Marty sets the table for Saturday's NHL action.

I got called in to give Anthony a hand as he’s off to see the Hawks and Kings do battle in Chicago. Our four-legged comrade came crashing back to earth last week only selecting a single winner, while yours truly had some decent picks with the Ducks, Devils, and Capitals all picking up important wins. Lots of good action on TV this weekend so let’s crack a cold one and jump right in!

Lightning @ Panthers

By the Numbers – Frozen Pool

The Bolts are reeling with six straight losses heading into their game against the Panthers, who have also lost three in a row. This may be the remedy the team has been looking for to get back in the win column as they won the only other matchup earlier in the year. Cory Conacher has come crashing back down to earth after opening the season with 12 points in seven games, as he's gone pointless during the losing streak and is -6. Rookie Huberdeau leads the Panthers in scoring with five goals and is turning into one of their more responsible forwards defensively as he's even on the season in plus minus, while leading point scorer Thomas Fleischmann is a team worst -9, tied with Weiss and Campbell.

My Pick: V

Thunder's Pick: V

Flyers @ Canadiens

By the Numbers – Frozen Pool

The Flyers head into this matchup after facing New Jersey Friday night; in two other back to back situations this month the Flyers have lost the first game, only to follow that up with a win over Carolina and Winnipeg. Jakub Voracek leads the team in scoring with 10 points in 14 games, as the absence of Hartnell and Meszaros due to injury, and the departure of Jagr and van Riemsdyk via free agency and trade is really impacting the offense. The Habs have responded with back to back wins after that 6-0 drubbing at the hands of the Maple Leafs. Rookie Alex Galchenyuk leads the team with a +7 rating only adding to the reasons why he's remained with the big club this season.

My Pick: V

Thunder's Pick: H

Devils @ Islanders

By the Numbers – Frozen Pool

LAST 3 REGULAR SEASON YEARS - NYI VS N.J

Devils VS Islanders

Name	Pos	GP	G	P	Pnt/G	+/-	PPP	PPTOI	TOI	SOG	PIM
KOVALCHUK,I.	R	24	14	30	1.25	0	10	06:05	22:59	93	12
ELIAS,P.	L	28	10	23	0.82	1	11	03:18	19:04	89	4
ZAJAC,T.	C	27	6	18	0.67	3	7	02:46	18:36	65	4
CLARKSON,D.	R	28	5	8	0.29	-11	3	01:50	13:10	57	57
ZUBRUS,D.	R	29	3	8	0.28	-2	0	02:03	16:47	48	14
ZIDLICKY,M.	D	10	1	7	0.70	7	4	04:13	22:48	17	2
GREENE,A.	D	26	1	6	0.23	2	3	01:38	20:19	23	12
JOSEFSON,J.	C	7	2	6	0.86	6	0	00:34	12:55	10	0
HENRIQUE,A.	C	6	1	5	0.83	1	1	01:38	18:04	10	0
SALVADOR,B.	D	18	2	4	0.22	3	0	00:01	19:00	15	28

Name	GP	Min	W	L	OTL	SO	GA	SA	SV	GAA	SV%
BRODEUR,M.	21	1216	11	10	0	0	47	497	450	2.32	0.9054
HEDBERG,J.	10	548	6	2	1	1	17	241	224	1.86	0.9295

Islanders VS Devils

Name	Pos	GP	G	P	Pnt/G	+/-	PPP	PPTOI	TOI
OKPOSO,K.	R	22	6	12	0.55	-5	9	02:34	17:39
NIELSEN,F.	C	25	4	11	0.44	7	4	02:04	15:59
STREIT,M.	D	21	3	10	0.48	-5	6	04:44	23:00
BAILEY,J.	C	16	5	9	0.56	0	2	01:29	16:22
REASONER,M.	C	17	4	7	0.41	0	0	00:08	14:59
TAVARES,J.	C	18	3	7	0.39	-9	3	03:15	19:23
MOULSON,M.	L	19	5	6	0.32	-3	1	02:26	17:12
MARTINEK,R.	D	17	2	6	0.35	2	0	00:17	22:20
VASICEK,J.	C	8	5	5	0.63	5	0	01:16	17:13
BOULTON,E.	L	15	3	4	0.27	0	0	00:01	07:31

