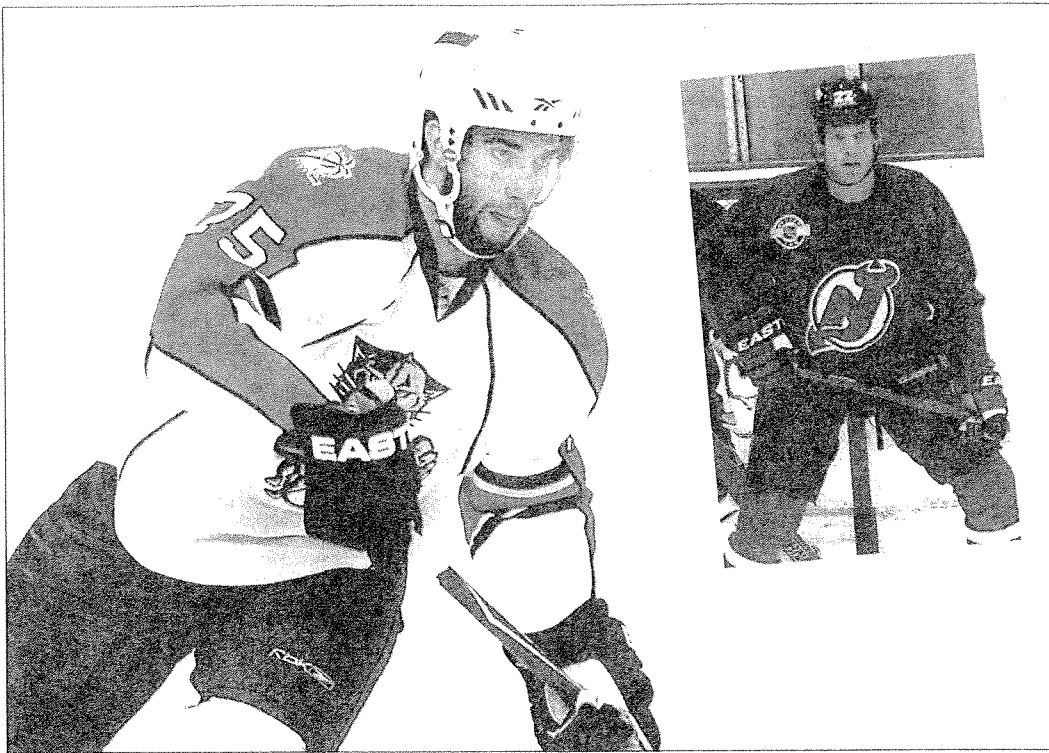


NEW JERSEY DEVILS NEWSPAPER CLIPS

SEPTEMBER 29, 2013



ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO; RECORD FILE PHOTO (INSET)

Devils trade Krys Barch (inset) to Panthers for Scott Timmins, who will be sent to Albany.

Devs tweak roster

Send enforcer to Florida for prospect

By **TOM GULITTI**
STAFF WRITER

NEWARK - The Devils moved a step closer to setting their season-opening roster Saturday by unloading enforcer Krys Barch in a trade with the Florida Panthers.

The Devils sent Barch, 33, and a 2015 seventh-round pick (previously acquired from St. Louis) to the Panthers for a 2014 sixth-round pick and 24-year-old center Scott Timmins, who will be assigned to Albany of the AHL.

The move trims the Devils' NHL roster to 27 players. Teams have until 3 p.m. Monday to cut their rosters to 23.

With goaltender Keith Kinkaid sure to be sent to Albany once Martin Brodeur returns from attending his father's funeral in Montreal, that would leave three more cuts to be made.

Barch, who played 41 games for the Panthers in 2011-12 before sign-

ing a two-year, \$1.5 million contract with the Devils as an unrestricted free agent July 5, 2012, had no points and 29 penalty minutes in three games this preseason. His departure leaves Cam Janssen as the lone enforcer left on the roster, but that doesn't necessarily mean that Janssen won't get sent down before Monday's deadline. (He would have to be placed on waivers today to clear at noon Monday.)

"No decisions have been made right now," Devils general manager Lou Lamoriello said. "We're not concerned about toughness with our team right now."

Timmins played five games for the Panthers in 2012-13, and 19 games for current Devils coach Pete DeBoer in Florida in 2010-11 and had one goal and no assists.

The 5-foot-11, 191-pound native of Hamilton, Ontario, was drafted in the sixth round by the Panthers in 2009. He had 11 goals and 13 assists in 65 AHL games last season with

San Antonio.

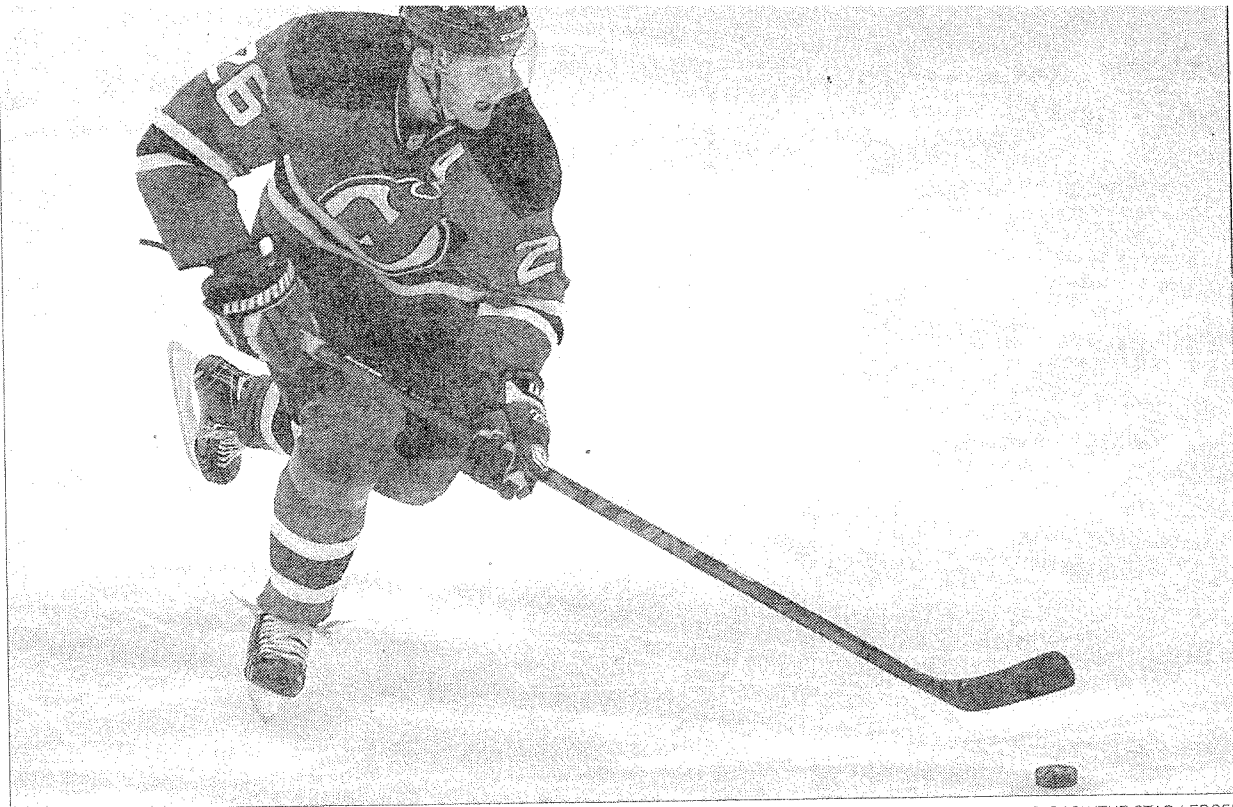
ELIAS' STATUS UNCERTAIN: Forward Patrik Elias did not practice again Saturday and has not skated since Tuesday's preseason game in Philadelphia because of soreness. A sore groin kept Elias off the ice for two days early in training camp, but he said his groin is not the issue now.

"My groin is fine," Elias said. "I was a little sore after the Philly game, so we're just being [cautious], I guess."

Elias said he's not concerned right now that he might miss the Devils' regular-season opener Thursday in Pittsburgh, but also wasn't ready to say he's certain he'll play.

"I guess we'll see after the weekend," Elias said. "We'll see how I feel after [today]. We have a day off [today], so a couple of days of rest again."

Devils and Rangers
schedules on **S-10**



SAED HINDASH/THE STAR-LEDGER

Devils left wing Patrik Elias, seen skating last season, says he is nursing a "mysterious" injury.

DEVILS

Elias may have to skip opener

By Rich Chere
STAR-LEDGER STAFF

It has been a cautious preseason for Devils forward Patrik Elias, who played in only two of the team's six exhibition games while periodically sitting out practices to rest a sore groin.

But now Elias, 37, isn't sure he'll be able to play in Thursday night's regular-season opener in Pittsburgh because of a different, unspecified injury.

"I guess we'll see after the weekend. We have a day off tomorrow, so that's a couple days of rest again," said Elias, who sat out yesterday's practice but worked out off-ice. "It depends on how I feel on the ice again Monday or Tuesday, whenever I'm ready to practice again."

Elias was in good spirits and joked that he is nursing a "mysterious" injury.

"My groin is fine," he said. "I was a little sore after the Philly game, so I'm just being cautious."

General manager Lou Lamoriello said of the injury: "Nothing to be

alarmed about."

Timmins acquired: Lamoriello trimmed his roster to 27 players yesterday when he traded winger Krys Barch to the Florida Panthers along with their seventh pick in the 2015 entry draft for minor-league center Scott Timmins and Florida's sixth pick in 2014.

Timmins, 24, is a 5-11, 191 pound centerman who had been playing for the San Antonio Rampage (AHL). In 24 career NHL games with the Panthers (five last season) he had one goal and no assists with 12 penalty minutes.

The Hamilton, Ontario, native was drafted in the sixth round (165th overall) by the Panthers in the 2009 entry draft.

The Devils had previously acquired the seventh-round pick in 2015 from the St. Louis Blues in last season's trade for Matt D'Agostini.

Barch, the 6-1, 220-pound enforcer, played 22 games for the Devils last season and had no points with 44 penalty minutes. He had signed with the Devils as a free agent in July 2012

after playing 41 games for the Panthers in 2011-12.

Lamoriello, who must make four more cuts to get his roster down to 23 by 3 p.m. tomorrow, said the trade does not necessarily mean fighting winger Cam Janssen will make the team.

"There are no decisions on anything. We're not concerned about toughness with our team right now," Lamoriello said.

Lamoriello said the Barch trade was made partially because of "what we see in camp and for our roster."

Jagr update: Jaromir Jagr, who skated in yesterday's first session, did not take part in the power play drills afterwards.

"I just wanted to be careful," Jagr explained.

The 41-year-old right wing, who skated with Dainius Zubrus and Andrei Loktionov, had been sidelined for most of camp with a hip/groin issue. He said he wouldn't classify yesterday as a setback.

Rich Chere:
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Carried Out Gradually

By PAT PICKENS

NEWARK — The banners hanging from the rafters of Prudential Center tell the story of the Devils' past two decades.

Nine Atlantic Division championships, five Eastern Conference titles and three Stanley Cups to go with three retired numbers — defenseman Scott Stevens, Scott Niedermayer and Ken Daneyko.

Martin Brodeur needs not peer too long at them. Brodeur, a 41-year-old goalie, has had a hand in nearly all of the franchise's glory. On top of backstopping the Devils to those accomplishments, Brodeur has claimed 669 wins — the most in N.H.L. history — and three Vezina Trophies. He will begin his 21st season as a Devil on Thursday in Pittsburgh and is expected to start opening night for the 11th straight season.

But Brodeur's career is clearly

Brodeur says Schneider will 'keep me accountable.'

running short. He is entering the final year of a two-year deal he signed after the Devils' most recent run to the Stanley Cup finals.

With the Devils not having an obvious heir apparent, General Manager Lou Lamoriello acquired goalie Cory Schneider from the Vancouver Canucks on draft day for the Devils' first-round pick.

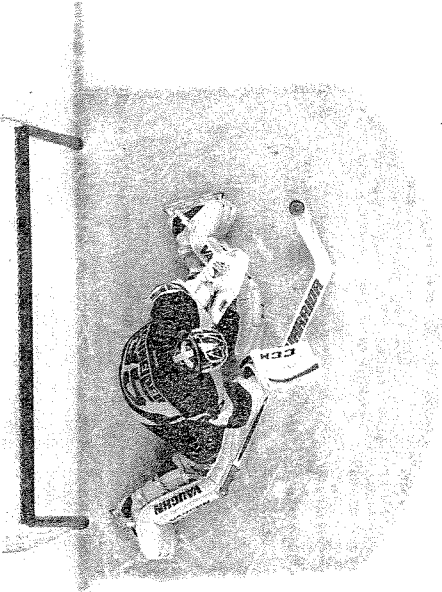
Schneider, 27, was in a fierce goaltending competition with Roberto Luongo in Vancouver, one many thought Schneider would win after playing 30 of 43 games last season. Luongo was shipped throughout the past year, but it ultimately was Schneider who was traded June 30.

Schneider has shown the Devils the promise he displayed in Vancouver. He spent the preseason playing like the starting goalie, stopping 79 of 80 shots in 260 minutes. In his first preseason start, against the Rangers on Sept. 16, he stopped all 22 shots through two periods, including a remarkable stick save on the star forward Rick Nash. Schneider was the game's first star and received chants of "Cory!" from the Prudential Center crowd.



HE IS BEYOND THE NEW YORK TIMES

Martin Brodeur, above, entering his 21st season with the Devils, is expected to get most of the starts in goal. Cory Schneider, left, was acquired from Vancouver in a trade.



MIKE CALABRANO/GETTY IMAGES

But Brodeur still seems confident. He also realizes Schneider's presence can be useful.

"He's going to keep me ac-

countable," Brodeur said. "I don't really need it, but it's there, so I might as well use it."

Brodeur says he does not think

he has anything left to prove. "If they don't know what I can do, they'll never know," he said.

As Brodeur enters the final year of his contract, he is not quite ready for a Mariano Rivera-esque farewell tour.

"I'm just going to play this year," Brodeur said. "Tell your friends around the league that I'm not going to tell anyone if I'm going to retire until I make a decision."

But even if Brodeur does return next season, and even though Schneider is signed only through 2015, there is no doubt in Brodeur's mind who will be in goal to help the Devils raise future banners.

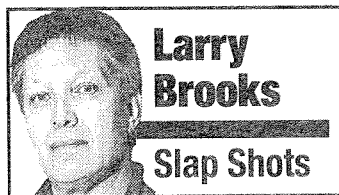
"He's definitely the guy who takes what I did for the last 10 years and moves with it," Brodeur said of Schneider. "He's going to be the top goalie in New Jersey in the next few years, there is no doubt about that."

Havin' a Marty

Time to marvel at Brodeur, while we can

THERE will be one more emotional sendoff, though even the grand goodbye that awaits Derek Jeter might not carry the emotional weight of Mariano Rivera's remarkable Bronx farewell.

But we have another special athlete who may very well be on his final tour and who deserves the love as much as his legendary brothers in pinstripes.



Nobody has been here longer than Martin Brodeur, who first showed up in New Jersey in the spring of 1992 before returning to stay in the autumn of 1993, almost two years before Jeter and Rivera (and Andy Pettitte) became Yankees.

Nobody has had a more distinguished career than Brodeur, who has played to a level of excellence over the past two decades achieved by few for even a single season, and nobody ever has been more identifiable with his team than this Devils' goaltender.

He is a Devil the way Mantle was a Yankee, the way Reed was a Knick, the way Gifford was a Giant and Seaver a Met, Namath a Jet, Potvin an Islander, Gilbert a Ranger.

If he played in Manhattan, he would have a candy bar named after him. Across the Hudson, he has his name on the Stanley Cup three times and scrawled all over the NHL record book.

You have to be pretty darn special for a league's governing body to create a rule in order to negate a strength. The NCAA instituted a no-dunk rule (later, of course, dunked itself) in the '60s in order to cut the then-named Lew Alcin-

dor down to size. The trapezoid on NHL rinks is an invention first contemplated in order to neutralize Brodeur's puck-moving skills.

This is a time of sadness for Brodeur, his family and friends as they mourn the passing of his father, Denis Brodeur. It was always a pleasure to interact with the elder Brodeur, the great sports photographer and goaltender on Canada's 1952 Silver Medal winning Olympic Team, and it always was impossible to tell who was more proud of the other, the father or the son.

Martin Brodeur, the French Canadian who became Marty Brodeur along the Turnpike to immortal-



WAVE REVIEW: This may or may not be Martin Brodeur's final season, but NHL fans should take the opportunity to appreciate the Devils goaltender, writes The Post's Larry Brooks.

ity, has not said this will be his final season. He may not know and he may not divulge his decision even when he makes it.

So we don't know. We don't know how many more chances we're going to get to watch him, enjoy him and revel in this singular athlete who has played more years for the Devils than anyone else ever has played for any one of our teams.

