The current NHL waivers system has to be changed. Blues President John Davidson has dealt with the absurdity of the rule first hand and his demands for change are right on the button.

Currently, the National Hockey League has a rule in place that states that if an NHL team signs a player that has played overseas after the start of the NHL regular season, that player must enter a 24-hour waiver period.

Davidson dealt with this twice, as his Blues saw two players nabbed away from thier grasp. First the team signed former-KHLer Marek Svatos to an NHL contract, but the Nashville Predators stepped in and picked him off waivers. Then the Blues signed another former-KHLer, Kyle Wellwood, but the San Jose Sharks took him off the market. Needless to say, Davidson was a tad-bit upset over his inability to control his own signings.

"I have no problems with the teams picking them because they didn't break a rule," Davidson said while being a guest on NHL Home Ice XM 204 on Tuesday. "The rule is what it is, but it could be tweaked.

"It's hard to understand how you can take a player who is finished somewhere else, becomes available, and you do all the work. You do a formula to finding a contract, you make late-night phone calls, you get lawyers involved. Then you try to get him here, when nobody else had thought of it and the other team says 'Oh, I'm going to take that player.'"

Davidson is calling for change.

"Evolution is always a part of sports," Davidson continued to tell NHL Home Ice. "I know there's a lot of people out there that hate to see change, period. But life changes and this rule is archaic as it is currently written, in my opinion, and it's something that the general managers should address in the next GM's meetings and tweak it to make it more fair to everybody involved."

“Archaic” is the exact word to describe this rule.

The origin of this rule dates back to 1987. The Edmonton Oilers signed Finnish defenseman Reijo Ruotsalainen late in the 1986-87 season. He was a member of SC Bern of a Swiss League before the Oilers brought him in, which was a factor in their eventual-Stanley Cup victory. Because of this, the NHL felt a waiver rule should be in effect to stop teams from bringing in outside help.

To put how old this rule is into perspective, 11 players on the current Blues roster were still toddlers. Six players weren't even born yet.

So what does Davidson suggest?

"I think that if a player has to go on waivers coming through, only the teams below you in the standings should have the right to pick him up, and if they don't want him, you get him.

"There should be some form of compensation in there. $100,000, $200,000, whatever it is, pick a number," Davidson said.

The positive of this rule is that it does not allow teams to just sign a player or two to help during a playoff run. This stops a team from jumping from ninth-place to a Stanley Cup-hopeful, or a team from building an all-star team late in a season.

But the reality that has surfaced is that it hinders teams much more than it helps them. If a team is ravaged by injuries, such as the Blues, it halts them from acquiring help to keep them in the playoff race.

Detroit may be facing the same problem. After Red Wings management decided that their goaltending situation is not up to their standards, they looked to Europe. Detroit staff traveled to Western Russia, met with goaltender Evgeni Nabokov and worked a deal that brought him to the United States. Now, the Red Wings had to place Nabokov on waivers and are waiting to see if he will be a member of their roster tomorrow afternoon. After all of their hard work, they may see him as an opposing goaltender rather than the backup that comes in and saves the day. If Nabokov is claimed by a rival, the attempt of signing him has slight potential to

completely blow up in their faces. The worst part for Detroit would be that it is completely out of their control.

Davidson could hold a self-help group for himself and Red Wings Owner Mike Ilitch if Detroit faces the same ending St. Louis has twice.

"…for a team to do all the work, and have the player exposed to 29 other teams, it's very frustrating."

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