In order to be successful in fantasy hockey one key strategy that will help tremendously is being able to identify past historical trends and utilize them to your advantage. This week's column will showcase 23 players out West that have had either positive or negative career trends during the month of February.

Heart Breakers

Henrik Sedin

Last season's Art Ross Trophy winner only registered two points in seven contests

post-Olympic break, so I delved a little deeper into his stats and discovered a small abnormality in his career February stats. He has a 0.71 point-per-game average during the second month of the New Year, which is nearly 0.10 off his overall career 0.81 numbers. Henrik is one of the best overall point-producers in the NHL, but if you are in a scenario where you're a bit behind in the standings and desperately need to making up ground quickly, you might want to consider moving him for someone with proven, consistent February production.

Justin Williams

Williams has had a hot start to the season with 39 points in 50 contests for the Kings. The main question that's on many poolies' minds is whether or not it will continue? If you are an optimist then you'd probably say 'well he's in the right situation and the numbers to support the cause', but if you are a believer in past trends then it could be a completely different story. In 43 career February contests, Williams only has 20 points (0.47 points-per-game), and his March numbers don't fare much better (0.48 points-per-game). With that said, he's also been ravaged by injuries in the past, which might have been the primary reason for the drop in production, but if he can stay relatively healthy it might just shake the trend.

Mikko Koivu

The leader of the Wild has also had a hot start to the 2010-11 season with 43 points in 49 contests. Koivu's generally a great source for fantasy production as he's not just a

one-dimensional player, but it's the mid-season February lull that has me a bit worried moving forward. In his career, he has 29 February points in 51 contests (0.57 points-per-game), which is his worst statistical month of the hockey season. Koivu wasn't involved with the All-Star festivities, so he might have used that time to rejuvenate his mojo for a second-half push to will the Wild into the post-season.

Lubomir Visnovsky

Vissy is certainly enjoying his top-dog status in Anaheim as he only trails Keith Yandle in the defensive scoring race amongst all NHL blue liners. What might give Yandle the edge by the end of the season might be Visnovsky's lowly career February numbers. Visnovsky has 28 points in 58 contests (0.48 points-per-game), which closely matches his career Feb-Apr numbers 95 in 194 (0.49 points-per-game). Unfortunately, those numbers don't seem to reflect his career Oct-Jan numbers 302 in 481 (0.63 points-per-game), so if you are a Lubo-owner, now might be a great time to consider selling high!

Shea Weber

Much like the candidates listed above, Weber is another player that tends to have a major February hangover. His 18 points in 47 career February contests is by far and away his worst performing month of the NHL season. Perhaps having the second hardest shot in the NHL might boost his confidence to intimidate more opposition goalies in the remaining three months,

but if history repeats itself, then don't expect much from him for the next 28 days.

Alex Burrows

Spending 65.6 percent of your overall ice-time alongside the Sedin twins should generally result in pretty good numbers, which has certainly been the case for Burrows so far this season (28 points in 40 contests), which is why it's kind of shocking to see that he only has a 0.33 (16 in 49) career point-per-game average for the month of February. It could be attributed to the fact that he has a lowly 1.31 SOG per game average, which is nearly 0.8 less than his monthly best of 2.03 for January. The lack of PP ice-time (1:26) also provides even more evidence to quietly start shopping Burrows.

Martin Hanzal

Hanzal is really starting to develop into a great two-way center, but his career February numbers are atrocious with just six points (0.27 points-per-game) and 30 SOG (1.36 SOG-per-game) in 22 contests. The fact that he plays for a very defensive-minded Coyotes team probably won't help matters either. So if you are part of the four percent of Yahoo! owners out there, now might be a good time to cut bait.

Valentines

Brad Richards

As if you really need me to add more on to the resume of Richards. He's already posted 57 points in 50 contests and is only behind the Pittsburgh duo of Evgeni Malkin and Sidney Crosby in terms of average PP TOI per contest. His SOG and PPP are also up amongst the league leaders as well. Toss in the fact that he has a career 1.12 (96 in 86) point-per-game average for the month of February, which could seriously price him out of Dallas come trade deadline time. I know there's been a big Dobber debate brewing between Steven Stamkos or Malkin, but I'd happily take Richards over the both of them at the moment.

