Welcome back to An Expert's Audit. Every month we'll take a look at a reader's keeper league team in the hopes of helping him toward a championship. If you're interested in getting an audit for your own keeper team you can begin the process by emailing Dobber about it.

Now sit back and let me tell you the woeful tale of Mario Pinard. Mario drafted a brand new dynasty team in early September after he had spent months putting together his cheat sheets, tiers and draft list. He was well prepared going in but he hadn't put his formal list as a pre-rank on Yahoo's system since he was going to have to react to situations on the fly. He wasn't worried about reacting to trends and he knew exactly who he wanted to go after. He sat down to work his draft, entered the draft room, saw that he had been randomly assigned the 9 hole in his draft and he hoped that he'd be able to get a star goalie with that first pick. The draft in the 1st

round went pretty much as expected, all the right names were falling ahead of his pick and he was pleased to get Roberto Luongo in the first round.

It was then that his computer crashed ... and I do mean crashed. It totally crapped out. He tried to reload and it failed. He tried again and it failed again. He kept trying to get answers to his problem and he kept coming up against brick walls. He tried to call buddies to borrow their computers but they were all out at an Avril Lavigne concert (not really) and nobody could come to the rescue. Mario had no option. Zero. Zilch. Nada. The same chance as the Florida Panthers at being able to keep their goals against below 4 per game. The same chance that the Leafs would claim Sean Avery so that he and Dion Phaneuf can finally have that conversation they started a couple years ago.

So Mario ended up with an autodraft dynasty team put together by a Yahoo default list with the exception of his 1st round pick. The next day he received an email from your friendly neighbourhood expert auditor to ask if he wanted a hand with his team for a month. I'm pretty sure Mario was crying when he responded to my email, there were tear stains all over his signature.

Mario plays in a 12 team dynasty H2H with settings of **G, A, +/-, PIM, PPP, SOG, HITS** for skaters and
W, GAA, SV%,
and
SHO
for goalies. I like the addition of HITS as a category since it doesn't get used enough in fantasy and might be a better category for hard-nosed play than PIMs are. It will also be important to remember this is a dynasty league so it'll be important to look at rostering some kids for the future along with vets for winning now.

Let's take a look at the **Cornwall Aces**.

C **Brad Richards** NYR – if Gabby stays healthy on his wing then we could see some really excellent chemistry for the Blueshirts. I can certainly see a return to a 90 point plateau for Richards and that's something that hasn't been seen for a Ranger since Jaromir Jagr got 96 pts in 06-07. In fact last year they only had 3 guys get half as many points.

C **Joe Thornton** SJ – Big Joe is a disher who's most value is seen in PPA when he has someone with an itchy trigger finger on the same slab of ice with him. Jury's out on whether or not some of the other offense will step up to help him in San Jose but you've got to admit that the offense they shipped to Minnesota hasn't exactly been the most consistent of scorers over the last few years. Joe will be fine and so will the Sharks.

C **Vincent Lecavalier** TB – he's already batted in a beauty of a goal to start the season so there's no doubting that he still has some beautiful hands to work with. He has definitely been passed by as the go-to guy in Tampa but he'll lead and show a young Mr. Stamkos how to do this NHL thing with some class and grace. I think 30 goals again is a bit of a pipe dream but I could certainly see a few seasons of 20 something goals for (my cousin) Vinny.

LW **Pavel Datsyuk** DET – there seems to be a call for the demise of the Red Wings as they break in a few kids again but I don't see them losing much space in the standings in the West. Dats just might be the best two way forward in the game with his phenomenal takeaway/giveaway ratio every year and then he's always been a pure magician with the puck. I have no worries for Dats or for the Wings this season.

LW **Andrew Ladd** WPG – I knew that there would no chance that Ladd wouldn't re-sign with the Jets this summer since what Canadian kid wouldn't want to go down in the books as the captain of Jets 2.0? He brings serious leadership skills with 2 rings on his fingers and he's a 30 goal guy in the waiting for a lot of years.

