

# Game Time

Four Dollars Of Good Karma

It's Almost Always Never Easy

Established in 2005

# Thanks Blues Fans

By Jeff Jones

@JMJones

I once heard the argument made that each year passes faster as we get older because each represents a smaller percentage of our lives. When you're in first grade, the school year takes forever because its duration is approximately 15 percent of your life span.

I'm 30 years old. Shit is happening quickly now. Seasons pass and change with a speed that I'm uncomfortable and unfamiliar with. That tonight's game could very well be the last of the season at Scottrade Center seems unfathomable, but my computer tells me that it's April 3 as I write this and I know that I have to be at Busch Stadium on Thursday, so it must be true.

If an entire hockey season has passed by, then surely there must be memories to consider. Something great must have happened over the last six months that we can all remember fondly, chuckle at lovingly and use to get ourselves worked up for what may or may not be a playoff push.

Did anything happen? I'll be damned if I can remember what. I can tell you about my personal life and the things I've lived over the course of 82 games. I can tell you about traveling to Philadelphia and Washington and Boston and Columbus and all of the generosity of friends that made those trips worth taking. Hell, I can even tell you some funny stories from preseason. Those I might save for an in-person conversation; I tend to get in trouble when I talk too much. Ask me about last season's last game sometime.

I know that a season passed. I have a folder full of columns and a feed full of podcasts which fully document my thoughts and opinions on the Blues throughout the year. I haven't been reliving them; mostly they've been dour, and I don't relish the idea of proving myself right. For this column, though, I did go back to look at my only other Blackhawks scribing from this year. It's been nearly six full months since they've been to St. Louis. Way to go, NHL schedule goons.



The first and only time I wrote about the Blackhawks this season, I myself was in Chicago. It hadn't crossed my mind in a while, but I wrote a column from the left field stands at Wrigley Field in the middle of a crisp afternoon and recorded a podcast that morning while sitting in Millennium Park.

My most recent column was already a love letter to another city, so I vow not to put you through that again. I only mention that to mention this – that feels to me like a lifetime ago, and yet the season passed in a blink. Is my brain broken? Maybe.

The new scoreboard was cool. Schenn-mania was fun. Vladimir Tarasenko fought a guy in a game where he also scored a couple goals. Some players had babies. Jake Allen did his thing until he didn't. Unless I'm missing something glaringly obvious, that just about wraps it up.

As the team turns from a six-game winning streak to a three-game losing streak and stumbles down the stretch, it's no wonder that they'll have to scrape to make it in to the playoffs for the

**(Continued On Page 26)**

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# From The Editor

In case you didn't know, this book (program, publication, paper — you can even call it a newsletter, I guess) is coming back for another season — whether you like it or not. This is probably going to be a weird column. I don't know the words that are coming out of my fingers as I type them.

In January 1995, Jeffio started the *Game Night Revue*, the first fan-run publication sold outside Blues games. It was the opening night of this building. That was 23 years ago. He ran the paper until the 2004-05 season was lost to lockout and did one issue to say goodbye when the league returned in 2005. Shortly thereafter, Gallagher got *Game Time* up and running. He lasted until the beginning of the 2012-13 season was lost to a lockout. And then I started putting this thing together. That means Jeffio did 10 seasons, Gallagher seven and I'm finishing my sixth. When my first issue hit against the Red Wings on Jan. 19, 2013, I didn't know what I was in for or how long I would last. Honestly, I'm a little surprised I'm still doing this for at least one more season after this.

Spoiler alert: when we get to the 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary of GNR in January, I know I'm going to see that 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary as only 12 months away. What's 12 more months? And odds are there won't be a lockout between now and then. So maybe I should say there's going to be a paper for two more seasons. As long as you want a paper, that is.

You think the Blues have had a rough season? Try basing your business model on their success. While I call GT the worst hobby ever, it's still a business. The paper has costs. And we don't cover those costs every game. Printing, vending. There is a number we need to sell each game to break even. It continues to get harder to hit that number.

I put it out there earlier this season that the era of a printed publication might be coming to an end. I don't want that. When I go to the game, I want the hardcopy in my hand. I still read it during stoppages even though I read every word of the thing the night before when I put it together. But I'm not a young Blues fan. I'm not of the generation where digital is always preferred. And look around, the crowd is getting younger every season. So maybe in the future the paper is only digital. Or it's a pay website or something. Hello, The Athletic, thanks for the idea.

To those of you who read our publication often, thank you from the bottom of my Blues-colored heart. I'll have a beer and talk about this star-crossed hockey franchise

with you anytime. I'm a diehard fan, you're a diehard fan, let's get tipsy and call for a ride some time.

The names of writers on these pages change pretty frequently, much like the season ticket base has ebbs and flows. People get excited to come to every game and then get burnt out coming to EVERY... SINGLE... Game. We have that with writers. But if we didn't have brave souls wanting to have opinions and share their thoughts about the Blues, I'd have to write the entire thing. It would be four pages long. You could call it a pamphlet. So writers, every last one of you crazy people, thanks for making GT the best fan-run paper in the NHL.

I often tell people that the hardest job at Game Time Enterprises is selling the damn paper. Neither wind, nor rain, nor snow, nor dead of night, nor fights among homeless people, nor threat of arrest from police officers will keep Amy, Jeff and Rich (Santa) from standing on street corners hawking my jokes for \$4 of good karma for the Blues. You don't get this thing in your hands without them. Amy has been doing it since 2000. She has been with the fan-run papers uninterrupted longer than anyone else. Check out her story about being a vendor on a page inside the book. It's good. Maybe I should have gotten her to write years ago.

My family puts up with so much crap for this thing. The kids are told on the night before games to be quiet more times than I can count. Dinner happens with my computer open and sometimes with me editing stories between bites. My wife deals with so many hours where I'm not available to help with the house, the kids, the dogs — everything. If my family didn't like this thing (ok, tolerate is a better word), it wouldn't still exist. It would be deader than Patrik Berglund's trade value. Thank you, Ethan. Thank you, Jackson. Thank you, Lauren. And Heather, thank you for helping to keep GT going. You found us printing companies when we didn't have a copier anymore. You make sure the bills are paid, especially when we don't exactly have enough in the bank to cover them. You hold down the fort when the kids are on the warpath when I need to get an issue done. If you love this paper/book/publication/whatever, tell her thank you next time you see her.

Thank you for reading this thing, for being part of this collective we call *Game Time*. It's not for everybody, and that's ok. I hope we have more issues this season. If not, so long for just a little while. — Brad

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## Today's Song Lyric:

Closing time  
Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end

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

Summer Sanders

# Tonight's Trivia

by Childhood Trauma

### First Period

1. If the Blues make the playoffs, they will own the longest active playoff streak in the NHL since both the Blackhawks and the Rangers have ended their streaks.
- 2: The Blackhawks own the NHL's record for most consecutive playoff appearances with 28 seasons (1970-97)

### First Intermission

- 3: A masked Ric Flair wrestled as the Black Scorpion at one point in time.

### Second Period

- 4: Which is the highest number: Joel Quenneville's PIMs total, Joel Quenneville's head coaching wins total, Jonathan Toews' career points or Corey Crawford's games-played?
- 5: Which of the following goalies did not win the William M Jennings Trophy (fewest goals allowed) while a Blue: Roman Turek, Jake Allen, Jaroslav Halak or Brian Elliott?

### Second Intermission

- 6: The last event at the St. Louis Arena was which of the following: a college basketball game, an NHL playoff game, a Christian concert or a circus?

### Third Period

- 7: Patrick Kane broke into the top five all-time Blackhawks scoring list by passing Chicago's all-time highest scoring defenseman. Who did Kane pass?
- 8: Who led the Blackhawks in scoring the most recent time they missed the playoffs prior to this season?
- 9: Corey Crawford won the William M. Jennings Trophy twice, once with Carey Price and once with whom?

### Overtime!

- 10: Blackhawk Marian Hossa won the WHL's Jim Piggott Memorial Trophy (rookie of the year) in 1998. Two current Blues also won that award. Name either one.

- 
1. False. The Blues would be at seven seasons, second place to the Penguins' 12 seasons.
  2. False. That is the second-place streak. The Bruins 29-season streak (1968-1996) is the longest. The Blues and the Red Wings' 25-season streak is third.
  3. True. In 1990 the Black Scorpion had a feud with Sting. And while several wrestlers (and even non-wrestlers) portrayed the Scorpion, it was Flair who was unmasked as the Scorpion.
  4. Joel's PIMs is the most. Joel has 509 wins, 705 PIMs. Toews has 674 points Corey Crawford has 409 games.
  5. Jake Allen has yet to win the award.
  6. The Old Barn's last event in 1994 was a concert by Carmen Dominic Licciardello a contemporary Christian music singer.
  7. Doug Wilson's 779 Hawks points is now sixth place, but still first among defensemen. Next up for Kane is Steve Lamer's 923.
  8. They had most recently missed the playoffs in 2008, and the leading three scorers were, in order of most points to least, were Patrick Kane, Patrick Sharp and Jonathan Toews.
  9. Crawford's first Jennings was in 2013 with Ray Emery.
  10. Scotty Upshall won in 2001 and Brayden Schenn won in 2009.

## Top 11 Things Heard On The Concourse Tonight

11. On Tuesday the Blues had an optional practice. Kind of feels like playing hard the last couple games has been optional too.
10. So I come tonight hoping for the best, expecting the worst from the Blues. Because fool me 50 years, shame on you, fool me 51 years, shame on me.
9. You're worried about next year? But the Blues have the four most valuable prospects in the history of professional hockey. I read that on the Internet.
8. The Predators were the eighth seed last season and they made the Western Conference Final. If the Blues make it, they'll be eighth and play the Predators. Therefore, the Blues will not last long in the playoffs.
7. "Hey baby, my kidney is bleeding for you. Literally."
6. The Blues' goaltending situation is totally fine. If by fine you mean totally messed up, unpredictable and kind of hopeless at the moment. So, fine.
5. Playoff tickets go on sale Friday. Does the Blues organization just not believe in jinxes? Lack of self awareness is funny.
4. When companies like Gatorade choose to put Patrick Kane in their commercials, I just figure they have the same marketing firm as the tobacco companies.
3. Watching the NHL playoffs without a team to really root for is like going to the horse races and not placing a bet.
2. Don't worry. The Avalanche are so bad the Blues will have to try and miss the playoffs. Which I wouldn't put past them at this point.
1. I'm kind of afraid John Tavares won't sign in St. Louis this summer because he wears 91 and Tarasenko wears 91, and if the Russian doesn't offer to switch, he won't come here. I'm really worried.

— From Brad Lee's empty beer cup

## Bob Plager

## Jokes Of The Game

**Patrick Kane** was sitting quietly watching TV when his wife walked up behind him and whacked him on the head with a magazine.

"What was that for?" he asked.

"That was for the piece of paper in your pants pocket with the name Laura Lou written on it," she replied.

"Two weeks ago when I went to the races, Laura Lou was the name of one of the horses I bet on," **Kane** explained.

"Oh honey, I'm sorry," she said. "I should have known there was a good explanation."

Three days later **Kane** was watching a hockey game on TV when his wife walked up and hit him in the head again, this time with the iron frying pan, which knocked him out cold.

When he came to, he asked,

"What the hell was that for?"

She replied, "Your horse phoned."

### Hawks Lookalike

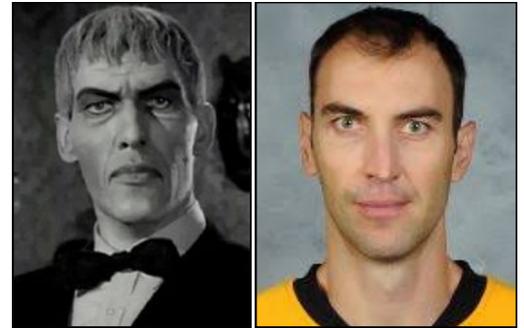


Pennywise and Patrick Kane

# 2017-18 Lookalikes

Thanks to everyone who has suggested them over the season. It can be a real challenge. — Brad

### Bruins Lookalike



Lurch and Zdeno Chara

### Blues Lookalike



Russell Brand and Chris Thorburn

### Hawks Lookalike



Kevin McKidd and Marian Hossa

### Blue Jackets Lookalike



Macklemore and Ian Cole (MackColemore)

### Blues Lookalike



Uncle Fester and Doug Armstrong

### Coyotes Lookalike



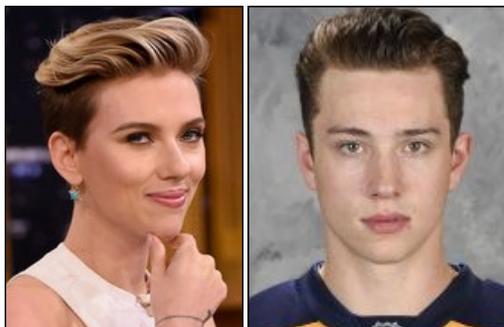
Paul Rudd and Jason Demers

### Senators Lookalike



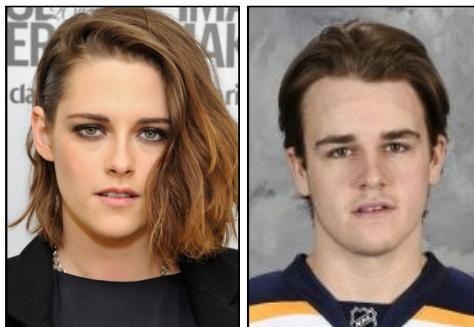
Kid Rock and Erik Karlsson

### Blues Lookalike



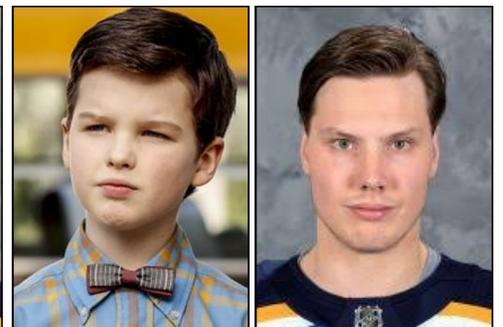
Scarlett Johansson and Vince Dunn

### Blues Lookalike



Kristen Stewart and Sammy Blais

### Blues Lookalike



Young Sheldon and Oskar Sundqvist

# The Five Hole

By Trevor Kraus  
The Franchise Goalie

“Well, hey: There’s always next year,” my Opening Night column began.

I spent the following 750 or so words describing why this edition of the St. Louis Blues wasn’t good enough to make a deep run in the playoffs. I wrote that after Vladimir Tarasenko and Jaden Schwartz, the scoring gets real tough, real quick. I wrote, “The best hope for this team’s offense is that one of Dmitrij Jaskin, Magnus Paajarvi or Ivan Barbashev goes crazy and pots 20.”

