I’m sure you’ve heard of the phrase “the numbers don’t lie”. If you’re a dedicated follower of my columns here at DobberHockey, then you’re probably well aware of how much I utilize stats to inform me during my decision-making process. For the past couple of seasons, I’ve been tracking baseline values into forecasting future stats. This week we’ll take a look at those values to help us better plan for the rest of this fantasy season.

Part I talks about 10 of my fantasy hockey "laws."

Now, onto the real mathematical stuff! Keep in mind these are general average numbers and there may be certain exceptions to each scenario.

Centers

Games Played

Goals

Assists

SOG

Ice-Time

PP Ice-Time

Point-Per-Game*

38.5

16.2

27.2

110.2

19:14

3:38

Top 10

39.8

13.0

23.0

99.8

19:22

3:27

60-pointer

39.7

11.4

18.2

104.8

19:40

2:58

50-pointer

38.1

9.3

15.5

80.4

18:12

2:49

35-pointer

37.8

8.9

8.6

72.8

17:11

1:39

*includes Evgeni Malkin and Tyler Seguin, but not Sidney Crosby

Without Seguin: 38.8 GP, 16.2 G, 28.4 A, 111.8 SOG, 19:51 TOI and 3:49 PP TOI

All of this year’s numbers seem to fall in line with past numbers. The 60-pointers included Eric Staal and Brad Richards, who should get bumped up into the top-10 grouping in the second half based on their stats so far.

Table of averages from past two seasons.

Centers

Games Played

Goals

Assists

SOG

Ice-Time

PP Ice-Time

Point-Per-Game

41.7

20.8

32.8

142.2

21:00

4:33

Top-10

40.9

15.1

28.9

106.2

20:20

3:23

60-pointer

41.2

13.1

18.5

113.7

19:17

3:12

50-pointer

40.2

10.1

15.6

93.1

18:02

2:54

35-pointer

37.7

7.5

10.4

75.9

17:12

1:49

Left Wing

Games Played

Goals

Assists

SOG

Ice-Time

PP Ice-Time

Point-Per-Game*

40.5

15.5

28.5

126.0

18:29

3:16

Top-10

39.4

15.4

18.6

123.6

20:17

3:46

60-pointer

38.8

14.8

15.0

102.2

17:31

2:51

50-pointer

38.8

9.4

14.6

85.8

17:11

2:20

35-pointer

36.4

7.6

10.0

73.6

17:31

2:16

*small sample size: only Daniel Sedin and Jamie Benn

This year’s left wings tables are a bit all over the shop, as the numbers don’t exactly fall in line with past numbers. A few underperformers like Alex Ovechkin, Ilya Kovalchuk and Zach Parise were included in the top-10 grouping, which skews the numbers higher than they should be. If you want a more accurate reading, refer to the table below instead.

Table of averages from past two seasons.

Left Wing

Games Played

Goals

Assists

SOG

Ice-Time

PP Ice-Time

Point-Per-Game

42.2

19.2

27.8

153.6

20:03

3:53

Top-10

41.4

17.3

20.0

129.2

18:39

3:14

60-pointer

42.0

14.2

17.0

112.9

18:13

3:09

50-pointer

39.8

11.6

13.5

96.6

17:11

2:34

35-pointer

40.8

7.2

9.4

68.6

14:32

1:42

Right Wing

Games Played

Goals

Assists

SOG

Ice-Time

PP Ice-Time

Point-Per-Game*

40.2

18.2

27.3

120.0

19:20

3:35

Top-10

40.4

16.8

19.2

124.6

19:43

3:38

60-pointer

38.1

13.0

17.0

106.6

18:56

3:28

50-pointer

37.5

11.7

13.3

96.2

18:14

2:16

35-pointer

39.4

8.0

9.3

79.0

15:35

1:39

*includes Jordan Eberle

Without Eberle: 40.0 GP, 18.4 G, 27.6 A, 125 SOG, 19:52 TOI and 3:33 PP TOI

The right wings, once again, mostly fit the trend of past tables. The top-10 included Corey Perry and Marian Gaborik, which props up the group’s stats instead of the point-per-game group where they really should belong.

Table of averages from past two seasons.

Right Wing

Games Played

Goals

Assists

SOG

Ice-Time

PP Ice-Time

Point-Per-Game*

44.0

19.5

29.5

147.5

21:22

4:03

Top 10

41.7

17.2

21.4

127.1

19:05

3:10

60-pointer

40.4

12.7

17.3

117.2

19:02

3:32

50-pointer

40.3

10.3

15.0

98.8

16:56

2:59

35-pointer

36.6

8.3

9.6

78.2

16:09

1:41

Defenseman

Games Played

Goals

Assists

SOG

Ice-Time

PP Ice-Time

Top 5

40.4

6.4

26.0

106.4

25:03

3:58

Top 10

40.0

4.2

20.4

92.0

23:34

3:29

40-pointer

39.3

3.2

16.8

83.5

23:16

2:59

30-pointer

39.1

3.3

11.7

63.4

22:46

2:22

25-pointer*

34.0

2.4

9.6

42.9

20:55

2:05

*includes Chris Pronger, Lubomir Visnovsky, Joni Pitkanen and Tobias Enstrom.

Without: 39.4 GP, 2.5 G, 8.4 A, 44.6 SOG, 20:04 TOI and 1:13 PP TOI.

