Players were struck down at an alarming rate during Week 18. Let's trudge onward to Week 19 of your leagues. The trade deadline is seven days away, so let's take a look “Between The Lines”.

Forward March…..

Bobby Butler-Milan Michalek-Jason Spezza (Ottawa) – So Ottawa's new first line was on fire in Week 18 led by **Jason Spezza** and his nine points (3 G, 6 A). Add in that both **Bobby Butler** and **Milan Michalek** had four points each and you had one formidable line. Were there hotter lines in Week 18? Yes. However, this line has the chance of doing more of the same with home tilts against the Isles, Caps, and Bruins. This a good start for Week 19.

Chris Kunitz-Evgeni Malkin-James Neal (Pittsburgh) – These guys seem to top the list every few weeks and in Week 18 they combined for 16 points. **Chris Kunitz** and **Evgeni Malkin** had eight while **James Neal** had six. Fantasy became reality when Neal was given a six-year, $30 million dollar extension. These three players have meshed well all season long and in a way the **Sidney Crosby** injury cemented their fantasy status. There is no reason why Week 19 would not be more of the same.

Erik Cole-David Desharnais-Max Pacioretty (Montreal) – Can you believe that this line was put together two months ago and they seem to just keep producing? It is one efficient line. Week 18 saw **David Desharnais** as the point leader with six points while **Erik Cole** and **Max Pacioretty** had four points each. Cole led the line with three goals. Even against New Jersey, they teamed

up for the only goal of the night and honestly, they look like they have been played together for a long while. Week 19 does not look as rosy but this is a line to keep on starting.

Patrick Kane-Patrick Sharp-Jonathan Toews (Chicago) – This was a sight for sore eyes as far as fantasy owners. Week 18 saw them combine for ten points mostly later in the week.
Jonathan Toews
led the way with five points almost as a Captain should. However
, Patrick Sharp
and
Patrick Kane
were still a bit quiet with only a few points each. Kane still seems a bit tentative at times at the finish while Sharp is at least showing signs of breaking out. With Chicago on the upswing, this first line will have just as good of a Week 19.

Andrew Ladd-Bryan Little-Blake Wheeler (Winnipeg) – The **Blake Wheeler** and **Bryan Little** duo
seems to mesh well together. Now
Andrew Ladd
does create space and is physical around the net. However, Little and Wheeler are the clear catalysts as seen on Sunday Night.
Blake Wheeler
had four assists in the 5-1 win over the
Colorado Avalanche
and
Bryan Little
put home two goals. They play together 31.5% of the time at EV and 74.3% on the PP. Those percentages have increased in the last few weeks which means Week 19 looks bright with all home games on the horizon.

Lead Us Defenders……

Alex Pietrangelo-Kevin Shattenkirk (St. Louis) – Here are two rapid risers in the fantasy hockey world. **Alex Pietrangelo** had a whopping eight points and a great two way game while **Kevin Shattenkirk** chipped in three points in Week 18. St. Louis has a very efficient starting five that works well as a PP1 unit also. That cohesiveness has generated results on the back end that are becoming more commonplace. Week 19 may not be as proficient as Week 18 but the Blues and their "D" are a presence.

Eric Brewer-Victor Hedman (Tampa Bay) – Why did we go outside the box here? It was simple. **Victor Hedman** had a four-point week which includes seven points in his last ten games. **Eric Brewer** had a couple points in Week 18 and was hitting well with several blocks and hits a game. That is what Brewer does best but Hedman has combined the offense with the defense since his return from a concussion. Will Hedman continue this run in Week 19? Stay lukewarm on that prospect.

Tomas Kaberle-P.K. Subban (Montreal) – This is a gamble in a sense for fantasy owners but from what has been seen from **Tomas Kaberle** and **P.K. Subban** in the last few games, there may be reason to keep an eye on this duo in the coming weeks. They combined for four points with Kaberle netting three points and Subban potting a couple points. Now while Subban will rack up the shots on goal and a few other categories, Kaberle will

net the fantasy GM assists and little else. Week 19 may be modest.

As always, you can follow me on Twitter @TheProgramBTR and fire away your questions.□□ Thanks again and good luck this week.