



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019

THE ATHLETIC

Hurricanes' Jaccob Slavin is just one man but for some, he's 'the best one' they know

By Ryan S. Clark

BOULDER, Colo. — Upon first glance, there is a certain amount of regality that comes with Sewall Hall. This is, after all, the oldest dormitory on the University of Colorado's already naturally scenic campus.

Numerous shades of brown-colored brick surround taupe-colored portico along with Spanish tile roofing shingles that have likely been replaced since Sewall first opened in 1934. Even the parking lot comes with crushed rock guarding the blooming flowerbed of bright colors offsetting the familiar white parking tickets placed on the windshield of every car in the first set of spaces.

All is quiet until the loud cadence of shouting children can be heard from more than 100 feet away. There is a line of around 25 of them between the ages of 9 and 12 forming outside one of Sewall's main doors. Each of them is wearing T-shirts and shorts as they wait to purchase some sort of snack while also selecting just one white plastic mini-stick with their favorite NHL team's logo on it in an organized stack on an adjacent table.

The sugar rush of Skittles coupled with the mini-sticks paves the way to an impromptu game being played inside a large, open room where chairs turn into makeshift nets. One young man, as play is about to resume, uses his mini-stick like a tennis racket to swat the ball beyond one of his peers for a goal.

"Hey! That's not fair!" says one of the adults in the room. "I'm pretty sure that's a high stick!"

Getting playfully called out by an adult can be a nervous moment when everyone is looking. That only intensifies when the grown-up in this instance is Jaccob Slavin. The 25-year-old Colorado native who grew up in the Denver suburb of Erie says this with a smile so big it almost makes his light-brown hair, even lighter-brown beard, green mesh T-shirt with a slight camouflage pattern and gray shorts seem like an afterthought.

Next to him are the two items he takes everywhere on a day like this. The first is a black water bottle. The second is his Bible.

Slavin having his water bottle on a mid-summer day in July makes sense because Boulder, while stunning, can get dry. But exactly why is he carrying around a Bible? It's because he is the lead on-ice instructor at a week-long summer camp organized by Hockey Ministries International.

Thirty-five of these camps are held throughout Europe and North America over the course of summer. And they are exactly what they say they are in that the focuses are on hockey and faith. Slavin's camp is six days long for children between the ages of 9 and 17. During the day, they receive on- and off-ice training to improve for their respective upcoming seasons.

At night, however, is when the group has chapel where they talk about the teachings of Jesus Christ and how to incorporate those beliefs into being a better person every single day.

"I mean, there are so many examples but even just this camp," Slavin said. "The one in Raleigh this year, I did an alter call-out at the end of one of the chapels. I think there were 10 kids that raised their hands to accept Christ as their savior. Hopefully, one day I am able to win a Stanley Cup, but I don't think the feeling of winning the Stanley Cup will even come close to seeing those 10 kids raise their hands to accept Christ as their savior and have their eternity change."

"That's not something I take lightly. I think that's why I am so open about it. It's more than just hockey. It's truly impactful."

Faith is at the bedrock of what Slavin and his entire family believe. His mother, Wendi, met her first husband in the church, but he died while she was pregnant. She returned to the same church where her first husband's funeral was held. That's where she later met her second husband, Robert, who was smitten with Wendi the first time he saw her.

Robert and Wendi got married. They grew their family. They gave all their children Biblical names. They raised Justin, Jordan, Jaccob, Josiah and Jeremiah to always keep faith at the forefront and to make time for it no matter what they were doing, even if it was playing hockey on weekends.

Jordan was a defenseman who played four seasons for the University of North Dakota women's team. Josiah, who is a left winger, is a Chicago Blackhawks prospect who will play next year at Colorado College. Jeremiah, who is also a defenseman, is only 14 and is already 6-foot-1, 185 pounds.

"We've always been active in the church and when the kids started playing hockey, it's hard to get to church every Sunday," Wendi said. "So, we put them in Christian school. That way they were able to learn every day and learn from the Bible every day because you don't always get a chance to go to church with five kids playing hockey and their schedules."

Family plays so much of an important role that practically all of them have a fingerprint on the camp. Jaccob is the lead instructor while Jordan also does teaching. Josiah is a camp counselor while Jeremiah is a participant. As for Wendi? She is the coordinator who keeps everything running smoothly and on schedule.

This is the fourth year Jaccob has done the Colorado camp. He's done the one in Raleigh for three summers and started attending HMI's initiatives for a number of years now.

Slavin knows the campers who are first-timers versus those who have come more than once. It was evident after dinner when they broke everyone into two groups to play dodgeball and kickball. There were a few campers who had questions. One asked, "Don't you play for the Hurricanes?" Slavin politely said "Yes" before receiving condolences for being swept by the Boston Bruins in the Eastern Conference final.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019

"Oh, that's OK," he said to the camper.

He was then faced with another question from a different camper.

"Who's your roommate in the dorms?" the child asked.

"My roommate is my wife and daughter, and we're staying at my parents' house in Erie!" Slavin said.

This answer generates several reactions. One of them comes from Caleb Dutton. He grew up with Slavin and is a worship leader at his church back in northwest Indiana. Dutton is a camp leader who was supposed to be Slavin's dorm mate for the week. The fact Slavin is at his parents' house becomes a running joke throughout the day. Dutton remarked how it was warm on the first night of camp and he went to move his bed closer to the window.

He initially had reservations about moving his bed but realized he could do it because, "Oh yeah, I'm by myself!"

Dutton's remarks make everyone, including Slavin, immediately laugh. But go back to the initial statement. The line about being with his wife and daughter is something those close to Jacob and Kylie understand. They recently adopted a baby girl and cannot discuss certain specifics – like the child's name – because the process is still being finalized.

What can be discussed, however, is the path Jacob and Kylie took to get this point. Jacob was playing for the Chicago Steel in the United States Hockey League when he randomly came across one of her tweets about God. He clicked on her profile, read her tweets and saw she was genuinely devout.

"She loved the Lord, I clicked on her picture and I was sold," Jacob said. "I clicked 'follow' and she did not follow me back for a couple days, and I had to work at it to finally get her to talk to me. She posted a tweet saying, 'Snapchat me, I'm bored' and with me being a bored junior hockey player, I'm going to take full advantage of that. So, I sent her a Snapchat and she was like, 'All right, this guy's OK.'"

"She snapped me back and started following me and then we started talking."

Kylie lived three-and-a-half hours south of Chicago and Jacob drove down there to spend the day with her and her family for the first time when his season ended. He then stayed in a hotel before driving back to Colorado. That was the start of them having a long-distance relationship for about a year-and-a-half.

They knew pretty early they were headed down a certain path. Jacob said their first Skype call went four or five hours. He said they were both 19 and talked about everything imaginable. But the moment he knew she was the one? They started talking about their love for Wendy's chicken nuggets and how they love dipping them in their Frosty.

"We always joke about how from that moment, we knew," Jacob said. "In all seriousness, she was the first girl I ever dated that truly and genuinely loved the Lord and followed the Lord with all of her heart. That was the thing I was drawn to the most."

Jacob enrolled at Colorado College and Kylie moved to Colorado with a family friend so they could be closer during

his freshman year with the Tigers. She then moved in with Jacob's family in Erie during his sophomore season. Slavin, a fourth-round pick by the Hurricanes in 2012, then signed his entry-level deal and they got married in August 2015.

