Welcome once again to “An Expert’s Audit”. This audit will be posted here as well as on my fantasy hockey blog at www.fantasyhockey.hockeyanalysis.com . During the season I do weekly reviews of teams for people who email in to me for a look-see, they’re less in-depth 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 (dobber at dobberhockey dot com) about it.

Adam Kras is cool. Way cooler than me. He’s the bass player in a band and he was pleased to announce the birth of his first child Cohen on Aug 31. Welcome to the world little Cohen, try not to make dad and mom lose too much sleep (both short term and long term). Adam and I went to the same university, about a decade apart from one another and he’s been featured on an episode of “Rich Bride Poor Bride”. True story, I was channel flipping last week and I came across Adam’s TV debut in all its comedic glory. It’s not like I watch that show or anything but I

HAD to spend a few minutes on it this time. You can see more info about him and his band at his band's website www.cyanidekiss.com . There, a little publicity couldn't hurt, right?

Adam plays in a 14 team H2H Dynasty league with a 30 man active roster plus prospects and 3 IR options. He starts 4C, 4RW, 4LW, 6D, 2G with 10 bench slots. He also has every stat category known to mankind to contend with (well maybe he doesn't EVERY stat category but there are a lot of categories). He battles it out weekly in these categories: G, A, P, +/-, PIM, PPG, PPA, PPP, GWG, SOG, FaceoffWins and W, GA, GAA, Saves, S%, and Shutouts. That would be the ever-popular 11x6 fantasy pool. If you've read my two bit opinion over the years you'd know that I don't like pools that duplicate stats, and this is one of those pools. As an example let's say that Eric Staal scores a power play goal right off the drop of the puck, well that one thing gets tabulated in six categories, seven if it's the game winner. I just have a problem with the idea that someone gets credit for something seven times when once accomplishes the same task. Anyhoo, they don't ask me about how to set it up so I'll just move on to the roster, that fine with all of you? Let's look at KOCUR MEAT.

Center
Sidney Crosby PIT – yeah, he's pretty good. Nuff said.
Mikko Koivu MIN – from mid March to mid April he was on a pt/game pace and spent all game with Gaborik. However, unless PM Bouchard gets hurt then Mikko doesn't line up with Gabby and there's nobody else worth playing alongside in Minny. This could be a long year.
Sam Gagner EDM – I pegged him for a breakout to begin the season last year and he nearly got to 50 pts. Now if only we can figure out how to get those shootout goals to count toward his stats. Seriously, watch this kid take his turn in the shootout, it's worth your time.
Martin Hanzal PHX – I honestly don't see him getting top-six minutes this year. I think one of the guys lower in your pecking order is going to take his starting slot on your squad.
Eric Perrin ATL – somebody has to wake Slava Kozlov up and I'm praying it's this kid.
Shawn Matthias FLA – you're going to hear a lot of him this year. David Booth too, whom you also have.
Brian Boyle LA – he's ready and he'll see second-line duty.

Right Wing
Marian Hossa DET – many are drooling at the thought of him teaming up with Datsyuk or Zetterberg. Use one of your son's bibs, you'll need it. I'm betting it'll be Datsyuk by the way.
Dustin Brown LA – power forwards have short careers putting up PIMs and pts and this guy is ready to fill in those numbers for the next few seasons.
Brad Boyes STL – goals, goals, goals. He's not a flash in the pan.
Joffrey Lupul PHI – he gives me the impression he might be Vaclav Prospal and the Flyers are looking pretty deep anyway so if you can get what you want for him then do so.
Drew Stafford BUF – he'll get top 6 minutes in Buffalo and I really like him to surprise and break the 50 pt barrier this season.
Ryan Callahan NYR – some pencil him into the second line on the Rangers but I just am not a believer. I could see Dubinsky or Prucha taking his minutes away.
Jared Boll CLB – nothing like having a troglodyte at the bottom of your roster. PIMs is all he offers.

