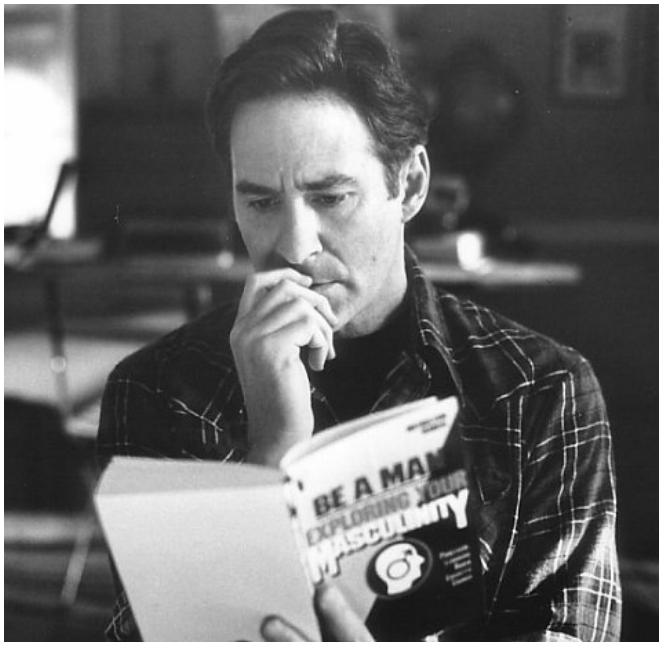

Welcome back to An Expert's Audit. Every month we'll take a look at a reader's keeper league team in the hopes of helping him toward a championship. If you're interested in getting an audit for your own keeper team you can begin the process by emailing Dobber (*dobber at dobberhockey.com*) about it.

I know Mac Vincent from DobberBaseball . We have both put in time as columnists to try and carry the load over there. In case you haven't checked it out DobberBaseball is a wealth of fantasy information for the baseball fan. You could be winning your baseball pool by gleaning all of the same things over there that you get over here. Anywho, Mac and I have become

email compatriots over the seasons so I wasn't surprised to see an email sitting in my inbox one day. It turns out that he had been on vacation in London England and was mugged so that he had lost his passport and he couldn't pay his hotel bill. Seriously, all that was missing was a Nigerian Prince and a lottery jackpot but I still couldn't leave that one alone. I emailed back and asked Mac if this was really him since the writing in the email didn't flow at all like the writing flow of someone who I had come to know. The email conversation ended when I asked my friend how it is that we knew each other. Nobody responded. A little while later I received an email from the real Mac and he was asking for a hockey audit. He has changed his email addy so let's not assume that all of Mac's friends are going to get spammed but if you fall into the same camp as me then find out how you can get some of that lottery money will you?

Mac plays in a 16 team dynasty roto league with 24 man rosters and a 10 man farm team. That makes for a really deep league and Mac was in pretty deep, as in the team wasn't very good. The stat categories in this league are **G, A, +/-, PIM, Hits, PPP, BS** (that would be Blocked Shots, how cool a category is that eh?)
,
and
SOG
for skaters and
GAA, SV%, SV
and
SHO
for goalies. I love leagues that track hits and blocked shots, they're stats that increase the value of more defensemen and pest-y type forwards.

At any rate, let's take a look at **Detroit Red Wings** on the day I arrived.

C **Patrick Berglund** STL – when is this kid going to be the 30 goal monster that his 6'4" frame

should be whenever he comes across the blueline? I have to stop and remember he's only 23 but I still admit that I'm expecting a lot more than what I'm seeing from him. He won't be a 30 goal monster this season and here's hoping that next year sees continued growth in hockey stature.

C **Bryan Little** WPG – it seems this season that when he gets close to 20 minutes of ice he produces. The stat line that I have always found interesting for him is the 31 goals he scored in 08-09 and I'm thinking that perhaps this might be the season that he comes close to that line again.

C **Steven Stamkos** TB – he's the best sniper in the game right now and he'll be the anchor of your team for this decade. 'nuff said.

LW **Sergei Kostitsyn** NAS – this kid can be a bit flashy and he scores goals in bunches but it seems that the spaces between those bunches get longer and longer. Prior to last year there has been no prolonged period of decent stats production for him and I've just got to say that I'm not all that surprised that his production has fallen off this season.

LW **Max Pacioretty** MON – "Patch it already" has had times where he is among the few bright lights for the Habs this season. I'm perfectly fine with the idea that the Habs aren't succeeding, I've been a Leafs fan all my life. Let'em stink and sink, that's what I say. Now Patch? I do want him to succeed but that's because I also have him on my own dynasty team.