Exactly how did Jacob propose? He went to visit Kylie and her family for a week during summer vacation. He asked Kylie's mom if she had any photo albums. Jacob took one of those albums with the idea of having the first part of the book being photos of her childhood before transitioning to pictures of them being together with captions with the last page asking for her hand.

"I woke her up from a nap because she had to go to work and told her before she left, 'I want you to come up to the kitchen,'" Jacob said. "She didn't know it was about to happen then and throws a Hot Pocket in the microwave. It's a great story! It's a great story! It gets even better! She finally sits down while her Hot Pocket is in the microwave. As she's reading this and my mom asks, 'Hey Jake? Can you tape Jeremiah's hockey sticks before he has to go to practice?'"

"So, as I'm proposing to my wife, my mom comes in and asks me to tape a hockey stick. I didn't think about but I was like, 'Yeah, sure.' I'm taping my little brother's hockey stick and she hears the end where I am about to get on my knee and I put the stick down and she gets jokingly upset to this day that I was taping a hockey stick while I was proposing to her."

But she was eating a Hot Pocket? Can she really be that upset?

"No, no, she wasn't eating the Hot Pocket, it was in the microwave cooking," Jacob said. "After we got done celebrating, she goes, 'Wait! My Hot Pocket is in the microwave!' and runs over to the Hot Pocket so she can start eating it. So, that's how that all went down. Hockey sticks and Hot Pockets."

Adopting a child is something Jacob and Kylie talked about for a while. They did it because of the gospel of how God has adopted them into his family but they also felt there were so many children who needed homes. Wendi recalled how the couple said it did not matter to them if they adopted an alcohol- or drug-addicted baby. Nor did it matter if the child was born with a disability.

They just wanted to give a child a good home.

Jacob said Kylie always felt that way, but he needed time and prayer before fully coming on board with adopting a child who might have one of those conditions.

"I got to a point where I was like, 'All right God. This is in your hands. You're going to give us the child that you want for us,'" he said. "We were open to anything, really. There were a couple cases we were in the running for a couple kids that had disabilities, whether it was physically or mentally. It was tough. There was a lot of prayer. ... God wanted me to stretch my heart out and just trust him."

Reaching the Stanley Cup playoffs was already enough of a rush until the couple received a phone call saying their daughter was being born at a hospital three hours away from Raleigh. He flew after Game 1 in Washington D.C. to be with the baby after she was born before flying back for Game 2, which was in the afternoon.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019

"That was a tough game to play because I was so tired," said Slavin, who played nearly 29 minutes while picking up two assists in a Game 2 overtime loss to the Washington Capitals. "But at the same time, my prayer was 'God, I need your strength because I am not getting through this by myself!' It was a whirlwind of emotion and excitement."

Kylie and their daughter are at the camp. They both spend so much time around her that Dutton joked how the couple has "play fights" over who gets to feed and change her.

Slavin invests more than 12 hours a day with his campers. There is the on-ice instruction but he is also heavily involved during the chapel services as well. On Monday, he set up the slideshow that allowed the campers to follow the lyrics to the songs played by Dutton and also then spoke to the group.

He shared the story of 'The Parable of the Prodigal Son.' It's the tale of how the younger son wanted his father's possessions and squandered it all to the point he asks his father for a job as his servant. The father welcomed him back with a feast to the dismay of the older son, who felt differently.

"God is like the father in this story," Slavin told the campers. "He loves you regardless."

R.J. Enga is a Colorado College assistant who was also an assistant with the Steel. He was with Slavin for two years in Chicago and for what would be his final season in Colorado Springs. Enga stresses how the talent was always there but that Slavin would do the extra work on small details until they were perfect. Even then? He did it again to ensure his efforts were not a fluke but in fact, routine in nature.

Enga, however, can speak to more than just the hockey acumen. He said Slavin always "carried himself well" off the ice and served as a great teammate in college and in juniors. There are two items Enga shares about Slavin that adds even more definition to his former pupil's personality.

The first being humility. Enga said Slavin possesses the sort of selflessness that results in him texting and finding time for an old coach despite being in the NHL.

And the other? Slavin does not swear.

"No. He doesn't," said Enga, who spoke at Slavin's camp Wednesday. "That's a true fact. I've never heard him swear. You never will. It's just not part of who he is and what he is about. I try to do the same, I'll be honest. That's the truth. It is not part of who he is."

Dutton was asked the same question and he says the same. Slavin, when asked about it, admits he's never done it in a way that is so mild-mannered, it would be as if asking someone if they've ever pumped gas before. He's the same way about drinking in that he's never felt the need to ever try alcohol.

Slavin said there were times growing up when other kids called him "The Christian Boy" but it never bothered him.

"Yes, they poke fun at you but they know you're the guy that they can come to if something is serious or something is happening or if they need someone to talk to, they know they can come to you," he said. "I remember a couple seasons ago, I got a message from my buddy on Facebook who I played with when I was 14. I get a message from him saying, 'Hey man. I know I may not have said this when I was 14 or whatever but you had an impact on my life back then because of the way you lived your life."

"I follow the Lord now. It didn't happen right then but that's where it started.' Just hearing those kind of instances where, yeah, all the fun-making just happens. ... I take it all with a smile, I guess."

Dutton shared a story about Slavin. OK, he shared quite a few. He said being involved in this camp helped him believe he could successfully make the transition from being an assistant men's basketball coach at his alma mater, Trinity Christian College in Illinois, to becoming a worship leader and tech director at his church.

"If I don't come to this camp last year ... I'm still doing things that are awesome but there is no way I am in ministry without this camp," Dutton said. "And without Jaccob."

Watching his childhood friend become an NHL success story while remaining grounded is "unreal" for Dutton to experience and he admits there is no way he could pull it off exactly like Slavin.

"Are you kidding me? He has tens of thousands of people that are booing him when he does bad and cheer for him when he does well and he goes every night completely unfazed," Dutton said. "Not that he doesn't care. Believe me. I have called him on a couple nights. Like that butt-whoopin' they took up in Washington and he wasn't happy after that but he went home and picked up his little girl and he's just fine."

Dutton recalled an anecdote about when Slavin signed a seven-year, \$37.1 million contract last summer. Like any friend, Dutton was stoked that Slavin was able to be heavily rewarded for all the years of hard work.

"He was like, 'Yeah, man, it's pretty exciting,'" said Dutton, who intentionally sounded flat to convey how matter of fact Slavin was about his new contract. "He's like, 'Dude, if I never played another game of hockey, that'd be OK with me.' I'm like, 'Dude? You're 24, you're making whatever you're making, you got a wife, you have a house in Raleigh. You're at the climax of life. You should be out partying and doing all this kind of stuff.'

"And he's like, 'Why? That's not going to glorify God.'"

Knowing his childhood friend has that mentality leads Dutton to say one more thing that might be the most profound statement of all when it comes to Jaccob Slavin.

"He's a man," Dutton said. "He's just the best one I know."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019



Tweetmail No. 220: Dzingelmail

by Michael Smith

And we're back!

It's been far too long. (Has it really been almost four months? Yes, apparently it has.) Welcome back to Tweetmail, (usually) a weekly feature on Hurricanes.com in which I take your Twitter questions about the Carolina Hurricanes or other assorted topics and answer them in mailbag form. Hopefully the final product is insightful to some degree, and maybe we have some fun along the way.

But wait. There's more! This isn't your typical Tweetmail, either. Answering your Twitter questions this week is Hurricanes forward Ryan Dzingel, who last week made his first visit to his new home in Raleigh.

