The first round of the Western Conference playoffs is over as another two Western Conference teams were ousted in two very entertaining six games series. Similar to last week we'll do a quick assessment of their players with fantasy significance and take a look at what could be in store for them next season.

Calgary

Five Stars

Eric Nystrom – If I predicted that Nystrom would out-score Micheal Cammalleri during the first round series with the Blackhawks, I think many of you would have already tuned out. Well guess what that happened? Nystrom ended up with four points compared to just three for Cammy. Nystrom has never really had a full-time shot at the NHL level, but with his solid outing this post-season, could possibly be in line for a top-six role with the Flames next season. Look for him to tally a very quiet 50 points next season.

Four Stars

Olli Jokinen – There are a lot of naysayers about Jokinen's motivation at times, but he certainly displayed plenty of confidence in their first round defeat against the Blackhawks. He led the Flames in overall scoring as well as shots on goal, and probably could have racked up more points if it wasn't for the solid play of Nikolai Khabibulin. With a full-time gig alongside Jarome Iginla next season, look for him to once again make a run at the century-point mark.

David Moss – Moss actually led the Flames in goals scored with three during the opening round series. For a 575k player to be outscoring players, who are making 12 times his salary, certainly is indicative of how the series went for the Flames. Moss spent most of his time this season on the third line alongside Craig Conroy and Curtis Glencross, but with the departure of a few top-six forwards, Moss and Nystrom could find themselves in top-six roles next season. Look for Moss to also be a sleeper candidate for 50 points next season.

Three Stars

Jarome Iginla – Probably expected more from the best offensive player on the Flames' squad, but he was pretty much locked down by Duncan Keith and co. throughout the series. The Flames' captain experienced another first round exit, and at the age of 32, time isn't going to be Iggy's friend. Look for him to once again once again reach the point-per-game mark, but I wouldn't expect anything more than that.

Adrian Aucoin – Aucoin scored a few timely goals for the Flames this post-season, which is why I awarded him a three star performance. He finished with a line of three points, a minus two rating, along with two PIMs, and 11 SOG. Those aren't bad numbers for a player who isn't always in the Flames' limelight. The Flames don't have much wiggle room in terms of salary cap, which makes his $4 mill salary too hefty of a price for the Flames to pay this off-season. Look for Aucoin to be suiting up for another team next year.

Two Stars

Michael Cammalleri – To say that Cammy under produced this post-season probably is a fair statement. He finished the regular season with 39 goals in 81 contests, but only tickled the twine once in six games against Chicago during the series. A lot of the lack of production could be attributed because the Flames top-line had a face full of Keith and Brent Seabrook, but great players always seem to find a way and Cammy didn't. Cammy is headed for unrestricted free agency at the end of the season, and will probably earn a big contract from another team other than Calgary.

Dion Phaneuf – Whether he was playing with an injury or not, there were clear expectations from Phaneuf this post-season, and he didn't meet them. He averaged 3.46 SOG/game during the regular season, but only averaged 1.6 SOG/game during the series, which certainly demonstrated that something was wrong. If Phaneuf played to his regular season numbers, the first round series would have certainly gone to seven games. Consider this an off-year for Phaneuf and look for him to be back amongst the elite 50-point defenseman next season.

Todd Bertuzzi – Bert had a good bounce back season this year, as he averaged 0.66

points-per-game with the Flames, but was unfortunately a no-show during the playoffs as he only picked up two points and nine shots on goal in six contests. Those are certainly not the type of numbers that you'd expect from a player of his caliber. Bertuzzi is also scheduled to become an unrestricted free agent this off-season, so it'll be interesting if anyone is willing to offer him a similar $1.95 mil contract that he earned this season.

Rene Bourque – I debated about giving him two or one star for his post-season performance and decided to upgrade him because he speedily returned back from injury in an attempt to help the Flames out during the playoffs. He finished with one goal and 12 SOG in five contests, which probably is in line with the performances of the rest of the two star players. Bourque had a solid breakout season this year, and look for him to take the next step forward as a full-time 55-point top-six forward next season.

One Star

Mikka Kiprusoff – I alluded to the fact that Kipper didn't have the historical numbers against Chicago and that if the Flames were to win he'd need to have much better numbers. In the end those numbers proved to be true and his sub-par play could be the main reason why the Flames bowed out at six rather than moving on to the next round in six. At the end of the day, you can't have a goalie with a 3.52 goals against average along with a .884 save percentage that will lead you to victory during the playoffs. Kipper's numbers weren't great during the regular season, and I wouldn't expect them to be better heading into next season. He's probably going to drop out of first rounds in many fantasy drafts next season.

