Over the course of the last few weekends I participated in a few Yahoo! mock drafts to gain a better grasp of what's been going on in the "real" fantasy hockey world. I thought I'd pass my findings onto you Dobberities. I participated in random drafts ranging from eight to 14 teams from H2H to Roto leagues with standard settings. This is what I have concluded.

A couple of weeks ago I posted a list of under-rated and unappreciated draft options, this week I'll do the opposite and post who I think is over-rated and over glorified at the Yahoo! draft tables.

Keep in mind that my opinions are based on **standard Yahoo! league settings (G, A, +/-, PIM, PPP, SOG, W, GAA, SP and SO).** Your personal league settings might be different than those used in my discussions, which could dramatically change my opinion on a few of the players noted below.

Claude Giroux – C/RW- Philadelphia Flyers

Average: 4.1

Yahoo O-Rank: 3

Dobber Experts Pick: 5th (Capped – Eric Daoust)

First thing I do need to clear up is that it's not like I don't want Giroux on my fantasy team, it's just that I don't really know if he's really that worth the price of his current draft position. Yes, I do understand that he posted 93 points, which was third behind Evgeni Malkin and Steven Stamkos , but a first round pick needs to be a clear-cut game breaker and although he did have a great 2011-12, Giroux hasn't earned that immunity factor for me to dive head first just yet. If you break down his overall stats, his plus six rating ranked him tied for 161st

, his 29 PIM ranked him tied for 290th, and his 242 SOG tied him with Tyler Seguin for 28th. So, if you break it all down, is he really the runaway candidate as the third or fourth pick?

Another factor that caught my attention is that nearly 60 percent (57.9) of his power-play points and 59.3 percent of his even strength points came when he was on the ice with Jaromir Jagr . Now that the cagy veteran has fled to the greener pastures of Dallas, will that severely hamper G's offensive production this campaign?

Where would I select him: Round 1 (pick 7 - 10)

Who would I select at his current draft position instead: Sidney Crosby , Alex Ovechkin , Henrik Lundqvist or Jon Quick.

James Neal – LW/RW- Pittsburgh Penguins

Average: 14.8

Yahoo O-Rank: 15

Dobber Experts Pick: 11th (Commish Office – Glen Hoos)

There's no doubt in my mind that Crosby and Jordan Staal 's absences to the Pens line up opened up a lot more scoring opportunity for Neal in 2011-12. At the end of the day, the Pens posted 746 points as a team in which Neal contributed 81 points which works out to be 10.9 percent of the team's totals. With Crosby and Malkin both healthy, you would have to think that this chunk of the pie would certainly decrease, simply because of the puck possession game that Malkin and Crosby both employ. Neal also registered a whopping 329 SOG (4.11 per contest), which is nearly one and a half times his previous career-high, so that might be another factor that comes back down to Earth this season.

I still think he's good for 65-70 points along with 250 SOG, but to expect 81 and 329 again, I think is a bit far-fetched.

Where would I select him: Round 2-3 (pick 20 - 25)

Who would I select at his current draft position instead: Ilya Kovalchuk , Rick Nash or Zach Parise .

Jimmy Howard – G- Detroit Red Wings

Average: 19.4

Yahoo O-Rank: 18

Dobber Experts Pick: 27th (Amato – Micheal Amato)

Howard enters 2012-13 as the fourth ranked netminder in Yahoo! draft lists. What's causing the uncertainty that surrounds him isn't his individual ability but it's the departing players around him (most notably Nik Lidstrom). I wrote about it briefly in a forum post back in July. The Wings went 3-6-2 while allowing 2.91 goals against per contest during an 11-game span in Lidstrom's absence. Howard didn't play a major role as he went 1-2-1 with a run-of-the-mill 2.75 GAA and dismal .887 SP. There are just better and "safer" options than Howard as your number 1 G.

Where would I select him: Round 3 (pick 30 - 40)

Who would I select at his current draft position instead: Tuukka Rask , Phil Kessel or Henrik Sedin .

Erik Karlsson – D- Ottawa Senators

Average: 21.7

Yahoo O-Rank: 25

Dobber Experts Pick: 12th (Legion of Dobber – Dobber)

Probably not going to get a lot of love with this pick, but hear my reasoning before you judge.

In the last five seasons, and a sample of 1490 blue-liners, there have only been a grand total of **five defensemen**

,
who have
had the prestige of tallying over 10 percent of their team's total point production during a season. Lidstrom (10.1 percent) with the Red Wings in 07-08,
Mike Green
(10.2) with the Caps along with
Mark Streit
(10.3) in 08-09,
Lubomir Visnovsky
also pulled of this feat in 09-10 while registering 10.4 percent of the Ducks totals and of course you have Karlsson from last campaign, which tallied a whopping
11.8 percent
of the Sens total.

