The return of Nicklas Backstrom over the weekend was a very nice surprise. However, this is the final week in the fantasy hockey season, There are only six days this week with classic busy days Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. We go “Between The Lines” one more time.

Forward March……

Josh Bailey-Frans Nielsen-Kyle Okposo (NY Islanders) -- They finally performed like a second

line should last week or did they with 14 total points as the
Pittsburgh Penguins
found out the hard way.
Josh Bailey
is still a bit of a project but he led the way amongst forwards with nine points while
Kyle Okposo
banged home five goals. Add in another six points from
Frans Nielsen
and there was your most productive line of the week. Please note they were pretty invisible against Ottawa yesterday and New Jersey alone could make them a lukewarm option.

Sidney Crosby-Pascal Dupuis-Steve Sullivan (Pittsburgh) -- This could be seen coming a mile away as this is Pittsburgh's third most frequent line used at 24.1% EV (0% PP). Obviously Crosby meshes well with Pascal Dupuis a nd always did but developed a training camp synergy with
Steve Sullivan
. The line was relied on more and more and produced ten points. Crosby had eight points in the last week and a few goals along the way. They may be a hotter option in the final week as teams key on the
Evgeni Malkin
line.

Alex Burrows-Maxim Lapierre-Henrik Sedin (Vancouver) -- The last week means we go outside the box a bit. Burrows and Sedin know each other well but for some reason the energy of Lapierre has made this line fantasy relevant as they burrowed their way to a nine point week as a line. This actually boosted Lapierre's ice time by 20-25% and helped protect Sedin. Granted, Sedin only had five points but this line could be a good for about the same production this week. That would not be too shabby.

Dany Heatley-Mikko Koivu-Devin Setoguchi (Minnesota) -- It seems like old times for this line who is fully healthy for the first time since November. They had a ten point week together but more importantly have injected offense into a comatose squad.
Mikko Koivu
had five points and one has to wonder if he was healthy in the second half, where the rest of his line would be fantasy wise. Even
Dany Heatley
had several points and looked much stronger on his skates. The trio is a solid start for the final week because not many will be paying attention honestly.

Ryan Malone-Marty St. Louis-Steven Stamkos (Tampa Bay) -- We will see if this line continues but clearly Ryan Malone is feeling it. He had a hat trick against New Jersey which headlined a six goal week for the forward who benefited playing with the likes of Stamkos and St. Louis. It was a line who clearly had some rough patches but they do benefit from playing four times this week in six nights. They are at the very least worth starting given their favorable schedule.

Lead Us Defenders…….

Ryan Suter-Shea Weber (Nashville) -- Weber and Suter racked up eight points in the last seven days as Nashville had a bit of an uneven week defensively but that does not always hurt fantasy wise. Shea Weber had five points in all while Ryan Suter had three but most importantly they were racking up the ATOI for their owners. Nashville has the four seed to play for and that is very important so expect Weber and Suter to keep playing long minutes and digging for offensive opportunities.

Zdeno Chara-Dennis Seidenberg (Boston) -- Now Dennis Seidenberg missed a game and Zdeno Chara still blitzed opposing teams for eight points this week. Chara topped the 50 point plateau along the way while taking it a bit easy at just over 25:00 ATOI. Granted Boston has clinched the second seed but that will not slow down “Big Z” as he wants to make a Norris push. Expect Seidenberg to reap the benefits as well from another big week by the gentle giant.

Brett Lebda-Nikita Nikitin (Columbus) -- Nikita Nikitin is the obvious and real fantasy threat here as he is one of those players poised to break out even more next year, especially if he is eventually paired with Jack Johnson on the man advantage. It just seems like a natural fit that has not been tried yet. However, Brett Lebda does allow Nikitin to play with a bit more of a free spirit. The talented Russian had six points in the last seven days and it would surprise no one if he had another solid week to close out the regular season since Columbus has nothing to lose.

As always you can follow @TheProgramBTR and fire away those questions. Good luck this week.