There will be no appreciation tour across the NHL's landscape to mimic baseball's unprecedented six-month recognition of Rivera. But it

will be your loss if you fail to appreciate Brodeur, who plays as a 41-year-old with the same zeal and joy he did at half that age.

We have become accustomed to having legends in our midst. Now we are becoming accustomed to bidding them farewell.

Icons: They come and they go.

We don't know if this will be it for Brodeur, but we do know time is growing short and growing near, and there is no time like the present to pay homage to the kind of a sports landmark you get once in a lifetime.

► Mark the NHLPA as a co-conspirator in last week's Sabres-Maple Leafs gong show in Toronto for its continued support of the small segment of sluggers in the population at the expense of the more skilled athletes whose roster spots they are claiming.

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Honestly, where was the league on the issue of player selection when **John Tortorella** had **Derek Dorsett**, **Kris Newbury**, **Michael Haley**, **Steve Eminger** and **Roman Hamrlik** on the ice as a five-man unit with the score tied 1-1 — but not for long — in last year's elimination Game 5 in Boston?

We only kid the ones we love.

► The Stampedes' second annual Kenny Cup will be played at 4:30 on Oct. 5 in Bridgeport before the AHL Sound Tigers' opener against Wilkes-Barre/Scranton. Proceeds from the charity event go to research at the Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in the memory of **Ken Dressler**.

larry.brooks@nypost.com

AP

Panthers trade for Barch, sign Boyes and Gilbert

Saturday September 28, 2013, 12:59 PM

Associated Press

[Print](#) | [E-mail](#)

SUNRISE, Fla. (AP) — The Florida Panthers reacquired right wing Krys Barch in a trade with the New Jersey Devils, and signed center Brad Boyes and defenseman Tom Gilbert to one-year contracts.

Barch came back to the Panthers, along with a seventh-round pick in the 2015 draft, for center Scott Timmins on Saturday. The Devils also got Florida's sixth-round pick in next year's draft.

Barch has played in 326 NHL games with Dallas, Florida and New Jersey.

Boyes and Gilbert had been with the Panthers on tryout deals. Boyes had 35 points last season for the New York Islanders, and Gilbert is a veteran of 447 NHL games with Minnesota and Edmonton.

The Panthers open the regular season in Dallas on Thursday.

- See more at:

http://www.northjersey.com/sports/225645901_Panthers_trade_for_Barch_sign_Boyes_and_Gilbert.html#sthash.Ss1ftee6.dpuf

Tom Gulitti: Centers are key to Devils' success - NorthJersey.com

NorthJersey.com

When asked Friday about his team's depth at center, Devils coach Pete DeBoer listed Travis Zajac, Adam Henrique, Patrik Elias, Andrei Loktionov, Stephen Gionta, Dainius Zubrus and Jacob Josefson among those who can play in the middle. Henrique, Elias, Gionta, Zubrus and Josefson also can play on the wing, giving DeBoer flexibility up front that he believes will be a significant asset.

Still, for this Devils team to be successful, it needs to be stronger up the middle than it was last season, and that has to begin with Zajac and Henrique. The Devils don't have the big-name centers of some of their divisional rivals – Pittsburgh (Sidney Crosby, Evgeni Malkin), Philadelphia (Claude Giroux), and the Islanders (John Tavares) – but Zajac and Henrique have demonstrated that they can play effectively on the top two lines.

DeBoer acknowledges "it's critical" for them to rebound after struggling during the lockout-shortened 2012-13 season and, from watching them in training camp, believes they're ready to do so.

"I think they both know they're capable of more," DeBoer said.

After signing an eight-year, \$46 million contract extension in January, Zajac, 28, never found his game last season without longtime linemate Zach Parise, who left as a free agent, and had just seven goals and 13 assists in 48 games.

Henrique, 23, surprised many as a Calder Trophy (rookie of the year) finalist in 2011-12, when he put up 51 points (16 goals, 35 assists) and then scored two series-clinching overtime goals in the playoffs. He missed the start of last season, though, while recovering from thumb surgery and had an up-and-down year in which he finished with just 11 goals and five assists.

Devils GM Lou Lamoriello attributed Henrique's inconsistency to his injury and showed faith in him by giving him a six-year, \$24 million contract this summer. Now, Henrique wants to be one of the players that helps fill the enormous hole created by Ilya Kovalchuk's return to Russia.

"I feel like I've come in and developed well, but I want to take my game to the next level and step up and be one of those guys that when you look around here are counted on to be playing every night and to contribute every night," he said.

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North Jersey Media Group Inc.

Saturday, September 28, 2013

Elias not concerned right now he'll miss Devils' opener, but not certain he'll play either

Patrik Elias said he's not concerned right now that he'll miss the Devils' regular season opener Thursday in Pittsburgh, but also wasn't ready to say with 100 percent certainty today that he will play in that game.

"I guess we'll see after the weekend," Elias said. "We'll see how I feel after tomorrow. We have a day off for tomorrow, so a couple of days of rest again."

Elias did not practice again today and has not skated since Tuesday's preseason game in Philadelphia because of soreness. A sore groin kept Elias off the ice for two days early in training camp, but he said his groin is not the issue now.

"My groin is fine," Elias said. "I was a little sore after the Philly game, so we're just being precautious I guess."

Devils general manager Lou Lamoriello said Elias' soreness is, "nothing to be alarmed about."

When asked if he was worried he won't be ready to play Thursday, Elias replied, "Not now. But it depends on how I'm going to feel on the ice again Monday or Tuesday, whenever I'm ready to practice again."

Right wing Jaromir Jagr did not participate in the second half of today's 95 minute practice as a precaution and said he had no setbacks with his recovery from back and left hip muscle soreness that kept him on the sidelines for the entire preseason.

Jagr scrimmaged with the rest of the team for the first half of practice, which lasted about 45 minutes. His team had only two lines, so he got a lot of ice time.

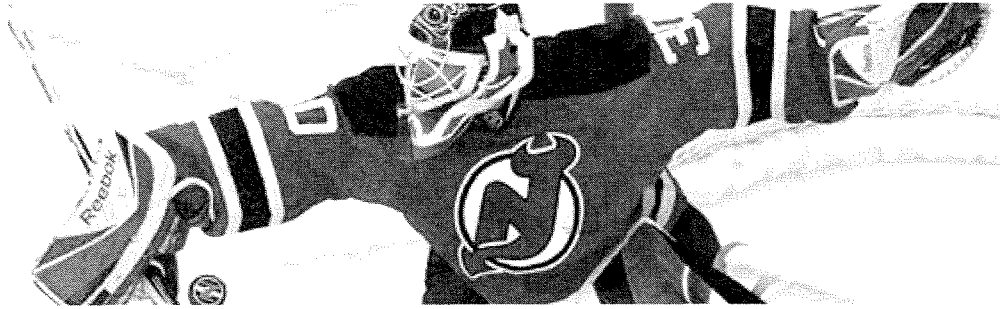
"We played two lines in the scrimmage, so it was kind of tough," Jagr said. "I just wanted to be careful a little bit."

Posted by Tom Gulitti on 09/28 at 12:25 PM

(59) [Comments](#) • [Permalink](#)

- See more at:

http://blogs.northjersey.com/blogs/fireice/elias_not_concerned_right_now_hell_miss_opener_but_not_certain_hell_play_either/#sthash.glq5UXCJ.dpuf



Saturday, September 28, 2013

Devils trade left wing Krys Barch to Florida Panthers

Devils general manager Lou Lamoriello announced this morning the team has traded left wing Krys Barch to the Florida Panthers.

The Devils sent Barch and a 2015 seventh-round pick to the Panthers for the Panthers' 2014 sixth-round pick and center Scott Timmins.

The seventh-round pick the Devils sent to Florida was previously acquired in last season's trade for right wing Matt D'Agostini.

Barch was on the ice for the team's practice this morning.

Trading Barch trims the NHL roster to 27 players. Teams have until 3 p.m. Monday to cut their rosters to 23 players. Lamoriello said today's trade was related to that.

"It's part of what we see in camp," Lamoriello said.

Barch, 33, was a healthy scratch for the last 18 games of last season with the team desperate for offense and wins as it fought to make the playoffs. He played in just 22 games as a Devils and did not register a point, but had 44 penalty minutes.

He had no points and 29 penalty minutes in three preseason games this year.

Barch's departure leaves Cam Janssen as the lone enforcer left on the Devils' roster, but that doesn't necessarily mean that Janssen won't get sent down to Albany before 3 p.m. Monday (He would have to clear waivers).

"No decisions have been made right now," Lamoriello said of the remaining roster. "We're not concerned about toughness with our team right now."

This is the second time in his career that Barch has been traded to Florida. He played 41 games for the Panthers, putting up two goals and three assists, after being acquired from Dallas on Dec. 7, 2011.

He signed a two-year, \$1.5 million contract with the Devils as unrestricted free agent on July 5, 2012.

Timmins, 24, played five games for the Panthers last season and has played in 24 career NHL games, scoring one goal. He played 19 games for current Devils coach Pete DeBoer in Florida in 2010-11 and had one goal and no assists.

The 5-foot-11, 191-pound Hamilton, Ontario native was drafted in the sixth round by the Panthers in 2009. He had 11 goals and 13 assists in 65 AHL games last season with San Antonio.

Timmins already cleared waivers last week with Florida, so he can be assigned directly to Albany.

Timmins was junior teammates with Devils centers Adam Henrique and Andrei Loktionov on the Windsor Spitfires team that won the Memorial Cup. Timmins and Henrique won another Memorial Cup together with Windsor in 2009-10.

Timmins received more attention, however, for being arrested on March 11 for allegedly breaking into a family's house while drunk and passing out on their couch, according to a report from San Antonio TV station KENS5.

The police report said that Timmins was intoxicated to the point where he could not hold his balance and did not remember how he had entered the Garza's home. He reportedly later told police that he had entered through a back door and "thought he was in his own home."

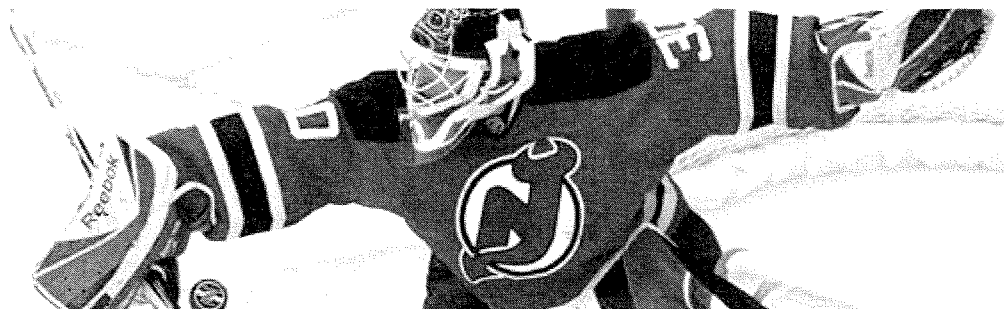
According to the San Antonio Express, Timmins lived about a mile away from the house he was found in.

He was charged with criminal trespassing, a misdemeanor.

Posted by Tom Gulitti on 09/28 at 11:07 AM

- See more at:

<http://blogs.northjersey.com/blogs/fireice/comments/devils-trade-left-wing-krys-barch-to-florida-panthers/#sthash.Wg81fqkq.dpuf>



Saturday, September 28, 2013

Elias misses Devils' practice again; Jagr skips second half; Carter-Gionta-Bernier line reunited

Patrik Elias is missing the Devils' practice again today. Devils coach Pete DeBoer said Elias was "maintenance resting" when he sat out Thursday's preseason finale against Philadelphia and did not practice on Friday.

Elias has been bothered by a sore groin that kept him off the ice for two days early in training camp.

Goaltender Cory Schneider, left wing Dainius Zubrus, right wing Steve Bernier are all back at practice today after "resting" on Friday.

With Bernier back at practice, DeBoer has reunited the fourth line of Ryan Carter, Stephen Gionta and Bernier. Zubrus is skating at left wing on a line with Andrei Loktionov at center and Jaromir Jagr on the right wing.

The players are split into two teams today with half in red practice jerseys and the other half in white. Jagr was out there for the first part of practice, but did not return for the second portion, which was dedicated to the power play.

Schneider and Keith Kinkaid are the two goalies today with Martin Brodeur still in Montreal after the death of his father on Thursday. The wake is scheduled for today.

DeBoer said Friday the team will give Brodeur all the time he needs away from the team and then formulate a plan concerning Thursday's regular season opener in Pittsburgh upon his return.

RED TEAM

Forwards: Ryane Clowe-Travis Zajac-Damien Brunner; Rostislav Olesz-Adam Henrique-Michael Ryder;; Ryan Carter-Stephen Gionta-Steve Bernier.

Defensemen: Bryce Salvador-Marek Zidlicky, Anton Volchenkov-Peter Harrold.

Goaltender: Keith Kinkaid.

WHITE TEAM

Forwards: Dainius Zubrus-Andrei Loktionov-Jaromir Jagr; Mattias Tedenby/Krys Barch-Jacob Josefson-Cam Janssen.

Defensemen: Andy Greene-Adam Larsson, Mark Fayne-Alex Urbom,

Goaltender: Cory Schneider.

The Devils scrimmaged for about 40 minutes and then left the ice to let the Zamboni resurface before returning for to practice the power play. For some reason, Jagr did not return to participate in the power play portion of the practice.

Here were the power play units.

First unit:

Forwards: Clowe, Henrique, Bernier.

Pointmen: Zajac-Zidlicky.

Second unit:

Forwards: Ryder, Brunner, Loktionov.

Points: Greene-Harrold.

The team will have the day off Sunday.

Posted by Tom Gulitti on 09/28 at 09:17 AM

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- See more at:

http://blogs.northjersey.com/blogs/fireice/patrik_elias_misses_practice_devils_practice_again/#sthash.MKaFdYiF.dpuf



[PRINT] ESPN.com: NHL

[Print without images]



Saturday, September 28, 2013

Updated: September 29, 11:08 AM ET

Florida brings back Krys Barch

ESPN.com news services

SUNRISE, Fla. -- The [Florida Panthers](#) reacquired right wing [Krys Barch](#) in a trade with the [New Jersey Devils](#), and signed center [Brad Boyes](#) and defenseman [Tom Gilbert](#) to one-year contracts.

Barch came back to the Panthers, along with a seventh-round pick in the 2015 draft, for center [Scott Timmins](#) on Saturday. The Devils also got Florida's sixth-round pick in next year's draft.

Barch has played in 326 NHL games with Dallas, Florida and New Jersey.

Boyes' deal was worth \$1 million; Gilbert's was for \$900,000, sources told ESPN.com's Pierre LeBrun.

Boyes and Gilbert had been with the Panthers on tryout deals. Boyes had 35 points last season for the [New York Islanders](#), and Gilbert is a veteran of 447 NHL games with Minnesota and Edmonton.

The Panthers open the regular season in Dallas on Thursday.

Time to marvel at Brodeur, while we can

By Larry Brooks

September 28, 2013 | 5:14pm



Devils goalie Martin Brodeur might not be around for much longer.

Photo: Getty Images

There will be one more emotional sendoff, though even the grand goodbye that awaits Derek Jeter might not carry the emotional weight of Mariano Rivera's remarkable Bronx farewell.

But we have another special athlete who may very well be on his final tour and who deserves the love as much as his legendary brothers in pinstripes.

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Martin Brodeur, the French Canadian who became Marty Brodeur along the Turnpike to immortality, has not said this will be his final season. He may not know and he may not divulge his decision even when he makes it.

And so we don't know. We don't know how many more chances we're going to get to watch him, enjoy him and revel in this singular athlete who has played more years for the Devils than anyone else ever has played for any one of our teams.

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We only kid the ones we love.

The Stampede's second annual Kenny Cup will be played at 4:30 on Oct. 5 in Bridgeport prior to the AHL Sound Tigers' opener against Wilkes-Barre/Scranton. Proceeds from the charity event go to research at the Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in the memory of Ken Dressler.

Cory Schneider, meanwhile, who will be the Devils' co-No. 1 with Brodeur, is the most important offseason acquisition in the NHL, and yes, that includes the Panthers' signing of free agent Scott Gomez.

PA executive director Don Fehr — you all remember him? — informed membership last week “to expect little or no return” on last season's 16.26-percent escrow deduction.

This means the players wound up with approximately 49 cents on the dollar for their work last season, already having lost a large chunk of dough to the 48-game season.

So we received a press release about Proskauer-Rose's role in the sale of the Panthers, and we can all rest easy knowing the new ownership will be the first to know the details of the next lockout.

<http://nypost.com/2013/09/28/time-to-marvel-at-brodeur-while-we-can/>

September 28, 2013

The Devils' Plan of Succession, Carried Out Gradually

By PAT PICKENS

NEWARK — The banners hanging from the rafters of Prudential Center tell the story of the Devils' past two decades.

