Volume 9, Issue 27
Feb. 1, 2014

Game Time

Four Dollars of Good Luck | It's Almost Always Never Easy | Established in 2005

Predators Are Dead

By Average Joe

Boy the Blues sure were gone awhile. That one-game road trip sure made a ton of sense. Also, a loss to Carolina? Really?

Yes, friends, the Blues are back in action and back at home after a quick jaunt to the Carolinas. The Blues will be home for a short time as the season winds down to the Olympic break. With the stoppage in the schedule coming up, it seems like now would be a good time to take a look at the Blues' eight defensemen since, you know, three of them will be in Sochi and a fourth was a surprising omission.

The Blues are one of the best defensive teams in the NHL and a big reason is the blueline is stacked. Jay Bouwmeester, Alex Pietrangelo and Kevin Shattenkirk are all top-pairing guys for all 30 teams. Each has at least 30 points, destroys tough competition and gets the Blues going in the right direction.

Barret Jackman, the last part of the top-4, is criminally underrated. Granted I've mostly avoided forums with braindead fans, but it's been a while since I've heard the Jackman bashers. Jackman's worst seasons were when the Blues were bad and he had to play the power play and when he was a walking injury report. He's healthy, he's solid. He doesn't do too much, helps Kevin Shattenkirk be Kevin Shattenkirk and gives the Jackman face on a regular basis. He's good.

The other four are fighting for two spots and it's a weird race. Carlo Colaiacovo doesn't really count because, well, the Blues have counted him out. He's been pretty invisible since the panic signing — the Blues probably would've been better off calling somebody, anybody, up from the AHL. He's fine, but he's not in the Blues' plans. Thank god.

The other three, that's where things get interesting. Roman Polak was seen as a lock before the season started, but something's been off — something that the Czech Olympic team noticed. I don't know if he's playing hurt, but he hasn't been great. He's probably the fifth d-man by virtue of being a right-handed shot, but I'm not sure he's a lock. He plays tough competition, doesn't get favorable zone starts, but he just hasn't been as effective this year.

When Polak got injured, Ian Cole stepped in and stepped up. Neither Polak or Cole provides much in terms of offense, but they both have that steady thing going for them. Cole looks like an NHLer, but there's something missing. He's leagues away from the top-4.

He's been OK possession wise, despite not playing the toughest competition. He is still young and has gotten dramatically better with playing time, but you have to wonder if he makes the most sense right now as the sixth man.

The other option is the recently back from injury Jordan Leopold. I'll be honest, I've never understood him. He seemed to be the move the Blues made when they thought they weren't going to get Bouwmeester. The Blues were desperate for a left-handed shot, got Leopold as the fill in and then, a few days later, landed the big fish. Since then he's just been kind of there.

Shattenkirk and Jackman were a great pair that was broken up in favor of Shattenkirk and Leopold. It never seemed to really work. Frankly, I was pretty surprised the Blues re-upped him last summer for two years.

Leopold isn't really an offensive guy, he has only five assists this year, but he's fine defensively. I think he should, in theory, pair well with Polak. The problem is, I don't know if both are healthy.

(Continued on page 22)

Today's Records, Injuries & News

Today's Team Records:

Blues:	***Predators***
36-12-5 (77 pts)	25-23-8 (58 pts)
2nd in Central	5th in Central
3rd Western	10th in Western

Last 10 Games:

Blues:	***Predators***
5-5-0	6-3-1

Season Series:	***All-Time Series:***
2-0-0	41-29-4-13

Today's Injuries:

Blues: No injuries to report. I'm sure there's an usher out with flu-like symptoms.

Predators: Pekka Rinne (hip surgery after a bacterial thing which sounds really gross) is out. Shea Weber (girl's name), Matt Cullen (yeast infection) and Viktor Stalberg (lack of talent) are all questionable.

Today's News & Notes:

- While the Blues are completely healthy, all of our regular vendors and our main fill-in are all out either with illness or plans. Like selling this thing in freezing rain isn't better than any other plans out there.
- Hey seriously, thanks for buying the paper tonight in less than ideal conditions. And be careful out there after the game.

CAUTION: *St. Louis Game Time* contains extreme sarcasm and less-than-gentle language. But it is a hockey paper, so you should just fucking get over it.

From The Editor

Volume 9, Issue 27
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What a mess. And I'm not just talking about the roads tonight. Hopefully the ice doesn't get too bad.

In case you didn't read the bottom right of the front page (almost always witty and nearly useful stuff), we had some issues with vendors. Clarence has been under the weather lately. So it was a smart move for him to not become a human popsicle tonight. Hope he's back sometime next week. Amy had a prior engagement. Gallagher had something to do. Probably with one of his 12 kids. Irish Catholics, go figure. And Bud who fills in was sick. So hopefully we convinced some people to stand in the cold and probably freezing drizzle to sell you this stuff we call literature.

And then the Blues had to go and drop a deuce in Carolina last night. I always say that writing about a good team is harder than writing about a bad one. There's all sorts of frustrations you can vent when the Blues are out of the playoffs. Don't get me wrong, I want our job in this paper to be hard because they're so fucking good there's no question about the outcome. And I thought that was the situation last night. The Hurricanes are on their third goaltender (kind of like the Predators tonight, except they've played five). Carolina is average defensively and are 20th in the league in goals for. Should have been a cake walk.

As fat slob Chris Berman on ESPN says (I'm guessing he still says it. Haven't watched him for a while, but it's not like he comes up with new bits.), and that's why they play the games. And while one of the three goals for Carolina was in the empty net, did it ever feel like the Blues were playing their style of hockey and imposing their will on the game? Did it feel like the Blues were going to tie it up and take the lead? I don't think so. It was lackluster. Ok, boring.

The Hurricanes lulled the Blues to sleep. In other words, the Canes did what the Blues were doing four and six years ago to win games that thankfully they don't have to do anymore. Kind of like what the Predators have to do: disrupt the flow, slow it down, decrease chances, play good team defense and hope the goalie has a good night. When you have Pekka Rinne back there, it's a lot easier. Pekke Rinne got some sort of bacterial infection in his leg and had to have surgery. So that makes this game a lot more in the Blues' favor. Hate playing that guy.

You will not see Ryan Miller's name in this column. Well, you won't see it again.

Jaroslav Halak got a shutout against the Devils on Tuesday. It was his 20th for the Blues, extending his own team record. If you were listening on Friday afternoon when I appeared on The People's Show on CBS Sports Radio 920, you might have heard me talking about the record and putting it in perspective. Sure, 20 is nice. This is only his fourth season, so an average of more than five a year is pretty good. But with a record so low, it hints at how mediocre Blues goaltending has been. For decades. Probably since Jacques Plante and Glenn Hall retired, save for a few moments of Mike Liut, Curtis Joseph and Grant Fuhr.

You can probably guess that Martin Brodeur has the team record for shutouts with the Devils. Could you guess that he has 124 of them? And that 20 shutouts for the Blues, that's just the margin Brodeur has over second place on the all-time shutout list. Brodeur has more than any other goaltender. Terry Sawchuck has 104. Great googly moogly.

Including tonight, there are just four games left before the Olympic break starts a week from tomorrow. That will leave 25 games on the schedule before the playoffs start. That's a nice kind of round number in an 82-game schedule. In my opinion, all the games until this break has been like the preliminary rounds of the regular season. Ken Hitchcock has caused some gnashing of teeth as he alternates who is in his doghouse and who is playing on which line. I think it was more of a feeling out process on his part. He got the chemistry set out and started mixing some liquids to see what goes well with what. He knows who he wants to play with whom. And I have a feeling we'll see those line combinations debut and then become more static on the road trip at the end of this month.

The Blues are so deep. Other than a healthy Rinne, is there another player you'd take off the Predators? And yes, Shea Weber's salary cap number comes with him. It wasn't that long ago that the Blues and Preds seemed to be nearly equals. That didn't last long. We'll see tonight if Nashville can give the Blues a good game.

Corrections & Clarifications

- Groundhog day is tomorrow. Sorry the Predator fans shot him and cooked him for dinner. Good vittles, they said.
- Just to clarify, I don't care that he's not a Predator anymore: Tootoo is dick dick.
- Last issue we printed a picture of the Predators' No. 1 fan. We were wrong. It's this guy right here:

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Mission:
We're fans at heart. We just happen to have an office copier in our basement. Our Motto: It's almost always never easy.

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Today's Song Lyric:
We count days and nights
We're paying with our lives
We're paying for our wrongs
Singing a prisoner's song

Today's Fake Name For The Post-Game Call-In Show:
Ivana Phuqalott

Tonight's Trivia
by Childhood Trauma

First Period (true or false):

1: Brent Peterson has been a Nashville Predators coach since their first game.

2: Peter Forsberg's cousin played for Nashville this season.

First Intermission (true or false)

3: Budweiser introduced the lizards, Frankie and Johnny, during the Super Bowl.

Second Period (Multiple Choice)

4: Which salary this year is the same as a 60 second Super Bowl ad: the Blues' goalie pair, the Blues' Canadian Olympians, the coaching staff or a line of Backes, Morrow & Steen?

5: Alexander Steen recently netted his 100th Blues goal. Who did that goal tie him with: Patrik Berglund, Peter Zezel, Andy MacDonald or Brad Boyes?

Second Intermission (Multiple Choice)

6: Which of the following is the first pop act to appear: The Bee Gees, New Kids on the Block, Michael Jackson or Stevie Wonder?

Third Period:

7: David Legwand was the first draft pick after Barry Trotz was hired as Nashville head coach. Who did the Blues pick when Barry began his Predators' coaching tenure?

8: The players who hold the Predators' single-season marks for goals, assists and points are former Blues. Name them.

9: Which current Predator is the son of an NBA player?

OVERTIME!

10: Who is the only Blues alumnus to have been a captain of a Canadian Olympic team?

1: True. Barry Trotz and Brent peterson have been coaching since the Predators' first game. The Predators also have their original goaltending coach, Mitch Korn.

2: False. Filip Forsberg was a Predator this season before returning to the AHL, but he is unrelated to any other famous NHL Forsberg.

3: False. The lizards were introduced during the 1997 Super Bowl but their names were Frankie and Louie.

4: At $8 million for the average 60-second commercial, Morrow, Backes and Steen would need their combined 2014 salary to buy one. The Canadian Olympians could buy one and have a measly $1.6 million left to spend.

5: Alex tied Patrik. The only member on the list with more than 100 is Boyes. Berglund and Steen need six more goals to reach Boyes in Blues goals scored.

6: Super Bowl XXV (January 1991) featured New Kids on the Block. Super Bowl halftime shows originally featured jazz bands, Broadway-like musical performances or marching bands.

7: 1998 was the year, Christian Backman was the pick. Trotz is still in Nashville, Backman is still in hockey. It is his fifth season in the SEL in Sweden.

8: Paul Kariya has the assist and point marks (54 helpers, 85 points) while Jason Arnott holds the goal mark with 33.

9: Seth Jones' father, Popeye Jones, played for over a decade in the NBA.

10: The 1988 Canadian captain was Trent Yawney.

Top 11 Things Overheard On The Concourse Tonight

11. I don't know why you think this weather is bad. I got to ice skate all the way to the rink.

10. I didn't even remember Carolina still had a team. Next you're going to say Phoenix still has a team.

9. This Bud Light is refreshing. I think my body temperature is colder than this beer. Feels like hot chocolate.

8. The Super Bowl is tomorrow. Sick day is Monday.

7. I've heard there's a shortage of chicken wings. So there's a bunch of wingless chickens running around? Zombie apocalypse indeed.

6. The Blues have no injuries. That's not good luck. Someone break Carlo Colaiacovo's arm.

5. It's not like he needs it to not play hockey in the press box.

4. Looks like Ken Hitchcock put on some extra weight to stay warm this winter. And next.

3. I was going to ask Angelllla out on a date. But I figured she only goes for guys in mascot costumes.

2. If the Blues want to trade for Ryan Miller, they'll have to overpay. Like these beers. And cost was not a deterrent.

1. I saw on Twitter that I'm going to be drunk in the next 72 hours. That's a prediction I can get behind.

— From Brad Lee's empty beer cup.

Jeffio's Bob Plager Joke Of The Day

Shea Weber's wife was having a passionate affair with an inspector from a pest-control company. One afternoon they were carrying on in the bedroom together when Weber arrived home unexpectedly. "Quick," she said to her lover, "into the closet!" And she pushed him in the closet, stark naked.

Weber, however, became suspicious and after a search of the bedroom discovered the man in the closet. "Who are you?" Weber asked him.

"I'm an inspector from Bugs-B-Gone," said the exterminator.

"What are you doing in there?" Weber asked.

"I'm investigating a complaint about an infestation of moths," the man replied.

"And where are your clothes?" asked the Weber.

The man looked down at himself and said, "Those little bastards."

