It's true. Don't fight it. Size does matter.

SIZE MATTERS IN KEEPER LEAGUES

Calvin from Vancouver

“8 team H2H Yahoo Keeper (Year 1, Keep 5)

G, A, P, +/-, PIM, PPP, GWG, SOG, W, GAA, Save%, SHO

Daily Roster: 2 C, 2 RW, 2 LW, 4D, 1 Util, 2 G

C: Datsyuk (LW), Getzlaf, E.Staal,

RW: Perry, Hossa, Semin (LW), Clarkson

LW: Parise, Vanek, Benn (C)

D: Boyle, Karlsson, Edler, Gonchar

G: Thomas, Quick

Hi Chris, Roster listed above. I am presently in first with a 50 point lead over 2nd place.

Goalies and late draft picks (Vanek, Karlsson, Edler) are making up for my struggling top picks (Perry, Getzlaf, Staal). Who would you consider for 5 keepers? the rest i may offer to upgrade keepers.

I am considering among:

Datsyuk (getting older)

Perry (good alround stats, valuable RW)

Parise (valuable LW), Getzlaf (injury prone)

Staal

Benn

Karlsson (top dman)

Quick (younger, solid stats).

Thanks.”

Chris: First of all, congrats on the big lead so far.

I’m glad you asked this one Calvin because it brings up a great point about keepers when it comes to smaller leagues and fewer keepers. Because your situation is on the shallow side with only eight teams and since, on top of that, the number of keepers is relatively small with only five, I’d be much less worried about the age of a player.

As such, I think Datsyuk is still a legitimate guy to consider as a lock in terms of his production and talent. The only caveat, IMO, is whether or not you want to invest in any centres at all since forward position matters for you. As you know, pivots are plentiful. Not Datsyuk-level, but in a shallow league especially you’ll be able to do quite nicely down the middle regardless.

Quick’s keeper value continues to move upward. With Darryl Sutter’s addition to the Kings, Quick’s worth is only improved.

Even though Tim Thomas is obviously up there in years, he's still playing so well and has such a great situation with the Bruins. Given your league dynamics, I could even honestly see going a little non-conventional in keeper thinking and going with both Quick and Thomas as two of the five. You'd likely be able to nab Rask back at the draft (the split situation might make his owner waver on keeping him, like you are with Thomas and his age) and your goaltending would theoretically be pretty awesome for next season.

If you went that route, then who for the final three choices? Parise and Perry should likely be locks. Wingers, solid stats and pretty valuable all-around.

I could then see going with Karlsson for the final pick, given his insane production and upside. It's always nice to have one d-man locked up in that scenario and there's no reason to expect any sort of dramatic drop-off for Karlsson. He's just a blue-chipper who has figured it out early in his career.

Honestly though, a legitimate argument could be made for Datsyuk (it's Pavel freaking Datsyuk) or Hossa (winger, great spot in Chicago and he's consistent), Benn (awesome young talent who is more valuable if he'll carry W/C eligibility into next season), Vanek (valuable winger and I have so much more respect for him after this season than I ever have before) or Getzlaf (looks bad now, but in standard leagues his long-term value is still really high). Staal, Boyle and Edler are no slouches either.

You’re a shrewd owner though Calvin. I’m not too worried. I also don’t think you can really go wrong with virtually any combo there. At the moment though, I’m leaning toward the double goalie route.

I’d also be really tempted to try to deal Quick and someone valuable at the end of the season, once you’ve won (I’m optimistic), for Henrik Lundqvist. All the cool kids have Lundqvist on their team.

GIRARDI’S OFFENSIVE VALUE

Harry

“Chris, What do you think about Dan Girardi offensively? We don't use hits or blocked shots in our league- otherwise he would be a stud. He appears to be a better real-world player than fantasy. As I speak- he has had a good week. We have a deep league- 16 teams. H2H points. Would you trade him for another d-man, or just ride him out? He has decent stats- 3G, 12A and + 7. But only 8 PIMS. Most of his points were early on, when he was more consistent. His last six weeks as far as fantasy pts go:

4, 0, -2, 6, 2 and this week, he has 13 - which is a great week for a defenseman in our league.

His value is high right now. Should I trade him??

BTW - this DH site is AWESOME- how about more podcasts from Brian or others?? Thanks."

Chris: Thanks Harry.

In terms of whether to trade him or not, it'll always come down to what you can actually get for him. Generally speaking though, I'd agree with your assessment that he's better for the Rangers than he generally will be for poolies. More often than not, it's secondary power play time for him with Michael Del Zotto and Brad Richards eating up the key minutes. The fact that Del Zotto has really taken that next step in his development and is producing clearly helps his case to stay there.

He's taking fewer PIM this year and he doesn't shoot much. As you noted, his main fantasy

value would come from the two categories you don't count – hits and blocked shots. He's a beast in front of Henrik Lundqvist and the fact that he's taken only four minors this year is pretty incredible.

If you can get something decent for him that'll help your team, go for it.

OMARK AND PAAJARVI

Donna

"I'd love to hear your thoughts on Linus Omark and MPS. With the injuries to RNH and Eberle will they get a call up?

I know Omark is healing from a broken ankle and will have the cast removed Jan. 12th and will have to rehab for a while.

Luleå Hockey hopes that Omark would return to the Eliteserien before January 31st when the transfer window closes. Do you think that will happen? He does have that out clause in his

contract. If he does leave can you see him ever returning to the NHL? Thanks."

Chris: Donna, from a fantasy perspective I think we're still looking at both Omark and Paajarvi being longer-term projects regardless of what happens this year with any call-up. Most of that is due to their play (when healthy) and, to be fair, just the way the Oilers' depth developed this season before these recent injuries. They weren't in good positions to be able to produce at a level we might expect, for the most part.

In terms of what we can expect as Oilers fan, of which you seem to be along with me and that seems to be the basis for the question, I certainly hope Omark does not return to the SEL. IMO, within the next few years both he and MPS could become key pieces for us having three truly dangerous lines. They both still have work to do though.

If he did go back to Sweden, I certainly don't think that would close the window on a return to the NHL at some point. I just think it's in his best interests to, when he's healthy again, put in the work in the AHL and earn his way back into the Oilers' lineup.

From the Oilers' perspective, I'm most concerned right now with the future of Ales Hemsky. I certainly hope they don't deal him away, unless he'll be asking for an unreasonable amount of money in a new contract. Some media and fans seem to be taking shots at him left and right this year especially.

From my point of view, the guy is a legit star talent who works hard and is a good team guy. I think the “doesn’t fit into the Oilers culture” anymore is garbage. He’s still pretty young. He likes Edmonton, which has been a problem with attracting free agents for so long. He also greatly adds to the offensive depth of this team when he’s playing like he can play. He’s just been struggling a bit. Give him a break.

Does he get injured too much? Unfortunately, yes. The past two seasons have been particularly hard. But he battles. He goes into the corners. As long as the salary is reasonable, I’d keep him around. He finally has talent with which to play. Once he gets into a groove, which he will, he’ll be fine.

End of rant.