You Never Know What You’re Gonna Get.

Although that quote was made famous by Tom Hanks portraying Forrest Gump in the 1994 film, it could be very fitting for plenty of fantasy hockey pools out there. The All-Star break has come and gone, and with a little over 30 games remaining for each team for the rest of the season, most teams will be either preparing for the postseason or prepping up for the future. We'll take a look at what's been happening in the Western Conference leading up to the All-Star break and into some insight as to what potentially could happen in the final two and a half months of fantasy hockey.

Maaasquito Buzzings…

Players in the last month with the highest production in each category who are less than 50% owned in Yahoo leagues.

Goals

Assists

+/-

PPP

SOG

McLeod (6)

Malholtra (9)

Hejda (12)

Berglund (5)

Backes (43)

Backes (6)

Aucoin (8)

Commodore (8)

Nolan (5)

Cole (40)

Nolan (6)

Gilbert (8)

O’Brien (7)

P.M. Bouchard (5)

Eriksson (39)

Bourque (5)

Huselius (8)

Burish (6)

Russell (5)

Wolski (39)

Grier (5)

Modin (7)

Modin (6)

Colaiacovo(5)

Ladd (39)

Anaheim

Anaheim struggled somewhat in the first half of this season, as they're currently sitting tied for sixth with Edmonton and Vancouver in the standings. Chris Kunitz was reunited with on the top-line with Corey Perry and Ryan Getzlaf. If the Ducks are to experience any success in the second half, the trio will need to continue to produce at a torrid pace. Their goaltending situation will need to be much improved as J.S. Giguere is only 1-5-2 in the past eight starts. His 3.08 GAA is the highest in his career, since his sophomore season in Calgary. Giggy typically plays much better in the second half (2.28 and .922) compared to his first half (2.58 and .911) throughout his career, so if you really want to make a push for the championship, I'd suggest you try to buy low on Giggy right now. Teemu Selanne has resumed skating during the All-Star break, and will likely return to the Ducks lineup early next week. It'll be interesting to see if they ice Selanne with Brendan Morrison and Bobby Ryan as a potent second line.

Calgary

Calgary is starting to run away with the Northwest crown, thanks to the superb play of Miikka Kiprusoff. His numbers in January (2.72 and .909) haven't been great, but those are serviceable numbers for a number one goalie in fantasy pools, especially with a 6-2-0 record. Like Giguere, Kipper tends to have better second halves (2.26 and .921) than first halves (2.51 and .909), so keep him in mine for your late season surge. Jarome Iginla only had one goal since the calendar rolled over to 2009, very uncharacteristic of the sniper, but he does have seven assists. Interesting note, he is a combined plus 19 when Calgary wins, but a minus 18 when they lose hmmmm… Michael Cammalleri has eight goals in the past six games, and could be in for a big hefty pay rise if he keeps this pace up. Dion Phaneuf has copped a lot of criticism this season, he's still on a 53 point, 274 SOG, and a 110 PIM pace, cut him some slack! Rene Bourque's on pace to set new career-highs in SOG and points, and has played in 17 or more minutes in five of the past 10 contests.

Chicago

Chicago continues to play well at home with a 14-4-5 record. Cristobal Huet is 3-3-0 with a 2.28 GAA and a .923 sv% compared to Nikolai Khabibulin's 2-2-1, 2.10 GAA and .929 sv% in the month of January. Those numbers are so similar that it'd be hard to justify the Hawks choosing one over the other as the number one goalie. Look for a 50/50 split the rest of the way. Duncan Keith missed the last four games before the All-Star break with concussion-like symptoms, he has resumed skating, so consider him day-to-day. Brian Campbell has gone ice-cold in the month of January with only has four points and eight SOG in 11 contests.

Columbus

Columbus has battled injuries all season long, but many of their injured players will be returning this week. 10 of their next 13 games will be at home, so that should help the players comfort levels during this stretch of the season. R.J. Umberger has five goals and seven points while firing 24 SOG and collecting 13 PIMs in 10 January contests. He's a great option to add to fantasy squads considering he's only 10% owned in Yahoo leagues.

Jason Williams has been a great addition to the Blue Jackets' line up, he has four points in four games, while tallying only 18 in 41 in Atlanta. He's only 4% owned in Yahoo leagues. Williams should be a must add if you are looking for offensive help in the right wing, as he garners plenty of power-play ice-time on the Blue Jacket's top PP unit. Rick Nash is red-hot with 10 points in six contests after returning from injury. Wade Dubielewicz will make five-to-eight starts from now to the end of the season according to coach Ken Hitchcock, so Mason owners can breathe a sigh of relief.

Colorado

Somebody yell Avalanche! Colorado's playoff hopes are falling faster than a ton of ice chasing a skier down a steep slope. Consistency has been the main issue, and it begins between the pipes with Peter Budaj. Budaj has a 1-3 record with a 4.09 GAA and a .878 sv% so far in January, which won't be enough to get it done. Andrew Raycroft is nipping at the number one gig with a respectable 3-3-0 record with a 2.53 GAA and a .917 sv%. Wojtek Wolski has been on fire since being moved to center the top-line of Ryan Smyth and Milan Hejduk. He has nine points in 10 January contests and most importantly 34 SOG. He's still 42% owned in Yahoo leagues if you haven't bit on him yet do so already. Peter Forsberg has announced that he wants to make another comeback to the NHL and has stated that he prefers to go to the Avs or the Flyers. Paul Stastny is still recovering from a broken forearm, but is slated to return mid-February. Joe Sakic's timeline is not a bright as he'll be out till mid-to-late March.

