The first round of the Western Conference playoffs are nearly over as we have two teams who were ousted in quick four-game sweeps. We'll do a quick assessment of their players with fantasy significance and take a look at what could be in store for them next season.

Columbus

Five Stars

R. J. Umberger – Three goals in four contests, while firing nine shots on goal in the series. Umberger should maintain a top-six role with the Blue Jackets next season, so look for him to split time centering Rick Nash.

Four Stars

None

Three Stars

Rick Nash – Probably expected more from the best offensive player on the Jacket's squad, but he was pretty much locked down by the Red Wing's defense throughout the series. With another year, and finally some post-season experience Nash should finally top the 80 point mark next season.

Kris Russell – Played well throughout the series, averaged 16:40 in ice-time per contest, and 2:03 on the power-play. Look for him to be the number one PP QB for Columbus heading into next season along with a sharp rise in fantasy production.

Raffi Torres – Another player that stepped up big this post-season, used his size up front, and played with physicality. Unfortunately he won't crack the top-six next season, but could make a decent 35-40 point as a third liner.

Two Stars

Freddy Modin – Finished with only one point in four contests. The Jackets really needed some secondary scoring, but unfortunately didn't get any from Modin. He'll also be hard-pressed to crack the top-six in Columbus next season, so I wouldn't expect anything more than 50 points from him.

Jakub Voracek – Probably a border-line player between three and two stars, but I downgraded him because of his lack of scoring during the series. Voracek gained valuable post-season experience, which will greatly further his development. He was second to Nash in shots on goal taken in the series, which shows that he's beginning to take more responsibility for his offense. Look for him to take the next step forward next season and crack the 50-point plateau.

Steve Mason – I'll give him a bonus star because he's a rookie, as he carried the Blue Jackets into their first ever post-season berth. But other than that, he didn't have a spectacular post-season that many fantasy pundits expected from him. He finished with an atrocious 4.27 GAA and a .878 save percentage, I'll give him some slack since it was up against the Red Wings, but those numbers certainly won't carry any positives into next season for Mason.

One Star

Kristian Huselius – I warned readers about Huselius' disappearing act during the playoffs, and it seemed to have come true. He finished with two points, while firing 11 shots on goal during the series. He is getting paid the big bucks in Columbus, so expect him to maintain a top-six role once again next season, but I wouldn't expect anything more than the 66 points he put up this regular season.

Jason Williams - Really needed to step up during the post-season, but like Huselius completely disappeared from the series. He managed to pick up a lone assist while firing a disappointing five shots on goal in the four contests. With Nikita Filatov, Torres and Modin possibly rounding out the top-nine in Columbus combined with a sub-par performance in this season's playoffs, it'd be hard for Williams to have any fantasy significance with the Jackets next season, despite having a relative cheap salary of $2.2 million.

Fedor Tyutin – Led all Blue Jacket's defense corps in shots on goal and points during the regular season, but like many of the other Jackets was a no show throughout the first round series. Tyutin certainly improved his fantasy value this season, but it will probably regress a little with Russell gaining more responsibility on the blue line for Columbus next season.

Antoine Vermette – Certainly had a sub-par post-season, as he was held point-less during the very quick four game series. He developed a bit of chemistry centering the top-line alongside Nash and Huselius, so if he can regain that spot again next season, look for much better numbers from him than he had in Ottawa.

St. Louis

Five Stars

Andy McDonald – Four points in four contests while firing a team-high 19 shots on goal. Andy Mac really established himself as an under-rated center this post-season, and will once again be undervalued in many fantasy drafts come next season. It appears that McDonald will center the top-line in St. Louis next season, and with a healthy Paul Kariya returning to the lineup, look for him to be in line for a very quiet 80 points next season.

Four Stars

Brad Boyes – Boyes did his part while scoring a few timely goals for St. Louis, but the Canucks experience was just too overwhelming for the inexperienced Blues. Boyes fired 13 shots on goal, while averaging 21:34 per contest for the Blues in the four contests. This was his first taste of the post-season, so look for him to use the experience to his advantage for next season and once again make a run for the Rocket Richard trophy.

David Backes – I thought he couldn't possibly be productive during the post-season and that a lot of his regular season production was a fluke. But he certainly turned me into a believer this post-season, while tallying three points in four contests as well as laying down 18 hits. He reminds me of a poor man's version of Brendan Morrow, and could possibly have a line of 60 points, 180 PIMs, and 200 SOG at the end of next season, which would make him a huge fantasy sleeper heading into next season.

Three Stars

Chris Mason – I debated about giving him four stars or three, but ended up going with three because he didn't steal manage to steal one game for the Blues. He finished the season with a

2.34 GAA and a .916 save percentage, which ranks him seventh and 11th respectively in those goalie categories amongst all of the starting goalies in the post-season. It certainly wasn't poor goaltending that lead to the Blues four-game defeat at the hands of the Canucks. So Mason should certainly head into the off-season with plenty of confidence for next year.

Alex Steen – I also toyed around a bit with Steen in debating whether or not he was worth three stars or four. The fact that he was tied with McDonald for the team-lead in shots on goal is certainly worthy of four stars, but the fact that he only picked up a lone point in the series made me drop him down to three. Either way Steen had a good post-season and should use this experience to help him out on the third line next season.

David Perron – Perron impressed me with his post-season play as he finished with two points and a plus three rating in the first round series. He'll need to have a strong camp to get himself into a top-six position next season as the return of Paul Kariya will certainly negatively impact his fantasy value. I wouldn't expect him to repeat his 50-point performance that he had this season for next years.

Barrett Jackman – Jackman did a decent job on the blue line for the Blues as he was a huge minutes chewer while averaging 25:18 each contest and picking up nine hits and four blocked shots for a good across-the-board post-season performance. He won't ever be a big fantasy producer, but someone needs to do the dirty work, while others get the glory.

Two Stars

Carlo Colaiacovo – Finished pointless but did manage to fire 11 shots on goal in the four contests. The Blues' blue-line corps was pretty thin, so it didn't take much for the Canucks to shut down the Blues' offense by targeting the forwards. This post-season experience should certainly help Colo heading into next season as he'll get backup from Erik Johnson when he returns from his knee injury. Carlo should be another good sleeper option for the Blues next season.

T.J. Oshie – Oshie wasn't spectacular in any facet of the game, so giving him a two star rating is probably pretty fair. He only fired six shots on goal, despite averaging a tad over 19 minutes per game for the Blues. This was the first playoff experience for Oshie, so you can probably attribute a bit of the poor production on rookie jitters. He'll be a mainstay on the Blues top-six for next season, so look for him to crack the 50-point plateau next season.

Patrik Berglund – I'll chuck Berglund in the same boat as Oshie, as they both are young and inexperienced which is probably the main reason why they were both held pointless throughout the series. Berglund didn't get the big minutes as Oshie did, as he only averaged 10:11 per contest in fourth line duties, which also explains why he was only able to fire only three shots on goal in the four games. With Backes establishing himself as a top-six player for the Blues, Berglund's fantasy value will certainly take a hit next season, as he is scheduled for third line duties.

One Star

Keith Tkachuk – There were high expectations for the seasoned NHL vet as the Blues were largely depending on him to carry most of their scoring this post-season. He ended up with a mighty goose egg and only seven shots on goal, definitely not up to the expectation of a veteran who has 89 games of playoff experience. Age is finally catching up to Tkachuk, so a scoring range of 40-50 points probably is a reasonable expectation from the 37-year old.

Questions or comments? Put any thoughts that you may have in the comments section below and I'll be happy to discuss it with you.