Some news and notes regarding prospects around the league...

Marc-Andre Gragnani was scratched Wednesday night and has opened the door for Mike Weber to take his spot in Buffalo's top six. With only four assists and five shots, Gragnani has been a disappointment so far this season. Weber was -2 Wednesday allowing Gragnani back into the lineup on Friday, but the message has been sent - produce or sit.

Adam Larsson was feeding Kovalchuk on the point on New Jersey's second power play unit Wednesday night. Larsson gets too much ice time (24 minutes) and is too good a player to be considered strictly a defensive defenseman at this point despite his single point in 11 games. Grab this guy, because one day he's going to get at least 40 points. It won't take long for him to get there - two more seasons.

David Rundblad’s outlet pass to Colin Greening vs. the Leafs last Saturday night was a sign of things to come. Rundblad frequently looks for the "long bomb" pass and was trying to execute them throughout the entire rookie tournament in Oshawa in mid September. This is going to be his trademark. He has two points in his last five games and is starting to get comfortable. Look for his point totals to increase in the near future. He's getting the ice time (16 minutes), frequently playing with Chris Phillips.

Not only does Gabriel Landeskog have seven points in 12 games, he's a classy kid. He shrugged off the Andy Sutton hit to his head by saying he shouldn't have left himself in a vulnerable position and that it was partly his own fault. That's the kind of character that you need to be an NHL star.

Carter Aston has nine goals and 13 points in 10 AHL games. Too bad he's stuck behind Martin St.Louis, Steve Downie, Brett Connolly and Adam Hall on Tampa's right side. It's a good sign though. If he keeps up this level of production, Tampa won't be able to ignore him for much longer.

Where is the love for Luke Adam this season? Yes, Nugent-Hopkins is three years younger but he is all over the media, while outside of Buffalo you don't hear much about Adam. Both have 11 points in 12 games, they both have a similar number of shots, both play on their respective team's top lines, but Adam gets almost two minutes of ice time less than the "Nuge." Add to that a 40 percent face off percentage which is significantly higher than RNH's 28 percent and you have a real battle for top rookie so far. Don't overlook Adam, despite the age difference he has been a revelation.

Another player not getting much love is Jake Gardiner. Outside of Toronto his name isn't being mentioned much, but he's clearly one of the Leafs' top four defensemen right now. His static defensive game isn't great but he's great on the rush because of his dynamic skating and he's been able to put up some decent numbers while logging 18 minutes of ice time each game. His five points is the most among rookie defenders and although he's -1, he sees a lot of ice time against top six forwards.

Kyle Palmieri has eight goals in six games and is looking like he belongs in the NHL. If Andrew Gordon or Devante Smith-Pelly falter, and each have only one point, look for Palmieri to get a second chance in Anaheim.

It'll be interesting to see what the Leafs do once they run into a scoring slump. There is no room for October's AHL player of the month on the Leafs roster right now, but Leaf fans will be screaming for Joe Colborne when the goals dry up. Unless Tim Connolly is injured (a likely possibility), Tyler Bozak or Matthew Lombardi might find themselves in the press box when the Leafs hit hard times and management wants to see what Colborne can do. Something is going to give here.

Jiri Tlusty, 23, has earned his playing time with Eric Staal. Tlusty, 6'0, 210 pounds was playing good two way hockey on Carolina's third line, before being promoted recently into Carolina's top six alongside Staal. Tlusty is currently fifth in points on the team with six and until last night's abysmal -3 was third on the team in plus minus. He has a long way to go to reach his 30-goal potential many in Toronto saddled him with, but he's moving in the right direction.

"Out of Left Field"

Dallas power forward Matt Fraser is off to a banner AHL start with eight goals in 10 games to go along with 21 PIMs. Fraser, 21, is a tough customer who can score goals in bunches. He potted 36 in 66 games for Kootenay last season and racked up 115 minutes in penalties. He's not fancy and tends to go through people, but his 6'2, 207 frame allows him to do that. His shot is his major weapon, but his defensive game has to improve as he has the second worst plus minus on the Texas Stars. Watch his goal totals and see if he can maintain his pace as the third leading goal scorer in the AHL. If so, he could get a call.

Jason Garrison, 26, was a 40 point AHL defenseman three years ago but had issues with his defensive game. He needed to learn how to play defense and needed to mature after a three year stint at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. After some time in the minors and then a full NHL season, Garrison is now a leader on the back end for the Panthers. Garrison plays 26 minutes a game, sees power play time and has a heavy point shot. He's sixth on the team in plus minus after a bad start but leads Florida in goals with five. With his quick start he has an outside shot at 35 points and would be a good depth defenseman in deep fantasy leagues.