LW **David Perron** STL – he's a cocky kid who has sometimes gotten himself in trouble because of his "confidence" but he's the sort that can be Gaborik-type good and I'd resist most offers that come in for him. I find it interesting that he's not scoring goals yet since I really do think that's his strong suit.

RW **Cal Clutterbuck** MIN – in a league that counts hits then "buttercluck" is a top 3 hitter. He'll get decent goals, some PIMs and he'll hit more than virtually anyone in the entire league.

RW **Martin Erat** NAS – he just doesn't shoot the puck. Assist guys are worth a bunch but it's not like this guy is anything close to Hank Sedin or something. He does get some decent opportunity and he's been close to a pt/game on average but it's just not cool to look down a stat line and see that 2 SOGs is a banner game.

RW **Michael Grabner** NYI – apparently he's been hurt all season and that's why he hasn't been able to blow the doors off guys by passing on the outside. If he gets healthy then expect that he'll contribute to the annual Isles run at finishing just out of the running for the 1st overall draft pick.

D **Jake Gardiner** TOR – he's going to be a solid citizen in the NHL. He won't be great but he'll have a decent career. I suspect he might just turn into roster filler for your team and when all the kids from the farm grow up they'll take up his roster spot. In the meantime, he's a solid citizen who won't hurt you much.

D **Tim Gleason** CAR – This is Jake Gardiner in 5 years. He's not worth a ton in your league but there aren't better options around just yet.

D **Erik Karlsson** OTT – he has stepped up his SOG pace from last year and he already has equalled his assist total from last year plus he's only 21. Life is good for this kid and for your team with him anchoring your D.

D **Andrej Sekera** BUF – the changes to the Sabres D corps this season has hurt his fantasy value more than any other on the team. Last year he was borderline decent for fantasy value and this year he's flotsam and jetsam. His concussion before New Year's isn't helping his value either but it's not like you were expecting much after his abysmal start.

D **Jared** "Like a" **Spurgeon** MIN – in most leagues if a D doesn't get 30 points then he's probably not rosterable. Spurgeon is on pace for 29 points this season but his jump up from 12 points last year is enough of a jump to make fantasy folk take notice. He's worth keeping

around.

D **Slava Voynov** LA – this kid has shot up the depth chart and is seeing PP2 time on a regular basis. In regular ice time they've been smart enough to pair him up with a steady stay at home type in Willie Mitchell and that will insulate him a little so that he can take some extra chances to produce more. The fact that he's behind DD and JJ on the depth chart will affect his future since there is always the danger that he'll bolt to Russia. There's plenty of good to see here and not a lot of fantasy folk are up to speed on just how good this kid is.

G **James Reimer** TOR – what's all this chatter over a slump? It's true that he hasn't produced like he did when he first came on the scene last season but people don't really believe that he's somehow lost it completely have they? Monster is not and will not be the full time starter for the Leafs, everybody just calm down and stop selling this kid up the river.

G **Semyon Varlamov** COL – it's true that he also has not had the best season but he's still young and there's still plenty of upside for him. Giggy isn't the danger to his starts that I'm worried about, I'm worried about Desjardins sitting there in the minors.

BN **Devan Dubnyk** EDM – I'm sensing that I might be in the minority in the fantasy hockey community because I still believe that Dub is going to be the starter for the Oil long term. I still believe it could happen this season and you're going to want the Oiler starter when that young offense is finally firing across the board.

BN **Evander** “Citizen” **Kane** WPG – the offense in the Peg flows directly through Evander. He’s 20 years old and he has the world at his feet in a town where hockey is everything. He’s the future captain and their best player for as long as he wants to be here and they’re smart enough to give him everything he wants.

BN **Tyler Bozak** TOR – if Tim Connolly is healthy and on the ice then Bozak is completely expendable. The time to trade Bozak was when Connolly was off the ice since he was producing at nearly a point per game. Now that Bozak is injured you won’t get anything for him and when he returns he won’t be worth much at all since he’ll get no opportunity to produce. If you can find a taker I say you should make any reasonable move.

BN **David Legwand** NAS – he had an amazing start to the season and I’m afraid the time to trade him has closed ... and that’s exactly what you should’ve done after his hot start. Oh well, it’s not always easy to figure out when you should cut bait.

BN **Zack Smith** OTT – I think that he’s got a shot at being a serviceable 20 goal scorer with a bit of an edge to him and that’s about it. Your league is deep so 20 goal guys are still pretty valuable but I don’t want you planning on him being a 40 goal guy one day. It’s just not happening, not in my crystal ball anyway.

