

An Expert's Audit - December Edition

Written by Ian Fergusson

Friday, 12 December 2008 04:50 - Last Updated Friday, 12 December 2008 11:32



Welcome once again to "An Expert's Audit". This audit will be posted here as well as on my fantasy hockey blog at [Hockey Analysis](#) . During the season I do weekly reviews of teams for people who email in to me for a look-see, they're less indepth but just as much fun. Dobber audits will continue to appear here monthly and if you're interested in having your keeper team "worked over" then you can begin by emailing [Dobber](#) about it

BEFORE

December 19th.

This month, and every month through March, not only does a lucky entrant get his or her team audited, but he or she also receives a FREE book courtesy of [Firefly Books](#) . The winner will receive either "

[Shooting From the Lip](#)

" or "

[Hockey Now!](#)

"

When is the right time for a rebuild? That quickly became the question this month as I worked with Scott, you might know him better as “mister mcgoo”. He took over a keeper team last year and was quickly appalled by the lack of options available to him. The previous owner had ignored his D and didn't draft ANY prospects whatsoever. It was an inauspicious start that he managed to turn into an 8th place finish last year. He plays in a 12 team H2H with a whack of categories to track: G, A, P, +/-, PIM, PPP, SHP, GWG, SOG, FW, GS, W, L, GA, GAA, SA, SV, SV%, and SHO.

Let's take a look at Wookie Sandwich.

C Daniel Briere PHI – all month long I talked about moving Briere in the right deal. When healthy he's an excellent C2 for any winning fantasy team.

C Michael Nylander WAS – I thought long and hard about what to say here and finally decided to say that the rumour has been that he'd be traded to the Hawks but why is that a better situation? He should just beat out Kozlov, Federov and Laich for ice time to line up with the big boys more often. That's the good situation he needs to find himself in.

C Stephen Weiss FLA – still young and unproven but give him time, he'll get better as the team gets better.

LW Mike Cammalleri CAL – why do the Flames figure they need to shop him for a power forward? They already have Iggy to do that job. He'll reach the 30 goal, 80 pt plateau again this season and yes I realize he's on pace for 30 and 68 but Iggy's got an itchy trigger finger and Camm is sure to send a couple saucers his way.

LW Scott Hartnell PHI – 20 goals and 150 PIMs is all I ask of him. He'll give you that.

LW Alex Tanguay MON – I like him but how is he a starting All Star? I refuse to believe that Mark Streit is the difference in the Habs change in PP stats from last year to this year so somebody should just wake up Kovalev. I nominate Tanguay for the wake-up call.

RW Pierre-Marc Bouchard MIN – he's certainly had a down year so far but bear in mind that Rolston is gone and Gaborik has been injured all season (seemingly).

RW Corey Perry ANA – your RW is money! No worries here.

RW Johan Franzen DET – Franzen is as Holmstrom used to be. Me likey.

D Andrej Sekera BUF – there's still growing pains but there's plenty of opportunity for him and he will one day be the PP QB for the slugs. Right now only Spacek gets more ice time for them than this kid does, that bodes well for the future.

D Joe Corvo CAR – he's leading his team in PP TOI and yet he has nine pts at the time of this writing for a team that put up monstrous stats last year. I certainly had big hopes for him this year and after the quarter pole I've got to say he's been a massive failure.

D Keith Ballard FLA – I still really only like him for PIMs and I think many fantasy folks

overvalue him completely. I'd rely on JBo and even McCabe ahead of him on his own team.

D Chris Campoli NYI – signing Streit was good for the Isles but I think it has hurt Campoli's growth. He'll be a serviceable NHL'er, probably NEVER a star.

D Paul Martin NJ – Paul Martin isn't even as good as Chris Campoli. No thanks.

D Dan Hamhuis NAS – when he was counted on as the main guy he didn't shine much but as a D3 on the Preds I think he fits in nicely and contributes as a solid fantasy option.

G Roberto Luongo VAN – a top 4 drafting option. He went 1st overall in the Dobber Expert's League and before getting hurt he was playing like the MVP type that he is.

G Ilya Bryzgalov PHX – what's all this talk about Tellqvist taking his job? Bryz is a borderline elite goaltender and Tellqvist is a career backup. Don't lose sleep over this.

BN Pekka Rinne NAS – I agree with Dobber that he's going to steal the job, it's looking like it might actually happen this year and not next year like I anticipated.

BN Todd White ATL – he's actually your highest producing offensive C this season. I'm sorry you had to see that.

BN Erik Cole EDM – I'm hoping that his lack of PP time of late is MacT's way of trying to wake him up. If he doesn't get more opportunity soon his fantasy value plummets more than my RRSP over the last quarter.

BN Kyle Turris PHX – He'll be your stud C within three years.

BN Andrew Cogliano EDM – I compare him to Mathew Lombardi and that's where I figure he'll end up career-wise.

BN Mike Modano DAL – his fantasy value petered out some time ago. He's playing for the career stats now.

