A tough decision can be made easier with these charts showing you the best five and worst five schedules for upcoming seven-day periods. Some of you used them last year. However, for the benefit of new readers. here is a refresher. The number next to the team indicates the 'multiplier' to use on a player's point-per-game pace to give you an idea how many points to expect for that week.

The Ducks can thank their 11-2-2 record since January 6 for getting them even remotely close

to being mentioned in the race. Now if you consider being out eight points qualifies them as being in the playoff race, the next 14 days is going to decide whether they can get to that eighth spot or not. Anaheim, who is tied for the League in road victories (6), starts a terrifying eight game road trip on Friday. Not only do they start it off against the Wings, but seven of the eight teams they play have a much better record in their own barn than on the road. The other unfortunate thing is that even if they manage to do well on this trip, they only play one team that they're in contention with for a playoff spot -- Minnesota.

Last week I mentioned the Hawks starting a similar trip that the Ducks are starting this week, except it was for nine games. They proceeded to go out and get hammered by Sam Gagner, then follow it up with losses to Calgary and Colorado. They currently have one of the worst road records for a playoff team, and their schedule doesn't get much easier this coming week. After playing San Jose on Friday, they head to Phoenix, Nashville and MSG to face the Rangers. Two weeks ago no one imagined that Chicago would be 10 points back of Detroit, but now we could see them fighting for their lives to make the playoffs for the second year in a row.

Another team starting a very lengthy road trip is the San Jose Sharks, who will head out for nine straight after Friday's game against Chicago. While their 12-7-4 road record doesn't necessarily show it, the Sharks have struggled to score away from HP, averaging only 2.4 goals per game, compared to just over 3 at home.

Speaking of the Red Wings, I unfortunately can't complete this week's article without mentioning their home streak of 18 consecutive wins. The fantastic news for Red Wings owners is that they have played a league high 31 road games so far this season, giving them only 10 more in their final 27 games. That means seven of their next eight and nine of their next 11 at the Joe. The record speaks for itself, but consider this: Detroit's goal differential on the road is -11. In six less games at home, their goal differential is +51. Aside from Zetterberg, all of their top players have equal to or more points at home. The biggest difference coming from the captain himself, who

has 21 points at the Joe and only 7 away from it.

Just like the Red Wings, the suddenly hot Sabres are now in the midst of playing eight of nine at home as well. They're in a situation much like the Ducks in that this next stretch of games leading to the trade deadline will decide whether they have a shot or not. Nine points back with three games in hand is not an insurmountable feat. The shocking thing about Buffalo's home and road scoring tendencies isn't the goal differential at home (80 gf, 71 ga), it's that they've only scored 48 goals in their 28 road games. I'm not really sure how they've managed 11 wins on the road scoring only 1.7 goals per game, but play your Sabres with a little more confidence for the next two weeks.

