Following along Tim's piece from the East, here is the first set of teams from the West.

Anaheim Ducks – Signed both Sheldon Souray and Bryan Allen to three-year deals, while losing highly revered prospect Justin Schultz to Edmonton and Lubomir Visnovsky (Islanders).

The move that has the most fantasy impact will be Souray. He essentially replaces Visnovsky (20:47 and 3:32 on the PP) as the number one D in Anaheim. The Ducks really had a "down year" last year because they couldn't get much puck movement out from their blue-line. Souray now becomes the number one PP option and should solve those woes and get the Ducks back into some form of respectability. He'll greatly benefit poolies who are in deep multi-stat fantasy leagues that have a bit more emphasis on peripheral stats like hits, BS, PIM, and SOG. Allen is

an interesting case, you won't get a lot of points from him, but his peripherals are fairly strong (76 PIM, 111 hits, 188 BS and 87 SOG). Allen also averaged 2:30 SH TOI last campaign, which should ease some of the pressure off workhorse Francois Beauchemin (4:13 SH TOI average) on the PK and possibly free him up for some extra PP time (1:29).

Calgary Flames – Signed Roman Cervenka (one year deal), Dennis Wideman (five year deal), Blake Comeau (one year deal), Cory Sarich (two year deal), Lee Stempniak (two year deal) and Jiri Hudler (four year deal) while losing David Moss (Phoenix) and Olli Jokinen (Winnpeg).

Wideman's five-year contract would be classified under the overpaid category, but with such a thin free agent class, and a high demand market that's desperately in need of puck-moving defenseman, it's not surprising to see Wideman obtain such a high-priced lucrative contract. With Jay Bouwmeester , Mark Giordano , Anton Babchuk and Wideman under contract the Flames do possess a decent top-four unit. The only problem is all four of them are pretty decent cooks, but they lack a chef to really get the offense revving. The Wideman signing essentially destroys any fantasy value for JBo, last year he saw 2:10 of PP time per game, he'll drop down to one minute something now and mostly on the second unit, which is probably the kiss of death for fantasy poolies. Calgary essentially replaced the oft-injured Moss with a more reliable Hudler. He should see a bit more than the 15:40 and 2:14 that he saw in Detroit, but I don't think it'll be much more. The Flames biggest issue that they need to address was to get help up the middle. In fact, they probably are worse off, now that Jokinen is gone. Until they address that need they'll continue to be a borderline playoff team and will be attempting to compete for a

playoff spot well into April.

Chicago Blackhawks – Signed Sheldon Brookbank (two year deal), re-signed Johnny Oduya (three year deal) and Jamal Mayers (one year deal).

Somebody needs to stick a defib on Stan Bowman just to check to see if he's still alive. To say that the Hawks have been quiet this off-season is a huge understatement. With that said, Chicago is a decent team, so it's not like they need wholesale changes in order to improve their club, but surely they can do better than just the addition of Brookbank. With Duncan Keith , Brent Seabrook , Niklas Hjalmarsson , Nick Leddy , Johnny Oduya , Steven Montador and now Brookbank signed that means the Hawks have seven NHL-ready defenseman under contract, which will result in one of them being wastefully sitting up in the press box as a healthy scratch victim. The Hawks choosing to not re-sign Andrew Brunette now opens up a more permanent top-nine slot for Andrew Shaw . He picked up 23 points and 74 SOG in 37 contests with Chicago last campaign. Shaw won't be a focal point of the Hawks' offense, but he could sneak in some second unit PP time, and post a sneaky 35-40 points this campaign.

Colorado Avalanche – Signed Cody McLeod (three year deal), David Jones (four year deal), Shane O'Brien (three year deal), John Mitchell (two year deal), Greg Zanon (two year deal), P.A. Parenteau (four year deal) and Sean Sullivan (one year deal), Erik Johnson (four years) while losing Jay McClement (Toronto), Cedrick Desjardins (Montreal), Kevin Porter (Buffalo) and Ryan Stoa (Washington).

The biggest impact on the fantasy front will be Parenteau. He spent the last two seasons alongside John Tavares on the Island, so it'll be interesting to see if it was JT that spiked up his production or was Parenteau creating it himself? If he can manage to repeat the numbers from last campaign, then his contract will certainly be justified, but if he manages to stink it up, then it could become an albatross of a four-year contract. The Jones contract caused quite a bit of stir amongst the Dobber community as he essentially received the same contract as Parenteau, the drawback is that at least Parenteau had the history (of production and health), to back up the contract, Jones didn't.

