Over the course of the last few weekends, I participated in a few, (about 30), Yahoo! mock drafts to gain a better grasp of what's been going on in the real fantasy hockey world and thought that I'd pass my findings onto you Dobberities. I participated in random drafts ranging from eight to 14 teams from H2H to Roto leagues with standard settings. This is what I have concluded.

- **Right Wings are massively deep and left wings are crazily not!**

These are the examples of the **typical**** player you can draft at each winger position.

- 10th RW: Daniel Alfredsson, Marian Hossa or Johan Franzen
- 20th RW: Steve Downie, Alex Hemsky, or David Backes
- 30th RW: Rene Bourque, Niclas Bergfors, or Jason Pominville
- 10th LW: Michael Cammalleri, Tomas Vanek, or Alex Burrows
- 20th LW: Mason Raymond, Scott Hartnell, or Taylor Hall
- 30th LW: Ryane Clowe, Daniel Carcillo, or Milan Lucic
- **Advice**: Don't overreach for RW, if you have the opportunity to draft a LW ahead of a RW, **DO SO!** I would probably go as far as an extent to say draft your first two LW before you even make your first RW pick. As you can see the talent pool of the lower ranked RW are fairly deep that you could easily find a 55-65 point player on the WW post-draft, but I can't say the same for LW though.

- **Center, as always, is as deep as ever!**

- 10th C: Jonathan Toews, Ryan Getzlaf, or Mike Richards
- 20th C: Brad Richards, Marc Savard, or Paul Stastny
- 30th C: Nik Antropov, Matt Duchene, or Olli Jokinen
- **Advice:** Same situation as with the RW, if there is a LW sitting right in front of you, go after him before taking the C. If you look above, there isn't much difference between the 30th drafted C compared to the 20th or perhaps even the top 10.

- **Much like last year, the goalie hype seems to have died down this year, as draftees are holding off on picking up goalies early and electing to wait into the mid-rounds, (rounds 4, 5 or 6), to draft their first goalie.**

- **Advice:** Generally speaking you probably should have two solid goalies by round nine, and a third by round 10-12. You don't want to be left with a Brian Elliott/Kari Lehtonen/Steve Mason/Jonas Gustavsson as your number two goalie.

- **"Big named Dobber favourites" on the back end are still relatively unknown to the general public.**

- A favourite of mine, Tobias Enstrom, I've managed to snag in quite a few of the mock drafts with an average draft position of 108.
- Guys like Jamie McBain, Stephane Robidas, Marek Zidlicky, Erik Karlsson, Tom Gilbert, P.K. Subban and Paul Martin have been left largely undrafted or were drafted very late in many mock drafts, so there are plenty of late round steals available.

Now onto the good stuff.

**Drew Doughty – D – Los Angeles Kings**

High: 10

Low: 26

Average: 19.0

Yahoo-Rank: 18

Don’t get me wrong I think this kid is definitely talented. His stat line of 59 points, plus 20 rating, 54 PIMs, 31 PPP and 142 SOG last season speaks volumes. The problem is that he’s being overreached in many drafts. There are plenty of similar alternatives being drafted 3-4 rounds later like Niklas Lidstrom who has a three-year stat line average of 59.3 points, plus 31 rating, 31.3 PIMs, 29 PPP, and 187.3 SOG or Dan Boyle’s two-year stat line of 57.5 points, plus six rating, 61 PIMs, 30.5 PPP and 196.5 SOG, (both being drafted 50 spots later). Doughty’s value is just way too inflated for me to spend my second round pick on him.

**Jimmy Howard – G – Detroit Red Wings**

High: 15

Low: 50

Average: 28.3

Yahoo-Rank: 27.5

I brought this topic up last week. Basically it comes down to my lack of trust in him heading into this season. There have been too many sophomore slumps in recent history to blindly enter this season thinking that Howard will be immune. According the mock draft results, he's being drafted just behind the big four of Ryan Miller, Roberto Luongo, Martin Brodeur and Henrik Lundqvist which is a huge investment for a potential bust candidate. If I'm in a position to select a goalie in the 21-30 slots, I'd probably go with a "safer" option in Ilya Bryzgalov instead.

**Alex Burrows – LW – Vancouver Canucks**

High: 43

Low: 90

Average: 71.0

Yahoo-Rank: 69.7

“Torn Labrum” is the two major words that you need to remember about Burrows. I know LW is a very shallow talent pool, so grabbing a good one is a priority, but the risk attached with selecting Burrows just isn’t worth it. Vinny Lecavalier, Zdeno Chara, and Mike Richards all underwent a similar procedure and all had down seasons the year after the surgery, so I wouldn’t doubt that Burrows would follow a similar suit especially considering his dependence on physical play. I really do like Burrows’ across-the-board stats, but with the prospect of him missing out on the first two months of the season, the price tag attached just isn’t worth it. I’d much rather wait a few rounds and snag a late rounder in Brendan Morrow instead.

