I checked my email this morning to find out I was getting tossed into the fire again, which sounds kind of nice since its mius-36 here this morning...Last week looked like a crap shoot as the afternoon games saw me go 0-4, but a strong evening session 7-1 saw $3 turn into $130 thanks in part the Isles and Thrashers going to a shootout, Colorado winning in Columbus, the Flames scoring an empty netter against the Leafs, and Marleau outscoring Dustin Penner. Luckily, there's only one afternoon game this time around. After last week, Notch still leads the way at .629 winning % and I'm barely ahead of my own mutt of a dog at .516, Thunder brings up the rear at .513. At least we're not a bunch of losers! Notch will be making his picks next week and the week after, as I will be in Jamaica. Enjoy the games everyone:

NY Rangers @ Boston Bruins

After getting bombed by Philly 6-0 at the end of 2009 the Rangers have managed to pick up pts. in their last 5 games including 3 wins. Lundqvist has given up 2 or fewer goals in 13 of his last 16 games. The kind of consistency us poolies expect out of him over an 82 game span. He's stopped 55 of 57 shots against the B's this season in two victories and has a lifetime 1.38 GAA. With Savard and Bergeron out of the lineup does Sobotka get off the 4th line finally and see more than 10 mins a game??

Pick: V

Thunder's Pick: H

Florida Panthers @ Ottawa Senators

One of these teams is going to snap a 2 game losing streak. Vokoun got shelled in his last game versus the Sens and is only 2-7 in his career with a 3.54 GAA. The Sens haven't been playing well lately but at least still give the home crowd something to cheer about. The Panthers have been struggling to put the puck in the net lately tallying more than 2 goals only twice in their last 6 outings. Ottawa's offensive situation isn't better as Mike Fisher leads the team in scoring, I don't think anyone would have expected that halfway through the season. Should be a tight game between a couple of struggling offenses.

Pick: T (OTT in a shootout)

Thunder's Pick: V

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Tampa Bay Lightning @ Philadelphia Flyers

Look like the Flyers got their offense back for Christmas this year as the team is rolling 6-1-1 since Dec. 23rd. They've scored 35 goals in that span, being lead by a balanced attack; Carter and Richards (10 pts. apiece), Briere and Gagne (9 pts. apiece) in that span and Leighton has yet to lose in regulation in Philly, posting a 2.27 GAA thus far. The Flyers have won the last 3 meetings by a score of 17-5, with Richards leading the way with 9 pts. in those 3 games. The other bad news is Tampa's on the road where their 6 wins leave a little something to be desired. They may be a little deflated after such a great start in Jersey before the game got postponed.

Pick: H+

Thunder's Pick: H

Colorado Avalanche @ Buffalo Sabres

Let me start off by saying Tyler Myers should win the Calder this year. He's on pace for 50 pts (if you round up that .58 after the 49 haha), and leaped ahead of Thomas Vanek to 4th in team scoring. People are hoping and expecting big second halves out of Vanek and Roy, which isn't farfetched, however Vanek isn't going to get it done on the 3rd line playing 12 mins a night. Lalime gets the start and he's played well against the Avs, 6-3-1 in his career 1.87 GAA, and even better splits at home this year. The Sabres look to win their 7th in a row, while the Avs haven't won the backend of a B2B situation since October.

Pick: H

Thunder's Pick: H

New Jersey Devils @ Montreal Canadiens

Brodeur loves playing against the Habs; 36 wins with a 1.77 GAA in 56 appearances. The Devils are 14-3 since the lockout and the Habs haven't won since March 11, 2008. The Devils still hold a 1 pt. lead in the Eastern Conference over the Sabres with 2 games in hand. Halak has not defeated the Devils in his career thus far, and the Devils remain the best road team in the league with only 4 defeats. The Devils are 11-3 in Saturday contests, while the Habs are 2-2-3 since the end of October.

Pick: V

Thunder's Pick: H

Washington Capitals @ Atlanta Thrashers

The Caps have defeated the Thrashers 4 straight times (3 of those on the road) scoring on average 4.8 goals per game. Ovechkin has 52 pts. in 32 career games, the most out of any team that he's played in his career. Hedberg snapped their terrible losing streak with a solid

performance but it was their offense that left them out to dry as Jim Slater had to tie the game with the team's lone goal in the 3rd. If Pavelec gets the start the odds of his 4.02 career GAA inflating are better than it deflating. The Caps last 6 wins have come by 2 goals or more.