Nine Atlantic Division championships, five Eastern Conference titles and three Stanley Cups to go with three retired numbers — defensemen Scott Stevens, Scott Niedermayer and Ken Daneyko.

Martin Brodeur needs not peer too long at them. Brodeur, a 41-year-old goalie, has had a hand in nearly all of the franchise's glory. On top of backstopping the Devils to those accomplishments, Brodeur has claimed 669 wins — the most in N.H.L. history — and three Vezina Trophies. He will begin his 21st season as a Devil on Thursday in Pittsburgh and is expected to start opening night for the 19th straight season.

But Brodeur's career is clearly running short. He is entering the final year of a two-year deal he signed after the Devils' most recent run to the Stanley Cup finals.

With the Devils not having an obvious heir apparent, General Manager Lou Lamoriello acquired goalie Cory Schneider from the Vancouver Canucks on draft day for the Devils' first-round pick.

Schneider, 27, was in a fierce goaltending competition with Roberto Luongo in Vancouver, one many thought Schneider would win after playing 30 of 48 games last season. Luongo was shopped throughout the past year, but it ultimately was Schneider who was traded June 30.

Schneider has shown the Devils the promise he displayed in Vancouver. He spent the preseason playing like the starting goalie, stopping 79 of 80 shots in 200 minutes. In his first preseason start, against the Rangers on Sept. 16, he stopped all 22 shots through two periods, including a remarkable stick save on the star forward Rick Nash. Schneider was the game's first star and received chants of "Co-ry!" from the Prudential Center crowd.

"It was great, I did not expect that at all," said Schneider, a native of Marblehead, Mass. "The fans were incredible that night. With the Rangers in town, you could tell there was a different atmosphere at the rink, even for a preseason game."

He also was the first star in the Devils' final exhibition game, stopping nine shots in a 4-1 win over the Philadelphia Flyers on Thursday night.

Brodeur surrendered seven goals in six preseason periods, including four in one period in a 5-3 loss to the Islanders. Yet, when asked, Coach Pete DeBoer immediately quells any goalie controversy, reiterating that Brodeur is the Devils' starter to open the season — assuming he is available after leaving the team Thursday because of the death of his father, Denis.

Such a statement could frustrate Schneider, but he seems to understand.

"He's earned that right for what he's done and who he is," said Schneider, who grew up idolizing Brodeur. "It's up to me to compete and battle for any game I can get."

The schedule will offer Schneider chances. The Devils will play 21 games on back-to-back nights, and DeBoer has said that goalies would not play back-to-back games.

"I think that's part of our schedule; we do have a lot of back-to-backs," Schneider said. "I think he has made it pretty clear that he wants to use both of us in those back-to-backs."

The Devils open the season with four games in six nights, including the back end of back-to-back games at Vancouver. When asked about the prospect of starting against the Canucks mere months after being traded, Schneider played it down.

"Maybe it is my turn in Vancouver, maybe it's not," he said. "Whoever plays the game, we'll have a good chance to win, and if it is me, it would be fun to play in front of those fans. But if it's not, it's a hockey game, and there'll be a lot more to come, so it wouldn't be the end of the world."

Brodeur has recently been susceptible to injuries, having played fewer than 60 games in four of the last five years. Last season, Brodeur pulled himself from a home game against Winnipeg during warm-ups with back stiffness, then missed the next 12 games with a pinched nerve.

But Brodeur still seems confident. He also realizes Schneider's presence can be useful.

"He's going to keep me accountable," Brodeur said. "I don't really need it, but it's there, so I might as well use it."

Brodeur says he does not think he has anything left to prove.

"If they don't know what I can do, they'll never know," he said.

As Brodeur enters the final year of his contract, he is not quite ready for a Mariano Rivera-esque farewell tour.

“I’m just going to play this year,” Brodeur said. “Tell your friends around the league that I’m not going to tell anyone if I’m going to retire until I make a decision.”

But even if Brodeur does return next season, and even though Schneider is signed only through 2015, there is no doubt in Brodeur’s mind who will be in goal to help the Devils raise future banners.

“He’s definitely the guy who takes what I did for so many years and move with it,” Brodeur said of Schneider. “He’s going to be the top goalie in New Jersey in the next few years, there is no doubt about that.”

September 28, 2013

Brodeur's Tenure Stands Out in Landscape Rich With Resilience

By JEFF Z. KLEIN

When the puck drops at Pittsburgh's Consol Energy Arena on Thursday, or whenever and wherever goalie Martin Brodeur lowers that familiar black, red and white helmet over his head for the first time this season, he will accomplish a rare feat.

In the long history of major league sports, only one player has spent more time with a single New York-area professional team than Brodeur's 21 seasons with the Devils: Mel Ott, who played 22 seasons for the long-departed New York baseball Giants, from 1926 to 1947.

Brodeur has already played more seasons with the Devils than Mariano Rivera or Derek Jeter have played with the Yankees, Ed Kranepool played with the Mets, or anyone played with the football Giants, the Jets, the Knicks, the Nets, the Rangers, the Islanders, even the old Brooklyn Dodgers.

"Really? I'm surprised," Brodeur said during training camp when informed of his place in the annals of metropolitan sports longevity. "When I started, I just wanted to get to the N.H.L., and everything else was just gravy to me."

Brodeur, 41, may delay the start of his season after the death of his father, Denis, on Thursday. But when he does take the ice, he will not be the only player turning over another page on the thick calendar of his Devils career this October. Center Patrik Elias, 37, is starting his 18th season with the Devils, making him one of only a dozen players who have spent so long a stretch on a New York-area team.

"I keep myself with the young guys," Elias said. "I compete with them and do my job well, and there is appreciation from management."

The list Brodeur and Elias belong to is an illustrious one, filled with Hall of Famers and franchise favorites.

Ott spent his entire career at the Polo Grounds and retired as the National League home run leader with 511. Then there is Brodeur, who would have tied Ott were it not for the lockout that wiped out the 2004-5 N.H.L. season. In third is Ken Daneyko, a dependable defenseman who retired in 2003 after 20 years with the Devils, and whose club record Brodeur will surpass.

Rivera's illustrious 19-year career with the Yankees will end with his retirement after the season finale Sunday. Jeter has also spent 19 seasons in a Yankees uniform.

Mickey Mantle and Yogi Berra each played 18 seasons with the Yankees. Kranepool spent 18 seasons with the Mets after making his debut with the expansion team as a 17-year-old. The Hall of Fame outfielder Zack Wheat played as long in a Brooklyn uniform, from 1909 to 1926.

Pat Leahy spent 18 years place-kicking for the Jets, and Rod Gilbert made the Hockey Hall of Fame after 18 seasons and 406 goals in a Rangers sweater.

Brodeur, whom the Devils drafted from the Quebec junior league in 1990, has his name engraved on three Stanley Cups. He has more career wins and shutouts than any other goalie in N.H.L. history. Elias, whom the Devils drafted from the Czech Republic in 1994, has his name on the Cup twice. He holds franchise records for goals, assists and points.

Through all their years with the club, their boss has been Lou Lamoriello, the Devils' president and general manager since 1987. His long tenure puts him in the same category as other New York-area multidecade team executives like John McGraw of the baseball Giants and Wellington Mara of the football Giants.

Lamoriello said he saw in Brodeur and Elias qualities like those exhibited by other legendary New York-area athletes.

"You've got Marty Brodeur and Mariano Rivera — they're key ingredients to success," he said. "Marty and Patrik, like Mariano and Jeter, have the attitude that it's their team. It's in their personality. They take ownership of their team."

Since Brodeur first stepped on the ice for the Devils on March 26, 1992, the Devils have won three championships, second in the metropolitan area only to the Yankees' five. Likewise, the Devils have three players on the local longevity list, second only to the Yankees' four.

Brodeur has already played long enough to announce that the Devils had drafted his son Anthony and to spend part of training camp with him last month. His contract carries him only through this season. Will he stick around long enough to tie Ott's New York-area record?

"It depends on what the team thinks after this season, but if they want me and my body holds up, why not?" Brodeur said. "But I don't want to think about next year. For now, I have a good life. This is what I like to do, and they let me do it."

The New York Times

September 28, 2013

Devils Trade Right Wing to the Panthers

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Panthers reacquired right wing Krys Barch in a trade with the Devils. Barch went to Florida, along with a seventh-round pick in the 2015 draft, for center Scott Timmins. The Devils also received Florida's sixth-round pick in next year's draft.

Devils: Patrik Elias sits out practice; Krys Barch traded to Florida

Patrik-Elias-Mulholland.JPG

Patrik Elias did not practice with the Devils today. *(Ed Mulholland/USA Today)*

Rich Chere/The Star-Ledger By **Rich Chere/The Star-Ledger**

Follow on Twitter

on September 28, 2013 at 9:44 AM, updated September 28, 2013 at 11:18 AM

Devils forward Patrik Elias did not practice today at AmeriHealth Pavilion while goalie Martin Brodeur remained with his family following the death of his father.

The Devils traded winger Krys Barch and their seventh-round pick in the 2015 entry draft to the Florida Panthers for a sixth-round draft pick in 2014 and minor league center Scott Timmins

The Devils had previously acquired the seventh round pick from St. Louis.

Timmins, 24, is 5-11, 191 pounds. In 24 NHL games with the Panthers (five last season) he had one goal and no assists. He's from Hamilton, Ont.

After a first session, the ice was resurfaced and the team came back out to work on the power play. Interestingly, Jaromir Jagr did not come back out for the power play session.

"Jagr is resting," GM Lou Lamoriello said. "He went the first half of the scrimmage."

The lines:

Ryane Clowe-Travis Zajac-Damien Brunner

Dainius Zubrus-Andrei Loktionov-Jaromir Jagr

Rostislav Olesz-Adam Henrique-Michael Ryder

Ryan Carter-Stephen Gionta-Steve Bernier

Mattias Tedenby/Krys Barch-Jacob Josefson-Cam Janssen

Defense pairings:

Bryce Salvador-Marek Zidlicky

Andy Greene-Adam Larsson

Anton Volchenkov-Peter Harrold

Alex Urbom-Mark Fayne

Goalies:

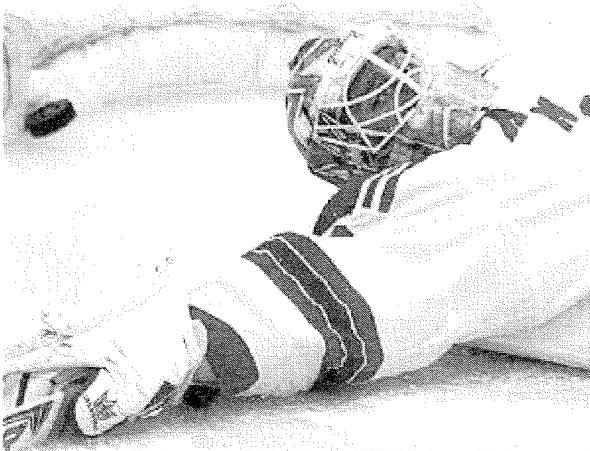
Cory Schneider-Keith Kinkaid

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Rangers need better effort from defense, prospects - NorthJersey.com

NorthJersey.com

VANCOUVER – The Rangers concluded their preseason schedule Friday night with almost as many questions as when they started this six-game learning process.



Henrik Lundqvist giving up a first-period goal in a 5-0 loss to the Canucks on Thursday.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Henrik Lundqvist giving up a first-period goal in a 5-0 loss to the Canucks on Thursday.

Thursday night's 5-0 loss to John Tortorella's Canucks left them 1-40 and having been outscored, 18-8. Henrik Lundqvist played against the Kings late Friday night in Las Vegas – Marty Biron originally was supposed to play the full game – after giving up five goals on 17 shots through two periods the night before.

And, perhaps most alarmingly to new coach Alain Vigneault and the Rangers' brass, none of their young prospects has definitively proved worthy to be on the opening-night roster Oct. 3 at Phoenix.

"There are a lot of players right now that are close but haven't really shown to me that they can play at this level on a consistent basis," Vigneault said Thursday night. "There's still going to be a couple of young guys that are going to get a chance, but they're definitely going to have to do better."

Presumably, that includes Chris Kreider, the 2009 first-rounder who showed so much promise in making his NHL debut during the 2012 playoffs but struggled last season with his defense and assertiveness under Tortorella.

The switch to Vigneault and his more offensive style was supposed to benefit Kreider, who started training camp playing with the team's best wing, Rick Nash, and presumed first- or second-line center Brad Richards. To be fair, neither Richards nor Nash has played well in the preseason, either, but against the Kings, the left wing started on a third line with center Brian Boyle and Swedish prospect Jesper Fast.

Also getting one last chance to show they belonged was a prospect line of Oscar Lindberg centering Marek Hrivik and J.T. Miller, another former first-rounder who also was inconsistent last season under Tortorella.

Of that prospect group, only Miller, who missed time in training camp with a hamstring issue, played against the Canucks. Despite the lopsided score, Vigneault called it "one of our better games."

"If I look at the way we played and the number of chances we were able to generate, I liked

that part of our game," Vigneault said after the Rangers outshot the Canucks, 41-20.

"Defensively, we had a couple of breakdowns and a couple of bounces. A few areas we need to clean up and we'll be in good shape. That's why there's a training camp."

By Lundqvist's count, four of the Canucks' goals came on deflections.

"I think we have some work to do as a group to get some structure in our game in our own end," Lundqvist said. "We're working on it in practice to score goals like that but teams are scoring on us right now on a lot of deflections. Some are great plays and some we just have to do better reads. And, also, we have to come up with the saves."

North Jersey Media Group Inc.

Players mixed about NHL's reshuffling

By **ANDREW GROSS**
STAFF WRITER

Some seasons, Jason Spezza has glanced at the upcoming schedule and rated it easier than usual. Other years, the newly named Ottawa Senators captain has pegged the slate to be tougher.

He's definitely put this season in the latter category, thanks to the NHL's realignment plan. The NHL season opens with three games on Tuesday. The Devils and Rangers start play on Thursday.



SPEZZA

"There's a big group of us that think we belong in the playoffs and somebody is not going to make it,"

Spezza said. "You've got to hit the ground running."

The new NHL features a 16-team Eastern Conference split into two eight-team divisions. The Devils, Rangers and Islanders are in the Metropolitan Division while the Senators are in the Atlantic Division, along with the Detroit Red Wings, whose move East is the most notable switch in the realignment.

The Western Conference has two, seven-team divisions, the Central and the Pacific and each team will play its out-of-conference opponents twice — last season's lockout-shortened 48-game schedule featured only in-conference play.

More importantly, only the top three teams in each division are guaranteed a playoff spot. After those six teams, the next two teams with the most points, regardless of division, will be wild-card teams. Playoff pairings will be based within the division until the conference final.

"I don't necessarily like it," Anaheim Ducks center Ryan Getzlaf said. "I don't know if it's the right answer to the problem but it's right now."

Countered Edmonton Oilers right wing Jordan Eberle: "You're playing divisional teams and those games get a lot more intense. It's better for the fans, now they get to see all the players."

Realignment became a necessity for geographic reasons when the Atlanta Thrashers became the Win-

Realigned NHL

Eastern Conference Metropolitan Division

DEVILS

RANGERS

Islanders

Blue Jackets

Capitals

Flyers

Hurricanes

Penguins

Atlantic Division

Bruins

Canadiens

Lightning

Maple Leafs

Panthers

Red Wings

Sabres

Senators

Western Conference

Central Division

Avalanche

Blackhawks

Blues

Jets

Predators

Stars

Wild

Pacific Division

Canucks

Coyotes

Ducks

Flames

Kings

Oilers

Sharks

ipeg Jets in 2011. But that relocation happened too late into the offseason to alter the 2011-12 schedule and the NHL was otherwise preoccupied last season with a lockout that ran into January.

Finally, though, Winnipeg is in the West and both the Red Wings and Columbus Blue Jackets have logically been put in the East.

But geographic balance has brought about a scheduling imbalance.

The schedule matrix has East teams playing 30 divisional games, 24 more games against teams in the conference's other division and 28 out-of-conference games. In the West, teams play 29 divisional games, 21 other conference games and 32 out-of-conference games.

One immediate impact is that many East teams used to a very relaxed travel schedule compared to the West — particularly in the Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington corridor — will experience longer road trips.

"I don't know if it's nice, I didn't want it to be worse on them," Getzlaf said. "I just wanted it to be better on us."

One other result of the realignment may be more league homogeneity as compared to distinct identities for each conference. Generally, the East has been associated with a more physical style while the West has featured more finesse teams and considered to be the better conference.

"A lot of people like to compare the East and the West and how those teams are different and what it takes to get to the playoffs in each conference," said Jonathan Toews, captain of the Stanley Cup champion Chicago Blackhawks. "I think you'll see less of a contrast because the teams are playing each other more often."

Toews added that it would be a "relief in a way" to not play as many divisional games. But adding to the divisional intrigue will be having the Red Wings, who signed away longtime Senators captain Daniel Alfredsson, in the Atlantic with Ottawa.