From my analysis of looking at the average point production of the top 10 blue-liners during the past five seasons, the average amongst them is roughly **8.7 percent** of their team's totals. If you look at the average percent of team contributing amongst the number one defensive scorer in the league it works out to be
10.3 percent
. So if you compare those numbers with Karlsson's 11.8 percent that just highlights how inflated his numbers really were from last campaign.

Another factor to consider is that the Sens posted 659 points as a team in 2011-12. If you look at the previous three seasons, they posted 502, 599 and 572 respectively, so once again 659 is pretty far off the pace compared to past historical numbers. Was it the influence of new coach Paul Maclean that got the team revving? And will it continue to shine or will the honeymoon period wear off?

If Karlsson reverts back to 10 percent of the Sens totals from this season, he'll still be in the ballpark figure of 65 points, which is a great figure in itself, but I don't think he comes close to repeating 78. Now consider a worst case scenario, what happens if he and the Sens both dip? 10 percent of 575 points is 57 points, which wouldn't be all that different than the production of another top-10 blueliner.

Now the million dollar question is whether or not a 55-65 point blue-liner is worth the price of paying a second round pick? Or a first rounder in Dobber's case?

Where would I select him: Round 3-4 (pick 30 - 40)

Who would I select at his current draft position instead: Tyler Seguin , Anze Kopitar , Eric Staal or Ilya Bryzgalov.

Cory Schneider – G- Vancouver Canucks

Average: 31.3

Yahoo O-Rank: 28

Dobber Experts Pick: 20th (Angus Unleashed – Angus)

Yahoo! really over-extended themselves in terms of where they placed Schneider in draft rankings. The problem with him is that he doesn't have 100 percent job security. With Roberto Luongo still lurking in the wings, the most likely scenario to occur is probably a 50/50 timeshare situation. At the end of the day, it's not like the Canucks can just sit a $5.3 mil goalie on the bench and let Schneider have free rein. They'll, at the very least, need to entertain a scenario where they can showcase Luongo for potential suitors to have a chance to at least preview the product before they buy. That in itself will limit the value that Schneider will have moving forward. Giving him the ranking of the sixth highest ranked goalie is just going overboard.

Where would I select him: Round 6-7 (pick 60-70), alongside Luongo.

Who would I select at his current draft position instead: Bryzgalov, Mike Smith , Jaroslav Halak or M.A. Fleury.

David Backes – C/RW- St. Louis Blues

Average: 41.4

Yahoo O-Rank: 36

Dobber Experts Pick: 41st (Mac's Militia – Mac Vincent)

GP

G

A

P

+/-

PIM

PPP

SOG

82

24

30

54

15

101

17

234

T-60 th

T-100 th

T-73 rd

T-56 th

32 nd

68 th

34 th

Backes is a great “total package” option, but the fact that he doesn’t really excel in any one area could be his major downside, making his 41st Yahoo! ranking a tad high. If you take **HIT and BS** into account then his current draft position is certainly justifiable, but in standard setting leagues, he’s probably being overreached.

Take a look at the following table regarding Backes' stats and how they are affected when Andy McDonald is active or inactive in the Blues line up.

	Points-Per-Game	**SOG-Per-Game**
Regular Season Without McDonald	0.76	3.02
Regular Season With McDonald	0.48	2.58

Post-season With McDonald

0.44

1.33

The health of McDonald certainly plays a major role in the offensive production that Backes produces. At the current cost of a fourth round pick, the price is just too hefty for my liking. A fourth round pick still needs to be an impact player, and I don't know if Backes is enough of one for me to pounce on.

Where would I select him: Round 6-7 (pick 60-70)

Who would I select at his current draft position instead: Marty St. Louis, Nicklas Backstrom , Dustin Byfuglien
or
Shea Weber
.

Mike Richards – C/LW – Los Angeles Kings

Average: 58.8

Yahoo O-Rank: 50

Dobber Experts Pick: 94th (Prospect Bites – Russ Bitely)

I'll give him props for winning the cup, but in terms of fantasy numbers, Richards is greatly over-rated.

GP

G

A

P

+/-

PIM

PPP

SOG

74

18

26

44

+3

71

14

171

T-117 th

T-139 th

T-129 th

T-224 th

T-82 nd

T-99 th

T-116 th

If you look at the rankings for the standard stats inYahoo! leagues, all of the stats except for PIM are essentially outside of the top-100. So my question to Yahoo! is why the hell is he ranked 50th overall? Add that to the fact that he plays on a team that was ranked second last in terms of total offense and that he also has to compete with the likes of Kopitar, Dustin Brown

,

Justin Williams
,
Jeff Carter
,
Simon Gagne
, Jarett Stoll and
Dustin Penner
for those precious points, there's just not a lot of room for Richards to really excel fantasy-wise. Let your competition gamble on Richards while you sit back and observe.

