

Boxing Day Picks - with Notch

Written by Steve "Notch" Johnson

Friday, 25 December 2009 17:12 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 December 2009 10:49



It's Christmas day and I am working 24 hours. I am fresh off a 10 day cruise that saw my buddy get married for the 2nd time. I got hypnotized on the boat and made a complete fool of myself. What an amazing trip! I have been on fire with my bookie recently and have won roughly \$2900.00 in the last 5 days of NHL action. [I made a posting in our forum](#) before Wednesday's games previewing my picks. I went 10 for 11 and was two Florida goals away from a perfect night. If that had happened, I would have won \$1600, but instead I only won \$600. Either way, I am on fire and I hope it continues for you all on Boxing Day, here are my thoughts and picks:

Quick stat: Since 2005 (post lockout) the home teams are 28-14 on Boxing Day games and have outscored the away teams by 31 goals. I have no reason for this, but found it interesting when I was doing my research.

Boxing Day Picks - with Notch

Written by Steve "Notch" Johnson

Friday, 25 December 2009 17:12 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 December 2009 10:49

Ottawa at Buffalo 7:00 PM

Ottawa owns Buffalo and have for quite a long time. Now take out Spezza and more importantly Alfie, add in Ryan Miller having a Hart trophy year so far in 2009 and what you get is a Buffalo win. It is as simple as that for this game.

Buffalo – Home Win – H (Proline)

Montreal at Toronto 7:00 PM

I have been riding Halak ever since his trade request has come public and I have been winning lots of money. I can thank the return of Markov at the same time as well. I wish I knew who was starting between the pipes for Montreal, but I can't see Halak leaving the net right now as the Habs ride a 3 game win streak into Toronto. The Leafs have cooled after playing above their heads for a couple games in early December. The season series so far this year is 2-1 for Montreal.

Montreal – Visitor Win – V (Proline)

Boxing Day Picks - with Notch

Written by Steve "Notch" Johnson

Friday, 25 December 2009 17:12 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 December 2009 10:49

Islanders at Rangers 7:00 PM

This will be the 4th meeting of the season for these two State rivals. Strangely enough, it will be the 3rd meeting in 11 days as well. The Isles have the edge right now - up 2-1. Since the lockout these teams have faced each other 33 times with the Rangers having the sight 17-16 edge. In the last four years, if the Isles have a losing record in a homestand of 4 games or more, the first game out on the road is usually a good one as they have a record of 3-1-1 and have beaten some good teams in the process. The Rangers meanwhile are riding a 4 game win streak that started with a Tortorella tirade and a 2 game scratching of Redden and Kotalik. Redden and Kotalik are now playing, but have posted zeros across the board in there 2 games back. This game has me confused and I would stay away from it.

*New York **Islangers**...just kidding – Rangers in a shootout – Tie – T (Proline)*

New Jersey at Washington 7:00 PM

This is the fourth and final game this season between the two clubs with the Devils owning the Caps 3-0 so far. The Devils are actually a combined 6-0 against the Caps and Pens this year. New Jersey is by far the hottest team in the league going 12-2 in their last 14 and 9-1 in their last 10. Pressure is off Brodeur to do anything anymore, how will that affect him? Washington can take over top spot in the East with a win. This game is a battle of the stingiest team GAA versus the highest scoring team in the league. Devils are 1-3 on Boxing Day in their last 4; Caps are 2-1 in their last 3. Another tough game to call, but I see a Caps win here.

Boxing Day Picks - with Notch

Written by Steve "Notch" Johnson

Friday, 25 December 2009 17:12 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 December 2009 10:49

Washington – Home Win – H (Proline)

[- Get the edge on making your hockey picks - Visit ProlineHockeyPicks.com for the winning tool! -](#)

Philadelphia at Carolina 7:00 PM

Not much to say about both teams that hasn't already been said. Leighton a former Cane will be in the net for Philly. As a goalie myself, in my opinion it is always an advantage for a goalie to know a shooters tendencies and not the other way around. This game won't come down to Leighton though as Philly should have no trouble beating the worst team in the league. I think Philly may go on a little bit of a run here in the next little bit and play the way they were expected to.

Philadelphia – Visitor Win – V (Proline)

Boxing Day Picks - with Notch

Written by Steve "Notch" Johnson

Friday, 25 December 2009 17:12 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 December 2009 10:49

Columbus at Detroit

Both team shave been struggling, but it has been because of completely different reasons. Columbus comes into this game winning only 2 of their last 18 games. Filatov was sent to the KHL 18 games ago. Can you tell I own him in one of my pools? Something has to give in Columbus as I have watched their last couple games and they are playing as if they know they are going to lose right from the start. The players have zero confidence on the ice and I will assume in their coach as well. Columbus struggles are unexplainable. Not so much with Detroit. We all know that injuries have the Wings where they are at right now and with the depth the Wings lost this off-season, injuries like these are a hard thing to deal with. These teams played each other once this year with the Wings demolishing the Blue Jackets 9-1 in Columbus. The result will be the same, the score will be closer.