"Fans get to see him a little more and potentially in a playoff matchup," Spezza said. "Storylines like that are what makes the game great."

Email: grossa@northjersey.com

Penguins D Letang out with lower-body injury

Saturday September 28, 2013, 10:02 PM

Associated Press

[Print](#) | [E-mail](#)

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Pittsburgh Penguins defenseman Kris Letang is out indefinitely with what coach Dan Bylsma described as a lower-body injury.

Letang did not skate Saturday with the rest of the team in West Point, N.Y., where the Penguins are spending the weekend in the run-up to the season opener against New Jersey. Bylsma said Letang will be re-evaluated when the Penguins return to Pittsburgh on Monday. There is no timetable for his return.

The Penguins signed Letang to an eight-year contract extension in the offseason. The 25-year-old was a Norris Trophy finalist last season. He had five goals and 33 assists as Pittsburgh put together the best record in the Eastern Conference.

- See more at: http://www.northjersey.com/sports/225671171_Penguins_D_Letang_out_with_lower-body_injury.html#sthash.wMArniqY.dpuf

Coyotes assign Max Domi to OHL's London Knights

Saturday September 28, 2013, 7:02 PM

Associated Press

[Print](#) | [E-mail](#)

GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP) — The Phoenix Coyotes assigned first-round draft pick Max Domi to the Ontario Hockey League's London Knights on Saturday.

The 18-year-old forward, selected 12th overall in the June draft, had one assist in four preseason games. He had 39 goals and 48 assists last season in 64 regular-season games for London.

- See more at:

http://www.northjersey.com/sports/225662401_Coyotes_assign_Max_Domi_to_OHL_s_London_Knights.html#sthash.W82TuaOz.dpuf



PRINT ESPN.com: NHL

[Print without images]



Sunday, September 29, 2013

Toronto waives John-Michael Liles

Associated Press

TORONTO -- The Toronto Maple Leafs have placed defenseman John-Michael Liles on waivers as their opening-night roster begins to come into focus.

Liles's departure seemed certain after Cody Franson signed with Toronto. If he's not claimed by another NHL team, Liles could be assigned to the AHL's Toronto Marlies.

The 32-year-old has a \$3.875 million salary-cap hit. If he's sent to the minors, \$925,000 of that would come off the Leafs' cap under the new collective bargaining agreement.

In addition to Liles, the Leafs put forwards Trevor Smith and Troy Bodie, defenseman T.J. Brennan and Korbinian Holzer, and goaltender Drew MacIntyre on waivers with the intention of sending them to the AHL.

Those moves make it likely that 19-year-old defenseman Morgan Rielly will be on the team to start the regular season.

 **[PRINT]** **ESPN.com:** NHL

[\[Print without images\]](#)



Saturday, September 28, 2013

Canucks acquire Dalpe, Welsh

Associated Press

VANCOUVER, British Columbia -- The Vancouver Canucks acquired right wing Zac Dalpe and center Jeremy Welsh from the Carolina Hurricanes on Saturday night for right wing Kellan Tochkin and a fourth-round pick next year.

Dalpe split last season between the Hurricanes and Charlotte Checkers of the AHL. He had a goal and two assists in 10 games with Carolina. Welsh had an assist in five games for the Hurricanes last season.

Tochkin spent last season with Missouri of the Central Hockey League.

 **[PRINT]** ESPN.com: NHL

[\[Print without images\]](#)



Saturday, September 28, 2013

Flames get Colborne for 4th-rounder

Associated Press

TORONTO -- The [Toronto Maple Leafs](#) traded center [Joe Colborne](#) to the [Calgary Flames](#) on Saturday night for a fourth-round pick next year.

The 23-year-old Colborne, a first-round pick in 2008, had a goal and five assists in 16 career games for the Maple Leafs. Last season, the former University of Denver player was scoreless in five games for the Maple Leafs and had 14 goals and 28 assists in 65 games for the American Hockey League's Toronto Marlies.

 **ESPN.com:** NHL

[\[Print without images\]](#)



Saturday, September 28, 2013

Paul Bissonnette's ban reduced

Associated Press

NEW YORK -- The NHL reduced Phoenix Coyotes forward Paul Bissonnette's suspension for leaving the bench to join an altercation from 10 regular-season games to three Saturday

In a Sept. 13 preseason game against Los Angeles, Bissonnette was assessed a game misconduct under Rule 70.6, an infraction that calls for an automatic suspension for 10 regular-season games. The Phoenix enforcer went after Jordan Nolan after his hit on the Coyotes' Rostislav Klesla.

The NHL said that during the appeal process, video evidence not available to the league at the time of the assessment of the suspension was reviewed. The league said the new evidence, although not conclusive, supported Bissonnette's contention that he took the ice legally to substitute for Max Domi. However, Domi remained on the ice and joined the altercation.

Bissonnette has five goals and 287 penalty minutes in 163 career NHL games. In 28 games last season, he had six assists and 36 penalty minutes.

"As much as I'm looked at as a 'plug', 'grocery stick', 'duster', it doesn't take away from the amount of respect I have for the game," Bissonnette tweeted. "Grateful for the time the NHL took to review my case and saw what my intentions were."

 **ESPN.com: NHL**

[\[Print without images\]](#)



Saturday, September 28, 2013

Penguins' Kris Letang out indefinitely

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH -- [Pittsburgh Penguins](#) defenseman [Kris Letang](#) is out indefinitely with what coach Dan Bylsma described as a lower-body injury.

Letang did not skate Saturday with the rest of the team in West Point, N.Y., where the Penguins are spending the weekend in the run-up to the season opener against New Jersey. Bylsma said Letang will be re-evaluated when the Penguins return to Pittsburgh on Monday. There is no timetable for his return.

The Penguins signed Letang to an eight-year contract extension in the offseason. The 25-year-old was a Norris Trophy finalist last season. He had five goals and 33 assists as Pittsburgh put together the best record in the Eastern Conference.

 **ESPN.com:** Hockey

[\[Print without images\]](#)



Saturday, September 28, 2013

Alex Ovechkin excited to carry torch

Associated Press

ANCIENT OLYMPIA, Greece -- [Alex Ovechkin](#) said he is thrilled to kick off Russia's Olympic torch relay for the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi -- a mammoth effort covering the country's nine time zones that will include a trip to outer space.

"I'm going to be probably smiling all the time and I'm going to remember this stuff for all of my life," the NHL star said late Saturday after arriving in Ancient Olympia for Sunday's flame lighting ceremony.

The 28-year-old [Washington Capitals](#) winger will be the first Russian to run with the torch on Sunday after 18-year-old Greek alpine skier Ioannis Antoniou will take it out of the ancient stadium in southern Greece, the birthplace of the ancient Olympics.

"I going to tell my kids, my grandkids, and it's probably one of the biggest moments in my life," Ovechkin said.

The 6-foot-3 hockey player said he was not worried about a potential match against his U.S.-based teammates.

"I'm playing in the NHL right now," he said. "I'm playing against lots of my friends, with players from different countries there so, you know, it's kind of going to be normal."

Ovechkin sidestepped controversy over Russia's record on gay rights, saying only that he was looking forward to the competition.

"To be honest with you, I'm a hockey player and I'm not (into) politics. In this kind of situation you'd have to ask those (in) politics," he said.

Games organizers described Ovechkin as a natural choice to represent Russia's campaign to increase its visibility around the world.

In remarks to The Associated Press and at a news conference, Dmitry Chernyshenko, chief organizer of Sochi 2014, described the hockey player as the obvious choice.

"From the beginning of this effort, he was our proud ambassador for the games ... beyond the borders of Russia and this is why it's absolutely natural that he was selected," Chernyshenko said.

"We saw how popular he was in Russia and abroad. ... He's charismatic and he has a great smile."

The Russian leg of the torch relay is set to cover 40,390 miles before the Feb. 7-23 Winter Games.

"The Olympic flame is about to begin an epic journey ... traveling all nine time zones of Russia in 123 days. It will be carried by 14,000 proud torchbearers," Chernyshenko said. "The Olympic torch will travel by reindeer, dog sled, snow mobiles, boats and even hot air balloon and many other vehicles, and of

course by foot, by car and tens of thousands of kilometers by train, by plane."

The flame would be carried into space on Nov. 7, he said.

"It will go to the North Pole by nuclear power icebreaker and yes it will travel to space ... and the same torch will be used to light the flame during the opening ceremony."

A practice run for the torch lighting was held midday Saturday.

Hundreds of tourists watched, took photographs and clapped as actresses dressed as ancient priestesses used the sun's rays, focused in a parabolic mirror to light the flame that will be kept in reserve for the actual ceremony to be held Sunday and attended by Thomas Bach, elected this month as the new president of the International Olympic Committee.

Saturday's rehearsal went off with one minor hitch: The first torchbearer, Greek Antoniou, had trouble with his torch and waited patiently but in vain for it to light.

"We didn't know they were going to use the torch in the rehearsal, so the gas bottle had been removed," Chernyshenko said. "It's been built to work in some very difficult terrain and freezing temperatures. So it will be fine tomorrow, you will see."



PRINT ESPN.com: NHL

[\[Print without images\]](#)



Saturday, September 28, 2013

First-round pick Max Domi to OHL

Associated Press

GLENDALE, Ariz. -- The Phoenix Coyotes assigned first-round draft pick Max Domi to the Ontario Hockey League's London Knights on Saturday.

The 18-year-old forward, selected 12th overall in the June draft, had one assist in four preseason games. He had 39 goals and 48 assists last season in 64 regular-season games for London.

30 in 15: Ducks look to fly higher

Sunday, 09.29.2013 / 3:00 AM / 2013-2014 Season Preview

By Adam Kimelman - NHL.com Deputy Managing Editor

NHL.com continues its preview of the 2013-14 season, which will include in-depth looks at all 30 teams throughout September.

Having won the Stanley Cup in 2007, watching his Anaheim Ducks lose to the Detroit Red Wings in the first round of the 2013 Stanley Cup Playoffs certainly wasn't the ideal situation for general manager Bob Murray.

However, he was able to find positives in a season that saw the team return to the postseason after a one-season hiatus, and win its first division title since the 2007 Cup season.

"Our younger players, while it would have been nice to have another round, got some really quality playoff time and played very, very well for us," Murray told NHL.com. "That's a giant plus for us, that they were there and they got to experience playing a great team like the Detroit Red Wings.

"I don't look at any negatives from that -- except we lost."

This season the team will do its best to eliminate any negatives.

FORWARDS

Two-thirds of the Ducks' big line returns intact, as Ryan Getzlaf will be in the middle of the first line with Corey Perry at right wing.

Perry was solid last season with 15 goals and 36 points in 44 games, and after a rough 2011-12, Getzlaf bounced back with a team-high 49 points in 44 games.

"The year I struggled I had my first child, I was newly married and all the other stuff that I dealt with away from the rink. I think that was a part of it," Getzlaf said of a 2011-12 season in which he scored a career-low 11 goals. "And I was a new captain at that point, and you're dealing with all the stuff you have to learn. That season, me and my wife had to learn how to have a child and [me] be away. I felt a lot of times that I was guilty of being away from my family and not seeing a lot of my son's initial stuff. I remember the first time he walked, I watched it on my phone."

Murray also believed Getzlaf learned to handle his role as captain better.

"Being the captain, I think sometimes he overthinks it a little bit," Murray said. "Last year he didn't overthink at all."

While the forward ranks are stocked with talent beyond the big two, the biggest question is who fills the top-line left-wing spot left vacant by the trade of Bobby Ryan to the Ottawa Senators.

There are plenty of options for coach Bruce Boudreau, but the leading candidate could be someone with a history with the Ducks' top duo.

Dustin Penner, who returned to the team this summer as a free agent, will get the first shot to play on the top line. During the 2007 Cup run, Penner, Perry and Getzlaf formed the Ducks' most productive line, combining for 16 of the team's 58 goals.

"They enjoyed playing together," Murray said. "You don't know if the chemistry will still be there or not. There's been lots of guys moving in and out of that spot over the years. Dustin has done just as well as anyone else has there, probably better, because that line was very good in the Stanley Cup Playoffs that year. That's definitely in Bruce's and my mind."

If the Penner experiment doesn't work, other options for that spot could be Kyle Palmieri, speedy 2010 first-round pick Emerson Etem and Jakob Silfverberg, part of the return from Ottawa in the Ryan trade.

If Penner gets the coveted spot alongside Getzlaf and Perry, the Ducks could have a second line of 20-somethings Nick Bonino and Silfverberg with 43-year-old right wing Teemu Selanne, who announced last month he would return for a 21st and final NHL season.

Selanne certainly hasn't slowed with age, as his 12 goals last season were fourth on the team, his 25 points ranked fifth and he played 46 of 48 games.

"He can still skate like the wind," Getzlaf told NHL.com. "It's pretty incredible. He can rejuvenate himself from last season and be back in form."

Saku Koivu also signed on for one more season. He'll center the third line, flanked potentially by Andrew Coglian and Palmieri. Coglian had a strong season, with 13 goals, 23 points and a personal-best plus-14 rating.

Competing for the fourth-line center spot likely will be a pair of first-round picks, Peter Holland (2009) and Rickard Rakell (2011), each of whom got some time to showcase themselves last season.

DEFENSEMEN

It will be a bit of a patchwork at the start, with Sheldon Souray out possibly until January, Francois Beauchemin working his way back from knee surgery and Luca Sbisa recovering from a sprained ankle sustained during the preseason.

That puts pressure on Cam Fowler, 21, to rediscover the form from his rookie season, when he had 10 goals and 40 points in 76 games. He had 11 points and a minus-4 rating in 37 games last season.

"I don't want to put pressure that yes, Cam, you have to be the guy this year. But ... it's his fourth year. I think that he's no longer a rookie," Boudreau told the Orange County Register. "You can only hope that, if the last 10 games of the season and the playoffs are an indication of whether he's ready to be going, then I would think that he's a guy that we're really counting on to step up and be the guy that we think Cam can be."

Fowler understands this is a big season for him.

"I've certainly had my ups and downs," he told the Orange County Register. "I'm a fourth-year player now. It doesn't matter about my age. I have experience in this League and I need to go out there and prove it."

Fowler won't be alone in leading the defense. Ben Lovejoy had 10 assists, a plus-6 rating and averaged more than 18 minutes per game in 32 games after being acquired in a trade with the Pittsburgh Penguins. That performance earned him a three-year contract this summer.

Bryan Allen and Sbisa, who could be available for the season-opener Oct. 2 at the Colorado Avalanche, could form a second pair.

Hampus Lindholm, the sixth pick of the 2012 NHL Draft, has had an outstanding preseason, with three goals in four games, and could earn a full-time roster spot. He spent last season with the Ducks' American Hockey League team in Norfolk, and had 11 points and a plus-5 rating despite sustaining a pair of concussions that limited him to 44 games.

Also competing for a roster spot are Mark Fistric, Nolan Yonkman and Sami Vatanen, who made his NHL debut last season.

GOALIES

The Ducks will go with the same formula they used so successfully last season, with Jonas Hiller and Viktor Fasth splitting time. Fasth had a dazzling start to his NHL career, winning his first eight decisions and filling in admirably while Hiller worked through injuries early in the season. He finished the season 15-6-2 with a 2.18 goals-against average, .921 save percentage and four shutouts in 25 games.

Hiller came on strong late when Fasth started to fizzle, going 7-2-3 in March and then playing strong in the Stanley Cup Playoffs with a 2.46 goals-against average and one shutout in seven games against the Red Wings.

"I love the way our goaltending was last year," Murray said. "They picked each other up. When one would be banged up, the other guy would carry the ball for a while. They get along very well. I think we have good goaltending and we have good young goaltending coming."

The good young goaltending Murray referred to is John Gibson. The 20-year-old will start his professional career this season in the AHL, but likely won't need much seasoning. He backstopped the United States to the gold medal at the 2013 IIHF World Junior Championship, winning the tournament's MVP and best goalkeeper award. He followed that by playing five games for the U.S. at the 2013 IIHF World Championship, winning three games, including a five-round shootout to win the bronze-medal game.

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30 in 15: Ducks' concerns include Penner, defense

Sunday, 09.29.2013 / 3:00 AM / 2013-2014 Season Preview

By Adam Kimelman - NHL.com Deputy Managing Editor

NHL.com continues its preview of the 2013-14 season, which will include in-depth looks at all 30 teams throughout September.

The Anaheim Ducks made sure last season that their 13th place finish in the Western Conference in 2011-12 was just a bump in the road, as they rode a 7-1-1 start to a Pacific Division title and a second-place finish in the Western Conference.

However, the season didn't have the ending anyone wanted, as they lost in the Western Conference Quarterfinals to the seventh-seeded Detroit Red Wings, losing in Game 7 at Honda Center.

The Ducks opted to bring back most of last season's roster, including future Hall of Famer Teemu Selanne, who will play one final season.

However, there are questions the Ducks must answer to make sure they're able to sustain the same level of play that got them so high in the standings last season.

