

## Forbes Hockey Part II

Written by Ryan Ma

Thursday, 20 March 2008 03:19 - Last Updated Friday, 21 March 2008 18:05

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Last week we looked at the top five NHL players who got paid the most for having the least impact on fantasy leagues this season. This week we will look at the top five players who do a great deal for fantasy leagues who are making pennies compared to what the players from last week were making. All salaries have been taken from the website [www.nhlscap.com](http://www.nhlscap.com).

Let's kick things off with one of our fan favorites of the year, Daniel Carcillo. The Phoenix rookie has been great this season while accumulating a league-leading 284 penalty minutes in just 48 contests for the Coyotes. Carcillo has also chipped in with eight goals and 16 points to go along with the massive amount of penalty minutes that he has received this season. Carcillo currently sits at a plus-2 rating which shows that he isn't a defensive liability for the Coyotes. Carcillo projects to finish the season just shy of the 320-penalty-minute mark if he continues on the pace that he set himself in the first 73 games of the season. Carcillo has toned it down a bit since being sent down to the minors for his antics, so you might see Carcillo closer towards the 300 mark rather than 320. Carcillo is making the league minimum of \$525,000 this season, and assuming he finishes the season with 300 penalty minutes, that should equate to nearly \$1,750 per penalty minute that he earned this season. That amount is well worth the money for the grit and toughness that he brings when donning a Coyotes uniform and quite worthy of the fifth spot

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on our list.

Number four on our list belongs to the short-handed killer, Patrick Sharp. Sharp is tied with Daniel Alfredsson and Eric Perrin for the league-lead in short-handed points with nine on the season. Penalty killers usually get paid for their stingy defense in preventing the opposition from scoring on the power-play. They usually have to work twice as hard while on the penalty kill than on even-strength to compensate for being down a man, but Sharp's opportunistic nature has given him seven short-handed tallies on the season.

Sharp is currently earning \$825,000 this season and is well worth the 55 points, plus 20 rating, and 49 penalty minutes that comes attached with his unique short-handed ability. His 34 goals scored also ties him with Eric Staal as the 12th leading goal scorer in the NHL. Sharp projects to finish the season with 63 points, which equates to him earning just over \$13,095 per point that he scores, he also deserves a bit of a bonus for all those short-handed points that he tallies. Sharp's overall contributions across the board in fantasy leagues this season demonstrate that he is well worth the money that he's making from the Blackhawks this season.

Number three on our list belongs to another Blackhawk, Duncan Keith. Keith was nominated for his first ever all-star game this season because of his outstanding first half play this season. Keith has been a workhorse for the Blackhawks this season as he has garnered well over 1,857 minutes of ice time in just 73 contests for the Blackhawks this season. That number projects to be well over 2,085 minutes over a full 82 game season. His plus 26 rating also ties him with Henrik Zetterberg for sixth overall in the plus/minus category in the NHL this season. His 132 shots on goal also add another positive dimension to his plus side in fantasy leagues, as only 22 defensemen have registered more shots on goal than Keith. Keith is making a mere \$1.4 million this season which equates to just over \$671 for each minute that he spends on the ice for the Blackhawks. Keith's valuable contributes across a wide variety of fantasy stats certainly deem Keith worthy of the money he is earning this season from the Blackhawks.

Number two on the list belongs to the most important position in hockey the goalie. The goalie who has been the most efficient in terms of salary vs. production is Columbus' own Pascal Leclaire. Leclaire is tied with Manny Legace, Cristobal Huet and Tim Thomas for 20th overall amongst NHL goaltenders with 24 victories. Leclaire is ranked sixth overall amongst NHL goalies with a 2.22 goals against average and is also ranked eighth overall with a .919 save percentage, all of this while tying Henrik Lundqvist for the league-lead with nine shut outs. Granted Leclaire might be a beneficiary of coach Ken Hitchcock's stingy defensive system, his play this year certainly justifies Leclaire as a top 10 fantasy goalie despite the lack of previous experience. Leclaire's annual salary this season is at \$1.4 million which is well below market value for the numbers that he has put up this season. Leclaire projects to finish the season with

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28 victories, which would earn him 50k for each victory that he earns. Comparing Leclaire's 50k per victory salary to Khabibulin's 320k per victory salary, Leclaire is certainly deserving of the number two spot for the best bargains in the NHL.

The grand daddy of them all, numero uno, on our biggest bargain list has to be the Great Eight himself Alex Ovechkin. Ovechkin is currently earning an annual salary of \$984,200, and so far this year he has produced a league leading 58 goals and 44 assists for a total of 102 points in 75 games so far for the up-and-coming Capitals. For a full 82 game schedule, Ovechkin projects to score 64 goals which would be the first time anyone has accomplished that feat since Mario Lemieux scored 69 goals in 1995-1996.

Ovechkin is also leading the league in shots on goal with 401, which would project to close to 450 by the end of this fantasy season. Ovechkin is certainly deserving of the nine-figured salary that he will receive from the Capitals management for the next 10 seasons. The only question that remains is whether or not he keeps up his production for the next 10 years to justify the big salary that he was awarded. His projected 111-point pace will earn him \$8,867 for each point that he tallies this season, which is nearly 14 times less than what Mr. Jagr is projected to make per point that he scores this season. At a relatively cheap salary (strictly salary, we won't look at bonuses here) of just under a million dollars, combined with the fact that Ovechkin is leading the league in three out of the five major offensive categories in fantasy hockey (G, P and SOG), and his relatively high standing in many other categories, Ovechkin certainly makes a great case for making the top of the list for the biggest bargain in the NHL this season.

There you have it folks, that is our top five biggest bargains in the NHL who also happen to contribute the most to fantasy hockey, while making marginal NHL salaries this season. Check in next week as we compile an article regarding alternative awards that the NHL might potentially consider giving out for its players at the end of the season.

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