Written by Jeff Ponder
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For someone who was often a healthy scratch in Montreal, Matt D'Agostini has found a safe home in St. Louis.

D'Agostini, drafted in the sixth round of the 2005 NHL Entry Draft by Montreal, was never expected to be a top-line talent. That showed while wearing a Montreal jersey, scoring just 25 points in 94 games played, including just 4 total points last season. Fans were upset and the coaching staff in Montreal was disappointed, earning him a reoccurring spot in the press box. But a change of scenery seems to be all the fourth-line mucker needed.

The then-23 year-old winger got a first-class ticket out of Montreal last March, when he was traded at the deadline for prospect Aaron Palushaj. Fans were constantly calling D'Agostini a nuisance to the Canadiens, gladly welcoming the trade. D'Agostini saw only seven games the rest of the season for St. Louis, recording no points. But after missing the playoffs, the Blues gave D'Agostini a chance. And boy did it pay off.

St. Louis Blues President John Davidson announced in mid-June that the club reached a deal with D'Agostini, signing him to a one-year, $550K contract. Heading into camp, D'Agostini would have to battle the likes of Brad Winchester, Vladimir Sobotka, Cam Janssen and B.J. Crombeen for a secure spot on the third and fourth lines. Not only did he play hard and make the team, but he really got believers with his hard work and patience in the pre-season. After scoring a goal in the pre-season, D'Agostini continued his production in the Blues' second game of the season. He scored two goals in a Blues' route over the Anaheim Ducks, resulting in a 5-1 victory.

"Matt's done a great job," Blues coach Davis Payne said after the Blues second win to open the season. "There was a real emphasis on making sure he came in and established himself. The first day when he comes in, that's based on condition — he did that. Then it's based on the work ethic he puts into practice and on game days — he does that."

D'Agostini knows what he is capable of as well.

"I think that's always been a big part of my game. Going back to my young days, I always had

one of the better shots," D'Agostini said. "It's something I take a lot of pride in."

The young forward hasn't stopped there. The Blues have been plagued with injuries to their top-forwards, but D'Agostini keeps stepping in and getting the job done. He now has seven goals on the season, stepping on the heels of his former best-season when he scored 12 in 53 games his rookie season. He is on pace to shatter that, as he has only played in 26 games thus far.

His last goal sparked a Blues comeback on Sunday, when he deflected in a bouncing Eric Brewer shot from the point. The goal tied the Canucks at 2 in the second period, and Alex Steen finished off the win with his second goal of the game in the third period. The win snapped the Canucks' four-game winning streak, and it was done without David Perron, T.J. Oshie and Andy McDonald, who were all in the top-four scorers for the Blues last season.

D'Agostini saw time on the checking line with Jay McClement and Alex Steen last game. But these three players were not just counted on to stop opposing players; they were being relied on for offensive production as well. They did just that.

D'Agostini seems to have the right state of mind for a player in his situation.

"I don't think I have anything to prove," D'Agostini told Chris Pinkert of stlouisblues.com. "I'm just going out there and playing my game. Hopefully it's good enough for the coaching staff and the organization and hopefully helps this team win."

If he continues playing at the high level that he is, I think the coaching staff and the organization will be more than happy to give him some job security.

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