What it boils down to is optimal playing time. A top-line player will get the best of everything, while a top-six player will receive decent even strength/second unit power-play ice-time. A bottom feeder will most likely receive checking line ice-time and less optimal scoring ice-time, which will hamper their scoring ability during the season. Their big break will only come if there are injuries or big sophomore slumps from their team's top-six. There really isn't a sense in projection 80 points for a player who isn't even on a team's top-line let alone top-six. Note: Take the line combos with a grain of salt. They are just arbitrary and are used primarily to separate a team's top-six from the bottom-six. I really don't want to get into arguments about how Bobby Ryan is going to line up alongside Ryan Getzlaf and Corey Perry instead of Joffrey Lupul. Anyways, onto the good stuff.

Anaheim - Locked

Top Six
Joffrey Lupul – Ryan Getzlaf – Corey Perry
Bobby Ryan – Saku Koivu – Teemu Selanne

Bottom Feeders
Andrew Ebbett, Todd Marchant, Erik Christensen and Ryan Carter.

Anaheim's top six is set in stone, and there really isn't too much wiggle room for the bottom six to improve barring injury. The Ducks offense looks pretty potent and should compete hard with the Sharks for the Pacific crown this season.

Calgary – Top-line set, second line uncertain

Top Line

Rene Bourque – Olli Jokinen – Jarome Iginla
Curtis Glencoss – Daymond Langkow – David Moss

Bottom Feeders
Craig Conroy, Wayne Primeau, Freddie Sjostrom, Eric Nystrom, Mikael Backlund, Jamie Lundmark and Brandon Prust.

Calgary's top six is pretty much almost the opposite of Anaheim's, where there is plenty of room for movement amongst the top-six. Moss is an early favourite of mine, but if he falters there's will be plenty of opportunity for Lundmark/Nystrom to jump in and take a top-six position with the Flames. The same goes for Glencross. With Moss and Glencross, you could either hit a massive walk-off homerun, or strike out swinging. Tread accordingly.

Chicago- Top six solid, but faces stiff competition

Top Six
Patrick Sharp – Jonathan Toews – Patrick Kane
Kris Versteeg – Dave Bolland – Marian Hossa

Bottom Feeders
Dustin Byfuglien, John Madden, Andrew Ladd, Troy Brouwer, Tomas Kopecky, Ben Eager, Colin Fraser and Adam Burish.

Chicago is in an enviable position as their top-nine is pretty much interchangeable. If any of their “role players” struggle they could easily be replaced with someone temporarily lower on the depth chart. Byfuglien established himself as a pest in front of the net on the power-play so look for him to assume that role once again for the Hawks on the PP. With that said, Blackhawk players are going to experience “Detroit” syndrome, where third-line players will “steal” points away from top-six players, just based on the quality of their third line. With the exception of Toews, Kane and Hossa, it’ll be near impossible for the other Blackhawk players to crack the 85 point mark this season.

Columbus – Pretty Certain, but faces shallow competition

Top Six

Rick Nash – R.J. Umberger – Kristian Huselius
Antoine Vermette – Derrick Brassard – Jakub Voracek

Bottom Feeders

Sammy Pahlsson, Freddie Modin, Raffi Torres, Jason Chimera, Nikita Filatov, Jared Boll, Andrew Murray, and Derek Dorsett.

Columbus' top-six is fairly certain, but there could be a bit of movement involving the top-line center position. Torres, Chimera and Filatov would make a formidable third-line, but chances are that Columbus will probably keep Filatov down in the minors for another year of seasoning. The Blue Jackets are in a similar position as the Flames, but Columbus has the advantage of boasting a more talented second line than Calgary does, which will make it more difficult for the third line players to crack.

Colorado – Top-line locked, rest uncertain

Top Six
Wojtek Wolski – Paul Stastny – Milan Hejduk
Darcy Tucker – Matt Duchenne – Marek Svatos

Bottom Feeders
T.J. Hensick, Cody McLeod, Chris Stewart, Dave Koci, T.J. Galiardi, and Ryan Stoa.

The lack of depth in the top-six coupled with shallow competition from the bottom-six, it can be expected that there will be plenty of line up changes in Colorado throughout the season. Tucker's temporary spot in the top-six could easily be occupied by one of Hensick, Stewart, Galiardi, Stoa or McLeod during the season. Duchenne should certainly get the green light, and probably is the front runner for the Calder Trophy entering this season. There probably isn't too much fantasy impact in Colorado this season, but look for Wolski to finally make a push towards stardom this season.

Next week: the Stars, Red Wings, Oilers, Kings and Wild.

Questions or comments? Like always I'll be ready and willing to discuss them in the comments section below.