Pick: V+

Thunder's Pick: H

Pittsburgh Penguins @ Toronto Maple Leafs

Despite the fact the Pens have lost 7 of their last 9, and finished their last road trip 0-4, there's nothing like a game against the lowly Leafs to get things back on track. The Leafs have also only won twice in their last 9 contests, but there are plenty of areas to point fingers...like their atrocious PK that has managed to kill off only 42.9 % (9 of 21) of penalties in their last 7 games. The Pens PP has been struggling, but this could be the break they need. B.Richards, St. Louis, Plekanec, Marleau, Eriksson, Horton, M.Koivu... just some of the names ahead of Malkin this year in scoring.

Pick: V

Thunder's Pick: H

NY Islanders @ Phoenix Coyotes

Rick Dipietro made his debut last night and allowed 4 goals on 28 shots. Looks like Rolly will get the start for this one as he's 5-0-1 in his last 6, and 6-1 in his last 7 versus Phoenix. JT continues to struggle as he still only has 1 pt. in his last 15 games now? The Isles haven't won the back end of a B2B situation since the first week in November. For the first time this year it appears as though there's a small crack in Tippett's defensive system as the Yotes have surrendered 12 goals in 3 January games. This will be their last chance to tighten things up before some contenders arrive in Glendale next week and a half (SJ, NJ, MIN, BUF). The Isles have one win all time in Phoenix.

Pick: H

Thunder's Pick: H

Anaheim Ducks @ Nashville Predators

Looks like someone got lazy and copy and pasted last weekend's games for this weekend for the Ducks as they head back on the road to face off against Nashville and Chicago this weekend. Last weekend they were outscored 8-3 in a couple of losses. This weekend should be different as Ryan Getzlaf is back in the lineup. The Preds continue to play well as no one on the team has 30 pts. this season (Dumont and Sullivan have 28 apiece). Hornqvist has 15 pts. in his last 12 games. Teemu Selanne rejoins the ducks and he has 22 pts. in his last 13 games versus the Preds. Hmm, Selanne and Getzlaf? Might as well stick with the road team.

Pick: V

Thunder's Pick: H

Chicago Blackhawks @ Minnesota Wild

The Hawks have scored 25 goals during their current 5 game winning streak and have scored 4 or more in 8 straight and 3 or more in 13 of their last 14 contests. Duncan Keith is on pace for 75 pts., unfortunately he'll probably slow down after the Olympic break and settle in around 65 pts. The Wild are .500 at home since starting out 10-3-1. Patrick Kane looks to extend his pt. streak that has him with 16 in 10 games, and an 8 game road streak (10 pts.).

Pick: V

Thunder's Pick: V

Calgary Flames @ Vancouver Canucks

Luongo has surrendered 10 goals to the Flames this season in 3 games which is 2 goals fewer than what he's allowed in 8 games since Dec. 22 to post a 7-0-1 record. Kipper hates playing in Vancouver where he's lost 5 of his last 6, he's 7-7-3 with a 3.65 GAA all time. The Flames have scored more than 3 goals only once in their last 18 games. If Alex Burrows can pot another hat trick tonight he will be the first player in NHL history to score hat tricks in three straight games. Kovalchuk was the last player to score hat tricks in back to back games back in '07.

Pick: H+

Thunder's Pick: V

St. Louis Blues @ Los Angeles Kings

The Blues look to avoid losing for an 8th straight game and give Davis Payne his first win as their interim coach. Ryan Smyth has a 4-game PPG scoring streak going and Anze Kopitar still only has 12 pts. since Remembrance Day. The Blues have only won in LA 3 times since the lockout, and one of those occurred last month.

Pick: H

Thunder's Pick: H

Detroit Red Wings @ San Jose Sharks

Jimmy Howard looks to have outright taken the #1 job in Detroit as he stoned the Kings making

51 saves in a 2-1 victory in LA. He's 4-1-1 in his last 6 starts and has only given up 9 GA to lower his GAA to 2.17 this season. The Sharks look for their 10th win in their last 11 contests. The Wings have won the only battle this season at Joe Louis Arena, but last year managed to give up 10 goals in their two visits out west. Nabokov has given up 2 goals or fewer in 9 of his last 10 starts.

Pick: H

Thunder's Pick: V