

## Seven Lucky Changes to Alter Your Fantasy Fate

Written by Ryan Ma

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We're turning the final corner of the fantasy season and depending on your league settings you could be heading down a few different paths. Let's look at those who are gunning for a money spot in Roto leagues, or those entering the playoffs in H2H leagues. If you are in a tight league where every little stat matters, making the smart adds/drops could determine whether you are the league champion or just another one of the 10 or 12 disappointed losers.

### Who's Hot

**Mikael Samuelsson** – Has Samuelsson hit the jackpot or what? Last week he found himself spending 79.7 percent of his ice-time alongside both of the Sedin twins. In eight contests since

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the Olympic break, he's amassed 13 points, a plus seven rating, eight PIMs, and a whopping 47 SOG while averaging 16:47 per contest. What's also astounding is that in the last four contests, the Swede is averaging 18:52 per contest, 4:38 of which is with the man advantage, with the Sedins. At 73 percent Yahoo! owned, Samuelsson probably isn't that widely available, but if you can get your hands on his services, he's bound to make a positive impact on your fantasy squad.

**Lee Stempniak** – If you haven't caught the Stempy hype yet, you better hop on board fairly soon. The newly acquired Coyote has seven points in five contests despite averaging just 13:19 per contest for the desert dogs. The trio of Vernon Fiddler, Taylor Pyatt and Stempy have accounted for nine of the 18 points that the Coyotes have put up in the last three contests. Phoenix is in a great position to make the post-season this year, so expect them to lean heavily on the trio for the final stretch of this season. At nine percent Yahoo! owned he should be fairly easy to acquire as a roster upgrade.

**Jakub Voracek** – Voracek has been red-hot of late as he has 14 points in the last 12 contests. In the last 10 contests, he has spent 29.7 percent of his overall ice-time alongside Derick Brassard and R.J. Umberger, which does show that he has a decent set of line mates to play with. The amazing thing is that he's averaging just 16:24 per contest, which doesn't really justify his current production rate. If he can gain Claude Noel's trust and garner even more ice-time, I'd expect his production to skyrocket even more. His 2:59 average per contest on the PP certainly provides plenty of upside for you to pick him up immediately.

**Fedor Tyutin** – Sticking with the same team, Tyutin has also made the list as a strong pickup candidate. He's tallied five points, while averaging 22:42, in the last four contests. The Jackets offense seems to be clicking as captain Rick Nash recovers from lower body/flu injury as they

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have potted 13 goals in their recent 3-1 record. His 4:00 PP ice-time per contest is probably amongst the defensive leaders in that department for the last week. The Jackets are 13 points behind the eighth place team out West, which means that they're all but mathematically out of the playoff hunt, but you never know, they might be able to get hot and win 10 or 11 out of their remaining 12 contests and manage to sneak in.

**Andy McDonald** – McDonald has gone on a point-per-game pace for the last nine contests while averaging 2.66 SOG per contest during that span. He's spent just under half of his overall ice-time alongside both David Perron and Patrik Berglund while picking up 4:05 per contest of PP time for the Blues. I'm not a big fan of what St. Louis has done by spreading out the offense, but it appears that Andy Mc should be on top of that heap for the rest of the way.

**Peter Mueller** – The Coyote/Avalanche deal appears to be a win-win situation as both parties seems to be enjoying their new acquisitions. Mueller has the benefit of dual eligibility in Yahoo! leagues, which provides that extra little flexibility in terms of setting your roster on heavy scheduled days. Mueller has eight points in six contests since joining Colorado on trade deadline day and has spent 94.5 percent of his overall ice-time alongside youngster Matt Duchene. He has also seen a bit (10.5 percent) of ice-time alongside the Avs top PP unit of Duchene, Mueller, Paul Stastny and Chris Stewart, which should equate to a few PPP the rest of the way. At just 15 percent Yahoo! owned, he should currently be available of in plenty of leagues.

**Jason Arnott** – The 16-year NHL vet hasn't exactly been lighting up the scoresheet, but he has put up fairly decent across-the-board numbers since the Olympic break. Arnott has a line of six points, minus four rating, four PPP and 25 SOG in eight contests. If you pro-rate his current rate for the final 13 contests, he would have a line of 10 points, six PPP and 40 SOG, which would

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surely be a useful upgrade on the seven players mentioned below.

### Who's Not

**Jason Blake** – I had high hopes for Blake when he was dealt to the Ducks in early-February, but he certainly hasn't been impressive as he only has five points in 13 contests playing for Anaheim. Those numbers definitely don't justify his current 60 percent Yahoo! owned rate, so if you are a Blake owner, it might be wise to cut bait and pick up one of the players mentioned above instead.

**Brad Boyes** – The Mississauga-native has just four points in 17 contests dating back to the end of January. During that span he has also averaged just 2.29 SOG per contest, which is probably unacceptable for a player who should be producing at a much higher rate. Definitely not justifiable for a player that's currently 57 percent owned in Yahoo! leagues. Do as I have, cut bait and never look back.

**Sheldon Souray** – The guy's going to be out for the rest of this season with a hand infection. The Oilers have nothing to play for, so why hang onto him in 46 percent of Yahoo! leagues. Drop him already.

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**Joffrey Lupul** – Same deal with Loops... He's developed an infection in his back after surgery and won't be returning to the Ducks' line up this season. It's probably safe to drop him for those 35 percent of owners who are still hanging onto him.

**Jay Bouwmeester** – I'm going to let all you Dobberities into the biggest secret in fantasy hockey.

**Jay Bouwmeester is the most over-rated player in fantasy hockey.**

If you look at the historical numbers, he has never had a season in which he has tallied greater than a 0.57 point-per-game pace. JBO is a defensive player first, then offense, so expect around a 40-45 point production from him, but nothing more and stop treating him as if he's a 55-60 point Dman. His current 135 SOG pace probably won't change his seasonal numbers all that much for the rest of the way. If you are a JBO owner, I'd definitely make the swap for Tyutin straight away.

**Mike Ribeiro** – Ribeiro hasn't been the same since the Olympic break. He had a 0.83 point-per-game production rate prior to the Olympic break but just 0.71 since. His SOG numbers have also taken a dip from 2.46 pre-Olympic to just 2.00 post-Olympic. The Stars are struggling offensively as they have only scored 16 goals in their recent 1-5-1 skid. I would gladly make the swap for McDonald, Jochen Hecht, or Tyler Bozak for the remainder of this fantasy season.

**Brian Campbell** – Campbell was viciously checked into the boards by Alex Ovechkin, and probably won't be returning for the rest of this season. If you don't have an IR slot available, it's probably a smart time to drop him outright. A few healthy options might be, Tyutin (mentioned above), Tyler Myers (50 percent Yahoo! owned), Carl Gunnarsson (zero), Sami Salo (21 percent), or Ryan Suter (56 percent).

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With head-to-head playoff hockey pools being as tight as they are, a single point here, a PIM there, and a SOG possibly could make or break your fantasy season. That's why it is essential to take advantage of the players that you have at your disposal, and cut loose any of the dead weight that might be dragging your fantasy squad down. After all this is your last opportunity to claim the crown even though you might not have had a great regular season. It's not about emotions, but purely based on stats from here on in. Good luck! See ya next week, if you are still alive in your leagues.