Around The League

Flames Get Hot…Right Before Olympic Break

Just two weeks after posting the longest home losing streak in club history, the Calgary Flames try to wrap a perfect five-game stand tonight as they battle the Minnesota Wild. What's this world coming to?

The Flames dropped a club-worst seven in a row at Scotiabank Saddledome during a streak that spanned Dec. 27-Jan. 16. Following back-to-back road losses, Calgary returned home to play five at home on Jan. 22 with a victory over Phoenix and has not looked back. If they did, they might remember they suck shit.

Victories over Nashville, Chicago and San Jose followed, giving the Flames a season-high four-game winning streak, their longest since a five-game run from March 6-15, 2012. In Thursday's 4-1 win over the Sharks. Karri Ramo made 27 saves, supported by goals from Lee Stempniak, Mark Giordano, Sean Monahan and Jiri Hudler. Giordano, the club's captain, has four goals and four assists over an eight- game point streak. Raise your hand if you even remembered that Giordano was even the captain of the Flames?

Bet they still don't make the playoffs.

Predators Win At Home Friday Night

Nashville captain Shea Weber managed to play with a back injury that sent him out of their previous game. It's a good thing for his team because he scored two goals, including the game-winner at 1:29 of overtime, and the Predators rallied late in beating the New Jersey Devils 3-2. Bad week for the Devils.

Weber didn't practice Thursday and was a game-time decision after leaving Tuesday night's win in Winnipeg early in the third period. Nashville coach Barry Trotz said Weber deciding to play made all the difference. The rest of his quote was garbled by his no neck anatomy. Seriously, he is without neck. Look. Ok, mostly without neck.

Legwand scored with 10.8 seconds remaining in regulation with goalie Carter Hutton on the bench to force the extra period. That would have been the headline if Weber didn't pull the, "I'm hurt but going to play" heroics.

Hutton, who struggled giving up the two goals to New Jersey, stopped Michael Ryder on a breakaway 80 seconds into overtime to keep the game tied. Patrik Elias scored a goal and had an assist, and Jaromir Jagr had a goal for the Devils. Combined age of those two players? Infinity plus one.

Parise Is New Captain America

Zach Parise of the Minnesota Wild will be the captain of the U.S. men's hockey team at the Sochi Olympics.

Minnesota defenseman Ryan Suter and center Dustin Brown of the Los Angeles Kings will be the alternate captains, U.S. general manager David Poile announced Friday.

Blues Record When…

With Ann

Playing at home	19-5-2	Leading after the first	22-0-2
Playing on the road	17-7-3	Tied after the first	10-3-0
Playing the Predators	2-0-0	Trailing after the first	4-9-3
They score first	28-2-3	Leading after the second	24-0-3
Other team scores first	6-11-2	Tied after the second	8-2-0
They score on the PP	27-4-2	Trailing after the second	4-10-2
They score shorthanded	2-0-0	Penalty shot!!	1-1-0
They played the day before	2-4-1	Win by one	15-0-0
Playing on Sunday	1-1-0	Loss by one	0-3-5
Playing on Monday	2-1-2	A Blues player has multiple goals	12-0-2
Playing on Tuesday	8-3-1	A Blue scores within the first minute	0-0-0
Playing on Wednesday	2-0-0	They are called for 7 or more penalties	9-3-0
Playing on Thursday	11-1-0	Other team called for 7 or more penalties	9-3-0
Playing on Friday	1-3-2	FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT!!!	13-3-2
Playing on Saturday	11-3-0	They take 30 or more shots	17-4-4
Playing in October	7-1-2	They allow 30 or more shots	11-4-1
Playing in November	11-3-1	Blues are outshot	14-5-0
Playing in December	9-3-2	They win in a shootout	5-0-0
Playing in January	9-5-0	Jaro-Water starts	24-8-3
Playing in the 2013-2014 season	36-12-5	Moose Juice starts	12-4-2
Blues are all three stars	24-0-0	Jakey starts	0-0-0
Playing on even days	12-5-3	Blues goalies switch in the middle of the game	1-5-0
Playing on odd days	24-7-2	Blues chase a goalie	8-0-0
Playing the Eastern Conference	17-4-1	Playing the Western Conference	19-8-4
Playing the Atlantic Division	8-1-1	Playing the Central Division	13-0-1
Playing the Metropolitan Division	9-3-0	Playing the Pacific Division	7-8-3

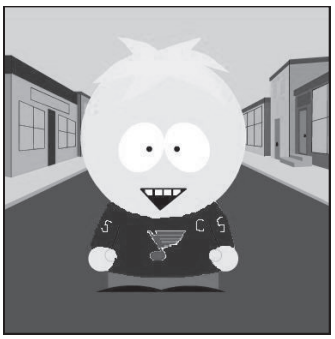
The Five Hole

With Chris Gift

Everyone has a take on the goaltending situation. Like most, mine is probably inaccurate. Like all except general manager Doug Armstrong's, what I think is irrelevant. But that doesn't stop us from opining on what the Blues' future should be for the 24 square feet of vertical real estate on the rink.

The sexy name for all teams that think they have a shot at a playoff run this year is Ryan Miller. In other breaking news, players now wear helmets. Let's give this Miller fella a closer look.

We're going to love him for purple mountain majesties above the fruited plane in about a week when the Olympics get under way. But for now, can Miller, Ryan and Blues, St. Louis be a match? Miller would want to come here and probably welcome a move here (at least temporarily…remember he is an unrestricted free agent at the end of the season), but seriously, do the Blues want this guy? And if so, at what price?



Let's first talk about Miller's Buffalo Sabres. They haven't played here yet this season so we haven't gotten a chance to see just how terrible the Sabres are. Buffalo is 16th in the Eastern Conference and 30th (last) in the league. There's not a chance of them going anywhere unless the NHL expands this season and that would only drop them in the standings. Royal pain in the ass Steve Ott is the team's most marketable, best and most complete player. He's also the team's captain. I tell ya, the word "awful" is insulted when it is used in the same sentence as the Sabres. By the numbers, the Sabres have only won nine games at home in regulation, and their goal differential is hovering around minus -50 while the Blues lead the league at plus-61.

That Miller's record is only seven games below .500 shows that Miller still is a decent goalie. For a career, he's now in his 10th season, and roughly 100 games over .500. He has only played in the Stanley Cup Playoffs four times, taking the Sabres to the Game 7 of the Eastern Conference Finals in 2005, but Miller's last two appearances have resulted in first round exits (2010 and 2011). In international play, Miller was Team USA's top goalie in Vancouver in 2010, taking home a silver medal. He was 5-1 in the tournament, only losing to Canada in the Gold Medal Game. Miller will turn 34 in July and as stated before, will be an unrestricted free agent at season's end.

Two subjective questions have to be answered: First, once the Blues figure out in their minds which of the two goalies currently on the NHL roster is the top goalie, is Miller better than him? Secondly, at what price in terms of players and/or draft picks would Buffalo want back in exchange for Miller? There's a caveat to that question in that the Blues aren't the only team that may be in the market for Miller. Is Miller such a "must have" for the Blues this year that within reason the Blues will do whatever possible to acquire him. Is he this year's Jay Bouwmeester, where picks, players, prospects and anything not screwed to the floor was fair game to go to Calgary for J-Bo, especially since then-archrival Detroit was also in the running for him? Or is Miller this year's version of the David Perron and Keith Tkachuk to Boston for Phil Kessel potential trade did? Everything was all lined up and at the very last minute, it just didn't happen for one reason or another.

A quick look at the standings shows that there's no obvious team that *has* to have Miller to stay in the hunt or solidify their spot atop the standings. Toronto could use an upgrade over James Reimer and Jonathan Bernier, but they're fine how they are. So is Vancouver with Eddie "the Stork" Lack and Roberto Luongo. Until Thursday night, Colorado could have brought Miller in to pick Patrick Roy's brain and share time with Semyon Varlamov. But he signed a five-year extension on Thursday to stop any thought of Miller going there. The Blues are just fine without Miller…but adding him would be nice.

But then there's the price of what Buffalo would want in return. Should the Blues part with their first round pick this year, that would mean that in back-to-back years the Blues' top draft pick was traded for a rent-a-player (remember, the Blues rolled the dice on re-signing Bouwmeester and it paid off). If Jake Allen, the Blues' top prospect according to hockeysfurture.com, is dealt that would make the Blues top goalie that is under contract for next season 20 year-old Jordan Binnington. Are Ty Rattie (second ranked prospect) and Dmitrij Jaskin (third) the ones to move with the extra second-round pick acquired from Tampa Bay for Ben Bishop?

Like you, I don't follow any other team as closely as I follow the Blues. I'm not going to dissect which team may come from out of nowhere to make a run at Miller. Detroit probably pooped themselves when the Blues swooped in and grabbed Bouwmeester last season, especially after the Jordan Leopold deal was completed right before the Bouwmeester trade. There is probably a mystery team or two, or five that has Miller in their crosshairs and may overwhelm any offer that the Blues make.

All of that is assuming that the Blues make an offer for Miller, which I think they shouldn't. Jaroslav Halak and Brian Elliott are playing pretty damn good lately. Good enough for a playoff run in my opinion. Besides, Allen and one of them will be here next season and the transition to Jake Allen being the Blues' top goalie for the next decade, like Miller has been for Buffalo, will start. With the talent accumulated, both on the blueline and with the forwards, and a goalie as good as Allen, the transition should go pretty smoothly. It is always fun to make a deal for a big name at the trade deadline, right all you Gretzky jersey wearers? But in this case letting Miller go to another team or play out the year in Buffalo is the right thing for the Blues to do.

Stand Pat In Goal, Doug Armstrong

Lighting the Lamp

With Rick Ackerman

As little as two seasons ago, goaltender Pekka Rinne and the Nashville Predators appeared to own the St. Louis Blues.

During the 2011-12 season, the Blues only won two of six contests against the Predators while getting outscored 13 to 11. Rinne was stealing games from the Blues with apparent ease. Last year's lockout-shortened season resulted in St. Louis righting the ship by winning three of four matches, the only loss a sloppy, embarrassing 6-1 debacle on home ice. Nevertheless, the Blues could only score nine goals in those four games, again stymied by Rinne, who made a combined total of 112 saves, a save percentage of 92.6 percent. In comparison, Blues goaltenders Jaro Halak, Brian Elliott and Jake Allen had a combined total of 62 saves, a save percentage of 87.3 percent. So, it is unfortunate, yet welcome news for Blues Nation that Rinne will not be playing tonight due to a long-term bacterial hip infection that has kept him out of play since Oct. 24.

Of course, it could easily be argued that Rinne's presence tonight would not make much difference in the outcome of the game since the Blues are clearly a much better hockey team than the Predators, proving it in two previous meetings between the two Central Division rivals this season. The Blues easily won both contests. Rinne was chased from the net after less than 10 minutes in the first period of the home-opener, giving up a power play goal to David Backes a little more than two minutes into the game, followed by first period tallies from Vlad Sobotka and T.J. Oshie. Rinne only made three saves.

Later in October in Nashville, St. Louis took a 3-0 lead into the third period and easily outlasted Preds' starter Carter Hutton, culminating in a 6-1 victory. Alexander Steen scored two goals, his third against Nashville, with Oshie scoring his second goal and Alex Pietrangelo on the power play with his first. Special teams helped the Blues considerably as the power play units went a combined four for nine, while the penalty killers were a perfect seven for seven. Nashville's Nick Spaling did tally a short-handed goal, though, the only blemish in a strong game for Jaro Halak, who also won the home opener with 28 saves, a total of 50 for the two games. For the math-impaired, that's a goals against average of 1.50 and a save percentage of 94.3 percent in the two games against the Predators. Naturally, Brian Elliott is the scheduled starter for tonight's match.

Yes, the Blues are really good this season, one of the best three teams in the league. They are ranked third with 36 wins to Anaheim (40) and Pittsburgh (38), with two games in hand on the Penguins and four on the Ducks. The Blues rank second (to Chicago) in goals for per game, and third in goals against per game. The power play is second in the league; the penalty killing fifth. The Blues are also ranked second in shots against per game (26.1). And the team has the best goals differential in the league with a plus-61, nine ahead of second place Anaheim. Of course none of that

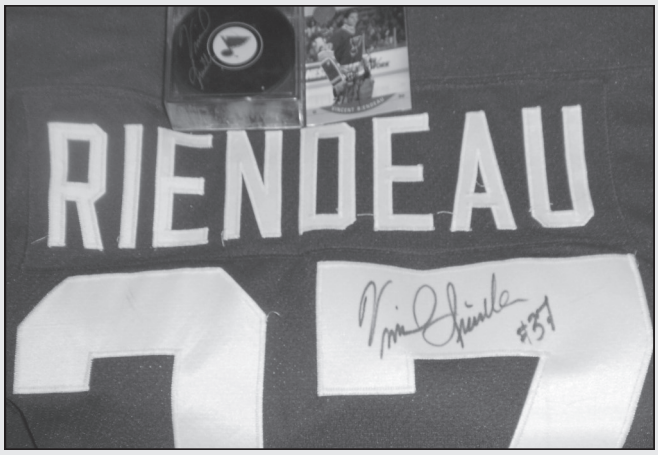
All of which begs the question as to why Blues Nation has been so concerned with GM Doug Armstrong possibly "improving" the club via trade this past week. The hockey blogs, talk shows and message boards have been buzzing with the possibility that Sabres' goaltender Ryan Miller is the target of Blues management as an upgrade in net. The consensus trade is that the Blues would get Miller, a free agent at season's end, and his rather large salary of $6.3 million for Halak ($3.8 million), a first-round draft choice this year and high-scoring rookie winger Ty Rattie, currently with the Chicago Wolves of the AHL. Because everything you read on the Internet is true.

