

Desperate Times Call for Desperate Measures (Part 3)

Written by Ryan Ma

Tuesday, 07 April 2009 10:39 - Last Updated Tuesday, 07 April 2009 17:13



Final part of the series, final week of this fantasy season, here we go.

Maaasquito Buzzings...

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

Goals

Assists

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+/-

PPP

SOG

Morrison (3)

Niskanen (4)

Sydor (5)

Morrison (2)

Upshall (16)

Cheechoo (3)

Lombardi (4)

O'Donnell (3)

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Niskanen (2)

Lombardi (15)

Upshall (3)

Whitney (3)

Hjalmarsson (3)

Demitra (2)

Cheechoo (13)

Gagner (2)

Holmstrom (3)

Woywitka (3)

Doughty (2)

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Christensen (12)

Lisin (2)

Ott (3)

Calder (3)

Oshie (2)

Hutchinson (12)

Players who I suggested last week and their production during the week.

Matthew Lombardi 0 G, 4 A, +1, 6 PIMs, 1 PPP, 15 SOG

Patrik Berglund 0 G, 0 A, -2, 0 PIMs, 0 PPP, 0 SOG

T.J. Oshie 1 G, 1 A, -1, 4 PIMs, 2 PPP, 4 SOG

David Perron 0 G, 0 A, -2, 0 PIMs, 0 PPP, 2 SOG

Alex Kotalik 1 G, 1 A, +1, 2 PIMs, 1 PPP, 7 SOG

James Wisniewski 0 G, 1 A, 0, 2 PIMs, 0 PPP, 2 SOG

Jamie Lundmark 0 G, 1 A, -1, 0 PIMs, 0 PPP, 0 SOG

Yessssh, pretty tough week on my picks, with only one saving grace in Lombardi, hopefully this week will be much better when it counts the most.

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Who's Hot

Matthew Lombardi – I gotta keep Lombardi on the list again as he was my only hit from last week. He had a solid week as his Yahoo-owned percentage remains status quo at seven percent. Coach Wayne Gretzky continues to have confidence in the veteran, which should continue to lead towards plenty of ice-time for the duration of this fantasy season. That really will certainly displease many Kyle Turris, Peter Mueller, Martin Hanzal owners though.

Jonathan Cheechoo – I've been tossing and turning about putting him on the list or not, but in the end I just couldn't ignore his point-per-game effort in the last five contests. During that span he's also averaging 17:35, which is a full two minutes more per game than his seasonal average this year. Cheechoo also picked up 25 PIMs, 16 SOG along with two game-winning goals, while his confidence is sky-high. He's certainly benefitting from the absence of the injured Patrick Marleau, and could prove to be a great insurance policy if one of the Sharks' top-six gets injured during the playoffs. But for now you should hop aboard the Cheechoo-train for the rest of this fantasy season.

Tomas Holmstrom – Holmstrom missed all of February and a bit of March due to hernia surgery, but has certainly returned with a vengeance this past week. He picked up five points in the last three games and is getting back towards what he does best, which is creating traffic in front of opposing goaltenders. With the Wings clinching a playoff spot early, now might be a great time to rest a few of their star players like Henrik Zetterberg and Pavel Datsyuk, which would give more responsibility to Holmstrom in the final week of this fantasy season. He's roughly available in a third of Yahoo fantasy leagues.

Scottie Upshall – Very similar case between Lombardi and Upshall, both were newly acquired at the trade deadline, and both seem to be Gretzky's golden boys for the final stretch of this season. As Upshall is averaging 18:39 since donning a new uniform, he also has 10 points in 16 games and might be finally living up to his sixth overall draftee potential. He should be widely available in Yahoo leagues being only eight percent owned.

Ryan Whitney – Whitney has enjoyed a bit a success since joining the Ducks at the trade deadline. He has nine points in 18 contests while averaging just a tad under the 23 minute mark in ice-time per game. A lot of people, including myself, thought that his fantasy value would plummet being buried behind Chris Pronger and Scott Niedermayer in Anaheim, but it just hasn't been the case. With the Ducks fighting for a playoff spot in the final week of this season, I'd for sure make a push to add him this weekend for both his games against the Stars and the Coyotes.