Sharks

Five Stars

None

Four Stars

Rob Blake – Blake finished with four points in six contests, which is probably around the numbers that I would expect from an elite defenseman. He also finished with four PIMs, and a team-leading 26 SOG which shows that he still has plenty of gas left in the tank for one maybe two seasons. Blake's scheduled to become an unrestricted free agent this summer, so it'll be interesting to see if he decides to return to San Jose or another team for next season.

Three Stars

Joe Thornton – I was going to be harsh on all of the Sharks, but thought I had to be fair and objective with the ratings. Thornton finished with a team-leading five points, which earned him one star. He averaged 2.83 SOG/game during the playoffs compared to 1.70 during the regular season which earns him a second star, and that fact that he took on Ryan Getzlaf to open up Game Six showed his leadership skills to earn him a third star. Past history provides a very big picture in fantasy performance, and hopefully Thornton taught a valuable lesson to many playoff

poolies this season which is numbers rarely lie.

Dan Boyle – Boyle I thought was deserving of a passing grade because he was the only Shark that really stood out during the series in my opinion. He picked up four points in six contests, while averaging well over 23 minutes per contest. Sure you can say you expected more from him, but I certainly didn't think that he deserved a failing grade. Look for Boyle to tally around the 55 point mark next season.

Devin Setoguchi – I debated between two stars or three for Mr. Setoguchi and decided to give him the benefit of the doubt. This was only his second post-season experience in his brief NHL career, so the fact that he only averaged 16:20 compared to 19:14 for Thornton and 20:28 for Patrick Marleau was his saving grace. Either way Setoguchi took a big step in his development this season, and should be right around that mark once again next season.

Jonathan Cheechoo – Similar story as Setoguchi where I debated between two or three stars, but also decided to give the Cheechoo-train the benefit of the doubt. Yes, he only picked up two points in six contests, but he also averaged only 10:10 per contest, which is half of what Marleau had, while being almost as productive. You can't really fault a guy who was barely on the ice for a disastrous playoff loss. Following another disastrous fantasy season, Cheechoo probably could be had at a very very cheap price in drafts next season. I'd definitely temper my expectations of him but still see if you can pick him up as a late round gamble.

Two Stars

Patrick Marleau – For the last couple of post-seasons, Marleau has averaged around the 0.5 points-per-game mark. This season was no different as tallied three points in six contests. He played well in spurts, but didn't play a complete series, which could be one of the main reasons why the Sharks bowed out in the first round series. At the end of the day, the top players need to be top players and Marleau wasn't. He had a big season this year, but I wouldn't expect him to repeat those numbers once again next season.

Ryan Clowe – Clowe wasn't spectacular in any facet of the game, so giving him a two star rating is probably pretty fair. He only fired 11 shots on goal, despite averaging over 18 minutes per game for the Sharks. Yes, the main stars of the Sharks didn't show up for the series, but a team effort is needed to overcome that hump, but they didn't show up either. Clowe is scheduled to become a restricted free agent this summer, so he'll most likely be re-signed by the Sharks. He'll continue to have a top-six role for the Sharks next season, so look for a marginal increase in the 52 points that he had this season.

Milan Michalek – No excuses for someone to average 19:22 per contest in ice-time and come out with a lone goal in six contests. The only saving grace was that he picked up 20 SOG, which is second on the team behind only Blake. Michalek always seems to put up a quiet 55 points year-in-year-out, so look for him to do so once again next season.

Joe Pavelski – Similar story with Michalek as Pavelski, there's just no excuses for someone to average over 19 minutes of ice-time and only produce one point in six contests. He did show

some effort as he picked up 18 SOG during the contest, and if it wasn't for a red-hot Jonas Hiller probably would have pocketed a few more points. He's taking the typical development path of a young NHL player, so look for him to take the big step forward in the "magical" fourth year next season.

One Star

Evgeni Nabokov – 2.44 goals against average and .910 save percentage certainly aren't Vezina-like numbers, but they are certainly better than the 2.82 and .890 numbers that Nabby displayed during the opening round series. Only Kiprusoff and Carey Price had a lower save percentage than Nabby, which is probably the main reason why the Sharks were ousted in the first round of the playoffs. The main question remains, is he going to be worth the first or second round price tag that many owners are going to splurge on Nabby in next season's drafts?

Questions or comments? Put any thoughts that you may have in the comments section below and I'll be happy to discuss it with you.