Week 3 saw a nice recovery from the disastrous second week. I'm changing the format a little this week. Due to the NHL's laughable injury disclosure policy, identifying who will be out due to an injury has become a crapshoot. Therefore, I won't be including the "Key Injuries" subheading that I had in previous weeks. You guys hang out at Dobberhockey.com so you know all the key injuries anyway. Good luck to us this week.

Week 1: +13 bananas

Week 2: -2 bananas

Week 3: +8 bananas

Total: +19 bananas

Don't forget to get your bets in early...there are afternoon games.

Saturday, November 29th, 2008

Edmonton Oilers @ St. Louis Blues

St. Louis has won three of their last four games and that is quite impressive when you consider the injuries they have. McDonald, Kariya, Johnson, Berglund and Oshie are key players yet the Blues are hovering at the .500 mark. The Blues have the second best powerplay in the league while the Oilers have the league's second worst penalty killing. The Oilers will need to stay out of the box if they want to win this one. The Oilers only have one win in their last five games and I don't think they'll improve that record tonight. I predict a Steen PP winner (Don't bet on that one though).

-Bet-

1 banana on STL to win

1 banana on the OVER (5.5)

Chicago Blackhawks @ Los Angeles Kings

The Blackhawks are quickly becoming one of the upper echelon teams in the league. They are the second highest scoring team and have won three of their last four games. Khabibulin is day to day with a ....wait for it.... lower body injury, so Huet will get an opportunity to steal the #1 job back. The Hawks have a goal differential of +0.70 goals while Los Angeles' goal differential is -0.19. I think Toews may have found his range in the last couple of games and I think he'll pop one in to help the Hawks win.

-Bet-

2 bananas on CHI to win

1 banana on the OVER (5.5)

Detroit Red Wings @ Boston Bruins

This is a battle of two of the NHL's current titans. Detroit is 7-1 in their last eight games against the Northeast. They are also 23-8 in their last 31 Saturday games. Tim Thomas has a .940 save percentage and has been absolutely brilliant. He has stolen games for the Bruins and will probably have to steal another one if Boston hopes to win. The Wings hope to have Daniel Cleary back in the lineup and he will probably return to a powerplay that has been deadly. I expect acrobatics from Tim Thomas and a Detroit win.

-Bet-

1 banana on DET to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

Philadelphia Flyers @ Toronto Maple Leafs

It's Brian Burke night! The Leafs will "officially" introduce Brian Burke as their saviour and then Burkie and Ron Wilson will have a fifteen minute debate on which one of them is the bigger genius. Leafs fans should hope Burke is a goalie because Cujo and Toskala have been dreadful. Toskala has a save percentage of .883 and Cujo's is even worse at .843. The Flyers have been averaging 3.6 goals for over the last five games and the offense should only continue with Daniel Briere expected back. Toronto is 2-8 in their last 10 games. Don't be silly, bet on Philly (that was courtesy of my 5 year old daughter).

-Bet-

1 banana on PHI to win

2 bananas on the OVER (5.5)

Buffalo Sabres @ Montreal Canadiens

Buffalo has only one win in the last 6 games. Montreal is coming off an impressive road win in Detroit where their defense looked very impressive (well, except for Ryan O'Byrne). The home team has won 9 of the last 12 matchups between these two teams. Thomas Vanek took a hit in the last game against Boston so his status is unknown. I like Montreal and I like the under.

-Bet-

1 banana on MTL to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

Ottawa Senators @ New York Islanders

Can the Islanders really beat Ottawa three straight? The Senators have been playing well defensively but they just can't seem to score. Jason Spezza looks disinterested at best most of the time. The Islanders are still dealing with injuries to players such as Comrie, DiPietro and Okposo. Ottawa is 16-4-3 in their last 23 meeting on Long Island and although the Islanders defeated the Senators in back to back games earlier this month I just can't see Ottawa losing here. This is a game against a team Ottawa knows they should beat and it's a team that Ottawa knows can beat them. I think Ottawa will pick up their intensity level tonight and I look for the big three of Heatley, Spezza and Alfredsson to have a good game. I know, I'm a sucker.

-Bet-

2 bananas on OTT to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

Washington Capitals @ Columbus Blue Jackets

Ovechkin is on FIRE! Nothing more really needs to be said, but I will add that Columbus is 2-7 in their last 9 Saturday games.

-Bet-

1 banana on WAS to win

1 bananas on the OVER (5.5)

New Jersey Devils @ Pittsburgh Penguins

Despite the fact that the road team is 11-2 in the last 13 NJ/PIT matchups and that New Jersey is 21-7 in their last 28 games in Pittsburgh I just can't bet against Malkin, Crosby and company. Pittsburgh has won eight of their last ten games and are 21-8 in their last 29 against the Atlantic division. Uncharacteristically, New Jersey has become an offensive force over their last few games but I look for them to try to tighten things up against Pittsburgh's offense. It may be difficult without Broduer, Rolston, Madden, Holik, etc.

-Bet-

1 banana on PIT to win

1 banana on the OVER (5.5)

Minnesota Wild @ Nashville Predators

The home team is 14-4-4 in the last 22 MIN/NAS matchups. I like for that trend to continue here as I think Trotz will be able to get the line matchups he wants enabling him to contain the Koivu line. Nashville is 10-4 in their last 14 home games. The over is 7-2-1 in the last 10 meetings. I also see that continuing.

-Bet-

1 banana on NAS to win

1 banana on the OVER (5.5)

Tampa Bay Lightning @ Colorado Avalanche

Here's a battle disappointing teams. I guess Colorado can be cut some slack because they have been without Joe Sakic for many games, but what is wrong with Tampa? They seem like more a collection of parts than a team Lecavalier and St. Louis have been shadows of their former selves and Jussi Jokinen has been disappointing to say the least...although that may have something to do with being buried on the third line. And Radim Vrbata hasn't score since Madonna WAS a virgin. I won't be surprised when Tampa explodes for 10 goals in a game but I will be surprised if it's tonight. Budaj has actually been playing well lately and has a save percentage of .906.

-Bet-

1 banana on COL to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

San Jose Sharks @ Phoenix Coyotes

San Jose has to be the odds on favourite to win the Cup right now. They have four quality lines, sold all-around defense, a very good starter in Nabokov and a very, very good backup in Boucher who has a save percentage of .928 and a record of 7-1-1. Phoenix has some quality youth but they are still a few years away from being one of the better teams. That youth will get more ice-time to prove their mettle as Jokinen will be gone for 2-4 weeks with a shoulder injury. Losing Ollie certainly won't help the offense.

-Bet-

2 bananas on SAN to win

1 banana on the UNDER (5.5)

Vancouver Canucks @ Calgary Flames

Here's a rematch of Thursday's game where the Flames ended the Canucks four-game winning streak thanks to a Cammalleri hat trick. The Canucks managed to score three goals for the fourth consecutive game, but unlike the previous three games, three goals wasn't enough for the win. I expect to see more of the same as the reality of the Luongo injury starts to sink in. Calgary has found their offensive touch over the last two games. They scored 10 goals in those two games and only managed 12 goals in the five previous games. Calgary has the better special teams and I think that will contribute to another Flames' win.

-Bet-

1 banana on CGY to win

1 banana on the OVER (5.5)

Don't bet if you can't afford to lose!