Where/What would I select him: Round 8-10 (pick 80-100)

Who would I select at his current draft position instead: Loui Eriksson , Brian Campbell , Joe Pavelski
,
Dan Boyle
or
Joe Thornton
.

Braden Holtby – G- Washington Capitals

Average: 65.3

Yahoo O-Rank: 55

Dobber Experts Pick: 73rd (Mac's Militia – Mac Vincent)

The Holtby situation is similar to the Schneider situation as mentioned above. Holtby and Michal Neuvirth will essentially be in a 50/50 timeshare situation until one can really grab the bulls by the horn to run with the starter's gig. I don't trust him enough to use my fifth or sixth round pick to select him and would prefer a "safer" option.

Where would I select him: Round 9-10 (pick 90-100)

Who would I select at his current draft position instead: Alex Pietrangelo , Ryan Suter , Jamie Benn , Dany Heatley or Martin Brodeur .

Max Pacioretty – LW – Montreal Canadiens

Average: 86.5

Yahoo O-Rank: 72

Dobber Experts Pick: 89th (Cage Match – Steve Laidlaw)

Once again I'm probably not going to win many fans with this pick as I know he's a major Dobber favourite around these neck of the woods.

It's not that I dislike him or think that he lacks skill, for me Max Pac kind of fell into the right situation last year allowing him to inflate his numbers. With Brian Gionta and Scott Gomez sidelined for much of the season along with David Desharnais and Erik Cole re-vitalizing their games, it allowed Pacioretty to claim a lot of that available ice-time to step up and inflate his production. From Feb. 1st onwards, he garnered 19:43 per contest, 3:18 of which was on the PP, while tallying at a 0.91

point and 3.6 SOG per game pace.

It's not that I think Gionta or Gomez are better players than Max Pac, but the truth of the matter is, the coaching staff won't just cast 10 and 13 year NHL veterans to the sidelines, they've earned enough trust to garner at least some sort of major responsibility with the team, which will cut into the 19:43 and 3:18 that Pacioretty gathered at the end of last year. The question is how much will it be cut and how will it affect Max Pac's fantasy totals?

Where/What would I select him: Round 9-10 (pick 95-105)

Who would I select at his current draft position instead: Jordan Staal , Mark Streit , Ryan Getzlaf , Mike Green or Matt Moulson .

Nail Yakupov – RW- Edmonton Oilers

Average: 88.5

Yahoo O-Rank: 78

Dobber Experts Pick: 113th (Lupul on my Clitsome - Mabus)

Here's a table of notable rookie point production from the last three seasons.

Rookie	**Points in Rookie Year**
Gabriel Landeskog	52
Ryan Nugent-Hopkins	

52

Adam Henrique

47

Jeff Skinner

63

Logan Couture

56

Jordan Eberle

43

Taylor Hall

42

Matt Duchene

55

John Tavares

54

With the lone exception of Skinner, generally speaking most “high-end” rookies will post roughly 50-55 points in their inaugural NHL campaigns. I don’t know if that would be enough to convince me to bypass a veteran and to take a rookie.

Where/What would I select him: Round 12-15 (pick 120-140)

Who would I select at his current draft position instead: Drew Doughty , Marian Gaborik , Keit

h Yandle
,
Duncan Keith
or
Miikka Kiprusoff
.

Brent Seabrook – D- Chicago Blackhawks

Average: 136.1

Yahoo O-Rank: 198

Dobber Experts Pick: 112th (Lupul on my Clitsome - Mabus)

His draft ranking has finally returned back to Earth after it was sky high and hugely over-rated just 12 months ago. In leagues with an emphasis on **HIT and BS** then certainly slide him up the draft rankings, but in standard leagues he won't produce enough stats to justify taking him over a few of the alternatives listed below

Where/What would I select him: Round 14-15 (pick 140+)

Who would I select at his current draft position instead: Matt Carle , Joni Pitkanen , Marek Zidlicky or Cam Fowler .

Are there any that I might have overlooked? Questions or comments? As always I'll discuss them in the section below.

A quick shout out, congratulations to a fellow Canadian Mike Pyke, who is the first ever Canadian to play in an AFL premiership (for those Canucks in Aus right now, they'll know what I'm talking about!) with the Sydney Swans! Congrats big guy!

Should you be so inclined, follow me on Twitter if you think that my article/tweets are useful.