BN **Carl** “I’d rather not barter, I’m not so good at” **Hagelin** NYR – too much? Oh well, you’re stuck with me. His speed is his biggest asset and the jury is still out on just how much he’ll be able to provide to a fantasy roster.

BN **Greg Zanon** MIN – what is it about hockey players with Zed names? It’s just cool sounding, isn’t it? I personally blame Zarley Zalapski. Zanon’s only fantasy value in this league is in blocked shots but then he started into a series of healthy scratches sapping all relevant value out of him.

IR **Tyler** “Oscar” **Myers** BUF – he has been the poster child for the Sabres’ miseries this season but now that he’s back on the ice and he’s healthy we’re going to be seeing what we have suspected to see from him.

The 10 man farm team included **Mikael Granlund** MIN, **Evgeny Kuznetsov** WAS, **Tyler Biggs**
TOR,
Emerson Etem
ANA,
Zack Kassian
BUF,
Vladimir Tarasenko
STL,
Jerome Gauthier-Leduc
BUF,
Brandon Gormley
PHX,

Jon Merrill
NJ, and
Justin Schultz
ANA.

You had the worst goaltending in the league, by a wide margin, but there was also some upside there so I wasn't terribly worried about your future there. I also knew that once all the kids on your farm (particularly Granlund, Kuznetsov and Tarasenko) grew into the big club then your offense will be in very good shape.

Waiver Wire Options

Clarke MacArthur TOR – he's on pace for the 20 something goals that he's going to get but his production this season has dropped off because his assists are in the crapper. If he taps into a little of the heat coming from Grabo or Koolie of late then things might be looking up for him.

Jason Chimera WAS – the Caps' offense has stunk it up so much that old man Chimera led the team in goals until Christmas. Well anyway, he was worth an add for some cheap goals.

Kevin Klein NAS – some say that his best work was done in “A Fish called Wanda” but I’ve always been partial to “In and Out” for pure movie enjoyment. That and blocked shots, he’s really good for blocked shots. There’s not a lot of offense in him but he puts on the wide shin guards and he fills the lanes like the best of them out there.

Maxim Lapierre VAN – the offense isn’t there but there are lots of hits to be had. He’s got a definite pest-y approach on the ice.

Trading Options

We traded **Sergei Kostitsyn for Matt Read**. I don’t see much future in SKost but I do see better short term and definitely long term value out of Read. Read came on the scene like gangbusters this season and he continues to contribute on a very strong offensively gifted team. Read will provide decent offense and elite +/- for a fantasy squad going forward.

The trading story got a little weird after we made that deal. Your league only allows you to roster 3 tenders on your big club but you can have as many goalies as you want on your farm. I suggested that it’d be wise to target a goalie to help you long term. We targeted **Jack Campbell** and our first offer should’ve closed the deal because it was a gift of an offer. We offered up

Michael Granlund
and the other guy countered instead of just hitting Accept. I was astounded that this guy couldn't just take his Christmas gift and be happy but he kept insisting that a deal work out that would land him Tyler Myers. Our "final" offer of
Jon Merrill and Tyler Myers for Jack Campbell, Marc-Edouard Vlasic and a first round draft pick
was also declined and I just shook my head and said "buddy, you should've just taken Granlund and went home happy". It's just plain wrong that this didn't get done.

Conclusions

Well it was a fun month working on this team. Adding Hits and Blocked Shots to a format makes for some altering of player values across the board and that made for some nice fun. I think your team is going to be fine long term and with how your team has played out through half a season this year then you're poised for a top 3 pick in the draft this year. I think that another season under the belt is going to make some difference for your team, particularly since your goaltending will have more games under their belt and will be that much more likely to step up and solidify the worst part of your team this season. The waiver adds this month were meant to try and catch a little lightning in the bottle (Clarke MacArthur) or to augment categories where you were falling a little short (Kevin Klein and blocked shots).

As for the trade you made, I think it's wonderful for you long term since I truly believe that Read is going to have a ton more value than SKost over a career. Then of course there's the trade that didn't happen but should've happened. It's astounding to me that the Campbell trade never happened and I don't think we were being unreasonable at all. If the other guy comes back with an offer that works for you then snap that up but in truth, it's probably best that he didn't take either any of your offers, at least two of which were pretty much "gift" offers. You know what they say, "if you loan a guy 20 bucks and never see him again ... it was probably worth it."

I know I'll see you around Mac, if only to field more spamming requests from Nigerian princes. Cheers.