Left Wing
Paul Kariya STL – there was a time when he was among the league leaders in SOG but that was many moons ago and his goal totals have decreased relatedly. I still like him for 20 goals in a great season
Ryan Clowe SJ – he should've been what Milan Michalek is to that team. Now he has to rely on Patrick Marleau to become the man he was two seasons ago.
Loui Eriksson DAL – he's a checker destined for third-line duty at best.
David Booth FLA – see Shawn Mathias.
Sergei Samsonov CAR – once he got to Carolina he had a bit of a rebirth. As soon as everyone is healthy there again I have some doubts as to whether the rebirth will continue.
Daniel Paille BUF – could see some decent second-line duty and if Derek Roy is healthy then Paille will be a decent beneficiary of his talent.
Tuomo Ruutu CAR – I see him as a low end fantasy option as soon as Brind'amour returns to the Carolina roster.

Defense
Ryan Whitney PIT – he'll be a nice Christmas present for your team, until then, tread water.
Jay Bouwmeester FLA – I wanted him to be Chris Pronger but he's never had the PIMs. I'm just leery of him, not sure why.
Eric Johnson STL – he'll be a 40-50 pt D and will lead the league in ice time eventually. I heart EJ.
Paul Martin NJ – the former Prime Minister didn't get my vote either. I suppose he'll have some PP opportunity and that's valuable.
Toni Lydman BUF – might get a tiny bit of PP time but overall I'm just not a believer (at all).
Francois Beauchemin ANA – when Niedermayer was retired last year with his hockey pants up to his armpits then Beau was among the league leaders in ice time. That changed but Nied's also isn't going to want to be around forever either. I think he'll be very valuable eventually.
Marc-Edouard Vlasic SJ – someone has to team up with Dan Boyle right? And … well ok that'll probably be Ehrhoff or a forward on the PP point but … well … he has a good name that's easy to give a nickname to. I call him pickles. I don't like him too much for fantasy stats.

Goalie
Marc-Andre Fleury PIT – if he's healthy he's one of the top goalie options in a keeper. Many weren't believers in him last year but I think he's shown his worth a couple times over. Remind him to watch his step coming on the ice though, that fall at the beginning of the Finals was embarrassing for us all.
Chris Osgood DET – you'll get at least one year of top stats out of him but the Wings are going to have to figure something out for their future.
Jaroslav Halak MON – he's got skills but his future in Montreal will be stunted with Carey Price around but a trade out of Hab-ville would keep him from getting stale. How about a trade to Detroit? Wouldn't that be nice?

Prospects
K. Turris, Z. Boychuk, J. Voracek, R. Jones, J. VanRiemsdyk, M. Boedker, M. Pacioretty, M. Trunev, A. Vasyunov, J. Abdelkader, K. Shattenkirk, N. Oystrick, B. Bishop.

Your C's have the potential to be quite strong, your starting 4 RW's are already very strong and your LW is your weakest position on your team. Your D will eventually be solid but it looks like you could use a little help there and your goalies will be more than solid this season if they're healthy. Your prospects are very nice. I have some fairly big hopes for Turris, Boychuk, Voracek JVR, Boedker, Shattenkirk and Bishop. I'd resist most attempts to trade them, but one never knows what sorts of deals come along.

You have a waiver wire in your league but in all honesty there's nothing there worth pursuing for your lineup at this time. You're going to have to improve your roster through trade and you'll be shopping primarily for help at LW and D, probably one guy at each position.

Hey buddy, can you spare some PIMs?

Your roster needs some help at LW and D and you look a little light on some toughness in your starting lineup. I'm going to suggest we go after a LW playing top 6 minutes for his team and a hard-nosed D who'll help on the PP plus get some PIMs.

