We’re now into the second week of the NHL season and a lot has been happening. Similar to last week, I’ll walk you through the Western Conference to see what’s been happening and catch you up with the latest trends, plus this week’s hot pickups/cold starters.

As always, before the good stuff let’s take a look at a few Maaasquito Buzzings…

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

Goals

Assists

+/-

PPP

SOG

Nystrom (3)

Belanger (4)

Grossman (8)

Belanger (4)

Vrbata(20)

Bourque (3)

Ju. Williams (4)

Robidas (7)

Quincey (3)

Richards (13)

Purcell (2)

Wisniewski (4)

Doughty (5)

Comrie (3)

Aucoin (13)

Handzus (2)

Cogliano (3)

Wisniewski (4)

Samuelsson (3)

Neal (12)

Grebeshkov (2)

Stoll (3)

Sjostrom (4)

Brunette (3)

Hornqvist (11)

Anaheim

The Ducks were bailed out on Saturday night thanks to Teemu Selanne who potted two goals including the shootout winner to help them pick up their second victory of the season. It wasn't as lucky on Monday night as they were blanked by the Rangers 3-0. The Ducks do own a 2-2-1 record to start the season, but it just doesn't seem impressive the way they've played their games. I know it's still early in the season, but Bobby Ryan's one goal and one point from 15 shots certainly doesn't resemble the same player from last season. The Ducks' defensive trio of Scott Niedermayer, Ryan Whitney and James Wisniewski has certainly been workhorses as they are averaging 26:01, 0.79 points and two SOG per contest as a group so far this season. I don't know what many owners are thinking, as Whitney's stat line of four points, plus-four rating, eight PIMs, two power-play points and eight SOG in five contests is still only 47 percent Yahoo-owned. If he's sitting on your waiver wire, what are you waiting for?

The major news coming out of Anaheim is the loss of Wisniewski for the next little while with a shoulder injury. The Ducks listed him as week-to-week, so it potentially could be a long term injury. Anaheim has a few decent backup options in Luca Sbisa and Nick Boynton who could easily step into Wissy's place in the lineup, so nothing big to worry about there. Petteri Nokelainen was briefly tried on a line with fellow Finnish countrymen Saku Koivu and Selanne in

Saturday night's contest against the Flyers, I don't think that's going to be a permanent fixture though. Evgeny Artyukin was brought in during the off-season to help give the Ducks a physical presence upfront, but he's surprising everyone with his offense prowess as he's on pace for 32 goals this season. It appears that the goaltending carousel will continue in Anaheim as J.S. Giguere and Jonas Hiller have pretty much split the starts evenly so far this season. The early edge does go to Hiller has he has an advantage in numbers with his 2.28 and .934 compared to Giggy's 2.93 and .913.

Calgary

Wow, did Calgary really let one slip Monday? They blew a 5-0 lead and lost it in overtime 6-5 to the Hawks, surely some of the blame has to be rested on the shoulders of Miikka Kiprusoff. In a few of my columns during the off-season, I wrote about how I didn't think Kipper would be top-tier material this season, despite the addition of Jay Bouwmeester to the team in the off-season, during the early going he certainly hasn't proven that he is. His 4-0-1 record is pretty nice, but if you are in a league that counts GAA as well as save percentage, trading off wins for two other stats isn't exactly the smartest thing to do in fantasy hockey. If you are a Kipper owner, I'd secretly take advantage of his nice record and see if you can get a better across-the-board goalie. Rene Bourque is leading the Flames with eight points in six contests. His 12 SOG is also very respectable, however he and his line mates, Nigel Dawes and Daymond Langkow, are a combined minus 23 this season which is a big worry. Bouwmeester has made his presence felt in Cow-town by averaging a league-high 28:05 in overall ice-time.

Chicago

As previously mentioned, the Blackhawks had a huge come-from-behind victory last night against the Flames. Cristbal Huet once again looked shaky as he allowed three goals in only seven minutes of play. Antti Niemi fared a little better in stopping 13 of the 15 shots that he faced to pick up the OT victory. As a Huet-owner I'm starting to panic right about now… Patrick Sharp and Patrick Kane are leading the way with seven points each to start the season. What's interesting is that Niklas Hjalmarsson is garnering six and a half more minutes of ice-time more than Cam Barker. The later does average close to three minutes of power-play ice-time per contest, which makes things better. Imagine if he got the best of both worlds while was averaging 20 minutes along with the PP ice-time. Andrew Ladd has gotten the shaft as he's averaging only 13:02 in ice-time along with a whopping four seconds on the PP while toiling on the third line with John Madden and Troy Brouwer. You would have to think that he's going to be a serious candidate as a cap casualty victim as the Hawks try to re-sign the RFA trio of Duncan Keith, Jonathan Toews and Kane in the off-season.