I wrote that the D-corps would need “an aberrational season from a rookie, or an offensively productive season from someone who has shown little to no ability to score (Jay Bouwmeester, Robert Bortuzzo, Carl Gunnarson, Joel Edmundson).” I wrote that there was one other hope for the Blues to be contenders: Jake Allen putting up a 92.0-ish save percentage over a full season.

In addition to several pleasant surprises or a career year or two — and we saw both, in Vince Dunn, Alex Pietrangelo and Carter Hutton — everything else would have to go perfectly. The team would have to be healthy. It would have to get exactly what it expected out of guys like Alexander Steen, Patrik Berglund, Colton Parayko and Vladimir Sobotka. It would have to avoid rotten shooting percentage luck.

It was clear: They were operating on razor-thin margins. Anything goes wrong, and there would be trouble in River City.

I truly couldn’t care less about being right — I didn’t put money down, and no one gives a shit about my opinion. What’s so troubling is that I, a guy who watches games in his underwear, with a beer and bag of peanuts and who spends maybe an hour a week reading about hockey and looking at statistics, knew this all along.

It wasn’t hard to identify this team’s flaws. Nor would it have been terribly difficult to avoid creating them. A basic level of dedication to statistics-based decision-making, using the information that is publicly available throughout the hockey

blogosphere, would have done the trick.

Doug Armstrong, however, was not up to the challenge. This season’s failure to contend — and whether the Blues squeak into the playoffs, they clearly are not Cup contenders — is on him. He has built a consistent winner here in St. Louis over the past decade. He’s in the top third of NHL GMs. But that says much more about how low the bar is. Because for the Blues to be contenders in the near future, he has to get better. It’s that simple.

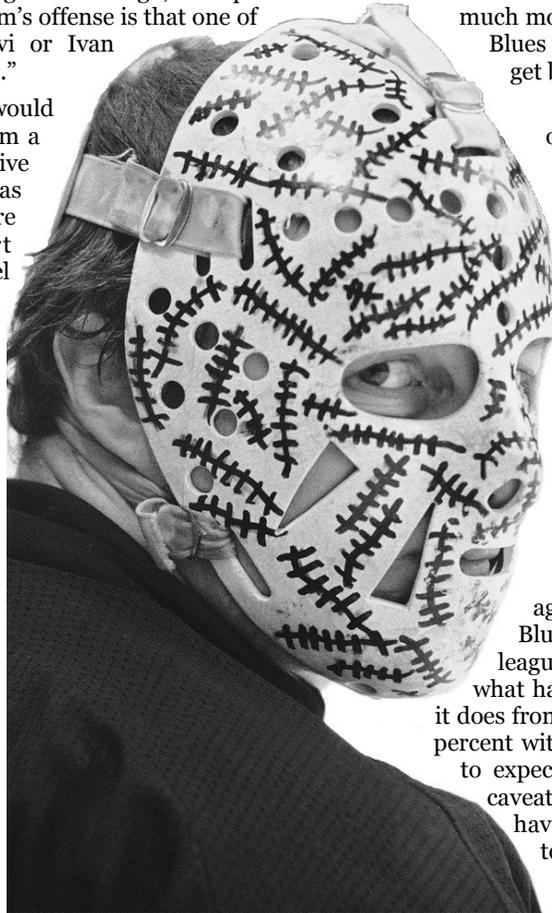
There are some meaningful reasons for optimism in the near future. For one, there will be cap space to work with this summer. Schwartz seems to have taken his game to another level. Tarasenko’s worst season still netted more than 30 goals. It looks like we’ve got a good one in Vince Dunn. Brayden Schenn has scored 25 for three straight years now; this season hasn’t been an aberration. Steen appears to have enough gas left in the tank for another productive season or two. Of the four young forwards who were untouchable at the trade deadline, plus Robby Fabbri, you only need two of those five to be legitimate second-liners next year for the offense to be in good shape.

The power play is unlikely to be this bad again. In the four seasons before this one, the Blues’ PP finished no lower than eighth in the league. This year, they’re almost dead last. That’s what happens when shooting percentage craters, as it does from time to time — they’re shooting a brutal 10 percent with the man advantage. It’s not unreasonable to expect a regression toward the norm, with this caveat: Special teams are where coaching seems to have the most impact, and no Mike Yeo-coached team has ever finished in the top 10 in power play Corsi-For per 60 minutes, which is the most predictive and sustainable power

play metric.

Finally, the Jake Allen verdict is in. He’s faced more than enough NHL shots; he is what his career save percentage says he is: a slightly below-average goalie. But he’s not *this far* below average (90.7 — the league is at 91.3). The Blues are comfortably in the playoffs if he’d hit his career average this year.

Doug Armstrong has built a roster that, even with a ton of crucial injuries, is going to finish top-five in the Western Conference in possession. This is a solid team. But his unjustified preference for veterans and his overpayments for guys he’s familiar with, to name two of his shortcomings, has resulted in a roster that’s not quite good enough to withstand the awful luck we’ve seen this year.



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# Game Time Emeritus

With Tim Wiemers @TimW\_GT

This could very well be the last home game in a season during which the Blues had the biggest variance in expectations throughout the season. The early season production of the Schwartz/Schenn/Tarasenko Experience had us all thinking that the Blues finally had a line with the “it” factor to last. After all, even the STL line seemed a little out of sorts considering Jori Lehtera’s claim was that he just really, really had chemistry with 91. Clearly, that got snuffed out in pretty short order.

Once the inevitable lull hit during the January shitpile, it was a question of if Jake Allen would ever come back to some semblance of average, rather than building on a stellar showing in the 2017 playoffs and generally not sucking in the early season goings-on.

Skipping ahead and bypassing the ups, downs and deadline trade that gest us to the current product, the Blues sit, somehow, through all the highs and lows, in control of their playoff destiny. Win and they’re in. Getting three games against divisional opponents in order to do it is certainly noteworthy, given two games are a hated rival and that other one is against the band of natural disasters the hometown boys are endeavoring to take a playoff spot from. I want to think that ADRENALINE and ATMOSPHERE and CLUTCH and all of that is enough to get through to the playoffs, because heaven knows being short Jay Bouwmeester and Carl Gunnarsson doesn’t do this bunch any favors.

Like every other Blues fan, though, I’ve come to expect heartbreak. It’s a role we’ve known all too well over the years. The individual examples are too numerous and painful to mention, but very likely you and I are both playing a moment in the brain when hockey made us sad. Considering the six-game winning streak seems like eons ago, the expectations are certainly lower than before. Then again, what were we thinking putting hope in a team that had to find three comeback wins in the third period and OT? I suppose that feeds right into the delusion.

Having said all of that, we’re all still here for one reason or another. Maybe this could be the time you get a year-end fan prize. Maybe even a jersey off of a player’s back. Maybe you’re here to enjoy a rivalry game and hope something like the St Patrick’s Day Massacre happens or a scene with the Blues celebrating while a Hawks goalie tries to break his stick on the goalpost. I know some, even the regulars and writers of this rag, have developed a camaraderie that’s yielded gameday routines, lifetime friendships and I’m pretty sure this paper has even gotten a few people laid (and married).

For whatever the reason, there’s still a game to be played and a prize to chase, since qualifying for the playoffs yields a minimum of two home playoff games and playoff revenue is cool. Sure, the pursuit of playoff revenue is, based on my own amateur analysis and no factual data at all, likely what caused the Blues to have only a partial sell off of Paul Stastny’s expiring contract instead of finding a swap to get picks/prospects for Vlad Sobotka and/or Patrik Berglund, but even if no amount of deadline wheeling and dealing would have installed the Blues as playoff favorites, there’s still something goddamn magical about having a ticket to the dance and all the prep that goes into consuming playoff hockey. There’s more nerves, more adrenaline, more barfing and not just from alcohol consumption, either. The hand-wringing and highs/lows are unlike anything else. If you’re like me (and I know I am), you look back on playoffs past and wonder just

why you go through the hell that is the lead-up to the game where work productivity goes to shit and everything revolves around getting to puck drop. It’s hell, but worth every second of it. Right now, the Blues aren’t out of it, so that’s reason enough to stick around, even if the most recent shitstorm involves what fans should/shouldn’t “woo” about and how best to get fans interacting.

Sidebar: This paper has routinely given Angella three different shades of grief since as far back as I can remember. Considering she has always done what she does with pride and enthusiasm and even suffered through the post-lockout Blues, I’m sad to see her take the Tampa Rays gig, but happy for her.

Back to playoff hockey musings, the Blues may as well throw whatever MASH unit they have against the wall and see what sticks. Give us a shot to come back as fans for a couple more pre-games, a couple more intermission drum circles and give us a reason to put together a few more issues of *Game Time*. It’s not like we’re going to get any sleep, anyway.

But since I’m one to hedge my bets, if this is it for the home dates, it’s been a shitload of fun like it’s always been. I’m grateful for the friends I’ve made and the discussions shared. Always up for more, though, so feel free to make use of that twitter handle of mine.

Let’s go Blues!

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# Everything Is Awful

## With Hoosier Blue

There is a common trend with each season lately for the Saint Louis Blues. It is almost like each season is its own living and breathing monster, all of them very closely related and suffering from a shallow gene pool and many genetic deformities.

Going back to 2011-12, the traits are as follows:

- A pretty solid start in October with a slight improvement into November.
- A pretty friggin' terrible December.
- A modest rebound in January.
- A slight lull in February.
- A pretty awesome March/April.

The last two seasons (excluding the current season) saw the December doldrums run well into January with the 2015-16 season and the 2016-17 season giving us our worst win percentages in January during the period analyzed. But, they finished with much better than average March/April records and generally went into the post season on a high note.

The seasons of 2013-14 and 2014-15 saw better Januarys but pretty terrible March/April records, and the Blues skidded into the postseason on cold, chapped ass cheeks. It was during this period of time that I became accustomed to being skeptical of the Blues' playoff prospects. It was like religion. I even wrote an article or two about how the Blues were ruining perfectly good seasons by playing like lazy frat-boys who thought they could win by partying late at night and showing up to practices hungover (looking at you, T.J.).

This year, skepticism has been in full bloom for a much longer period of time than usual. This season is a mutant bastard, far more flawed than its degenerate siblings of years past. It shares much of the same stench with little of the charm of the last six or seven iterations of the annual sacrifice of hopes and dreams to the unforgiving hockey gods.

Let's compare, shall we? (It's a rhetorical question, I'm planning on doing it anyway)

- Strong October? Check. Best October ever (based exclusively on my memory and not verified by research).
- Slight improvement into November? Nay. Significant drop-off from an epic October.
- Terrible December? Big flipping check. Worst winning percentage in the last seven season. (This one I actually did verify).

- Modest rebound in January? We went above and beyond. From a terrible December the Blues birthed a hearty January. And many among the Blues faithful thought maybe the worst was behind us. Yet another cruel, cruel trick from the hockey gods.
- You all know how this story goes. They dropped from a good January to a bad February. Terrible actually. Atrocious honestly. Not only the worst February in the last seven years, but the worst single month win percentage of any month in the last seven years of Blues hockey. There aren't enough expletives in existence to capture how bad February was, so I won't even try.

Since then, they've strung together a small but impressive streak of gutsy wins. Just enough to keep the Blues in the playoff picture and to cause fans to let our collective guard down against the terrible and malevolent hockey gods who are certainly prepping for a swift kick to the tenderbits of our delicate hockey psyches as you sit here reading this.

Back when I wrote those chicken-little-esque articles for the online drunk little sister to this functioning alcoholic big sister fan paper, I ended them with a fan poll – because fan polls are awesome. In those polls I asked the \$12 question: “What is causing the Blues to screw the pooch?”

The winner both times was overconfidence. And it won big.

It seems the primary common genetic deformity in this mutant family of Blues seasons is the tendency to follow up a good string of performances with some absolutely pathetic efforts resulting in

embarrassing strings of defeat.

The Blues seem to be incredibly prone to believing their own hype. They watch the highlights of themselves looking invincible and they start thinking they've got superman capes on under their jerseys. It seems to take ages for them to get the memo and start working again, only to repeat the cycle a few weeks later.

You may have your hopes up that they will rebound and sneak into the playoffs, hungry and looking for a fight. Take my advice and do not open yourself up to that sort of hurt. This season is uniquely bad. We need to hold its ugly little blue head underwater until it stops kicking and be glad for its demise.

Compared to the last seven season, the Blues have the worst of all of the following stats: goals against per game, shots against per game, power play percentage and penalty kill percentage. The Blues have really outdone themselves this time.

This monster of a season has already hurt you too much. Keep those hopes firmly planted in the cement where they belong. Start practicing it now, the four magic words that ensure our survival:

There's always next year.



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# On Tap With Drunk Girl

In the past I've really fucked up and accidentally missed the last game of the season. Usually it's because of an anticipated but not guaranteed playoff exit. Or it's because I've been too drunk to remember to write. I may be blitzed and in the lair of a serial killer cider seller right now, but I want to give our readers what they deserve, which is Drunk Girl going out for the season in a glaze of glory. Blaze. I mean blaze. Patrick Kane that alleged piece of shit rapist says he'd love to play spoiler to the Blues. Fuck him. Here's why.

**Pregame:** Right now the serial killer is eating polenta and watching some shitty John Travolta movie and told me to go play with my hockey thing, and I'm not openly confessing to it but if he or PKane goes missing, maybe I did it fruitlessly. Both are fuckboys. Both are not trustworthy. And both were blessed with decent cheekbones. Let's have a Grapefruit IPA from Schlafly because we're keeping it local tonight, and PKane is a bitter piece of fruity shit.

**First Period:** The other reason the Blues can't go down tonight is that team whipping boi Patrik Berglund is just getting started. It isn't fair to penalize the whole team and fanbase just because the hot dumb Swede just shows up in contract seasons and in the playoffs. I personally want to see what he can do. In German folklore, a Schnickelfritz is a mischievous little shithead. In St. Louis it's a staple beer from Urban Chestnut that could be dedicated to our favorite Techno Viking.

**Second Period:** Who the fucking hell made this schedule? What sick fucking sadist put the fucking Blackhawks in two of the Blues' last three games? And who the hell anticipated it would be a final game that actually means something against the Avs? The fucking Avs. A man tonight spotted my Blues tank top and was, in true Red Wings fan fashion, a dickface and

razzed me about the Blues' current playoff situation. I did the most reasonable thing and stabbed him and killed his wife. Just kidding. I smiled sweetly and told him to go fuck himself. Drunk Girl Favorite Earthbound Brewing once made a raspberry gruit. They don't make it anymore, so just drink anything they have right now because it's probably perfect.

