

The Fat Lady Has Sung III

Written by Ryan Ma

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The second round of the Western Conference playoffs are over and another two Western Conference teams have joined four others on the golf course early this summer. Similar to the columns from two weeks ago, 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.

Vancouver

Five Stars

Alex Edler – Certainly was one of the Canucks that performed better than expected as he finished with eight points in 10 playoff games this post-season. He averaged 22:08 per contest for Vancouver, 3:19 of which came on the power-play. With the momentum that he built in this

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great post-season, Edler should translate into a solid 40-45 point player next season.

Four Stars

Daniel Sedin – Both Sedin’s finished with a team-leading 10 points each, as they led the way for the Canucks. Daniel was more productive in the SOG and PIMs department as he picked up a team-high 36 SOG along with eight PIMs. I assigned the fantasy Western Conference Hart Award to him last week and he certainly backed up that award with a solid post-season this year. He is due for unrestricted free agency in the off-season, but the Canucks should have enough salary cap room to accommodate the Sedins, look for another consistent line of 80 points, 35 PIMs, and 275 SOG next season from the Swedish sniper.

Henrik Sedin – As mentioned above, both Sedins had good post-seasons while tallying at a point-per-game pace these playoffs. I would have awarded them five stars if they were able to get the Canucks past the Blackhawks, but they didn’t so I dropped them one step on the ladder. Henrik’s numbers don’t look as attractive as Daniel’s as he only picked up two PIMs, and 19 SOG, but Henrik has always been known as a passer more so than a shooter. He is an assists machine as he averaged near the 60 assists mark in the last four seasons. Look for him to make it five consecutive next season.

Sami Salo – Salo also tallied a very respectable point-per-game effort these playoffs, while picking up seven points in seven contests and firing 12 SOG. He was battling a “lower-body injury” which caused him to miss a few games in the playoffs. Salo has the history of being a bit of a band-aid boy, so expect another 60 game, 25-30 point season from him next season.

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Three Stars

Mats Sundin – I'll be honest and say that I expected a bit more from Sundin, which is why I dropped him down to three stars instead of awarding him four. For me the playoffs, is when a superstar steps up and brings his "A" game. I understand the fact that he's 38-years old, but a star needs to be a star in order to take their team to the next level, unfortunately, he didn't. I wouldn't expect Sundin to be back with the Canucks next season unless he's willing to take a massive pay cut and accommodate for their salary cap situation after re-signing the Sedins. Expect a similar situation as this season, where he'll wait out till Christmas before making a decision about his hockey future, which will certainly please many fantasy poolies...

Two Stars

Ryan Kesler – I also had big expectations for Kesler, as I picked him to be in the top five overall scorers this post-season, but that blew up in my face when the Canucks were ousted by the Blackhawks in six games. Kesler finished the post-season with four points in 10 games, while picking up 14 PIMs and 28 SOG. Kesler took a big step forward in his development this year, but with the possibility of Mats Sundin leaving, I wouldn't expect him to repeat/surpass the numbers that he had this season.

Alex Burrows – Burrows started the post-season off very well as he picked up three points in the four games in the opening series against the Blues. It was the complete opposite picture in the second round series, as a constant in-your-face defensive scheme by Duncan Keith and Brent Seabrook really shut him down. Burrows only managed a lone point in six contests, and was a complete a non-factor in the series. The combo of the Sedins and Burrows really demonstrated a lot of chemistry during the regular season and appeared to look like they've been playing together for many years. I wouldn't expect too much from Burrows, but a reasonable projection of 60 points seems fair enough.

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Roberto Luongo – I probably would have bet my house on Luongo winning the Conn Smythe award following the opening round series with the Blues when he put up mind boggling numbers like a .962 save percentage and a 1.16 goals against average. The second round was a complete 180 as he managed only a .878 save percentage and a 3.54 goals against average against the Blackhawks. I probably would have cut him some slack and given him three stars, but he came out and said, “I think I let my teammates down tonight and it's something that's going to take a while to get over.” Admitting you dropped the ball drops you down a notch in my books...

One Star

Pavol Demitra – I had huge expectations for Demitra this post-season, and needless to say I was disappointed with his three points in six games performance this post-season. It turned out that he tore his labrum, which caused him to miss most of the second round series against the Blackhawks. Labrum surgery tends to greatly affect players for the next 12 months following the surgery. I would seriously temper my expectations on numbers for Demitra (ahem, cough cough... Mike Richards) during the next fantasy season.