Colorado

The Avs top-line of Milan Hejduk, Paul Stastny and Wojtek Wolski are making it happen as they have combined for 17 points in the first five games of the season. They are probably the most under rated top-line in the NHL. Kyle Quincey is also joining the fun as he has six points to lead the Kings defensive corps. What's amazing is that despite averaging 24:56 in overall ice-time

along with 4:10 on the power-play each game, he's only 45 percent owned in Yahoo leagues. If he's available definitely take a flyer on Quincey. The Avs power-play units have also tickled the twine at a rate of 38.1 percent, which sits them nicely in second place in all of the NHL. Craig Anderson has returned back to Earth after a dazzling week last week. He's allowed three goals in each of his last three starts, which is probably the numbers that you would expect him to have throughout the year. Youngster Matt Duchene is still being eased into the lineup as he's only averaging 16:53 per contest for the Avs. The plus side is that out of those 16 minutes, almost four of them do come on the power-play.

Columbus

Columbus is off to a blazing 3-1 start to the season, and they're doing it by playing a strong defensive game. Steve Mason was pasted for five goals on just 20 shots by the Sharks on Thursday night, which has caused his GAA to balloon above the three mark. Mathieu Garon also had a great start as he picked up a shutout against the Coyotes on Saturday night. This just gives more confidence to coach Ken Hitchcock that they'll have no problems giving extra rest to Mason throughout the season. After a brief stint alongside Rick Nash and Kristian Huselius, Derick Brassard has been demoted to the second line because Hitchcock didn't want to "overload him against the big dogs every night." From a fantasy standpoint, you have to hate what he's doing to Nikita Filatov (seven minutes of overall ice-time per contest) and Brassard's fantasy value, but he and the Blue Jackets do own a 3-1 record so you can't fault him for that. Anton Stralman is finally getting his shot on an NHL team, as he's averaging second behind only Fedor Tyutin in power-play ice-time. Keep monitoring his situation, as he might have some fantasy value this season after all.

Dallas

The Stars have been snake-bitten as they start the season 1-0-3. The positive is that they've gained points in each of their four matches, which should surely be beneficial come playoff race time in April. Dallas also welcomed back veteran Jere Lehtinen back into the lineup after missing the first three contests with a groin injury. His return to the lineup could singlehandedly destroy any fantasy value that Fabian Brunnstrom may have had this season, and could also affect youngster Jamie Benn. I'm sorry Mr. Angus you are dead wrong about Brad Richards! You can't say that someone with a 1.5 point-per-game average while also averaging 5.25 SOG per game is a shadow of his former self. I ask myself this question, why is he only 48 percent owned in Yahoo leagues? Last week Marcus commented on how he thought that Matt Niskanen is the d-man to own in Dallas, I think after this past week's performance, Stephane Robidas has taken over. He's on a point-per-game pace along with a dazzling plus seven rating, along with six SOG. At 33 percent owned he's as much as a bargain as Richards. If you are struggling to find a replacement on the wing for Johan Franzen or Daniel Sedin, you might not have to look any further than Benn. He's spending 90.27 percent of his overall ice-time alongside both Brendan Morrow and Mike Ribeiro. If he manages to maintain that roster spot, the Calder trophy could very well come calling in June. If you are a Marty Turco owner, don't panic just yet because traditionally his weakest statistical season is in October. He has a lifetime 2.79 GAA along with a .894 save percentage in the first month of the season, but usually comes back down to Earth with dazzling numbers in November.

Detroit

The biggest news coming out of Detroit is the major knee injury sustained by Johan Franzen, who will be sidelined for at least four months with a torn ACL. To be honest I think four months is a bit optimistic, Erik Johnson and Brendan Morrow both sustained the same injury last season which both lingered into the off-season. If you have a free IR slot and it won't cost you too high of a waiver priority, it might be worth taking a gamble on Franzen. Just don't have too high hopes for his return this fantasy season. The fallout has sent huge ripples down the Wings' offensive lines, as Pavel Datsyuk and Henrik Zetterberg were re-united on the top-line. The early benefactor is Todd Bertuzzi who joined the dynamic duo in shutting down the highly explosive Caps trio of Alex Ovechkin, Nicklas Backstrom and Alex Semin in Saturday night's contest. Keep an eye on Dan Cleary as he picked up over 18 minutes of ice-time, including 3:12 on the power-play, along with five SOG in the contest.

