Last week saw another small victory for the good guy, picking 4 out of 8 winners, including the Atlanta/Tampa Bay tie. Thunder had an off week picking only 2 winners, however it has been suggested that she overlooked her hockey picks and devoted too much of her focus to going ice fishing on Saturday. She still won over the home crowd with her winning Leafs pick over Montreal at the Bell Centre. With only 4 different selections out of the 11 games this Saturday night this has the potential to make one of us look really smart or really stupid… Plenty of good matchups so let's get it going:

NY Rangers @ Pittsburgh Penguins
The Rangers lead the season series 3-2, however the Pens have gained momentum winning the last 2 contests. The Pens offense has slowed a little scoring only 3 goals in their last 2 games, something that perhaps I wouldn't be mentioning if Matt Cooke could score on an empty net :) The Rangers are 1-8-1 in their last 10 road games on Saturday's, with 5 of those 8 losses being by 2 or more goals. Combine all that with their poor afternoon performances this year (being outscored 25-13 in 8 outings this year) and it is difficult to go against the home team.

Prediction: H+
Thunder's Pick: H

Los Angeles Kings @ Nashville Predators
The Predators look to sweep the season series on Saturday and have won 10 of the last 14 head to head matchups. The Kings offense is sputtering again, scoring only twice in their last 4 games. LA's offense on the road is ranked tied for 28th in the league with only 81 GF this season. Rinne snapped a 3 game OTL streak by beating the Sharks on Thursday night. At home this year he boasts a 16-5-2 record with a 1.90 GAA and a .935 SV%. Nashville's last 5 games have been one goal decisions, don't expect much to change as they continue to battle for their playoff lives.

Prediction: H
Thunder's Pick: H

Boston Bruins @ Toronto Maple Leafs
The Bruins have won 4 straight H2H matchups and 5 of the last 7 headed into this one. The Leafs are 12-4-2 in their last 18 games on Saturday night, hmmm maybe if the league decides to shorten the schedule they will only play on Saturdays :) In back-to-back situations on the back end the Leafs have won their last 3 (all against teams named New York), they are 1-5 otherwise on the year. Boston is in a front end situation where they have won 10 of 14 on the year. The B's also have the top defense on the road this year, ahead by 16 GA. Curtis Joseph will probably be in net for the Leafs, and he hasn't faced the Bruins since December of '05. The B's let me down by only beating the Isles by one last Saturday, so I'll take the safer bet.

Prediction: V
Thunder's Pick: H

Ottawa Senators @ Atlanta Thrashers
The Sens have won 5 of the last 7 H2H matchups between these teams and hold a 9-3 record in the month of March. They had been clutch winning 5 straight 1 goal games in March until their setback against the Canes. The Thrashers have been really pouring on the offense lately averaging 3.72 GF/game in their last 19 outings. Kovalchuk has 35 pts. in his last 19 games. The Thrashers have the 2nd worst home PK, while the Sens are the team tied with the Kings at 28th overall in GF on the road. In front end games of B2B sets the Sens have won their last 6 straight.

Prediction: T
Thunder's Pick: H

Philadelphia @ NY Islanders
Oh the beloved Islanders... have unfortunately lost 8 straight to the Flyers. As horrible as the Islanders are they have managed to win 4 straight Saturday home games. Asides from that all other statistics point towards the Flyers in this matchup. The Flyers have outscored the Isles 45-23 over the last 2 seasons (12 matchups, 11-1 Philly). Just like the Sens above, the Flyers have won their last 6 straight front end games in B2B situations, and 11 of 15 this season. Philly's last 12 victories have been by 2 or more goals.

Prediction: V+

Thunder's Pick: H

Carolina Hurricanes @ New Jersey Devils
The Canes are another team peaking at the right time as their 9-1-2 March record, while outscoring the opposition 49 - 25, has them on the dance floor for the post season. The Devils were also hot in March starting off winning 7 of 8, but have since cooled losing 3 of their last 4 games. The home team has won that last 5 meetings between these two. Marty has won his last 4 home outings against the Canes and is 10-1-1 with a 1.65 GAA and .942 SV% on home ice this year.