**Third Period:** The only thing even worse than not having control over the outcome of the playoff picture is being at the mercy of the most terrible sports team on the planet. It's hard enough not to trust the Blues to win out, but when you have to watch them face a terrible. Let's be honest, somehow for the Blues' formidable team that I fucking hate, it's about as bad as it gets. Unless you're a Chicago cab driver. Whatever, you shitface. Let's have a 4 Hands Send Help because even though I don't like kolsches, I can respect the style and we need all the help we can get.

**Postgame:** Since I have just a few more words to talk about this shitstorm of a season: thank you for reading. Thank you for drinking. Thank you for getting down and dirty with this sweet underbelly of Blues fan culture that some of us are so proud to give to you. I know I write about nonsense and beer and hockey in that order, but I'd like to think that what we do in this humble hockey rag makes a difference in your Blues experience. I'm also wasted and will definitely hate myself for writing that in the morning. In the spirit of the times, let's all raise a glass full of Fantastic Voyage from our friends at Perennial. It's a basically perfect mild stout, and that's how I'd like to go out if I had to pick. Regardless of how the season ends or doesn't, it's been a good time.

I believe in the good times and I believe in this team. I'll see you in the playoffs. Xoxo, @GTDrunkGirl

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# Mucking And Grinding

With J.R. Mannigel @JMblues83

Well, we are officially here. The last regular season paper of the year. And while there is still a small glimmer of hope that the Blues will make the playoffs, I am going to go ahead and treat this as my last time to converse with you before we start this whole thing over again. Hopefully there is still some Blues hockey to look forward to, maybe there is a lot of hockey to look forward to, but as of right now it would probably be wise to go ahead and say our goodbyes.

First off, I would like to thank each and every one of you who take time out of your busy day to read the words that we write. Without you none of this would be possible, much less worthwhile. I have always viewed *Game Time* as a sort of machine with a bunch of different working parts. There are the publishers, editors, writers and most importantly the readers. We all have a role to play, and without each other this whole thing would fall apart. I know quite a few amateur writers who would kill to have a platform like *Game Time* from which to share their ideas to the world. Without you guys I would just be another one of those writers.

That being said, I think we all could probably do a better job in our respective roles within this hockey paper/magazine/book/whatever. I believe that we Game Timers (readers included) are a cut above your run-of-the-mill Blues fan, and with that heightened awareness comes a responsibility to become stewards of the game that we all love. The game of hockey is not perfect, the NHL is far, far from perfect and it is up to the few of us to protect the future of the many. I believe in upcoming years the game of hockey is set to make some huge strides in catching the other three major sports leagues, especially its biggest competitor, the NFL. Hockey is a fast-paced, upbeat, energetic game that is played by extremely talented, hardworking, blue-collar athletes, and I believe that if the general population would just give it a chance they would fall in love with the game just like you and I have. But it is not going to happen unless the NHL can figure out how to get out of its own way.

We as fans are the only hope. We can't wait around for a slippery lawyer and a bunch of bean counting businessmen (the current Blues ownership group not withstanding) to make the necessary sacrifices to grow the game without pressure from their ATM machines (a.k.a. die-hard fans). And while I am sure that the players would like to see the game expand, mostly to see their wallets expand as well, I am not so sure that all of their solutions would be totally beneficial to the game in the long run. Despite not having any authority over either group we fans are the ones that possess the most control. We fans are the judge, jury and executioner. And it is ultimately up to us to decide which way the game goes.

It won't be easy, and I hardly doubt that the game will be able to grow without some unwelcome changes. It will mean that many of us will have to let go of some of the traditions and philosophies that we hold near and dear to our hockey hearts. It will mean welcoming a new generation of fans, many of whom will not be aware of, let alone care about, the sacrifices that have been made to the game in order to get their butts in the seats. Maybe the change will not be that bad, but I can guarantee that it will be hard.

Why then, you ask, if all of this is required then why even bother going through with it? What is wrong with the way things are? Why change just for the sake of changing?

The answer to those questions is fairly simple. If you aren't growing, then you are dying. There is no standing still, no treading water. The game of hockey is either growing or it is wilting away. Think how far the game has grown since the first years of the NHL. Think how far the game has grown in the last decade, let alone the last 50 years. If not for those changes, do you believe that the game would be as good as it is right now? I doubt it. And that is why we must vow to persevere, to make our voices heard in order to make sure that this game will be in our lives for many, many years to come.

And that is where *Game Time* comes in: to be the voice of the fans. The real fans that deserve to have their voices heard. But it is going to take all of us to make sure that voice is heard by more than just each other. And just like the NHL, that means that we need to continue to grow. We need to take what we do and do it better. We all need to be better in order to keep this little rag heading in the right direction.

Maybe I am being a little too idealistic. Maybe I am being a little too progressive. But the one thing I do know is that *Game Time* makes my game day experience just a little bit better, and I would hate to know what going to game, or even watching one at home, would be like without a copy in my hands. I have met so many great people and made so many great memories because of this paper that I hate to think that had it not existed, I would have missed out on something so good.

Thank you so much for another great season and thank you for being a part of *Game Time*.



# Dose Of Buffa

With Dan Buffa @Buffa82

The Chicago Blackhawks have spent the better portion of the past decade looking down at the St. Louis Blues. Whether it was passing them by on their way to the Stanley Cup Championship or holding them down like a big brother, Chicago has comfortably held a leg up on St. Louis.

Tonight, the story is different. At 32-37-10, the Blackhawks step onto the ice at Scottrade Center tonight as pure spoilers. The crooked numbers looking to wreck the Blues chances of making the playoffs for the 42<sup>nd</sup> time in franchise history. You bet your wet ass that Joel Quenneville has sung this tale several times over the past few days.

“We got these boys twice in three days, so let’s fuck them up. Kick their ass in front of their home crowd and wreck their dreams at the United Center on Friday. We control their destiny, so let’s do our fucking jobs and win these games.” Perhaps a crotch-grab or two would be thrown in, but that pretty much sums it up.

However, as Robert De Niro once told Al Pacino from across a diner table holding two cups of coffee, there’s a flip side to that coin. In the words of Bobby’s Neal McCauley:

“Joel, what if you do got me boxed and I got to put you down? Cause no matter what, I will not hesitate. We’ve been face to face, yeah. But I will not hesitate, not for a second.”

The Blues can’t let their rivals win this time. They dispatched them two years ago in the playoffs, and that was sweeter than a piece of lemon-crumble cheesecake. But they can’t even let the Hawks get a damn point this week. They’ve given away all their nights off on the ice; the Blues need to be ruthless once and for all.

Think about it. The Blues really have no business getting into the playoffs this year. It’s like the kid who stutters getting a shot at American Idol. “Ro-ro-ro-ro-ro-xxaannneee!” Their roster is average in its construction, packed with third-line talents and coulda-been contenders. The power play is Jefferson County trashy, unable to crack the top 25 teams in the league. Their hope and excuse exist around a young forward with weak knees coming back to save the day next season.

It’s a messy situation that has gotten so bad that people are comparing young talents like Tage Thompson to disappointments like Patrik “I don’t need a C in my name or on my chest to be rich” Berglund after the kid’s first 35 games. The only thing that gives the “trade Tarasenko” demands in the Blues Lounge are the “trade Pietrangelo” demands. It’s white-hot shit bad around here.

Here’s the funny part about this recent stretch of play. There

are some around here who are trying to convince themselves and others that it’s best for the Blues to not make the playoffs. That Doug Armstrong would suddenly have a switch go off in his head, causing him to go hard on the rebuild or even harder after John Tavares.

It generates a laugh for me because it’s complete bullshit. Every Blues fan wants the playoffs, or at least they should want extra hockey. This glorious paper wants extra hockey games so we can keep spreading the good word, 24 pages (or 28 tonight!) at a time. Legit fans of hockey want the opportunity, even if it does yield a slim chance for success, to make a run at Lord Stanley instead of waiting six more months for another mission.

I don’t care if it’s only two more games at Scottrade, I want more action. I need playoff hockey in St. Louis, because I’m not ready to hear Cardinals fans whine about Tommy Pham just yet. Call it arrogance or greed, but I want to write another dose or five for your eyes to behold and spill beer on. I don’t fool myself into thinking a playoff miss will make Armstrong suddenly finish buffering and receive clarity.

It doesn’t work that way. It would take another playoff miss and coach firing for the GM to feel like something had to be done. If the Blues make the playoffs and get demolished, Armstrong could get the same takeaway he would if the team finished in ninth place on Sunday morning.

This team doesn’t make any sense. They get at least a point in seven straight games, scoring seven on Jonathan Quick and climbing back to the top of the pack-and then lose 6-0 to Arizona. It’s madness. Pure, unfiltered madness that the Blues specialize in.

So, wouldn’t it be practically sinister for them to follow a three-game losing streak with a three-game winning streak, riding into the playoffs as the team least-likely but most dangerous to win big?

The Blues have been heartbreakers since I started watching them with fearless loyalty when I was eight years old and this guy named Brett Hull shake ‘n baked his way to the top of the record books. I don’t expect them to change as I fly through my 30s carrying more blunt cynicism to go with my hopeless optimism.

Do I expect the Blues to reach the playoffs and blow our minds? Not really. I wouldn’t bet a car payment on them winning more than two games in the extra season. I’m just not ready to fool myself into thinking playoff action can be skipped this year.

Go Blues. Fuck you, Blackhawks. Just to be safe, I’d buy more bourbon.

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# Building Blocks



St. Louis Blues		Chicago Blackhawks		
Year	Player	Year	Player	
2006	Patrik Berglund ~ Drafted: 1st Round, 25th overall	2002	Duncan Keith ~ Drafted: 2nd Round, 54th overall	
2008	Alex Pietrangolo ~ Drafted: 1st Round, 4th overall	2003	Brent Seabrook ~ Drafted: 1st Round, 14th overall	
	Jake Allen ~ Drafted: 2nd Round, 34th overall		Corey Crawford ~ Drafted: 2nd Round, 52nd overall	
	Alexander Steen ~ Acquired with Carlo Colaiacovo from TOR for Lee Stempniak	2006	Jonathan Toews ~ Drafted: 1st Round, 3rd overall	
2010	Jaden Schwartz ~ Drafted: 1st Round, 14th overall	2007	Patrick Kane ~ Drafted: 1st Round, 1st overall	
	Vladimir Sobotka ~ Acquired from BOS for the rights to David Warsofsky	2009	Marian Hossa ~ Signed as a Free Agent (DET)	
	Vladimir Tarasenko ~ Drafted: 1st Round, 16th overall	2012	Vinnie Hinostroza ~ Drafted: 6th Round, 169th overall	
2011	Dmitrij Jaskin ~ Drafted: 2nd Round, 41st overall		Michal Rozsival ~ Signed as a Free Agent (ARZ)	
	Joel Edmundson ~ Drafted: 2nd Round, 46th overall	2013	John Hayden ~ Drafted: 3rd Round, 74th overall	
2012	Jordan Schmaltz ~ Drafted 1st Round, 25th overall	2014	Nick Schmaltz ~ Drafted: 1st Round, 20th overall	
	Colton Parayko ~ Drafted: 3rd Round, 86th overall		Dylan Sikura ~ Drafted: 6th Round, 178th overall	
2013	Jay Bouwmeester ~ Acquired from CGY for Reto Berra, Mark Cundari and a 1st Round 2013 pick	2015	Artem Anisimov ~ Acquired along with Marko Dano, Jeremy Morin, Corey Tropp and a 2016 4th Round pick from CBJ for Brandon Saad, Michael Paliotta and Alex Broadhurst	
2014	Robby Fabbri ~ Drafted: 1st Round, 21st overall		2015	Viktor Svedberg ~ Signed as a Free Agent (Undrafted)
	Ivan Barbashev ~ Drafted: 2nd Round, 33rd overall (Pick acquired as part of Perron-Paajarvi trade)		2016	Blake Hillman ~ Drafted: 6th Round, 173rd overall
	Carl Gunnarsson ~ Acquired from TOR for Roman Polak and a 2014 4th Round pick	Alex DeBrincat ~ Drafted: 2nd Round, 39th overall		
2015	Robert Bortuzzo ~ Acquired along with a 2016 7th Round pick from PIT for Ian Cole	2017	Erik Gustafsson ~ Signed as a Free Agent (PHI)	
	Kyle Brodziak ~ Signed as a Free Agent (MIN)		Patrick Sharp ~ Signed as a Free Agent (DAL)	
	Vince Dunn ~ Drafted: 2nd Round, 56th overall		Jordan Oesterle ~ Signed as a Free Agent (EDM)	
	Scottie Upshall ~ Signed as a Free Agent (FLA)		Connor Murphy ~ Acquired along with Laurent Dauphin from ARI for Niklas Hjarmarsson	
Tage Thompson ~ Drafted: 1st Round, 26th overall	Anton Forsberg & Brandon Saad ~ Acquired along with a 2018 5th Round pick from CBJ for Artemi Panarin, Tyler Motte and a 2017 6th round pick			
2016	Nolan Stevens ~ Drafted: 5th Round, 125th overall		Tomas Jurco ~ Acquired from DET for a 2017 3d Round pick	
	Carter Hutton ~ Signed as a Free Agent (NSH)		David Kampf ~ Signed as a Free Agent (Undrafted)	
2017	Brayden Schenn ~ Acquired from PHI for Jori Lehtera, a 2017 1st Round pick, 2018 1st Round pick		Andreas Martinsen ~ Acquired from MTL for Kyle Baun	
	Oskar Sundqvist ~ Acquired with 1st Round 2017 pick (Klim Kostin) from PIT for Ryan Reaves and 2017 2nd Round pick		Jean-Francois Berube ~ Signed as a Free Agent (VGK)	
	Chris Thorburn ~ Signed as a Free Agent (VGK)		Jeff Glass ~ Signed as a Free Agent (AHL)	
2018	Nikita Soshkinov ~ Acquired from TOR for 2019 4th Round pick.	2018	Victor Edjsell ~ Acquired along with a 2018 1st Round pick and a 2018 4th Round pick from NSH for Ryan Hartman and a 2018 5th Round pick	
	Mitch Reinke ~ Signed as a Free Agent (Undrafted)		Anthony Duclair ~ Acquired along with Adam Clendenning from ARI for Richard Panik and Laurent Dauphin	
<b>Management / Coaching Staff</b>			<b>Management / Coaching Staff</b>	
2008	Doug Armstrong ~ General Manager	2008	Joel Quenneville ~ Head Coach	
2013	Sean Ferrell ~ Video Coach	2010	Stan Bowman ~ General Manager	
2016	Mike Yeo ~ Head Coach	2013	Matt Meacham ~ Video Coach	
2017	Craig Berube ~ Assistant Coach	2014	Jimmy Waite ~ Goaltending Coach	
	Steve Ott ~ Assistant Coach		Kevin Dineen ~ Assistant Coach	
	Darryl Sydor ~ Assistant Coach	2017	Ulf Samuelsson ~ Assistant Coach	
	Daniel Tkaczuk ~ Assistant Coach		Don Granato ~ Assistant Coach	
	David Alexander ~ Goaltending Coach			



**What'd Bowman Trade For These Guys?**  
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# Laps With Lippo

With Art Lippo @ArtLippo

Friend of the paper Art Lippo asks for questions on Twitter. People respond and he makes some of them semi-famous (regionally).