However, this deal would add $1.7 million to the Blues' salary cap, putting them well over the limit. So, some would have Armstrong deal veteran Derek Roy ($4 million) and/or streaky Chris Stewart ($4.2 million) to the Sabres for either rookie center Mikhail Grigorenko ($900,000) and/or winger Matt Moulson ($3.1 million) in order to balance the salary cap equation. Another problem with this potential trade is that the Blues are said to be decidedly against letting Rattie go, believing that is a deal-breaker for an expensive goaltender due to be a free agent at season's end.

Nor does it make much sense to disrupt team chemistry or fundamentally change what has been an extremely successful hockey club this season. Remember what impact the Garth Butcher trade with Vancouver had upon an extremely successful Blues team in 1991? St. Louis (105 points in the regular season) lost to Minnesota in six games (68 points) in the Norris Division finals, outscored 17-22. Apparently Butcher left his best defense behind in Vancouver, and Curtis Joseph (injured) wasn't around to help Vincent Riendeau and Pat Jablonski figure it out.

Statistically, both Halak and Elliott have out-performed Miller (except for save percentage) and it is clear Blues' management has confidence in the Blues' current goaltenders, including Jake Allen. Ironically, like Miller, both Halak and Elliott are scheduled free agents at season's end. So, in this case, all that smoke does not mean there is a fire. I think it is unlikely the Blues will make any major changes any time soon, especially in goal. Halak has played extremely well amidst the rumors and Elliott should continue that trend tonight against Nashville.

Memorabilia Corner



Hey Vincent

Here's a 1991 pre-tournament Canada Cup jersey, puck and card from former Blues goalie Vincent Riendeau.
— Rick Ackerman

Mucking & Grinding

Editor's Note: From time to time our merry band of writers don't fill the paper. So we go searching for a good story. And sometimes it comes from a fan of the opposition. This is from Dirk Hoag, proprietor of the highly acclaimed On The Forecheck. They cover all things Predators. It's a good read. Go there.

By Dirk Hoag

Let me be clear about this - I'm a major David Poile fan.

Thanks to last season's Ambassadors Club sales, I received a personalized jersey from the Preds, and had the option of getting it signed by a team member - rather than going with an on-ice hero like Shea Weber or Pekka Rinne, I got Poile's John Hancock emblazoned on the logo.

As I wrote recently, I believe he's a lock for the Hall of Fame in the builders category, and deservedly so. But Poile needs to go.

The time has come for change, fundamental change, in the Nashville Predators organization, however, and that starts with thanking the team's one and only general manager for his incredible work establishing the Predators as a sustainable NHL franchise and wishing him the best of luck with future endeavors, most especially with Team USA at the upcoming Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

Now in their 15th NHL season, the apex of Predators hockey has merely been to "be competitive." Despite an impressive seven playoff appearances in eight seasons from 2004-2012, this franchise has yet to achieve anything worthy of a banner to hang from the rafters at Bridgestone Arena.

For a long time, one could excuse that gap in their record since at least there was an impression that the team was headed in the right direction, but events since the summer of 2012 have the franchise spiraling into mediocrity, with no turnaround in sight. In short, this team doesn't appear to be on the path towards Stanley Cup contention any time soon, and the roster/salary situation presents serious obstacles to getting on that path.

Lest you think my expectations are too high, just consider the possible achievements which allow an NHL team to raise a banner for a successful season: winning a regular season division title, Presidents Trophy, conference playoff championship, or Stanley Cup championship. Since the Preds joined the league in 1998-99, only three teams have failed to achieve any of those goals: the Columbus Blue Jackets, New York Islanders and your Nashville Predators. (*EDITOR'S NOTE: OUCH.*)

For the bulk of the Predators' existence, the team made gradual progress that fed an attitude of optimism about what the future might hold. Despite repeated playoff disappointments and the Great Fire Sale of 2007 when Craig Leipold sold the team, Poile steered the franchise through choppy waters to assemble teams that drew high regard from around the league... until the next playoffs came around.

To do this, Poile has traditionally established a core unit, then found value in depth players on low priced, short term contracts, guys who are working their tails off to earn that next deal and stay in the league. Think Scott Nichol, Jerred Smithson, Francis Bouillon, Jack Hillen, Joel Ward, Dan Ellis and many more.

What we've seen ever since the summer of 2012, however, is a gentrification of the role players, lavishing too much money and too much term on contracts for Paul Gaustad, Matt Hendricks, Eric Nystrom and Rich Clune. All four are "bottom six" forwards, with all of them under contract through at least 2016 for a combined cap hit of more than $8 million per season. A return to "Predators hockey" was heralded last summer as a way of reconnecting with the team's identity and leading a revival in Smashville.

This "Grit Fetish," as I like to call it, is a preference for perceived characteristics in a player like hard work and character over talent. Such a mindset served to help a team near the bottom of the salary cap range overachieve relative to its budget, but teams with championship aspirations acquire or develop the high-end talent needed to make a difference when it counts.

The bottom line here is that the Predator Way has, in 15 years, built a foundation for hockey in Nashville, but has not shown the ability to rise above that and move the team into the league's elite, even for a single season. A continued devotion to that philosophy hampers the franchise in addressing its long-standing weak spot, as once again they rank among the lowest-scoring teams in the NHL.

What's needed now is a fresh attitude that moves beyond old constraints such as the low-budget "hard working scrapper" attitude, the impression that Nashville isn't an attractive destination for free agents, etc.

I've written in this space for more than 8 years now, and have never called for such change before. It sincerely bums me out to write this, but the David Poile era in Nashville should come to an end this season.

Our Coach Is So Fat . . .

Our Coach is so fat, his picture weighs ten pounds.

Our Coach is so fat, a sumo wrestler asked him how he did it.

Our Coach is so fat, his favorite food is seconds.

The Roman Polak Joke of the Day

Roman Polak absolutely hated his wife's cat and decided to get rid of him one day by driving him 20 blocks from his home and leaving him at the park. As he was getting home, the cat was walking up the driveway. The next day he decided to drive the cat 40 blocks away.

Driving back up his driveway, there was the cat. He kept taking the cat farther and farther and the cat would always beat him home.

At last he decided to drive a few miles away, turn right, then left, pass the bridge, then right again and another right until he reached what he thought was a safe distance from his home and left the cat there. Hours later Polak called home to his wife, "Honey, is the cat there?"

"Yes," the wife answered, "why do you ask?"

Frustrated, Polak answered, "Put that son of a bitch on the phone, I'm lost and need directions."

More Like Crappy Music City

Please enjoy your complimentary Jumbotron sign. Use responsibly. Or not. Your choice, really.

Team Comparisons

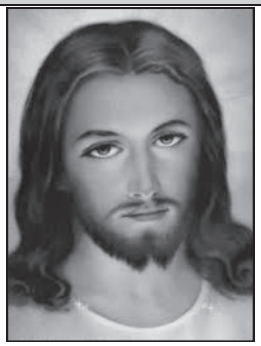
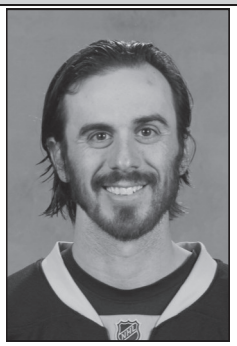
Blues Leaders		
Goals	Alexander Steen	27
Assists	Oshie/Pietrangelo	31
Points	Alexander Steen	45
Plus/Minus	Jaden Schwartz	+20
PP Goals	David Backes	8
Wins	Jaroslav Halak	23
GAA	Brian Elliott	2.06
Save PCT	Brian Elliott	91.7%

Predators Leaders		
Goals	Craig Smith	16
Assists	David Legwand	28
Points	David Legwand	38
Plus/Minus	Craig Smith	+6
PP Goals	Shea Weber	9
Wins	Carter Hutton	13
GAA	Pekka Rinne	2.31
Save PCT	Pekka Rinne	91.7%

Blues All-Time Leaders		
Games Played	Bernie Federko	927
Goals	Brett Hull	527
Assists	Bernie Federko	1,073
PIM	Brian Sutter	1,786
Goalie GP	Mike Liut	347
Wins	Mike Liut	151
GAA	Roman Turek	2.10
Shutouts	Jaroslav Halak	20

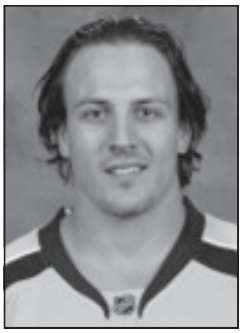
Predators All-Time Leaders		
Games Played	David Legwand	950
Goals	David Legwand	210
Assists	David Legwand	354
PIM	Jordin Tootoo	725
Goalie GP	Tomas Vokoun	383
Wins	Tomas Vokoun	161
GAA	Pekka Rinne	2.36
Shutouts	Pekka Rinne	30

Blues Lookalike

Oh, sorry. Jumped the gun on adding Ryan Miller to the Blues. Hey wait a second. He kind of looks like another bearded, long-haired guy who makes saves.

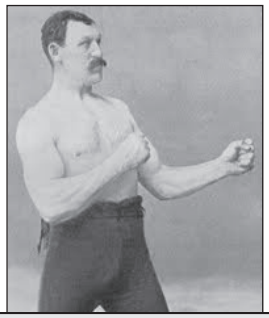
Predators Lookalike



One of these guys is Tyson Nash. And the other is Gabriel Bourque, who probably is confused with other guys just based on his name.

Because Stats Almost Never Lie.

www.stlouisgametime.com



Fight Card

Rich Clune left a double decker in your toilet tank.

By Tim Wiemers
@Tim_GTpcs on Twitter

Tonight's Matchup: I'm still trying to figure out if there's a rivalry with the Predators. I can't say I ever look forward to seeing NSH on the magnet schedule, but I don't think there's much of a performance from the mustard-clad clan over the years to really suggest a back-and-forth type of exchange in wins and losses. Anytime these two teams have linked up, I've always seen the Blues as the favorite. While there were a couple seasons where the Predators could rely on Weber, Suter, and Rinne to do the bulk of shutting things down and maybe eeking out a one-goal win, it's clear that Nashville will be enduring some lean years and a few beatings from the Blues along the way. It's not a 100 percent lock, but with both on the back end of a back-to-back set of games, I'm inclined to go with the home team tonight.

St. Louis Blues Probable Fighters

- **Ryan Reaves** –Ryan Reaves is very much alive and looking to get back into the lineup after sitting out last night as a healthy scratch. This is certainly an assumption on my part, given I don't have tonight's scratches before I write this, but I have to imagine 75 is in with Trotz's gang likely looking to slow down the Blues' offense with lots of hits and physical play. With Reaves having gone since November since his last fight, I see no reason why he won't punch Rich Clune. A lot.
- **Brenden Morrow** – At *Game Time*, we've prided ourselves on not being afraid to call a piece of shit "a piece of shit." Last night, 10's game was comparable to a piece of shit. General frustration after an early high stick call combined with a flat Blues team manifested itself no better way in how Morrow looked: A step behind, a day late, and a dollar short. Morrow isn't expected to carry the load here in St. Louis, but after a game such as last night's, I look at Morrow's next game as a prime example of how to bounce back vs. a division opponent.
- **Max Lapierre** – I hope the Predators are sick of seeing 40. Back-to-back games tend to put an added emphasis on the aspects of the game plenty of Blues fans hear in Hitchcock presser quotes: Grit, gumption, determination. Although the minutes may not sway too much from the usual game, the bottom 6 and PK lines will need to make sure they handle the simple business of limiting space and agitating the skilled forwards for the opposition. Thankfully, it's the Preds.

