

Monkey's Saturday NHL Picks - Dec. 20, 2008

Written by Dale McCarthy

Friday, 19 December 2008 14:26 - Last Updated Saturday, 20 December 2008 10:01



+15 bananas last week! What a great night...hopefully some of you made some money. Let's see if we can get on a little roll as we head into a new year.

Saturday, December 20th, 2008

Carolina Hurricanes @ Boston Bruins

Boston continues to play well. Their defensive play and goaltending has let up a bit but they have made up for that by scoring in bunches. The Bruins are 12-1-1-0 at home so the Hurricanes have their work cut out for them. Cam Ward has looked good since returning from his injury. Boston should prove a little too much for Carolina.

-Bet-

1 banana on BOS to win

2 bananas on the UNDER (5.5)

Pro-Line: H

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Washington Capitals @ Philadelphia Flyers

The Capitals are hurting again with Green and Semin out again. Washington is almost unbeatable at home but unfortunately for them they are under .500 on the road. The Flyers seem to lack consistency from game to game but they have the guns to match up offensively against any team in the league. Stopping Ovechkin is always the key and it becomes a little easier with other offensive weapons out of the lineup.

-Bet-

1 banana on PHI to win

2 bananas on the OVER (5.5)

Pro-Line: H

Buffalo Sabres @ Montreal Canadiens

Mike Komisarek has returned to the lineup but the Habs are still hurting. Chris Higgins is out for a month and a half and both Carey Price and Saku Koivu aren't expected back until after the Christmas break. Although the Sabres lack consistency, this may be a spot where they will be worth a gamble.

-Bet-

1 bananas on BUF to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

Pro-Line: V

Dallas Stars @ Ottawa Senators

Here's a battle of underachievers. Both these teams were expected to be among the leagues best but both can currently be found near the bottom of the standings. I give Ottawa the slight advantage due to home-ice advantage.

-Bet-

1 banana on OTT to win

2 bananas on the UNDER (5.5)

Pro-Line: T

Toronto Maple Leafs @ Pittsburgh Penguins

This is a matchup of two teams who seem to like to fall behind early and then battle back. Pittsburgh's big guns like Crosby and Malkin should feast on the Leafs.

-Bet-

1 banana on PIT to win

2 bananas on the OVER (5.5)

Pro-Line: H+

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Tampa Bay Lightning @ Atlanta Thrashers

The Thrashers are the Jekyll and Hyde of the NHL. One night they can look like a very good team with guys like Kovalchuk, Little, Kozlov and White clicking on all cylinders but then the next night they look horrible and give up a handful of goals. On the other hand, the Lightning never really look that good. I think Atlanta will take this one and I also think this could be the game Ilya Kovalchuk explodes for 3 or 4 goals.

-Bet-

1 banana on ATL to win

2 bananas on the OVER (5.5)

Pro-Line: H+

Los Angeles Kings @ Detroit Red Wings

Detroit is 10-3-2-0 at home and the Kings are only 3-6--00 on the road. I think that's a pretty clear indication of how this game should go down. Osgood is nursing a groin injury but that doesn't necessarily help the Kings' cause as Ty Conklin actually has better numbers than Osgood. By the way; Pavel Datsyuk looks just about ready to go on a very sick run.

-Bet-

2 bananas on DET to win

1 banana on the OVER (5.5)

Pro-Line: H+

New York Islanders @ Nashville Predators

The Islanders have lost 7 games in a row now and I'm expecting number 8 here against the Preds. In their last 10 games the Predators have scored more than 3 goals only once. The offense is definitely struggling a little but the defense is keeping them in a lot of those games. At the other end of the rink, the Islanders have allowed 3 goals or more in 9 of their last 10 games including 7 goals to the Bruins on November 28th and a 9-spot to the Penguins on December 11th. Playing the Islanders seems to be good for struggling offenses.

-Bet-

1 banana on NAS to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

Pro-Line: H+

Minnesota Wild @ St. Louis Blues

The Blues have lost 5 in a row and the Wild have lost 6 in a row. I predict one of those losing streaks will come to an end. The Wild are struggling to score goals. They have only managed 7 goals in their last 6 games so it's quite understandable that they are on a 6-game losing streak. The blues on the other hand are scoring goals but they are giving up far too many.

-Bet-

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1 banana on MIN to win
1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)
Pro-Line: V

Columbus Blue Jackets @ Phoenix Coyotes

The Coyotes are 10-4-0-2 at home this season and the Blue Jackets are a dismal 4-9-1-2 on the road. Phoenix has beaten Columbus in all three previous matchups this season. I think this will be a close one but I think the Coyotes will prevail. NOTE: Rick Nash is unbelievably fast for such a big man.

-Bet-
1 banana on PHX to win
1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)
Pro-Line: T

Chicago Blackhawks @ Vancouver Canucks

For those of you just returning to the planet, Mats Sundin has signed with the Canucks. He's not expected to see action until the new year but when he does he may join the Sedins to make up the "Broadcaster's Nightmare" line. The Blackhawks are on a little roll and have won 5 in a row and 6 of their last 7. The offense is clicking and they are getting decent goaltending. I think they will prove too much for the Canucks to handle.

-Bet-
1 banana on CHI to win
1 banana on the OVER (5.5)
Pro-Line: V+

New York Rangers @ San Jose Sharks

San Jose has not lost in regulation at home this year. As I've stated before, betting against trends is usually a losing proposition but this may be a spot where the Rangers are a good bet. The Sharks have looked a little vulnerable in their last few games including a whipping at the hands of the Red Wings. The Rangers can finally put the Mats Sundin drama behind them and focus on the task at hand. I like the Rangers in this spot.

-Bet-
1 banana on NYR to win
2 bananas on the UNDER (5.5)
Pro-Line: V

Have a Great Holiday Season and don't forget to check out the World Junior Tournament!