T.J. Galiardi – The out there pick this week is Galiardi, well not really that out there but I bet you never even hear about him till you read Dobber's comments on him a few days ago. Galiardi was a former second round pick and is finally getting his cup of coffee with the big squad this season. He didn't take the usual career path of a NHL player, as he played one year in Dartmouth in the NCAA, then played in the WHL with the Calgary Hitmen, where he tallied 70 points in 72 games along with 24 in 16 in the playoffs, and then started the season in the AHL with Lake Erie before joining the Avalanche seven games ago. The Avalanche have been

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decimated by injuries, which has earned Galiardi top-line duties centering Milan Hedjuk and Darcy Tucker. He should make the Avalanche's roster full-time starting next season, but he might have fantasy value beginning this week. If you are really strapped for fantasy production you should take advantage of Galiardi's three games remaining this week.

Who's Not

Joe Thornton – With only two points this past week now might be a good time for the Sharks to bench Jumbo Joe and get him rested for a long playoff haul. The Sharks have three remaining games, Colorado, Phoenix and LA, who are all going to miss the playoffs this season, so there isn't really a huge demand for the Sharks to play JT down the stretch of the regular season. I'd probably expect him to sit out at least one if not two of the remaining games. I wouldn't click the drop button right away, but if you are in a tight head-to-head finals matchup and you desperately need the points, you have to pull the trigger.

Olli Jokinen – Jokinen seems to have pulled the disappearing act as he's gone pointless in seven of his past eight games. He's still contributing on the peripheral stats end as he has eight PIMs and 21 SOG during that span, but if you desperately need the points, I'd ditch the dead weight and see if you can scoop up someone more productive than Jokinen.

Brian Rafalski – Brian Rafalski missed his fourth consecutive game with a sore groin, but is expected to play on Thursday. The Wings won't lose much playoff positioning in the West, so I don't see them rushing Rafalski back early before the playoffs begin, and if they do they'd probably limit his minutes anyways to prevent further injury. I'd probably take the Whitney for Rafalaski swap if I had the chance.

Brian Campbell – Campbell has been on a cold-streak in his last eight contests, as he only has one point to go along with 2 PIMs, and 10 SOG, which are not very Campbell-like numbers. In four out of the past six contests he's played 20 minutes or less, which is a tell-tale sign that the Blackhawks are resting him before the post-season. He's probably a must-drop in all one-year fantasy leagues at this point in the season.

Dustin Brown – Brown has struggled immensely this past month and is one of the main reasons why I fell off the pace in the Dobber's Expert league this past month. Brown only has five points and eight PIMs to go along with 47 SOG since the end of February (18 games). The Kings will miss the post-season this year, which is probably why Brown will have zero fantasy value for the final week of this fantasy season. I'd drop him ASAP.

Mats Sundin – Sundin has been in a goal-less drought for the past 10 contests, and seems to be cooling down instead of heating up come playoff time. The main reason why his goals seemed to have disappeared may be the fact that he only has 16 SOG in that 10 game span, which is nowhere near his 2.98 career SOG/game average. I might keep him until tonight's game against the Flames, but after that I'd probably cut him loose.

Devin Setoguchi – Setoguchi has gone ice-cold again after hitting a hot-streak where he tallied 10 points in six games at the end of March. He's gone pointless in his past four contests with no

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PIMs, and an even plus/minus rating. Jonathan Cheechoo seems to have taken over Patrick Marleau's spot on the top-line which probably will keep Setoguchi's value at bay for the final week of this season.

Other honorable mentions from both leagues

Vinny Lecavalier (injured)

Marty St. Louis

Paul Stastny (injured)

Patrick Marleau (injured)

Nathan Horton

Nikolai Zherdev

Ryan Smyth (injured)

Martin Erat (injured)

P.M. Bouchard (injured)

With head-to-head playoff hockey pools being as tight as they are, a single point here, a PIM there, and a SOG possibly could make or break your fantasy season. That's why it is essential to take advantage of the players that you have at your disposal, and cut loose any of the dead weight that is dragging your fantasy squad down. After all this is your last opportunity to claim the crown even though you might not have had a great regular season. It's not about emotions, but purely based on stats from here on in. Good luck! We'll see ya next week in our first playoff edition.