Take it away, Ryan.

Grant Merritt@Gmerritt01

To Ryan: What are you looking towards most about Raleigh other than PNC Arena and it's crowd?

Probably just making this place my home. I haven't really had one place where I called home or bought a house and relaxed and enjoyed it, so I'm looking forward to actually making this my home.

Taylor@jtschult

How psyched is he to play for RBA based on initial conversations and what he has heard from other players?

I've heard nothing but great things. He's going to let you know where you stand. I like that. You have to keep yourself accountable, but it's good to know what the coaching staff feels about you, too.

andy veasey@freeveasey

Aside from Sebastian Aho, who are you most looking forward to playing with on this Carolina roster and why?

There are a lot of guys. Staal is cool. I watched him a lot when I was younger. Aho is pretty special. Our D corps is awesome. A little bit of everyone, to be honest. I'm sure once I get out there, I'll have a better feel for the guys. There are a lot of great players here.

Kaitlyn Alumbaugh@katie_030305

@MSmithCanes Does he know any of our players personally or has he played on the same team as them before?

No, I don't know anyone, which is kind of weird, but it's going to be cool.

Kevin Kohler@kohlerk08

#dzingelmail what was your favorite storm surge from last season?

I don't know. Duck, duck, goose was pretty funny.

kelly hruska@kehruska

#tweetmail #canescast Hi Ryan! Did you always play forward growing up playing hockey? What is your favorite thing about the position you play now? Do you like to play any other sports for fun?

I always played forward. Scoring goals is definitely the most fun, so I try to do that as much as I can.

Canes ftw@Tylerlakecanes

What rating should you be on nhl 20?

I don't even know. I haven't even looked what I'm at. It's probably pretty low. Bump me up a couple of spots. We'll see after this year.

Matthew Herman@mattyheman

What's your opinion on pizza with pineapples on it?

My family enjoys it a lot. Is that a Raleigh thing?

No.

I'm not a huge pineapple guy.

Do you have a go-to pizza topping then?

Deep dish with sausage in Chicago is pretty bomb.

Carolyn Gilbert@goCanes_score

For RD: What is one hockey and one non-hockey thing that #Canes fans might be interested to know about you? #dirtylittlesecrets #Tweetmail

I have a great country voice. I like a ton of country, like Luke Combs.

Scott Ensell@ScottEnsell

What can you tell us about your charity, the Ryan Dzingel foundation? What type of events could you see the foundation having here in the Triangle?

The last two years we've had a hockey camp for kids 18 and under. We had a lot of inner-city kids who came. We paid for all of them to come and all their gear and stuff, so that was pretty cool. We raised a lot of money for that. I actually want to do a golf tournament. I was going to do one this summer, but getting traded and then trying to find out where I was going, I'm definitely going to do a golf tournament here.

Cardiac Cane@CardiacCane



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019

Ryan, which emoji would you use to describe you. For example, Aho=🐼

That's a tough one. Tongue out one, I guess, I don't know.

Rob Sherwood@rcsherwo

Ryan, do you have any pregame traditions or superstitions? #tweetmail #canescast

No, but I eat chicken parm the night before every game, pretty much.

That was fun, no? Join me (not Dzingel) next week (promise!) for more questions and more answers!

If you have questions you'd like answered or you have some additional quires for Dzingel we can answer in the coming months, you can find me on Twitter at @MSmithCanes, or you can drop me an email.

YAHOO! SPORTS

Predicting NHL's breakout and bounce-back candidates for 2019-20

By Ryan Lambert

One of the things that got discussed a lot around the James Neal/Milan Lucic trade is that both could bounce back and enjoy better seasons with a change of scenery.

The broad acknowledgement, though, is that Neal is a far more likely candidate. Not only because, well, the track record is "20 goals without fail" and "he'll probably play with McDavid" but also because "Lucic looks washed" and "Calgary's bottom six is only a little better than Edmonton's."

As mentioned before, Neal scored seven goals last season and it was seen as a major failure. He had a low shooting percentage, too. By expected goals, he "should have" scored 13 or so in his 63 games, which is still rather low by comparison with what he typically puts up, and this is as a high-skill guy who typically outperforms his xG. When he was on the ice, the Flames scored only four more goals than expected, so they offset his lack of production a bit.

The idea that he would bounce back with a full season alongside Connor McDavid or Ryan Nugent-Hopkins and even pot 20-plus goals is easy to see, then.

Lucic, though, has been in this rut for two-plus years. In 79 games, he was only "supposed to" score 9.7 goals by xG, and scored six. That's underperformance, but even if he were exactly where he should have been, that's still a 10-goal season for a guy now costing Calgary \$5.25 million against the cap. Moreover, unlike Neal, the entire team underperformed around Lucic when he was on the ice, too. They generated more than 45 expected goals, and scored just 41.

And that's not a new thing: In 2017-18, Lucic was on the ice for almost 78 xG, but Edmonton scored just 63. Even accounting for his personal shortfall of about nine goals below expected (10 actual vs. 19.2 xG), the team was still short about six goals. Simply put, the guy's a black hole for goal scoring. He's where offense goes to die.

As you might imagine, these aren't the only guys who underperformed personally or with their teammates.

For instance, while the Carolina Hurricanes made the Eastern Conference Final last season, a bunch of their guys are at or near the top of the charts for differences between expected and actual goals.

Teenager Andrei Svechnikov was on the ice for a whopping 82 expected goals in all situations, but Carolina — with its famous struggles to score before acquiring Nino Niederreiter — only scored 62 when he was on the ice. And by expected goals, he should have netted nearly 25, but "only" had 20. The idea that he takes a considerable step next season is certainly not farfetched. Jordan Staal and Jordan Martinook, as well as Lucas Wallmark and Warren Foegele also ranked highly in these categories, so you have to be more confident that the offensive output for Carolina as a whole improves next season.

Another notable player in this realm is Max Pacioretty, because for all Vegas's success last season, he didn't come along for the ride at all. He scored 22 goals versus 18.5 expected across just 66 games, and it was his second straight injury-riddled season. As with Neal, this is a skilled goalscorer who tends to outperform his xG, so to even fall a little bit short is actually more disappointing.

But you can argue the results should have been better here because while he outperformed his personal expected output by 3.5 goals, the Golden Knights fell almost 10 goals short of expectations when he was on the ice. Are we talking about him in glowing terms if those 10 extra goals go in, or if the defense tightened up? Probably. Expected goals say Pacioretty should have been plus-20 in all situations last season; instead, he was plus-2. That's a big difference.

A couple other guys on this list are Islanders. The team was 12 short of its expected-goal total with Mathew Barzal on the ice, and 10 short with Jordan Eberle on. Surely there's overlap there, but both players personally did about what you'd expect by xG: Barzal (18 goals) just missed his 19.24 expected, Eberle (19) barely exceeded his 18.46 expected. So the fact that they fell so far short of offensive expectations largely seems a function of their lower-quality teammates, which wasn't really sorted out this summer. And with Robin Lehner departing, the Isles better hope like hell the other guys can start hitting their expected-goal totals.

