

Forget Me Not (West 2011)

Written by Ryan Ma

Tuesday, 23 August 2011 09:54 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 August 2011 17:05



Following the last couple of years, here's a list of some of the Western Conference underachieving veterans from last season. Many of them underachieved or were simply injured, which resulted in lower than normal overall numbers for 2010-11. Most pool providers generally base their draft rankings on the previous year's stats, which could lead many of the following players to be severely undervalued heading into this season. Make sure you make a mental note of these players and don't fall into the trap of undervaluing them like some of your competitors might on draft day.

Ryan Getzlaf – Center - Anaheim

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Getz still managed to have a fairly decent season finishing with 76 points despite suiting up for just 67 contests, which would have pro-rated to 93 points (fifth overall in league scoring), over a full 82-game season. He'll undoubtedly be selected within the first two rounds of all fantasy drafts, but would you have the kahunas to select him after the big three of Sidney Crosby, Alex Ovechkin, or Steven Stamkos?

Matt Beleskey – Left Wing - Anaheim

Beleskey spent roughly half of his time in the minors and the other half in the Bigs. Obviously his fantasy value will largely depend on the career status of Teemu Selanne. If the Finnish flash decides to call it quits, then Beleskey could be first in line to receive top-six minutes alongside Corey Perry, Bobby Ryan or Getzlaf. In 35 contests with Anaheim last campaign, he spent 45.12, 29.58, and 21.24 percent of his overall ice-time alongside Perry, Ryan and Getzlaf respectively, which will be a huge positive if things go his way if he gets a crack at the top-six.

David Moss – Right Wing - Calgary

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Moss was on a pretty decent season tallying 17 goals in 58 contests, prior to having his season abruptly ended with a sudden ankle injury back in March. Olli Jokinen, along with Curtis Glencross and Moss actually formed a pretty decent second-line for the Flames. He has the skill set to consistently become a 20-goal scorer, but his band-aid boyness seems to always become a burden. If he can ever manage to shake the injury bug, a 20-goal, 50-point season probably isn't out of the question.

Daymond Langkow – Center - Calgary

Langkow appeared in only four contests last season due to a broken vertebra. In the past, he has developed plenty of positive chemistry playing alongside Iginla, and if he can manage to get onto a line with him and Tanguay, Langkow can certainly return back to the fantasy-worthy glory days. Since the lockout, he has maintained a 13.5 percent shooting efficiency, which is a noteworthy stat to file to the back of your head. If you pro-rate that over 150 SOG, that's still equivalent to roughly 20 goals, which wouldn't be a bad total to have in your back pocket at the end of the season. The only drawback is that with Morrison, Jokinen and Stajan are all in the center mix for Calgary, I don't know if Langkow will receive enough ice-time to be fantasy worthy.

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Marian Hossa – Right Wing – Chicago

Pretty much exactly what I wrote about him last year. You probably won't forget his "big name" status, but in pool providers that rank players entirely on actual production, his 57 points last season will probably drop him lower on many pre-season draft lists than he probably should be. If you are setting up your default pre-draft lists, it won't be a bad idea to adjust his name accordingly.

Dave Bolland – Center – Chicago

Bolland missed a large part of last season dealing with a concussion issue, but during the playoffs he posted six points in just four contests against the eventual Western Conference champs, the Canucks, which sends a pretty strong message about his offensive potential. I've read that the Hawks might toy with the idea of shifting Patrick Sharp down to center the second line, but my line of thinking is why mess up something that proven to work wonders. Bolland is more than capable of handling the second line center gig as long as he can stay out of the infirmary. Unlike the Calgary situation, after Jonathan Toews and Bolland there isn't much depth up the middle, which should enable Bolland to get a longer look at center than in the past.

T.J. Galiardi – Left Wing – Colorado

Much like a few of the players listed above, Galiardi also had an injury-riddled season in 2010-11. He suited up for only 35 contests due to wrist and arm injuries. The positive is that he spent 46.4 percent of his entire ice-time alongside Paul Stastny, so there is some form of familiarity there. The Avs are pretty weak on the wings this campaign, which should open up plenty of opportunity for Galiardi to have a solid bounce back season if he can shake the injury bug.

Semyon Varlamov – Goalie – Colorado

For those of you who follow fantasy hockey dearly, then you're probably well aware of the situation that Varly was faced with last season. He managed to suit up for 27 contests, while maintaining a very respectable 2.23 GAA and dazzling .924 save percentage. Talent has never been the problem with the young Russian, but it's always been the injury bug. Perhaps a new team and a new training regime might have fixed some of his band-aid boyness, but an injury

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prone goalie is never a good thing. Either way if he can find a Kari Lehtonen-solution to his injury woes, Lethonen v2 might just be in store for Varly this campaign, which should certainly make plenty of poolies happy.

Kyle Quincey – Defense – Colorado

Quincey had a pretty dismal season last year when he tallied just one point in 21 contests, which could have been related to playing with a bum shoulder. For the previous two seasons he averaged 0.44 points and 1.91 SOG per contest with the Kings and the Avs, so the offensive upside is certainly there. The Colorado blue-line is looking awfully thin, from an offensive perspective, to start the season, which could open the door for Quincey to grab the bulls by the horn.