Predators Probable Fighters

- **Richard Clune** – If you're looking for a Nashville Predator to hate ever since Tootoo left town, allow me to introduce you to Shit Awful Predators Pest Candidate, Richard Clune. The merits of his candidacy for this prestigious position are as follows: after being revealed in an interview with a Nashville Predators blog: He idolizes Sean Avery. That should about sew up the position of most hated Predator for Clune. He's a sub-6 feet tall guy who will answer the bell occasionally, but the important thing that you need to know is that he's the guy to hate in Nashville now that Scott Hannan is gone.
- **Seth Jones** – The No. 4 overall pick comes in still pissed off that he wasn't able to go first to the Avalanche in the 2013 draft, which would have seen him employed by his childhood team. Put simply, Jones is a big, tough son of a bitch. His game will likely see him playing heavy minutes sooner rather than later, which means his fights will be few and far between, if at all.
- **The Rest** – You've got Shea Weber, who wears the 'C' and can play like one of the toughest defenseman in the game. Want verification? Just ask Henrik Zetterberg's face. There's also Mike Fisher, who goes five hole with Carrie Underwood. Roman Josi is usually involved in some physical altercations, be they without gloves or in the front of the net after a whistle. Opposing fans are likely to get into a fight if you mention something negative about Waylon Jennings.

Date	Combatants	Battle	Decision
10/26/2013	Barret Jackman vs. Matt Hendricks	After being stood up by Jackman, Hendricks gave Jackman a two-hander across the legs before the two decided to go for the full five-minute experience by dropping the gloves. After a couple of weak punches landed for each, this morphed into an amateur wrestling match with Jackman in a headlock before taking Hendricks to the ice.	Draw.
1/24/2013	Ryan Reaves vs. Richard Clune	Reaves initiated this one by laying a heavy shoulder hit onto Nashville's Matt Halischuk. Clune came over to take exception and, in a fight that started and ended in short order, nothing much was landed. Clune and the Predators seemed content to get Reaves and his heavy hits into the penalty box for five minutes.	Draw.
2/4/2012	Ryan Reaves vs. Brian McGrattan	McGrattan started this fight by getting a great grip on Reaver's jersey. Couple that with his size advantage over #75, which amounted to about 3 inches and 10 pounds, and it's a wonder the Blues' tough guy got in as many bombs as he did, although Reaves still took the worst of this one. This could've been much more one sided but Reaves at least kept it close.	Decision goes to: Brian McGrattan

Franchise Foundations

St. Louis Blues	
Year	**Player**
1999	Barret Jackman ~ **Drafted:** 1st Round, 17th overall
2003	David Backes ~ **Drafted:** 2nd Round, 62nd overall
2004	Roman Polak ~ **Drafted:** 6th Round, 180th overall
2005	T.J. Oshie ~ **Drafted:** 1st Round, 24th overall
	Ryan Reaves ~ **Drafted:** 5th Round, 156th overall
2006	Patrik Berglund ~ **Drafted:** 1st Round, 25th overall
2007	Ian Cole ~ **Drafted:** 1st Round, 18th overall
	Chris Porter ~ Signed as Free Agent (CHI)
2008	Alex Pietrangelo ~ **Drafted:** 1st Round, 4th overall
	Jake Allen ~ **Drafted:** 2nd Round, 34th overall
	Alexander Steen ~ Acquired along with Carlo Colaiacovo from TOR for Lee Stempniak
2009	Adam Cracknell ~ Signed as Free Agent (CHI)
2010	Jaroslav Halak ~ Acquired from MTL for Lars Eller and Ian Schultz
	Jaden Schwartz ~ **Drafted:** 1st Round, 14th overall
	Vladimir Tarasenko ~ **Drafted:** 1st Round, 16th overall
	Vladimir Sobotka ~ Acquired from BOS for David Warsofsky
2011	Kevin Shattenkirk and Chris Stewart ~ Acquired along with a 2011 2nd round pick from COL for Erik Johnson, Jay McClement and 2011 1st Round pick
	Brian Elliott ~ Signed as a Free Agent (COL)
2013	Jordan Leopold ~ Acquired from BUF for our 2013 2nd Round and Conditional 5th Round picks
	Jay Bouwmeester ~ Acquired from CGY for Reto Berra, Mark Cundari and 2013 1st Round pick
	Magnus Paajarvi ~ Acquired along with a 2014 2nd Round pick from EDM for David Perron
	Maxim Lapierre ~ Signed as Free Agent (VAN)
	Derek Roy ~ Signed as Free Agent (VAN)
	Brendan Morrow ~ Signed as Free Agent (PIT)
	Carlo Colaiacovo ~ Signed as Free Agent (DET)
Management / Coaching Staff	
2006	Ray Bennett ~ Assistant Coach
	Brad Shaw ~ Associate Coach
2010	Doug Armstrong ~ General Manager
	Corey Hirsch ~ Goaltending Coach
2011	Ken Hitchcock ~ Head Coach
2012	Gary Agnew ~ Assistant Coach
	Danny Brooks ~ Video Coach

Nashville Predators	
Year	**Player**
1998	David Legwand ~ **Drafted:** 1st Round, 2nd overall
2003	Shea Weber ~ **Drafted:** 2nd Round, 49th overall
2004	Pekka Rinne ~ **Drafted:** 8th Round, 258th overall
2005	Patric Hornqvist ~ **Drafted:** 7th Round, 230th overall
2007	Nick Spaling ~ **Drafted:** 2nd Round, 58th overall
2008	Colin Wilson ~ **Drafted:** 1st Round, 7th overall
	Roman Josi ~ **Drafted:** 2nd Round, 38th overall
2009	Ryan Ellis ~ **Drafted:** 1st Round, 11th overall
	Taylor Beck ~ **Drafted:** 3rd Round, 70th overall
	Craig Smith ~ **Drafted:** 4th Round, 98th overall
	Mattias Ekholm ~ **Drafted:** 4th Round, 102nd overall
	Gabriel Bourque ~ **Drafted:** 5th Round, 132nd overall
2011	Mike Fisher ~ Acquired from OTT for 2011 1st Round and a conditional 2012 pick
	Victor Bartley ~ Signed as Free Agent (BOS)
2012	Paul Gaustad ~ Acquired along with a 2013 4th Round pick from BUF for a 2012 1st Round pick
	Colton Sissons ~ **Drafted:** 2nd Round, 50th overall
2013	Rich Clune ~ Claimed off waivers (LOS)
	Seth Jones ~ **Drafted:** 1st Round, 4th overall
	Eric Nystrom ~ Signed as Free Agent (DAL)
	Matt Cullen ~ Signed as Free Agent (MIN)
	Viktor Stalberg ~ Signed as Free Agent (CHI)
	Carter Hutton ~ Signed as Free Agent (CHI)
	Devan Dubnyk ~ Acquired from EDM for Matt Hendricks
	Michael Del Zotto ~ Acquired from NYR for Kevin Klien
Management / Coaching Staff	
1997	David Poile ~ General Manger
	Barry Trotz ~ Head Coach
1998	Mitch Korn ~ Goaltending Coach
2008	Lawrence Feloney ~ Video Coach
2011	Lane Lambert ~ Assistant Coach
2013	Phil Housley ~ Assistant Coach

Barry Trotz: Coach For Life

St. Louis Blues Rosters and Statistics

General Manager: Doug Armstrong
Head Coach: Ken Hitchcock
Assistant Coaches: Ray Bennett, Brad Shaw
Gary Agnew
Goaltending Coach: Corey Hirsch

#	Player	Pos	Sh	H	W	Born	Rk	GP	G	A	Pts	+/-	PIM	PPG	SHG	GW	OT	S%	TOI/G	FO%	Salary
5	**Jackman, Barret "A"**	D	L	6'0	203	Mar 5, 81, Trail, BC, Canada		52	3	9	12	17	52	0	0	1	0	6.3	17:52	0.0	$3,250,000
9	**Schwartz, Jaden**	C	L	5'10	190	Jun 25, 92, Wilcox, SK, Canada		51	16	20	36	20	19	2	1	1	0	14.5	17:07	58.1	$900,000
10	**Morrow, Brenden**	LW	L	6'0	205	Jan 16, 79, Carlyle, SK, Canada		47	8	10	18	1	42	3	0	2	0	24.2	11:55	32.0	$1,500,000
12	**Roy, Derek**	C	L	5'9	184	May 4, 83, Ottawa, ON, Canada		51	8	24	32	-1	22	4	0	2	0	9.8	13:38	47.4	$4,000,000
13	**Colaiacovo, Carlo**	D	L	6'1	200	Jan 27, 83, Toronto, ON, Canada		10	0	2	2	1	8	0	0	0	0	0.0	14:40	0.0	$2,150,000
17	**Sobotka, Vladimir**	LW	L	5'10	197	Jul 2, 87, Trebic, Czech.		46	7	18	25	17	46	1	0	1	0	8.9	16:31	60.9	$1,400,000
19	**Bouwmeester, Jay**	D	L	6'4	212	Sep 27, 83, Edmonton, AB, Canada		53	4	26	30	17	10	1	0	0	0	4.4	24:12	50.0	$6,600,000
20	**Steen, Alexander "A"**	LW	L	5'11	212	Mar 1, 84, Winnipeg, MB, Canada		42	27	18	45	18	28	5	1	7	0	18.8	20:17	48.0	$3,566,667
21	**Berglund, Patrik**	C	L	6'3	217	Jun 2, 88, Vesteras, Sweden		50	8	14	22	5	28	2	0	0	0	8.5	16:05	48.4	$3,250,000
22	**Shattenkirk, Kevin**	D	R	5'11	207	Jan 29, 89, New Rochelle, NY, USA		52	8	28	36	11	18	5	0	4	1	6.6	20:05	0.0	$3,300,000
25	**Stewart, Chris**	RW	R	6'2	231	Oct 30, 87, Toronto, ON, Canada		53	15	10	25	7	103	3	0	3	0	15.2	13:34	34.8	$4,100,000
27	**Pietrangelo, Alex "A"**	D	R	6'3	201	Jan 18, 90, King City, ON, Canada		53	6	31	37	14	14	2	0	0	0	5.8	25:21	0.0	$5,000,000
28	**Cole, Ian**	D	L	6'1	219	Feb 21, 89, Ann Arbor, MI, USA		35	2	6	8	13	21	0	0	0	0	6.7	15:18	0.0	$750,000
33	**Leopold, Jordan**	D	L	6'1	206	Aug 3, 80, Golden Valley, MN, USA		21	0	5	5	1	4	0	0	0	0	0.0	15:53	0.0	$2,250,000
40	**Lapierre, Maxim**	C	R	6'2	207	Mar 29, 85, Saint-Léonard, QC, Canada		43	7	4	11	3	42	0	0	1	0	14.9	10:54	50.5	$1,000,000
42	**Backes, David "C"**	C	R	6'3	221	May 1, 84, Minneapolis, MN, USA		48	18	22	40	13	78	8	0	3	1	17.8	19:34	50.3	$4,750,000
46	**Polak, Roman**	D	R	6'0	236	Apr 28, 86, Ostrava, Czech.		43	3	5	8	7	35	0	0	0	0	5.8	17:15	0.0	$3,100,000
56	**Paajarvi, Magnus**	LW	L	6'3	208	Apr 12, 91, Norrkoping, Sweden		33	4	3	7	-5	4	0	0	0	0	9.3	10:10	40.0	$1,000,000
74	**Oshie, T.J. "A"**	RW	R	5'11	189	Dec 23, 86, Everett, WA, USA		53	12	31	43	15	26	3	0	3	0	13.2	19:06	44.4	$4,000,000
75	**Reaves, Ryan**	RW	R	6'1	224	Jan 20, 87, Winnipeg, MB, Canada		34	2	4	6	2	71	0	0	0	0	12.5	8:17	80.0	$600,000
79	**Cracknell, Adam**	RW	R	6'2	210	Jul 15, 85, Prince Albert, SK, Canada		17	0	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	7:33	38.5	$600,000
91	**Tarasenko, Vladimir**	RW	L	6'0	219	Dec 13, 91, Yaroslavl, Russia		51	17	14	31	10	12	5	0	3	0	15.2	13:38	33.3	$900,000
	‡ Roster Totals/Avg.	--	--	6'0.7	209	Avg. Age: 27.8		--	175	306	481	188	683	44	2	31	2	9.9	--	--	$57,966,667

#	Player	C	H	W	Born	RK	GP	GS	W	L	OT	SA	GA	GAA	Sv	Sv%	SO	PIM	TOI	Salary
1	**Elliott, Brian**	L	6'2	209	Apr 9, 1985, Newmarket, ON, Canada		37	35	23	8	3	898	76	2.22	822	91.5%	4	0	2,051	$4,500,000
41	**Halak, Jaroslav**	L	5'10	186	May 13, 1985, Bratislava, Slovakia		22	18	13	4	2	484	40	2.06	444	91.7%	3	0	1,164	$1,900,000
	‡ Totals/Avg.								36	12	5	1382	116	2.14	1266	91.6%	7		3,215	$6,400,000

Legend: S:Shoots; C: Catches; Rk: Rookie (any player who has played fewer than 25 games in the previous season or fewer than 26 in the previous two years and has not reached age 26); GP: Games Played; G: Goals; A: Assists; Pts: Points; PIM: Penalties in Minutes; TOI/Game: aver- age Time On Ice per Game.