IR Francois Beauchemin ANA – he's pretty decent as a lower end fantasy option, when healthy obviously.

Your farm team (drafted only by you since the previous owner neglected it completely) consists of: Nigel Dawes, Nikolai Kulemin, Benoit Pouliot, Francois Bouchard, Max Pacioretty, and Alex Pietrangelo. I have no doubt that Pietrangelo will be very valuable for you down the road. The others will too but Pietrangelo fits best with your team given its weaknesses.

This team isn't winning anytime soon. You don't have a single elite option amongst your D (yet), your wingers are shaping up although you need some more depth at LW and your C's are either over the hill or unproven. Dare I say it (and I did), you have to shop Roberto Luongo and

Daniel Briere around to get help at D, young LW, and a serviceable goalie. The good news is that some guys will actually pay to get a superstar on their team but of course, the bad news is that both guys you were going to shop around this month got injured.

Waiver Wire Options

You had just added Dan Hamhuis to your team when I came on the scene. That was a really good move. Let's look at some other guys who were available.

Johnny Oduya – the Jersey D isn't exactly elite but Johnny O gets some O and his +/- inflates his value. I'm a bit annoyed that I turfed him in the Dobber Expert's League actually, his +/- improved dramatically and now he's helping Dobber's team.

Martin Hanzal – young with some really nice upside for what will be a scary Yotes team in a couple years.

Ales Kotalik – PP specialist. Look at his ratio of PPP to P over the last couple seasons and you'll get a taste of his value to the Sabres.

Curtis Sanford – you'll need a goalie with Bobby Lou on the shelf and I really do think that if Sanford is healthy he'll get the lion's share of starts for the nucks.

Mikael Tellqvist – he seems to be outplaying Ilya in the desert right now and he'd be a nice handcuff for your team when Ilya isn't going that night.

You were able to add almost all of these options to your team. Hanzal, Oduya, Sanford and Kotalik all spent some time on your roster this month and some of them are still there post-audit.

Trading Options

It's a seller's market my friend! You can shop Luongo and Briere to see if they can land you stud D, another LW keeper option, and a G3 once Bobby Lou leaves the nest. Unfortunately they were both injured as we tried to shop them so we knew it wouldn't be an easy process. The hole that the previous owner of this team dug is DEEEEEEP and it's doubtful that everything can be solved in a one month process. How hard can it be to trade these guys though? Let's see.

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Failed trade offers:

Trade Daniel Briere and Scott Hartnell for Jay Bouwmeester, Eric Johnson and Steve Mason (farm)

Trade Scott Hartnell for Andrei Markov

Trade Todd White and Joe Corvo for Filip Kuba and Tom Gilbert

Trade Daniel Briere and Dan Hamhuis for Dennis Wideman, Kris Versteeg and a draft pick

Trade Roberto Luongo and Dan Hamhuis for Rick Nash, Shea Weber and Cam Barker

Trade Roberto Luongo for Alexander Ovechkin

Trade Roberto Luongo for Wojtek Wolski and Mike Green

Now let's look at what finally worked:

Trade Roberto Luongo and Chris Campoli to Wu Crew for Brent Burns, Petr Budaj and Brendan Morrow –

Wu has a shot at it this year and an MVP goalie could get him there. Morrow wouldn't be helping him this year and Burns and Budaj would shore up where you need it. You're taking some pretty serious chances here but I fully believe that Burns as a D is an elite option, Budaj is a more than solid 2nd tier goaltender and Morrow is an elite LW that contributes across the board (next year).

Trade Daniel Briere and Michael Nylander to Milan Hedge Ducks for Patrick O'Sullivan and Cam Barker –

This trade almost died because Milan wanted a LW option and we weren't willing to part with one. We pointed out that he was getting a very nice deal and we just let him sweat this decision. He took the offer and we were thrilled.

Conclusions

Players coming in: Martin Hanzal, Petr Budaj, Brendan Morrow, Patrick O'Sullivan, Cam Barker, Brent Burns, Johnny Oduya, Ales Kotalik, and Chris Sanford.

Players going out: Roberto Luongo, Daniel Briere, Chris Campoli, Michael Nylander, Mike Modano, and Paul Martin.

When Luongo and Briere both got injured this month I had no idea how we'd be able to complete deals for them without selling them too low. We both agree that we got reasonable prices for them and I'm more than convinced that you'll be in a much better place with this team next year. Your glaring weakness was at D and you managed to trade for Burns and Barker while adding Oduya off waivers, that's really good. You also had a weakness at LW and you added Morrow and O'Sullivan there, also really good. Morrow will sit on your IR this year but next year when you're a lot closer to being ready to compete in this league he'll be monstrous for you. By the time that Morrow's ready to help then Burns, Barker, O'Sullivan, Hanzal and Turris will be anchors for your team for the next decade.

This month was a bit stressful for me because I wanted to say more than "here's what you need to do over the next 3 months". It wasn't necessary to say that though, we got good return for our moves. Your team will be in really good shape and you'll be the class of the league ... eventually. See ya McGoo, you'll be fine.