Grant Clitsome – Defense – Columbus

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Injuries weren't a problem for Clitsome as he stayed relatively healthy since being called up to the Jackets in mid-January. However, he did pick up 19 points, 67 HITS, 29 BS and 50 SOG in 31 contests, while being one of the major mid-season surprises for many poolies. He won't unseat the highly priced James Wisniewski for the number one PP QB gig, but he could be a solid candidate to ride shotgun as the number two. If you're after a possible 30-point, 100 SOG with a high propensity for HITS and BS then consider Clitsome as a strong dark horse candidate for your fantasy squad.

Vinny Prospal – Left Wing – Columbus

Prospal actually had a pretty productive season while tallying 23 points in 29 contests before missing well over 50 games due to a knee injury. He was mainly brought in to help strengthen the power-play which was an atrocious area for the Jackets last campaign (14 percent efficiency, ranked second-last in the entire league). A top PP unit of Rick Nash, Jeff Carter, Wisniewski, Clitsome and Prospal could certainly compete with the best of them, so look for a similar point-per-game ratio as last season prior to the injury.

Sheldon Souray – Defense – Dallas

Riding the bus for the entire 2010-11 season surely would have built up some pent up anger inside Souray. After Alex Goligoski there isn't a lot of competition in Dallas, so look for Souray to release some of that anger over the opposition. That's if he can avoid the injury bug of course.

Pavel Datsyuk – Center – Detroit

Datsyuk missed significant time last season due to a broken hand as well as a "lower body" injury, but he still managed to post 59 points in 56 contests. What's surprising is that he also registered 54 HITS (pro-rated to 79 HITS), which does help contribute to the peripheral stats, an area in which poolies have traditionally soured on him about. Much like the situation with Getzlaf, you probably don't need me to tell you to select him for your pools, but his last season totals might cause him to slip a couple of rounds and slightly under-rated. Don't let him fly under your radar.

Ales Hemsky – Right Wing – Edmonton

Pretty much status quo for Hemsky last season, but instead of a left shoulder injury, it was the right that caused him fits. The shoulder injury held Hemmer to just 42 points in 47 contests last season. The interesting thing is that since the lockout, he has averaged 0.92 points-per-contest, but the down side is that he has averaged just 60 games played. If you do decide to roll the dice with Hemsky, just know that you're going to be playing with fire.

Shawn Horcoff – Center – Edmonton

Horcoff experienced a multitude of injuries last campaign, which sidelined him for 35 contests. He's never going to be the backbone of your fantasy squad but he's always a good complement to your third center. The last time that the trio of Ryan Smyth, Hemsky and Horcoff played together back in 2007, they registered 1.00, 0.83 and 0.64 points-per-game respectively. If they can rekindle some of that chemistry the Oilers could be a much improved team this campaign.

Ryan Whitney – Defenseman – Edmonton

Whitney was on a blistering pace recording 27 points in 35 contests before being sidelined for the rest of the season with an ankle injury. He's never been a huge shot taker, but he's still a quality number one PP QB that should pick up plenty of points while anchoring the blue-line for the Oilers. The addition of Cam Barker should help him on the opposite wing. A top-10 fantasy ranking isn't out of the question is he can stay healthy.

Scott Parse – Left Wing – Los Angeles

Prior to Parse's hip injury last season, he registered four points in five contests and spent a blistering 82.3 percent of his overall ice-time alongside Anze Kopitar and Dustin Brown. It's probably safe to say that he won't spend that much time with them this year, but with band-aid boys like Simon Gagne and Justin Williams in the lineup, plus the inconsistencies that come with Dustin Penner, you would have to think that Parse would at least garner a few chances in the top-six. He probably isn't someone to invest in heavily on draft day, but certainly remember

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his name in case something happens during the season.

Simon Gagne – Left Wing – Los Angeles

One would have to think that the Gagne signing had to do, primarily, with the acquisition of Mike Richards earlier in the summer. The last time that the pair was with the Flyers, Gagne spent a whopping 79.5 percent of his overall ice-time alongside Richards, which resulted in him posting 40 points in 58 contests. Since the lockout, Gagne has averaged 53.2 points, but only 62.2 contests played. If you can handle the headaches of missed games, the reward could certainly be worth taking a flyer on Gagne at the draft table.

P.M. Bouchard – Left Wing – Minnesota

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Bouchard missed the first part of last season dealing with a concussion issue that sidelined him for essentially all of the 2009-10 season. He returned with a bang while tallying 38 points in 59 contests with the Wild. PMB was once a junior superstar, posting 235 points in the final 136 contests in juniors, which does highlight his offensive upside. The revamped Wild offense should finish much higher than the 26th ranked offense that they upheld last season and PMB should play a large part contributing to it.

Guillaume Latendresse – Left Wing – Minnesota

Latendresse only appeared in 11 contests last season due to abdominal and hip injuries. Wild owner Craig Leipold had some choice words for him over the summer, which should light a fire under him heading into this season. He should fit in nicely alongside Matt Cullen and PMB on the Wild's second line. Look for a much better campaign from the Quebec-native.