Friday Feb 10 to Thursday Feb 16, 2012

Best Bets

St. Louis 4.23 - Col, SJ, @CBJ, NYI

Anaheim 4.22 - @Det, @CBJ, @Min, @Pit

Buffalo 4.14 - Dal, TB, NJ, @Phi

San Jose 4.03 - Chi, @StL, @Was, @TB

Tampa Bay 3.95 - @Buf, @Pit, Ott, SJ

Steer Clear

Washington 1.79 - @NYR, SJ

Nashville 1.83 - @Bos, Chi

New Jersey 2.00 - Fla, @Buf

Carolina 2.15 - @Col, @Mon

Edmonton 2.18 - @Ott, Tor

Saturday Feb 11 to Friday Feb 17, 2012

Best Bets

Anaheim 4.32 - @CBJ, @Min, @Pit, @NJ

Florida 4.24 - @NJ, @NYI, Ott, Was

St. Louis 4.23 - Col, SJ, @CBJ, NYI

San Jose 4.19 - @StL, @Was, @TB, @Car

Buffalo 4.04 - TB, NJ, @Phi, Mon

Steer Clear

Carolina 1.88 - @Mon, SJ

Pittsburgh 2.09 - TB, Ana

Phoenix 2.70 - Chi, Van, @LA

Philadelphia 2.77 - NYR, @Det, Buf

Dallas 2.80 - LA, @Det, Cgy

Sunday Feb 12 to Saturday Feb 18, 2012

Best Bets

Anaheim 4.32 - @CBJ, @Min, @Pit, @NJ

San Jose 4.19 - @StL, @Was, @TB, @Car

St. Louis 4.15 - SJ, @CBJ, NYI, Min

Washington 4.05 - @NYR, SJ, @Fla, @TB

NY Islanders 4.04 - Fla, @Wpg, @StL, Car

Steer Clear

Nashville 1.93 - Chi, @Det

Edmonton 2.04 - Tor, Col

Colorado 2.05 - @Van, @Edm

New Jersey 2.05 - @Buf, Ana

Ottawa 2.26 - @TB, @Fla

Monday Feb 13 to Sunday Feb 19, 2012

Best Bets

St. Louis 4.30 - @CBJ, NYI, Min, @Chi

San Jose 4.25 - @Was, @TB, @Car, @Det

Vancouver 4.18 - @Phx, Col, Tor, @Edm

Anaheim 4.17 - @Min, @Pit, @NJ, @Fla

Boston 4.04 - NYR, @Mon, @Win, @Min

Steer Clear

Philadelphia 1.81 - Buf, Pit

Los Angeles 1.92 - Phx, Cgy

Ottawa 2.26 - @TB, @Fla

Columbus 2.70 - StL, Chi, @NYR

Phoenix 2.76 - Van, @LA, Dal

Tuesday Feb 14 to Monday Feb 20, 2012

Best Bets

St. Louis 4.30 - @CBJ, NYI, Min, @Chi

NY Islanders 4.16 - @Win, @StL, Car, Ott

Anaheim 4.17 - @Min, @Pit, @NJ, @Fla

Boston 4.04 - NYR, @Mon, @Win, @Min

Winnipeg 4.02 - NYI, @Min, Bos, Col

Steer Clear

Philadelphia 1.81 - Buf, Pit

Phoenix 1.91 - @LA, Dal

Los Angeles 1.92 - Phx, Cgy

Columbus 2.70 - StL, Chi, @NYR

Detroit 2.78 - Dal, Nas, SJ

Wednesday Feb 15 to Tuesday Feb 21, 2012

Best Bets

San Jose 4.51 - @TB, @Car, @Det, @CBJ

Anaheim 4.31 - @Pit, @NJ, @Fla, @TB

Vancouver 4.14 - Col, Tor, @Edm, @Nas

NY Islanders 4.06 - @StL, Car, Ott, @Buf

Edmonton 3.98 - Tor, Col, Van, @Cgy

Steer Clear

Ottawa 2.26 - @Fla, @NYI

Columbus 2.72 - Chi, @NYR, SJ

Phoenix 2.73 - @LA, Dal, LA

Tampa Bay 2.74 - SJ, Was, Ana

Minnesota 2.80 - Win, @StL, Bos

Thursday Feb 16 to Wednesday Feb 22, 2012

Best Bets

Washington 4.54 - @Fla, @TB, @Car, @Ott

San Jose 4.51 - @TB, @Car, @Det, @CBJ

Los Angeles 4.11 - Phx, Cgy, @Phx, @Col

NY Islanders 4.06 - @StL, Car, Ott, @Buf

Dallas 3.92 - Cgy, @Phx, Nas, @Mon

Steer Clear

Florida 1.85 - Was, Ana

Toronto 1.94 - @Van, NJ

Ottawa 2.07 - @NYI, Was

Columbus 2.72 - Chi, @NYR, SJ

Phoenix 2.73 - @LA, Dal, LA

Friday Feb 17 to Thursday Feb 23, 2012

Best Bets

Washington 4.54 - @Fla, @TB, @Car, @Ott

Anaheim 4.46 - @NJ, @Fla, @TB, @Car

San Jose 4.40 - @Car, @Det, @CBJ, @Tor

Vancouver 4.10 - Tor, @Edm, @Nas, @Det

Dallas 3.97 - @Phx, Nas, @Mon, @Chi

Steer Clear

NY Rangers 2.04 - CBJ, @PIT

Ottawa 2.07 - @NYI, Was

Columbus 2.72 - Chi, @NYR, SJ

Minnesota 2.80 - @StL, Bos, @Fla

Florida 2.82 - Was, Ana, Min

Saturday Feb 18 to Friday Feb 24, 2012

Best Bets

Vancouver 5.20 - Tor, @Edm, @Nas, @Det, @NJ

Dallas 4.92 - @Phx, Nas, @Mon, @Chi, Min

Washington 4.39 - @TB, @Car, @Ott, Mon

Chicago 3.96 - @CBJ, StL, Det, Dal

NY Islanders 3.94 - Car, Ott, @Buf, NYR

Steer Clear

Florida 1.96 - Ana, Min

Ottawa 2.07 - @NYI, Was

Buffalo 2.76 - Pit, NYI, Bos

Detroit 2.77 - SJ, @Chi, Van

Nashville 2.81- @Dal, Van, StL

Sunday Feb 19 to Saturday Feb 25, 2012

Best Bets

San Jose 4.31 - @Det, @CBJ, @Tor, @Nas

Washington 4.29 - @Car, @Ott, Mon, @Tor

Boston 4.25 - @Min, @StL, @Buf, @Ott

Vancouver 4.20 - @Edm, @Nas, @Det, @NJ

NY Rangers 4.20 - CBJ, @Pit, @NYI, Buf

Steer Clear

Toronto 2.74 - NJ, SJ, Was

Carolina 2.80 - Wash, Ana, Fla

Columbus 2.84 - @NYR, SJ, Col

Ottawa 2.87 - @NYI, Was, Bos

Calgary 2.89 - Edm, Phx, Phi