Q: (@doubleohduke) F/M/K: Catherine Shanahan-Janney, Saint Kelly Backes, Corina Hitchcock?

A: M: Saint KB because that's the closest that I'll ever come to Jesus. K: Mrs. Shanny Janney because someone needs to go. F: Corina because I don't know the last time she had some he man.

Q: (@Razielmarie) What's on your offseason wish list this summer?

A: My wish list is that Doug 5% remains as aggressive on the trade market as he was last year at the draft. The Brayden Schenn trade was bold and innovative and my only irk was that he relied too heavily on the unknown to fill top six spots. Playoff teams should not have the unknown filling top six forward spots.

Q: (@2xAught7) Did you name this column after Daniel or Ian Laperriere?

A: I love the #ObscureFormerBlues reference. It would definitely be named after Ian. Loved how he came on to the scene and destroyed everything in sight. I believe he was traded for Stephan Matteau or Brian Noonan. Fucking Keenan.

Q: (@MWatty55) What's 5%'s plans for the offseason?

A: My guess is try really hard to get John Tavares. Brag about it to the local writers who will then try getting a statue of him erected out front next to Bernie Federko.

Q: (@Fabbrishair) You get a time machine and it will allow you to go back in time and stop only one bad contract by Doug 5% Armstrong. Which do you stop?

A: Jori Lehtera is the easiest and most popular answer — still one of the worst contracts I've ever fucking seen. Since that's a layup, I am going to go with Alex Steen's. I don't understand how you can offer Steen five years and not Captain Backes when you could see that RW was more of a position of need than LW. Steen has been fine this year, but man, I think the dynamic of this team shifts if you still have DB42 here.

Q: (@Bluenotebacker) Do the financial losses incurred by missing the playoffs delay the Scott trade improvements scheduled for this summer, or hurt their ability to make new contracts?

A: No. The improvements to the building are going to come regardless of the product on the ice. There's too much at stake financially for events outside of Blooose Hawkey to have that kind of impact. Now the ability to max out the payroll to the cap is a different question.

Q: (@adv7w6) Does Darren Pang love Vladimir Sobotka as much as Mike Matheny loves Matt Bowman?

A: As the great Tony LaRussa used to say. "Tied for first"

Q: (@LegitEric) Who would you want to see replaced 5% if he was let go this summer?

A: Marty Brodeur is starting to gain traction as a viable NHL GM. I'd keep it in house and promote from within before recycling another GM or bringing in some analytics shithead without any hockey knowledge.

Q: (@d\_scott1616) Will my Tage Thompson boner ever go down?

A: Knowing your affinity for 20-year-old boys, I'm going to say no.

Q: (@WalterSobchako) Who will have more goals and points next year, Tage Thompson or Patrik Berglund?

A: Thompson will have more points because he will either be on another roster or in the AHL. Berglund will have more NHL goals.

Q: (@Theohall65) #stlblues PP featuring Schenn, Steen, Jaden Schwartz and Vladimir Tarasenko is one for 25 since March 1. Why won't #YeoMustGo bust up the worst PP group of forwards in the NHL in 2018?

A: First, I don't understand the Yeo must go hashtag. How can he go and not the guy that anointed him coach in waiting and gave him a knife for a gun fight? The reason why you don't see the personnel shifts on the power play is because there's such a dramatic shift in talent. You don't have Paul Stastny or Bob Fabbri to plug and play on another unit. It's a system issue, not a talent. It's painfully predictable.

Q: (@d\_scott1616) Rank the big four of Thompson, Jordin Kyrrou, Klim Kostin and Rob Thomas.

A: Thomas, Thompson, Kostin, Kyrrou.

Q: (@tr4shc4n4lidnips) How do you feel about the current point system and do three-point games between teams in competition for a wild card spot change your view at all?

A: There needs to be a bigger emphasis on winning in regulation. Period. Playoff positions shouldn't be decided on gimmicks like 3-on-3 and shootouts.

Q: (@Card\_Blues) Why do we put up with this franchise's crap every year?

A: 1. Because we are gluttons for punishment. 2. I'll take frustrating bullshit over no hockey at all. They might frustrate us with their mind-blowing decisions and inconsistent play, but there's never a dull moment.

Q: (@ArtLippo) What do you really want to see the Blues do this offseason?

A: First, find a trade partner for Vladimir Sobotka and Steen. Second, I would go balls deep on John Tavares. This franchise needs a wow factor, a splash. Talent puts butts in the seats, not the promise of prospects.



# Tough In The Corner

With Ken Ford @BoneyardBro

I have been accused of being irrationally positive quite often. I have a generally happy outlook and even find optimism in the Blues. That is not always received well among our fan population. So I decided it was time to show my negative side. I have encountered people who claim fandom to teams other than the Blues. I hear my "second favorite team," "I'm a Blues and (insert other team name) fan" in twitter bios. I am here to take a stand, this is totally unacceptable. There are teams that annoy me less than others. That's as far as I'll go. So here is my guide as to why you should hate every other team, in no particular order. Go Blues! Fuck everyone else!

**Bruins** – Have you met a New England sports fan? Remember how Boston sports fans were the lovable losers because of the Red Sox drought? Remember how when that ended, they became the most insufferable pile of garbage in the world. We don't even need to get into Brad Marchand spearing dudes in the nuts. Fuck the Bruins!

**Sabres** – I mean, sure they are harmless right now, but have you seen how good Jack Eichel is? Like actually watched him play? They have managed to surround him with a team so bad that they will sufficiently waste the prime years of one of the best young American players we've seen in the NHL for a long time. And he will do it in obscurity as a result. Fuck the Sabres!

**Red Wings** – Because fuck Detroit!

**Panthers** – I have to admit, this one was tough, not because I don't hate them, but they are so irrelevant, I couldn't place why. So I'll go with their embracing of ousted predator Kevin Spacey. Fuck the Panthers!

**Canadiens** – The snooty belief that they are the true center of the hockey world and that world is French speaking only. The fact that they ran a genuinely good guy out of town in P.K. Subban, and I'm sure it had nothing to do with race. Fuck the Canadiens!

**Senators** – The fact that they have the Canadian Kroenke as their owner seems good enough for me. Fuck Eugene Melnyk and fuck the Senators!

**Lightning** – Do you remember that the reason we have John Tortorella and Guy Boucher frowning behind NHL benches to this day is because they had brief success in Tampa? Ugh. Fuck the Lightning!

**Maple Leafs** – See Boston fans. These fucking guys haven't won anything in over 50 years and they are still insufferable. Their fans talk like they are the class of the NHL and even the Blues have had more success during their existence. Fuck the Maple Leafs!

**Hurricanes** – The Carolina Hurricanes have a Stanley Cup Championship, the Blues do not. This is the one that should stick in your craw the most. Plus, we don't have Brass Bonanza anymore because of these fucking guys. Fuck the Hurricanes!

**Blue Jackets** – See Tortorella, John. And also, their fans booed Keith Tkachuk scoring his 500th goal in a meaningless game for both teams with me present in the building. Fuck the BlueJackets!

**Devils** – Where do I fucking start? The whole Scott Stevens saga. All the draft picks unjustifiably sent their way. But I will focus on more recently. Taylor Hall should be piling up those points for the Blues but Kevin Shattenkirk is an asshole. Fuck the Devils!

**Islanders** – This is the only franchise that could leave the hole that is Nassau Coliseum and find someplace worse. Add the fact that they have pulled an Eichel and wasted the talent of John Tavares up to this point and they are worthy of hate. Fuck the Islanders!

**Rangers** – There are so many reasons to hate any New York team, mainly New York people are their fans, but I will focus my reasons on that balding defenseman that stonewalled every decent trade the Blues could work out for him and wound up with less term and money. Fuck the Rangers!

**Flyers** – Philadelphia is actually a great city, if it weren't for the people. Philly fans are a special breed of asshole. Leaving a game, I saw a fan with his dick out about to piss on my dad's van. He saw me and said he "wasn't going to piss on my truck." I'm not sure he was telling the truth. And a baseball game with a 5 and a 7-year-old relatives on run the base day in which a fan got right in the children's face and said, "Go fucking run the bases in St. Louis!" Fuck the Flyers!

**Penguins** – Am I the only non-Caps/Flyers fan that hates Sidney Crosby, because I shouldn't be. Is there anyone who whines for calls more than him? And gets the benefit of every single call. All while having a

Marchand-like highlight reel of slashes and ball spearings. Fuck the Penguins!

**Capitals** – This is probably the team that caused me to write this because there seems to be a lot of overlap here. Perhaps it's my physical proximity to Washington and the fact that I have been to a lot of Blues-Caps games, but I can't stand this team. They gave cowbells as a giveaway once as an homage to the asshole I had the misfortune of sitting near that never stopped ringing that fucking thing. Add to that the fact that you have to be 5'7" or below to comfortably sit in their arena seats. Fuck the Capitals!

**Ducks** – They employ both Corey Perry and Ryan Kesler. (Kelly Backes is a saint). Fuck the Ducks!

**Coyotes** – Bettman's refusal to accept he made a mistake on this team's existence is the only reason we have to wait a few more years for a sweet hockey road trip to see the Blues play in an awesome city like Seattle. Fuck the Coyotes!

**Flames** – They are the reason the Monday Night Miracle isn't even more meaningful because they ruined the narrative in Game 7. Fuck the Flames!

**Oilers** – I mean how many times can you win the lottery and ruin it. And now they are well on their way to wasting the best player in the NHL, because their GM wasted money on diminishing assets like Lucic and traded away every complementary forward they had. Fuck the Oilers!

**Kings** - 2012 still hurts me. I still do not believe the Kings were better that year. Like Dustin Penner plays that well? Dustin Fucking Penner? Mr. injured by pancakes??? Is there a more punchable face than Drew Doughty? OK, maybe Jamie Benn (more on that later). And Dustin Brown is just the biggest garbage person on ice. Fuck the Kings!

**Sharks** – Isn't it endearing how Brent Burns and Joe Thornton grow their beards to ridiculous lengths? It's stupid. Burns punched Tarasenko in the ribs in a scrum in front of the net and Thornton cheap-shotted Petro in the back of the head and speared Stastny in the nuts. We don't even have to get to the Perron hit. Fuck the Sharks!

**Canucks** - The Sedins are creepy and this franchise will always be connected to that raging ball of fucktard, Ryan Kesler (Again, Kelly Backes is a saint). Fuck the Canucks!

**Golden Knights** – How dare they be this good this fast. How dare they make David Perron a 70-point scorer. How dare they have a mascot that looks like a jaundiced Barney the Dinosaur with a raging case of herpes? Fuck the Golden Knights!

**Blackhawks** – This probably doesn't need much because if you say you are a Blues and Blackhawks fan, you might change my thoughts on drone strikes. The fucking bandwagon 2010 fans. That frowny overrated captain of theirs (I could watch the Backes beatdown of him on a loop for hours). The wakey bullshit. Oh, and the fact that they embrace and parade around a sexual predator as the face of the franchise. Fuck the Blackhawks!

**Avalanche** - As much as 2012 hurt me, this one really killed me. I mean three OT games in a row. I still wonder if Brent Johnson had only started that series instead of Turek. They are owned by Stan Kroenke. There is no need to dig deeper. Fuck Kroenke and Fuck the Avalanche!

**Stars** – As stated above, Jamie Benn has the most punchable face in the NHL. And he is a selfish lover. But most of all, Antoine Roussel plays for this team. Fuck the Stars!

**Wild** – Bruce Boudreau's red face. The fact their fans think Wild has two syllables. The fact that they yell DUUUUUB every time Dubnyk settles a clear from the red line. Fuck the Wild!

**Predators** – I am tired of everyone in the hockey world sucking their dicks. They hand out cheat sheets for coordinated cheers. They have plaques for winning the Stanley Cup after a first round win. I could go on but they are still chanting about a goal scored in a game last week. Oh. Google Fangerang. Fuck the Predators!

**Jets** – I always wondered why Dustin Byflugien wasn't more hated. I hate him. I'm a reasonable person. He plays pretty dirty and lest we forget, he is a big reason why the 2010 Blackhawks bandwagon exists. Fuck the Jets!

So there you have it. I'm not saying you can't have a rooting interest in matchups that don't involve the Blues, but it should only be differing degrees of hate, none of this actual happiness for others' successes. Fuck them. All of them. Go Blues!!!!