Two last guys who strikes me as very intriguing here are Wayne Simmonds and Corey Perry, who missed their on-ice xG numbers by more than 11 and seven, respectively. Both had awful years (Perry's being the latest of two straight) and signed short-term, middling-money "prove-it" contracts.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019

I've seen a little bit about whether they can bounce back, but Perry scored six goals on close to 5.9 expected last year, right where he should have been in an injury-shortened campaign. I can see the argument that with a little bit more health he could be a 20ish goal guy, but I wouldn't be confident in that bet. Simmonds, though, had 17 on 22.4, which indicates he might be able to score a little more if he's put in the right situation. It's worth noting, however, that he only generated 2.4 expected goals on his own in 17 games for the Predators. That's a bad number and one that shouldn't exactly fill New Jersey with hope that last season was an aberration.

In both cases, I think those guys probably need a little more help than the players surrounding them on the Stars and Devils rosters can reasonably provide.

These are, of course, just kind of guesses. It's impossible to accurately predict things like health and luck, roster changes and so on. But these are basically all players that will be heavily relied upon by their teams to earn their keep and then some. Generally speaking, top players outperform their xG numbers pretty consistently since xG is a league-average measure.

If they continue to fall short of lofty expectations, based on their own play, let alone an average player's output, that could be a big problem for the teams that employ them. Just something to watch as the season progresses.



Checkers sign Cavan Fitzgerald to AHL deal

by Nicholas Niedzielski

The Checkers added another piece to the defensive corps Wednesday, signing Cavan Fitzgerald to a one-year, AHL contract.

The 22-year-old – who became an unrestricted free agent this offseason after not receiving a qualifying offer from the Sharks – spent his first two pro seasons in the San Jose system, where he logged 33 points (11g, 22a) in 112 AHL games for

the Barracuda. Last season Fitzgerald ranked second among team blue liners in goals (7) and fourth in points (20), both of which were career highs, and skated in all four of the Barracuda's postseason contests.

Prior to turning pro, the undrafted Boston native recorded 117 points (35g, 82a) in 150 QMJHL games over four seasons with Halifax and Shawnigan.

TODAY'S LINKS

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<https://sports.yahoo.com/predicting-nh-ls-breakout-and-bounceback-candidates-for-201920-143251492.html>

<http://gocheckers.com/articles/transactions/checkers-sign-cavan-fitzgerald-to-ahl-deal>



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019

SportScan

Articles from outlets covering the Hurricanes' upcoming opponents and league-wide news

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The Athletic / Using the best contracts in hockey to create the optimal NHL team

By Craig Custance Jul 24, 2019 88

It was a conversation centered around how the Blues were built for a story to be published in a couple weeks and, as things tend to do in the salary cap world, the talk shifted to salary structure. The St. Louis Blues are a fascinating study because they're an elite team without having players with exorbitant salaries. Unlike other league powers, they're not top heavy. Ryan O'Reilly and Vladimir Tarasenko have the highest cap hit at \$7.5 million and there's money spread throughout the roster.

"We'd love to keep it where we're making lots of guys wealthy and not two or three guys ultra rich," Blues GM Doug Armstrong said during a Tuesday morning phone conversation.

It's not always possible. But when you have, say, a Norris-caliber defenseman like Alex Pietrangelo coming in at \$6.5 million annually, it's a huge competitive advantage.

Some of the most interesting summer reading on The Athletic has been the work done by Dom Luszczyszyn breaking down the best and worst salaries across the league. He even graded out every contract in a piece that should be required summer reading material.

Since this is Lineup Week here at The Athletic, the idea was presented to try and maximize every dollar under the cap by using the best contracts in hockey to build a team, without cheating by using a bunch of entry-level deals.

Before leaving for a vacation Dom left behind a spreadsheet that had the team he thought was the most efficient along with each player's GSV (Game Score Value Added). The GSV is for their projected ice time on their actual teams. In reality, players lower in this lineup would have less value with less playing time on this team. The goalies GSV is per 60 starts. So here it is, our teamwork effort to produce the best possible lineup that would fit under the 2019-20 \$81.5 million cap ceiling:

Forwards

The fact that we can build a top line out of three great contracts on the same team goes to show you just how much a competitive advantage the Bruins have with this trio locked up at such reasonable numbers. None of these three players crack \$7 million annually, a number Kevin Hayes eclipsed this year before hitting the UFA market. Not only are these great contracts for great players, it also led to David Pastrnak being asked about his contract during the playoffs which led to this fantastic quote (via Mark Masters) to put it

all in perspective: "If you (told) me when I was 15, I'd be playing for \$6m a year (at) 22, I'd be like, 'I don't think you're saying the truth.' Just a dream come true. I'm happy for what I'm getting. I could be playing in Czech for a couple hundred a month."

GSVA

Marchand: 4.06

Bergeron: 4.95

Pastrnak: 4.28

Any time you can put the two guys who had the most Hart Trophy votes a couple years ago on the same line, you should do it. MacKinnon's contract is a famously great contract and it's a good lesson. His contract runs through 2022-23 at the very reasonable \$6.3 million per season. So let's talk about that one for a moment. Yes, it's an incredible deal for the Avalanche. It's also a reminder of the value that can be derived from betting on young skill when doing contracts. When he signed, he was coming off a 52-point season. That's when he locked in for seven years. He followed it up with a 53-point season, with just 16 goals. The contract didn't become a steal until he blew up the last couple seasons where he's been pushing 100 points. Was it inevitable that he would get to this point? Maybe. But it wasn't the lock it looks like now to be such a steal from the moment he signed it. As for Hall, the Devils should try to maximize getting him on the cheap this year because his price tag is about to jump considerably.

GSVA

Hall: 3.95

MacKinnon: 3.92

Gallagher: 2.35

For whatever reason, teams have had a lot of success signing young defensemen to extended, often team-friendly, deals coming out of entry-level. But typically, forwards seem to get a bridge before getting their long term contract. In Arvidsson's case, Nashville did well to get him locked in on a seven-year contract coming out of his entry-level contract with an AAV that looks better each year. There was a bit of risk involved — Arvidsson had just the one 30-goal season but again it was a bet on skill and it's paying off. He has averaged over 30 goals per season since signing it. Also, man, that Couturier contract is great. There's not a lot of Selke-level centers who score 30-goals making under \$5 million. Three more years left on that one too. The reality is that having contracts like that on the books give teams the luxury to overspend in free agency as the Flyers occasionally do. The Josh Anderson contract was the classic case of a team using their leverage when a player doesn't have arbitration rights. He'll cash in soon enough.

GSVA

Arvidsson: 2.57



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019

Couturier: 3.32

Anderson: 1.61

Labanc at \$1 million might be the best contract signed in the last year. Like Anderson, this was a case of a team being able to take advantage of their leverage. He didn't have arbitration rights. He didn't want to go anywhere. The Sharks are squeezed against the cap. So he had to do the deal and hope to make it up in the next deal when he has more leverage. In a story by Kevin Kurz, Labanc's agent, Mike Curran, said the Sharks track record of taking care of their players down the line made them more comfortable to make this deal: "You've got to look at their past to understand the reasoning behind some of the deals and why they're doing things. They're a (team that spends to the cap). The proof is in the pudding when you see what they give some of their older guys, and guys that have been there a while they're rewarded with some good money."