Marek Zidlicky – Defenseman – Minnesota

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One of the major areas where the Wild will be hurting from this season will be their blue-line. Beyond Zidlicky there just isn't any depth whatsoever, which is a double edged sword. From a positive perspective, it pretty much means that Zidlicky will garner all the time in the world while facing pretty much no competition. But, from a negative perspective, being the band-aid boy that he is and being overly-utilized with no protection isn't exactly a smart mix. He's averaged 0.54 points-per-game since the lockout, which makes him a huge boom or bust candidate that could singlehandedly make you a genius or the goat.

Cal O'Reilly – Center – Nashville

O'Reilly missed over half of the season dealing with a broken fibula. He's still finding it difficult to crack into the NHL and stay relatively healthy. He's pretty much dominated every level of hockey (172 points in his last 136 juniors contests and 253 points in 262 AHL contests), except the NHL where he has only posted 34 points in 80 games. With David Legwand and Mike Fisher occupying the top two center spots in Nashville, he'll either have to shift to wing or hope for an injury to occur if he's to garner fantasy worthiness.

Martin Hanzal – Center – Phoenix

If you've followed my columns or forum posts, then you'll probably realize how big of a fan I am of Hanzal heading into this season. The Coyotes are just struggling for offensive skill from the center position, which should pretty much hand Hanzal the number one gig on a silver platter. If Eric Belanger, who's a career 0.29 point-per-game player, can tally 40 points with the Yotes, then a more talented Hanzal should easily be able to register at least 50. The bonus is that you're also getting the extra HITS that will come with Hanzal as well. He's averaged 2.10 HITS per contest for the last three seasons and if you throw in the FW stats too, Hanzal is going to be a huge stat-monger this campaign.

James Sheppard – Left Wing – San Jose

Sheppard missed the entire 2010-11 season dealing with a knee injury he suffered during an ATV accident last summer. The Wild drafted him ninth overall way back in the 2006 NHL entry draft, but has never seemed to pan out. The Sharks have a good track record of properly developing young talent, so the change of scenery might just be what the fantasy doctors ordered for Sheppard to rekindle his NHL career. With that said, Martin Havlat, Joe Pavelski and Ryane Clowe aren't exactly NHL ironmen, so Sheppard could see some top-six time if an injury were to happen within the Sharks' top-six.

Chris Stewart – Right Wing – St. Louis

Many poolies are pretty high on Stewart heading into this campaign, but I'm not a huge fan due to the situation that he's in. With that said, he did tally 53 points in 62 contests, and more importantly, 23 in 26 since joining the Blues at the trade deadline. The 53 points tied him for 75th overall in league scoring, which will probably drop him a few notches in early pre-season draft rankings. He does have the skill set to become a point-per-game sniper (think Iggy), so for those of you who are believers, you might want to move him a few notches up your draft lists.

T.J. Oshie – Center – St. Louis

Oshie appeared in only 49 contests last season due to an ankle injury, but he still managed to post 34 points. He has one of those qualities that most centers don't possess, which is that he has a knack for shooting the puck. Oshie has averaged 1.99 SOG per contest so far in his career, which should generally help his boost point totals. I'm not entirely in favour of his situation in St. Louis, but I do have an inkling that he might deviate from the pack.

Alex Edler – Defenseman – Vancouver

Despite being limited to only 51 contests with a back injury last season, Edler still managed to record 33 points. The Canucks had a bit of a logjam, especially on the PP, last season with Christian Ehrhoff, Sami Salo, Kevin Bieksa, Dan Hamhuis and Edler all in the mix for extra man advantage time. They cleared up a bit of the congestion by not re-signing Ehrhoff, which should open up a bit more time for Edler to solely claim the number one PP QB gig in Vancouver.

Sami Salo – Defenseman – Vancouver

Pretty much just a repeat of what I wrote above. Salo missed over half of the season dealing with an Achilles tendon injury, but still managed to post seven points in 27 contests. Salo

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received the third most PP ice-time amongst Vancouver blue-liners behind Ehrhoff and Edler, which should mean that he'll be first in line to pick up some of the slack from the departure of Ehrhoff. The downside is that since the lockout he has averaged just 57.3 games played per season, so if you do decide to take a leap of faith on Salo, expect a few missed games.

Marco Sturm – Left Wing – Vancouver

Sturm appeared in only 35 contests last season due to lingering knee problems, but still managed to post 16 points. The latest news is that the knee isn't giving him any problems and he expects to make a big push to secure a top-six spot with the Nucks heading into the new season. With Mason Raymond on the sidelines dealing with a vertebrae fracture, Sturm might start with a top-six spot and never look back.

Notable Mentions

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Dan Sexton, Kyle Palmieri, Steve Staios, Nick Leddy, Ryan Wilson, Ryan Stoa, Kristian Huselius*, Matt Calvert, Anton Stralman, Linus Omark, Andrei Loktionov, Jared Spurgeon, Justin Falk, Marco Scandella, Jordan Tootoo, Blake Geoffrion, Kyle Turris, David Perron*, and Cody Hodgson

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