1. Will a return to Anaheim rejuvenate Dustin Penner? -- The last time Penner played a meaningful game in an Anaheim Ducks sweater, it ended with him carrying the Stanley Cup. That was more than six years ago, but the hope is a return to a familiar spot -- including a chance to rejoin Ryan Getzlaf and Corey Perry on a line -- can bring back the old Penner.

"I talked to Pens [Penner] a lot before we signed him," Getzlaf told NHL.com. "That was a big part of signing him, making sure that Pens was motivated to play and get back to proving he was the player that he was. ... I think he'll be able to come back to Anaheim and settle into where he's a little more comfortable. He's got a house and all that other stuff is behind him."

The hope is Penner can slide into the top-line left-wing spot left vacant when Bobby Ryan was traded to the Ottawa Senators this summer.

"He'll never have a greater opportunity to play with players of the caliber of Ryan and Corey," Ducks coach Bruce Boudreau told ESPN.com. "It's all up to him. We want it to work, but in the end, he's going to have to be the one that produces and shows that he deserves to be on that line."

If Penner doesn't work there, Boudreau will have other options, among them Kyle Palmieri, who started a game on the top line during the Stanley Cup Playoffs last season; Emerson Etem, who played up and down the lineup and is a natural left wing; and Jakob Silfverberg, who came back from Ottawa in the Ryan trade.

"It's going to be a hell of a dogfight in our training camp to see who comes out playing," Ducks general manager Bob Murray told NHL.com.

2. What does the team do on defense? -- The early part of training camp has not been kind to the Ducks. Already missing Francois Beauchemin while he recovers from surgery to repair a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee, the team has lost Sheldon Souray for 3-5 months with a torn ligament in his right wrist and Luca Sbisa for at least two weeks due to a sprained ankle.

The hope is Sbisa can return for the season opener, Oct. 2 at the Colorado Avalanche, but Souray certainly won't be there, and Beauchemin is questionable. The latter two veterans were the team's biggest offensive producers from the blue line last season, and were plus-19 each.

That puts extra pressure on 21-year-old Cam Fowler, entering his fourth season and looking to get back to the level he reached as a rookie, when he had 10 goals and 40 points in 76 games.

He's also starting a five-year contract that will pay him \$4 million per season.

"I've had kind of a grace period," Fowler told the Orange County Register. "I've certainly had my ups and downs. I'm a fourth-year player now. It doesn't matter about my age. I have experience in this League and I need to go out there and prove it."

Ben Lovejoy, Sami Vatanen and Mark Fistrich also will have big roles, and Sbisa and Beauchemin could be on the ice Oct. 2. However, it's likely the defense's performance will follow Fowler's lead.

"I don't want to put pressure that yes, Cam, you have to be the guy this year," coach Bruce Boudreau told the Orange County Register. "But ... it's his fourth year. I think that he's no longer a rookie. He's played about 150, 160 games in the NHL now. I think he's comfortable. His body is starting to grow into a man's body right now. You can

only hope that if the last 10 games of the season and the playoffs are an indication of whether he's ready to be going, then I would think that he's a guy that we're really counting highly on to step up and be the guy that we think Cam can be. And the guy he thinks he can be."

3. Will there be a Stanley Cup Playoffs hangover? -- The Ducks took a 3-2 series lead against the Red Wings, but lost in overtime in Game 6 (after rallying from a 3-1 deficit to force overtime), and then lost in Game 7 at home.

However, Ducks general manager Bob Murray said he only had positives to take out of the experience. Because of that, he's not worried about any negative carryover from last season creeping into the team's thought process for the 2013-14 season.

"I think we got beat by a team that had been injured all year long but was getting healthy and was a very veteran, experienced playoff team," Murray told NHL.com. "I looked at it as some of our younger players, while it would have been nice to have another round, got some really quality playoff time and our younger players played very, very well for us. That's a giant plus for us, that they were there and they got to experience playing a great team like the Detroit Red Wings. I don't look at any negatives from that -- except we lost."

Getzlaf said he hopes his teammates use the loss as anger and motivation.

"I think it's a combination of both," he told NHL.com. "I've been in some situations where I've lost some big games and I think I've learned a lot from those and I'm hoping guys that haven't been there, that haven't lost that Game 7 before, can take the same things out of it to motivate themselves."

RELATED NEWS:

30 in 15: Injuries could help Vatanen earn a roster spot

Sunday, 09.29.2013 / 3:00 AM / 2013-2014 Season Preview

By Adam Kimelman - NHL.com Deputy Managing Editor

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One man's injury is another man's opportunity.

For Anaheim Ducks defenseman Sami Vatanen, a rash of injuries to the team's defensemen has given him an opportunity to earn a full-time NHL roster spot.

Sheldon Souray is out until December or even January following surgery for a torn ligament in his wrist. Francois Beauchemin, while skating, is only four months removed from reconstructive knee surgery and is questionable to start the season, and Luca Sbisa is hoping to recover from a sprained ankle in time for the season opener Oct. 2 at the Colorado Avalanche.

That leaves multiple openings, and Vatanen could slide into one of them. The 2009 fourth-round pick (No. 106) made a nice initial impression last season, playing three games in February, then returning for five more at the end of the regular season, during which time he scored two goals. He also had nine goals and 45 points in 62 games with the Ducks' American Hockey League team, the Norfolk Admirals, in his first season of North American hockey.

"He played really good for us at the end of last year, and we like him a lot," Ducks coach Bruce Boudreau said.

Producing offense never has been a problem for the 22-year-old, who had 14 goals and 42 points in 2011-12 playing with JYP in SM-liiga, Finland's top professional league. The next step is for Vatanen to become more reliable in the defensive end.

He was a plus-3 in limited NHL ice time last season, and is a plus-1 (with one goal) in four preseason games.

"He just has to gain experience and know when to do it [jump into the attack] and know when to not do it," Boudreau told the Orange County Register. "I don't think he's risky as far as play in his own zone. He's smart. He makes the good play.

"Where he's risky is stepping up in the neutral zone or stepping up at the blue line. That's where he gets to be risky. So we would like to take that out of the equation."

The 5-foot-10, 180-pounder has dealt with his own bumps and bruises during training camp, but remains hopeful that he'll be in Colorado when the season starts.

"My plan is to play [in the NHL]," Vatanen told the Orange County Register. "Not in Norfolk or anything like that. There's so many good guys here, so you've got to push it to the limits and do what you got to do.

"I do my best and we will see what happens. No pressure or anything. Just enjoy the time that you're here."

RELATED NEWS:

30 in 15: Getzlaf grows into captaincy, results follow

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By Adam Kimelman - NHL.com Deputy Managing Editor

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It's been quite the rollercoaster ride for Ryan Getzlaf the past two seasons.

In 2011-12 he slumped to a career-low 11 goals and totaled 57 points, the fewest he's scored in a full NHL season. He also had a minus-11 rating and the Ducks fired coach Randy Carlyle, the only NHL coach Getzlaf had played for, while plummeting to 13th in the Western Conference standings.

With low expectations heading into the 2012-13 season, Getzlaf looked a new man -- actually, more like the player fans were used to seeing. His 15 goals tied linemate Corey Perry for the team lead, his 49 points were tops on the club and 10th in the League, he led the Ducks with 34 assists and his plus-14 rating topped the team's forwards. While he scored just four power-play goals, his three shorthanded goals led the team and set a personal best.

Getzlaf's numbers last season are more indicative of a player who has averaged slightly less than a point per game during his eight-season NHL career (521 points in 566 games) and has a career plus-81 rating.

So who was the imposter in the No. 15 jersey in 2011-12?

Getzlaf was physically healthy that season, playing all 82 games, but emotionally was a different story.

"The year I struggled I had my first child," he told NHL.com. "I was newly married and all the other stuff that I dealt with away from the rink and I think that was a part of it. And I was a new captain at that point, and you're dealing with all the stuff you have to learn."

Part of the education for Getzlaf was balancing his professional life with his family life.

"That season me and my wife had to learn how to have a child and [me] be away," he said. "I felt a lot of times that I was guilty of being away from my family and not seeing a lot of my son's initial stuff. I remember the first time he walked I watched it on my phone. It was the things that I had to learn to deal with and know that what I was doing was just as important as what she's doing at home."

While learning about the work/family balance, Getzlaf also said he still was growing into his role as captain. He was given the captaincy after Scott Niedermayer retired in 2010, and said that while he's learned a lot from watching Niedermayer, he's still developing his own style of leadership.

"It's been a learning curve," he said. "I obviously followed one of the best captains in the game in Scott Niedermayer. He taught me a lot of things, when to keep your mouth shut and when to talk, those kinds of things. Scotty had a little different way of leading than I do. But I think when it comes to being a captain, you have to learn to deal with the off-ice stuff but put that aside when it's time to go on the ice. I feel like I've learned a lot in the last couple years on developing those relationships with the guys and them having that trust in me."

Ducks general manager Bob Murray also noticed a change in Getzlaf, and it definitely was a change for the better.

"Being the captain, I think sometimes he overthinks it a little bit," Murray told NHL.com. "Last year he didn't overthink at all. ... He's growing with being that captain."

That growth helped the Ducks rocket out of the starting blocks, maintain a strong pace through most of the season, and finish atop the Pacific Division and second in the Western Conference.

The way the season ended, a Game 7 loss at home to the Detroit Red Wings in the first round, put a blemish on things. However, Getzlaf said he hopes some of his younger teammates take the sour ending as extra motivation for this season.

"I expect our team to try and outplay what we did last season," he said. "That's always the goal for our group, to get to the Stanley Cup Final, and that's no different going into this season. We have to be aware that there are a few more teams that are aware that we could be a contender. Last year we went in as a dark horse and no one expected much of us, so I think we surprised a lot of teams at the start of the year and that's not going to be the case this season."

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By Curtis Zupke - NHL.com Correspondent

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ANAHEIM, Calif. – When Kyle Palmieri was beginning his offseason routine on the East Coast this summer, he received a phone call from Anaheim Ducks equipment manager Doug "Sluggo" Shearer. Shearer asked Palmieri if he wanted to change from the jersey No. 51 he had worn since he arrived in Anaheim. Palmieri chose his old No. 21 and didn't think much of it until he was asked about it later. "People make a bigger deal out of it than it is," Palmieri joked.

Palmieri referred to those who see the symbolism, because Anaheim typically gives a young player a lower number when it feels that player is established - Bobby Ryan started out wearing No. 54 with the Ducks.

The next step is now for Palmieri and Anaheim's other young forwards to build off the offensive balance it achieved last season, especially after the trade of 30-goal scorer Ryan to the Ottawa Senators.

Anaheim used to be a top-heavy offensive club with Ryan Getzlaf, Corey Perry, Teemu Selanne and Ryan, who accounted for 57 percent of its goals in 2010-11 and 51 percent in 2011-12. Last season that number dipped to 39 percent as players like Palmieri, Emerson Etem and Nick Bonino began to bloom.

"That's the key," Andrew Cogliano said. "You take the load off guys like Getzlaf and Perry. You get some deep scoring, and it changes the dynamic of the team. I think we have a good balance of speed, and obviously big bodies. I think we need to push the pace but also have guys that are big and go to the net."

Palmieri, Etem and Bonino all had a breakthrough in the Stanley Cup Playoffs with three goals each. Palmieri has an NHL-level shot and projects as a 20-goal scorer. Etem is a scary-fast wing who can kill penalties and turn harmless looking plays into breakaways. Bonino's season was hindered by injury but he asserted himself late and showed he has the capability to fill the second-line center spot.

Anaheim coach Bruce Boudreau, who was known for video-game like offense with the Washington Capitals, has a lot of clay to mold, although it's been hard to tell in camp as the Ducks have been hit with injuries.

"When you have four lines that can score, you're usually a pretty good team, in my history, anyway," Boudreau said. "We want to get to that point again. We haven't scored very much in preseason, and we certainly would like to have a couple more opportunities to score goals."

A lot will depend on Jakob Silfverberg, the major piece from the Ryan trade who looked sharp in the early portion of camp before a lower-body injury kept him off the ice. The 22-year-old is expected to play left wing on the second line with Bonino and Teemu Selanne.

Boudreau is quite unfamiliar with Silfverberg but the early glimpses have him thinking positively.

"I think we've got a good idea that he's a very responsible player," Boudreau said. "He's got a tremendous shot. He's going to be a real useful guy at all ends of the ice."

Palmieri will likely start out with Getzlaf and Perry on the top line. The Ducks can boast intimidating speed on the third line with Etem and Cogliano on the wings beside center Koivu. Dustin Penner, who was demoted from the top line less than a week into camp, is an X-factor but can still be plugged into any line. Peter Holland, Patrick Maroon, Rickard Rakell, Matt Beleskey and Devante Smith-Pelly are also in the mix.

After being moved around two seasons ago, Cogliano found an identity on a line with Koivu and Daniel Winnik. He finished with 13 goals even though he didn't play on the power play.

"Whenever you're moving positions and playing different positions every game, it's really tough to find a balance and find what you're supposed to do out there," Cogliano said. "But I felt last year Bruce gave me a role and gave me a chance to find a specific thing to do every night. I was just able to focus on playing the right way. When I did that, the offense came."

Anaheim needs it come in a big way as it enters the season banged up. Etem has a lower-body injury in addition to Silfverberg. Defensemen Sheldon Souray, Francois Beauchemin and Luca Sbisa are all recovering from injury or surgery.

Former 50-goal scorer Perry looks for a bounce-back year himself and knows how valuable balance is to Anaheim in the post-Ryan era.

"Losing Bobby - somebody has to fill that void," Perry said. "There's 30 goals that, not just one person, but collectively we have to do. There's a lot of talent in this room that can do it. We have no doubt that somebody in here is going to be able to step up and fill that void."

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By Arpon Basu - Managing Editor LNH.com

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When viewed from the outside, it would be difficult for anyone to consider the 2012-13 season as anything but a rousing success for the Montreal Canadiens.

Coming off a season in which they finished last in the Eastern Conference, leading to a complete overhaul of management and the coaching staff, the Canadiens won the Northeast Division and finished second in the conference.

Montreal finished tied for fourth in the NHL in goals per game, was sixth in 5-on-5 goals for/against ratio, fifth in power-play efficiency and fifth in shots against per game, all signs that the team had made a serious turnaround from the nightmare season that preceded it.

But on the inside, all of those positives were wiped out in the span of one week in May, when the Canadiens were ousted in five games in the first round of the Stanley Cup Playoffs by the seventh-seeded Ottawa Senators.

The season, for the most part, was seen as a failure in the Canadiens' dressing room.

"You have to be happy with the steps we made, we did some good things," captain Brian Gionta said. "You finish first in your division, you finish second in the conference, those are big accomplishments that make a difference. But at the end of the day, it's what you do in the playoffs. I think it was a learning experience for some of our guys, and this year we can build off that."

Much of that building will come from the continuity and familiarity coach Michel Therrien benefited from in training camp -- the polar opposite of what he had during a shortened camp in January when he had to introduce a new system while experimenting with line combinations as he learned the strengths and weaknesses of his players.

This time, right from the start Therrien used the forward lines and defense pairings he plans to start the season with, and those combinations have had two weeks to build on chemistry that was already established last season in most cases.

FORWARDS

The Canadiens will use the same balanced attack that worked so well for them last season when they didn't have a player among the top 30 in points yet still finished fourth in goals per game as a team.

Montreal will come at opponents in waves with talent sprinkled evenly throughout the top nine forwards, making life difficult for opposing coaches when deciding how best to deploy their top defensive players. Every night, one of the top three lines for the Canadiens winds up with a favorable matchup, and often times that is the line that will do the most damage.

"The Montreal Canadiens have been tough to play against, especially last season, because you can't key on just one guy," said free-agent acquisition Daniel Briere, the only newcomer to Montreal's top nine forward group. "The stars are [goaltender Carey] Price and [defenseman P.K.] Subban, and you can't put someone on Price and shadow him. Those guys are tougher to stop. But offensively what made it tough playing against Montreal was they were fast, they kept coming at you, they have lots of depth and I think we added to that this summer."

Therrien likes to use his forward lines based more on what zone the faceoff is than the players the opposing team sends out, and the trio that should get the bulk of the offensive zone opportunities will be Briere's new line.

He was placed on right wing with the well-established duo of center David Desharnais and left wing Max Pacioretty from the start of camp; line showed signs of growing chemistry as camp progressed.

Desharnais had a difficult time last season with just 10 goals and 28 points in 48 games, a big drop-off from his 60 points in 81 games a season earlier despite getting significant power-play time and spending the bulk of the season playing with Montreal's top wing, Pacioretty.

He will benefit from that luxury again this season. Pacioretty was clearly Montreal's best forward through training camp, showing improved speed to go with his size and lethal shot to score five goals in four preseason games, tied for first in the NHL in that category before the final two days of games.

"He's always been known as a power forward, but I think he's raised his level a notch," Therrien said. "In his understanding of the game with and without the puck, we can see a player who isn't as hesitant in certain situations

because he understands how we want to execute and how we want to play. It's become second nature for him in certain situations and he's thinking less."