Ducks

Five Stars

Ryan Getzlaf – One word: STUD! Getzaf tallied 18 points in 13 games, along with 25 PIMs and 25 SOG. He certainly deserves to be mentioned alongside the big three of Alex Ovechkin, Sidney Crosby and Evgeni Malkin. The added bonus is that he doesn't have the large price tag that comes along with the other three. Let the salivating begin, look for a line of 100 points, 100 PIMs, and 250 SOG from Getz next season.

Four Stars

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Corey Perry – Perry finished the post-season with 14 points in 13 contests, while firing 41 SOG. We also saw some toughness from the youngster as he picked up 36 PIMs during the post-season as well. There has been some recent debate on the forums regarding who's the better player, Perry or Bobby Ryan. At least for these playoffs the edge goes to Perry. A line of 85 points, 105 PIMs, and 300 SOG certainly isn't implausible for the talented right winger for next season.

Scott Niedermayer – Niedermayer had a great regular season while tallying 59 points in 82 games and followed that up with a great post-season while tallying 10 points in 13 games these playoffs for the Ducks. Those numbers currently sit him tied for second overall amongst all defenseman in the NHL during the playoffs. What's interesting is that he also averaged well over 26 minutes of ice-time per contest, so he definitely has plenty of gas left in the tank if he decides to return next season.

Chris Pronger – Pronger also had a very productive post-season as he tallied 10 points in 13 games for the Ducks. He also garnered a plus four rating and 27 SOG while averaging a league-high 27:12 each contest for Anaheim. Plain and simple, Pronger is a workhorse and will once again be that workhorse for the Ducks next season. Expect a line of 45 points, 100 PIMs, and 175 SOG next season from Pronger.

Jonas Hiller – I debated whether to give him three or four stars, but decided to give him the benefit of the doubt because of his great stats. Hiller finished with a dazzling 2.23 goals against average and a .943 save percentage in 13 contests for the Ducks in just his first ever playoff experience in the NHL. A lot of his future is unknown, but one thing for sure is that at the very least he'll have to split the goaltending duties with J.S. Giguere next season.

Three Stars

Bobby Ryan – Ryan didn't have a bad post-season as he picked up seven points in 13 contests

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for the Ducks these playoffs. The only distinguishing point that I could have made between Perry and Ryan is that when it counted (Game Six/Seven) Perry really stepped it up, where as Ryan didn't. There was quite a bit of flack that Dobber copped when he stated in the daily ramblings that Ryan would barely top 60 points next campaign, but there are a lot of external factors that might affect his numbers next season. Sophomore slump, juggling of lines, change in defensive schemes, just to name a few. If you head into the season expecting 60-65 and he gets 80, you're going to be ecstatic at the end of the season. If you go in thinking that he's going to be a 85-point player, and he ends up with 60 (or worse - Peter Mueller comes to mind), it could cost you the win... I'm backing Dobber 150 percent on this one. Take the safe route and cover your backside.

□ Two Stars

Teemu Selanne – Selanne finished the regular season with nine points in the last seven games, so he was certainly revving on high gear before entering the playoffs. I was expecting Selanne to be a difference maker during this post-season but he just turned out to be the run-of-the-mill underachiever. He finished with just six points in 13 contests, and played a very minimal role in the series against Chicago. Selanne promised to give the Ducks a decision about his future pretty quickly, according to the Orange County Register, which could mean one of two things, 1) He's dead set on returning next season or 2) He's dead set on retiring. At least fantasy owners won't have to worry about the half season shenanigans that he pulled two seasons ago...

Andrew Ebbett – Ebbett finished the regular season with three points in the final five contests. I had high hopes for Ebbett to chip in with a few points during these playoffs while centering the second line alongside Selanne and Carter, but he ended up with a disappointing three points in 13 contests. He finished the season with 32 points in just 48 contests, so a small increase in expectation of 45 points for next season seems fairly reasonable for Ebbett.

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Ryan Whitney – Whitney finished with six points in 13 contests, which isn't a bad standard by any means, but his nine total shots on goal were a huge disappointment in my opinion. Whitney averaged 1.48 SOG/contest during the regular season, but picked up just 0.69 SOG/contest during the post-season which certainly isn't good enough for a defenseman of Whitney's caliber. As of right now the situation is probably is a bit muddy for Whitney, we'll know a bit more about the Ducks' defensive scheme once training camp rolls around in September.

One Star

J.S. Giguere – I don't know how much you can fault someone for playing in less than 17 minutes of ice-time in 13 contests during the playoffs, but I certainly expected Giggy to have more of an impact this post-season than he actually did. I guess all I can say is that if you believe in Giggy, you'll certainly be able to pick him up at a discounted rate at the draft table next season...

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.