Name	GP	Min	W	L	OTL	SO	GA	SA	SV	GAA
THOMAS,T.	16	926	10	4	1	2	29	473	444	1.88
DIPIETRO,R.	9	541	6	3	0	2	15	251	236	1.66

New Jersey fared well for me last week knocking off the Penguins on Saturday, and then to prove it wasn't a fluke they beat them again on Sunday. It's difficult to pick against them especially heading into Long Island where the Islanders have one victory all season long. After 13 games played David Clarkson leads the team in goals (nine), hits (22), shots on goal (54), is tied for the points lead (15), and is second behind Barch with 21 PIM. Can you say roto fantasy STUD? Goal scoring hasn't been an issue for the Isles this season potting three goals per game; it's been keeping them out, as they're ranked 28th in the league in goals against average.

John Tavares continues to lead the team with eight goals and 16 points, and the defensive pairing of Visnovsky (3gp) and Brian Strait

lead the team at +1. Unfortunately Tavares has managed only seven points in 18 games and -9 against the Devils.

My Pick: V

Thunder's Pick: H

Senators @ Maple Leafs

By the Numbers – Frozen Pool

It will be interesting to see how the Sens respond to the battle of Ontario with Spezza and Karlsson gone for the remainder of the year. The Leafs ran into a small road bump in the Hurricanes to snap their win streak, seems like that's what Carolina does best, as they ended the Devils run earlier in the week as well. However, a team that is being led offensively by Nazem Kadri with 12 points, and James van Riemsdyk with eight goals should be able to get on the score sheet against the Sens.
Phil Kessel is shooting at a 3.6% pace, which he won't sustain so the goals will come in bunches when they do, as he's no Jason Blake.
Craig Anderson

makes a great sell high option, as that window is shrinking quickly before his numbers start to inflate and the wins seemingly disappear.

Pick: H+

Thunder's Pick: V

Ducks @ Predators

By the Numbers – Frozen Pool

Well simply looking at their team names, in nature, the Ducks wouldn't stand a chance. Pekka Rinne has been out of this world lately posting three shutouts in his last four starts and allowing six goals in seven starts since giving up a four spot to the Coyotes. It seems like that team is really missing Ryan Suter defensively, thanks to their organizational depth on the blue line it doesn't seem like they've skipped a beat and all they need is Weber (two points) to start showing up on the score sheet again as Ryan Ellis currently leads all Preds blueliners with six points on the season.

However, the Ducks counter with Viktor Fasth who has now bumped his NHL start to a 6-0-0 record and despite giving up five goals to St. Louis still has a 1.74 goals against average with a .933 save percentage on the season. The defence in front of him has been stellar as he hasn't had to face more than 31 shots in a game all season. If you thought Daniel Winnik would be leading this team with five goals twelve games into the season than you should take your talents to Vegas; however seven teammates are hot on his heels with four goals apiece.

My Pick: T (Ducks in the SO)

Thunder's Pick: H

Avalanche @ Oilers

By the Numbers – Frozen Pool

The last meeting between these two occurred on a Saturday afternoon with Varlamov holding the fort, and the Avs finally figuring out that they should score some goals in the third period. Since then, O'Reilly still hasn't signed, Landeskog's concussion has been confirmed, Erik Johnson
is now out with a concussion,

Ryan Smyth
and
Ryan Whitney
were scratched and the list goes on and on.
Matt Duchene
has carried the Avs, and given what this top nine looks like, the fact that he's put up 11 points in 12 games is remarkable, I watch a lot of Avs games and he's in the best shape of his career flying up and down the ice creating chances. He's done a terrific job of showing you don't need a "C" on your jersey to be a leader on the ice and in the locker room.

Thursday night the Avs had a defensive core of Hunwick, Barrie, Zanon, O'Brien, O'Byrne, and Hejda (OUCH!!!) on the ice and yet still managed to pick up a shootout victory over the Wild of all teams and in Minnesota. Varlamov has played very well this season; unfortunately the team in front of him has been less than stellar providing only 17 goals in his 10 starts, including three goose eggs. Compare that to the team scoring 10 goals (if you count the SO winner) in two starts for JS Giguere . The Oilers have also struggled offensively scoring two or fewer goals in seven of their last eight games. However the last time the Avs came to visit they managed to put up four goals, and if Varlamov starts for the Avs don't expect too much goal support.

My Pick: H

Thunder's Pick: H