Offer Ryan Clowe to Vinnie's Crew for Robert Nilsson – this was actually a long drawn out affair that was almost done three times. Crew suggested possibilities on a couple of occasions and then backed out before the deed was done. In the end he figured that Clowe was too injury prone to trade for in this deal and this idea died a painful death. HOWEVER, once the door had closed on a Nilsson deal then Crew decided to put Vincent Lecavalier on the block for prospects and young players. The offer turned into Lupul, Whitney, Clowe, Hanzal, Voracek, and Shattenkirk for Lecavalier, Nilsson and Goligoski. In this way Adam lost some kids with talent to land a superstar, he got help at LW for a price he can afford and he got a replacement D for the one he moves out. This trade offer died a painful death too. Vinnie took a bad offer from someone else if you ask me and he should've taken this deal, it would've helped him more than what he got. Adam came away empty after working on this deal for the better part of two weeks. Frustrating.

Offer Ryan Callahan to Transmangulation for Alex Burrows – once Nilsson went off the board we decided on Burrows as our fallback position. I think he has the potential for one of the best PIM and point combinations in the game. If you can get 30 pts and 200 PIMs you have a proverbial gold mine that few in the entire league can match. Discussions continued. He asked for Joffrey Lupul, you declined. He threw out a completely unreasonable offer and you cuffed him upside the head (he's your cousin) and then finally he gave you Alex Burrows and Thomas Hickey for Joffrey Lupul. Good enough I say. You got some D depth and a LW with PIMs that you needed.

Offer Drew Stafford to Puck Finn for Kevin Bieksa – there were a few PIMy D guys that we targeted but Bieksa came out on the top of the list because he's got skill and his value is deflated after his season of discontent last year. Stafford should be in line for duty on the top 2 lines in Buffalo this season and you can spare him at RW. The offers continued for a long time until you made the Burrows deal. Puck Finn kept asking for Kevin Shattenkirk to get this done and we both fought the urge to include him due to your lack of prospect depth at D. Once you did the Burrows deal we both agreed that you could include Hickey in your discussions since

the future of the Kings blueline is a lot more crowded than it will be for Shattenkirk and the Avs. It was risky but you needed a D that could help you now and Bieksa fits the bill. In the end the deal was Ben Bishop and Thomas Hickey for Kevin Bieksa and a 2010 2nd round pick. From our perspective Bieksa moves you closer to the top now while both prospects are a couple years away from contributing, at best. It hurt to trade some quality prospects but you'll like the all around and special teams play that Bieksa will give your team. I'm also betting that this year is more like two seasons ago for Bieksa than the trainwreck that was his season last year.

Sergei Gonchar was offered to you for James VanRiemsdyk and Martin Hanzal – we had a long discussion about JVR, how far away he is and just how much of a stud he'll be when he finally arrives. In the end we both agreed that your prospects are deep enough that you could move JVR for some help now and then we'll just wait 3 seasons to see just how good JVR is anyway. There was no way we were giving Hanzal up too though, I suggested you offer a low pick and don't budge from that. In the end this deal was Gonchar for JVR and a 2009 2nd round pick. You get help right now where you need it most, defense, and it doesn't cost you anything from tomorrow's roster. I got the impression that I liked this deal more than Adam did but believe me, the time will come that you'll LOVE this deal … Pops.

Conclusions

Well, I think you're ready. You needed some LW help, some D help and you had to put in a better showing for some PIMs. All of the changes you made are designed to help you there. My crystal ball tells me that Burrows might be among the next really good power forward options and as a minimum he'll anchor your PIMs all season. Kevin Bieksa is going to return to his 40 pt prowess now that he's healthy again and his value is at a low point right now after such a poor, injury riddled season last year. Adding Gonchar was a bonus, the other guy approached you about it and whenever someone offers you the best D for PPP in the game last year at a price you can afford, then you make the move.

You definitely had some prospect depth to make these moves with. You added the 3 guys listed above along with Thomas Hickey and what should be a high second round pick but it only cost you Joffrey Lupul off your NHL roster. It hurt to move Ben Bishop who could be really special and JVR is definitely going to be a stud when he arrives but they're both a couple years away at least. You helped yourself NOW, when you needed to help yourself.

That was fun Adam. If ever you're in Winterpeg then drop me a line and we'll sit down in another coffee place to catch up. All my best to you and your new family, and to Kocur Meat too.