Just over two weeks ago a planned eight-part series covering some emerging fantasy bargain players was rudely interrupted by the end of the NHL lockout. The signing of the new CBA required some coverage due to the changes to the NHL's salary cap system and how this affects fantasy leagues both now and in the future. This week we return with part six which includes a couple players who have made the jump to the NHL.

Taylor Beck (LW – Nashville)

Cap Hit: $886,667
Years Left: 2
AHL Team: Milwaukee

GP: 33
G:6
A: 20
PTS: 26
PIM: 16

After a decent rookie professional season a year ago, Taylor Beck has taken his game to the next level as his 26 points in 33 games leads Milwaukee. More importantly, his play puts him in good position for call-ups to Nashville. He has the size and all-around ability that the Predators covet so there is good reason to believe that he will get a fair opportunity to catch on in the NHL at some point.

For fantasy purposes, while Beck will likely have opportunity on his side, he does not possess top-end offensive upside and has not posted great PIM numbers in the lower levels. Consider him a good cap bargain option to fill a depth spot on your roster.

Michael Sgarbossa (C – Colorado)

Cap Hit: $540,000
Years Left: 3
AHL Team: Lake Erie

GP: 36
G: 14
A: 18
PTS:32
PIM: 41

The undersized Michael Sgarbossa has made tremendous strides in his development over the last two years and has gone from a total unknown to a legitimate fantasy hockey prospect. He currently leads Lake Erie with 14 goals and 32 points along with an impressive 41 PIM.

Currently the Colorado Avalanche roster has several talented forwards but also has some holes that will need to be filled in the future. If Sgarbossa can continue to develop at both ends of the ice, there is a chance that he could secure a roster spot in Colorado. His entry-level contract lasts two more years beyond this one so he has time on his side.

Ben Smith (RW – Chicago)

Cap Hit: $562,500
Years Left: 2
AHL Team: Rockford

GP: 37
G: 15
A: 12
PTS: 27
PIM: 9

Ben Smith is a talented winger who has had good success at the AHL level. This year he currently sits third in scoring in Rockford and is making a case to be the first winger called up to Chicago if there is an injury. He also has the benefit of his team having so many gigantic contracts because the Hawks have constantly looked within the organization for cheap help in recent years.

Unfortunately, Smith turns 25 after this season so he is clearly running out of track. He needs to make an impact in Chicago soon or he may be labeled a career minor-leaguer. With the emergence of youngsters like Andrew Shaw , Brandon Saad and Brandon Pirri his chances are getting worse. Despite the potential for fantasy failure, Smith still cannot be ignored because of his high talent level and the quality of potential linemates in Chicago.

Andy Miele (LW – Phoenix)

Cap Hit: $850,500
Years Left:1
AHL Team: Portland

GP: 38
G: 11
A: 15
PTS: 26
PIM: 41

Like Sgarbossa, Andy Miele is a small forward with a ton of talent. He has the benefit of being in an organization (Phoenix) that operates with a small budget and does not retain top forwards. If he can land a spot in Phoenix and produce early, he has a chance to really stand out especially if he can establish chemistry in the top-six.

Miele is the same age as Smith and carries the same risk as an older prospect. On top of that, undersized forwards tend to get fewer looks in the big leagues. The only alternative is to make a splash when such an opportunity presents itself. There is some risk here but the reward is that Miele could land a spot on a team where he would be one of the most talented offensive players on the roster.

Teemu Hartikainen (LW – Edmonton)

Cap Hit: $550,000
Years Left: 1
AHL Team: Oklahoma City

GP: 37
G: 11
A: 16
PTS: 27
PIM: 23

NHL stats:

GP: 2
G: 0
A: 0
PTS: 0
PIM: 0

Teemu Hartikainen is a big physical winger who despite all of the new arrivals in Edmonton has a good chance of securing a key role in the NHL. His skill set, versatility and two-way abilities are a great compliment to the elite offensive talent throughout the roster. He has had

cups of coffee at the NHL level over the last two years and has 10 points, 10 PIM, 58 hits, 17 blocked shots, two power play points and 47 shots on goal in 31 career games. This should give an indication of his future value in roto leagues but he has much more to offer in as an offensive player.

It is possible that Hartikainen becomes the next Johan Franzen , who has had a great fantasy hockey career due to his size and versatility despite not having high-end upside. Here are Franzen's career numbers courtesy of Yahoo:

Year

Team

GP

G

A

Pts

+/-

PIM

Hits

BkS

PPG

PPA

SHG

SHA

GW

SOG

Pct

2005-06

DET

80

12

4

16

4

36

N/A

N/A

0

0

2

0

2

119

.101

2006-07

DET

69

10

20

30

20

37

N/A

N/A

0

1

1

3

2

151

.066

2007-08

DET

72

27

11

38

12

51

N/A

N/A

14

2

0

1

8

199

.136

2008-09

DET

71

34

25

59

21

44

N/A

N/A

11

8

1

0

8

246

.138

2009-10

DET

27

10

11

21

1

22

46

12

6

5

0

0

1

91

.110

2010-11

DET

76

28

27

55

5

58

143

29

10

7

0

0

5

248

.113

2011-12

DET

77

29

27

56

23

40

60

30

11

2

0

0

10

211

.137

2012-13

DET

3

0

1

1

1

14

3

0

0

0

0

0

0

8

.000

Career

475

150

126

276

87

302

252

71

52

25

4

4

36

1273

.118

Franzen had the benefit of playing with some great linemates but Hartikainen could be in a similar situation for years to come. It remains to be seen if this comparison is valid but in most league formats it is worth owning Hartikainen to see if it works out.

Andrew Shaw (RW – Chicago)

Cap Hit: $565,000
Years Left: 2
AHL Team: Rockford

GP: 28
G: 8
A: 6
PTS: 14
PIM: 84

NHL Stats:
GP: 3
G: 0
A: 0
PTS: 0
PIM: 2

This is not the first time that Andrew Shaw has been mentioned in Capped articles and there is good reason for his name to keep popping up. In roto leagues fighters have more value than in points-only leagues because of their ability to produce in categories like hits and PIM where star players are generally weaker. Among these fighters are players who are able to play a regular shift in addition to their enforcer role. Andrew Shaw is one of these players.

Shaw has proven to be a decent scorer in both the AHL and NHL and during his stint in Chicago last year he was an excellent all-around roto league contributor. His high level of energy makes him a good fit with the Hawks' star forwards when he does get that opportunity but he is capable of playing a variety of roles which increases his chances of retaining his spot in the lineup.

Previous posts from Eric Daoust:

- **Salary Cap Bargains: Part I**
- **Part II**
- Part III
- Part IV
- Part V