Therrien's go-to line in defensive zone situations will again be centered by Tomas Plekanec with Gionta on the right wing and Rene Bourque on the left. That line was Montreal's best last season until Bourque went down with a concussion on Feb. 23 and missed 21 games.

The wildcard in the group is the line centered by Lars Eller with sophomores Alex Galchenyuk and Brendan Gallagher on the wings, a trio that has been dubbed the "EGG Line" by fans on social media. At 24, Eller is the line's wise old man, and this youthful group may have the biggest impact on Montreal's improvement this season.

Eller is coming off his best NHL season with 30 points in 46 games, including 13 in his final 12. Galchenyuk also finished strong playing on Eller's wing, with 12 of his 27 points coming in his final 13 games. Gallagher played with Eller and Galchenyuk over the final few games of the season; he tied for the team lead in goals with 15 and was runner-up in the Calder Trophy voting.

According to behindthenet.ca, Gallagher was 10th in the NHL last season in points per 60 minutes played among those who played a minimum of 20 games, while Galchenyuk was 13th and Eller was 17th. In theory, if these three get more ice time, their production should increase.

The trio got a lot of ice time in the preseason with underwhelming results, but they showed some signs of life in the finale Thursday, a 3-1 win against the Senators.

"I thought that line, that was their best game of the preseason," Therrien said following the game. "I did have a meeting with them before the game and let them know how I feel about their performance so far, but they responded well. They played the way they're supposed to play."

There will be lots of competition for time on the fourth line, with Brandon Prust being the only member who has no real threat of being a scratch on any given night. Newcomer George Parros will be used on nights when his skills as an enforcer will be called for, meaning one of Travis Moen and Ryan White will have to sit out those games. Those two will also have to hold off rookie Michael Bournival, who was the revelation of training camp and used his NHL-level speed and a motor that doesn't stop to create turnovers and scoring chances.

DEFENSEMEN

This is a group that has the most to prove because of the way last season finished.

The Canadiens allowed 31 goals in their final eight regular-season games, then surrendered 20 in the five-game playoff loss to the Senators. That's 51 goals in 13 games, an average of 3.92 after allowing 2.32 per game over their first 40.

Alexei Emelin's left knee injury April 6 was the catalyst for the defense becoming a mess, and though he started skating last week, he won't be available until early December at the earliest. Emelin emerged as Montreal's most physically intimidating player last season, regularly laying highlight-reel hits and causing opposing forwards to be aware of his presence when crossing the Canadiens' blue line.

In an effort to bridge the gap until Emelin's return, general manager Marc Bergevin signed Douglas Murray to serve as a physical presence and penalty killer, but he too sustained a lower-body injury in training camp and his availability for opening night on Tuesday is questionable.

That's where Jarred Tinordi comes in.

The rookie defenseman was called up to play in the playoffs last season, and he arrived in training camp determined to show the team he could provide what they lost with Emelin.

In six preseason games Tinordi was a human battering ram, hitting everything in sight, and it paid off for him with a spot on the 23-man roster.

"We asked him to be physical, and that's what he did throughout training camp," Therrien said after announcing his final cuts Thursday. "He came here on a mission. We could see he put in the effort over the summer to get stronger, and that's what allowed him to play such a physical game."

If Murray isn't ready for opening night, Tinordi will start the season on the third pairing with Francis Bouillon playing to his right.

The top pairing remains unchanged from last season, with Norris Trophy-winner P.K. Subban playing to the right of Josh Gorges.

This was Subban's first training camp under Therrien; he missed the start of last season in a contract standoff with the Canadiens. The delayed start to Subban's season led Therrien to slowly integrate him into the lineup, with Subban beginning his season on the third pairing and second power-play unit while seeing no time on the penalty kill, a role he excelled at in his first two seasons.

Subban was 35th among NHL defensemen in ice time last season at 23:14 per game but still tied for the scoring lead with 38 points in 42 games, with 26 of those points coming on the power play.

Having Subban in camp to start the season on time may entice Therrien to use him more often, but he's not giving any hints as to whether that will be the case.

"I really liked P.K.'s camp," Therrien said. "We had a good talk and we established a plan, established a goal, established what we want him to accomplish. Me and P.K., we're on the same page. He's taken this camp really seriously, we can see it in the games, I like the way he's practiced, his focus is there.

"Performance on the ice will always dictate, it's the same with everyone. But one thing's for sure, right now P.K. Subban has his focus at the right place."

The team's leader in ice time was veteran Andrei Markov at 24:07 per game, but that may need to change because the veteran defenseman's game began to deteriorate towards the end of the season, particularly after Emelin, his partner, went down.

Markov will start the season playing with Raphael Diaz on the second pair while anchoring the first power-play unit with Subban, but the management of his minutes early on by Therrien will be something to watch.

GOALIES

No single player will have a greater influence on the Canadiens' season than starting goaltender Carey Price, but that's a reality for just about every starting goalie in the NHL.

Price's game went south at about the same time as the Canadiens' defense, which has a certain chicken-or-the-egg element to it. He is being counted on to put that poor finish to last season behind him as quickly as possible.

Getting married over the summer likely helped Price forget ending his season with a knee injury at the end of regulation in Game 4 against the Senators. He claims last spring's troubles are already behind him.

"It's in the past now," Price said. "You have to come into training camp and look at it as a new year. I'm not really going to dwell on a whole lot from last season; it's not going to help you."

What could help him is the arrival of goaltending coach Stéphane Waite from the Chicago Blackhawks, who helped shape Antti Niemi and Corey Crawford into Stanley Cup-winning goaltenders.

Price's save percentage has dropped in each of the past two seasons, from .923 in 2010-11 to .916 two seasons ago to a career-worst .905 last season, so there are clearly some adjustments to be made.

Waite's influence on Price's technique was apparent in training camp, with one adjustment being that the goaltender no longer slides across the crease in his butterfly, instead staying on his feet for his lateral movements to be in a better position to react to a second shot.

"We're not changing much," Price said. "It's just simplifying things and trying not to get too out of control. Sometimes goaltenders think you've got to overcompensate and show your athleticism. But a lot of the really good goaltenders are compact; they don't make a lot of unnecessary movements. That puts you in better position for bad bounces and whatnot.

"When you're playing really well you don't want to be making a whole lot of flashy saves, or even be noticed. If it's hitting you in the chest, you know you're doing good."

Backup Peter Budaj did a fine job last season, posting an 8-1-1 record with a 2.29 goals against average and .908 save percentage in 13 appearances.

RELATED NEWS:

30 in 15: Goal prevention tops Canadiens' storylines

Sunday, 09.29.2013 / 3:00 AM / 2013-2014 Season Preview

By Arpon Basu - Managing Editor LNH.com

NHL.com continues its preview of the 2013-14 season, which will include in-depth looks at all 30 teams throughout September.

The overriding question facing the Montreal Canadiens as they enter the new season is whether their second-place finish in the Eastern Conference in 2012-13 is a true indicator of their quality as a team.

The Canadiens had seven regulation losses in their first 35 games last season, then had seven over their final 13 of the regular season before losing four of five games against the Ottawa Senators in the first round of the Stanley Cup Playoffs.

"We changed a lot of things, especially the mentality of our group. I think that's important," defenseman Josh Gorges said. "But the big picture is that each year we come in with the same goal of winning the Stanley Cup, and all 30 teams have the same goal. If you don't have that as the main goal, you shouldn't bother. I'm sure every team would say the same thing. So if you don't succeed in the playoffs, it's a failure."

So why did they fail and what will prevent it this season?

There are many facets to that answer, but here are three areas they'll have to address:

1. Can the defense and goaltending keep pucks out of the net? -- Goaltender Carey Price and the defense in front of him had a very difficult finish to the season, a leading cause of Montreal's late-season slump.

With 31 goals allowed in their final eight regular-season games, the Canadiens went from being a team with a tight defensive system to one that allowed numerous high-quality scoring chances every game. While the play of the forwards had something to do with that, the defense and goaltending were the leading causes.

The Canadiens attempted to address the goaltending situation by getting a new coach for Price, hiring Stéphane Waite away from the Stanley Cup champion Chicago Blackhawks.

But on defense, the problems that plagued that group remain largely because Montreal will be without Alexei Emelin for at least the first two months of the season. His injury April 6 exposed a lack of depth on the blue line, and Therrien will attempt to plug the hole left by Emelin by pushing Raphael Diaz into a top-four spot playing alongside Andrei Markov.

"I want to give them some time," Therrien said of his second defense pairing. "I believe in stability whether it's with the defensemen or with the forwards as long as the results are there. When the results aren't there, that's when we have to try other experiments. But I want to give them at least the opportunity to get to know each other."

2. Can Daniel Briere turn things around? -- When Briere was bought out by the Philadelphia Flyers, he was approached by about half the teams in the League. He ultimately considered three offers before deciding to sign with his childhood team in Montreal.

While there was a certain degree of nostalgia attached to the decision, Briere was also influenced by the role he would play.

Last season in Philadelphia, Briere was not on the team's first power play unit, but he will be featured prominently on Montreal's power play on a line with Max Pacioretty and David Desharnais.

"It's always been my role everywhere I've been before last year," Briere said. "Even when I started in Phoenix, I barely played and I spent a lot of time in a fourth-line role, but I was always on the first unit going out on the power play. It was a little weird. So last year was definitely tougher, but it was a bit of my fault too. I put myself in that position with the injuries and having some bad games here and there. I want to make sure I take advantage of this chance."

Briere's offensive production has gone down in each of his last two seasons and he turns 36 on Oct. 6, an age at which few players are able to reverse a downward trend in their career.

But Briere's opportunity to play on Montreal's top power-play unit this season could help him do just that.

3. How will the Canadiens benefit from the lessons of last season? -- The Canadiens did not have a full training camp last season under Therrien, meaning a lot of the learning they did of the new coach's system was done on the fly. That didn't stop the Canadiens from getting off to a 6-2-0 start, paving the way for their turnaround season.

This time around, Montreal not only had a full training camp, but they had very little turnover from last season and a

system that was already in place.

"Last year was a real change. We went to a completely different style to what we were used to," Gorges said. "Now, coming in this year with most of the guys returning, it's about fine tuning those things. We know what to expect, we know what we want to do, not a lot has changed. So now how do we go from being good at what we did to being great at what we're going to do?"

"We're used to this system, we're used to what we're supposed to do on the ice. Now it's time to take it to that next level."

RELATED NEWS:

30 in 15: Canadiens excited by Tinordi in camp

Sunday, 09.29.2013 / 3:00 AM / 2013-2014 Season Preview

By Arpon Basu - Managing Editor LNH.com

NHL.com continues its preview of the 2013-14 season, which will include in-depth looks at all 30 teams throughout September.

The biggest moment of Jarred Tinordi's hockey life wasn't announced to him. He was left to figure it out on his own.

When the Montreal Canadiens cut center Gabriel Dumont and defenseman Nathan Beaulieu following their final preseason game Thursday night, Tinordi was able to conclude that he had achieved a lifelong dream.

"They didn't mention anything to me, but I saw the cuts that were made and I didn't have a meeting, so it was kind of clear that I was sticking around for a little while at least," Tinordi said. "It was obviously a good feeling, I called my parents right away."

Tinordi is the son of longtime NHL defenseman Mark Tinordi, and dad didn't appear to be quite as excited as his son.

"He said 'Good job,'" Tinordi said. "He doesn't really say a lot. He said 'good job.' and that was pretty much it."

However, the Canadiens are quite excited with the way Tinordi played in training camp, and their hope is that he can force them into making some difficult decisions when it comes to the top-six on defense.

Montreal will be missing physical defenseman Alexei Emelin until at least December, so Canadiens general manager Marc Bergevin went out and acquired free agent Douglas Murray to fill that hole. But Murray has been out with a lower-body injury for nearly all of training camp, leaving the door open for Tinordi to perhaps be in uniform when the season opens Tuesday night at Bell Centre against the Toronto Maple Leafs.

However, once Murray is ready to play, the only way Tinordi would be able to get in the lineup would be if coach Michel Therrien decided to sit a veteran on defense.

Tinordi did his best throughout training camp to show that can a viable option for Therrien by playing a physical game while showing good poise in his own end.

"He really grasped that and said to himself, 'This is what they need, and this is what I have to do to be here,'" defenseman Josh Gorges said. "He's committed himself to do what it takes to be here."

Therrien has not committed to how Tinordi and fellow rookie Michael Bournival will be used, stating repeatedly that they are on the 23-man roster and nothing more. When asked if he was comfortable having two young players sit in the press box, Therrien appeared to suggest that if it were to happen it wouldn't be for long.

"When a young player can't get in the lineup over a long period of time because your team is playing well, that's when you need to make a decision," Therrien said. "But over a shorter period of time it's not that bad, there's no reason to panic. So that's how we made our decisions. Our young players are part of our 23-man roster, and we'll make those decisions afterwards."

Tinordi practiced on Montreal's third pair with Francis Bouillon on Saturday, with Murray skating as the extra defenseman while he gets his conditioning back up to par with his teammates. That may provide Tinordi with the window he needs to make Therrien's decision a difficult one.

RELATED NEWS:

Blackhawks' Nick Leddy still has lots to learn

Saturday, 09.28.2013 / 10:37 AM / 2013-2014 Season Preview

By Brian Hedger - NHL.com Correspondent

CHICAGO -- The last thing that most people remember about Nick Leddy from the 2012-13 season is the dramatic reduction in his ice time during the Stanley Cup Final.

That cut in ice time raised some red flags about the lofty expectations that were heaped on his shoulders before the age of 20, when legendary coach Scotty Bowman -- a senior adviser for the Chicago Blackhawks -- compared him to a young Phil Housley.

Those questioning the 22-year old Leddy's ability, however, should probably talk to his teammates on the defending Stanley Cup champion Blackhawks first.

"He's good at both ends of the rink and I don't think there's anyone in the League who can chase him from behind the net and keep up with him," Andrew Shaw, a 21-year old second-year center, told NHL.com. "Whenever I'm on the ice with him, I just give it to him and yell, 'Skate!' ... because why should I have to skate with it when he can easily go through three guys?"

Shaw is Leddy's roommate and a friend off the ice, but he's not the only one in the dressing room who's impressed with Leddy's skating and instincts. Veteran defenseman Sheldon Brookbank, who played with Scott Niedermayer during his time with the Anaheim Ducks, said Leddy has at least one trait that's eerily similar to the 2013 Hall of Fame inductee.

"Some of the things he does out there are just amazing," Brookbank told NHL.com this week. "I'm not going to get ahead of myself and compare him to Niedermayer, but after playing with Niedermayer, sometimes you'd shake your head at how he'd go retrieve a puck and things like that. [Leddy] can go into a corner with two guys on him and just leave them in the dust. There's not many guys who can do that in any league, so he definitely has some very high-end talent and skating ability."

Brookbank's kicker ought to allay any concerns that Leddy isn't capable of developing into a star blueliner.

"I think he still has room to improve," he said. "He's a [real] good player right now, but I think there's still room to improve. He's still young and he's only going to get better."

The question is what Leddy needs to improve most?

Ask him and he's got all areas of his game circled. This will be Leddy's fourth NHL season, and his second full campaign. He has 176 regular-season games behind him, as well as 36 games of experience in the Stanley Cup Playoffs.

He's still learning a lot on every shift and is the first one to admit it.

"You can keep learning throughout your whole career, whether it's from a younger guy and watching him or [veterans] like [Duncan Keith] and [Brent Seabrook]," Leddy told NHL.com. "It's nice having those kind of guys in front of me and learning from them."

One aspect of Keith's game he's trying to emulate is using his speed to get better gap coverage. Leddy is built much like Keith, and both have elite speed. The difference is that Keith has a lot more experience and a Norris Trophy from 2010 on his resume.

"He'll hit guys if he needs to, but he's so good at getting on people quick and having stick-on-puck all the time," Leddy said. "It makes guys make mistakes and makes guys try to make plays earlier than they want to."

Offensively, Leddy is making a concerted effort to shoot the puck more often. It's become a theme throughout his career, dating back to high school. Coaches and teammates are always impressed with his shot, especially his accuracy, and want him to use it more.

"It's always been the way I play ... I like to dish it off more than shoot it, but in some circumstances I need to be shooting more than passing," Leddy said. "I think it's more of a natural thing [not to shoot], but I've got to change that mentality a little bit. I'm not saying I would score a lot of goals if I start shooting more, but it creates a lot of plays and creates a mess in front of the net."

That kind of mess would please Blackhawks coach Joel Quenneville, who was bothered enough by Leddy's play in the Final against the Boston Bruins that he sat him on the bench for long stretches.

After scoring six goals and finishing with 18 points while playing all 48 games during the regular season, Leddy watched his ice time in the Stanley Cup Playoffs go from 22:37 at the start to 3:25 in Game 6 of the Final, when the Blackhawks won the Cup with two goals in the final 90 seconds of regulation.

