If ice-time and SOG are any indicators of fantasy success, this week's column will be a good accompaniment in identifying a few trends moving forward. We'll examine several advancers and decliners out West to help get you through that mid-season lull. Remember, we're now in the portion of the season where it's win and move on or lose and go home. So when it comes down to making the tough decisions, think of the "here and now" implications rather than the "what could possibly happen" next week.

Advancers

Ryan Jones – LW – Edmonton – 2% Yahoo! owned

I don't quite know what's going on in the Edmonton water system, but it seems as though the offense has finally woken up during the past two weeks. Jones has picked up seven points along with 23 SOG during the last eight contests. What's interesting, is that he's also receiving a decent amount of PP TOI as well (1:17 per contest), which accounts for 32.8 percent of the team's PP opportunities. The Oilers have a very favourable "non-traditional" game night schedule this week (Wed. vs. Dal, Fri. vs. LA and Sun. @Ana), which should certainly help those who are looking to gain a slight advantage in terms of GP over their H2H opponent.

Ales Hemsky – RW – Edmonton – 19% Yahoo! owned

Pretty much ditto for Hemmer, but he has the edge in PP TOI (1:49 per contest), and SOG (25), over the last two weeks. At 19 percent Yahoo! owned, he's probably a bit harder to pluck off the waiver wire, but should still be available in plenty of leagues. Scheduling should play a big role in the reasoning behind adding him to your fantasy squad.

Kyle Brodziak – C –Minnesota – 8% Yahoo! owned

I've kind of left Broziak on the backburner the last couple of weeks, so I figured now's probably a great time to stick him back under the flame. Since Feb. 23, Brodziak has posted 12 points

along with 29 SOG all while averaging 20:36 per contest. The 2:15 on the PP (33.6 percent of the Wild's opportunities), is certainly noticeable as well. The Wild's schedule this week isn't as "coasting" a few of the other teams, but they do have four contests along with back-to-back games on the weekend against the Kings and Hawks. This should provide a bit of a late-week boost for many poolies.

Andrew Shaw - C –Chicago – 4% Yahoo! owned

Shaw's been averaging 16:48 per contest during the last two weeks, which is two minutes more than his seasonal average (14:48). The extra boost in ice-time has resulted in him posting eight points along with eight SOG during the last seven contests. Even though the Hawks have been struggling offensively lately, the trio of Bryan Bickell , Dave Bolland and Shaw have been sufficient. The Hawks also have four games this week, with a back-to-back weekend special, so Shaw might be worth considering in deep H2H leagues.

Jeff Petry – D – Edmonton – 4% Yahoo! owned

Dobber highlighted Petry's offensive success (12 points), during the last 25 contests in his ram blings
on Monday, but it's the five points in the last eight games that poolies should probably take a note of. He's also contributing on the SOG front with 15 for a 1.9 SOG per game average. Petry needs to consider this a "real-life" audition for his role next campaign. If he can pick up three or four points during the remaining six contests, giving him 26 or 27 points on the season, which should be enough evidence for Tom Renney to hand him a more offensive role in 2012-13.

Johnny Oduya – D – Chicago – 1% Yahoo! owned

With Duncan Keith being suspended for five contests due to his “elbow”, it has left a gaping hole on the Hawks’ blue-line for the next week and a bit. There was a bit of debate on the forums regarding who the potential replacement would be, but after Sunday night’s embarrassing 6-1 loss to the Preds, we’re still left with an unclear answer. Nick Leddy picked up 4:07, while Oduya picked up 4:02 with the man advantage. I didn’t get a chance to catch the whole game, but I did catch Oduya playing on the top PP unit alongside, Patrick Kane, Dave Bolland, Brendan Morrison and Andrew Brunette, while Leddy was slotted alongside Patrick Sharp, Marian Hossa, Brent Seabrook and Shaw. Leddy is 21 percent Yahoo! owned, which will make it a bit tougher to get your hands on him than Oduya, but if you can get your hands on both it certainly wouldn’t be a bad idea.

Ray Emery – G – Chicago – 20% Yahoo! owned

There weren’t very many goalies to choose from, so I kind of had to go with a gut feeling on Emery. It’s not that I think he will put up fantastic stats and outplay Corey Crawford to steal the number one gig away, but I’ve actually dug up some very interesting splits on Crawford.

