

Between the Lines - Backes, Simmonds, White and more

Written by Chris Wassel

Monday, 23 January 2012 11:26 -



The All Star Break is close at hand. There are three nights of games, then a five night break, and then six more nights to complete the 14 day “week”. Therefore, next week there will be no “Between The Lines”. Now let’s get down to business.

Forward March.....

Nik Antropov-Andrew Ladd-Kyle Wellwood (Winnipeg) – This is not much of a surprise when you consider that **Antropov** is a very good fantasy option when full of confidence. If you combine that with **Ladd's** propensity to deliver and **Wellwood's** ability to be at the right place at the right time, then one has a good line on their hands. They combined for 15 points when they were together. Week 16 does not look too shabby either considering Winnipeg plays six times.

David Backes-T.J. Oshie-David Perron (St. Louis) – The “BOP” line racked up 12 points in Week 15 and looks to be the Blues’ steady fantasy producing trio. **Backes** led the way on the line with two goals and four assists while **Oshie** and **Perron** were solid contributors. The player to watch amongst the three is obviously Backes as he is steady yet able to break out some weeks. St. Louis plays four times in Week 16 with a big test against Detroit for starters. They are a solid start anyway.

Sean Couturier-Matt Read-Wayne Simmonds (Philadelphia) – This was a bit of a “makeshift” line but it struck gold for 10 points in Week 15. **Read** should still be in the “Calder Trophy” conversation and his five points combined with playmaking

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ability is eye popping. Also,

Simmonds

has kind of found his niche err line with a five point week. When you add in the force and intensity that

Couturier

plays with and there is no surprise why this line clicks. Despite their 15.2% EV frequency (new line),

Peter Laviolette

may have found something. Philadelphia plays five times in Week 16 and this second line (because of injury) could help lead the way.

Todd Bertuzzi-Pavel Datsyuk-Johan Franzen (Detroit) – The “Renaissance” for **Bertuzzi** continues as netted four goals in Week 15 which was a part of the 14 point outburst from Detroit’s top line.

Datsyuk

was quite the setup man with seven assists and

Franzen

chipped in with a few points while creating space for Bertuzzi and Datsyuk to operate. This line works well because of Bertuzzi’s increased work ethic and conditioning program. Week 16 has Detroit playing five times and a few tough tests but run these guys out there anyway.

Chris Kunitz-Evgeni Malkin-James Neal (Pittsburgh) – Here is a line that just seems to strike on Sunday’s at the most crucial point. On Sunday, they combined for eight points including the game winning goal in overtime by **Ma**

Ikin

(nine points in Week 15).

Neal

was also very dangerous with two goals and an assist alone on Sunday against Washington. Even

Kunitz

can light up the fantasy scoreboard on occasion but his power skating cannot be underestimated. Pittsburgh plays five times in Week 16 and is riding a six game winning streak. This threesome is hot.

Lead Us Defenders.....

Tobias Enstrom-Ron Hainsey (Winnipeg) – There was a warning alarm that went off when **Enstrom**

came back a few weeks ago and Enstrom has not disappointed. He had three goals and an assist in Week 15 for fantasy owners. People think of his passing and forget that Enstrom does have a deceptively hard shot that can easily fool goaltenders.

Ron Hainsey

has become more of a defensive defenseman but has upside still to set up Enstrom. Winnipeg plays six road contests in Week 16 but Enstrom is a must start.

Chris Summers-Michael Roszival (Phoenix) – Summers has arrived. With the season ending injury to **David Schlemko**, Phoenix plugged in Summers and all he did was have three points in Week 15.

Roszival

is a good mentor to the youngster and while Summers does not see any power play time but that could change in weeks ahead. Phoenix only plays three times in Week 16 so Summers is a modest play.

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Nick Lidstrom-Ian White (Detroit) – The choices get tough but **Lidstrom** and **White** had three points each in Week 15 and that production is likely to continue in weeks ahead. White and Lidstrom are one of the best pairings we have seen that plays both ends of the ice. They feed off each other very well a lot like

Ryan Suter

and

Shea Weber

of Nashville. However, the difference is White and Lidstrom do this like they have been together for a decade.

As always, you can follow me on Twitter [@TheProgramBTR](https://twitter.com/TheProgramBTR) and fire away your questions. ☺ Thanks again and good luck this week.