With Paul Stastny , Milan Hejduk , Matt Duchene , Gabriel Landeskog , Steve Downie , Parenteau, Jones and possibly Ryan O'Reilly amongst the top-eight of the Avs, there's a strong possibility that leaves Jones and his four million dollar price tag in third-line checking duties, which will make him overpriced for four more years. On the defensive front, the Avs got a lot more physical with the addition of Zanon along with the re-signing of O'Brien (138 hits and 86 BS). Zanon posted 116 hits along with 136 BS in just 56 contests last campaign. If you factor in Ryan O'Byrne (180 hits and 141 BS),

Jan Hejda
(142 hits and 134 BS),
Ryan Wilson
(97 hits and 70 BS) and
Erik Johnson
(123 hits and 94 BS), that's a boat load of peripheral stats on the blue-line. However if you include
Matt Hunwick
in the mix, I don't know if there's going to be enough room for highly-touted youngsters
Stefan Elliott
,
Tyson Barrie
or
Duncan Siemens
to make an impact on the fantasy front this campaign.

Columbus Blue Jackets – Signed Adrian Aucoin (two year deal), Nikita Nikitin (two year deal), Curtis McElhinney (one year deal),
Nick Holden
(one year deal),
Derek Mackenzie
(two year deal),
Ryan Russell
(one year deal) and Mark Methot (Ottawa) also acquired
Nick Foligno
(Ottawa) and
Sergei Bobrovsky
(Philadelphia).

The biggest fantasy news coming out of Columbus is disgruntled star Rick Nash still hasn't been traded yet. Until that situation sorts itself out, it's darn near impossible to plan for next campaign. With that said, the Jackets now have
James Wisniewski

,
Jack Johnson
,
Fedor Tyutin
,
Nikita Nikitin
,
John Moore
and Aucoin under contract for next season. They might not have a lot of flash, but their top-four could certainly compete with the rest of the league. Johnson posted a stat-line of 14 points, a plus five rating, 15 PIM, 35 hits, 45 BS along with 56 SOG in 21 contests with the Jackets after the trade from LA and is certainly someone to keep an eye on for next campaign, especially if Wissy can manage to stay relatively healthy. The addition of Aucoin should also help out Tyutin's fantasy numbers. Between 2008-10 when Tyutin played alongside two-way veteran linemates of Rotislav Klesla and
Anton Stralman
, he posted consecutive 30+ point and 150(ish) SOG seasons.

If he is paired with Aucoin as the second pairing, he could reach those numbers once again in 2012-13. New acquisition Foligno could also impact fantasy leagues which have an emphasis on hits, BS, PIM and SOG. He posted 47 points, 196 hits, 30 BS, 124 PIM along with 153 SOG all while averaging just 14:38 per contest for the Sens. Foligno, Dorsett and Mackenzie could form a very solid checking third line. Newly acquired Bobrovsky could also make an impact next campaign, as the inconsistent Steve Mason is probably running on his last legs in an NHL gig. Unless Mason completely tanks another season, look for Bob and Mason to get close to a 50/50 timeshare situation in Columbus.

Dallas Stars – Signed Ray Whitney (two year deal), Aaron Rome (three year deal), Toby Petersen
(two year deal),
Jaromir Jagr
(one year deal),
Tyler Sloan
(two year deal) while losing

Mike Ribeiro
(Washington),
Adam Burish
(San Jose),
Jake Dowell
(Minnesota),
Steve Ott
/
Adam Pardy
(Buffalo) and Souray (Anaheim) also acquired
Derek Roy
(Sabres) and
Cody Eakin
(Washington).

GM Joe Nieuwendyk convinced the owners to loosen the purse strings this summer as the Stars made a huge splash with their off-season free agent signings. The Stars essentially replaced Ribeiro with Roy, which probably is a neutral trade in terms of point production, but where the Stars gained is in the background/behind the scenes stats like faceoff winning efficiency. Ribeiro posted a 44.8, 46.6 and 42.2 percent faceoff winning efficiency during the last three seasons, while Roy subsequently posted a 50.4, 46.4 and 50.6 winning percent efficiency. If you factor in the amount of faceoffs that these guys take over the course of a full season, a five or six percent improvement in faceoff winning efficiency equates to 40-50 extra possessions, which could result in four to five extra goals and thus a few more wins.