LW **Erik Cole** MON – if he's healthy he's the only hitter you have on your team and he should also secure 20-30 goals in a full season. Other than that I kinda think he's pretty vanilla ... but I have a personal hate on for Habs generally.

RW **Martin St. Louis** TB – as much as everyone fawns all over Stamkos this is the engine that runs that team. He does everything, plays in every situation and everyone else depends a great deal on every little thing that he adds on every shift. His biggest value in fantasy is in his PPP.

RW **Jaromir Jagr** PHI – the last time he was in the league Ryan Smyth was an Oiler. What's that you say? Oh, never mind that analogy then. Some are saying 40 points would be great for him this season but I could see 60 points for him playing in that offense in Philly. He'll get plenty of top line exposure with Giroux, who is a magician in the making if you ask me, and all he'll need to do is keep up. This isn't your typical superstar whose time has passed, there are still some tricks in the bag here.

RW **Milan Hejduk** COL – speaking of superstars whose time has passed, the only reason he's still contributing is because they have few options on the right side that are any better than him so they still send the old warrior out there. He's 35 and I could see the drop-off coming faster that that first downslope on your favourite roller coaster.

D **Keith Yandle** PHX – he's the only reason to watch the Coyotes and the only dog I'd have in my kennel. I'm telling you, there's a decent chance the desert dogs finish a distant last place this season. Still, in a dynasty league I'd love to be able to roster this kid.

D **Dan Boyle** SJ – he's been on pace for 50 point seasons every year since '03-04, who wouldn't want those kind of numbers for any fantasy team? He is 35 but that shouldn't change your opinions on rostering him this year and next at least.

D **Nicklas Lidstrom** DET – this is year 20, all for the Wings and he states that it'll be his last. I don't know if he'll step back from that statement at another time but I do fully expect that he'll still be top 3 for D scoring this season and it doesn't look like he needs (air quotes) to retire at this time. I have him in a dynasty league too and I've been trying to determine his market value

in standard leagues. He'll be my suggested trade target for your team.

D **Ryan Whitney** EDM – since he's the only real offensive weapon on the back end for the Oil then I wouldn't really be surprised to see him continue at a pt/game pace once he's back in the game. I still say the Oilers should've traded down at this year's draft to get Adam Larsson but nobody ever asks me about it.

Util **Stephen Weiss** FLA – I consider him an underrated offensive option if he has some healthy talent around him. I wouldn't be surprised to see 20-something goals and a career high of 70 points from him this season if he gets to stick with Flash or Booth and they're healthy for a full year.

G **Roberto Luongo** VAN – remember this guy? He's the only guy that you got to select for your team. It's true that Bobby-Lou stunk it up for 4 games in the Finals but he also played pretty well in the other 3 games along with 3 full rounds to get to the dance. I have no worries about this decision whatsoever and he'll be an anchor for your squad for years to come.

G **Martin Brodeur** NJ – all the retirement talk is a bit scary but I don't think that Marty's leaving until he's good and ready. If I'm a betting man (and I'm not, not with a mortgage payment or anything) then I'm thinking that we'll have a couple full seasons with Marty around yet. When the Devils make the playoffs easily then all this talk about retirement will go out the window.

BN **Al Montoya** NYI – he's 26 now and I think the time is now for him to produce. DiP is going to have some sort of significant injury this season and eventually the Isles are going to trade Nabokov somewhere so they don't have to deal with his whining anymore, so this is looking like a big opportunity for Montoya. If he's ever more than a backup option this is probably his chance. Then again, he's still playing for the Isles so how successful could this possibly be?

BN **Mark Dekanich** CBS – he's got a high ankle sprain so he won't be back for a month or so but I'm sure that the Jackets are excited about having another goaltender with leg problems. I don't think you can hear the sarcasm in my voice so visualize your wife telling you that last sentence. What? You say that your wife isn't sarcastic? Well, I'm thinking that I want you on my side for trade negotiations because I could really make use of someone who's good at lying. By the way, you don't want Dekanich on your team.

BN **Andrei Markov** MON – ok, so they rebuilt his right knee for the second time and his team is all hush-hush about his progress? I'm thinking you want to run away from this guy pretty quickly. It shouldn't be all that hard actually, his knee is trashed. They say that he'll be back in November but I don't think he'll produce much when he does return and I'll wait to see his value after the fact.