Henrik Zetterberg

Zetterberg is another "big name" that tends to have very productive Februarys. Maybe it's due to the fact that he generally takes the opportunity to miss out on the All-Star game to recuperate during the mid-season break, or maybe he just enjoys having a few days off. Whatever it is that

he's doing, it seems to be working as he has 82 points in 71 contests (1.15) during the second month of the year. Zetterberg is slated to get his wingman, Pavel Datsyuk, back on Tuesday night which might result in another huge February for him.

Anze Kopitar

As a Kopitar owner in a couple of fantasy leagues, I know that I've been expecting much more from the Slovenian than what he's shown so far this year. Things might be looking up for the offensive leader of the Kings as statistically speaking February is his most productive month of his career with 45 points in 41 contests (1.10 points-per-game). The downside is that the next 10 games will be on the road where he has a career 0.81 point-per-game average compared to a 1.00 point-per-game average at Staples Center. If he can manage to buck the road woes, he definitely could be setting the scoresheets on fire in February.

Jarome Iginla

The Flames were on a real high winning their last four contests prior to the All-Star break. Post-ASB could follow a similar trend if captain Iginla mirrors his traditional career path where he has tallied 140 points in 135 career February contests (1.04). Prior to the break the trio of Alex Tanguay, Brendan Morrison and Iginla were on fire, if they can manage to re-kindle that some of that magic, it might just extinguish some of those "rebuild" comments made earlier in the season.

Teemu Selanne

Another seasoned veteran makes the list of February favourites. With 194 points in 164 career February contests (1.18), Selanne is the biggest producer during the month of February. The Ducks face mostly Northwest division foes in February (seven of 11), in which Selanne has a career 1.07 point-per-game average against those teams. The soon to be 41-year old could still have plenty of gas left in the tank to put up a massive February as his last hurrah as he contemplates retirement in the off-season.

Paul Stastny

Stastny hasn't exactly lived up to my standards this season, but he could turn the corner for the final three months of the fantasy season. He has a career 1.04 point-per-game February average (29 points in 28 games), which closely mirrors the 1.07 Feb-April average that he has maintained during his young NHL career. If you compare that to the 0.91 Oct-Jan average that he possesses, you could certainly call him a true "second-half" player. I'd strongly suggest that you send the Stastny-owner in your league a quick offer to see what it'll take to pry him off their roster.

Joe Thornton

Jumbo Joe certainly hasn't turned very many heads (at least offensively anyways) so far this season with a very un-Thornton-esque 44 points in 48 contests. It's also been nine years since he's had a minus plus/minus rating which just shows how dreadful of the season JT is really having. The positive note is that he has registered 134 points in 124 career February contests (1.08), which might just be the pre-cursor needed to ignite a fire under his backside. His 25 PPP is just two behind league-leader Stamkos, so it might be a smart idea to see if you can make a pitch in an attempt to "buy-low" on Thornton.

Brendan Morrow

Morrow is finally looking like the pre-ACL injury Morrow with 13 points in 13 contests prior to the All-Star break. He's a rough and tough sandpaper type of player, who generally wears down as the rigors of the season take their toll. This has led to very interesting split stats prior to and post layoffs. He has splits of 0.82 (153 in 187) in the months of October and February compared to 0.60 (317 in 532) for the rest of the months. If you were a smart poolie, you'd attempt to acquire the services of Morrow, to take advantage of his forecasted production in February, and then move him by the start of March before his production drops off again.