Prediction: H
Thunder's Pick: V

Buffalo Sabres @ Montreal Canadiens
The Habs have snapped a 5 game winless streak with two straight wins, although not exactly against playoff calibre opposition (TB and ATL). Montreal is 7-3 in their last 10 Saturday matchups, but have struggled since the all-star break holding a -19 in GF to GA differential. The Habs have won 3 straight home H2H matchups and 7 of the last 8 at the Bell Centre versus the Sabres. In back end games of B2B sets this year the Sabres have only won 3 of 14 games.

Prediction: H
Thunder's Pick: H

Florida Panthers @ Dallas Stars
At the start of the year no one would have expected the Florida Panthers to be closer to a playoff berth than the Dallas Stars. These teams have only met 3 times since the lockout, with a 2-1 edge going to the Stars. Dallas is reeling with a 4-11-2 record in their last 17 overall with offense being the problem as they've scored 3 or more goals on only 6 occasions (4-1-1 record) over that stretch. The Panthers are still surprisingly only 2 pts. out despite only winning 5 games in March. Road stats for Vokoun this year: 6-13-2 3.00 GAA .914 SV% compared to Anderson: 10-4-2 2.84 GAA .922 SV%. Wow, those records aren't even CLOSE.

Prediction: V
Thunder's Pick: V

Columbus Blue Jackets @ St. Louis Blues
This is probably the most important matchup this Saturday night. Both teams are playing some great hockey. Columbus is 9-3-1 in their last 13 while the Blues are 11-4-2. This will be a battle between each teams' saviour this season Mason vs. Mason. People say so much about Steve Mason in the forums, but what about Chris Mason?? Chris Mason has started 24 straight for the Blues, his pre and post all-star splits are incredible: 5-13-1 2.99 GAA .904 SV% compared to 15-7-5 2.03 GAA .927 SV% respectively. St. Louis has won 7 of the last 9 head to head matchups. C. Mason is 10-2-1 2.02 GAA .939 SV% in his career versus Columbus. St. Louis has the best GAA and PK% since the all-star break.

Prediction: H

Thunder's Pick: H

Minnesota Wild @ Calgary Flames
The Flames have dominated the Wild recently winning 9 of the last 10, and 12 of the last 14 H2H matchups. 8 of their last 10 meetings have been 1 goal games. Being shutout back to back on the road, you know their offense is just itching to explode. They're scored 5 or more goals 6 times in March, going 4-2 with losses to Tampa Bay and Toronto. Calgary hasn't won a home game on Saturday night since Dec. 27th, but I wouldn't put too much into it since they've only played twice since than. Burnt out or not, Kipper seems to always save his best for his fellow NW Division foes. A 23-6-1 record, 1.79 GAA and .932 SV% is difficult to ignore.

Prediction: H
Thunder's Pick: H

Phoenix Coyotes @ San Jose Sharks
The Coyotes have managed a split in their H2H meetings vs. the Sharks this year a 2 games apiece and have won their last 2 Saturday home games. That's probably where the good news ends for the Coyotes, their 2 wins were versus Brian Boucher. The Coyotes have the worst PK since the all-star break at an atrocious 68.8% success rate, their GF to GA differential is -30 since the break (Colorado is the worst at -40). The Coyotes have surrendered the 5th most GA on the road and their GF to GA difference is -41 trailing only the NYI (-47). The Sharks on the other hand have been dominant at home giving up the fewest GA and having the 5th best offense in the league. The Sharks have slowed down in March with some injuries posting a 6-5-2 record in March including their only 3 game winless streak of the year. Coming off back to back losses in Chicago and Nashville look for them to rebound against the 'Yotes.

Prediction: H+
Thunder's Pick: H