Detroit – Home Win – H (Proline)

Atlanta at Tampa Bay 7:30 PM

The home team has won 16 out of the last 22 games between these two clubs. Atlanta has turned cold in December after a decent November. The Thrashers are 4-7-1 in their last 12 and losers of their last 3. Goaltending and defence are to blame as the Thrashers have allowed 24 goals against in their last 5 games. Their offense is almost keeping pace though as they have scored 20 in the same span. Six of the Thrashers last seven, have been decided by one goal. The Lightning are 3-9-2 in their last 14 and in those 9 regulation losses they are losing by an average of 2.65 goals a game. Tampa has won 3 of the last 4 meetings.

Boxing Day Picks - with Notch

Written by Steve "Notch" Johnson

Friday, 25 December 2009 17:12 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 December 2009 10:49

Tampa Bay – Home Win – H (Proline)

Chicago at Nashville 8:00 PM

This is game 1 of a home and home, back to back series. Four points separate these teams atop the Central division. This is the game to watch on Saturday if you are an overall hockey fan in my mind. This series is as close as it gets – this season is split at 2 games apiece, with each team winning on the road and at home. Over the last 10 games the same holds true – they are 5-5 with the home team taking 1 extra game each. Does anyone remember what happened last time Patrick Kane was at home in Buffalo with family and friends? My guess is this time he was on his best behaviour.

Chicago by 2 or more – Visitor plus Win – V+ (Proline)

St. Louis at Minnesota 8:00 PM

One of the best teams on the road, St. Louis will be facing one of the best teams at home in Minnesota. Every stat I look at for this game is very even. I called St. Louis' offense at the start

Boxing Day Picks - with Notch

Written by Steve "Notch" Johnson

Friday, 25 December 2009 17:12 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 December 2009 10:49

of the season a juggernaut, while that hasn't happened; they have been on a bit of a hot streak lately outscoring their opposition 12-4 over their current 3 game winning streak. Minnesota looked like they are getting used to their new equipment by beating Edmonton last game. If you take out the 2 games after the fire (both losses), Minnesota has won 8 of their last 10. It may sound ridiculous to take out those 2 games, but I don't think anyone thought Minnesota would win a hockey game with equipment they weren't used to wearing.

Minnesota – Home Win – H (Proline)

Los Angeles at Phoenix 9:00 PM

This is the current 4 versus 5 seed matchup in the Western Conference if the regular season ended today. \$100 to the person that said that would be the case at the Christmas break. There are only a few teams that have scored more goals than the Kings. Conversely, there are only a few teams as stingy on D as the Coyotes. Los Angeles has only lost one game against a divisional rival this season and that game was to Phoenix on opening night. Other than that game, the Kings have won the other 9 games against Pacific division opponents, including 3 wins against these Coyotes this season. The Kings have had no trouble scoring goals on anybody this year and have averaged 4 goals a game in the 4 games against the Yotes this season.

Los Angeles – Visitor Win – V (Proline)

Boxing Day Picks - with Notch

Written by Steve "Notch" Johnson

Friday, 25 December 2009 17:12 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 December 2009 10:49

Dallas at Colorado 9:00 PM

Dallas has picked up points in 8 of their last 10 games - only 4 of those are regulation wins though. The Stars love taking the game past the 60 minutes mark – 15 of their 37 games have gone into extra time. Maybe they should find a different strategy as they have lost 11 of those 15. Colorado plays a consistent game usually, but in their last game they let Anaheim score 4 unanswered goals in the 3rd period to lose 4-2. Craig Anderson could only do so much and for the first 2 periods he stood on his head making save after save before the floodgates opened. All four games last year were decided by one goal between these two former playoff rivals.

Colorado in OT – Home Win – H (Proline)

Edmonton at Vancouver 10:00 PM

This is the 4th game this season pitting these two clubs against each other. The home team has won every game so far. Edmonton has lost their last 5 games. Those 5 losses came after winning 5 in a row. In their most recent five losses, they are losing by an average of 3 goals. This will be the last game of a season long 8-game homestand for the Canucks. They are 5-2 in the previous seven. Things are clicking right now for Vancouver and they will want to finish up strong at GM Place before they go on the road for four games.

Vancouver by 2 or more – Home plus Win – H+ (Proline)

Boxing Day Picks - with Notch

Written by Steve "Notch" Johnson

Friday, 25 December 2009 17:12 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 December 2009 10:49

Anaheim at San Jose 10:30 PM

This is the fourth of six meetings between the California rivals. The Sharks are a perfect 3-0 so far by outscoring Anaheim, 11-4, in the three previous meetings. The Ducks are playing better than their record indicates lately and may be able to hang with the Sharks this time. One big thing working against the Ducks keeping it close is the 5 days off that the Sharks have had off between games. The last time the Sharks had 5 days off between games was on December 17th

when the Sharks played at home and won easily 4-1 against...you guessed it...Anaheim. What a weird schedule!!!

San Jose by 2 or more – Home plus Win – H+ (Proline)

This is a tough week. Good luck! I will definitely be tapering my bets down this Saturday.