Change is always constant in our everyday world. We change the way we talk, we change the way we walk, and we even change our daily rosters in our fantasy hockey squads. Some change is good, some is bad. We conclude this week with the final installation of this series. We'll take a look at which teams are due for changes and which will be forced to make some. Buckle up and get ready for the ride.

**Maasquito Buzzings…**

- Mikko Koivu regains the Western Conference lead in faceoff wins with 438. Shawn Horcoff continues to mosey along with 426, Sammy Pahlsson rounds out the the top three with 420.
- Koivu has the most power-play faceoffs won in the Western Conference with 105.
- Rick Nash is on fire registering nine points in the past week for the Blue Jackets. He's finally rounding back into the superstar found that we all expected him to be. Erik Cole also is beginning to round into form as he picked up six points this past week as well. The Sedin twins combined for 13 points this past week.
- There were 15 Western Conference players ranked in the top 25 in Yahoo rankings last week.
- Dustin Brown maintains the lead in the Western Conference with 140 hits.
- Kyle Wellwood took a bit of a hit this week as his shooting percentage fell to 29.8%. He's already beginning to take a slip as the season progresses. I don't think he'll be anywhere near the 20% mark at the end of the season. Tomas Holmstrom takes second place with a 25.0 shooting percentage and Loui Eriksson rounds out the top-three with a 24.7%.
- Teemu Selanne continues to lead the league with 13 power-play goals, Brad Boyes, and Keith Tkachuk are catching up with 10 each.
- Johan Franzen and Owen Nolad both had two power-play markers last week.
- Dustin Brown is firing a ton of bombs on opposing goalies as he maintained his Western Conference lead with 168 shots on goal. He’s now dropped to third after Philadelphia's Jeff Carter is beginning to fire away at opposing goalies. The Detroit pairing of Marian Hossa and Henrik Zetterberg are sixth and seventh respectively with 161 and 146.
- Daniel Sedin registered 20 shots on goal this past week, while Jason Arnott rebounded after a poor December with 19, Brent Burns also registered 19 for the week.
- Shane O’Brien continues to maintain his NHL lead in PIMs, he has 118 in 42 games played. David Backes who I mentioned a few weeks earlier is now catching up with 113. He has 30 point upside as well as the PIMs, and should be a must own in most roto leagues.
- Fedor Tyutin has 23 PIMs this past week and Backes has 20.
- Minnesota continues to be stellar on the PK with a 87.9%, while Edmonton is a league worst 74.4%
- San Jose now gains the leading ratio in five-on-five situations with a ratio of 1.26. St. Louis is the worst in the Western Conference with a rating of 0.77, Brad Boyes continues to be in the minus 20s.
- Detroit leads the Western Conference with an average of 10.6 minutes in penalties per contest, they just don’t take any penalties. Anaheim and Vancouver are tied averaging the league high of 19.2.
- Phoenix is 8-3-0 when they are outshooting their opponents, while Anaheim is a league worst is 6-9-1. San Jose is 12-1-1 when being out shot by their opponents, while St. Louis is 6-12-2.

## Nashville

### Salary Cap Status

$44.770 room of $11.930 million

### Team Status

Nashville has plenty of cap room to make a big splash in the free agent pool this offseason. Changes this season will depend on their position in the standings at the trade deadline. They have a bulk of their big stars under contract for the next season, so they don't have a lot to worry about being sellers at the trade deadline.

**Key Changes**

The Predators won't be losing Jason Arnott, J.P. Dumont, Martin Erat or Shea Weber, so most of their offensive weapons will return for next season. With that said, many of their second/third liners are up for free agency, so they have the plenty of decisions to make regarding keeping or replacing them in the off-season. Steve Sullivan probably will be the big question mark, as he has battled injuries for the past few seasons, and hasn't yet justified his $3.2 million salary. If he stays in Nashville, he'll probably have to take a massive pay cut.