Antoine Vermette

I've mentioned Vermette for the last few weeks, and I really think that the numbers are going to align itself which will result in a big boost in production from the Quebec-native. All the positive factors are there, top-six role, overall TOI, PP TOI, SOG, faceoff win percentage, line mates and improving power-play. It's just a matter of time before big things are bound to happen. Since 2007, Vermette has 60 points in 74 Feb/Mar (0.81) contests, which might just be the key to help jumpstart his second-half production. The Jackets have 28 contests in Feb/Mar, which could potentially lead to a very large yield for those who decide to take a leap on the 23 percent Yahoo! owned Vermette.

Niklas Kronwall

Being buried behind two potential hall-of-famers in Nicklas Lidstrom and Brian Rafalaski will certainly hamper your scoring opportunities, but if history is to repeat itself, that might not stand in the way for Kronwall. His 20 points in 32 February contests (0.63) is his most productive month by a country mile. I don't have as much faith in Kronwall compared to the rest of the players listed, but you might be willing to take the plunge.

Sam Gagner

If there is such as thing as a “second half” producer then that moniker probably belongs to the Oilers’ Gagner. He has splits of 0.51 points-per-game between Oct-Jan, and 0.78 points-per-game between Feb-Apr. In 29 career February contests, he has registered 19 points (0.66), which could be something to look forward to in the next month. Another positive factor is that he’s in his “magical fourth year”, which has yielded some pretty nice numbers according to my article a few weeks ago. The Oilers are still a young developing team, but I would not be completely surprised if we saw a huge breakout from Gagner in the remaining three months of the season.

J.P. Dumont

Nashville and offense belong on the opposite scales of words, but Dumont could be the happy medium that draws the two closer together. Since the lockout, he has registered 45 points in 52 February contests (0.87) and has been the backbone to much of the Predators’ offense. So far this season it’s been a massive struggle (17 points in 49 contests, while averaging just 12:14 per game), but he did kind of turn the corner with six points in the final five contests before the ASB. If Barry Trotz will loosen the reigns and offer him more responsibility, the points should come flying in bunches from the once QMHJL scoring superstar.

Tom Gilbert

Following along the same lines as his teammate Gagner, Gilbert can also be considered a “second-half” producer. He has splits of 69 points in 205 games (0.34) between Oct-Jan and 61 in 102 (0.60) between Feb-April. Most importantly February seems to be the month where the start of the spike really begins (19 in 36, 0.53), so now might be a great time to take a pre-emptive strike in acquiring the three percent Yahoo! owned Gilbert.

Pekka Rinne

According to the FrozenPool goalie big board, Rinne has been ranked the top net minder during the span of the last month, which will make it hard to get your hands on him at the current moment. Toss in the fact that his best career month is in February where he has posted numbers of 10-4-3, 2.02 GAA and .932 SP, it’ll make a hard task pretty darn near impossible. With that said if you are lucky enough to find your Rinne-owner ready and willing to deal, it’d be a huge roster bolstering move to pick him up for the stretch run of the season.

Marty Turco

With the way things are currently going in Chicago, it may be highly unlikely that Turco will make a big splash in fantasy leagues during the next three months. But if you’ve got nothing to lose, it might not be a bad idea to see if you can make a pitch for a reclamation project. The

10-year NHL veteran has posted a record of 32-17-6, along with numbers of 2.02 GAA and .922 SP for the month of February, which is statistically his best month by a long shot. If Corey Crawford slips up at any point of the second-half, Turco could sneak right into the number one gig once again.

Steve Mason

If you're looking for another reclamation project, Mason might just be your guy. He's had a real rollercoaster ride in his young NHL tenure, but it seems that his career February numbers (8-4-1, 2.06 GAA and .922 SP) might be the lone ray of shining light. Last week I introduced the idea of how Steve Mason's career path reminded me a lot of the path that Cam Ward went through. Ward's turning point was a stretch in his third year during the end of February where he went on a 5-1-1 stretch with a 2.61 GAA and .910 save percentage and he's never really looked back since. Could this February do the same for Mason?

Questions or comments? Like always I'll be ready and willing to discuss them with you in the comments section below. We'll see you back here next week as we discuss more from the Western Conference.