Edmonton

Edmonton pasted the Preds last night in a huge 6-1 victory. The first thing that came to mind was YES! Ales Hemsky, Patrick O'Sullivan, Sam Gagner and Shawn Horcoff must be having a huge night, then my bubble burst when I looked at the box scores and saw that the foursome combined for a whopping three points. Zack Stortini outscoring all of those guys, are you kidding me? Anyways, Dustin Penner is finally looking like the 2006-07 Penner, as he has five points in five games. He's at least starting to justify the huge package that the Oilers coughed up to get him from the Ducks. Denis Grebeshkov is certainly filling in nicely for the injured Sheldon Souray. He's still battling concussion symptoms after being tripped into the boards by Jarome Iginla last week. With Souray sidelined for the next little bit, look for Grebeshkov and Tom Gilbert to gain some addition power-play responsibilities in the next few games. Jeff Drouin-Deslauriers allowed only one goal while facing 41 shots from the Preds last night, and was the best player on the ice according to coach Pat Quinn. A quality outing like that might put more faith in the coaching staff to start him more often than once every five contests.

Los Angeles

If there was ever any substantial proof of the “magical fourth year myth”, Anze Kopitar should be the poster boy for it. He topped my list in the off-season as the top player to keep an eye out for in their “magical fourth year” and so far he’s making me look like a genius. The young Slovenian is off to a blistering start as he now has 10 points in five contests for the Kings. The trio of Ryan Smyth, Justin Williams and Kopitar has certainly formed some positive chemistry together as they have collected 23 points in the first five contests of the season. Williams is the easiest to acquire as he’s only 10 percent owned in Yahoo leagues. Jack Johnson and Drew Doughty are both averaging over 22 minutes of ice-time per contest. The edge belongs to Doughty as he has six points compared to just two for JJ. I’m finding out firsthand what it feels like as a frustrated Alex Frolov-owner. He’s toiling around in the third line alongside Michal Handzus and Wayne Simmonds, while picking up four points in the process. Imagine what kind of numbers he would be producing if he was playing on the top-line alongside Smyth and Kopitar? Jon Quick has a dazzling 4-1 record, but just like Kipper his GAA and save percentage (3.00 and .898) has been atrocious. I have a bit more faith in Quick as he’s younger and wants it more though, his numbers will return back to Earth fairly soon.

Minnesota

The Wild have struggled to start the season as they own a 1-3 record. What’s more alarming is that they’re only averaging 2.5 goals per game, which ranks them tied for 21st in the league.

They play three road games this week against the Ducks, Oilers, and Canucks, which probably doesn't bode well for the numbers for this week. Heading into the season there were a lot of unknowns about the style of play that the Wild will undertake this season, which would directly affect the fantasy value of Niklas Backstrom for this year. Four games into the season and Backstrom sports a 2.99 GAA and a .900 save percentage. I personally don't think that he's going to be anywhere near the 2.32 and .921 numbers that he has from the last two seasons, so if you do own him you might want to think about using his great numbers from the past two years to your advantage and get a goalie with higher upside. On the plus side, Brent Burns is garnering a team high 25:24 in overall ice-time, on the flip side, he has a minus six rating and only one assist to show for it. Petr Sykora and Cal Clutterbuck both left Saturday's contest due to injuries, both don't have too much upside in fantasy leagues this season.

Nashville

Patric Hornqvist is really making the most of his opportunity on the top-line as he now is tied with Jason Arnott for the team lead in points with five. It's just too bad the rest of the Preds have been so horrible that as a team they have a combined 17 points in the first four contests of the season. J.P. Dumont has resumed skating on his own, which means that he's nearing a return to the Preds lineup fairly soon. Other than that, it's hard to find any positives coming out of Nashville this early in the season. Pekka Rinne was chased from the net after allowing four goals in the first period of last night's contest against the Oilers. Is it too early in the season to mention the words sophomore slump? Dan Ellis filled in for the final 40 minutes and stopped nine of the 11 shots that he faced. Quick goalie comparison, Ellis 2-0 with a 2.18 GAA along with a .920 save percentage, Rinne 0-2 with a 3.80 GAA along with a .902 save percentage. Could we see a fourth consecutive change in number one goalie during a season in Nashville?

