The first week of the NHL season is done and near the top of your NHL standings with a 3-0 record... the Toronto Maple Leafs? Should be an interesting year.

As for the upcoming seven day schedules, be wary of a few “best bet” teams playing stretches of road games. Sometimes, teams actually prefer long road trips at the beginning of the season in order to pull the group together, but it is still something you will want to keep an eye out for.

Carolina from Sunday to Saturday, Anaheim from Wednesday to Tuesday, and LA from Friday to Thursday play ALL four of their games on the road. Both Anaheim (4.30) and LA (4.25) are the top ranked teams for those respective weeks. The Ducks were outscored 13-2 in their first three road games of the season, so be wary.

While the Canes (3.87) aren't the top ranked, they head to Vancouver and then through the Pacific Division's toughest; San Jose, LA and Phoenix. The European teams will be slowly making their way back into your fantasy lives over the course of this weekend. The Blue Jackets play Friday, while Boston, San Jose and Phoenix all play Saturday.

With the help of Jason Arbuthnot's fantastic/phenomenal/incredible Fantasy Planner , I want to take a look at some of the long term trends that poolies should keep note of over the next few weeks.

As I said above, the Bruins open their North American schedule this Saturday. But don't let the fact that they're coming off a two European game week fool you into thinking you should stock up on Boston players. At least not just yet. They only play seven games between this Saturday, October 16 and November 3. In that stretch, they face New Jersey , a home and away with the Capitals and dare I say it, the Maple Leafs .

The Canes on the other hand, don't play their actual home opener until October 27 against Washington . Their second home games is against Crosby and the Penguins

. Lucky them.

Another team to back off from until November begins is the Detroit Red Wings. They only play four games over the next 14 days , and six over the next 21 days . Looking at the chart below should also clue you in to stay away from them in the near future; they're in the "steer clear" section for all ten weekly schedules posted. By the time November 4 rolls around, a team like Chicago will have played five more games than the Wings. If you own some Hawks, that would be a smart time to catch an unknowing owner of a Red Wings player off guard.

How about a team that you want to invest in right now? Well aside from the aforementioned Blackhawks and their 11 games over the next 21 days , my choice would be the Philadelphia, who has seven home games over that same stretch and only two on the road.

Dave's Best of the Best

I can't really review last week's choice for best bet because it was the Canucks schedule from Wednesday to Tuesday (they have only played one game from that stretch so we will have to wait and see). As for this week....

Saturday Oct 16 to Friday Oct 22

Tampa Bay - @Fla, Dal, NYI, @Atl

The Lightning will be able to keep their hot start going against these four non playoff teams from last (and probably this) season. They have a two day break in between playing Dallas and the back to back games with Long Island and Atlanta, so that should give them enough time to recover.

Best Bets
NYI 4.39 - four games @PIT, COL, @TOR, @TB
Vancouver 4.08 - four games @LA, CAR, @MIN, @CHI
Anaheim 4.05 - four games ATL, PHO, @CBJ, @PHI
Pittsburgh 4.01 - four games NYI, @PHI, OTT, @NAS
Colorado 3.91 - four games @NJ, @NYI, @NYR, SJ
Steer Clear
Detroit 1.77 - two games @PHO, CAL
Edmonton 1.95 - two games @CAL, MIN
Philadelphia 1.99 - two games PIT, ANA
Ottawa 2.07 - two games @MON, @PIT
St. Louis 2.09 - two games @DAL, @CHI
o Friday October 22, 2010
Best Bets
Tampa Bay 4.37 - four games @FLA, DAL, NYI, @ATL
Calgary 4.24 - four games EDM, @NAS, @DET, @CBJ
Minnesota 4.24 - four games CBJ, VAN, @EDM, @VAN
Vancouver 4.10 - four games CAR, @MIN, @CHI, MIN

Chicago 3.66 - four games BUF, STL, VAN, @STL

Steer Clear

Montreal 1.75 - two games OTT, NJ
Detroit 1.77 - two games @PHO, CAL
New Jersey 1.82 - two games BOS, @MON
Edmonton 1.95 - two games @CAL, MIN
LA 1.95 - two games CAR, @PHO

Saturday October 23, 2010

Best Bets

Vancouver 4.10 - four games CAR, @MIN, @CHI, MIN
Anaheim 3.98 - four games PHO, @CBJ, @PHI, @DET
Chicago 3.88 - four games STL, VAN, @STL, CBJ
Carolina 3.87 - four games @VAN, @SJ, @LA, @PHO
NYI 3.48 - three games @TOR, @TB, @FLA

Steer Clear

New Jersey 1.85 - two games @MON, BUF
Montreal 1.85 - two games NJ, @OTT
Detroit 1.88 - two games CAL, ANA
Edmonton 1.88 - two games MIN, SJ
Florida 2.11 - two games DAL, NYI