GSVA

Guentzel: 3.21

Staal: 2.74

Labanc: 1.04

Defense

The Predators get one more season out of Roman Josi with his incredible cap hit of just \$4 million. He's not on this list, but the combination of Mattias Ekholm and Josi for under \$8 million combined is pretty ridiculous... The John Klingberg contract was a great one from the moment the ink dried but it's also another good lesson. The Stars offered him a seven-year contract just 65 games into his NHL career. They definitely took a risk there. "It's pretty hard to say no to that," Klingberg said when I asked him about it a couple years ago. "I was having that conversation with my agent – I felt, when you sign, you have to be happy with what you're doing. Right then and there, I might regret it long term if I didn't sign it... the financial part covered your whole life."... Morrissey and Spurgeon are in the final years of their contract so those deals are about to jump.

GSVA

Josi: 2.31

Klingberg: 2.83

Morrissey: 1.72

Spurgeon: 2.80

Grzelczyk: 0.93

Pulock: 2.08

Goaltenders

There are quite a few Predators on this list, a big reason they had the flexibility to hit the free-agent market and sign Matt Duchene to a contract worth \$8 million per season. Saros has two more years on a contract that averages \$1.5 million per season. It's a great deal, especially when you consider there are backup goalies around the league making twice that salary. The turnaround of Jack Campbell's career has quietly been one of hockey's more remarkable stories. He now has a .925 save percentage in 38 NHL games after nearly flaming out. It's a huge credit to his resilience and we're thrilled to have him on this roster at such a cheap price.

GSVA

Saros: 2.84

Campbell: 2.33

TOTAL IN SALARIES: \$78.6 million

The Athletic LOADED: 07.25.2019

1107604 Websites

The Athletic / Inside the secret lives of the NHL Insiders and how they unwind for the summer

By Sean Fitz-Gerald Jul 24, 2019 42

Darren Dreger sent 45 text messages on a recent flight to Vancouver from Toronto. He is not proud to admit that he often looks at his phone when he is inside a movie theatre. His charger is never far from reach and he usually carries an external battery.

"I'll shut my phone off at funerals," he said. "I won't shut it off at weddings. I'll put it on vibrate."

As one of the main NHL news-breakers at TSN, the married father of two is essentially on call 24 hours a day from the start of training camp through the first few days of free agency. There are hirings, firings and trades. Rules are debated, teams are sold and, in between all of that, actual games are played.

Dreger is part of a relatively exclusive group where members are expected to not only be fluent in each of those issues but to also lead the conversation. Their words — on TSN or Sportsnet platforms — are shared widely and are parsed for further meaning on social media.

Many spend their winters on the road, following the news and games until their airline and hotel status reward cards are preceded by words such as super or elite. Now, with the draft and the awards and the opening of free agency having been dutifully covered, the on-air personalities are working on the final piece of their schedule: Vacation season.

"At 8 p.m., my flight leaves Toronto after the free agency show," said TSN analyst Ray Ferraro. "When the nose of the plane starts going upward, my season is over."

Media has become a volatile industry, with cutbacks and layoffs and job losses across all sectors, including sports. None of the personalities contacted for this story complained about their jobs or the conditions under which they work. Ferraro, for example, said the relief he feels watching the nose of that airplane go skyward is not tied to getting away from the job — it is more about the chance to exhale after running a marathon all winter.

Gord Miller, the TSN personality, estimated he spends more than 160 days away from home during the season. Christine Simpson, from Sportsnet, estimated she was gone for more than 120 days. Jeff Marek said he could never go without watching hockey, even for a little break from this Sportsnet job, without feeling guilty about it.

"We're not surgeons, and we're not doing brain surgery in the middle of the night," said TSN insider Bob McKenzie. "It doesn't stop us from going out and drinking too much sometimes, or whatever."

McKenzie helped to revolutionize what it meant to be a hockey insider. Along his path to becoming the "Bobfather," he had to develop shorthand with his family. It was difficult to make plans to do



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019

just about anything during the hockey season, so if he was ever asked to commit to attending a function, he would say yes, but offer the caveat "all things being equal."

The translation: Sure, unless someone calls with news.

You cannot be an insider Monday to Friday. It is seven days a week. And the result, as McKenzie said: "We're at family functions and they get sick of us looking at our phone, or having to duck out to take a call, or send a text or be late for something."

Dreger said that when the Florida Panthers fired coach Mike Keenan early in the 2003 season, he got a phone call at 3 a.m. He has gotten story tips when he has been out with friends, and he has gotten calls when he has been out with family. And yes, he has gotten tips at church, during weddings.

"Pretty much every member of my family — both kids and my wife — has broken news via Twitter while I am driving," he said with a chuckle. "Obviously, I can't type, so I am dictating to them what they need to tweet. They're my alias in the moment."

That has happened more times than he can count.

"I've kind of made it my mantra that there's no such thing as a small trade or a small signing," he said. "So as long as that information comes my way, I'm going to make sure that I get it out."

Marek is not an insider, per se, but he has to stay connected to all of the stories for his work on air. He is on the radio and on television. He anchored Sportsnet's marathon trade deadline coverage.

He said he refused to miss even a night or two of hockey during the season. If he did, Marek said he would "feel like a fraud going on the air."

"It's one of the easiest jobs you can imagine: Watch hockey games, and then go talk about them," he said with a laugh. "If I can't pull my own personal act together to watch hockey games every single night, then something's really wrong."

Simpson watches a lot of games for a living, too, except hers are almost always in person. She has to be in a city the day before a game, and she leaves the day after. Every one-off game means she is away for three days. She estimated she ended up with more than 30 games this season.

"I have a suitcase that is perpetually packed all winter," she said with a laugh.

Miller, a play-by-play voice for hockey at TSN, figured he takes more than 110 flights a year. He said he spent 65 days working in the United States alone last year, not including travel days. Many of those travel days are spent with Ferraro, his long-time broadcast partner.

"We've been on the road for, I think, a dozen years together," Miller said. "I don't know that we've ever had a fight. I can't think of one."

Ferraro estimated he logs 150,000 miles with Air Canada a year. In addition to his work during games, the retired NHL forward said he does 15 radio interviews every week, which adds up to more than 500 a season.

He had a plan for summer.

Ferraro planned to golf three or four times a week. He was going to catch up on his reading, and he was going to spend as much time as he could with his children and grandchildren. He was also going to renew an unexpected summer tradition: He was taking his family camping.

"I couldn't be more useless setting up a tent or anything," he said. "I'm just the pack mule, basically. But I just love it."

Simpson said she planned to reconnect with friends and family. She has taken big trips over the last two summers — to India and Kenya — and was going to start planning another one. She was also planning to finally get around to some renovations on her home.

Miller enjoys tennis and cycling around Toronto. Marek has two sons in competitive baseball and was planning to spend a large chunk of his summer around diamonds in Kitchener and Windsor and Guelph and other stops around Ontario.

Dreger said he has gotten better at turning off the switch over the years. It used to take him 10 days before he could stop monitoring his phone to check with sources, or to see what stories fellow insiders such as Elliotte Friedman, Chris Johnston or Pierre LeBrun (who also works at The Athletic) might have broken.

He conceded that McKenzie, his long-time co-worker, was also a role model.

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT I ANNOUNCE THE TIME HAS COME. HE HAS RETURNED. BOBBY MARGARITA IS BACK. @TSNBOBMCKENZIE PIC.TWITTER.COM/LKN2CDAH3Y

— SHAWN MCKENZIE (@SHAWNMCKENZIESN) JULY 3, 2017

"I aspire to be Bobby Margarita," Dreger said with a laugh. "I want nothing more than to be able to fire up the mixed drink machine on July 2. Unfortunately, Bob has seniority, and I don't have such luxuries.