Dallas

Dallas is in the same boat as Colorado and battling some consistency issues. Marty Turco could be one culprit to finger the blame. His 3.08 GAA and .885 sv% numbers have been the worst in his career. The only reprieve is that like Giggy and Kipper, his career numbers have looked a lot better in the second half (2.01 and .917) compared to the first half (2.34 and .908) throughout his career. Brad Richards has had a slow month point-wise with five in nine games, but does have 35 SOG in those contests, which is a positive sign. Stephane Robidas continues to log huge minutes for the Stars by averaging 24 minutes per game in the last 10 contests. Mike Modano continues to chug along, he's on a .64 points-per-game pace thanks to a hot October, he'll be more like a .50 point-per-game player from here on out.

Detroit

Detroit has had a fantastic first half as they entered the All-Star break second in the Western Conference behind only San Jose. The only blemish that may be tagged with Detroit is Chris Osgood's sub-par play. He had shown signs of improvement at the start of January, but a string of three sub-par outings have left the Red Wings turning towards Ty Conklin for their goaltending services. Conks has been tremendous with a 4-1-0 record and a 2.00 GAA along with a .924 sv% in the month of January compared to Osgood's sub-par 3.34 and .903 numbers. I just don't see Detroit completely giving up on Osgood and handing the number one gig to Conklin, so I think it's going to be a 50/50 or a 60/40 split for the duration of the season. Niklas Lidstrom and Pavel Datsyuk was suspended one-game each for missing the All-Star game, it's probably better off for them in the long run to rest up during the break anyways. Johan Franzen was out of action with a strained hip, but looks ready to go against Columbus on Tuesday night.

Edmonton

Edmonton was red-hot as they entered the All-Star break by winning five of their last six contests. One of their key moves was dealing away Mathieu Garon to the Penguins. With that bode move, all of the spotlight will be on Dwayne Roloson as the number one goalie in Edmonton. Ales Hemsky is proving that he is one of the elite players in the NHL, as he had six points in two games since returning from a concussion. He had 51 assists which ranked him amongst the top 20 in the NHL for that statistic last season. His up-tempo play has also inspired both Erik Cole and Sam Gagner to elevate their play as the duo has combined for 12 points in the past 10 games for the Oil. Tom Gilbert has also picked up his play recently as he has picked up six points in the past five contests, and is on pace to record a very quiet 42 point season.

Los Angeles

The Kings are looking for their first playoff berth since 2002. It'll be a rough road ahead as 24 of their final 36 games will be on the road. It'll be a tough task since the Kings boast one of the youngest rosters in the league. The main thing that needs to happen is improved offensive scoring. Anze Kopitar will need to carry that load, he's only on pace for 65 points, which is a huge drop compared to last season's 77 points. On the bright side, he's nearly a point-per-game player (.94) in the second half of seasons throughout his career, so that's a positive sign that

things will turn around. Dustin Brown is on pace to shatter his career-high in SOG as he is averaging 4.15 SOG per contest. Jack Johnson recently returned from a torn labrum injury, and has played in over 20 minutes in two of the three contests. With Johnson returning back into the lineup, it has affected Kyle Quincey's overall ice-time, as Quincey has dropped under the 20 minute mark in ice-time in those three contests.

Minnesota

The Wild's schedule is an interesting one, as they play nine of the next 13 games at home then play 14 of their next 17 on the road. The road games will be a true indication of what type of Wild team they are. Are they the Northwest leading team at the beginning of the year, or are they the team that lost six in-a-row in mid-December? The Wild have trouble scoring goals, and without Marian Gaborik for the rest of the season, any improvement won't come any easier.

The team can't just worry about this season as both Marian Gaborik and Niklas Backstrom are both headed towards unrestricted free-agency at the end of the season. Both players could command a huge pay rise from other teams if they seek greener pastures. So the Wild are stuck between a rock and a hard place, if they don't deal them for something at the trade deadline they risk losing them for nothing in the off-season. I do see Backstrom being moved, as he has shown no indication that he wants to re-sign with the Wild. That plus the fact that the goalie market in the off-season is in Backstrom's favor, so I don't see any justification why he would want to re-sign in Minny. With that said, I'd make a pre-emptive strike and snatch up Josh Harding, if you have a roster spot available for your fantasy squad.

Nashville

Everyone counted the Predators out last season, but they managed to push the Stanley Cup champions to six-games in the first round of the playoffs. Jason Arnott played a big part in that role, but has struggled somewhat this season. His four-point December, was beginning to show signs that this might be an off-year for him, but he has since rebounded nicely with six points in seven January contests to right the ship on the correct bearing. The fact that he's averaging 2.9 SOG, and .925 PIMs per contest still deems him one of the best across-the-board centers to own fantasy-wise.