**Key Needs:**
- Depth in the forward positions

**Unrestricted Free Agents:**
- Steve Sullivan ($3.20)
- Radek Bonk ($1.60)
- Vernon Fiddler ($0.90)
- Scott Nichol ($0.750)
- Joel Ward ($0.500)
- Jed Ortmeyer ($0.750)
- Greg DeVries ($2.750)
- Greg Zanon ($0.750)
- Ville Koistinen ($0.700)

**Restricted Free Agents:**
- Antti Pihlstrom ($0.530)
- Ryan Jones ($0.920)
- Drew MacIntyre ($0.500)

**Phoenix**

**Salary Cap Status**

$46.458 room of $10.242 million

**Team Status**

Phoenix is also one of the teams in a great financial situation for next season. With youngsters, Peter Mueller, Martin Hanzal, Mikkel Boedker, and Viktor Tikonov signed for pennies, the Coyotes have plenty of cap space to make big splash this off-season in the free agent market and possibly at this season's trade deadline to help cement their lineup for the future. They have a combination of young skilled players, as well as veteran leadership of Shane Doan, Ed Jovanovski and Olli Jokinen, so they aren't in an immediate need to acquire a veteran presence in the locker room.

**Key Changes**

The Coyotes don't have to worry about aging free agents on their roster. Steven Reinprecht and Brian McGrattan are more support-type players rather than impact players, so losing them won't hurt them too much.

With Mueller, Boedker, Tikonov, Doan, Jokinen and Hanzal, the top-six in Phoenix seems pretty set. But with over $10 million available in the salary cap, adding a Marian Hossa, Marian Gaborik, Henrik Zetterberg to the lineup would make a strong up and coming team that much better.

**Key Needs:**
- Puck moving defensemen to complement Ed Jovanovski
- Defensive depth

**Unrestricted Free Agents:**
- Steve Reinprecht ($2.00)
- Brian McGrattan ($0.650)
- Derek Morris ($3.95)
- Ken Klee ($1.250)
- Mikeal Tellqvist ($0.800)

**Restricted Free Agents:**
- Enver Lisin ($0.850)
- Daniel Winnik ($0.510)
- Joakim Lindstrom ($0.500)
- Garth Murray ($0.450)
- Keith Yandle ($0.635)
- Ryan Lannon ($0.500)

**<u>San Jose</u>**

**Salary Cap Status**

$56.804 room of $0.621 million

**Team Status**

San Jose is probably in the win right now mode, they are near the salary cap and don't have much wiggle room to acquire pieces at the trade deadline this season. Their offense has been solid this year, and their veteran defense should carry the Sharks deep into the playoffs this season. They potentially have three highly offensive scoring lines, so they won't need to add anyone to that department at the trade deadline. Look for their roster to remain the same for the duration of this season.

**Key Changes**

The Sharks don't have too many decisions to make during the off season. Rob Blake will probably be the number one option, but that will probably depend on Blake's decision on whether to retire or keep playing for another season. If he decides to return he'll most likely need to take a pay cut to accommodate Sharks' salary cap situation. Mike Grier is a solid depth player for the Sharks, but at $1.775 million that salary isn't justifiable for another season. Ryan Clowe, has been a solid top-six player this season, and will continue to develop his skills playing alongside Joe Thornton and Patrick Marleau. Clowe could possibly be sniped by another team in the off-season if the Sharks decide to retain Blake's services and could become a salary cap victim, so keep an eye on his status once the trade deadline rolls along.

