

The IR: Updates on Burns, Duchene, Wisniewski and more

Written by Mike Schmidt

Wednesday, 27 February 2013 09:55 - Last Updated Wednesday, 27 February 2013 16:56



The Injury Ward - updates on Malkin, Brodeur, Wisniewski, Burns - and more.

Let's take a look at who is battered, bruised or back in the lineup in this week's IR report:

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[Evgeni Malkin](#) is out with concussion-like symptoms after he slammed into the boards during Friday night's game between Pittsburgh and Florida. He was placed on injured reserve on Monday and is out indefinitely.

[Brent Burns](#) has been one of the most frustrating players to own in fantasy in 2013. The San Jose defenseman sat out the majority of the season's first month with a lower-body injury, and he has done little since returning to the lineup on Feb. 9. He has yet to score a point and sits at -5 after six games. Now he is expected to miss some time with a lower-body injury. There is no definitive timetable for his return.

[Matt Duchene](#) is currently dealing with a groin injury. The Avs centerman has enjoyed a bounceback campaign after an injury-riddled and underwhelming 2011-12 campaign in which he managed just 28 points in 58 games played. Knee and ankle injuries sapped his effectiveness a year ago, and his shooting percentage dropped to .106, or almost 30 points lower than those he posted in his first two seasons. Duchene played a total of 161 out of a possible 164 games during the 2009-10 and 2010-11 seasons, so it's hard to label him "injury-prone" after one season in which he missed significant time. Nevertheless, a lingering groin injury could lead to a drop-off in production if Duchene attempts a return to the lineup before he's 100-percent healthy.

[Kevin Bieksa](#) is also dealing with a groin injury, but the Vancouver defenseman could be back in action by this weekend.

[James Wisniewski](#) broke a bone in his foot and is out for a considerable amount of time. This comes as a surprise to no one. The oft-injured blueliner missed 34 games a year ago in his inaugural campaign with Columbus, and now the Jackets have lost him while teammate

[Jack Johnson](#)

is sidelined with an upper-body injury. Columbus will have to lean on underrated

[Fedor Tyutin](#)

and short-term fantasy sleeper

[Nikita Nikitin](#)

to produce on the power play while fellow d-men Wisniewski and Johnson are out. Simply stated, they have nowhere else to turn.

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[Rene Bourque](#) does not have the flu, as was reported earlier in the week. The Habs forward is out indefinitely with a concussion.

[Martin Brodeur](#) is dealing with a back injury sustained prior to Sunday's home loss to visiting Winnipeg. He was placed on IR and is not eligible to return until Monday.

One Day At A Time (Day-to-Day)

[Jeff Skinner](#) remains sidelined indefinitely with a concussion sustained last almost two weeks ago. While he recently began skating with the team, he has not been cleared for contact.

Skinner was enjoying a breakout campaign playing left wing on the same line as

[ordan Staal](#)

. His 2.8 even-strength-points per 60 minutes are fantastic for a player in his age-20 campaign, and he looks like a point-per-game player moving forward. His fantasy owners will have an extremely difficult time replacing his production while he remains out of the lineup.

[Rick Nash](#) continues to miss time with an unidentified injury. The timing of this recent ailment couldn't have been worse for the 28-year-old winger. He totaled five points (one goal and four assists) in four games between Feb. 10 and Feb. 17. Nash has looked great in his inaugural campaign with the Rangers. His possession numbers are great and he was scoring 2.64 ESP/60. There's a good chance he finishes the year with his first point-per-game campaign since 2005-06.

It wasn't all that long ago that Vladimir Tarasenko was among the most impressive rookies to take to the ice in 2013. Now his immediate future as an integral member of the Blues top six is very much in doubt. The concussion he suffered on Feb. 20 has sidelined St. Louis's 2010 first-rounder indefinitely. Meanwhile, fellow Blues forward [Chris Stewart](#) has been extremely productive over the course of the past two weeks and has taken Tarasenko's spot on a line with [Alexander Steen](#) and

[Andy McDonald](#)

. Stewart has nine points in his past eight games in his most productive campaign since his 64-point season with Colorado in 2009-10. However, an inflated shooting percentage of .194

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and an uncertain long-term role on a Blues squad teeming with quality options at forward make Stewart a desirable fantasy option only as long as his good luck lasts and Tarasenko remains out of the lineup.

Pull Off The Band-Aid (Returning To Action)

It did not take long for [Gabriel Landeskog](#) to make an impact in his return from a lingering concussion that kept him out of action for 11 games. The Avalanche centerman assisted on a power-play goal by [Milan Hejduk](#) and saw more than 19 minutes of action in a loss to host Los Angeles on Saturday. Look for Landeskog's presence to help slumping Avs center

[Paul Stastny](#)

, who has struggled to produce much of anything positive for his fantasy owners in 2013.

[Jaroslav Halak](#) looks healthy after missing almost three weeks with a lingering groin injury. He stopped 38-of-40 combined shots he faced over the course of his past two starts, a 1-0 overtime road loss to Colorado and a 2-1 home victory over Columbus. Halak should receive the lion's share of starts in net for the foreseeable future. Fellow Blues goaltender

[Brian](#)

[Elliott](#)

has struggled this season. Elliott's .849 save percentage is the lowest of any netminder in the league that has seen action in more than three games.

[James Reimer](#) looked like a No. 1 NHL goaltender prior to his untimely knee injury a couple of weeks back. Only three goaltenders ([Craig Anderson](#) , [Carey Price](#) and [Kari Lehtonen](#)

) who have seen action in more at least 10 game have compiled a higher save percentage at even strength this season than Reimer's .940 (the aforementioned Halak is tied with Reimer). Toronto's young netminder returned to practice Sunday and doesn't appear to be far from making a return to the ice. It will be interesting to see how Toronto head coach Randy Carlyle handles Reimer's playing time moving forward, especially since

[Ben Scrivens](#)

has been more than adequate in net for Toronto during Reimer's absence.

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Speaking of Lehtonen, the Dallas netminder is expected to return from a groin injury that has kept him out of the lineup since Feb. 15. Given his success as his squad's No. 1 netminder and his history with injuries, it makes sense that Dallas has played it cautious with his recovery.

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It will be interesting to see what [Cam Fowler](#) is capable of now that he is fully recovered from a head injury that knocked him out of the lineup in early February. Anaheim's 21-year-old defenseman has been limited to only seven games this season due to the head injury and a bout with the flu that plagued him shortly after the season began. However, he was activated on Sunday and returned to the lineup in his squad's 4-3 victory over Los Angeles.

Hopefully [Scott Hartnell](#)'s fantasy owners weren't caught off guard on Saturday when the veteran Flyers forward returned sooner than expected from a broken foot sustained in late January. He provided four penalty minutes... surprise, surprise. He then scored his first goal of the season Monday evening against Toronto.

[Mike Green](#) returned to the Washington lineup Monday. His presence will help provide some a much-needed offensive spark from the Capitals' blueline. Green had been out of the lineup since Feb. 14 with a groin injury. While the former high-end fantasy defenseman has been useful after a forgettable 2011-12 season, he is still looking for his first power-play goal of the season. In two seasons from 2008-10, Green totaled 28 goals on the man advantage in 143 games. Injuries, declining shot totals, an adjusted role and a lack of offensive support from his teammates have led to Green becoming merely a good (but no longer elite) fantasy defenseman. Well, at least he's healthy (for now).

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[Michael Del Zotto](#) practiced on Monday after missing one game with a hip injury. He missed Monday's contest, but the Rangers d-man should be good to go by Thursday.