Nashville Predators Rosters and Statistics

General Manager:	**David Poile**
Head Coach:	**Barry Trotz**
Assistant Coach:	**Lane Lambert**
Assistant Coach:	**Phil Housley**
Goalie Coach:	**Mitch Korn**

#	Player	Pos	Sh	H	W	Born	Rk	GP	G	A	Pts	+/-	PIM	PPG	SHG	GW	OT	S%	TOI/G	FO%	Salary
3	**Jones, Seth**	D	R	6'4	205	Oct 3, 94, Arlington, TX, USA	Y	56	5	16	21	-16	18	2	0	1	0	6.3	20:57	0.0	$925,000
4	**Ellis, Ryan**	D	R	5'10	175	Jan 3, 91, Hamilton, ON, Canada		54	3	13	16	4	14	0	0	1	0	4.1	14:33	0.0	$810,000
6	**Weber, Shea "C"**	D	R	6'4	233	Aug 14, 85, Sicamous, BC, Canada		53	15	23	38	-10	28	9	0	3	1	11.4	26:42	0.0	$14,000,000
7	**Cullen, Matt**	C	L	6'1	200	Nov 2, 76, Virginia, MN, USA		53	5	17	22	-3	26	0	0	1	0	5.1	15:16	57.0	$3,000,000
11	**Legwand, David**	C	L	6'2	205	Aug 17, 80, Detroit, MI, USA		56	10	28	38	-7	24	4	0	2	0	10.3	16:59	50.6	$3,500,000
12	**Fisher, Mike "A"**	C	R	6'1	215	Jun 5, 80, Peterborough, ON, Canada		49	14	14	28	-10	40	3	0	2	0	11.2	19:06	47.8	$4,200,000
13	**Spaling, Nick**	C	L	6'1	201	Sep 19, 88, Palmerston, ON, Canada		52	10	12	22	2	10	2	1	1	0	15.9	16:10	53.0	$1,500,000
15	**Smith, Craig**	C	R	6'1	202	Sep 5, 89, Madison, WI, USA		53	16	17	33	6	16	5	0	3	1	11.9	15:49	21.4	$2,000,000
16	**Clune, Richard**	LW	L	5'10	207	Apr 25, 87, Toronto, ON, Canada		34	2	1	3	-7	96	0	0	1	0	14.3	8:14	0.0	$550,000
18	**Del Zotto, Michael**	D	L	6'0	195	Jun 24, 90, North York, ON, Canada		5	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	17:03	0.0	$2,900,000
24	**Nystrom, Eric**	LW	L	6'1	193	Feb 14, 83, Syosset, NY, USA		53	11	4	15	-17	49	0	1	1	0	13.8	14:37	25.0	$2,000,000
25	**Stalberg, Viktor**	LW	L	6'3	209	Jan 17, 86, Stockholm, Sweden		47	6	9	15	-10	26	0	0	1	0	7.1	13:02	0.0	$2,500,000
27	**Hornqvist, Patric "A"**	RW	R	5'11	189	Jan 1, 87, Sollentuna, Sweden		51	10	18	28	-7	18	5	0	3	0	6.1	16:31	0.0	$3,500,000
28	**Gaustad, Paul**	C	L	6'5	223	Feb 3, 82, Fargo, ND, USA		56	7	6	13	-6	40	0	0	0	0	14.0	13:59	58.4	$4,000,000
30	**Hutton, Carter**	G	L	6'1	195	Dec 19, 85, Thunder Bay, ON, Canada		27	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0.0	--	0.0	$550,000
33	**Wilson, Colin**	C	L	6'1	216	Oct 20, 89, Greenwich, CT, USA		55	7	17	24	2	12	2	0	2	0	9.7	15:19	45.8	$2,000,000
35	**Rinne, Pekka ****	G	L	6'5	204	Nov 3, 82, Kempele, Finland		9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	--	0.0	$7,000,000
40	**Dubnyk, Devan**	G	L	6'6	210	May 4, 86, Regina, SK, Canada		2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	--	0.0	$3,750,000
41	**Beck, Taylor**	LW	R	6'2	206	May 13, 91, St. Catharines, ON, Canada	Y	5	0	0	0	-2	4	0	0	0	0	0.0	12:47	0.0	$600,000
42	**Ekholm, Mattias**	D	L	6'4	202	May 24, 90, Borlange, Sweden	Y	38	1	4	5	-11	4	0	0	0	0	2.7	16:54	0.0	$900,000
57	**Bourque, Gabriel**	LW	L	5'10	192	Sep 23, 90, Rimouski, QC, Canada		49	5	12	17	-7	8	0	0	1	0	7.6	13:23	0.0	$725,000
59	**Josi, Roman**	D	L	6'1	192	Jun 1, 90, Bern, Switz.		46	7	17	24	-10	14	2	0	1	0	5.9	26:05	0.0	$2,500,000
64	**Bartley, Victor**	D	L	6'0	204	Feb 17, 88, Maple Ridge, BC, Canada	Y	36	0	3	3	-3	12	0	0	0	0	0.0	15:40	0.0	$600,000
84	**Sissons, Colton**	C	R	6'1	189	Nov 5, 93, North Vancouver, BC, Canada	Y	2	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0.0	7:57	37.5	$640,000
	‡ Roster Totals/Avg.	--	--	6'1.5	203	Avg. Age: 26.9		--	134	233	367	-108	463	34	2	24	2	6.6	--	--	$64,650,000

#	Player	C	H	W	Born	RK	GP	GS	W	L	OT	SA	GA	GAA	Sv	Sv%	SO	PIM	TOI	Salary
30	**Hutton, Carter**	L	6'1	195	Dec 19, 1985, Thunder Bay, ON, Canada		27	23	13	8	2	692	65	2.82	627	90.6%	0	2	1,383	$550,000
35	**Rinne, Pekka**	L	6'5	204	Nov 3, 1982, Kempele, Finland		9	9	4	4	1	229	19	2.31	210	91.7%	0	0	493	$7,000,000
40	**Dubnyk, Devan**	L	6'6	210	May 4, 1986, Regina, SK, Canada		2	2	0	1	1	60	9	4.35	51	85.0%	0	0	123	$3,750,000
	‡ Totals/Avg.								17	13	4	981	93	3.16	888	89.1%	0			$11,300,000
																				$75,950,000

NHL Referee Statistics

No.	Official	Born	1st Game	2014						Since 2007					
				Blues Games	Blues PP	Blues PK	W	L	OTL	Blues Games	Blues PP	Blues PK	W	L	OTL
3	**Leggo, Mike**	North Bay, ON	1997	1	3	2		1		32	117	117	16	13	3
4	**McCauley, Wes**	Georgetown, ON	2003	3	9	8	2	1		21	59	62	11	8	2
5	**Rooney, Chris**	Boston, MA	2000	4	11	16	3	1		37	152	160	19	13	5
6	**Charron, Francis**	Gatineau, PQ	2010	4	13	16	3	1		8	33	32	7	1	0
8	**Jackson, Dave**	Montreal, PQ	1990	4	12	12	3	1		31	111	114	20	8	2
9	**O'Rourke, Dan**	Calgary, AB	1999	3	13	11	3			25	106	98	12	9	4
10	**Devorski, Paul**	Guelph, ON	1989	2	4	5		1	1	29	100	109	16	9	4
11	**Sutherland, Kelly**	Richmond, BC	2000	1	3	3		1		27	89	98	11	15	1
12	**St. Pierre, Justin**	Dolbeau, PQ	2003	2	8	5	1	1		24	89	80	16	6	2
13	**O'Halloran, Dan**	Essex, ON	1995	3	11	7	3			36	142	166	19	15	2
14	**LaRue, Dennis**	Savannah, GA	1991	4	8	12	2	1	1	34	105	113	14	13	7
15	**Hebert, Jean**	Bouctouche, NB	2010	3	15	16	1	1	1	6	27	31	2	2	2
16	**Pochmara, Brian**	Detroit, MI	2006	2	7	7	1		1	33	137	150	21	7	5
17	**L'Ecuyer, Frederick**	Tois Riveres, PQ	2007	4	17	16	3	1		18	69	65	8	10	0
18	**Kimmerly, Greg**	Toronto, ON	1996	2	8	6	1	1		32	113	114	11	14	7
19	**Dwyer, Gord**	Halifax, NS	2003	4	18	16	2	2		35	137	129	18	15	2
20	**Peel, Tim**	Toronto, ON	1999	3	10	8	2		1	36	116	121	19	13	4
21	**VanMassenhoven, Don**	Parkhill, ON	1993	2	4	3	1	1		31	113	119	19	8	4
22	**Hebert, Ghislain**	Dieppe, NB	2009	2	6	9	1		1	14	47	45	8	3	3
23	**Watson, Brad**	Regina, Sas	1996	5	21	25	3	2		37	143	165	17	14	7
25	**Joannette, Marc**	Verdun, PQ	1999	2	7	8	2			24	93	90	12	9	3
26	**Martell, Rob**	Winnipeg, MB	1996	4	11	11	3	1		30	117	117	22	6	2
27	**Furlatt, Eric**	Trois-Rivieres, PQ	2001	4	15	17	2	2		29	110	127	10	16	3
28	**Lee, Chris**	St John, NB	2001	3	11	15	3			34	149	149	16	15	3
29	**Walsh, Ian**	Philadelphia, PA	2000	3	7	5	2		1	29	93	111	14	12	3
30	**Hasenfratz, Mike**	Regina, SK	2000	4	15	13	4			17	58	56	12	4	1
32	**Kowal, Tom**	Vernon, BC	2000	4	12	12	2	1	1	34	124	126	15	14	5
33	**Pollock, Kevin**	Kincardine, ON	2000	2	4	5	2			32	103	113	14	13	5
34	**Meier, Brad**	Dayton, OH	1999	5	20	19	3	1	1	35	131	132	17	12	6
36	**Morton, Dean**	Peterborough, ON	2000	3	13	11	3			26	98	106	18	6	2
37	**Rehman, Kyle**	Stettler, AB	2008	3	8	9	3			23	79	83	12	7	4
38	**St. Laurent, Francois**	Greenfield Park, PQ	2006	4	17	17	3	1		29	116	105	18	9	2
40	**Kozari, Steve**	Penticton, BC	2006	2	9	7	2			30	123	128	18	11	1
41	**Lemelin, Mark**	Albuquerque, NM	2011	1	3	4	1			1	3	4	1		
42	**Burchell, Darcy**	Hamilton, ON	2013	2	9	7	2			2	9	7	2		
43	**Chmielewski, Tom**	Colorado Springs	2013												
44	**Knorr, Trent**	Powell River, BC	2012												
45	**McIsaac, Jon**	Truro, NS	2012												
46	**Lewis, Dave**	Whitby, ON	2012												
47	**Hanson, Trevor**	Richmond, VA	2012	1	4	5			1	1	4	5			1
49	**Luxmore, T.J.**	Canada	2012												
49	**Skilliter, Graham**	La Ronge, Sas	2011	1	4	6		1		2	7	10		2	
	TOTALS			**106**	**370**	**374**	**72**	**24**	**10**	**924**	**3422**	**3557**	**485**	**332**	**107**

NHL Linesmen

50	Cherrey, Scott	66	Gibbs, Darren	75	Amell, Derek	83	MacPherson, Matt	92	Shewchyk, Mark
54	Devorski, Greg	67	Champoux, Pierre	76	Cormier, Michel	84	Sericolo, Tony	93	Murphy, Brian
55	Heyer, Shane	68	Driscoll, Scott	77	Nowak, Tim	86	Lazarowich, Brad	94	Pancich, Bryan
56	Wheler, Mark	70	Nansen, Derek	78	Mach, Brian	88	Cvik, Mike	95	Murray, Jonny
57	Sharrers, Jay	71	Kovachik, Brad	79	Murchison, Kiel	89	Miller, Steve	96	Brisebois, David
59	Barton, Steve	73	Rody, Vaughan	80	Nelson, Thor	90	McElman, Andy	97	Morin, Jean
65	Racicot, Pierre	74	Cameron, Lonnie	82	Galloway, Ryan	91	Henderson, Don	98	Grandt, John

St. Louis Game Time Scorecard

St. Louis Blues vs. Nashville Predators, Saturday, Feb. 1, 2013

Referee: _____ Referee: _____

Linesman: _____ Linesman: _____

Shots						
Team	**1st**	**2d**	**3rd**	**OT**	**SO**	**F**
Preds						
Blues						

Score						
Team	**1st**	**2d**	**3rd**	**OT**	**SO**	**F**
Preds						
Blues						

Blues Starting Lineup
C:
LW:
RW:
D:
D:
G:

Predators Starting Lineup
C:
LW:
RW:
D:
D:
G:

Three Stars of the Game
1st Star:
2nd Star:
3rd Star:

Other Stars of the Game
GWG:
GW Goalie:
Hard Hat:

Goal Scoring

Per.	Time	Team	Goalscorer	1st Assist	2nd Assist

Penalties Called

Per.	Time	Team	Penalized Player	Penalty

Game Notes:

Tomorrow's Blues

By Brian Weidler

Mid-Season Draft Analysis And Preview, Part IV

In this installment of the *Game Time* Mid-Season Draft Analysis and Preview, our focus will be on the first complete (seven round) Mock Draft of the season. This is our attempt to simulate a potential game plan for the Blues at the real draft this June in Philadelphia, and to see the outcome of the draft strategies we have formulated.