**Unrestricted Free Agents:**
- Mike Grier ($1.775)
- Tom Cavanaugh ($0.500)
- Rob Blake ($5.00)
- Alex Semenov ($0.650)
- Brian Boucher ($0.650)

**Restricted Free Agents:**
- Ryan Clowe ($1.600)
- Marcel Goc ($0.775)
- Torrey Mitchell ($0.715)
- Thomas Plihal ($0.600)
- Lukas Kaspar ($0.600)
- Thomas Greiss ($0.725)

**St. Louis**

**Salary Cap Status**

$54.856 room of $1.844 million

**Team Status**

St Louis have plenty of holes to fill at the end of the season. Keith Tkachuk and Andy MacDonald are both up for unrestricted free-agency, so both could find themselves in a new

uniform to finish off this season. The Blues are in a transition phase where they have a strong mix of youngsters like Brad Boyes, T.J. Oshie, Patrik Berglund and Alex Pietrangelo ready to take over the team, while combining them with veterans like Paul Kariya and Eric Brewer. Surprisingly, the Blues are near the salary cap despite their poor ranking in the standings, so they might be hard pressed to make a big splash in the free agent market this off-season or the trade deadline.

**Key Changes**

As stated previously, Tkachuk and MacDonald are up for unrestricted free-agency. Both could help contending teams for the stretch run this season, while picking up a few extra draft picks for the Blues at the trade deadline. Manny Legace is also up for free agency and his $2.5 million salary could be a cheaper option for teams to acquire than Nikolai Khabibulin or Dwayne Roloson's high priced salaries. The Blues are dropping out of the playoff race, so they're probably become sellers than buyers this trade season.

**Key Needs:**
- Defensive depth
- Offensive depth

**Unrestricted Free Agents:**
- Keith Tkachuk ($4.50)
- Andy MacDonald ($3.33)
- Dan Hinote($1.00)
- Brad Winchester ($0.600)
- Mike Weaver ($0.700)
- Manny Legace ($2.5)

**Restricted Free Agents:**
- Jay McClement ($0.950)
- B.J. Crombeen ($0.550)
- Jeff Woywitka ($0.750)
- Roman Polak ($0.475)
- Steve Wagner ($0.635)

**<u>Vancouver</u>**

**Salary Cap Status**

$52.442 room of $4.25 million

**Team Status**

With just over four million in salary available for the rest of this season, the Canucks are in a good position to acquire a few more pieces at the trade deadline to help them during the stretch run of this season. Both the Sedin twins as well as Mats Sundin are up for free agency at the

end of this season and could dramatically re-shape the Canucks lineup for next season.

**Key Changes**

As stated earlier, the Sedins are up for unrestricted free-agency. Both are making a total of $7.5 million this season, but if they ask for a hefty raise or receive a better offer from other teams, the Canucks may not be able to retain the twins' services for next season. That would leave a huge void offensively for the Canucks. If the Sedin's, Sundin and Ohlund all leave, that might free up a ton of money to sign both Marian Hossa and Marian Gaborik to complete the Slovak line along with Pavol Demitra. The Canucks also have 12 players up for unrestricted free-agents, so their lineup could be dramatically reshaped come next season. Bernier, Wellwood and O'Brien are all restricted free agents who potentially have additonal trade value at the trade deadline, so they could potentially find themselves in a new uniform to finish this season.

**Key Needs:**
- Offensive depth
- Puck moving defensemen

**Unrestricted Free Agents:**
- Daniel Sedin ($3.75)
- Henrik Sedin ($3.75)
- Mats Sundin ($5.627)
- Taylor Pyatt ($1.575)
- Alex Burrows ($0.525)
- Jason Jaffray ($0.500)
- Michel Ouellet ($1.30)
- Jason Krog ($0.605)
- Matthias Ohlund ($3.500)
- Rob Davidson ($0.560)
- Lawerance Nycholat ($0.600)
- Curtis Sanford ($0.650)

**Restricted Free Agents:**
- Steve Bernier ($2.500)
- Kyle Wellwood ($0.998)
- Mike Brown ($0.522)
- Rick Rypien ($0.522)
- Jannik Hansen ($0.508)
- Shane O'Brien ($1.025)

I hope you enjoyed this three-part series on potential changes that may or may not happen in the Western Conference. We are less than a week away from the Dobber Mid-Season guide - packed full of quality and insightful information that will certainly help you win your pool this season with a strong second half.