**Erik Johnson – D- St. Louis Blues**

High: 54

Low: 89

Average: 73.6

Yahoo-Rank: 72.1

On average Johnson has been selected as the 11th overall blue liner in most Yahoo! mock drafts. He does have plenty of potential, but that's all that it really is,
**potential!**
Even last season's stat line of 39 points, plus one rating, 79 PIMs, 15 PPP and 186 SOG isn't exactly all that spectacular and certainly isn't enough to justify taking him over proven veterans like Brian Rafalski, Tomas Kaberle or Brian McCabe.

**Dustin Penner – LW – Edmonton Oilers**

High: 62

Low: 112

Average: 86.7

Yahoo-Rank: 85

Penner started off blazing hot with 30 points in the first 27 contests of last season, but then slowed down dramatically with just 33 in the final 55. Last year he pretty much had full reigns on the number one LW slot in Edmonton. This year he has plenty of competition with the new kid duo of Taylor Hall and Magnus Paajarvi, so definitely don't head into 2010-11 thinking similar numbers as last season.

**Patric Hornqvist – RW – Nashville Predators**

High: 68

Low: 112

Average: 92.1

Yahoo-rank: 85.5

I potentially could be kicking myself at the end of the season because of this pick, but two factors have led me to this conclusion. First, is that Horny is being a tad overrated in Yahoo! mock drafts, (drafted on average 91st overall). Second, is that RW has an extremely deep talent pool that if you missed out on him, you could find 10-15 other RWers that have similar potential. I'd rather wait a bit and snag someone with similar fantasy value and use my mid-round pick in a shallower position.

**Taylor Hall– LW- Edmonton Oilers**

High: 33* (I think the drafter was mucking around)

Low: 179

Average: 105.7

Yahoo-Rank: 114.1

I'm just not that big into drafting rookies for one-year fantasy leagues. Malkin (85), Kane (72), Ryan (57), and Duchene (55) were the rookies that led their respective years in scoring. There is an adjustment period for youngsters to adjust to the NHL level, which prevents them from having consistent optimal production throughout the year. Hall might be an exception since the Oilers will give him plenty of opportunities to succeed, but I'm a conservative fantasy player and would much rather have a Brendan Morrow, Wojtek Wolski, or Alex Frolov in my pocket than an unknown quantity in Hall.

**Nik Kronwall – D – Detroit Red Wings**

High: 79

Low: 130

Average: 105.7

Yahoo-Rank: 102.8

Kronwall does have plenty of offensive upside, but the problem lies in his injury proneness. Recent news coming out of Detroit is that his injured knee is still giving him some of problems, and from what I can tell knee problems tend to linger unless rested properly. With him undergoing surgery this close to the start of the season, I just don't think he has enough time to get it properly rested to survive the entire season. That, plus the fact that he ranks third on the depth charts buried behind Niklas Lidstrom and Brian Rafalski, I'd much rather pick up better alternatives like, Enstrom, Lubomir Visnovsky, and Joni Pitkanen, over the 29-year old Swede.

**Mason Raymond – LW – Vancouver Canucks**

High: 64

Low: 147

Average: 110.7

Yahoo-Rank: 105.3

Raymond had a big bust out year last season when he posted 53 points and 217 SOG in 82 contests. The problem for me is when it counted the most, during the playoffs, he was essentially non-existent with a mere four points in 12 post-season contests. Raymond also benefitted from Daniel Sedin's foot injury during the regular season, as he picked up 13 points in 15 contests when Daniel was out of the line up, while registering just 40 in 67 when the twins suited up together. I know LW is a shallow talent pool, but I'd there are plenty of "safer" picks than Raymond.

**Nikita Filatov – LW – Columbus BlueJackets**

High: 108

Low: 173

Average: 139.2

Yahoo-Rank: 135.7

If you've been following my forum rants/articles during the off-season, you'll probably realize that I'm not a big fan of offense by committee teams and that's exactly what Columbus will be in 2010-11. With the depth that the Jackets have offensively, Rick Nash, R.J. Umberger, Antoine Vermette, Kristian Huselius, Derick Brassard, and Jakub Voracek, that doesn't leave a lot of room for Filatov to be productive in one-year leagues. Dobber thinks 40, and I think he's spot on with that projection.

Stay tuned next week as we do a 180, and discuss a few under-rated and undervalued players from Yahoo! mock drafts. Questions or comments? Like always I'll be ready and willing to discuss them with you in the comments section below.