Background

As you'll recall, last time in this space, we took a closer look at Doug Armstrong's track record as a general manager in the NHL and arrived at the following conclusions: In 10 Entry Drafts as a general manager, Armstrong has made a total of seven selections in the first round. When he has had picks in the middle of the round, he has drafted forwards; when he has late picks, from 25th overall on down, he has drafted defensemen.

Two of those defense picks have been premium offensive talents on the blueline. Another has been a serviceable stay-at-home NHL defenseman, and two defense picks from the QMJHL have busted.

Also, when Armstrong has had picks near the top of the second round, he has drafted skilled offensive players; Loui Eriksson 33rd overall in 2003, James Neal 33rd overall in 2005, and Ty Rattie 32nd overall in 2008.

Based on history, if the Blues do retain their own first-rounder this year (a late pick) as well as Edmonton's second-rounder (an early pick), we can expect to see Armstrong draft a defenseman in the first round, probably an offense-minded player who is college-bound (and most likely not a European playing in the QMJHL), and a skilled forward with the early second-rounder.

Also previously in the space, we identified the following breakdown of positions as a reasonable set of targets for the Blues in this draft:

- Two centers
- Two or three wingers
- Two offensive, puck-moving defensemen
- One physical, stay-at-home defenseman
- One or two goaltenders

Keeping those conclusions and targets in mind, your *Game Time* Prospect Department has embarked on yet another mock draft at the "Hockey's Future" website. This mock is being conducted by a well-respected poster on the "HF" boards, and is a full seven-round mock as opposed to the three-round "mini-mock" we participated in earlier.

A link to the mock draft thread will be provided in "The '14 File" during Prospect Sunday, for those of you who are interested in tracking your GTPD's performance in attempting to fill Doug Armstrong's shoes. Feedback is strongly encouraged.

Getting Ready

In this mock draft, trades were allowed because in the real world, trades do happen. The downside to allowing trades in a mock is that there are always one or two mock GM's who want to blow up the club they're representing and start from scratch, and some outrageous deals get made. Your GTPD took a more realistic approach, and made just two trades, one involving a roster player and the other involving picks only.

In the first trade, we sent Chris Stewart to the Islanders along with the sixth-round pick the Blues obtained from Boston in the Wade Redden trade at the 2013 trade deadline. In return, we received center prospect Anders Lee from the Islanders, along with the Islanders' picks in the third and fifth rounds of this draft.

The Islanders approached us about Stewart, and originally offered LW Josh Bailey and the Isles' second-round pick. We were sorely tempted to accept this first deal until we researched Bailey's contract on the "Capgeek" site. Bailey, a serviceable NHL winger, has four years remaining on his current contract at $3.3 million per year. We did not see Bailey as being a "replacement" for Stewart — that role will fall to Dmitrij Jaskin — and thus were not interested in picking up that contract.

We counter-offered by adding the Boston sixth to the Blues' side of the deal and asking for Lee and two picks from the Islanders. Anders Lee is a big (6' 2, 225) left-shooting Minnesota high school product who was drafted by the Islanders in 2009 after scoring 81 goals and 179 points in 93 games with St. Thomas Academy and Edina High School. Lee played a year with Green Bay in the USHL (2009-10, 35-31-66 in 59 games) and two years with Notre Dame (84 GP, 41-37-88) before turning pro in 2012-13 with the Islanders' farm club in Bridgeport, Conn.

Lee is a pending RFA in the last year of his entry-level deal, but there is plenty of money available to sign him to a reasonable second contract now that Stewart's $4 million is off the books, and Lee becomes the Blues' top center prospect by a country mile as a result of this deal. Your GTPD was a proponent of drafting Lee in the first place back in 2009, and if the proposed trade had been Stewart for Lee straight up, we'd probably have gone for it; getting a high third-round pick (65th overall in this mock) and a bonus fifth-rounder (125th overall in this mock) is a bonus.

In the second trade, we did exactly the opposite of something that Doug Armstrong did at the 2013 Entry Draft. There, Armstrong traded away a number of picks in order to acquire a late second-round pick (57th overall), which he used to select William Carrier from the QMJHL. In this mock, we traded the Blues' pick at 56th overall to Los Angeles, in exchange for the Kings' picks at 113th, 143rd, and 203rd overall, plus a pick at 158th overall that LA had acquired previously from Carolina.

Our thinking here was that, since we had already acquired the Islanders' pick at 65th overall, there was not going to be a significant difference in the quality of the player available at 56th vs. the quality of the player available at 65th, and the opportunity to make more selections in this draft offered a unique opportunity to restock the prospect pipeline.

This draft has been called a "weak draft" by several pundits who follow and report on such things. Our feeling at the GTPD is that there is no such thing as a "weak" draft, only sub-par performances by scouts and general managers on a team-by-team basis. There is world-class talent available in every draft, including in the later rounds, and it is the job of the scouting staff and GM to find this talent and get it into their organization.

Through trades in this mock draft, your GTPD has strengthened the Blues' prospect pool in the immediate term by adding an NHL-ready center prospect, and with a total of 13 selections in the seven rounds of this draft (including three in the fifth round between 123rd and 143rd overall), our goal is to spend the top picks on players who will be ready to turn pro in the near term

(Continued on following page)

Colton Sissons

Center
Shoots: *Right*
Height: *6'1*
Weight: *187*
Birthdate: *Nov. 5, 1993*
Birthplace: *North Vancouver, B.C.*

Colton Sissons has two NHL games under his belt. Now those are two more games than you or I probably have (Mr. Plager, that was not including yours). While we don't know what kind of NHL player he might be, we can get an idea.

Sissons in the AHL for the Milwaukee Admirals (you'd think the team would be about brewing beer or eating sausage or having eternally disappointing baseball teams) in goals and points (16g-12a-28pts), in addition to being tied for second among all AHL skaters in game-winning goals, five, during his first professional season. According to the Predators when he was called up this week, Sissons was one of three rookies named to the 2014 AHL All-Star Team earlier this month. He spent the previous three seasons with the Kelowna Rockets, amassing 149 points (71g-79a) and 162 penalty minutes in 182 Western Hockey League games.

First, that's not a lot of penalty minutes for three years out west. That's a rough and tumble place. Second, if you can't come close to average a point a game in Major Junior, you're no sure thing to make the NHL. You've got to do something else to make yourself valuable. For Sissons, that's defense from a forward position.

Because I know nothing about this dude, let's steal some content from Hockey's Future: "Sissons has the look of a primarily defensive forward with a bit of offensive upside. His defensive skills are already well-formed, and he isn't afraid to join puck battles along the boards. Sissons skating could be described as adequate; he can keep up once up to speed, but does not have good initial acceleration." That was written before he was an AHL all-star or called up to the big show in his first pro season.

Tomorrow's Blues [continued]

(two years out), while loading up on college-bound players and European juniors in the later rounds.

The First Pick

Center is still the weak link in the Blues' organization below the NHL level, but that does not necessarily mean that a center will — or should be — the Blues' primary target with their first-round pick. And in this mock, circumstances played out to where the Blues were able to draft a player at a position where Doug Armstrong has had some success in previous real-life drafts.

As the Blues' pick at 26th overall approached in this mock, we were still seeing on the table centers that we had previously identified as being primary targets for the Blues — the USNTDP's Dylan Larkin, Swedish prospect Adrian Kempe and St. Louis native Ryan Macinnis. But we were also noticing the fall of a defense prospect that we liked a great deal, and whom we had projected to go somewhere in the 15-20 range, and therefore be long gone when it came time for the Blues to select.

When the Blues' selection came around at 26th overall, that defense prospect was still available, and so we went with the "best player available" strategy while still being able to draft from a position in which the Blues' real-life GM has had some success before, and also having the opportunity to think somewhat "outside the box" in relation to the Blues' recent draft history.

Our selection for the Blues at 26th overall was New Jersey-born defenseman Anthony DeAngelo of the Ontario Hockey League's Sarnia Sting. Not the biggest player on the ice at 5' 11 and 165 pounds, DeAngelo has nevertheless developed into one of the premier offensive defensemen in his age group over the last four seasons.

As a 15-year-old with Cedar Rapids (USHL) in 2010-11, De Angelo managed a 1-14-15 scoring line with 19 PM in 29 games, and jumped up to the Ontario League the following year. In two full seasons (2011-12 and 2012-13) with Sarnia, DeAngelo scored 15 goals and 81 points, and in 42 games this year with the Sting, DeAngelo has a 13-47-60 scoring line with 65 minutes in penalty time.

"The Scouting Report" website notes that De Angelo is an "undersized defenseman (who) can be a fourth forward on the ice at times and is a major asset on the power play where his shot placement and puck distribution is top notch." Indeed, 11 of his 28 career OHL goals to date have been scored on the power play. DeAngelo's defensive game is a work in progress, and he gets outmuscled by bigger and stronger players when they can keep up with him, but these are areas that can be improved over time.

As mentioned earlier, we expect DeAngelo to go in the 15-20 range in the actual draft... but if he should fall to the Blues in June as he did in this mock, this would be a fine addition to the Blues' prospect pool.

Check out "The '14 File" feature on Prospect Sunday at the "Game Time" website this weekend for more discussion of potential draft picks — including who our second-round selection was in this mock draft. We'll see you on the Web this weekend, and until next time, remember... "if we do not prepare for ourselves the role of the hammer, there will be nothing left but that of the anvil." *Auf wiedersehen.*

Skeet Shootin'

With South Sorrell Booke

This past Monday, Al Gore's internet was on fire in St. Louis. All it took was one jackass to troll a message board with an unsubstantiated rumor, and the mindless sheep followed the shepherd over the cliff and onto the rocks below.

Some clown claimed he had a "source" who knew someone in the Blues front office. This "source" claimed the Blues were getting ready to pull the trigger on a deal that would send Jaro Halak, prospect Ty Rattie and a first round draft pick to the Buffalo Sabres for Jesus Chr....., I mean Ryan Miller.

Never mind the fact that an actual media expert hadn't reported anything of the sort, but a small minority of Blues fans on the message board and Twitter ran with it like Barry fucking Sanders on Thanksgiving Day against the Packers. I decided to look up "Ryan Miller Blues" in the search engine on Twitter and it was utter comedy. There were people out the ass welcoming Miller to St. Louis.

Even after it was announced that no trade had transpired, the dumbshits were still tweeting Miller welcome greetings hours later. One guy even offered to pick him up at Lambert and fondle his nether region on the car ride to Scottrade. That is dedication my friends. How big a fan are you?

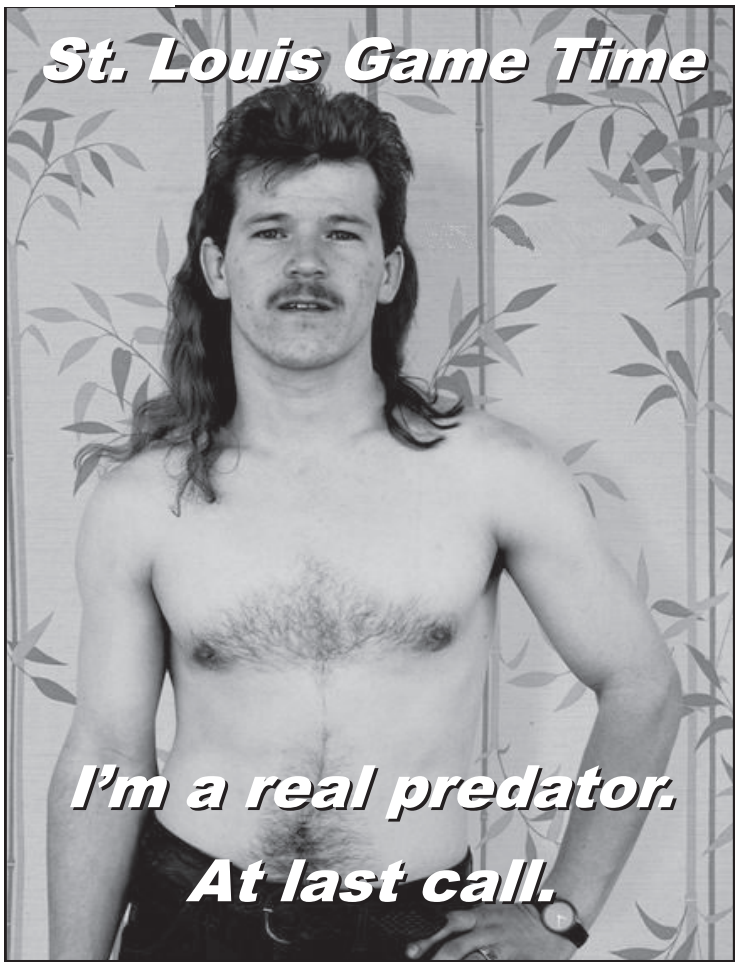
The troll went on to say the deal would be completed by 5 pm. on Monday. When numerous media outlets called bullshit, said troll then stated the trade would be done in the next 72 hours, but general manager Doug Armstrong was waiting until the Sabres pulled away from their demands of Rattie. I'm sure Sabres GM Tim Murray was sitting in his office in Buffalo thinking "You know, I'm sick of this waiting shit. I'll tell Army to hell with Rattie and I'll ask for Cole, D'Agostini, and a first rounder instead."