"So while he heads off to his compound — and it's no longer just a cottage, it's literally a compound — some of us do have to hang in there and mind the shop."

McKenzie has indeed developed a tradition on July 1. He is usually the last one out the door on the big day, sticking around just to clear out the odds and ends of the initial frenzy of news items. He might be in his car by 8 p.m., and then he will roll down his windows and open the sunroof.

He will point the car toward his cottage and put a 45-year-old Lynyrd Skynyrd song on the stereo: "Call Me The Breeze."

"For that first day or two it's hard, because there's still usually a fair amount of activity, and the people you talk to are sending you stuff," he said. "You know what? It's vacation time. All year long, we've taken time away from our families, so you've just got to bite the bullet and say 'that's it.'"

The Athletic LOADED: 07.25.2019

1107605 Websites

The Athletic / Down Goes Brown: Who was the worst player to ever be traded one-for-one for a future Hall of Famer?

By Sean McIndoe Jul 24, 2019 82

While there hasn't been a ton of big news over the last few weeks, we have seen a handful of trades. The Hawks made two of them, sending Artem Anisimov to Ottawa for Zack Smith and Henri



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019

Jokiharju to Buffalo for Alexander Nylander. And then there was the big one, last week's Milan Lucic for James Neal swap.

That one led to Bob McKenzie getting a little bit cheeky on Twitter.

I DO FEEL OBLIGED TO SAY THIS: THE LUCIC-NEAL CGY-EDM TRADE IS ONE FOR ONE. ☺

&Mdash; BOBBY MARGARITA (@TSNBOBMCKENZIE) JULY 19, 2019

That's a callback to this all-timer about the Taylor Hall deal, but it highlights something neat about the last few weeks of deals: They were all classic one-for-ones.

I've always loved the humble one-for-one trade. I can appreciate the occasional nine-player blockbuster as much as the next guy, but there's just something about the simplicity of one player going each way in a deal. It's the sports equivalent of buying something with exact change. No draft picks, no prospects, no list of depth guys or fringe minor leaguers to balance out the ledger. Just two players switching teams, and two GMs betting that their new guy will be better than their old one.

The Lucic-for-Neal trade might not stay a one-for-one, thanks to the inclusion of a truly spectacular conditional third-round pick. But for now, it can be included in a category with a rich if uneven history. Crack open the NHL record books, and you'll find one-for-one trades that include multiple Hall of Famers (Pronger-for-Shanahan, Sawchuk-for-Bucyk), very good players (Middleton-for-Hodge) and current-day stars (Weber-for-Subban). Some of them worked out great for both teams (Jones-for-Johansen). Some of them very much did not (Hall-for-Larsson, Rask-for-Raycroft, Naslund-for-Stojanov).

But today, I want to go in a slightly different direction, with what might seem like a weird question: Who's the least successful player to ever be traded straight up in a one-for-one deal for a future Hall of Famer?

At first glance, you'd think the list would be a pretty short one. After all, future Hall of Famers tend to be pretty good. You'd figure that if you were going to be traded for one, you'd have to be pretty good too. And usually, yeah, that turns out to be the case. But not always, because this is the NHL. Sometimes circumstances get weird and stuff happens.

So, let's look at five players who it might surprise you to learn can claim to have been traded one-for-one for a future Hall of Famer. (All trade details are from hockey-reference.com.)

Jim Montgomery

Technically, Guy Carbonneau isn't a Hall of Famer yet; that will have to wait for the induction ceremony in November. But he's now officially a future Hall of Famer, so we can use him to build our list. And as it turns out, he offers us two possibilities. Carbonneau was traded twice in his career, and both were underwhelming one-for-one deals. In 1995, he went from St. Louis to Dallas for Paul Broten, who wasn't a superstar but at least put together a solid career. So instead, let's use Carbonneau's other trade, which came in 1994 and saw him dealt from Montreal to St. Louis for 25-year-old sophomore (and Montreal native) Jim Montgomery.

The trade was a big deal in Montreal, where Carbonneau had played 13 seasons, winning three Selkes and two Cups, including one in 1993 as captain. One year after that championship, and just days after the team was eliminated from the playoffs, a Montreal newspaper ran a front-page cover of Carbonneau giving the finger to a photographer at a golf course. The team claimed that the trade had nothing to do with the controversy, although it's fair to say that

not everyone believed them. Either way, Carbonneau was himself stunned by the trade, as were many fans.

In exchange, the Canadiens received a young center who'd been a college star and was coming off a 20-point rookie season. He made the Habs to start the lockout-shortened season, appearing in five games without recording a point. That would spell the end of his career as a Canadien; just two weeks into the season, the Flyers claimed him on waivers, leaving Montreal with nothing to show for trading away their captain.

Montgomery would spend parts of two seasons in Philadelphia and several more in the minors before resurfacing in the NHL with the Sharks and later Stars. In all, from the day he was traded straight up for Carbonneau he'd play just 55 NHL games, scoring three goals and 14 points.

So no, Jim Montgomery didn't end up being much of an NHL player, despite once being traded for a Hall of Famer. But if the name sounds familiar, it's because he's back in the league now, having slightly more success as the head coach of the Dallas Stars.

Yan Golubovsky

Golubovsky was a Russian defenseman who'd been a first-round pick by the Red Wings in 1994. He didn't debut until 1997, playing a dozen games for the Wings over a one-month stretch before being sent back down. He bounced up and down for three seasons, playing a total of 50 games and scoring one goal while mostly holding down AHL duties.

When he didn't make the NHL roster out of camp in 2000, the team finally cut bait. And they did it by reacquiring a recent Wing. Igor Larionov had spent five years in Detroit before heading to Florida as a free agent in the 2000 offseason, presumably to center countryman Pavel Bure. That move had been a bust for everyone involved, with Larionov playing poorly, feuding with the coaching and staff and generally making a nuisance of himself. When the Wings came calling and Larionov agreed to waive his no-trade clause, the Panthers jumped at the chance to fold a bad hand, and a Larionov-for-Golubovsky trade was born.

Larionov played three more solid seasons for the Wings, including a 2002 Cup run in which he scored a massive goal. As for Florida, the deal was overshadowed by bigger news, as the Panthers fired GM Bryan Murray and coach Terry Murray on the same day. But they promised their fans that Golubovsky would play for the Panthers one day. He did – six games, to be exact. They'd be the last of his NHL career, as he'd head back to Russia after the season.

Ken Block

This one's a bit of a weird one. It involves Red Kelly, a legend who spent 20 years in the NHL, was an all-star eight times and who won eight Cups while playing a key role in dynasties in Detroit and Toronto. Also, he was once traded straight up for Ken Block, who you have never heard of.

It all happened in 1967, after Kelly had just captured his final Cup with the Maple Leafs. He announced his retirement, and agreed to become the head coach of the expansion Los Angeles Kings. But Leafs GM Punch Imlach insisted that the Kings had to obtain Kelly's rights first, and would have to use one of their expansion selections to take him. The Kings refused, leading to a standoff that was only resolved when the two teams agreed to a trade. Heading to Toronto was Ken Block, a minor-league blueliner who you have to admit had a pretty good name for a defenseman.

After all of that, Block never played for the Leafs. He spent three more years in the minors before ending up in the system of the



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019

Vancouver Canucks for their expansion 1970-71 season. He finally cracked the NHL there, making his debut and playing the game of his life. Literally. He played one game, went back down to the minors, and never saw the ice in the NHL again.