Phoenix

If the Coyotes are going to win games this season it appears that it's going to come from the shutout variety. In five contests this season, the Coyotes own a 3-2 record along with two shut outs. Their latest conquest was against the Sharks in last night's shootout victory. Ilya Bryzgalov spots a dazzling 0.98 GAA along with a .960 save percentage and is certainly paying off for those who gambled on him during the drafts this season. The Coyotes offense hasn't been as dazzling as they only have registered 10 goals in their five contests this season. Radim Vrbata leads the way with three goals, four points and 26 SOG. He could very well make an interesting sleeper pick this season. If you are struggling to find a Franzen replacement, you might want to strongly consider the 37 percent Yahoo-owned Vrbata. It really does appear that the Coyotes are limiting Ed Jovanovski's ice-time as Adrian Aucoin is averaging close to three minutes of ice-time more than JovoCop. Aucoin's also been a bit of a surprise as he's averaging three SOG per contest along with 4:40 on the power-play for the desert dogs.

San Jose

It doesn't appear that scoring goals is the problem for the Sharks, but it's preventing them that

have been their Achilles heel. The Sharks are tied with Pittsburgh for 12th overall in the league in terms of goals scored per game, but are only ranked 16th overall in goals allowed. Dany Heatley and Joe Thornton are leading the way with 10 points apiece. The later has a whooping nine assists. The Jason Demers project seems to be carrying on as he's averaging 4:15 on the power-play alongside Dan Boyle on the Sharks' top power-play unit. Demers doesn't really get much peripheral stats, as his measly six SOG demonstrates, with that said, if he can keep garnering that much ice-time on the power-play he's bound to pick up a few extra points due to the star power of his teammates. He's only one percent owned in Yahoo leagues. Demers inclusion in the PP has certainly left a sour taste in the mouth of many Rob Blake-owners. Evgeni Nabokov is off to a flying 3-1-1 start. The main drawback is his weak save percentage. Over his last three season's Nabby has posted .914, .910 and .910 numbers in that department, which is good, but I don't think it's good enough to carry you to a fantasy hockey championship. If there are other owners in your league who are willing to give you a better statistical goalie, or is highly fascinated in owning a goalie from a strong offensive team, you might just want to listen.

St. Louis

The Blues' slow starts to games have cost them valuable points to begin this season, as they have been outscored 7-3 in the first period of their first four games. That'll need to change tomorrow night if they are to sneak a victory in the desert against the Coyotes. The foursome of Keith Tkachuk, Paul Kariya, Andy McDonald and Brad Boyes is continuing their hot start, as they now have a combined 16 points in four contests for the Blues. Jay McClement has been the surprise this season, as he's starting the season on a point-per-game pace. What's completely baffling is that he's doing it all on even-strength, as he only has a grand total of four seconds of power-play time beside his name. Barret Jackman's sprained left ankle has opened the door for Alex Pietrangelo to get some much needed ice-time. It appears that it might be a long-term injury as the Blues have listed him as week-to-week as opposed to the usual day-to-day. This might just be enough of a crack for AP to establish himself as an NHLer. After

leading the Blues blue line corps in power-play ice-time last season, it looks like Carlo Colaiacovo has drawn the short straw this season as he's averaging almost three minutes of power-play ice-time less than Johnson. Chris Mason started the season slowly last year as he bolstered a 2.99 GAA along with a .904 save percentage entering the All-Star break, while finishing with a astounding 2.41 GAA and a .916 last season. So if you are a Mason owner, don't hit the panic button regarding his 2.70 GAA and .901 numbers so far this season.

Vancouver

The big news coming out of Van-city is the loss of Daniel Sedin for the next four-to-six weeks. If you have ever wondered how well the Sedin's would do without each other, I guess we'll get our first taste these next four weeks. It appears that Steve Bernier will get the first crack at lining up alongside Henrik Sedin and Alex Burrows. He's picked up 31, 32, and 32 points in the last three seasons, so this might just be the year where he tops the 50 point plateau. Following last week the Canucks' ice-time from defenseman has broken down to 23:17, 22:44, 21:45, 19:29, 17:38 and 16:30, I'm still wondering what's it going to look like when Mathieu Schneider returns? The Kevin Bieksa vs. Sami Salo vs. Christian Ehrhoff vs. Alex Edler battle is continuing. Ehrhoff leads in the points, plus/minus, and SOG column, but trails other three in overall time-on-ice, which is certainly interesting. Well, for those of you that stuck by Luongo this week you certainly reaped the rewards of a solid outing against the Flames. It's now three consecutive seasons that he was pulled in the third game of the season and rebounded with a solid victory in his fourth start. Store that in the back of your mind for next season.

Questions or comments? Like always I'll be ready and willing to discuss them with you in the

comments section below. See ya next week.