# St. Louis Blues Rosters

**General Manager:** Doug Armstrong      **Head Coach:** Mike Yeo      **Associate Coach:** Craig Berube  
**Goalie Coach:** David Alexander      **Video Coach:** Sean Ferrell      **Assistant Coaches:** Steve Ott, Darryl Sydor, Daniel Tkaczuk

#	Player	Pos	Sh	H	W	Born	Rk	GP	G	A	Pts	+/-	PIM	PPG	SHG	GW	OT	S%	TOI/G	FO%	Salary
4	Gunnarsson, Carl **	D	L	6'2	198	Nov 9, 86, Orebro, Sweden	63	63	5	4	9	15	22	0	0	2	0	8.5	16:09	0.0	\$2,900,000
6	Edmundson, Joel	D	L	6'4	215	Jun 28, 93, Brandon, MB, Canada	66	66	7	9	16	-1	57	0	0	0	0	5.8	20:42	0.0	\$1,200,000
9	Ushal, Scottie **	RW	L	6'0	200	Oct 7, 83, Fort McMurray, AB, Canada	63	63	7	12	19	-1	46	0	0	2	0	9.8	10:51	53.3	\$700,000
10	Schenn, Brayden	C	L	6'1	200	Aug 22, 91, Saskatoon, SK, Canada	79	79	26	39	65	12	56	8	0	8	2	12.9	19:43	47.9	\$5,000,000
15	Fabbri, Robby **	C	L	5'10	190	Jan 22, 96, Mississauga, ON, Canada	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0:00	0.0	\$832,500
17	Schwartz, Jaden	LW	L	5'10	190	Jun 25, 92, Wilcox, SK, Canada	59	59	22	34	56	16	26	5	1	3	1	15.0	19:27	41.1	\$5,500,000
19	Bouwmeester, Jay **	D	L	6'4	206	Sep 27, 83, Edmonton, AB, Canada	35	35	2	5	7	5	16	0	0	0	0	4.4	20:08	0.0	\$5,400,000
20	Steen, Alexander "A"	LW	L	6'0	211	Mar 1, 84, Winnipeg, MB, Canada	73	73	15	31	46	-13	20	4	1	2	0	9.2	18:39	39.6	\$7,000,000
21	Berglund, Patrik	C	L	6'4	219	Jun 2, 88, Västerås, Sweden	54	54	14	8	22	-7	30	3	1	3	1	13.5	16:08	55.1	\$4,700,000
22	Thorburn, Chris	RW	R	6'3	235	Jun 3, 83, Sault Ste. Marie, ON, Canada	47	47	1	6	7	-4	60	0	0	0	0	2.9	7:02	58.3	\$900,000
23	Jaskin, Dmitri	RW	L	6'2	216	Mar 23, 93, Omsk, Russia	73	73	6	11	17	7	14	0	0	0	0	5.1	12:20	15.4	\$1,000,000
25	Butler, Chris	D	L	6'1	196	Oct 27, 86, St. Louis, MO, USA	3	3	0	0	0	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	9:53	0.0	\$675,000
27	Pietrangelo, Alex "C"	D	R	6'3	210	Jan 18, 90, King City, ON, Canada	75	75	15	38	53	7	20	3	0	5	1	7.3	25:47	0.0	\$7,000,000
28	Brodziak, Kyle	C	R	6'2	209	May 25, 84, St. Paul, AB, Canada	78	78	10	20	30	10	33	0	1	2	0	9.3	13:18	52.1	\$900,000
29	Dunn, Vince	D	L	6'0	203	Oct 29, 96, Lindsay, ON, Canada	72	72	5	18	23	4	18	2	0	1	1	3.8	17:08	100.0	\$742,500
32	Thompson, Tage	C	R	6'5	185	Oct 30, 97, Phoenix, AZ, USA	39	39	3	6	9	-10	12	0	0	0	0	5.8	11:55	14.3	\$925,000
34	Allen, Jake	G	L	6'2	203	Aug 7, 90, Fredericton, NB, Canada	57	57	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	--	0.0	\$3,850,000
39	Reinke, Mitch	D	R	5'11	181	Feb 4, 96, Stillwater, MN, USA	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	13:05	0.0	\$925,000
40	Hutton, Carter	G	L	6'1	202	Dec 19, 85, Thunder Bay, ON, Canada	31	31	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0.0	--	0.0	\$1,000,000
41	Bortuzzo, Robert	D	R	6'4	216	Mar 18, 89, Thunder Bay, ON, Canada	69	69	3	8	11	8	39	0	0	1	0	4.0	14:41	0.0	\$1,150,000
43	Schmaltz, Jordan	D	R	6'2	190	Oct 8, 93, Madison, WI, USA	13	13	0	1	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	0.0	10:58	0.0	\$925,000
49	Barbashev, Ivan	C	L	6'0	187	Dec 14, 95, Moscow, Russia	Y	50	7	6	13	0	2	0	0	1	0	17.1	12:09	38.5	\$650,000
51	Stevens, Nolan	C	L	6'3	183	Jul 22, 96, Brantford, ON, Canada	Y	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0:00	0.0	\$925,000
55	Parayko, Colton	D	R	6'6	230	May 12, 93, St. Albert, AB, Canada	79	79	6	29	35	-3	13	2	0	0	0	2.9	22:43	0.0	\$6,500,000
70	Sundqvist, Oskar	C	R	6'3	209	Mar 26, 94, Boden, Sweden	40	40	1	4	5	-5	14	0	0	0	0	2.6	10:28	44.3	\$675,000
71	Sobotka, Vladimir	LW	L	5'10	184	Jul 2, 87, Trebic, Czech.	78	78	11	20	31	-5	46	0	1	4	0	8.7	17:07	53.4	\$4,000,000
90	Soshnikov, Nikita	RW	L	5'11	185	Oct 14, 93, Nizhny Tagil, Russia	10	10	1	1	2	1	4	0	0	0	0	5.9	11:21	0.0	\$575,000
91	Tarasenko, Vladimir "A"	RW	L	6'0	225	Dec 13, 91, Yaroslavl, Russia	77	77	32	32	64	13	17	6	0	5	2	10.8	19:19	25.0	\$7,000,000
† Roster Totals/Avg.		--	--	6'1.6	203	Avg. Age: 27.4	--	1991	343	542	47	573	33	5	39	8	8.4	--	--	--	\$73,550,000
#	Player	GP	GS	W	L	OT	SA	GA	GAA	SV	SV%	SO	Mins								
34	Allen, Jake	57	54	27	23	3	1551	145	2.72	1406	90.6	1	3201:26								
40	Hutton, Carter	31	25	16	7	3	790	55	2.13	735	93.0	3	1549:32								
† Totals/Avg.		--	--	43	30	6	2341	200	2.53	2141	91.5	4	4750:58								



# Chicago Blackhawks Rosters

General Manager: Stan Bowman

Head Coach: Joel Quenneville

Assistant Coaches: Kevin Dineen, Ulf Samuelsson, Don Granato

Video Coach: Matt Meacham

Goalie Coach: Jimmy Waite

#	Player	Pos	Sh	H	W	Born	Rk	GP	G	A	Pts	+/-	PIM	PPG	SHG	GW	OT	S%	TOI/G	FO%	Salary
2	Keith, Duncan "A"	D	L	6'1	192	Jul 16, 83, Winnipeg, MB, Canada	79	1	30	31	-25	26	1	0	0	0	0.5	23:58	0.0	\$5,000,000	
5	Murphy, Connor	D	R	6'4	212	Mar 26, 93, Dublin, OH, USA	73	2	11	13	0	30	0	0	0	0	1.9	16:20	0.0	\$4,600,000	
7	Seabrook, Brent "A"	D	R	6'3	220	Apr 20, 85, Richmond, BC, Canada	78	6	18	24	-1	38	2	0	0	0	4.5	20:12	0.0	\$9,000,000	
8	Schmaltz, Nick	C	R	6'0	177	Feb 23, 96, Madison, WI, USA	75	21	29	50	0	16	4	0	2	0	18.1	18:10	40.2	\$925,000	
10	Sharp, Patrick	LW	R	6'1	200	Dec 27, 81, Winnipeg, MB, Canada	67	10	11	21	-13	14	0	0	1	0	7.6	12:46	54.9	\$800,000	
12	DeBriencet, Alex	RW	R	5'7	165	Dec 18, 97, Farmington Hills, MI, USA	79	27	23	50	8	6	6	0	1	0	15.3	14:49	46.2	\$742,500	
13	Jurco, Tomas	LW	L	6'2	188	Dec 28, 92, Kosice, Slovakia	28	6	4	10	1	12	0	0	1	0	13.6	12:32	21.4	\$950,000	
14	Eidseell, Victor	C	L	6'5	214	Jun 6, 95, Karlstad, Sweden	3	0	1	1	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	15:14	40.6	\$833,750	
15	Anisimov, Artem	C	L	6'4	198	May 24, 88, Yaroslavl, Russia	69	20	10	30	-13	22	11	1	6	0	15.9	16:47	45.8	\$5,000,000	
19	Toews, Jonathan "C"	C	L	6'2	201	Apr 29, 88, Winnipeg, MB, Canada	74	20	32	52	-1	47	2	0	2	1	9.5	19:41	58.0	\$13,800,000	
20	Saad, Brandon	LW	L	6'1	206	Oct 27, 92, Pittsburgh, PA, USA	79	18	17	35	-7	14	1	0	8	2	7.8	17:30	46.8	\$6,250,000	
29	Mathisen, Andreas	LW	L	6'3	229	Jun 13, 90, Baerum, Norway	6	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0.0	12:03	0.0	\$675,000	
30	Glass, Jeff	G	L	6'3	206	Nov 19, 85, Calgary, AB, Canada	14	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0.0	--	0.0	\$650,000	
31	Forsberg, Anton	G	L	6'3	192	Nov 27, 92, Härmösand, Sweden	35	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	--	0.0	\$700,000	
34	Berube, J.F.	G	L	6'1	177	Jul 13, 91, Repentigny, QC, Canada	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	--	0.0	\$675,000	
40	Hayden, John	RW	R	6'3	223	Feb 14, 95, Chicago, IL, USA	47	4	9	13	-4	54	0	1	0	0	7.1	10:49	50.0	\$925,000	
44	Rutta, Jan	D	R	6'3	200	Jul 29, 90, Pisek, Czech	54	6	14	20	-2	22	2	0	1	0	8.9	19:20	0.0	\$925,000	
48	Hinojosa, Vinnie	LW	R	5'9	173	Apr 3, 94, Chicago, IL, USA	47	7	18	25	6	10	1	0	1	0	8.4	13:52	43.8	\$575,000	
50	Crawford, Corey**	G	L	6'2	216	Dec 31, 84, Montreal, QC, Canada	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	--	0.0	\$6,000,000	
55	Hillman, Blake	D	L	6'1	180	Jan 26, 96, Elk River, MN, USA	1	0	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	19:18	0.0	\$925,000	
56	Gustafsson, Erik	D	L	6'0	176	Mar 14, 92, Nynashamn, Sweden	32	4	11	15	2	6	0	0	0	0	6.1	18:26	0.0	\$575,000	
64	Kampf, David	C	L	6'2	195	Jan 12, 95, Chomutov, Czech	43	4	7	11	-8	12	0	0	0	0	8.9	12:41	52.9	\$925,000	
81	Hossa, Marian	RW	L	6'1	207	Jan 12, 79, Stará Lubovna, Slovakia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0:00	0.0	\$4,000,000	
82	Oesterle, Jordan	D	L	6'0	182	Jun 25, 92, Dearborn Heights, MI, USA	53	5	10	15	-9	8	1	0	0	0	5.2	20:40	0.0	\$650,000	
88	Kane, Patrick	RW	L	5'11	177	Nov 19, 88, Buffalo, NY, USA	79	27	47	74	-18	30	5	0	4	2	9.7	20:14	35.3	\$13,800,000	
91	Duclair, Anthony	LW	L	5'11	191	Aug 26, 95, Pointe-Claire, QC, Canada	23	2	6	8	0	6	0	0	1	0	6.9	13:02	50.0	\$1,200,000	
95	Sikura, Dylan	RW	L	5'11	158	Jun 1, 95, Aurora, ON, Canada	2	0	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0.0	14:04	0.0	\$925,000	
± Roster Totals/Avg.		--	--	6'1.3	195	Avg. Age: 27.3	--	190	311	501	-84	388	36	2	28	5	8.6	--	--	\$82,026,250	
#	Player	GP	GS	W	L	OT	SA	GA	GAA	SV	SV%	SO	Mins								
30	Glass, Jeff	14	12	3	6	3	413	42	3.31	371	89.8	0	760:54								
31	Forsberg, Anton	35	30	10	16	4	921	85	2.97	836	90.8	0	1774:47								
34	Berube, J.F.	11	8	2	5	1	330	36	3.93	294	89.1	0	549:07								
50	Crawford, Corey	28	27	16	9	2	842	60	2.27	782	92.9	2	1583:30								
± Totals/Avg.		--	--	31	36	10	2506	223	2.90	2283	91.1	2	4608:18								

# Down On The Corner

## With Amy Benoist

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Amy and I've been affiliated with the paper since the 2000-2001 season. I first became involved when I had season tickets that year and someone at work heard about how I was a hockey fan. That person's name was Jeffio. He told me that he needed someone reliable to sell a fan-run hockey paper and that I'd make \$30 per game. That sounded good for someone who was out of college for a few years and needed to make some extra money.

When Jeffio retired the *Game Night Revue*, Gallagher created *Game Time*, and I knew him since he worked with Jeffio and me. Next was Brad and I actually knew him from Harvard (the Harvard of the Midwest — Truman State University), so I continued being a part of the paper.

By day, I'm a quality analyst and, by night, I'm a homeless-looking vendor. It's no joke that I weigh an extra 18 pounds when I sell on really cold nights, and that's not including the plastic bags that I wear around my shoes. Anyone who is wearing that much clothing, and takes 30 minutes getting dressed, has extreme dedication.

Selling hockey papers isn't for the faint of heart, and I could write a book about the antics that I've seen. One minute a guy is a scalper, the next minute he's rattling a cup full of change and asking for money. Once I had a homeless person tell me that he collected \$50 that day and that he had spent \$35 of it on drugs. He said he didn't buy cocaine, though; like I was supposed to take comfort in that fact! I had a person try to give money to me because he thought I was homeless. The best had to be when some man told me that I could pay \$10 to him to you know, get with him. I had no words for that proposition. None of this ever deterred me from doing my duty, and I would happily report to work for the next home game.

The main reason that I returned, year after year, was because of the customers. It didn't matter what kind of day that I had at my *real* job, I always left a home hockey game with a smile on my face.

Thanks to the hockey ladies who always had candy for me and kept me entertained with their dating lives. Thanks to fan who dressed as a referee who conversed with me before every home game, and thanks to the chemistry professor who always tipped me. Thanks to William, from North Carolina, who would always make it a point to see me whenever he was in town.

Thanks to the German hockey jersey, ugly Blues Christmas sweater and black/blue poncho-wearing guy who always keeps me

entertained with his eclectic clothing choices. Thanks to Red Berenson and his woman for always giving Christmas cards to me. Thanks to the customer who has a lawncare business and always asks me about my training ever since he saw me running in a Creve Coeur subdivision. Thanks to the customer who always has me looking for his sports Sound Off in The St. Louis Post-Dispatch after the Blues lose in the playoffs every year. You should look for it, too, and his name is Larry Storz. Thanks to the customer who always wore the [Brent] Johnson jersey in fall of 2016, in hopes that [Gary] Johnson would win the election.

Thanks to the customer whose daughter was a French major (like me!) for keeping me updated on her travels in France. Thanks to the customer who always sported his Blues suede jacket and RIP to his friend who died in the off-season. Thanks to the customer who brought chicken fingers to me, during the ALL YOU CAN EAT games, and for listening to me relate stories about my high school crush who lived near his small town. Thanks to the

couple that got married, at the same church as me, and who used to live in Dogtown. Thanks to another couple that actually still go to church with me in Dogtown, and it's proof that we crazy readers can actually step into a church. Thanks to the guy who wears the Tarasenko jersey with Russian script, who has shared stories about living out west. Thanks to anyone that has ever tipped me, told me to stay warm, given a free ticket to the game to me, told me that they've missed me when I missed a game (or two or five) and asked about Clarence.