Block would go on to a decent WHA career, and Kelly coached in the NHL for 10 seasons, so maybe this one worked out well for everyone involved. But it's probably the only one-for-one trade involving a Hall of Famer that saw the two players involved combine to play exactly one NHL game after it was made.

Hey, what about ...

Only because I know it's going to come up in the comment sections, let's flag a few trades you might be expecting to see mentioned. If you're like me, you probably have a few trades filed away that you think were one-for-one deals that actually turn out not to be.

For example, the infamous trade that sent Dominik Hasek from Chicago to Buffalo for Stephane Beauregard wasn't a one-for-one — it also included a fourth-round pick (that the Hawks turned into a pretty decent player in Eric Daze). The same is true for the Cam Neely for Barry Pederson deal, although in that case it's even worse because the Canucks gave up the Hall of Famer and the pick.

There was also a pick involved in deals like Murphy-for-Mironov as well as in Gartner-for-Dahlen. (And no, a trade where a player is dealt for a single draft pick isn't a one-for-one, at least not in the spirit of what we're going for here.)

I didn't include cases of Hall of Famers being traded for guys who were still pretty good, like Zubov-for-Hatcher, Vachon-for-Gilbert, Coffey-for-Emerson or Ciccarelli-for-Miller. That's also the category where you'd have to slot in Anson Carter, a solid middle-six winger who scored 200 goals in the NHL and was once traded straight up for one of the greatest players in league history who was still in his prime. That trade was more about salary and cost-cutting, but it still stands out as one of the strangest one-for-one swaps in NHL history.

OK, let's take it home with a few more ...

Lou Fontinato

It's one thing to be traded straight up for a very good player, or even a no-doubt-about-it future Hall of Famer. It's another thing entirely to be traded for the greatest defenseman to that point in the history of the sport.

That's what happened to Fontinato, a hard-nosed Rangers defenseman in the 1950s who's probably best remembered for his nose not quite being hard enough to withstand a fight with Gordie Howe. Despite that one-sided loss, Fontinato continued to make his name as one of the toughest players in the NHL, and could arguably be called one of the league's first true enforcers.

While Fontinato was slugging his way through the league, Montreal's Doug Harvey was rewriting the record book. In 10 seasons between 1951 and 1961, Harvey won six Norris Trophies and was named to the first all-star team nine times. (In the other season, he was named to the second team. That qualified as an off year for Harvey.) He was also heavily involved in efforts to organize players into a union and fight for better rights and contracts. That didn't win him many friends among NHL owners and is widely considered to have led to the Canadiens' decision to trade him in 1961.

The deal ended up sending Harvey to the Rangers, where he became one of the last men in NHL history to serve double duty as player and head coach. He'd win his seventh Norris in that first season, finishing as runner-up in Hart voting in the process. He played another full season in New York, then bounced between the

NHL and AHL for much of the 1960s before playing one last year for the Blues in 1968-69 at the age of 44.

As for Fontinato, he lasted two seasons in Montreal, scoring four goals before suffering a career-ending neck injury in 1963 in a game against his former team. He passed away a few years ago, and was remembered as "the toughest NHL player of his time."

Theo Ruth

We'll close with the story of Ruth, a defenseman who was picked in the second round of the 2007 draft by the Capitals, just three picks after Montreal snagged a fellow blueliner named P.K. Subban. Ruth was more of a defensive defenseman and had spent the last two years with the U.S. Development Program's under-18 team. He committed to Notre Dame, where he'd spend three years before turning pro.

He wouldn't get the chance to do it with the Capitals, thanks to a 2008 trade deadline deal that sent him to the Blue Jackets for Sergei Fedorov. (I'll pause here so we can all collectively realize that we're vaguely aware of the Fedorov-in-Columbus era.) It wasn't exactly a blockbuster, since Fedorov was 38 years old and well-removed from his days as one of the league's best two-way players. But the deal still created some excitement, since it suggested that Fedorov might get to play with fellow Russian legend Alexander Ovechkin.

Fedorov was decent in Washington, scoring 13 points in 18 regular season games and adding five more in a first-round playoff loss. He returned the following year, adding 33 points to his career total in what would be his final NHL season. He remained active in the KHL until 2012 and didn't hang up his skates until an appearance in the Spengler Cup in 2013.

That creates some nice symmetry with Ruth, who also retired in 2013. He played for Team USA at the 2009 world juniors and spent four years in the AHL and ECHL, but never did make the NHL, as the league slowly moved away from the type of hard-working stay-at-home style that he excelled at. That makes him one of the rare players — and maybe even the only one — who can say he was traded straight up for a Hall of Famer without ever actually playing in the NHL.

Honorable mention: Alan Haworth

Yeah, we're going to need a ruling on this one.

Haworth was a center who played about 500 games during the '80s for the Sabres, Capitals and Nordiques. He was fine, but didn't exactly rack up the accolades; he received one second-place vote for the 1986 Selke, and that's it.

But he was traded for a Hall of Famer. It happened in 1991, and the deal was indeed one for one. And Haworth was definitely a bad NHL player at the time, in the sense that he hadn't played in the league for over three years.

But I don't think he can be on this list, based on a technicality. We said we were looking for guys who were traded for future Hall of Famers. Three years after his career ended, in one of the strangest trades in NHL history, Haworth was traded straight up for a guy who was already in the Hall of Fame.

Yeah, this one gets weird. I'll explain.

The Hall of Famer in question is Guy Lafleur, the legendary Canadiens sniper who racked up 514 goals in 14 years in Montreal. He stunned the hockey world in 1984 by retiring during the season, partly due to disputes with the organization, and was inducted into the Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility in 1988. Then he made a comeback, joining the Rangers for the 1988-89 season and



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • July 25, 2019

becoming the league's second active Hall of Famer after Gordie Howe. (Mario Lemieux would later become another.)

So far, so good. But things get really odd after Lafleur plays two seasons with Quebec. That brings us to 1991, when the Nordiques are terrible. At this point Lafleur is 39 and ready to retire for good and join the team's front office. But first comes that weird expansion draft involving the Sharks and North Stars, in which every other NHL team had to lose one player. Nobody wanted anyone from the last-place Nordiques, and the rules said you couldn't pass, so Stars GM Bobby Clarke used his last pick on Lafleur, knowing he'd never play.

It was meant to be a harmless bit of paperwork, but it ended up creating a problem with echoes of the Red Kelly situation: Because his rights were now owned by another team, Lafleur couldn't take that front-office job with the Nordiques. So the two teams hooked up on a trade that would send Lafleur back to Quebec in exchange for Haworth, who was playing in the Swiss league with no intention of ever returning to the NHL. It was the only trade of Lafleur's career.

So there you have it. One of the strangest trades in NHL history, and one that makes Alan Haworth the undisputed titleholder as the worst player to ever be traded for a player who was already in the Hall of Fame.

The Athletic LOADED: 07.25.2019

1107606 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Calgary Flames' Bennett hoping to complement physical game

Eric Francis | @EricFrancis July 24, 2019, 11:51 PM

For a player as fearless as Sam Bennett, the prospect of heading to arbitration Saturday was no more daunting than a dental appointment.

"I wouldn't say I was worried about it – I was actually kind of curious about what it was like," said the Calgary Flames winger of the boardroom bloodbath most players pray to avoid.

"But I'm happy it's all done."

The restricted free agent agreed to a two-year deal with the Flames at \$2.55 million annually on Wednesday.

