

Saturday's Picks - March 5th

Written by Marty Kwiaton

Friday, 04 March 2011 13:48 - Last Updated Saturday, 05 March 2011 19:07



I'd like to give props to Anthony for picking four winners last week, including the BUF/DET shootout game. The week before that I struggled to come away with two victories while my own dog beat me with three winners. Another strong performance like that and I foresee a visit to the pound in the near future. It's time to bounce back in the face of adversity (have more wobbly pops?), or something like that. Anyways let's get to the action as we have a real mixed bag, with some great match-ups for teams looking to squeeze into the big dance, and some meaningless bottom dwelling games as well.

St. Louis @ NY Islanders

By the Numbers – [Frozen Pool](#)

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The Blues have only one win in their last seven games, meanwhile the Islanders just snapped a four game winless streak with a victory over N.Backstrom and the Wild. The Islanders have the 2nd worst goals for to goals against ratio 5 on 5 in the NHL at 0.77. They also hold a league worst .160 winning % when out shooting their opponents. The Isles lead the league in blocked shots despite allowing over 32 shots on goal per game. This should be interesting, if the Isles defensive play can help their transition game as they have the 2nd most takeaways in the league while the Blues have the 2nd fewest giveaways.

Pick: H – NY Islanders win.

Thunder's Pick: V

Pittsburgh @ Boston

By the numbers – [Frozen Pool](#)

The Pens are struggling winning one of their last six games. Boston meanwhile has had success regardless of who plays net these days. The Tim Thomas/Tuuka Rask combo is probably tops in the league heading into the playoffs, especially with the playoff experience Rask was able to collect last season. The B's are the best defensive team this season despite allowing the third most shots against per game. Deadline acquisitions upfront James Neal and Alex Kovalev have combined for 1 pt. in 4 and 3 games played respectively.

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Pick: H – Boston win

Thunder's Pick: H

Chicago @ Toronto

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The Hawks have won six in a row scoring 25 goals in the span. They are also 9-3-1 in the second game of a back-to-back set. The Leafs meanwhile sit three points out of a playoff spot having collected points in 14 of 16 games since the start of February. However, the team is winless in their last six games played on Saturday. Look for the Leafs to continue to battle and pick up a point on Saturday night.

Pick: T – Chicago Shoot Out Win

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Thunder's Pick: H

Montreal @ Tampa Bay

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The Habs are looking to extend their three game win streak, and wish that every game they played was on a Saturday. The Habs are 12-3-1 in Saturday match-ups this season. The Bolts are 2-0 against the Habs so far this year, including a 4-1 win at home. It would make sense to include SHG for and against in special teams statistics, deducting a PPG if you allow a SHG and a PPGA if you score a SHG. I only bring this up as the Lightning special teams may not be as special as some may think, scoring the fewest SHGs while tied for giving up the most SHG.

Pick: V – Montreal Win

Thunder's Pick: V

Florida @ Atlanta

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The Hawks have taken themselves out of playoff contention with only two wins since the start of February. Also their offence has come to a screeching halt as they've only managed to score one goal in each of their last four losses. The Panthers aren't much better, having won only four games since February. But it has come against opponents such as San Jose, Tampa Bay, and the red hot NJ Devils. Performances like that have been followed up with back to back defeats to the lowly Isles and Sens to the tune of surrendering a combined 10 GA. Last Friday Florida pulled out a 2-1 victory over the Hawks in Atlanta. Maybe this will help: the Hawks Jets have been awaiting their revenge. Well, it certainly can't hurt.

Pick: H – Atlanta Win

Thunder's Pick: V

Edmonton @ Colorado

By the numbers – [Frozen Pool](#)

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The tanking continues, for the Avs anyways, having won only 2 games since January 20th, and both of those wins coming against the Blues. The Oilers are 6-3 in their last nine games, however are still entrenched in the NHL basement by a single point thanks to the Binghamton Senators and their new starting goalie Craig Anderson. As an Avs fan, I encourage this futile play from my team especially if it results in a top 3 pick. Too bad there aren't any quality, can't miss goalie prospects to draft this year. The Avs tandem of Budaj and Elliott is just atrocious right now (insert Dan Cloutier beach ball photo here). I will give Elliott a little bit of credit in his last start pulling out a point in San Jose allowing 2 goals on 36 shots. For the Oilers, Taylor Hall picked up his first career Gordie Howe hat trick, and management hopes it will be the last, especially when he decides to drop his gloves against a scrapper like Dorsett. I thought this kid had hockey IQ?? Anyways, the game should go similar to the 5-1 drubbing the Oilers handed Colorado a couple of weeks ago

Pick: V – Edmonton Win

Thunder's Pick: H