BN **Joe Corvo** BOS – so let me get this straight, T-Kab craps out as a Bruin and they let him sign in Carolina then they trade for Corvo because they're short a D-man. I've got to think that the B's make that sort of deal in a heartbeat. So would I.

BN **Ian White** DET – it's still very early but the Wings ran White out there with Lidstrom, Kronwall and Stuart for over 20 minutes of ice this season. He showed that when he gets some opportunity that he can contribute a good amount offensively so I would expect he can return to 40-50 point production once again.

BN **Curtis Glencross** CAL – he's a 20 goal guy that will battle Rene Bourque for opportunity. Unfortunately, Bourque will win that battle if he's healthy. I'm just not a fan. Best case scenario is that he's Kris Versteeg.

Waiver Wire Options

Below are some pickups made this month in an attempt to shore up hits, PIMs and generalized offense.

Chris Kunitz PIT – he'll get plenty of opportunity and you can never ignore offense that's just sitting there for the picking.

Brandon Prust NYR – I fully expect that Prust had a career year last season with his 29 pts and 160 PIMs. If he gets enough ice time then I could still see him getting up there in stats again but that's also a bit of a pipe dream in my eyes too. Prust will give you PIMs and better hits than most guys you'd find on a wire.

Blake Comeau NYI – you'd get 20 reliable goals and an abysmal +/- but you have to pick your poison sometimes.

Mathieu Garon TB – I've got to admit I didn't much get this transaction when you told me about it. Rolo is the starter and the only thing in Garon's favour is the fact that Rolo is as old as me so if his knees hurt half as much as mine then Garon might just be a decent option this year or next. If it pans out for you then congrats to you, you're a braver man than I.

Brian Campbell FLA – he was a 50 pt D the last time he played a full season ... however ... there's a bit of a difference between playing on Chicago's PP and on Florida's PP. No, having Dale Tallon around in Miami doesn't mean it's going to be the same. I suspect he'll still put up 30 pts anyway if the Cats can build some offense down low.

Mark Scheifele WPG – this kid is going to be a rock star in this town (fyi – I live in Winnipeg). I suspect that he'll go back to Barrie to hang out with Dale Hawerchuk but that surely isn't a consolation prize if you're a Jets fan since Hawerchuk is truly adored in this burgh. We'll see about his future in the next 10 games. I could see Scheif and Kane doing a lot of damage for a lot of years together.

Matt Cooke PIT – you need hits and PIMs and Cooke is sure to provide that. He also chips in the occasional point to make him valuable as a power forward option. He's hated universally in the league but in fantasy I don't mind rostering him at all.

Trading Options

We traded Nicklas Lidstrom for Devin Dubnyk – In a dynasty league we had to figure out what we could get for a top 3 D-man that could help us for the future. When Mario first told me about this deal I thought it was decent but I also thought we could've done a little better. He was happy with the return so therefore, so was I. Nick the stick will probably finish near the top of D scoring in the league this season but I was thoroughly surprised to see that Dub began the season as the starter for the Oil. I expected the day would come that Dubnyk would take the starter's job, I just didn't expect it so soon. One of the things that I like about Dub is how big he is. He relies on size, angles and reflex to block so much of the net that he'll be pretty close to a wall for them.

Conclusions

The moves made this month had more to do with finding some generalized offense, PIMs and hits and seeing what sort of future could be found by moving a stud D like Lidstrom. You were successful if you ask me. Guys like Kunitz, Campbell and Scheifele will help with the generalized offense and Scheif is an 18 year old with a sky-high future. PIMs and hits are secured with Prust and Cooke and then you moved a retiring stud like Lidstrom for Dubnyk to provide you with a young stud goalie to offset the age you already roster at that position. Overall, that's a very good month.

You have a shot at winning this year and you also were able to secure a couple more kids for the future too. It's a delicate balance when you're running a dynasty team. You have started to recover from a horrifying fantasy accident. You'll be ok, eventually.