If ice-time and SOG are any indicators of fantasy success, this week's column will be a good compliment in terms of identifying a few trends moving forward. We'll examine several advancers and decliners out West, to help you get through that mid-season lull.

Beneficiaries

Valtteri Filppula – C/LW – Detroit – 64% Yahoo! owned

At 64 percent Yahoo! owned, it's probably a bit late to snag Filppula off the waiver wire, but it's certainly worth a gander to see if he's still available. Since Pavel Datsyuk's knee surgery, Filp is

seeing top unit PP time and is averaging 3:30 and 19:06 overall, as well 2.5 SOG per contest for Detroit. Datsyuk is targeting a March 13th return to the lineup, which would give Filppula three more games of quality production time before the superstar returns.

Kyle Brodziak – C – Minnesota – 7% Yahoo! owned

A couple of weeks ago, I wrote about Brodziak being a beneficiary due to Mikko Koivu's arm injury, it appears that we're back in the same situation once again.

	With Koivu in lineup	Without Koivu in lineup
GP	47	17

Overall TOI
18:17
21:18

PP TOI
1:37
2:00

Plus/Minus
-14
Even

SOG/game

2.15

2.06

Points/game

0.45

0.59

With Koivu sidelined for at least two more weeks, if not longer, look for Brodziak to continue to line up on the top line alongside Dany Heatley and Nick Johnson.

Martin Hanzal – C – Phoenix - 13% Yahoo! owned

A couple of weeks ago I also mentioned Hanzal in the same column as Brodziak. During the last two weeks he's averaging close to 20 mins per game and nearly four minutes on the PP. He's also accumulated six points along with 14 SOG during the last six contests. The Yotes will be battling for playoff positioning in the next couple of weeks, so it'd be a great idea to own their top line center for the stretch run.

Vinny Prospal – C/LW –Columbus – 21% Yahoo! owned

After starting the 2011-12 season in blazing fashion, tallying 19 points in 21 contests, Prospal hit a mid-season lull while recording just 11 points in the next 29 contests. He's finally rebounded with 11 points in the last 15 and seems to have developed some newfound chemistry with Mark Letestu and youngster Cam Atkinson on the Jacket's second line. During the last two weeks, he's seen his PP TOI increase to 2:58 per contest and has been a mainstay on the Columbus' top PP unit. Look for this to continue, as the Jackets will be playing for respect during the next 33 days. If you're looking for a late-season offensive boost to your lineup, then give Prospal a shot.

Derick Brassard - C – Columbus – 13% Yahoo! owned

Another Blue Jacket that has really benefitted from the spring cleaning at the trade deadline was Brassard. With Jeff Carter and Antoine Vermette changing addresses at the deadline, Brassard has seen his overall ice-time increase from 15:40 to 17:00 per game. But, most importantly, it's the 100 percent of the 2:59 PP TOI per contest alongside Rick Nash that has resulted in an increase to his offensive production. The Jackets' don't have anything but pride to play for during the last 17 contests, so look for Brassard to showcase himself for next campaign.

Marc-Andre-Gragnani – D – Vancouver – 2% Yahoo! owned

Gragnani had limited opportunity with the Sabres, but it seems like a change of scenery and a chance to prove himself was all he needed to help spark his game. In two contests with the Nucks, he's leap frogged Dan Hamhuis, Kevin Bieksa and Sami Salo for sole possession of the number two D slot in Vancouver. The overall ice-time (17:08) isn't all that flashy, but it's the 3:03

on the PP that bears watching. The second PP unit might not have the “big names” of the Sedins or Ryan Kesler, but David Booth, Mason Raymond and Alex Burrows aren’t slouches either.

Jeff Petry – D – Edmonton – 1% Yahoo! owned

With Tom Gilbert moved to Minnesota at the deadline, it left a gaping hole offensively on the blue-line for the Oilers. Edmonton hasn’t had very many PP opportunities since the trade deadline, but if overall TOI is any indication of the new depth charts, then Petry (24:35) should see plenty of quality ice-time during the next month and a bit.

Trending: David Legwand, Cam Atkinson, Erik Christensen, Mark Letestu, Peter Mueller, David Jones, Curtis Glencross, David Moss, Dwight King, Cam Fowler, Stefan Elliott, Jared Spurgeon, Nikita Nikitin, Stefan Elliott, Alec Martinez and Tom Gilbert.