His curiosity now matches that of his fan base, wondering if he'll be on the third line with Milan Lucic and Mark Jankowski as part of a decidedly unpleasant trio to play against.

"For sure I think that's a possibility," said Bennett, a left-shot winger who said he'd be comfortable switching to right wing to accommodate the Flames high-priced trade acquisition.

"I think he's one of the scariest guys to play against in the league. Anytime you get to add a guy like that to your team or especially your line it makes you feel a lot taller.

"He's one of the most intimidating players I've ever played against. That's something we did need a little bit, and I'm sure he'll be a good addition. I talked to a few guys and everyone is excited. A couple of guys that know him said he's a great guy and a great guy in the room."

A weekly deep dive into the biggest hockey news in the world with hosts Elliotte Friedman and Jeff Marek. New episodes every Thursday.

Last season the six-foot-one, 195-pound Bennett became a fan favourite by assuming a relative tough-guy role, leading the team with a career-high 93 penalty minutes, which included five fights.

He finished second on the squad in hits, stood up for teammates whenever it was called for and became an aggressive menace many nights.

Credit to the 23-year-old, it was a role he was never asked to play – he simply figured it out.

"That was never discussed – it kind of just came into its own," said Bennett, whose mindset behind taking the evolved role speaks to maturity and experience that betrays his age.

"At times during the year, you have to do things to help the team win if you're not producing or getting a chance that way. You've got to help the team or you're really not going to get the opportunity."

"I think this year I took a lot more physical and aggressive role. I was sticking up for my teammates if the situation presented itself and I was comfortable with that role. Every team needs that.

"I'm definitely not going to change my game – I was happy with the physical play and the aggression this year – that's part of my game. But I hope to add a little more offensive upside."

Drafted fourth overall in 2014, the expectation was certainly for Bennett to score at a much higher clip than the 13 goals and 27 points he had last season.

He hasn't given up on regaining the scoring touch he had in junior, and the team is certainly betting on him to improve in that vein.

"I don't want to be known as just a physical, aggressive player – I still believe in myself and I can add a lot more offensively," said the versatile Bennett, who will be an RFA once again when his deal concludes.

Bennett further endeared himself to fans this spring when he led the team in playoff scoring (one goal, four helpers) in a five-game dismissal by Colorado.

He was arguably the Flames best skater, much like four years earlier in the playoffs against Vancouver when he and Micheal Ferland first made names for themselves.

"I thought I played a lot more like myself – a lot more confident," said Bennett, who has battled confidence issues throughout his four full seasons in the NHL.

"I want to be that aggressive and effective player to start the season and roll from there."

Pinder and Steinberg

Jul. 24: Bennett Signs

July 24 2019

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Bennett's signing leaves the club with \$7.42 million left to sign RFAs Matthew Tkachuk, Andrew Mangiapane and starting netminder David Rittich, who has an arbitration hearing scheduled for Monday.

Even with an inevitable buyout of Michael Stone's final season, saving \$2.33 million in cap space, GM Brad Treliving will almost



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certainly have to shed salary by way of trade to make the finances work.

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Sportsnet.ca / Laine, Connor in focus as Winnipeg Jets' salary cap picture becomes clear

Sean Reynolds July 23, 2019, 6:45 PM

With the signing of Neal Pionk and Andrew Copp's arbitration decision rendered, you can ring the bell to begin the main event of the Winnipeg Jets' off-season.

Frustrated fans who don't understand why one established Jet after another left the team this summer should know those decisions came down to one thing: leaving enough money on the table to re-sign restricted free agents Patrik Laine and Kyle Connor. Both players are set for massive pay raises so allowing the likes of Tyler Myers, Brandon Tanev, Ben Chiarot and Jacob Trouba to leave was a must to free up the kind of money it will take to lock those two players down.

So with Connor and Laine now the last two Jets remaining at the bargaining table, the waters surrounding Winnipeg's cap space have become quite clear. Unfortunately for the Jets there are sharks circling in those waters, threatening to turn this situation into a feeding frenzy.

We know other teams have contacted Connor's agent with interest in his client. Those calls started on the opening day of the RFA speaking period back on June 26 and Sportsnet has learned that contact has continued past July 1. Those teams interested in Connor now have a solid handle on the financial constraints Jets GM Kevin Cheveldayoff is facing and how that situation could be used against him.

It's bad enough having one highly attractive RFA left to sign with defined cap space. Having two is double trouble.

Let's use Connor as the example. Should a rival GM produce an offer sheet, every dollar it takes to keep Connor is a dollar taken away from re-signing Laine. So overpaying for one through an offer sheet simply makes it easier to follow up with an offer sheet on the other (should the Jets match).

Call it the San Jose Sharks blueprint. Back in 2010 the Chicago Blackhawks came off winning the Stanley Cup only to be greeted with an off-season cap crunch that included RFAs Niklas Hjalmarsson and Antti Niemi. The San Jose Sharks recognized the pinch Chicago was in and extended an offer sheet to Hjalmarsson. The Hawks matched and it looked like Sharks GM Doug Wilson's strategy had failed.

But it didn't.

The Hjalmarsson contract Wilson orchestrated ran the Hawks out of the money they needed to re-sign Niemi. So when Niemi was awarded a one-year, \$2.75 million contract in arbitration that the Hawks couldn't fit under the cap, they walked away from the ruling and made Niemi a UFA. Shortly after, the goalie signed with San Jose.

Fast forward to the present and any GM looking to add a high-powered scorer could use a similar blueprint against the Jets. Neither Laine or Connor are heading to arbitration this summer, but a big offer sheet on either could force Winnipeg's hand and put them in a one-or-the-other position.

Ryan Dixon and Rory Boylen go deep on pucks with a mix of facts and fun, leaning on a varied group of hockey voices to give their take on the country's most beloved game.

BY THE NUMBERS

With the potential for that strategy hanging in the air, the numbers become vitally important.

After Copp's arbitration award the Jets now find themselves with \$17,592,503 remaining in cap space, accounting for 10 forwards, seven defencemen and two goalies, per CapFriendly. Should they fill out their roster with 13 forwards (and they don't have to, which gives them some cap flexibility) the three players the Jets would use to do that would probably cost roughly \$750,000 per man. That leaves about \$15.25 million to re-sign both Connor and Laine.

That's not a small number, but it does leave rival GMs with plenty of room to apply the San Jose Sharks blueprint.

A WAY OUT

While the numbers do make the Jets look vulnerable, they have options. Three days following the resolution of Copp's arbitration a 48-hour buyout window will open which would allow the Jets an opportunity to increase their cap space in 2019-20.

Common wisdom suggests defenceman Dmitry Kulikov could be a candidate for a buyout, should it come to that. With one year left on his contract at \$4.33 million, Kulikov hasn't provided good value in the third pairing role he's occupied. Buying him out would save the Jets some cash, but more importantly free up an extra \$2.88 million in cap space.

If that's still not enough, Cheveldayoff could also shed salary via trade, although making moves while backed into a corner hardly allows him to deal from a position of strength.

In all it means the Jets still have some flexibility in this situation, though probably not as much as Cheveldayoff would like. Allowing other GMs to do your negotiating for you is a good way to lose control over salary structure and that issue would be compounded should an offer sheet walk Laine or Connor to early unrestricted free agency.

One thing is certain: if a team is searching for a dynamic young talent with the ability to fill the net, Winnipeg is a good place to look right now.

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