A special thanks has to go to Andy Neath, a statistician at a local university who always brought his brother-in-law to the game. The word

was that Andy would never share his paper, so his brother-in-law had to buy his own. Andy was always friendly, even though his brother-in-law said nothing but "Good Evening!" — in a very grumpy manner — to say. During the Christmas holiday of 2008, Andy gave hockey tickets to me since he was going to be out of town. I used his tickets, even though I had to sit next to his less-than-charming brother-in-law. After a few games, that brother-in-law asked me on a date and that grumpy GT reader became my husband in 2015. Who knew that I would meet my future husband by selling hockey papers?

Finally, I must thank Jeffio, for starting the paper. I need to thank Gallagher and Brad for keeping it alive. My life has been enriched because of them and for all of the customers they brought into my life. I can't imagine what my life would be without this paper, and I can only hope that, one day I'll be selling a copy with the title "BLUES WIN THE STANLEY CUP!" on the cover. And when I do, it's okay if I'm wearing 18 pounds of extra clothing and plastic bags on my shoes.



# From The Cheap Seats

With Chip Bothman @Justin03

It felt dirty rooting for the Los Angeles Kings on Monday night.

It's going to feel even dirtier rooting for the San Jose Sharks tomorrow night. We're in uncharted territory, folks. Usually around this time, the Blues have already clinched a playoff spot, and all that is to be determined is their first-round opponent. This year, it appears the team has stolen the motto of this publication and are owning the fuck out of it.

## It's almost always never easy

The Blues have increased the difficulty slider on the 2017-18 season by losing their last three games, leaving them just shy of a Wild Card. The quickest, best-case scenario for the Blues to earn a playoff spot would be to win tonight, have the Sharks beat the Avalanche (in regulation) on Thursday, then win again on Friday in Chicago. I suck at math, but I believe that would clinch a playoff spot for Our Town and render the Colorado game on Saturday meaningless. Again — it's almost always never easy — so #STLvsCOL will probably be a do-or-die game for the Note.

I'm sorry to be a Debbie Downer — but even if it all works out and the Blues make the playoffs, all they've likely earned is the right to get curb stomped by the defending Western Conference Champs. With that in mind, and in the event this is the last issue of *Game Time* produced this season, I thought I'd create the "Rooting Guide to Playoff Hockey, After Blues." If you're reading this rag, you're probably not the type of person to just quit watching hockey for more than two months while the Blues play golf. So, here's a helpful guide to help you decide who to root for in the race for Lord Stanley's Cup.

Western Conference: I'm a dog person, but my favorite GIF on Al Gore's Information Machine is one of a playful cat. Said cat is sitting on a table and its owner is placing items in front of it, only to see them batted off the table. Of course, since the internet is awesome, someone added some text to the GIF in rapid fire succession. Owner puts a cigarette lighter in front of the cat, the cat bats it off the table: FUCK THIS. Owner puts a pack of cigarettes in front of the cat, the cat bats it off the table: FUCK THAT. Pack of gum? FUCK THOSE TOO. Wallet? FUCK ALL THESE. Eyeglass case? FUCK THIS THING IN PARTICULAR. If I had any creative skills whatsoever, I'd remake the GIF to reflect my rooting interests in the playoffs. Anaheim? Fuck this. Minnesota? Fuck that. San Jose? Fuck those too. Los Angeles? Fuck all these. Nashville? FUCK THIS THING IN PARTICULAR.

So that leaves two teams in the Western Conference — Las Vegas and Winnipeg. Vegas is an obvious choice. Here's a team

built from the scraps of the rest of the league, and they appear to have treated this season as a goddamn revenge tour. William "Wild Bill" Karlsson has scored 42 goals, (lol CBJ) Jonathan Marchessault has tallied 75 points, (lol FLA) and David Perron has 50 assists and 66 points. (dammit) And Marc-Andre Fleury certainly knows his way around the playoffs.

While Winnipeg is a division rival, they are damn fun to watch. The Jets are a fast, skilled team led by Patrik Laine and his hideous/outstanding beard. The Jets roll three solid lines and get excellent goaltending from Connor Hellebuyck. Winnipeg's fans are ridiculously loud, and if a fast, skilled Canadian team with a raucous crowd isn't enough, you wanna see Paul Stastny win a Stanley Cup, right?

**Eastern Conference:** This is much more difficult for me as I don't really carry any animosity towards (most) of these Eastern Conference teams. The only reason to watch Columbus is for John Tortorella gestures and sound bites. As the cat said, fuck this. Philly doesn't bother me, but doesn't excite me either. Fuck that. Taylor Hall (lol EDM) is lighting up the league for the Devils, but the only other exciting thing about this team is Keith Kinkaid's Twitter date at Chipotle. Fuck those too. I'm simply tired of seeing Pittsburgh play into June. Fuck all these.

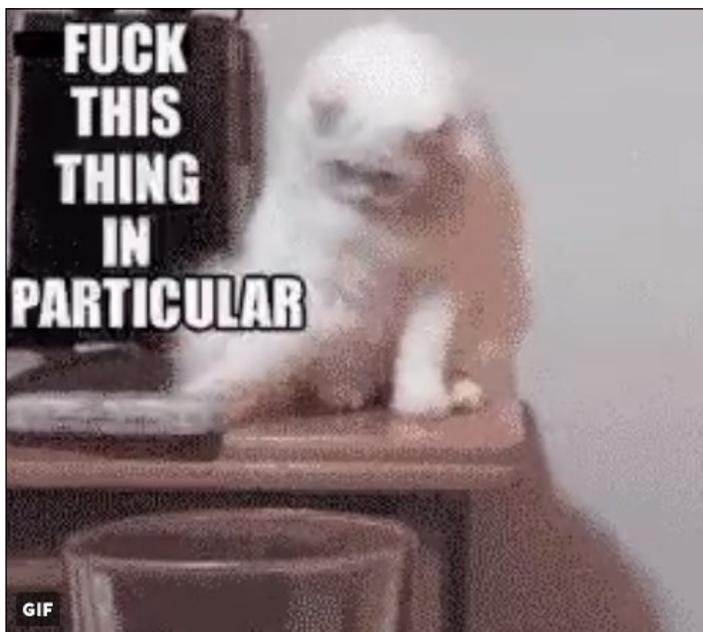
That leaves a Murderer's Row of Boston, Tampa Bay, Toronto and Washington. Boston almost ended up in the paragraph above simply because of Brad Marchand. FUCK THIS THING IN PARTICULAR. There's really only one reason to root for the Bruins to win the Stanley Cup and it's DMFB. If you wouldn't get joy out of seeing David Backes raise the Cup, just quit watching hockey.

Much like Winnipeg in the West, and with a better playoff resume, Tampa is an uber-skilled team that is damn fun to watch. Stamkos and Kucherov have combined for 183 points as of Monday night, (Tarasenko, Schenn and Schwartz have combined for 185 in STL for

perspective) and literally half of their defensive corps comes courtesy of the 2013-14 New York Rangers team, which was a Cup Finalist.

It's been a record breaking season for the second-best team in Canada, the Toronto Maple Leafs. Auston Matthews and company have earned the most wins in franchise history this season and look to improve on their first round loss to Washington last season. Unfortunately, they'll likely face the above mentioned Tampa Bay Lightning in the first round. It would be worth it to see Toronto advance just for the Steve "Dangle" Glynn LFR vids on YouTube and the general media circus in Toronto.

That leaves the team we all know Front Page Jeff will be rooting for, the Washington Capitals. And honestly, as a Blues fan — how can you NOT root for a team who rosters Timothy Jimothy Oshie, an enigmatic Russian Superstar and always falls short of expectations?



# Blues Record When...

With Heather  
@gtheatherlee

Playing at home	24-16-0	Leading after the first	24-2-2
Playing on the road	19-14-6	Tied after the first	14-11-2
Brad Lee in the house	4-0-0	Trailing after the first	4-18-2
They score first	33-6-3	Leading after the second	31-0-2
Other team scores first	10-24-3	Tied after the second	7-5-2
They score on the PP	17-8-1	Trailing after the second	5-25-2
They score shorthanded	5-0-0	Ends in OOOvertime!!!	8-0-6
Playing on Sunday	2-3-1	Shootout!!!!	3-0-0
Playing on Monday	3-2-0	Head Coach has no hair	43-30-6
Playing on Tuesday	8-6-1	We get a Penalty shot!	0-0-0
Playing on Wednesday	6-3-0	Win by one	19-0-0
Playing on Thursday	8-7-0	Loss by one	0-7-6
Playing on Friday	3-5-1	A Blues player has multiple goals	14-3-0
Playing on Saturday	13-5-3	A Blue scores within the first minute	4-2-0
They played the day before	6-4-2	They are called for 7 or more penalties	1-1-0
Playing in January	7-3-1	Other team called for 7 or more penalties	3-2-2
Playing in February	4-8-1	FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT!!!	7-6-1
Playing in March	8-3-2	They take 30 or more shots	29-21-5
Playing in April	0-1-0	They allow 30 or more shots	18-16-3
GT staff do Shots for Goals pre-game	15-5-3	Blues are outshot	12-10-1
Rain, sleet, or snow during the game	4-5-1	Blues earn us \$1 tacos at Hot Shots	10-0-0
Blues take a dumb penalty for too many men	3-2-1	Schenn gets a point	30-10-4
Alex sells GT	5-2-0	Empty net goal	2-5-0
Playing on even days	21-14-2	Current Streak	0-2-1
Playing on odd days	22-16-4	Jake "the Future is Now" Allen gets the start	27-24-3
Tarasenko gets a goal	18-7-1	Carter "Huts" Hutton starts in net	16-6-3
Blues switch goalies in the middle of the game	1-7-0	Playing in the 2017-18 season	43-30-6
Blues chase a goalie	3-0-1	Blues are all three stars	19-0-0
Playing the Eastern Conference	21-10-1	Playing the Western Conference	22-20-5
Playing the Atlantic Division	12-5-0	Playing the Central Division	10-9-3
Playing the Metropolitan Division	9-5-1	Playing the Pacific Division	12-10-2

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# Looking For A Dubya

With Justin Dubya @Justin03

If you asked a hockey player what he wanted to do when he grew up, he'd almost always answer, "I wanted to play hockey." What if fate had something else in mind? This year fate gets to do its handy work and give some of today's stars different professions. Last one of the regular season, just want to say thanks to the ones and ones of you that still read this.

**Vladimir Tarasenko, international soccer star.** All of Vladimir's friends growing up played hockey. They couldn't get enough of it. Vladimir loved it too. There was just one problem, he didn't know how to skate. He could run though. He loved to run. "You know mother, I can run and kick this ball at the same time. Is there a sport that I might be able to do that? Everyone here plays hockey." His mom thought for a minute and said, "Yes, you go to America. You play soccer there." So he came to the soccer hotbed of St. Louis. He learned from the best coaches and even played for STLFC. He couldn't play MLS in St. Louis though for some dumb reason (blankly stares at all of you). So he went and became a superstar in Kansas City. "Look, I'd have love to have played for STL but for some reason they wanted a trolley or a crime-riddled train or something dumb," Vladimir told a magazine after his fifth shot of whiskey. Turns out he hated vodka.

**Chris Thorburn, professional impressionist.** Early on in his life, Chris knew he wanted to be someone else. "This life fucking sucks," he'd say to anyone that gave him the time of day. I

want to be someone else. That's exactly what he did. For some reason though he could only impersonate WWE superstars Seth Rollins and Elias. "Look I can't fight for shit, but if some kid wants to give me a small fee of \$50 to have me sign a picture of some other dude, then so be it."



**Patrik Berglund actual techno viking.** When people ask Patrik what he does, they get a dose of some god-awful dance music. He then comes out in full Viking gear and starts shaking his ass all over the place. That's right Patrik Berglund is a techno Viking. He doesn't have a boat, but he has cardboard in the shape of a boat dressed over his 1985 Honda Civic. He can't grow a beard, but he can grow a sweet mustache that makes 1970s porn stars jealous. It's always a party in Patrik's world, we're just living in it.

**Brayden Schenn, professional video game player.** Brayden could not put his Nintendo controller down. It was like a brother to him. Mainly because his actual brother was a douchebag. He has beaten every single game that Nintendo has released. Yes, even the bad ones, so basically anything on the Wii. Nintendo found out about this and wanted to see his skills. They saw him and immediately knew he was the one. He was hired by Nintendo to play their games professionally. After winning every tournament he was entered in, Schenn was dubbed "The Schennendo Entertainment System." Unfortunately, his career was cut short after an awful bout with carpal tunnel.

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# Tomorrow's Blues

By Brian Weidler @TomorrowsBlues

## Major Efforts From Minor Leaguers

The 2017-18 season has been largely a season to forget, at least as far as the Blues and their minor-league operations are concerned.

The season began with a rift between the Blues and their AHL affiliate in Chicago, a situation that has been building for some time. The Wolves simply do not operate their franchise in accordance with the AHL's playbook, which is focused on the development of prospects for their NHL partners. They are focused on their own bottom line, and after having signed a long-term affiliation agreement with the Vegas Golden Knights, had little room for, or concern for, the Blues prospects.

The good news is that the Blues were able to send most of their premium prospects to San Antonio this season, and they were able to forge an affiliation agreement with the Rampage after the Colorado Avalanche announced that they were pulling out of San Antonio after this year in order to stock a new AHL club in Loveland, Colo.

At the next level down, the ECHL, the Blues seem to have finally settled on an affiliation with the Tulsa Oilers after having bounced around between Alaska, Evansville, Kalamazoo, the Quad Cities and Kansas City over the last half-dozen seasons. While the Blues have few prospects in the organization that will be assigned to Tulsa, the stability of having settled on an affiliate, and Tulsa's relative proximity to St. Louis and San Antonio, make it a good choice for prospect development going forward.

Tonight, we'll take a quick look at how all of the Blues prospects in the minor leagues (ECHL and AHL) have fared this season, and what their postseason possibilities look like as of press time.

### Making The Grade

The 2017-18 season saw prospect defenseman Vince Dunn make the jump from the AHL to the NHL, and except for a brief conditioning assignment to the Chicago Wolves (in which he had a goal and an assist in two games) following an injury in mid-January, he has been a mainstay on the NHL roster at age 21.

Several other players have spent time in the minors this season, and are now on the NHL roster:

- Ivan Barbashev (Chicago Wolves): 20 GP, 5-5-10, minus-1, 6 PM, 1 PP, 0 SH, 0 GW.
- Jordan Schmaltz (San Antonio Rampage): 31 GP, 5-18-23, plus-9, 20 PM, 1 PP, 0 SH, 1 GW
- Oskar Sundqvist (San Antonio Rampage): 6 GP, 2-4-6, minus-2, 6 PM, 1 PP, 0 SH, 0 GW
- Tage Thompson (San Antonio Rampage): 30 GP, 8-10-18, minus-4, 4 PM, 2 PP, 0 SH, 1 GW

Prospect LW Sam Blais has been up and down between St. Louis and San Antonio several times this season; he's back with the Rampage now and is a point-per-game player for them with a 16-21-37 scoring line (minus-5, 34 PM, 8 PP, 0 SH, 0 GW) in 37 games played. Not bad for a kid chosen 176th overall in 2014.