Let me give you all a little of my Blues background unlike the hat of lies Joe Hamm spewed in 2009 when he said he had his Blues logo hat for 15 years even though the Blues didn't introduce that logo until 1997. Sorry Jon. I call bullshit on your hat. I love *Mad Men* though. And Christina Hendricks. I'd take a game misconduct for checking from behind if you catch my drift. Anyway, I have followed this team since 1986. In that time, you could have had multiple All-Star teams with the talent that has played here over that span. Over the past 28 years, I have learned one thing. Chemistry is everything. The Blues have had it two times that I can remember with those years being 1990-91 and 2000-'01.

When it comes to the 90-91 model, all the parts were there for a serious run in the Stanley Cup playoffs. The Blues had two scoring lines, a motherfucker for a checking line and a strong, rugged defense. A team that was one point ahead of the Blackhawks in the standings on March 5, 1991 only needed to add a naked lady air freshener. Instead, they tore out a good engine and rebuilt it with Play-Doh. The trade that sent Cliff Ronning, Geoff Courtnall, Sergio Momesso and Robert Dirk to Vancouver for Garth Butcher and Dan Quinn completely screwed the team for years to come. In fact, I blame that deal on the domino effect of deals that came thereafter. It's why the Blues ultimately lost Scott Stevens and here's why. When the Blues decided they needed to replace the goal scoring and toughness they lost when they dealt Courtnall and Momesso, the team decided to play with fire and it burned them badly. The Note signed Brendan Shanahan and ultimately lost captain Scott Stevens as compensation. To replace the toughness and size they lost in Stevens, the Blues immediately traded Rod Brind'Amour and Quinn to Philadelphia for Murray Baron and Ron Sutter. The result was the Blues went from a major player to a middle of a pack team in the league. I still believe the Blues would have won multiple Cups had they not touched the team at the 1991 deadline.

Fast forward to 2001. The Blues had a team destined for great things when the 2001 deadline came around, but it was decided they needed a power forward to compete with the likes of Detroit, Colorado, San Jose, and Dallas. I agreed with that assessment at the time. Hell, they even brought Eric Lindros in for a physical but Bobby Clarke wanted nothing to do with Pierre Turgeon. Instead, the Blues dealt Michal Handzus, Ladislav Nagy, Jeff Taffe, and a first round pick to the Coyotes for Keith Tkachuk. Had the Blues stopped there, I think the outcome of the Western Conference Finals would have been different. Instead, the Blues traded away the Energizer Bunny in Craig Conroy to Cal-Garry for Cory "skinny and younger Larry Conners" Stillman. I feel that trade cost the Blues much needed energy they needed come playoff time.

The point of this diatribe is it is asinine to make a trade for the sake of making a trade. The funny thing is if Halak was playing for another team with the numbers he is sporting now, Blues fans would be pissing themselves to ACQUIRE him instead of TRADE him. The hard cold facts are that Halak has played a grand total of THREE fucking playoff games for the Blues. I say give him a chance to show what he can do. Please Doug Armstrong, don't fuck with this team. Nikki Cox spat in the face of God and now you see the results. She now works at Silo-X scaring people for a living sans a mask and makeup. Please Army, don't make your team the next Nikki Cox. I beseech you.



Top 11 Signs You're Next To A Predators Fan

11. Keeps talking about his kids and uses their middle name, Joe. Must be lovely daughters.

10. Has a favorite Pred, NASCAR driver, country song, Duck Dynasty guy and Statler brother.

9. Complains that $9 for a spit cup is a lot.

8. Thinks you can cut a hole in the ice to go fishing.

7. He always wanted to be a coal miner's daughter when he was growing up.

6. Looks like Kenny Rogers. Post plastic surgery.

5. One day he was out shootin' at some food. And up through the ground came a bubbling some crude.

4. Has a tramp stamp tattoo of General Lee. From *Dukes of Hazard*.

3. Makes sure to spend a lot of time with his sister. On Mother's Day.

2. Keeps on top of pop culture by watching *Heehaw* on the RFD network. (*EDITOR'S NOTE: That one's for Dad*.)

1. Offers, "I reckon I'll share my moonshine with you at halftime."

— From Brad Lee's tired brain.

Remember Me?

Vincent Riendeau

DOB: April 20, 1966 in Edmonton, Alberta
Position: Goaltender
Played for the Blues: 1998-1992 (122 games; record of 58-45-16)

Everyone remembers that Scott Stevens was awarded as compensation to the New Jersey Devils for the Blues' signing of Brendan Shanahan following the 1991 season.

The Blues' counteroffer in the arbitration case was two players that the team thought would be victims of a very talented organizational depth chart and never play much for the team: Rod Brind'Amour and Curtis Joseph. Brind'Amour was thought of as a playmaking, number one center, and the Blues had one of those named Adam Oates. Joseph was embattled in a goalie-et-trois with Pat Jablonski and Vincent Riendeau.

The Blues saw Riendeau as the best of the three goalies, and offered up CuJo as compensation.

Riendeau was a solid, unspectacular netminder while here. He was acquired from Montreal with Sergio Momesso for Jocelyn Lemieux and Darrell May in the summer of 1988.

While he played here for just a few years, it is hard to look at the Blues' all-time goaltending leaders without seeing Vinny's name all over it.

His 122 games played is ninth highest (Mike Liut is first with 347); his 58 wins tie him for eighth with Glenn Hall (Liut leads with 151); tied for sixth with Greg Millen and Ernie Wakely with three assists (CuJo had 17!); and is ninth in minutes played with 7,221 (again, Liut leads with 20,010).

CuJo asserted himself as the number one goalie after the 1991 season. Guy Hebert had turned into a dependable backup and Riendeau became expandable, especially with the Blues needing a veteran defenseman.

Rick Zombo was acquired from Detroit in exchange for Riendeau on October 18, 1991.

After leaving Detroit, Riendeau played in Boston before bouncing around minor leagues in North America, England, Germany, Switzerland, and Russia.

He now has a goaltending school in Quebec where his website is all in French. He has worked in the Canadiens organization, splitting time between players in Hamilton, Ontario and in Germany.

NHL Standings

EASTERN

Rank	Team	GP	W	L	OT	ROW	PTS	GF	GA	Streak
1	**Pittsburgh**	54	38	14	2	34	**78**	175	129	Won 2
2	**Boston**	53	34	16	3	33	**71**	160	119	Lost 1
3	**Tampa Bay**	54	31	18	5	25	**67**	160	136	Lost 2
4	**Toronto**	56	29	21	6	20	**64**	164	173	Won 2
5	**Montreal**	54	29	20	5	26	**63**	135	135	Won 2
6	**NY Rangers**	56	30	23	3	27	**63**	145	140	Won 3
7	**Carolina**	54	25	20	9	24	**59**	137	151	Won 1
8	**Detroit**	54	24	19	11	20	**59**	139	152	Won 1
9	**Columbus**	54	27	23	4	23	**58**	159	153	Won 1
10	**Ottawa**	54	24	20	10	22	**58**	155	170	Won 2
11	**Philadelphia**	55	26	23	6	23	**58**	150	163	Lost 1
12	**New Jersey**	56	23	21	12	23	**58**	132	140	OT 1
13	**Washington**	55	24	22	9	16	**57**	158	167	OT 1
14	**NY Islanders**	57	21	28	8	15	**50**	159	191	Lost 3
15	**Florida**	54	21	26	7	14	**49**	132	170	Lost 2
16	**Buffalo**	53	15	30	8	9	**38**	104	154	Won 1

WESTERN

Rank	Team	GP	W	L	OT	ROW	PTS	GF	GA	Streak
1	**Anaheim**	56	40	11	5	38	**85**	189	137	Won 1
2	**Chicago**	56	33	10	13	28	**79**	199	156	Won 1
3	**St. Louis**	53	36	12	5	31	**77**	181	122	Lost 1
4	**San Jose**	55	34	15	6	26	**74**	166	133	Lost 3
5	**Colorado**	53	34	14	5	31	**73**	158	141	Won 2
6	**Los Angeles**	56	30	20	6	24	**66**	134	120	Lost 2
7	**Minnesota**	56	29	21	6	23	**64**	137	140	Lost 1
8	**Vancouver**	56	27	20	9	24	**63**	142	147	Lost 3
9	**Phoenix**	54	25	19	10	21	**60**	156	163	Lost 1
10	**Nashville**	56	25	23	8	24	**58**	139	168	Won 2
11	**Dallas**	54	24	21	9	21	**57**	156	160	OT 1
12	**Winnipeg**	56	26	25	5	21	**57**	159	165	Won 1
13	**Calgary**	54	20	27	7	16	**47**	128	170	Won 4
14	**Edmonton**	56	18	32	6	16	**42**	147	190	Won 3

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St. Louis Blues Schedule and Results

October				
Date	**Opponent**	**Score**	**Record**	**Goalies**
THU OCT 3	PREDATORS	4-2	1-0-0	Halak/Rinne
SAT OCT 5	PANTHERS	7-0	2-0-0	Halak/Thomas
WED OCT 9	BLACKHAWKS	3-2	3-0-0	Halak/Crawford
SAT OCT 12	RANGERS	5-3	4-0-0	Halak/Biron
TUE OCT 15	SHARKS	2-6	4-1-0	Niemi/Halak
THU OCT 17	AT BLACKHAWKS	3-2SO	5-1-0	Halak/Crawford
FRI OCT 18	AT JETS	3-4SO	5-1-1	Pavelec/Elliott
FRI OCT 25	CANUCKS	2-3OT	5-1-2	Lack/Halak
SAT OCT 26	AT PREDATORS	6-1	6-1-2	Halak/Hutton
TUE OCT 29	JETS	3-2	7-1-2	Halak/Pavelec
November				
FRI NOV 1	AT PANTHERS	4-0	8-1-2	Elliott/Markstrom
SAT NOV 2	AT LIGHTNING	2-4	8-2-2	Bishop/Halak
TUE NOV 5	AT CANADIENS	3-2SO	9-2-2	Halak/Price
THU NOV 7	FLAMES	3-2	10-2-2	Elliott/Berra
SAT NOV 9	PENGUINS	2-1	11-2-2	Halak/Fleury
TUE NOV 12	COYOTES	2-3OT	11-2-3	Smith/Halak
THU NOV 14	AVALANCHE	7-3	12-2-3	Halak/Giguere
SAT NOV 16	HURRICANES	4-2	13-2-3	Elliott/Peters
SUN NOV 17	AT CAPITALS	1-4	13-3-3	Holtby/Halak
TUE NOV 19	AT SABRES	4-1	14-3-3	Halak/Miller
THU NOV 21	AT BRUINS	3-2SO	15-3-3	Halak/Rask
SAT NOV 23	STARS	6-1	16-3-3	Elliott/Lehtonen
MON NOV 25	WILD	3-1	17-3-3	Halak/Backstrom
WED NOV 27	AT AVALANCHE	4-1	18-3-3	Halak/Varlamov
FRI NOV 29	AT SHARKS	3-6	18-4-3	Niemi/Elliott
December				
MON DEC 2	AT KINGS	2-3	18-5-3	Scrivens/Halak
THU DEC 5	ISLANDERS	5-1	19-5-3	Halak/Nilsson
SAT DEC 7	DUCKS	2-5	19-6-3	Andersen/Halak
TUE DEC 10	AT JETS	2-1	20-6-3	Elliott/Pavelec
THU DEC 12	MAPLE LEAFS	6-3	21-6-3	Elliott/Reimer
SAT DEC 14	AT BLUE JACKETS	4-3SO	22-6-3	Halak/McKenna
MON DEC 16	AT SENATORS	2-3OT	22-6-4	Lehner/Elliott
TUE DEC 17	SHARKS	2-4	22-7-4	Niemi/Halak
THU DEC 19	CANADIENS	5-1	23-7-4	Halak/Price
SAT DEC 21	AT OILERS	6-0	24-7-4	Ellliott/Bryzgalov
MON DEC 23	AT FLAMES	3-4SO	24-7-5	Berra/Halak
SAT DEC 28	BLACKHAWKS	6-5SO	25-7-5	Elliott/Raanta
SUN DEC 29	AT STARS	3-2OT	26-7-5	Elliott/Lehtonen
TUE DEC 31	AT WILD	2-1	27-7-5	Elliott/Harding
January				
THU JAN 2	KINGS	5-0	28-7-5	Elliott/Jones
SAT JAN 4	BLUE JACKETS	6-2	29-7-5	Elliott/McElhinney
TUE JAN 7	AT OILERS	5-2	30-7-5	Elliott/Bryzgalov
THU JAN 9	AT FLAMES	5-0	31-7-5	Halak/Ramo
FRI JAN 10	AT CANUCKS	1-2	31-8-5	Lack/Elliott
TUE JAN 14	COYOTES	2-1	32-8-5	Halak/Smith
THU JAN 16	KINGS	1-4	32-9-5	Quick/Halak
SAT JAN 18	DUCKS	2-3	32-10-5	Anderson/Elliott
MON JAN 20	AT RED WINGS	4-1	33-10-5	Halak/Howard
TUE JAN 21	AT DEVILS	1-7	33-11-5	Schneider/Elliott
THU JAN 23	AT RANGERS	2-1	34-11-5	Halak/Lundqvist
SAT JAN 25	IAT SLANDERS	4-3SO	35-11-5	Halak/Poulin
TUE JAN 28	DEVILS	3-0	36-11-5	Halak/Schneider
FRI JAN 31	AT HURRICANES	1-3	36-12-5	Khudobin/Halak
February				
SAT FEB 1	PREDATORS			
TUE FEB 4	SENATORS			
THU FEB 6	BRUINS			
SAT FEB 8	JETS			
WED FEB 26	AT CANUCKS			
FRI FEB 28	AT DUCKS			
March				
SUN MAR 2	AT COYOTES			
TUE MAR 4	LIGHTNING			
THU MAR 6	AT PREDATORS			
SAT MAR 8	AT AVALANCHE			
SUN MAR 9	AT WILD			
TUE MAR 11	STARS			
THU MAR 13	OILERS			
SAT MAR 15	AT PREDATORS			
MON MAR 17	JETS			
WED MAR 19	AT BLACKHAWKS			
SAT MAR 22	AT FLYERS			
SUN MAR 23	AT PENGUINS			
TUE MAR 25	AT MAPLE LEAFS			
THU MAR 27	WILD			
SAT MAR 29	STARS			
April				
TUE APR 1	FLYERS			
THU APR 3	SABRES			
SAT APR 5	AVALANCHE			
SUN APR 6	AT BLACKHAWKS			
TUE APR 8	CAPITALS			
THU APR 10	AT WILD			
FRI APR 11	AT STARS			
SUN APR 13	RED WINGS			