"Everybody has got pride [and] they want to play, they want to do well and contribute in a meaningful way," Quenneville said. "Whether [the Final] is a motivator or not, I mean, that's where we're at and that's where we are today. Take advantage of the situation and show us that you deserve more and earn more ... and I expect that."

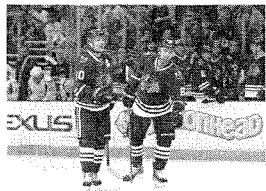
Leddy, who inked a two-year deal in the summer as a restricted free agent, plans to use the experience as motivation. He views it as another educational bump along his career path and is quick to share what it thought him.

"That there's always going to be ups and downs, and you just have to basically control what you can control," he told NHL.com. "Obviously you can use that as motivation, but you don't need to think about it too much. I mean, we did win the Stanley Cup, so that's always the main goal. Winning is always the main goal, and doing whatever you can to win is the most important thing."

RELATED NEWS:

NHL preseason roundup: Blackhawks win finale

AP 12:38 a.m. EDT September 29, 2013



(Photo: Dennis Wierzbicki, USA TODAY Sports)

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CHICAGO (AP) — Andrew Shaw knocked in a rebound at 1:47 of overtime to give the Chicago Blackhawks a 4-3 victory over the Washington Capitals on Saturday night in the teams' preseason finale.

Defenseman Nick Leddy had two goals and an assist, and Jimmy Hayes also scored for the Blackhawks (4-0-2). Nikolai Khabibulin had 12 saves.

Mikhail Grabovski, Marcus Johansson and Joel Ward scored for Washington (4-0-4), which will open the regular season at Chicago on Tuesday night. Braden Holtby finished with 32 saves.

BOX SCORE: [Blackhawks 4, Capitals 3 \(OT\) \(http://www.usatoday.com/sports/nhl/game/boxscore/l.nhl.com-2013-e.17724/\)](http://www.usatoday.com/sports/nhl/game/boxscore/l.nhl.com-2013-e.17724/)

PREVIEW: [Central Division \(http://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/nhl/columnist/allen/2013/09/24/nhl-central-division-preview/2865541/\)](http://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/nhl/columnist/allen/2013/09/24/nhl-central-division-preview/2865541/)

Blackhawks No. 1 goaltender Corey Crawford didn't dress as a precaution because of lower-body stiffness, according to coach Joel Quenneville.

Crawford, who played every minute of Chicago's 2013 Stanley Cup playoff run, is expected to start Tuesday. The Blackhawks will raise a banner in a ceremony before that contest to celebrate their fifth NHL championship and second in four seasons.

Chicago's top line of right wing Patrick Kane, center Jonathan Toews and left wing Bryan Bickell started and skated together throughout the game.

Leddy opened the scoring 5:52 in on a high screened shot after pinching into the slot.

Grabovski tied it at 4:48 of the second by completing a breakaway, but Leddy put Chicago ahead 2-1 on a low screened shot from the left point 3:30 later.

Johansson tied it at 2-all at 3:32 of the third on a low shot from the left circle that fooled Khabibulin.

Hayes put Chicago ahead 3-2 at 6:52 of the third, but Ward scored from 15 feet out with 5:01 left in regulation to set up overtime.

Versteeg leads Panthers past Lightning

SUNRISE, Fla. (AP) — Kris Versteeg scored twice, including the tiebreaking goal near the midpoint of the third period, to lead the Florida Panthers to a 5-3 win over the Tampa Bay Lightning in the teams' preseason finale on Saturday night.

Versteeg, playing in his second game after undergoing knee surgery in March, put the Panthers ahead at 8:38 of the third and added an empty-netter with 1 minute remaining. Brad Boyes, Scott Gomez and Jesse Winchester also scored for the Panthers (3-1-3).

BOX SCORE: [Panthers 5, Lightning 3 \(http://www.usatoday.com/sports/nhl/game/boxscore/l.nhl.com-2013-e.17758/\)](http://www.usatoday.com/sports/nhl/game/boxscore/l.nhl.com-2013-e.17758/)

Tim Thomas stopped 19 of 22 shots in his first full game in about 17 months. Thomas, who signed with the Panthers after sitting out last season, made his Florida debut Thursday night against Tampa Bay but was replaced in the second period.

Steven Stamkos and Martin St. Louis each had a goal and an assist for Tampa Bay (5-2-0), and Brett Connolly also scored. Anders Lindback made 17 saves.

Leivo pushes Maple Leafs past Red Wings

TORONTO (AP) — Josh Leivo scored twice in the Toronto Maple Leafs' 3-1 victory over the Detroit Red Wings on Saturday night in the preseason finale for both teams.

BOX SCORE: [Maple Leafs 3, Red Wings 1 \(http://www.usatoday.com/sports/nhl/game/boxscore/l.nhl.com-2013-e.19046/\)](http://www.usatoday.com/sports/nhl/game/boxscore/l.nhl.com-2013-e.19046/)

Defenseman John-Michael Liles scored on a power play in the second period and assisted on Leivo's third-period goal. James Reimer made 24 saves for Toronto (5-2-1).

Mitch Callahan scored for Detroit (3-5-0).

PHOTOS: Best of preseason

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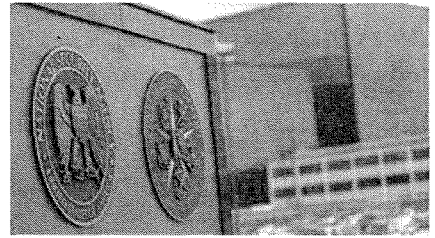
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Sep 27, 2013

Coyotes F Paul Bissonnette's suspension cut to 3 games

Sarah McLellan, USA TODAY Sports 11:39 p.m. EDT September 28, 2013



(Photo: Sergei Belski, USA TODAY Sports)

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PHOENIX - The NHL has reduced Coyotes winger Paul Bissonnette's suspension from 10 games to three after Bissonnette was punished for leaving the bench during an illegal line change during the team's preseason game Sept. 15 against the Los Angeles Kings.

Bissonnette was appealing the initial 10-game ban, and a hearing was scheduled for Sunday in New York with Commissioner Gary Bettman. But he and the NHL Players' Association have dropped their appeal after the reduction was announced Saturday afternoon.

NHL: Pacific Division preview (<http://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/nhl/columnist/allen/2013/09/24/nhl-pacific-division-preview/2866005/>)

In that preseason game, defenseman Rusty Klesla was leveled with an open-ice body check from Kings center Jordan Nolan and had to be taken off the ice on a stretcher. After that, Nolan became an easy target for the Coyotes and center Martin Hanzal elbowed Nolan along the boards later in the period.

A scrum ensued and that's when Bissonnette made an illegal line change, coming off the bench before a teammate returned to it, to join the action. He was given a game misconduct for leaving the bench, and that triggers an automatic 10-game suspension to be served in the regular season.

Since the game was in the preseason, the league had limited video to review.

"The precise timing and circumstances pursuant to which Bissonnette entered the ice surface are not apparent in the video," read a release from the league explaining its decision.

2013-14 NHL suspension tracker

In the appeal process, Bissonnette's camp presented new video evidence that supported his claim that he left the bench legally to substitute for winger Max Domi. Teammates and coach Dave Tippett supported this stance.

"None of the on-ice officials definitively contradict Bissonnette's contention," the release noted.

Although the video evidence was not conclusive, the league decided to rescind the 10-game suspension and instead issue a three-game ban for his involvement in the altercation that targeted Nolan.

Bissonnette will forfeit \$11,346.15 and is eligible to return Oct. 10 against the Detroit Red Wings.



Paul Bissonnette
@BizNasty2point0

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As much as I'm looked at as a "plug", "grocery stick", "duster", it doesn't take away from the amount of respect I have for the game.

9:38 PM - 28 Sep 2013

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Sarah McLellan writes for the Arizona Republic

PHOTOS: NHL preseason games

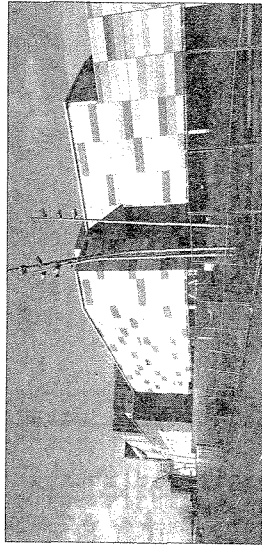
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Selling the American Dream



Developer's want up to \$800 million in bonds for the complex.
CARMINE GALASSO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Meadows project hinges on huge bond offering

By **CHRISTOPHER MAAG**
and **JOHN BRENNAN**
STAFF WRITERS

James Colby is what's known on Wall Street as a "big boy," a sophisticated investor who manages at least \$100 million and is willing to certify to federal securities regulators that he understands risky and complex financing plans well

enough to bet large sums of other people's money on them.

That potentially makes him very important to the future of the proposed American Dream entertainment and retail complex — specifically the plan to tap as much as \$800 million in public bonds to help the private developer Triple Five finance its resurrection of the Meadowslands project once

known as Xanadu. Colby is one of a relatively small number of high-powered investors who specialize in the sort of financing envisioned for American Dream — high-yield municipal bonds, which combine more risk than traditional government bonds with higher returns. He and his counterparts will have a lot to say about the fate of Triple Five's

plan to transform the empty white elephant that looms over the Meadowslands into a year-round shopping and entertainment destination. They ultimately are in control of how much capital is raised and at what cost.

More than a dozen high-yield municipal bond buyers and analysts interviewed for this article

See **DREAM** Page **A-8**

Dream: High-yield, high-risk bonds crucial to mall project

From Page A-1

said there could very well be significant investor interest in the American Dream bonds. But they all expressed concern about the size of the offering and some wondered whether the promised return would be high enough to sufficiently attract investors.

Colby, for one, thinks \$800 million is a lot of money in a market niche that has been shrinking recently.

"There's no doubt the market has been weak," said Colby, portfolio manager and senior municipal strategist at the investment firm Van Eck Global, whose clients include pension funds and other institutional investors. "They'll have to do a very good selling job of convincing buyers."

Those concerns underscore a decision made early on in the process by Triple Five and the public officials who have been working with them. Though issued by a public entity and offering tax-free returns, the bonds envisioned would come without government guarantees, backed instead only by the revenues generated by the project itself. That decision inoculates the public from exposure in the case of a default, but adds hundreds of millions of dollars to the cost of the project — money that otherwise would go to pay state and local taxes.

State officials made it clear from the beginning that Triple Five, unlike the previous developers for the project, would be able to count on government help in obtaining financing — so long as that didn't expose the public to any risk.

Led by Governor Christie, they have touted American Dream for the economic benefits it will generate, including the thousands of construction and permanent jobs it will create.

Triple Five — the owner of the nation's largest mall, the Mall of America in Minnesota — says American Dream will bring a regional shopping and entertainment mecca to Bergen County, as well as a stop for international tourists.

The company says it will spend \$1.8 billion on American Dream — to complete the interior and remodel the controversial facade of the existing 2.3-million-square-foot structure, and to add a 639,000-square-foot indoor water and amusement park.

In addition to the public financing, it says it will spend \$200 million of its own money and find private financing to cover the rest of the cost.

Since unveiling the American Dream plan in 2011, the company has secured the land-use and environmental permits it needs. But the effort to secure the public component of its financing plan has dragged on.

Triple Five spokesman Alan Marcus had no comment for this article. "It would be premature to comment until the financial structure of the deal is complete," he said Friday.

Few offerings bigger

In Wall Street's high-yield bond market, American Dream is shaping up as a big deal. In early September, the Bergen County Improvement Authority tentatively agreed to sell up to \$800 million in tax-free, high-yield municipal bonds to help Triple Five get American Dream up and operating.

Only a handful of such offerings have ever been larger, said Triet M. Nguyen, managing partner of bond counsel firm Axios Advisors. The majority of issuances in the high-yield market range between \$10 million and \$150 million, bond experts said.

"Eight hundred million is large for the municipal bond world," said Robert Slavin, a staff writer at Bond Buyer, an industry publication.

The complicated public financing plan also involves the state Economic Development Authority and the borough of East Rutherford; all three entities must formally sign off on the plan before the bonds would be offered for sale.

The \$800 million is a cap, and the final offering would likely be somewhat lower.

In a scenario included in the BCIA-approved plan, the bonds offered for sale would total \$738.5 million — \$484 million issued in the name of East Rutherford, which would forgo future property tax payments that would be used instead to pay off the bonds, and \$254.5 million via an agreement with the EDA to redirect sales taxes and other state taxes generated on the project to bondholders.

Triple Five and its backers say the tax breaks don't represent a public cost because they never would have been generated in the first place had the state and East Rutherford not agreed to help finance the project.

Even \$738.5 million would qualify as a very big deal, the experts say.

"Wow," said Bob Donahue, managing director of Municipal Market Advisors, a New York company that advises individual and institutional bond buyers. "That certainly is one of the larger deals ever in the high-yield market."

These will not be boring, vanilla municipal bonds, experts agree. A traditional municipal bond might raise, say, \$1 million to pave a town's streets and it is backed by the credit of the issuing government. Most are "general obligation" bonds, which means if the town fails to repay, taxpayers are on the hook.

Because such bonds are backed by significant collateral — the taxing power of the government — they are among the safest investments on the market. But they also pay relatively low interest. The going rate on traditional municipal bonds is currently about 3 percent, said Herman R. Charbonneau, manager of public finance at Roosevelt & Cross, a Manhattan-based bond broker.

American Dream's bonds will involve significantly more risk. They are "revenue" bonds, which means investors are repaid only with revenue generated by the project itself. They are also "non-recourse," meaning that if American Dream defaults, investors cannot seek repayment from the issuing government bodies — in this case East Rutherford or the BCIA.

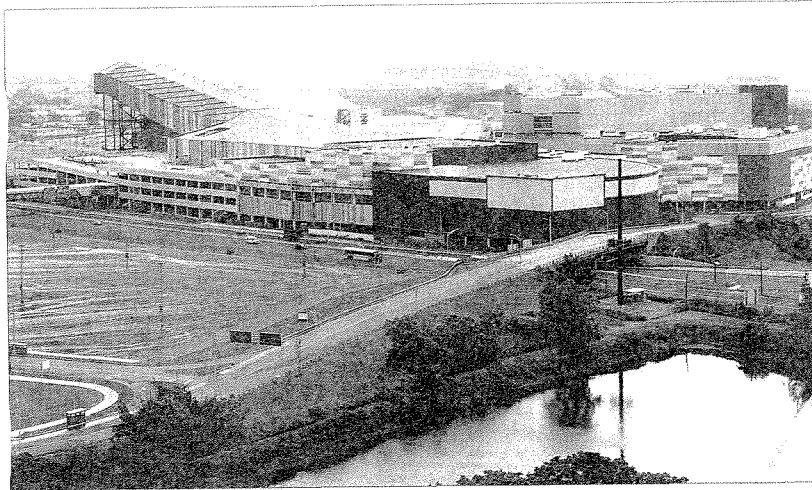
If American Dream fails, the only option for investors is to try to win some redress from the project itself.

"If it's specifically stated as non-recourse, then it's buyer beware," said David B. Thompson, CEO of Phoenix Advisors, a bond-counsel firm based in Bordentown. "If the project goes under, you're out of luck as an investor. You cannot go after the public entities."

High yield, high risk

Far from being repelled by such bonds, some investors embrace the risk because it brings higher returns. Investors currently demand 6 or 7 percent for high-yield bonds, Charbonneau said, somewhat higher than the rates laid out in the Amer-

Dream: High-yield, high-risk bonds crucial to mall project



CARMINE GALASSO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

American Dream Meadowlands retail and entertainment complex remains incomplete.

ican Dream plan reviewed by the BCIA. "These bonds attract investors who are willing to take on greater risk in return for greater yield," Donahue said.

Another major advantage: IRS rules allow bonds like those proposed for American Dream to be tax-free, a designation that significantly increases the effective return for wealthy investors.

In addition to extensive research performed by investors, the bonds will be reviewed by teams of experts hired by East Rutherford, the county, the EDA and the state Local Finance Board, providing an added layer of scrutiny.

"It's a very specialized product and you really do need to have a top-notch research team to analyze all this stuff," said Nguyen, who's also the author of a recent book on investing in the high-yield market.

The result is that American Dream bonds could fill an attractive niche for investors, combining high returns with tax-free status.

"I get a lot of safety and extra yield, and I don't have to pay taxes?" Donahue said. "I'm in."

Finally, the American Dream bond offering may be attractive to investors because it is very big. The high-yield municipal bond market is highly centralized, just a handful of large firms control the lion's share of such bonds, Nguyen said, and those bonds are highly concentrated in a small number of sectors including Puerto Rico's debt and state tobacco settlement bonds.

An offering of this scale would allow fund managers to diversify their holdings into a new sector. And the sheer volume of American Dream bonds increases the likelihood they could be traded on the secondary market, further increasing their value.