Between the pipes, Pekka Rinne has shown signs that he could be a number one goalie in the NHL with four shut outs this season. He also has a very respectable 2.33 GAA and .916 sv% this season, which is well above his goaltending partner Dan Ellis, who owns a 2.92 GAA and a .898 sv%. Look for Rinne to get more starts than Ellis in the second half of this season, which was the same scenario that happened last season with Ellis and Chris Mason. Shea Weber started the season red-hot with 22 points in his first 23 games, but only has 10 points in 22 since. One reason could be the decrease in SOG. He was averaging 3.56 in the first 23 games, while averaging just 2.64 in the next 22. If you are in a one-year league, I'd try to sneakily pawn him off for a more established defenseman like Sheldon Souray, Chris Pronger or Jay Bouwmeester.

Phoenix

The Coyotes were playing some inspired hockey heading into the All-Star break as they won five of their past seven contests. Shane Doan continues to be the leader in a young Coyotes squad. He has 46 points in 48 games, while averaging 2.68 SOG and 1.08 PIMs per contest. The Coyotes have the personnel to make it into the post-season this year, so look for similar, if not better, second-half numbers like he has last season. Peter Mueller has seven points in 10 January contests, and seems to be rounding the corner. He scored 24 in 33 to finish off last season, and could be above that pace this season playing with Olli Jokinen. Speaking of Jokinen, since the 2003-04 season, he has potted 117 points in 115 second half games, so he has demonstrated that he has huge scoring potential especially when his team is fighting for a playoff spot. Use his slow first half start to your advantage and see if you can land him in a deal. Ilya Bryzgalov's numbers haven't been as good as last season's but he's starting to come around. He's posted a 2.76 GAA and a .916 sv% in eight January starts, which shows that he's improving. If you are looking for a cheaper option to buy-low on a goalie Bryz could be a great alternative.

San Jose

San Jose will continue their search of their first ever President's trophy. They have the strong veteran presence along with the offensive scoring ability to make a hard run at it. Joe Thornton leads the charge as he's on pace to average an assist-per-game this season, a feat that he hasn't accomplished since the 2005-06 season. Patrick Marleau is also on a point-per-game pace, which like Thornton, he hasn't accomplished since the 2005-06 season. Devin Setoguchi has continued to produce, but I have a feeling that they might unite the JT, Cheechoo and Marleau line in the second half of this season, which would somewhat decrease Setoguchi's fantasy value a bit. Similar to Olli Jokinen, Cheechoo has tallied 115 points in 114 second half games since the 2003-04 season, but this year he faces stiffer competition from Setoguchi and Ryan Clowe for a top-line/top power-play spot on the Sharks' roster. If you have nothing to lose or are looking for something to gamble on, make a run at the 56% Yahoo-owned Cheechoo-train.

St. Louis

St. Louis is in a transition phase, they're a good up-and-coming team, but I don't think they have

the horses to get them there just yet. Brad Boyes, T.J. Oshie and Patrik Berglund are all young stars in the making, but will need a few more years before they get there. The loss of Paul Kariya really hampered their season. Keith Tkachuk is scheduled to become an unrestricted free agent at the end of the season. So the Blues might pull off what they did in the 2006-07 season, and pawn him off to a contender at the trade deadline. This time they probably won't be able to squeeze a first rounder from someone.

I still like David Backes' across-the-board stats. He's on pace for 44 points, 215 PIMs and 192 SOG. At 34% Yahoo-owned, he's a bargain. Andy McDonald tweaked his ankle last week, but he said it wasn't a set back in his rehab program. He still wants to return to the Blues lineup later this week or early next week. When he returns Andy Murray will probably re-unite him with Tkachuk and Boyes, so look for those three to have a solid run up to the trade deadline. Neither Chris Mason (2.99 gaa and .904 sv%) or Manny Legace (3.12 gaa and .888 sv%) have stepped up to the plate this season, so it looks like both goalies will split the goaltending duties for the duration of the season.

Vancouver

Vancouver will be waiting for Mats Sundin and Roberto Luongo to recover from their long layoffs, hopefully the All-Star break has given them enough time to find their groove back. Pavol Demitra sat out a few games prior to the All-Star break to rest his injured groin. He should be returning back to the Canucks roster this week and should join Sundin on the second line for the Canucks. Taylor Pyatt has scored two goals in two games since rejoining the Sedin twins on Vancouver's top line. He's beginning to relight the chemistry that he had with the twins in the 2006-07 season, where he tallied a career-high 23 goals that season. Sundin's addition to the Canucks lineup has completely destroyed all of Kyle Wellwood's fantasy value as he only has one goal in the past 11 games while, watching his SH% freefall from 31.7% down to 27.5%. Kevin Bieksa had a hot December while tallying eight points and 39 SOG in 14 contests, but has reverted back to normality with five points and only 17 SOG in 10 January contests.

Fantasy hockey is very much like a box of chocolates, sure you can look at stats or current trends all day long, but in most cases it depends on sheer luck and improvisation in order to win you a championship. As Forrest said, "You just never know what you're gonna get."