The latest news coming out of Dallas is that Roy just underwent shoulder surgery which will sideline him until November. Hopefully it's not the dreaded "torn labrum" surgery that usually cripples the fantasy value for a player for 12 months. With the injury to Roy, the Stars are looking very thin up the middle. They really only have Benn, but he's not a natural center, which could pose potential problems down the track. This could however vault newly acquired Eakin straight into a top-six role. He posted eight points in 30 contests with the Caps last campaign, and if he can translate his success in juniors (174 points in the last two years in the WHL), to the big league level, he could be a star in the making. Definitely keep his name on your radar on

draft day.

The positives of the Jagr signing have been well documented. The Stars don't need him to post 50+ points in order to be worthwhile. If he has a "dressing room" effect much like he did for Claude Giroux on Jamie Benn, then the contract itself will be positively justifiable. Whitney now enters a situation where he was in a "top dog" situation to one where he has shared responsibility (competition with Benn, Jagr, Roy, Brendan Morrow, Michael Ryder and Loui Eriksson). Expect his numbers to plummet down towards the low 50-point range. The major winners from the departure of Souray (20:27 and 1:48) will be the big three of Alex Goligoski, Trevor Daley and Stephane Robidas. Goligoski is already a "household" name, so everybody will be after him on draft day. Daley (45 hits, 115 BS and 134 SOG) and Robidas (191 hits, 110 BS and 75 SOG) will be your better "buys" as they'll come at a much cheaper discounted rate. Robidas I could see returning back to 2009-10 form where he was a fantasy stud in terms of the peripheral stats. The Souray departure also opens up the doors for youngsters Philip Larsen and Brendan Dillon, as both should see full-time roles with the big clubs this campaign.

Detroit Red Wings –Signed Damien Brunner (one year deal), Jonas Gustavsson (two year deal), Mikael Samuelsson (two year deal) and Jordan Tootoo (three year deal) while losing Jiri Hudler (Calgary),

Chris Conner
(Phoenix) and the retirement of
Nicklas Lidstrom
.

The biggest miss of the off-season was Detroit losing out to Minnesota on highly-sought after blue-liner Ryan Suter . There was tons of hype that the Red Wings were going to throw everything including the kitchen sink at Suter to get him as a replacement for the departed Lidstrom. Add that to the fact that they missed out on Souray, Garrison, Wideman and Matt Carle , (Tampa), and are now left with a huge, gaping hole that needs to be addressed on the blue-line. They'll need to explore the trade route as the free agent list has pretty slim pickings. The Wings lost out on Hudler, but found a familiar face in Samuelsson. He won't light the fantasy world on fire, but he could settle in quite nicely in a second-line role while tallying 40-50 point along with 220+ SOG beside Valtteri Filppula and Todd Bertuzzi . This also opens up the opportunity for Filppula to repeat the numbers from last campaign, especially if one of the "big three" of Pavel Datsyuk , Henrik Zetterberg and Johan Franzen succumb to long-term injury.

Tootoo could be a Cal Clutterbuck -light, not as much upside in the hits department, but could chip in with 25-30 points, 80+ PIM along with 150 SOG. The biggest whammy for the Red Wings will be the loss of Lidstrom. With him in the lineup, that allowed role players like Ian White to do their thing (0.44 points and 2.73 SOG per contest) however when Lidstrom was out of the lineup that forced White into more uncomfortable roles and severely decreased his fantasy

production (0.27 points and 1.45 SOG per contest). On the flip side, Niklas Kronwall saw a huge boost when Lidstrom was out of the lineup (0.82 points and 1.73 SOG per contest) compared to when he was in the lineup (0.38 points and 1.72 SOG per contest). If things remain status quo, look for Kronwall to fill the role left behind by Lidstrom and make a much bigger impact on fantasy leagues this campaign.

Brendan Smith should also finally crack the Red Wings lineup on a more permanent basis. The loss of Lidstrom doesn't just hamper the blue-line, but it also might filter down and hurt goalie Jimmy Howard's fantasy value as well. When Lidstrom missed 11 games during the season, the Red Wings as a team went 3-6-2 during that span. They' also allowed an average of 2.91 goals per game compared to 2.37 with Lidstrom in the line up. I know it's only a small sample size, but it could foreshadow what could possibly occur this campaign. During that span Howard went 1-2-1 while posting a 2.75 GAA along with a .887 SP. If you are a Howard-owner, now might be a great time to use his "big name" status as trade bait.

Stay tuned next week as we go through the remaining eight teams of the West.

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

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