Goaltenders Ville Husso and Jordan Binnington have both

been called up to the Blues for a cup of coffee at one point or another in the season, but neither saw any game action during the 2017-18 season.

### Livin' On Tulsa Time

Turning back to the ECHL, the Tulsa Oilers still have a shot at making the Kelly Cup playoffs. As of press time, the Oilers are in the 10th spot overall in the Western Conference with 73 points (31-27-3-8) in 69 games. The Indianapolis Fuel also have 73 points, but have a game in hand and more wins (34-29-4-1). In the last two Western Conference playoff spots are Kalamazoo (69 GP, 34-29-4-2, 74 pts) and Wichita (69 GP, 33-28-6-2, 74 pts).

The Oilers have three games left to play, all at home at the plush BOK Center where they have a 16-14-1-2 record for the season. Tulsa hosts the Idaho Steelheads (69 GP, 42-20-4-3, 91 pts) tonight, and close the regular season with a weekend series against the last-place Rapid City Rush (69 GP, 22-41-3-3, 50 pts).

At this point of the season, the Blues have just two prospects skating in Tulsa: defenseman Dmitrii Sergeev and center Justin Selman, neither of whom appear to be in the Blues' long-term plans. Sergeev has had a career year in his second season as a pro with a 3-19-22 scoring line (minus-1, 19 PM, 1 GW), and is a 6'3, 200-pound 22-year-old with one more year left on his entry-level contract. He has not, however, gotten so much as a sniff of the AHL this year despite a pretty good offensive showing, and projects as little more than an AHL depth player at this point.

Selman is a six-foot, 200-pound center who signed as a free agent last season after a solid four-year career at the University of Michigan. Selman is a reliable two-way forward, but he missed a big chunk of the middle of this season with an upper body injury suffered in November, and has appeared in just 26 games for the Oilers with a 3-7-10 scoring line (plus-1, 8 PM, 1 SH).

Defenseman Tommy Vannelli and center Conner Bleackley also spent much of this season with Tulsa, but are both currently on callup to San Antonio. There is a possibility that they could be returned to Tulsa and be eligible for the playoff roster if San Antonio fails to qualify for the AHL playoffs. In 40 games with the Oilers this season, Bleackley posted a 19-19-38 scoring line (minus-7, 82 PM, 5 PP, 3 SH, 5 GW), while Vannelli put up a 4-18-22 line (plus-7, 16 PM, 2 PP, 1 GW) in 51 games.

### AHL Prospects On Loan

Moving up now to the AHL, the Blues have two prospects at that level who are currently on loan to other organizations. Defenseman Jake Walman started the year with the Chicago Wolves, but was pulled from their roster without explanation and reassigned to the Binghamton Devils in mid-season. The 6'1, 200-pound Toronto native posted a 2-11-13 scoring line (minus-5, 14 PM, 1 GW) in 40 games with the Wolves, and has a 1-4-5 line (minus-1, 10 PM) in 16 games for Binghamton, who have been eliminated from Calder Cup playoff contention.

Goaltender Jordan Binnington is playing on a qualifying offer

(Continued on page 21)

# Tomorrow's Blues (continued)

this season, and is making a strong case to either be re-signed by the Blues, or to get a shot at a full-time NHL job in some other organization. The 6' 1, 175-pound native of suburban Toronto is putting up career number with the Providence Bruins; he is currently second in the AHL in goals-against average with a 1.94 mark, and third in the league with a 93.1 save percentage over 26 games played. He also has a 16-8-1 record, and one shutout back in early November, a 33-save effort vs. the Hartford Wolf Pack.

With six games left to play, Providence is currently the fifth seed in the AHL's Eastern Conference with a 41-24-3-2 mark for 87 points, just one point back of the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins, who have a game in hand.

## Howlin' Wolves

The soured relationship between the Blues and Wolves – epitomized in the Walman situation – has resulted in the Blues having only a bare minimum of prospects and AHL depth players assigned to Chicago this season.

Besides the now-departed Walman, the Blues had only defenseman Petteri Lindbohm and left wing Mackenzie Maceachern as prospects assigned to Chicago this season. Lindbohm suffered a season-ending shoulder injury midseason after putting together a 1-2 3 scoring line (plus-2, 21 PM) in 23 games, and as his contract expires after this season, the odds of him re-signing and coming back next season are probably 50/50 at best.

Maceachern has not played for the Wolves since mid-February, and in 46 games has a 6-4-10 scoring line (minus-4, 25 PM, 1 SH, 2 GW). The Michigan native is also in the last year of his entry-level deal, but we predict that he gets at least a qualifying offer from the Blues to help them stock up the

Rampage next season when they are a full affiliate.

The Blues also have two younger veterans skating for the Wolves, RW Beau Bennett (54 GP, 11-38-49, plus-4, 28 PM, 5 PP, 2 GW) and C Wade Megan (62 GP, 10-22-32, plus-5, 52 PM, 1 PP). Both are pending free agents after this season, Bennett an RFA and Megan a UFA, but we predict that the Blues will bring both back next year to provide some veteran leadership and scoring in San Antonio. Both got cups of coffee with the Blues this year, so they can slot into the NHL lineup on a part-time basis, too. The Wolves will be in the Calder Cup playoffs, and both Bennett and Megan are expected to play key roles.

## San Antonio

As mentioned above, the Blues have sent their premium prospects to San Antonio this year as a tune-up for next year when the Rampage become the Blues' sole AHL affiliate. The Rampage have been little better than a .500 team on the ice and will need a lot of things to go right in the next week or so in order to make the AHL playoffs. In addition to Blais, who we mentioned above, goaltender Ville Husso has been outstanding for the Rampage. Husso has appeared in 37 games (2070 minutes), with a 2.32 GAA, a 92.6 save percentage (fourth-best in the AHL) and a 15-13-5 record with a career-best four shutouts.

2017 first-round pick Klim Kostin has also been a bright light for the Rampage. One of three Blues' first-rounders to dress for San Antonio this year (Schmaltz and Thompson are the others), Kostin has put together a 6-19-25 scoring line (minus-2, 68 PM, 2 PP, 1 GW) in 61 games as an 18-year-old.

Zach Sanford, who came to the Blues in the Kevin Shattenkirk trade last year, began the season on IR, and has been rehabbing in San Antonio. In 14 games played, Sanford has a 3-2-5 scoring line (minus-2, 16 PM).



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# NHL Referee Statistics

Official	Born	1st Game	2017-18						Since 2007							
			Blues Games	Blues PP	Blues PK	W	L	O T L	Blues Games	Blues PP	Blues PK	W	L	O T L		
2	Mclsaac, Jon	Truro, NS	2012	4	17	17	4				11	42	38	7	3	1
4	McCauley, Wes	Georgetown, ON	2003	4	7	6	2	2			48	117	138	21	22	6
5	Rooney, Chris	Boston, MA	2000	5	21	20	2	3			54	214	219	26	23	5
6	Charron, Francis	Gatineau, PQ	2010	4	13	13	2	1	1		31	69	105	18	10	3
7	Rank, Garrett	Elmira, ON	2015	3	11	9	2		1		11	34	41	6	1	3
8	Jackson, Dave	Montreal, PQ	1990	1	3	1		1			45	147	161	25	17	2
9	O'Rourke, Dan	Calgary, AB	1999	4	12	9	2	2			48	178	189	21	22	5
10	Rehman, Kyle	Stettler, AB	2008	6	10	17	2	3	1		47	137	157	26	13	8
11	Sutherland, Kelly	Richmond, BC	2000	4	18	13	2	1	1		52	177	189	29	20	3
12	St. Pierre, Justin	Dolbeau, PQ	2003	4	11	8	3	1			45	150	154	26	14	5
13	O'Halloran, Dan	Essex, ON	1995	4	10	13	3	1			59	214	232	37	20	2
14	Hanson, Trevor	Richmond, VA	2012	4	16	14	3	1			15	47	55	11	2	2
15	Hebert, Jean	Boucrouche, NB	2010	3	13	6	2	1			31	95	116	14	15	2
16	Pochmara, Brian	Detroit, MI	2006	2	10	4	2				50	176	196	32	12	6
17	L'Ecuyer, Frederick	Tois Riveres, PQ	2007	4	12	12	2	2			39	141	127	18	17	4
18	Chmielewski, Tom	Colorado Springs	2013	6	15	16	1	4	1		12	36	37	4	6	2
19	Dwyer, Gord	Halifax, NS	2003	5	21	20	1	3	1		61	239	222	34	22	4
20	Peel, Tim	Toronto, ON	1999	5	11	15	2	3			67	207	212	36	27	5
21	Luxmore, T.J.	Timmins, ON	2012	5	20	16	3	1	1		19	56	55	10	6	3
22	Hebert, Ghislain	Dieppe, NB	2009	4	12	9	2	2			36	101	119	20	12	3
23	Watson, Brad	Regina, SK	1996	5	14	15	4		1		59	213	245	33	17	10
24	Skilliter, Graham	La Ronge, SK	2011	4	10	8	4				19	54	58	13	6	
25	Joannette, Marc	Verdun, PQ	1999	4	9	14	2	2			51	163	164	29	17	7
26	Brenk, Jacob	Detroit Lakes, MN	2015	3	8	7	1	2			8	26	24	4	4	
27	Furlatt, Eric	Trois-Rivieres, PQ	2001	5	13	17	4	1			59	202	231	29	23	6
28	Lee, Chris	St John, NB	2001	4	9	8	3	1			59	214	217	32	24	4
29	Walsh, Ian	Philadelphia, PA	2000	3	11	9	3				46	145	164	25	16	5
30	Nicholson, Kendrick	Suabie Beach, ON	2012	4	15	11	1	3			9	34	25	4	4	1
32	Kowal, Tom	Vernon, BC	2000	3	7	11	2		1		54	179	187	27	20	7
33	Pollock, Kevin	Kincardine, ON	2000	5	12	11	1	3	1		59	183	207	30	23	6
34	Meier, Brad	Dayton, OH	1999	4	12	13	2	2			51	182	182	27	18	7
36	Morton, Dean	Peterborough, ON	2000	5	13	11	5				40	144	156	30	9	2
38	St. Laurent, Francois	Greenfield Park, PQ	2006	3	9	9	1	2			48	175	164	27	18	3
39	Romasko, Evgeny	Tver, Russia	2015								6	22	23	4	2	
40	Kozari, Steve	Penticton, BC	2006	4	15	8	3	1			54	200	204	32	21	1
41	Voss, Cameron	St. Paul, MN	2016													
42	Syret, Corey	Millgrove, ON	2017													
44	South, Furman	Sewickley, PA	2016													
45	MacDougall, Peter	Regina, SK	2016													
47	Lambert, Pierre	St.BasileleGrand, PQ	2016	1	1	3		1			2	3	7	1	1	
48	Schlenker, Chris	Medicine Hat, AB	2016	2	5	6	2				4	9	13	2	2	
49	Anderson, Reid	Airdrie, AB	2017													
<b>TOTALS</b>				<b>140</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>1409</b>	<b>4725</b>	<b>5033</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>133</b>

## NHL Linesmen

50	Cherrey, Scott	59	Barton, Steve	68	Driscoll, Scott	77	Nowak, Tim	89	Miller, Steve
51	Smith, Andrew	60	Suchanek, Libor	70	Nansen, Derek	78	Mach, Brian	92	Shewchyk, Mark
52	Alphonso, Shandor	61	Tobias, James	71	Kovachik, Brad	81	Daisy, Ryan	93	Murphy, Brian
53	Mills, Bevan	63	Knorr, Trent	73	Rody, Vaughan	82	Galloway, Ryan	94	Pancich, Bryan
54	Devorski, Greg	64	Gawryletz, Brandon	74	Cameron, Lonnie	83	MacPherson, Matt	95	Murray, Jonny
55	Heyer, Shane	65	Racicot, Pierre	75	Amell, Derek	84	Sericolo, Tony	96	Brisebois, David
56	Wheler, Mark	66	Gibbs, Darren	76	Cormier, Michel	87	Berg, Devin	97	Nagy, Kory
58	Gibbons, Ryan	67	Gawryletz, Travis						



