It’s the first weekend of March. Do you feel it?! The last full month of the regular season is now underway. Divisional and conference races are tightening. The playoff picture is slowly, yet increasingly become clearer. Some franchises are surging, some collapsing. Scoring races are beginning to crystallize as the 3 headed monster of Malkin, Stamkos & Giroux have set themselves apart from the crop. The triumph in cementing a spot in the top 16, the disappointment Leaf Nation of missing the playoffs each and every single post lockout season. I can hardly wait to see how these last six weeks unfold.

Without further ado, this weekend’s Six-Pack!

Stats as of Friday morning
Winning % on the season= 55%
Previous Week Record= 3-3

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NY Islanders @ Boston (1:00pm ET)
By the Numbers - Frozen Pools

With Thursday night's OT winner against Jersey, the Bruins are unbelievably gunning for their first pair of consecutive victories since January 10th & 12th. Coupled with Tuukka Rask's coming back to earth, losing five straight spot starts, Timmy T hasn't fared much better as Boston has been playing at a.500 clip since well before the All-Star game now.

However luckily for them and their dramatic OT victory this week, they face off against an Islanders squad who have silently slipped back below the mediocrity line losing five of six. Should be a walk in the park for the defending champs.

Pick
Boston - Home Win Plus – H+(ProLine)

Tampa Bay @ Carolina (7:00pm ET)
By the Numbers - Frozen Pools

Mathieu Garon is coming off a nice trip back home shutting the door for the most part against the very same Montreal Canadiens which he group up cherishing, in a tight 2-1 affair. Perhaps it is a testament to his newfound confidence since he's been (yet again) anointed as the Lightning starter for the remainder of the season. Something tells me he gets going on a mini streak, despite his record this season suggesting otherwise, as he has a tendency to blow it when given the opportunity to rise from a backup goalie.

However, luckily for Coach Boucher, Stamkos has not had the 1nd half drought that plagued him last season where he scored 40 goals by January and only tallied seven more the rest of the way. This season he shatters his personal record of 51, without a doubt. However, this divisional matchup usually ends up being either the Marty St.Louis or Eric Staal show, with both players recording 39 points in 30 games against each other. (Bet on the over if you want another free biscuit here)

Pick:

Tampa Bay - Home Win– H(ProLine)

Toronto @ Montreal (7:00pm ET)
By the Numbers -Frozen Pools

This once hailed "*most famed rivalry in hockey history*" has surely dulled out a fair bit, hasn't it?! The Habs sit right at the bottom of the East, losers of six in a row heading into their faceoff with the Wild on Thursday where they blew a 4-1 late third period lead. (Only to take it in the penalty shot competition, due mostly to Devin Setoguchi falling flat on his face, all alone in mid-ice.)

Despite being higher in the standings than Montreal, the Leafs have been arguably more horrid of late, only a point out of fifth, just three weeks ago, now sitting in 11th and within a five point reach of joining the Habs in dead last. Toronto has lost six consecutive outing and a disgusting 10 of 11. They're dreams and for a long time deemed reality of ending their six year missed playoff streak is slipping right through their fingers. Although a win against their archrivals could spark Toronto to a nice little boost going forward.

Pick
Toronto - Visitor Team Win - V(ProLine)

Pittsburgh @ Colorado (9:00pm ET)

By the Numbers - Frozen Pools

The Pens have been killing it lately, riding a four game winning streak and have been averaging a ton of offense at a rate of 4.33 goals per game over their past 9. Despite Sid the Kid continuing his seemingly eternity in purgatory and with Letang knocked out of the lineup once more, Malkin has once again been playing out of his mind, terrorizing defense tandems all over the lead, with James Neal riding shotgun. (Chaa Chiiing! for fantasy owners) Meanwhile,

Kudos to the Avs, who have really played themselves back into the thick of the Western Conference playoff race-- despite being written off by critics & pundits(including yours truly) for many for months now.

Pick
Pittsburgh - Visiting Team Win - V(ProLine)

Buffalo @ Vancouver (10:00pm ET)
By the Numbers - Frozen Pools

Doesn’t get much juicier than this one folks for a regular season game. First of all, the story of the night here is naturally the immediate return to town of 2-time World Junior Gold Medal

owning Cody Hodgson, now in enemy colours. The former Windsor Spitfire, turned Memorial Cup Champion, Zack Kassian along with newly acquired Gragnani will do their college best to erase any nostalgia in the air at GM place. Moreover, Ryan Miller's 120 minute shutout streak goes head to head with Roberto Luongo's 60 minute shutout streak. Whose will end first? I say Miller's. But both with surely end—I predict before the 1st intermission buzzer.

Pick
Vancouver - Home Win- H(ProLine)

St.Louis @ San Jose (10:00pm ET)
By the Numbers - Frozen Pools

Despite Anti Niemi sporting a 0.50 GAA & .979 SV % over his last pair of starts, the Sharks recently futile offense forced him to split the 2 game set. San Jose is really counting on a return from injury of Martin Havlat soon to inject some life into their offense, as the Sharks have eight losses to their names over the past three weeks alone. Due to this recent skid, they've managed to lose their foothold in the upper echelon of the conference, and having also given up the division lead for the first time this season to the streaking Phoenix Coyotes. Despite St.Louis' fantastic play of late, San Jose takes this one in the Shark tank to roar back ahead of Phoenix for a share of the division lead.

Pick:
San Jose Home Win– H(ProLine)

2012-03-03 22:30:00 ET

ST. LOUIS BLUES	NHL Rank	Stat	Category	Stat	NHL Rank	SAN JOSE SHARKS
	2✔	65	Games Played	63	4	
	3✔	40	Wins	33	8	
	3✔	18	Losses	23	8	
	17	162	Goals	172	9✔	
	2✔	124	Goals Against	157	7	
	5✔	+38	Goal Differential	+15	9	
	10	2004	Shots On Net	2172	1✔	
	2✔	1700	Shots Against	1777	6	
40-18-7			REGULAR SEASON RECORD			33-23-7
2-1-0			REGULAR SEASON LAST 3 GAMES			1-2-0