Decliners

Jonathan Toews – C – Chicago – 99% Yahoo! owned

Although Toews' concussion issues haven't garnered as much press as the Sidney Crosby saga, both situations have plenty of similarities. In the 2009-10 season, Toews was sidelined for six contests due to "concussion-like" symptoms after receiving an open-ice hit from Willie Mitchell, and now he's sidelined again after experiencing more concussion-like symptoms. This could be another "Crosby-like" situation where the symptoms persist and has us fantasy poolies guessing day-by-day what's going to happen next. If you have an opportunity to unload, do so immediately.

Corey Perry- RW –Anaheim– 99% Yahoo! owned

The Ducks have been on an 18-6-4 tear since January 6th, but the surprising thing is that Perry only has a stat-line of 16 G, six assists, seven PPP, a plus eight rating, 33 PIMs along with 104 SOG during the span, which is a far cry from the numbers that he posted in his Hart Trophy winning season last campaign. I don't know if there's much you can do this late into the fantasy season, but with fantasy trade deadline's creeping up, now might be a good time to use his "big name" status and pawn him off to an unsuspecting owner.

Shea Weber – D – Nashville– 99% Yahoo! owned

Weber is one of the premiere defenseman to own for fantasy purposes, but if you're a big trend reader, (like me), then now is probably a great opportunity to sell-high and never look back. Since the lockout, Weber has a career March/April point-per-game average of 0.5 compared to 0.56 during all of the other months of the year. If you knock out his "blip on the radar" 2007-08 season (where he tallied 15 points in 19 contests), his March/April average is closer to 0.45 points-per-game. If you can move him straight up for a Dustin Byfuglien, Zdeno Chara or Alex Edler, do it and do it now!

David Backes – C/RW – St. Louis– 95% Yahoo! owned

The opposite of the Brodziak's situation is happening in St. Louis. The Blues are getting healthier. Andy McDonald has recently returned back to the lineup after missing most of the season with concussion symptoms, which has dramatically and negatively impacted the offensive production of Backes.

	With McDonald in lineup	Without McDonald in lineup
GP	12	51
Overall TOI		

20:00

20:05

PP TOI
2:15

2:24

Plus/Minus
+1

+18

SOG/game
2.33

3.02

Points/game
0.40
0.76

In fact most of the Blues' forwards have been negatively impacted by the return of McDonald back in the lineup, except for maybe T.J. Oshie.

So definitely use Backes "big name" status to see if you can boost another part of your line up for the stretch run.

Drew Doughty – D– Los Angeles – 96% Yahoo! owned

DD has had a nightmare of a fantasy season, and certainly hasn't lived up to the hype of being

the third highest drafted blue-liner at Yahoo! fantasy drafts tables during the pre-season. I dug a little deeper and found that since January 1st, 2010 his numbers have remained relatively consistent, but in the negative form, which is a stark contrast to his prior numbers.

2009 season - December 31, 2009

Post-January 1st, 2010

GP
113
105

Overall TOI
25:08
25:20

PP TOI

4:27

4:00

Plus/Minus

+34

Even

SOG/game

1.7

2.00

Points/game

0.70

0.45

If you look at FrozenPool big board for the past month, Doughty is ranked as the 104th defenseman overall, which is certainly shocking when you see players named Scott Hannan, Chris Phillips, Cory Sarich and Aaron Rome slotted ahead of him in the rankings. I know it's going to be painful to have to bite the bullet, but how long can you compete if you continue to carry such an anchor on your fantasy roster?

Lubomir Visnovsky – D – Anaheim – 85% Yahoo! owned

Lubo is another massive anchor that's dragging down many fantasy teams at the moment. In the past month, he has produced a stat-line of zero goals, three assists, a plus two rating, 22 PIMs, zero PPP along with 22 SOG in the last 16 contests, despite the Ducks owning a 10-4-2 record during that span. On top of that Cam Fowler has been receiving the bulk of the Ducks' PP TOI (3:22) compared to Vissy (1:49), which is starting to nail shut the latter's fantasy value. We're now entering the part of the season that you need to expect production from each and every one of your players and you just can't sit back and have the rest of your team carry him while waiting for things to turn around. He's essentially droppable at the moment.

Trending: Daniel Sedin, Henrik Sedin, Logan Couture, Johan Franzen, Duncan Keith, Jamie Benn, Jack Johnson, Erik Johnson and Brent Seabrook.

Questions or comments? As always I'll discuss them in the section below.

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