# Schedule & Results

Date	Opponent	Result	Goalies	Date	Opponent	Result	Goalies
Wed, Oct. 4	@PIT	W 5-4 OT	Allen, Murray	Tue, Jan. 2	NJD	W 3-2	Hutton, Schneider
Sat, Oct. 7	DAL	W 4-2	Allen, Lehtonen	Thu, Jan. 4	VGK	W 2-1	Hutton, Fleury
Mon, Oct. 9	@NYI	W 3-2 SO	Allen, Greiss	Sat, Jan. 6	@PHI	L 6-3	Elliott, Allen
Tue, Oct. 10	@NYR	W 3-1	Hutton, Lundqvist	Sun, Jan. 7	@WSH	OTL 4-3	Holtby, Hutton
Thu, Oct. 12	@FLA	L 5-2	Luongo, Allen	Tue, Jan. 9	FLA	L 7-4	Reimer, Allen
Sat, Oct. 14	@TBL	L 2-1	Vasilevskiy, Allen	Tue, Jan. 16	@TOR	OTW 2-1	Hutton, Andersen
Wed, Oct. 18	CHI	W 5-2	Allen, Crawford	Thu, Jan. 18	@OTT	W 4-1	Hutton, Anderson
Thu, Oct. 19	@COL	W 4-3	Allen, Bernier	Sat, Jan. 20	ARI	L 5-2	Raanta, Hutton
Sat, Oct. 21	@VGK	OT 3-2	Dansk, Allen	Tue, Jan. 23	OTT	W 3-0	Hutton, Anderson
Wed, Oct. 25	CGY	W 5-2	Allen, Lack	Thu, Jan. 25	COL	W 3-1	Hutton, Bernier
Fri, Oct. 27	@CAR	W 2-1	Hutton, Ward	Tue, Jan. 30	MTL	W 3-1	Hutton, Price
Sat, Oct. 28	CBJ	W 4-1	Allen, Korpisalo	Thu, Feb. 1	@BOS	L 3-1	Rask, Allen
Mon, Oct. 30	LAK	W 4-2	Allen, Quick	Sat, Feb. 3	@BUF	W 1-0	Hutton, Lehner
Thu, Nov. 2	PHI	L 2-0	Neuvirth, Allen	Tue, Feb. 6	MIN	L 6-2	Dubnyk, Hutton
Sat, Nov. 4	TOR	W 6-4	Allen, Andersen	Thu, Feb. 8	COL	W 6-1	Hutton, Bernier
Tue, Nov. 7	@NJD	W 3-1	Allen, Schneider	Fri, Feb. 9	@WPG	W 5-2	Allen, Hellebuyck
Thu, Nov. 9	ARI	W 3-2	Hutton, Raanta	Sun, Feb. 11	PIT	L 4-1	Murray, Allen
Sat, Nov. 11	NYI	L 5-2	Greiss, Allen	Tue, Feb. 13	@NSH	OTL 4-3	Rinne, Hutton
Mon, Nov. 13	@CGY	L 7-4	Smith, Allen	Fri, Feb. 16	@DAL	L 2-1	Bishop, Allen
Thu, Nov. 16	@EDM	W 4-1	Allen, Talbot	Tue, Feb. 20	SJS	L 3-2	Jones, Hutton
Sat, Nov. 18	@VAN	W 4-3 OT	Allen, Nilsson	Fri, Feb. 23	WPG	L 4-0	Hellebuyck, Allen
Tue, Nov. 21	EDM	W 8-3	Allen, Brossiot	Sun, Feb. 25	@NSH	L 4-0	Rinne, Allen
Fri, Nov. 24	NSH	L 2-0	Rinne, Hutton	Tue, Feb. 27	@MIN	L 8-3	Dubnyk, Allen/Hutton
Sat, Nov. 25	MIN	W 6-3	Allen, Dubnyk	Wed, Feb. 28	DET	W 2-1	Hutton, Howard
Wed, Nov. 29	ANA	L 3-2	Gibson, Allen	Sat, March 3	@DAL	OTL 3-2	Bishop, Hutton
Fri, Dec. 1	LAK	L 4-1	Kuemper, Hutton	Thu, March 8	@SJS	L 2-0	Jones, Allen
Sat, Dec. 2	@MIN	OTL 2-1	Dubnyk, Allen	Sat, March 10	@LAK	W 7-2	Allen, Quick
Tue, Dec. 5	@MTL	W 4-3	Allen, Price	Mon, March 12	@ANA	W 4-2	Allen, Gibson
Thu, Dec. 7	DAL	W 3-0	Allen, Lehtonen	Thu, March 15	COL	L 4-1	Varlamov, Allen
Sat, Dec. 9	@DET	W 6-1	Allen, Howard	Sat, March 17	NYR	OT W 4-3	Allen, Georgiev
Sun, Dec. 10	BUF	W 3-2 OT	Allen, Lehner	Sun, March 18	@CHI	OT W 5-4	Allen, Berube
Tue, Dec. 12	TBL	L 3-0	Vasilesky, Allen	Wed, March 21	BOS	OT W 2-1	Allen, Khudobin
Thu, Dec. 14	ANA	L 3-1	Gibson, Allen	Fri, March 23	VAN	W 4-1	Allen, Nilsson
Sat, Dec. 16	WPG	W 2-0	Hutton, Mason	Sat, March 24	@CBJ	W 2-1	Allen, Bobrovsky
Sun, Dec. 17	@WPG	L 4-0	Hellebuyck, Allen	Tue, March 27	SJS	OT W 3-2	Allen, Jones
Wed, Dec. 20	@CGY	L 2-1	Smith, Hutton	Fri, March 30	@VGK	OTL 4-3	Subban, Allen
Thu, Dec. 21	@EDM	L 3-2	Talbot, Allen	Sat, March 31	@ARI	L 6-0	Raanta, Allen
Sat, Dec. 23	@VAN	W 3-1	Allen, Markstrom	Mon, April 2	WSH	L 4-2	Holtby, Allen
Wed, Dec. 27	NSH	L 2-1	Rinne, Allen	Wed, April 4	CHI		
Fri, Dec. 29	@DAL	L 4-2	Bishop, Allen	Fri, April 6	@CHI		
Sat, Dec. 30	CAR	W 3-2	Hutton, Darling	Sat, April 7	@COL		

# An Opposing Viewpoint

With Mike Martin @HawksBearsCubs

Considering this could be the last issue of *Game Time* of the season, and it's a larger than normal issue, it sorta has a high school yearbook vibe going on. In that spirit, it doesn't seem too out of place to use the cliché inscription that I don't think anyone outside of the movies uses: "What a long, strange trip it's been. - Mike"

For the Blackhawks and this Blues, this season clearly didn't play out the way anyone expected. In October, it was expected tonight's game would at most matter for playoff seeding, or the seeding would be set and it'd be a meaningless tune-up game for the playoffs. The meaningless prediction was at least right for one team. If you haven't been paying attention, the usual timeless headline that accompanies every issue of *Game Time* on the night of a Hawks game also accurately describes the standings for the first time in nearly 10 years. (Blackhawks Suck)

After having the best regular season record in the Western Conference last year, the Blackhawks largely collapsed this year due to the aging legs of Duncan Keith and aging everything else of Brent Seabrook, finally catching up to them. Instead of being the two all-universe (or so we're told) defensemen providing a stable presence for the Hawks glut of young and/or bad defensemen as Stan Bowman expected, they've been less effective than the British at the Battle of Trenton. Even combined with the decline of

Jonathan Toews, Corey Crawford singlehandedly held Chicago near the top of the standings for the first quarter of the season. Then he got his brain broken and the wheels fell off the Chicago bandwagon.

The only thing about this Blackhawks season that anyone is going to remember is the moment an accountant became the best goalie on the roster for a day. However, there's still some occasional pop from the Hawks offense. Patrick Kane is still there and not in Cook County Jail. Young forwards Alex DeBrincat and Nick Schmaltz are threats if given space. And of course, every shitty NHL team loves to play the heel this time of year, and there's no doubt Chicago would love to see the Blues on the golf course with them next week.

As for me, the Blackhawks fan, my hopes of the actual outcome are torn. As much as I always love watching the Hawks beat the Blues, at this point a win does nothing for the Hawks. A loss potentially gets them ever-so-slightly closer to the bottom, and slightly higher odds in the draft lottery. Aside from the obvious benefit, Chicago winning any lottery pick – let alone the first pick – would provide hours of entertainment from the tinfoil hat crew on Twitter. But losing just sucks in general.

I guess I just hope both teams have a lot of fun. And maybe punch each other a bit.

## Western Conference Wild Card Standings

CENTRAL	GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	ROW	SOW	SOL	GF	GA	DIFF	STRK
1x --Nashville Predators	80	51	18	11	113	45	6	7	259	206	53	L1
2x --Winnipeg Jets	80	50	20	10	110	46	4	2	271	216	55	W3
3x --Minnesota Wild	79	44	25	10	98	41	3	3	242	221	21	W1
PACIFIC	GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	ROW	SOW	SOL	GF	GA	DIFF	STRK
1y --Vegas Golden Knights	79	50	22	7	107	47	3	3	263	213	50	W2
2x --San Jose Sharks	79	44	25	10	98	39	5	3	243	217	26	L3
3 Los Angeles Kings	80	44	28	8	96	42	2	1	232	195	37	W1
WILD CARD	GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	ROW	SOW	SOL	GF	GA	DIFF	STRK
1 Anaheim Ducks	79	41	25	13	95	37	4	7	224	212	12	W2
2 Colorado Avalanche	80	42	29	9	93	40	2	1	250	231	19	L2
St. Louis Blues	79	43	30	6	92	40	3	0	217	212	5	L3

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**(Continued From Page 1)**

seventh consecutive season. That streak, if maintained, would be the second longest in the NHL, just behind Pittsburgh. I can distinctly remember when they were terrible for a bunch of years in a row. Again, the passage of time.

I checked with friends to make sure I didn't miss anything obvious about this season, and for the most part, I hadn't. They had some other individual plays to mention – Brayden Schenn fighting Gabe Landeskog to start off a game against the Avalanche, Jake Allen's long pass to spring Jaden Schwartz the last time the Blackhawks were here – but the consensus remained that there was a general flatness all year long.

That may be the biggest concern of all for the Blues, and it's something that can be hard to correct. How can a team identify a solution to a problem that hides? How do you infect a team with energy and drive when each individual shows it for a limited period of time and then seems to lose steam as quickly as they gained it?

This column is being presented with a degree of fatalism that may be uncalled for. After all, I could very well be back here 10 days from now writing about a couple surprise victories in Nashville to kick off the first round. They themselves pulled it off on the Blackhawks last year. Who's to say turnabout won't be fair play?

I wonder if as many as 10 people will read this column who believe earnestly that that outcome is likely to come to pass. Plenty of people joke about the depression and pessimism that comes with being a Blues fan, but it really is easy to hear in the voices of people who follow the team closely. I don't believe many people want the season to end in a hurry, but I do believe that plenty of folks are preparing themselves for that eventuality.

In my previous column covering the Blackhawks, I mentioned Mark Lazerus, who covers them for the Chicago Sun-Times. He said something interesting about Blues fans on Twitter on Tuesday, and since I'm a shameless fanboy, I'm reprinting it here:

"I'd say Blues fans are embittered and wary, but justifiably so. And they have a good sense of humor and self-awareness about it. That's why I like them."

Self-awareness may be the quality I value the most in other people. Knowing yourself, appraising fairly and being conscious of the way events unfold around you is a delicate balance, and very few people pull it off. Frankly, I'm not convinced that Blues fans achieve that goal *en masse*, but apparently other people think so. For now, that has to be good enough.

"Wary and embittered" describes so much of my relationship with the St. Louis

Blues that I should honestly consider having it sewn onto the back of a jersey. Feeling an obligation to ask questions about the path of the team has left me mostly unable to enjoy their peaks of success this season, but I suppose I've been mostly spared since those peaks have been so rare. There's not a lot to miss. There may be more to come.

In the event that there's not more to come, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge you, person reading this column, for following along this season. Taking the reins of the front page was a daunting task, believe it or not, and I hope I've managed to bring you into games with a valuable perspective and a couple laughs along the way.

I've been a part of a few communities of people in my life that have each believed they're unique in some way. And in some ways, they are. What's hard to acknowledge, however, is the commonality. Communities of all kinds work because individuals find solace there. We find friends. We learn from each other and support each other. We make teams.

The Blues aren't my team. Hockey is. There are countless people I've met along the way that make up that team, and I hope you join us.

If this is the last thing I write this season, after 48,522 words, then please allow me to say thanks.



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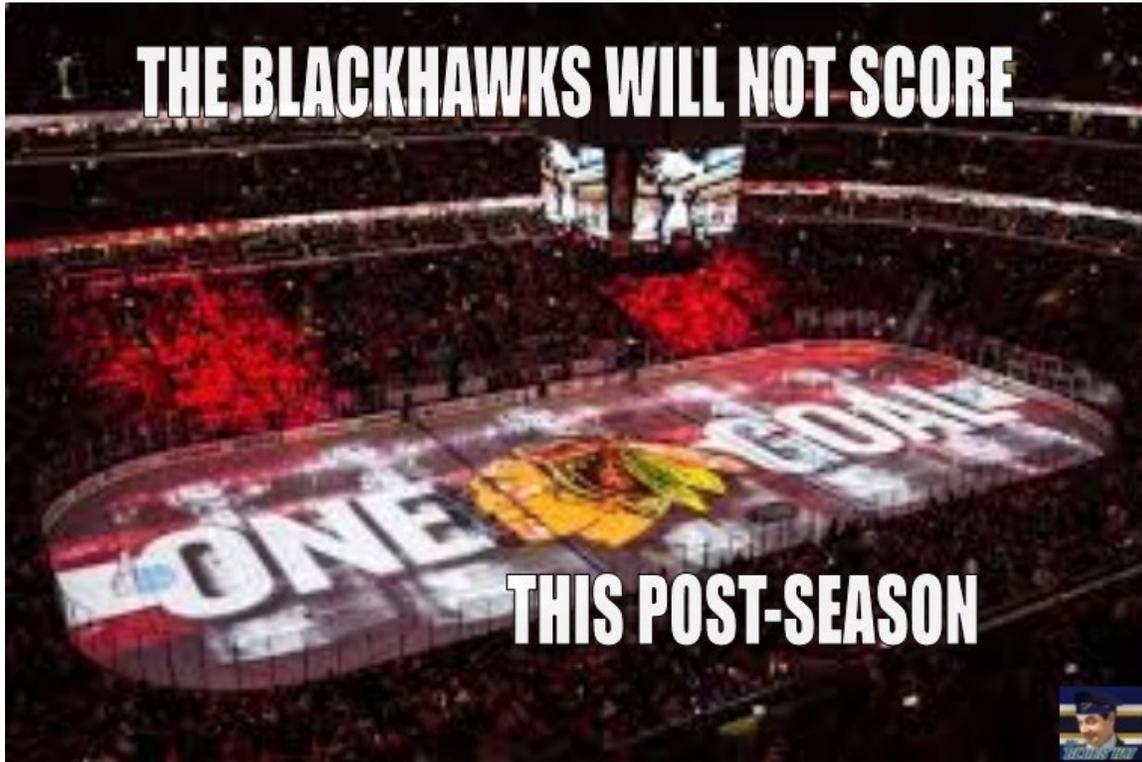
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# Things Aren't Always What They Meme

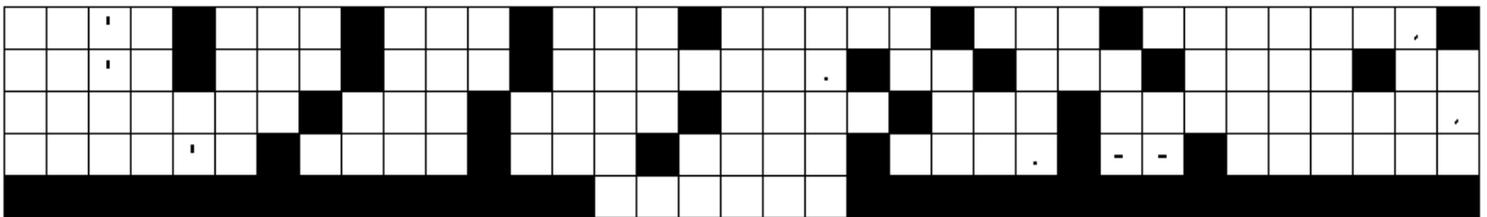
By @MrBluesHat



## Second Season

**Instructions:** Place each letter below the grid into a space directly above it to complete a quote by a St. Louis legend about ending the season. Good luck!

*With Childhood Trauma*



U S L

I T P N H E E I M S T Y Y O F  
 H E S H O T Y O O A U J M A K T T T E A I N O F S  
 T T L S S G W T A O U Y F P U I O A A R I F H H O U S E A S B E R T  
 I H A T I N O W H H T W T Y O N P L H S E F O R Y E P L W A L D N U P

**Answer:** It's not how you start the season, it's how you finish. If you wind up helping the team make the playoffs, that's what you play for. -- Albert Pujols

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