 3.31 goals per game.

-Prediction-

I think Ottawa will score 5 goals to take the rematch.

-Bet-

2 bananas on OTT to win

1 banana on the OVER (5.5)

Boston Bruins @ New York Rangers

-Key Injuries-

BOS - Andrew Ference

NYR - Scott Gomez

-Notes-

Boston is playing very well right now and have won five in a row. They are only averaging 2.3 goals against on the season which is good enough for third best in the league. The Rangers give up even fewer goals with an average of 2.2 goals per game (2nd best).

The Bruins power play is clicking at 21.88% but they average only 4 power plays per game and the Rangers only give up an average of 3.8 power plays per game. Throw in the fact that New York's penalty killing is running at 90.3% (second best) and all signs point to a low-scoring game.

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-Prediction-

If this were a playoff game I'd be predicting quadruple overtime. Look for the Rangers to win 1-0 or 2-1 (probably in a shootout).

-Bet-

1 banana on NYR to win

2 bananas on the UNDER (5.5)

Toronto Maple Leafs @ Vancouver Canucks

-Key Injuries-

TOR - John Mitchell, Mike Van Ryn

VAN - Kevin Bieksa, Rick Rypien, Pavol Demitra

-Notes-

Now that Luongo is struggling anything is...heh, I can't even type that with a straight face. The Canucks have scored 8 goals in their last 4 games and have come away with 7 of a possible 8 points. That is just sick! Luongo has allowed just 1 goal in his last 4 games. Again, sick! The Leafs are averaging 3.24 goals for per game but they're giving up an average of 3.53 goals per game. That puts their goal differential at -0.29 goals. The Canucks may not score as much (3.06 average) but they also don't give up nearly as much (2.50) and have a goal differential of +0.56 goals. Toronto has been OVER in 8 of their last 10 games and Vancouver has been UNDER in 7 of their last 10 games.

Pavol Demitra is expected back tonight.

-Prediction-

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Do you feel comfortable betting against Luongo? I don't.

-Bet-

1 banana on VAN to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

Buffalo Sabres @ Pittsburgh Penguins

-Key Injuries-

BUF - Tim Connolly is always a threat to be out

PIT - Sergei Gonchar, Ryan Whitney

-Notes-

This game sees the Sabres playing the back end of 2 games in 2 nights. This will be the third time this season that Buffalo has been in this situation and they lost both times previously. Both losses were also UNDER. The Penguins are coming off a big emotional comeback versus Detroit and a shootout win against the Flyers. Crosby seems to have found his scoring touch. It was only a matter of time and as is typical in these situations once the first one goes in, they come in bunches.

Pittsburgh and Buffalo met four times last season and the Penguins came out on top all four times. Three of the four games were UNDER.

-Prediction-

It should be close but the Penguins will come out on top of a low scoring game.

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-Bet-

1 banana on PIT to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

Columbus Blue Jackets @ Minnesota Wild

-Key Injuries-

CLB - Marc Methot

MIN - Kurtis Foster, Marian Gaborik

-Notes-

The Wild are doing just fine without Demitra and Rolston, thank you very much And they don't really seem to be missing Gaborik either. Any loss of goal production from Gaborik's absence is being more than compensated by the Wild's defensive play. They lead the league in penalty killing at 93.0% and have the best GAA at only 2.00 goals per game. Columbus has been scoring well lately and have averaged 3.00 goals per game. Their problem has been their defense which has allowed an average of 3.38 goals per game. However, the return of Pascal Leclaire should help.

-Prediction-

There's no reason to believe this game won't end up the same as the previous matchup this season on October 25th...a 2-1 Minnesota win.

-Bet-

1 banana on MIN to win

2 bananas on the UNDER (5.5)

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Dallas Stars @ Phoenix Coyotes

-Key Injuries-

DAL - Joel Lundqvist

PHO - NONE

-Notes-

Dallas still has the worst GAA in the league. They allow an average of 3.75 goals against and their goal differential is at -0.94. It really is shocking. Perhaps Dallas is just not as good as many thought they would be. Perhaps Brett Hull would have been better off leaving Sean Avery at Vogue. Avery does seem more adept at striking a pose than striking fear into an opponent.

Dallas is coming off 3 losses in a row including back to back 3-2 losses to Ersberg and the Los Angeles Kings. The Coyotes won 3 in a row before being shutout by a tough Minnesota Wild team. Phoenix is averaging 2.53 goals for per game and 2.53 goals against per game.

-Prediction-

Call me a sucker. Dallas wins a squeaker.

-Bet-

1 banana on DAL to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

Colorado Avalanche @ Edmonton Oilers

-Key Injuries-

COL - Joe Sakic, Ben Guite

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EDM - Ladislav Smid, J.F. Jacques

-Notes-

This is the third meeting of the year for these two teams. Both previous games have seen 5 goals scored with the home team winning both times.

Edmonton has the league's second worst penalty killing at 74.3% but Colorado's power play has been powerless. They have 1 PPG in their last 27 chances over five games.

-Prediction-

I think the home team/under trend will continue.

-Bet-

1 banana on EDM to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

Nashville Predators @ Los Angeles Kings

-Key Injuries-

NAS - Dan Ellis, Martin Erat, Steve Sullivan, Jed Ortmeyer, Joel Ward. Radek Bonk

LOS - Jack Johnson

-Notes-

Los Angeles is playing well. They have won 4 in a row and seem to be falling out of the Hedman/Tavares sweepstakes. Nashville is coming off a big emotional overtime win against

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San Jose which saw them give up 57 shots to the Sharks.

The Kings have 7 PPG in their last 4 games and Nashville has allowed 5 PPG in their last 4 games. The Kings power play has a very good chance of being the difference in this game.

-Prediction-

Two PPG for the Kings makes it 5 wins in a row.

-Bet-

1 banana on LOS to win

1 banana on the OVER (5.5)