Sunday October 24, 2010

Best Bets

SJ 4.32 - four games CAR, @COL, @EDM, @CAL
Nashville 4.14 - four games CAL, PIT, @DAL, @TB
Tampa Bay 4.12 - four games DAL, NYI, @ATL, NAS
Calgary 3.96 - four games @NAS, @DET, @CBJ, SJ
Chicago 3.88 - four games STL, VAN, @STL, CBJ

Steer Clear

Montreal 1.85 - two games NJ, @OTT
Detroit 1.88 - two games CAL, ANA
Edmonton 1.88 - two games MIN, SJ
Phoenix 1.94 - two games LA, CAR
Florida 2.11 - two games DAL, NYI

Monday October 25, 2010

Best Bets

SJ 4.32 - four games CAR, @COL, @EDM, @CAL
Nashville 4.14 - four games CAL, PIT, @DAL, @TB
LA 4.11 - four games CAR, @PHO, @COL, @MIN
Minnesota 4.08 - four games VAN, @EDM, @VAN, LA
Calgary 3.96 - four games @NAS, @DET, @CBJ, SJ

Steer Clear

Colorado 1.77 - two games SJ, LA
St. Louis 1.82 - two games CHI, PIT
Ottawa 1.84 - two games @BUF, MON
Detroit 1.88 - two games CAL, ANA
Edmonton 1.88 - two games MIN, SJ

0 to Tuesday October 26, 2010

Best Bets

Anaheim 4.30 - four games @CBJ, @PHI, @DET, @DAL
Calgary 4.18 - four games @DET, @CBJ, SJ, EDM
Philadelphia 4.12 - four games ANA, TOR, @CBJ, BUF
LA 4.11 - four games CAR, @PHO, @COL, @MIN
Phoenix 4.02 - four games LA, CAR, @MON, @OTT

Steer Clear

St. Louis 1.82 - two games CHI, PIT
Boston 1.84 - two games WAS, NYR
Detroit 1.88 - two games CAL, ANA
Carolina 1.90 - two games @LA, @PHO
Washington 1.95 - two games @BOS, ATL

to Wednesday October 27, 2010

Best Bets

Calgary 4.18 - four games @DET, @CBJ, SJ, EDM
Philadelphia 4.12 - four games ANA, TOR, @CBJ, BUF
San Jose 4.06 - four games @COL, @EDM, @CAL, NJ
Tampa Bay 4.05 - four games NYI, @ATL, NAS, PIT
Phoenix 4.02 - four games LA, CAR, @MON, @OTT

Steer Clear

St. Louis 1.82 - two games CHI, PIT
Boston 1.84 - two games WAS, NYR
Carolina 1.87 - two games @PHO, WAS
Detroit 1.88 - two games CAL, ANA
Vancouver 1.95 - two games MIN, COL

hursday October 28, 2010

Best Bets

LA 4.25 - four games @COL, @MIN, @CHI, @DAL
Calgary 4.15 - four games @CBJ, SJ, EDM, COL
Phoenix 4.10 - four games CAR, @MON, @OTT, @DET
Columbus 3.88 - four games CAL, @CHI, PHI, EDM
Ottawa 3.66 - four games @BUF, MON, PHO, FLA

Steer Clear

Detroit 1.85 - two games ANA, PHO
Carolina 1.86 - two games @PHO, WAS
Vancouver 1.95 - two games MIN, COL
Boston 1.98 - two games NYR, TOR
NYI 2.11 - two games @FLA, @MON

o Friday October 29, 2010

Best Bets

LA 4.25 - four games @COL, @MIN, @CHI, @DAL
Philadelphia 4.17 - four games TOR, @CBJ, BUF, @PIT
Montreal 4.16 - four games @OTT, PHO, NYI, @NYI
Phoenix 4.10 - four games CAR, @MON, @OTT, @DET
Edmonton 3.93 - four games SJ, @CAL, @CBJ, @CHI

Steer Clear

Vancouver 0.95 - one game COL
Tampa Bay 1.82 - two games NAS, PIT
Minnesota 1.84 - two games LA, WAS
Detroit 1.85 - two games ANA, PHO
St. Louis 1.91 - two games PIT, @NAS

Saturday October 30, 2010

Best Bets

Philadelphia 4.16 - four games @CBJ, BUF, @PIT, NYI
Phoenix 4.11 - four games @MON, @OTT, @DET, TB
Montreal 4.16 - four games PHO, NYI, @NYI, FLA
NYR 4.07 - four games NJ, ATL, CAR, @TOR
New Jersey - four games @NYR, @SJ, @ANA, @LA

Steer Clear

Vancouver 0.95 - one game COL
Detroit 1.68 - two games PHO, NAS
St. Louis 1.99 - two games @NAS, ATL
Boston 2.16 - two games TOR, @OTT
Ottawa 2.64 - three games PHO, FLA, BOS