Pretty straight forward with the D, as the numbers all seem to fall into place.

Table of averages from past two seasons.

Defenseman

Games Played

Goals

Assists

SOG

Ice-Time

PP Ice-Time

Top 5

43.8

9.6

27.8

109.2

23:47

4:20

Top 10

41.6

5.2

25.2

89.1

23:52

3:10

40-pointer

39.8

5.1

16.0

68.2

22:30

3:32

30-pointer

38.2

3.3

12.3

61.1

22:01

2:59

25-pointer

39.2

3.1

10.2

53.7

20:59

1:41

Goalies

I didn’t know how to tier the goalies without getting 50 billion complaints about how I did it, so I guess I’ll just state some quick points.

- Three goalies (Jimmy Howard, Craig Anderson and Pekka Rinne), are on pace to finish with 40 or more wins, which is similar to last season.
- Seven more are on pace for 35 wins or more.
- Seven goalies are on pace for 70+ starts (Howard, Rinne, Craig Anderson, Carey Price, Cam Ward, Jonas Hiller, and Jon Quick).

Fantasy Impact: Teams are using split-time/tandem situations much more than the clear number one/number two options like they have in the past. For example, the once sure fire workhorse 70-start goalies like, Roberto Luongo and Henrik Lundqvist, are on pace to start just 53 and 60 contests respectively.

The top 50 fantasy-worthy goalies have averaged 24.2 starts and 12.0 wins.

Of those 50, only eight have a win percentage of greater than 60 percent with a minimum of 30 games played.

Goalies

Starts

Win Percentage

GAA

Save Percentage

Top-5*

33.8

59.8

2.40

0.919

15-win

28.4

52.8

2.45

0.917

10-win

20.2

48.5

2.46

0.916

5-win

13.8

36.1

2.84

0.903

*includes Craig Anderson

If you replace Anderson with Quick: 33.6 GP, 58.9 win percentage, 2.16 GAA, and .925 SP, which is more in line with past numbers and a better indicator of a top-5 goalie.

There are some very interesting results with the goalie stats. There isn’t a large discrepancy between win percentage, GAA and SP between a 15-win and a 10-win goalie. The only major difference between them is the number of starts that they receive. So if you’re looking at swapping goalies to try to gain an edge in the peripheral stats, don’t bother, it isn’t going to make too much of a difference in the grand scheme of things.

Table of averages from past two seasons.

Goalies

Starts

Win Percentage

GAA

Save Percentage

Top-5

33.6

62.4

2.28

0.924

15-win

29.1

52.0

2.52

0.918

10-win

20.7

51.8

2.63

0.906

5-win

14.6

35.1

3.08

0.896

So you’re probably sitting there wondering, there’s a whole bunch of numbers, what does it all mean? Here are three examples of how I would use the numbers to determine the second-half.

For the first example I’m going to examine someone who I think is overachieving. Jamie Benn has 41 points in 40 contests, while averaging just 17:55 overall and 2:32 on the PP for the Stars. He also has 114 SOG and is currently tied for 15th in league scoring. Benn has spent 89.3 percent of his overall shifts alongside Loui Eriksson, which does show that he’s an integral part of the Stars’ offense, but the big problem for me is that he’s hasn’t cemented a top PP unit role as he’s only part of 44.5 percent of the Stars’ total power-play opportunities. If you compare that to his fellow point-per-gamers like Pavel Datsyuk (51.7 percent), Pominville (61.2), or Marian Hossa (56.5), it kind of highlights just how “off the mark” his numbers really are. If things remain status quo, he could be in for a sharp dip in second half production.

Let’s try a second example to make sure that we’re all on the same page. A lot of Dobberities heavily invested in Bobby Ryan during their initial drafts. He’s averaging 18:42 per contest. His

power-play ice-time isn't all too flashy at just two minutes per game (34.2 percent of Anaheim's total PP opportunities), while picking up 95 SOG. The numbers project him to be more of a 50-55 point scorer by season's end, which is probably a lot lower than many poolies initially anticipated. If I were a Ryan-owner, I'd put on my best used car salesman's pitch and try to sell the hell out of him (especially now after his hot run of eight points in the last six games).

For a third example we can take a backwards approach. Let's take a look at Ilya Kovalchuk's stats, so far he's played 36 contests, while averaging 24:38 per contest (league-high amongst all forwards), 5:11 of which is on the PP (also a league-high), while tallying 34 points. He also appeared in a whopping 93.8 percent of the Devils' total PP opportunities. If you break it down a bit further, in the last month he has 17 points in 15 contests (1.13 points-per-game), so really it was the early year numbers that are dragging his overall totals down. If you pro-rate his current numbers, he should see somewhere around a 45-50 pointer in the remaining 41 contests, which is probably someone you should primarily target in trade talks.

So hopefully you can use the guidelines and numbers above to help you gain a better grasp of what to expect for player X moving forward. Now use this information and create changes to win yourself a fantasy championship. Of course if you are desperately seeking different opinions, hop onto the DobberHockey forums where there are plenty of fantasy fanatics who are ready and willing to give you their "expert"opinions. Questions or comments? As always I'll discuss them in the section below.

If you're wondering who the players that the coloured dots in the graphs above represent, you can pop onto my Twitter page to find out. Should you be so inclined, follow me on Twitter if you think that my article/posts are useful.