

Changing Your Fantasy Fate (Part Four)

Written by Ryan Ma

Tuesday, 29 March 2011 15:41 - Last Updated Wednesday, 30 March 2011 15:47



If you are in a tight league where every little stat matters, making the smart adds/drops could determine whether you are the league champion or just another one of the nine, 11 or 13 disappointed losers. At this point of the season it's not about what your players have done for you all season long, it's all about what your player will do for you in the next four weeks that will determine your fantasy fate.

***I didn't notice this until I looked it up for myself. Did you know that Yahoo! H2H finals are just one week (seven days) long? They stretch from March 28 to April 3 and aren't the traditional two week format of the past.**

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Without a doubt

Jamie Langenbrunner

The Stars have a very favourable schedule this week with a 4.14 rating according to “[Looking Ahead](#)” as written by Dave Poleck. Langenbrunner seems to be the main beneficiary of the James Neal deal, as he’s garnered plenty of ice-time alongside superstar playmaker Brad Richards during the last three contests (82.69 percent of his overall shifts). If you’re looking for across-the-board help (points, plus/minus, PIMs, SOG and HITS) then the 28 percent Yahoo! owned Langenbrunner might be a great late-season option.

Antti Miettinen

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Following along the same lines as Langenbrunner, if you're after the scheduling factor then picking up a few Wild players probably isn't a terrible idea (4.32 rating according to "Looking Ahead"). Minnesota has lost eight consecutive contests, but the offense hasn't exactly been atrocious (12 goals in the last six contests). During the losing streak, Miettinen is averaging two SOG along with 1.25 HITS per contest, so it's not like he's completely useless from a fantasy perspective. I'd much rather roll the dice with him than a few of the righties mentioned below.

Andrew Brunette

See above but without the HITS aspect.

Michal Handzus

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The injury to Anze Kopitar sent shockwaves in many fantasy leagues this weekend (including two of my most attention grabbing leagues that I participate in.) When one door closes, another one opens, (or so the saying goes), so I guess Handzus' door just swung right open for the next seven to 10 days. He saw plenty of ice-time alongside Dustin Penner and Oscar Moller in the third during Kopitar's absence, which has resulted in some great [news](#) from the Handzus front. Coach Terry Murray has given it the thumbs up to attempt to keep that line intact, which should give him a slight boost moving forward. With three games this week, Handzus will certainly garner plenty of opportunity to prove that he's a legitimate top-six forward in the NHL.

Trevor Lewis

Another member of the Kings that you might want to keep an eye on is Lewis. I haven't really followed his career all that much, so I don't know his full pedigree, but the Kings' play-by-play commentators had plenty of nice things to say about his game during the last few contests. He saw a bit of ice-time alongside Dustin Brown and Ryan Smyth in a top-six role and responded with the two-point effort on Saturday afternoon. Jarret Stoll and Handzus will most likely get the first shot at a top-six gig, but if you're looking for a dark horse candidate then Lewis might just be your guy.

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Matt D'Agostini

Since mentioning D'Agostini a couple of weeks ago I find myself going back to the well once again. In the last six contests, he's posted seven points along with 16 SOG. D'Agostini isn't garnering a large amount of ice-time (16:06 per contest), but a significant portion of that ice-time has been on the top-line alongside Andy McDonald and David Backes (75.81 percent). Generally speaking, if you spend that much quality time alongside talented players, the numbers will eventually reflect it. If you are looking for a hot pickup of the week, the eight percent Yahoo! owned D'Agostini should do the trick.

Jose Theodore

The Wild are essentially out of the Western Conference playoff race, so now might be a great time for management and coaching staff to start evaluating for the future. With four contests this week, two of which are back-to-back, we're bound to witness Theodore appear in at least one contest. Minnesota has a Saturday afternoon affair with the Lightning in which he maintains an 11-6-2 record along with a career 2.13 GAA and sparkling .931 save percentage against TB. If you're desperate for a spot start in the goalie slot, I'd strongly consider snagging Theo for Saturday's matinee affair.

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Outlook not so good

Dany Heatley

Heater has gone ice-cold during the last six games while registering only three points and is currently in line to finish with the lowest point-per-game pace of his NHL career. The Sharks have a pretty tough schedule with only two contests this week, both of which are against pretty formidable defensive opponents (DAL and ANA), so it might be a smart idea to swap Heatley out for a potentially higher yielding alternative.

Anze Kopitar

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Kind of an obvious selection here, but I'll chuck it in anyways. Monday's MRI results showed that Kopitar has torn ligaments in his ankle and will be out of the line up for the remainder of regular season and playoffs. He essentially has zero fantasy value in leagues this season, and I'd probably start to shop him in keeper leagues just to gauge what trade value he actually maintains. Ankle injuries tend to linger and I wouldn't be surprised if the injury continues to affect him in the long term. If you receive a solid offer, I'd take the bait.

Alex Burrows

Despite spending close to 66 percent of his overall ice-time alongside the Sedin twins, Burrows has hit a bit of a rough patch lately while registering just a lone point along with four SOG during the last four contests. The Nucks essentially are just one win away from clinching the President's trophy, which means that the Vancouver coaching staff/management might be inclined to "rest" the Sedin twins for the post-season. 84 percent of Burrows' points scored this season have been while he was on the ice with one of the Sedin twins. If the Nucks do decide to bench the superstar duo, Burrows' fantasy value could plummet dramatically, so I'd definitely tread carefully with Alex moving forward.

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Shane Doan

Much like a few of the candidates mentioned above, the reason why I'm adding Doan to the list is not due to his propensity to put up points, but it's mostly due to the scheduling of this week. The Coyotes face only Dallas and Colorado, which will severely limit the amount of scoring opportunities that Doan will receive this week. I wouldn't mind utilizing Doan up until Friday night's contest against the Avs then look for a weekend replacement.

Jordan Eberle

It's kind of hard to expect huge numbers from rookies, but with the ice-time that Eberle is receiving during the last nine contests, it's a bit disappointing that he's recording just a 0.33 point-per-game pace. The fact that he's also garnering plenty of PP time (3:19 per contest) only makes matters worse. Eberle's showing up on 41 percent of Yahoo! rosters, but that's just too high of a number for the amount that he's currently producing. The Oilers' season is essentially done, so don't let him ruin your fantasy season as well.

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Jack Johnson

With Kopitar and Justin Williams out of the line up, it'll surely create a large scale changes to the Kings' roster. One major change that will send major ripple effects will be on the PP. 56 percent of LA's overall power play points occurred with Kopitar on the ice. Just 11 percent of the overall power play has transpired without Kopitar or Williams on the ice, which shows you just how dependent upon the two they really are. The Kings are currently operating at a 17.1 percent efficiency rating, but that'll surely drop in the next seven contests. JJ will be the one of the main fantasy falloffs, so take note if you are an owner.

Miikka Kiprusoff

Kipper has been atrocious since the middle of March with a dismal 2-3-1 record in his last seven starts. What's also revolting is the 3.85 GAA and .864 save percentage numbers, which are extremely detrimental in H2H playoff matchups, that he's displayed during the slide. He's on pace for a sixth consecutive 70+ start season, and surely being overworked/fatigued has got to be one of the main reasons which has lead to the decrease in his late-season stats. If you are a Kipper owner I'd definitely wouldn't want to roll the dice with his services heading into the final

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week.

Remember at this stage of the season, it's not about when you drafted a player back in September, nor is it about a player that has potential point-per-game status sitting on your bench with DTD status. It's all about what a player can do for you in the next six days. Don't let "big name" status get in the way of you winning a fantasy championship, it's all about the numbers from here on out.