(Continued from page 1)

Predators Are Dead

In an ideal world, you play your two best together, regardless of handedness. But, it's not that simple. I think there's value in seeing what the Leopold-Cole pairing could bring. Leopold, when healthy, is probably the best of three. Cole has the most upside and, quite frankly, really seemed to be doing something with playing time. He hasn't really earned the reassignment to the press box. Maybe a few games without Polak would show the Blues something. They were playing just fine without him when he was injured.

This is not just a current issue, but a long term one. Polak is making $2.75 million the next two seasons. Leopold is making $2.25 million through next year. Cole is signed at $825,000 per through next year. We already know about the Blues' attendance issues and we already know ownership isn't made of money. The Blues have to be financially smart. Can they afford six d-men all making more than $2 million a year?

The Blues have more than $11 million coming off the books next season when the contracts of Derek Roy ($4 million), Brendan Morrow ($1.5 million), Colaiacovo ($500,000), Jaroslav Halak ($3.75 million) and Brian Elliott ($1.8 million) expire. I could really see a world where none of those guys come back (Elliott, maybe as the lone holdover). If Elliott goes with Halak, the Blues would need a goalie (Ryan Miller?).

Add in restricted free agents Patrik Berglund, Vladimir Sobotka and Jaden Schwartz needing new contracts, you could make the case the Blues will need to cut some payroll by the time the 2014-15 season rolls around.

I honestly wouldn't be shocked if the Blues shop Polak at some point. Trading Cole doesn't save money and Leopold's age doesn't' make him that attractive. If the Blues are going to move a d-man, and possibly a big Swedish center, to save some money, it's gotta be Polak, right?

So, and again I'm aware I'm looking pretty far down the road, but wouldn't it make sense to make sure Cole is your guy? Play Cole with Leopold and see what you got. Not all the time, just enough to see if dealing Polak would be a smart move.

If you're wondering what Polak could fetch, take a look at tonight's opponent, the Nashville Predators. They recently traded Kevin Klein for Michael Del Zotto. At one point, Del Zotto was favorably compared to P.K. Subban and Petro before he fell off. The Blues could trade Polak and buy low, or deal him for a stable Mike Weaver type. It wouldn't be the worst thing in the world.

If you missed it, the Predators kind of suck right now. Remember when they were an up-and-coming team that played with great defense but had trouble scoring? Well the good news is they still can't score, but now the defense sucks.

Ryan Suter left to Minnesota and Pekka Rinne got hurt. They still have American hero Seth Jones and Shea Weber, but they've given up 166 goals this year — more than three per game and 47 more than the Blues. They're just a team with more non-wins than wins. Music City is playing off key.

And that offense? Woof. They've only scored 136 goals in 55 games, just under 2.5 goals per game. That's pretty low. The only teams Nashville has outscored are the really bad teams — Buffalo, Calgary and teams of that ilk. The Preds are just one point ahead of the Winnipeg Jets. Oh and the Preds' -30 goal differential is way worse than the Jets. There's a good chance that, when the season ends, the Preds are last in the Central. The ability of Barry Trotz, coach for life, to survive this season will be tested.

The Preds are, somehow, led by 900-year-old David Legwand. He has nine goals and 28 assists for 37 points. He has one more goal than Kevin Shattenkirk. Some guy named Craig Smith is leading the way with 16 goals. I know, I was shocked, too. I think Craig Smith is the name of my parents' insurance agent.

The key for the Blues tonight is simple (and honestly it was the key in Carolina and we know how that worked out): Be better. These aren't the good Preds. These are the bad Preds. Pekka Rinne is out and all the goalies they have used have been pretty, pretty terrible. The goalie can't stop the puck, the Blues score a ton (especially at home and on weekends). All the Blues have to do is control the puck and get chances. The chances will turn into goals and there's a good chance fans will get Big Macs or whatever for a five spot.

The Blues have been pretty good beating the bad teams (except in Carolina). This is another bad team. The Blues just have to not play down to their level and they'll grab another two points.

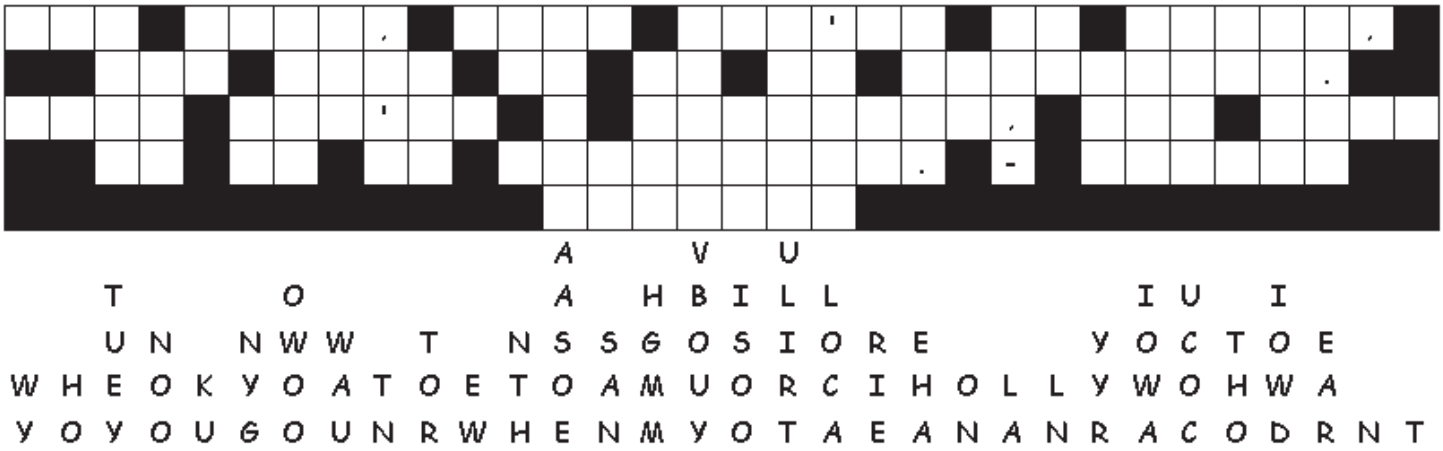
Game Time Bingo!

Fight! Fight! Fight!	You Read GT For The Stats	Person Behind You Reads GT	Yell Home Of The "BLUES!"	You wait for a whistle.
Freezing Rain Sucks	Back In Black	You tipped your beer vendor today.	PTMFUS!	Barret Jackman gives someone the "You're an idiot" smirk.
Someone asks Tom Calhoun, "How much time is left?"	Radioactive	Rage	Dreading Olympic Break	OT
Empty Netter	Tired Of Peyton Manning	Bud Light Bud Light	Can't Wait For Olympic Hockey	Horn. Guy. Warbles.
You Bought From A vendor You Don't Know	You See A Jersey With The Owner's Name On It	Super Bowl Pre-Party	Expect A Prize For Getting A BINGO	Towel Boy Urges Crowd Extra. He Likes Attention.

Bon Jovi Says

With Childhood Trauma

Instructions: Place each letter in a slot directly above it in order to complete a relevant Bon Jovi quote.



Answer: You know, when you're an actor, you want to go to Hollywood. When you're a musician, you want to go to Nashville. - Richie Sambora

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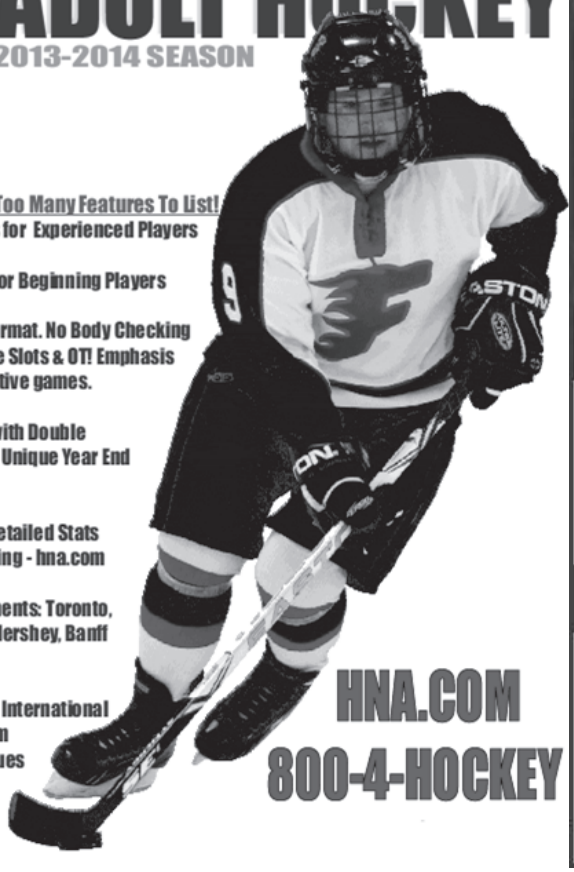

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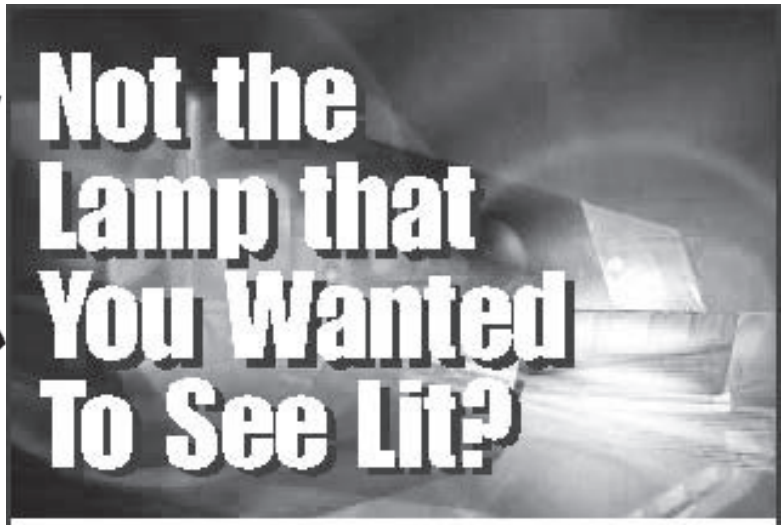

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