Jonathan Cheechoo, who scored 56 goals in 2005-06 to win the Maurice “The Rocket” Richard Trophy, signed a one-year, two-way contract worth $600,000 if he plays in the NHL and $225,000 if he plays with the Rivermen of the AHL. The latter seems like the more believable possibility.

Cheechoo saw a not-so-steady drop in his goal-numbers on the NHL stage since his amazing 56-goal run. He followed that up with 37 goals in 2006-07, 23 tallies in 2007-08 and then a depressing 12 goals in 2008-09. Cheechoo faced many nagging injuries, including groin problems and other ailments to his left leg.
Cheechoo left the only team for which he had played after his disappointing season in 2008-09 (San Jose Sharks), when he was involved in the blockbuster trade that sent Dany Heatley from Ottawa to San Jose.
As a member of the Senators that season, Cheechoo scored just 5 goals and 9 assists in 66 games, before he was sent to the Binghamton Senators of the AHL.
In 25 games, Cheechoo contributed just 8 goals and 6 assists.

Last season, the Sharks gave Cheechoo another chance, giving him a contract to play as a member of the Worcester Sharks of the AHL. Cheechoo picked up his scoring-prowess, knotting 18 goals and 29 assists. Cheechoo’s 47 points led the team at the end of the season.

Can Cheechoo still be a solid contributor in the NHL?

It would be a surprise if Cheechoo is still on the Blues’ 23-man roster after the pre-season. Whil e Cheechoo can still find the back of the net if he has a solid set-up man, he likely will be used in call-up situations.
The native of Moose Factory, Ontario is likely going to be used as a top-line winger on the Rivermen.

Cheechoo, who was selected in the second round, 29th overall by the Sharks in the 1998 NHL Entry Draft, turns 31 on Friday. He will add a veteran presence to a young Rivermen roster, as well as be a marketable tool for the American Hockey League franchise.
Adding a former NHL 50-goal scorer cannot be a bad thing for ticket sales.

The Rivermen's top-goal scorer from last season, Graham Mink, signed a contract today with the Hershey Bears of the AHL. Perhaps contract talks with Mink reached an impasse and the Blues acted by adding a veteran goal-scorer to replace him. Cheechoo still can blast shots and knows where to set up on the ice; his presence will be important for the Rivermen on any scoring line.

Depending on how training camp goes for certain players (Philip McRae, Chris Porter, Ryan Reaves, Adam Cracknell), Cheechoo may find himself playing with AHL-veterans T.J. Hensick and newly-acquired Brett Sterling on the first scoring line. Hensick and Sterling are both former 70-point scorers in the AHL. If these two can help Cheechoo get to a high point-plateau, he may be one of the first call-ups when injuries occur on the Blues' roster.

I would not go out and get that Cheechoo jersey yet, but I would not be surprised if St. Louis sees his face from time to time.

After all, how many other players on the Blues' roster can say they have scored 50 goals in a season?

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