"There is a certain preference for the nine-figure deal, because a larger offering means there will be more buyers," said William C. Rhodes, a partner at Ballard Spahr, a bond counsel firm.

Bond market is down

But there's a downside to the jumbo size of the American Dream bonding plan, the financial experts said, especially now. The total value of the high-yield municipal bond market dropped from \$46 billion in May to \$35 billion in September — a 28 percent decline, according to data supplied by Bond Buyer, the trade publication. Amid concerns about the possibility that the Federal Reserve might raise interest rates, Detroit's bankruptcy and Puerto Rico's economic crisis, many investors sold their high-yield bonds in search of either greater safety or higher returns.

"There have been fairly large-scale redemptions" in recent months, Charbon-

neau said. "Their appetite for buying bonds has shrunk."

If enough buyers cannot be found, the bond offering could be derailed, several analysts said.

"I would ask myself is there capacity in the high-yield market to purchase such a large speculative bond," said Donahue.

"It is a substantial deal size, particularly in this environment," said Nguyen, who noted that the market tends to be volatile and could rebound in the near future. "The bond market is in disarray."

In addition, the fact that the revenue needed to repay the bonds is based largely on retail sales at a new mega-mall will not necessarily put investors at ease.

"It's hard to underwrite revenue in that case because you can't underwrite economic cycles," said Randel Beamon, senior credit analyst at Kemper Corp. who, like Colby, was interviewed at a recent conference of high-yield municipal bond investors in Old Greenwich, Conn. "They can make an argument, but it's still hard to know which way the economy will go."

Other bond buyers questioned whether the interest rates incorporated in the preliminary Triple Five proposal reviewed by the BCIA are overly optimistic. It calls for a private placement in which Goldman Sachs, the Wall Street investment bank, will sell the bonds to a small group of pre-arranged buyers at interest rates of 5.5 and 5.7 percent on the two types of bonds, according to the proposal filed with the county.

That's below going rates, which currently range between 6 and 7 percent for such risky unsecured debt, Charbonneau said.

"For them to talk about 5.5 or 5.7 percent, that seems to be uncharacteristically low," he said.

Finally, there is the baggage of Xanadu and the fact that it failed twice under the stewardship of two other developers — before Triple Five took over and put forth the American Dream plan.

"It doesn't preclude anyone from doing the deal," Rhodes said of Xanadu's track record. "It would have to put everyone's antenna up just an inch higher."

How will all these questions get answered? Carefully and slowly, bond buyers and analysts said. The maximum amount Triple Five can seek to borrow will be based on projections of how much American Dream will be worth each year over the life of the bonds, which in the case of the East Rutherford component stretches for more than 30 years. To account for annual fluctuations in American Dream's performance, that figure will be cut by roughly 20 percent, providing a cushion in case the project falls short of those projections.

Next, Goldman Sachs will offer the bonds for sale with a given interest rate. If

buyer demand is high, the rate could be dropped, reducing the cost of interest and allowing Triple Five to borrow more money. On the other hand, buyers may decide the project is too risky and demand a higher interest rate, reducing the amount available to Triple Five.

Either way, the final bond totals and interest rates won't be decided until the week the bonds go on sale.

"The wiggling takes place in slow motion in the days immediately preceding the final contract," Charbonneau said.

A representative of Goldman Sachs declined to comment.

Borough has a say

Before Wall Street investors get a chance to weigh in, the bonding plan must be vetted and secure a formal signoff from officials in East Rutherford, the EDA and the BCIA, as well as the state Local Finance Board. The timeframe for those approvals is unclear.

Because the American Dream site falls within its borders, East Rutherford figures prominently in the deal; the lion's share of redirected tax money to repay borrowers would come from the payments in lieu of taxes, or PILOTs, it would share with Triple Five.

"We're the people who own the PILOT," said East Rutherford Mayor James Cassella, "so the only way they can do it is through us."

That makes some elected officials and residents of East Rutherford very nervous.

"It's going to put East Rutherford taxpayers in jeopardy," said Edward Raventine, a Borough Council member.

That would be true in a normal bond sale, experts say. But when it comes to high-yield, non-recourse bonds, such rules do not apply. The deal will attract a small subset of investors known as "qualified institutional buyers." Each must sign a representation letter, colloquially known on Wall Street as a "big boy" letter, certifying to the federal Securities and Exchange Commission that he manages significant amounts of capital and understand the risks.

Should the project fail, those letters insulate East Rutherford from lawsuits, bond experts said.

"That's why they sign it," Donahue said. "It says they can't sue and claim, 'You didn't inform me that these bonds are risky.' It proves they all know upfront."

That's especially important to the elected officials who must agree to the deal.

"No risk, no cost, or no deal," Casella said at a recent Borough Council meeting.

Beyond that, there is concern in East Rutherford that the financing plan represents an unfairly generous tax break for Triple Five. Under the previous financing deal for Xanadu, the developers agreed to pay East Rutherford between \$1.85 million and \$9.85 million per year, for a total of \$164 million in the first 20 years.

The deal laid out in the BCIA documents gives East Rutherford far less. Triple Five plans to pay the borough between \$500,000 and \$750,000 annually, for a total of \$11 million during the first 20 years of the project, according to the company's public-financing application. Those amounts could rise or fall every year based on an annual reappraisal of the property, said Robert Tuteur of the Blank Rome law firm, who is serving as bond counsel for the county improvement authority.

East Rutherford will not accept such a figure, Casella said during a recent council meeting.

"If those numbers are correct, we're not signing it," he said, describing his negotiations with Triple Five. "There's a lot more money on the table."

At the state level, the EDA "has requested all kinds of information from the developer," Tuteur said. "They are another set of eyes."

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All aboard the Huddle Shuttle

Caravan of fans stops by events to kick up Super Bowl spirit

By Peggy McGlone
STAR-LEDGER STAFF

Zachary Muller was channeling his inner Aaron Rodgers as he cradled a football under his arm and raced over speed bumps and cut around cones in an effort to beat his opponent. The 9-year-old Green Bay Packers fan completed the obstacle course in 15.1 seconds — good enough for bragging rights and a big smile.

The Wayne youngster was one of hundreds of kids — and more than a few adults — who tried the football activities that were part of the NY/NJ Super Bowl's "Join The Huddle" tour, a traveling football circus that stopped at Wayne Hills High School in Wayne last weekend, where several thousand people watched the Hills take on cross-town rival Wayne Valley.

The tour and its Huddle Shuttle are bringing Super Bowl excitement to games and festivals in the metro area. Inside the 64-by-8-foot truck is a replica locker room and the Vince Lombardi Trophy that will be given to the winner of February's game. Outside are interactive stations that test a participant's football skills, including agility, vertical leap and throwing accuracy.

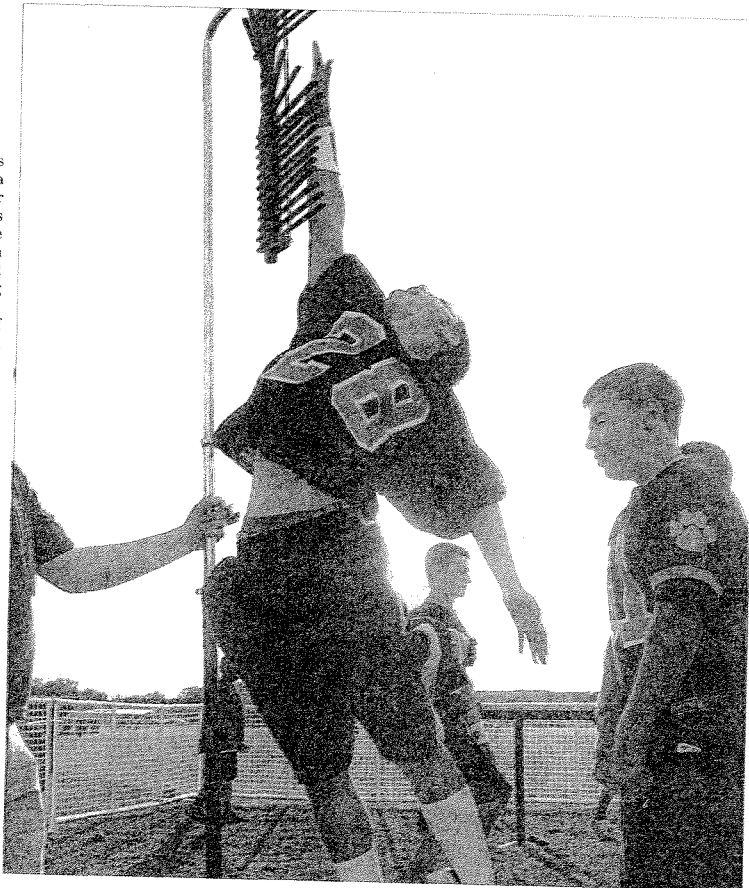
"I've never seen anything like it. It's pretty cool," Diana Rasa said as she watched her son Michael race through the course.

As he waited to try to kick a field goal, Rasa's 11-year-old son gave the training games — designed to resemble the combine activities football players must master — a big thumbs-up. But his favorite attraction was inside the truck.

"It's really cool that they have the Vince Lombardi Trophy," Michael said. "It's cool to see what some of the greatest players ever have held."

No previous Super Bowl has launched a community outreach program of this size and scope, but then no other championship has been hosted by two states in a region of this size.

"Our No. 1 challenge has been our geographical footprint. That challenge



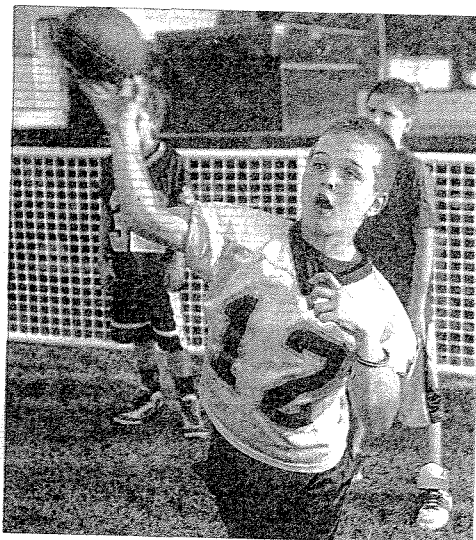
Andrew Topielski, 13, tries his luck at the vertical jump as the Super Bowl 2014 Huddle Shuttle, a mobile event to promote Super Bowl XLVIII, visits Wayne Hills High School in Wayne last weekend.

PHOTOS BY ALEX REMNICK/THE STAR-LEDGER

transcends a bunch of issues, from transportation to weather-preparedness to security," host committee president Alfred F. Kelly Jr. said. "One of our goals is to engage the community, raise awareness of the game and build regional spirit."

The mobile tour will make at least 44 more stops between now and Feb.

SEE HUDDLE, PAGE 27



Michael Rasa, 11, attempts to complete the football toss challenge.



Tracey Wilson of the Huddle Shuttle crew quizzes Jake McKay, 12, on his football knowledge. The shuttle will make at least 44 more stops by Feb. 2.

Huddle

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

2, when Super Bowl XLVIII gets under way at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford. The visits were chosen to connect to football events — such as last night's Bergen Catholic versus St. Joseph's of Montvale game in Palisades Park — and community events like today's Morristown Festival On The Green. It also will visit places associated with Lombardi, the legendary Green Bay Packers coach who played at Fordham University and coached for the Giants.

The host committee also wants to visit all five New York City boroughs, the seven northern New Jersey counties

and parts of Westchester and Rockland counties, Kelly said. “We’re not trying to be an event, we’re trying to plug into an event,” he said. “We’re trying to be the added surprise.”

The Huddle Shuttle has a staff of 20 to 25 people who operate the stations, register the participations or help with crowd control. About 150 to 200 people can move through its activities an hour, depending on the crowd and their enthusiasm, Kelly said.

Kelly would not disclose the cost of the truck and its games, only saying it’s a “good-sized investment” and that building it and operating it for almost five months are about equal.

The shuttle received high marks at its first New Jersey

stop last weekend. A miked Tracey Wilson greeted participants into the training area with trivia about football and the local teams. She raced the course against a few youngsters who didn’t have opponents, and played a penalty signal version of Simon Says with others.

“It’s great,” Wayne resident Marc Piro said after he tried to throw footballs through the snowflake-designed targets. “It’s great for the kids to try to do the tasks the pros do.”

Andrew Topieliski, 13, finished the shuttle’s entire circuit in the hour before the high school teams played. “It’s good to have this for kids to get involved,” Andrew said. “I’m excited about the Super Bowl.”

Kelly said the tour’s final stops are still being determined, and the host committee has received a couple dozen invitations from groups who’d like to have it at their event.

He’s been pleasantly surprised at crowd reaction to Lombardi and the memorabilia inside the shuttle. Kristine Muller, one of the first Wayne visitors to go through the exhibit, was thrilled to see the trophy up close, but she was amazed by something else on display.

“The first Super Bowl had \$10 tickets,” she said.

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Meadowlands officials look to turn this Super “Ice Bowl” into a “Nice Bowl,” too

Posted on Sunday, September 29, 2013 11:48 am

by John Brennan

Bill Ervolino, The Record’s resident funnyman, has a – well, funny column today about attending a seminar on Friday designed to help local merchants and service providers prepare for the walkup week to the Feb. 2 Meadowlands Super Bowl at MetLife Stadium.

One excerpt:

“One short promotional film, shown during the seminar, noted repeatedly that the Super Bowl is taking place in [ahem] “New York and New Jersey” — a somewhat irksome description to the residents of East Rutherford, unless New York has an embassy located somewhere under MetLife Stadium that no one knows about.

The film also played up the strengths of both areas. New York, for example, has Broadway, great shopping and the Naked Cowboy, while New Jersey has Field Station: Dinosaurs, great shopping and no Naked Cowboy.”

But amusement aside, there is a more serious issue under the surface: Can locals, as Ervolino puts it, be “a little less ‘Joisey’” when it comes to greeting what some of us might uncharitably call ‘clueless tourists?’

NFL officials say that while the stadiums hold about 80,000 fans, twice as many supporters tend to show up in the Super Bowl host city the week before the game to attend parties and drink in – literally and figuratively – the atmosphere.

The Meadowlands Regional Chamber, which co-sponsored the seminar along with Bergen Community College, is of the mind that the friendlier experience those visitors receive, the more likely they are to come back for more.

That could particularly could be true for the large numbers who will at first imagine staying in Manhattan – then detour to Secaucus and other North Jersey towns once they see that a Big Apple hotel room costs more than their monthly mortgage payment.

That means a large influx of out-of-towners who may not have stayed in Joisey before, aside maybe from the Newark Airport Marriott.

From Ervolino’s column: “As Ronald Milon, director of the BCC Meadowlands Campus admitted, “Yes, to a lot of people, we are the ‘Sopranos’ state, but that’s where ‘Warm Welcome’ comes in. We can only do what we can do, but if we do it well, we will encourage people to return.”

I will say this: Some New Jerseyans have a lot to learn about good old Midwestern hospitality. I've seen it constantly in well over 200 trips to that area in my days as a traveling NBA writer (and vacationer).

I experienced my most concentrated and lengthiest doses of it in a six-week span from late 2011 to early 2012. The first visit was to the Twin Cities in Minnesota, where videographer Thomas E. Franklin and I checked out Mall of America – the massive shopping and entertainment project operated by Triple Five, the same folks who are trying to get American Dream Meadowlands (nee Xanadu) to the finish line.

The other trip was a week-long visit to Indianapolis for the Giants-Patriots Super Bowl, Round 2.

The motto of the first state is “Minnesota Nice.” The theme of the other state is.... yep, “Indiana Nice.”

It's a way of life – make yourself an ambassador of your state, so that maybe the good experience of tourists will lead them to recommend that their friends and family visit.

My favorite example actually came in an earlier trip to Indianapolis in 2010. I was staying at the Jets team hotel, covering their AFC title game against the Colts. Every Jets fan who arrived – and there were thousands – seemed to know this was the Jets hotel, so the lobby was always mobbed and the elevators were overwhelmed.

I was coming down from my 12th-floor hotel room when the elevator stopped on the second floor.

The Jersey thought is, “Really? You couldn't walk down those 12 stairs right there? It's carpeted, and with a nice view of the lobby, not some dank stairwell. And you sure seem to be an able-bodied middle-aged woman.”

You think it, but you don't say anything, of course. But you think it.

Well, this is how Indiana Nice works: The woman turned to those of us in the elevator and literally “begged our pardon” for her apparent “rudeness,” stressing that she had badly twisted her ankle earlier that day or of course she wouldn't have slowed us up by – ok, about 10 seconds.

Some of my Meadowlander readers must be thinking, “Are you kidding? Doesn't all that sincerity and sweetness get sickening after a little while?”

Not at all, and I should know – I married a Hoosier 15 years ago.

- See more at: <http://blog.northjersey.com/meadowlandsmatters/6731/meadowlands-officials-look-to-turn-this-super-ice-bowl-into-a-nice-bowl-too/#more-6731>