Stat

Games During the Last Calendar Week of a Month

Rest of the Games

Record

6-9-1

21-8-4

GAA

3.07

2.68

SP

.872

.915

Percentage of games pulled

25% (4)

9.1% (3)

Also

Emery’s Career Numbers

Record

GAA

SP

SO

vs. NJ

5-3-2

2.08

.928

1

vs. Stl

3-1-0

2.72

.903

0

vs. Nsh

0-2-0

5.44

.750

0

vs. Min

3-0-0

2.59

.918

0

According to sportsclubstats.com , the Hawks basically need to win just one out of their remaining six contests to be a lock for the post-season. If Emery gets the call on Tuesday night and picks up the victory, I wouldn't be surprised to see him get another call on Sunday night against the Wild and perhaps even the Thursday night game against the Blues.

Trending: Viktor Stalberg , Todd Bertuzzi , Dave Bolland , David Jones , Mason Raymond , Anton Babchuk
,
Ladislav Smid
,
Slava Voynov
and
Nikita Nikitin
.

Decliners

Note: Suggestions are based on one-year H2H leagues with playoffs occurring this week.

The biggest question that's being littered on the boards at the moment is, "What to do with _____?" or "When is _____ going to turn it around?" My simplest answer to those questions is to drop them and never look back. Now before you jump on my back about it, here's why; 1) It doesn't matter who's on your roster when you lose. If you lose, you're done anyways, so why have both Sedins on your roster to finish in fifth place? And, 2) It's the easiest "BS" excuse to come up with if you lose with an underperforming player. "If so and so decided to play this week, I would have won…" my response, "I'm sorry you but made the decision of keeping the underperforming player, you made the bed, now you have to lie in it. So live with the consequences of the decisions that you made."

The following table is my opinion of what to do with the current under-performing players, and are based **only on this week** (March 26 – Apr. 1).

Under-Performing Player	Keep/Drop
Daniel Sedin	

Drop

Henrik Sedin

Keep

Corey Perry

Drop

Pavel Datsyuk

Keep

Patrick Kane

Keep

Jonathan Toews

Drop (YCCL)

Rick Nash

Drop

Dany Heatley

Drop

Ryan Kesler

Drop

Joe Pavelski

Keep

Mike Richards

Drop (YCCL)

Ryane Clowe

Keep

Dan Boyle

Keep

Nicklas Lidstrom

Keep

Matt Duchene

Drop

Johan Franzen

Drop (YCCL)

Duncan Keith

Drop

Chris Stewart

Drop

Mike Cammalleri

Keep

Teemu Selanne

Drop

Taylor Hall

Drop

Mikko Koivu

Drop

Alex Tanguay

Drop

Nik Kronwall

Drop

Brendan Morrow

Drop

Alex Goligoski

Drop

Erik Johnson

Drop

Andy McDonald

Drop

(YCCL) – Yahoo! can’t cut list.

I don’t have enough room to provide an explanation for each of the players above, so I’ll have to lump them into general categories and just provide a brief general statement.

Drops

Unfavourable Schedule

All Phoenix players, the Yotes only have two games this week, so it's probably not a great idea to keep them on your roster if you're in a tight H2H playoff matchup.

Nash (regained his scoring rhythm last week, but double against Det then another one against STL isn't exactly conducive for great offensive numbers)

Injured

D. Sedin, Toews, Franzen, Hall and McDonald (DTD status, uncertain return date)

Suspended

Keith (gone for the next five)

General sucky-ness

Heatley (just two points in last 14 games, ouch talk about unmotivated…)

Kesler (point-less in last six, and missing Daniel will hurt)

Duchene (just one point in last 10 games, not what the Avs need in the middle of a tight playoff race)

Stewart (just two points in last seven games, role diminishing with the Blues)

Selanne and Koivu (both with only one point in last four games, Ducks packing it in for the season)

Tanguay (after a hot start to March [11 points in first eight contests], has cooled off with just two points in the last six)

Morrow (three points in eight contests since returning from injury)

Goligoski (two points in 12 March contests)

Johnson (one point in last 15 games, with a 13 game goose egg streak, seriously beginning to remind me of Jay Bouwmeester)

Keeps

Favourable Schedule

Sedins and Burrows (four-game week)

Pavelski, Clowe, Burns and Boyle (Sharks picking up steam for the playoffs)

Favourable Depth Chart

Datsyuk (scored an absolutely filthy goal on Saturday night, he’s back)

Kane (Hawks are hot, four games this week plus a sweet game against the Wild on Sunday night, could make or break your season)

Lidstrom (back from injury: two games since he’s returned. The Red Wings average six goals per game, granted it was against Canes and Jackets. If he retires in the off-season, Wings could be in trouble)

Cammalleri (back from injury, four points and seven SOG last two games)

Hejduk (re-united with Duchene and Mueller should get the offense started)

Questions or comments? As always I'll discuss them in the section below.

Should you be so inclined, follow me on Twitter if you think that my article/posts are useful.