Fantasy League Awards

Imagine… if only the NHL were in session…

Buoyed by his new pivot James van Riemsdyk, Phil Kessel has shot out of the gate in 2012-13, potting 6 goals and 10 points in his first 8 games. Leaf fans (never given to premature celebration, of course) are already purchasing playoff tickets, planning the parade route and proclaiming Kessel the odds-on-favourite to claim the Hart Trophy as NHL MVP at season's end.

It's never too early for excitable fans to look ahead to awards season, and in that spirit, let's talk fantasy awards.

An easy way to inject some extra fun into your fantasy league is to create end-of-season awards. In my league, the league champion hoists the Theoren Fleury Memorial Trophy (which I've had proudly displayed on my shelf three times in the past five years, thankyouverymuch). The winner of our playoff pool takes home the Mark Messier Cup.

But beyond the championships, at the end of each season our owners vote on a series of player awards to honour the best fantasy players in our league. As commissioner, I prepare a list of nominees for each award; I usually nominate six players per award, and include all pertinent stats to make the voting process easy for everybody. Owners are asked to send me their top three choices for each award, and players receive 5 points for a first place vote, 3 points for a second place vote, and 1 point for a third place vote. Owners are reminded to vote based on fantasy qualifications in our unique scoring system, not on "real life" value.

The awards were named based on the inaugural award winners five seasons ago. Below is a list of our awards, along with last season's winner. Use these to stir ideas for your own awards – the only limit is your creativity!

The Alex the Great MVP
(Most Valuable to his GFHL Team)
2012 Winner: Henrik Lundqvist

The Ovie Award
(Best Performance by a Forward)
2012 Winner: Evgeni Malkin

The Highway Nabbery Award
(Best Performance by a Goalie)
2012 Winner: Jonathan Quick

The Dion D-Man of the Year
(Best Performance by a Defenceman)
2012 Winner: Erik Karlsson

The Fist of Phaneuf Goonery Award
(Best Performance by a Tough Guy – emphasis on PIM, Hits and Points)
2012 Winner: Scott Hartnell

The Kane is Able Young Gun of the Year
(Best Performance by a Player Who Began the Season as a GFHL Prospect – under 165 GP for a skater, or 100 GP for a goalie)
2012 Winner: Erik Karlsson

The Richie Richards Breakout Player of the Year
(Player Who Most Exceeded Expectations)
2012 Winner: Mike Smith

The 3 Star Award
(Player with the Most Weekly 3-star Selections – 5 points for 1st star, 3 points for 2nd, 1 point for 3rd)
2012 Winner: Evgeni Malkin

The Price is Right Fleury MVP
(MVP of the Fleury Championship Final)

2012 Winner: Sidney Crosby

The Jet Zetter Award
(MVP of the Messier Cup Playoff Pool)
2012 Winner: Drew Doughty

The awards are a fun way to cap off the season, and it gives us one more thing to debate before everyone signs off for the summer. And yes, after five years we're still waiting for a Leaf to claim an individual player award. Will this be the year? (Probably not.)

Does your fantasy league have player awards? Share your most creative ideas below!

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