Updates on Active Blues Players

Written by Jeff Ponder Wednesday, 14 November 2012 20:46

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After a season that saw the Blues climb to second place in the Western Conference standings, the players had to pack up and head in different directions across the world. Some skaters headed to Germany, some to Sweden and some even stayed in the regional area.

Thanks to modern technology, it has become very simple to see how well each player is doing in their respective new league. Here are where locked out Blues players are currently playing, as well as their up-to-date point totals:

Player Name	Team	League	GP	G	Α	PTS
Patrik Berglund	VIK Västerås HK	HockeyAllsvenskan (Sweden)	15	9	7	16
Ian Cole	Peoria Rivermen	AHL	9	0	0	0
Matt D'Agostini	SC Riessersee	Eishockey-Bundesliga T-2 (Germany)	6	0	2	2
Roman Polak	HC Vítkovice Steel	Czech Extraliga	11	0	3	3
Kris Russell	Turun Palloseura	Finnish Elite	8	2	7	9
Jaden Schwartz	Peoria Rivermen	AHL	9	2	2	4
Vladimir Sobotka	HC Slavia Praha	Czech Extraliga	13	6	9	15
Alex Steen	Modo	Elitserien Sweden	15	5	9	14
Chris Stewart	ETC Crimmitschau	Eishockey-Bundesliga T-2 (Germany)	9	5	6	11
	HC Bili Tygri Liberec	Czech Extraliga	5	0	1	1
Vladimir Tarasenko	SKA Petersburg	KHL	13	10	9	19

Detailed updates:

□□ **Patrik Berglund** (VIK Västerås HK, HockeyAllsvenskan) – After deciding to <u>play without a paycheck</u>,

Berglund has been one of the HockeyAllsvenskan's top scorers. Just one point behind Anze Kopitar for tenth place amongst league leaders, Berglund has posted 16 points in 15 games. Berglund opted in September to join Västerås because he spent three years there before joining the Blues, while he also played youth hockey in the area. For someone who is playing without a financial motive, Berglund has posted some respectable numbers at a good pace.

lan Cole (Peoria, AHL) – Despite not posting a point yet, Cole has been a steady, reliable defenseman for the Rivermen. Cole should feel right at home though, since he has played in 84 career AHL games spanning over four seasons. He has put out some crushing hits, none better

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than a clean shoulder check he delivered to Brandon Pirri of the Rockford Ice Hogs (affiliate to the Chicago Blackhawks) a few weeks back.

Matt D'Agostini (SC Riessersee, Eishockey-Bundesliga) – D'Agostini joined the Eishockey-Bundesliga just a few weeks after Blues teammate Chris Stewart signed his one-month contract within the same league. He has played in six games and remains scoreless. D'Agostini, along with oft-injured Islanders goaltender Rick DiPietro, will face Sharks forward T.J. Galiardi and his team, the Bietigheim Steelers, next week. Currently, Bietigheim is just two points behind the league leader. D'Agostini's Riessersee is in last place with just ten points (3-10-0-1).

Roman Polak (HC Vítkovice Steel, Czech Extraliga) – Polak's HC Vitkovice Steel will be playing Blues teammate Vladimir Sobotka's Slavia Praha next Wednesday in Vitkovice and then will play Chris Stewart's Liberec on November 30, also at home in Vitkovice.

Kris Russell (Turun Palloseura, Finnish Elite) – Playing with fellow NHLers Mikki Koivu, Lauri Korpikoski and Alec Martinez, Russell has posted a respectable nine points (2G-7A) in eight games. He did come back to St. Louis after suffering a knee injury, but returned to Turun

also known as TPS Turku, after doctors gave him a proper diagnosis and rehabbed his knee back to health.

Jaden Schwartz (Peoria, AHL) – After the Rivermen started the season 0-3 and were outscored 12-4 in that time, the young team had their first home game on October 19 against the Rockford Ice Hogs. Schwartz's line, consisting of Rivermen veterans Derek Nesbitt and T.J. Hensick, scored the team's first goal on home ice of the season in the middle of the second period. They followed that up with another goal about 4:00 later after Schwartz received the puck in the right offensive zone face-off dot and

beat goaltender Carter to give the Rivermen

a 2-1 lead. The Blues' AHL affiliate never looked back, as Schwartz's goal stood as the game-winning goal. Schwartz has since posted one more goal and two assists to give him four points in nine games.

Vladimir Sobotka (HC Slavia Praha, Czech Extraliga) – If there are to be any bright spots that come from the lockout, they may all come from mucky forward Vladimir Sobotka. The native of Czech Republic has been tearing up the scoring sheet, ranking in the top-25

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NHL scorers who are currently playing overseas

for multiple weeks in a row. He is currently his team's points leader (6G-9A—15PTS), followed closely by line-mate and Coyotes draftee Vladimir Ruzicka (3G-11A—14PTS). Sobotka currently outranks NHL talent playing in Extraliga, such as Michael Frolik, David Krejci and Radim Vrbata.

Alex Steen (Modo, Elitserien Sweden) – Steen is one of three Blues players who can usually be found in the top-25 NHL scorers who are currently playing overseas (Sobotka, Tarasenko). Steen will see some time off the roster though, as he had a muscle tear in the back of his thigh. The team announced on November 2 that he will be out three weeks, and Modo Head Coach Ulf Samuelsson said that playing without Steen "will be a challenge for the group."

Chris Stewart (HC Bili Tygri Liberec, Czech Extraliga) – Along with good friend and Flyers winger Wayne Simmonds, Stewart signed a one-month deal in September with ETC Crimmitschau of the Eishockey-Bundesliga in Germany. Stewart was one of the league's top scorers at the time his month contract ended, amassing 5 goals and 11points in 9 games played. When October 23 hit, Stewart and Simmonds left the Bundesliga and headed to the more competitive Czech Extraliga to play with Liberec. In five games, Stewart has accumulated just one assist. He is obviously facing stiffer competition as other NHLers, such as Jaromir Jagr, Milan Michalek and David Krejci, have also decided to join the Czech Republic's top league.

Vladimir Tarasenko (SKA Petersburg, KHL) – After scoring 5 goals in his first 4 games and 11 points in his first 6 games, Tarasenko has been one of the elite players in the KHL. Viktor Tikhonov and Ilya Kovalchuk make up the rest of SKA's top line, which has contributed 24 total goals to the team. This is Tarasenko's fifth season in the KHL. Even with his league crawling with NHL talent, Tarasenko has remained to be one of the top KHL players.