The off-season is coming to an end. We watched that team we love to hate skate around with the Stanley Cup too many times on the NHL Network, and we have even watched Ben Bishop dominate the pre-season. So now it's time to look ahead to the season that will be. Who is going to bring home the President's Trophy? Who will be bringing it up the rear? Hard to say even before the season starts, but let's take a crack at it anyway, shall we?

30. Edmonton Oilers

Even if Andrew Cogliano plays like he actually belongs in the NHL this season, the Oilers still have a terrible goaltending situation and a questionable defense. Tom Renney doesn't make me want to invest in the Oilers either.

29. New York Islanders

John Tavares will be a man-possessed this year, but don't expect that to be the reason they make a playoff push. Manny Legace isn't your answer either, Mr. Garth Snow.

28. Carolina Hurricanes

Even playing in the clear-cut worst division in hockey (just one team made the playoffs in 2009-10 from the Southeast Division), the 'Canes just are not strong enough. Joe Corvo and Anton Babchuck can only take you so far.

27. Minnesota Wild

Todd Richards was brought in to be the new-offense head coach, but he will see that even in the second season of his contract that the Wild roster… well, just can't play offense. Their best players are their goalie and their other goalie.

26. Dallas Stars

Mike Modano will be happy to be wearing red this season. If Kari Lehtonen breaks apart (which we all know he will), this team just doesn't have what it takes.

25. Toronto Maple Leafs

J.S. Giguere has been showing signs of age, but is still a dominant goalie. The lack of team play will be the Leafs' problem, considering their collective ego is bigger than Coldplay's.

24. Florida Panthers

I really do like the changes made by the front office, especially adding to the defensive core. Give them a few more years and this team could be one to watch.

23. Columbus Blue Jackets

They will look like a hungry team most of the year, but just won't be able to pull it off in the end. Like the Panthers, this team will be exciting in the not-too-distant future.

22. Calgary Flames

Two words why this team is not in playoff contention: Darryl Sutter.

21. Anaheim Ducks

Luca Sbisa will continue to grow, but he pretty much doesn't have a choice. He has been served a top-defenseman job in his first-full NHL season. That is, unless Sheldon Brookbank wants to challenge for it (pause for laughter).

20. New York Rangers

Marian Gaborik sure is lucky that Rangers GM Glen Sather has his back. He found that secondary scoring that the Rangers needed in free-agency. Derek Boogaard's two career goals will surely help out. At least Rangers fans can applaud the loss of Wade Redden.

19. Tampa Bay Lightning

The Lightning have one of the greatest offenses in the game, but I am not sold on their goaltending. Dan Ellis and Mike Smith will have to come up huge in order to prove me wrong.

18. Atlanta Thrashers

They will pick up points because they will face Carolina, Florida and Tampa Bay for a total of 18 times this season. Don't count them out though; the acquisitions of Andrew Ladd, Fredrick Modin, Dustin Byfuglien, Brent Sopel and Chris Mason could be huge come the All-Star Break.

17. Montreal Canadiens

Playoff berth? Maybe. If Cary Price can manage to win back the fans of Montreal (maybe he can single-handedly bring back the Expos or break Quebec off from Canada), the Habs could be a strong team. The addition of ex-Blues prospect Lars Eller brings in some added scoring-depth, and Mike Cammalleri could reproduce his post-season.

16. Colorado Avalanche

Joe Sacco impressed many, but what will be even more impressive is when Craig Anderson rips the Patrick Roy banner from the rafters and chops it up with a snow blower in front of 18,129 screaming fans.

15. Ottawa Senators

Sergei Gonchar will show the city of Ottawa what an offensive defenseman looks like, but his age may be a factor. Still, the Senators have Kuba, Carkner and Campoli to cover him up. Don't forget either – the Jonathon Cheechoo experiment is over. That's worthy of another five games won this season.

14. Nashville Predators

Why is Barry Trotz not Governor of Tennessee yet? What, he's Canadian?! Didn't stop Arnold.

13. St. Louis Blues

Alright Blues fans, I hear ya. Here they are. David Perron will be a 30-goal scorer, Jaroslav Halak will be an improvement over Mason and Davis Payne will be our savior. This team has loads of youth that has the ability to score, but the weaknesses nest in the third and fourth lines. Can this team get balanced scoring? That will be the key down the stretch for these guys.

12. Phoenix Coyotes

So they drop off a little from last season, so what? This team is a playoff team. Shane Doan will get it done yet again all season long, while Lee Stempniak enjoys his 20-game-point-streak then 15-game-scoreless-streak. Plus, Ray Whitney has joined on to light the lamp about 20 times. Can't go wrong with Phoenix.

11. Philadelphia Flyers

The Flyers will get as many points as they get players suspended throughout the season. Shelling out the likes of Carcillo, Hartnell, Laperriere, van Riemsdyk and Pronger was already enough, and now they add Sean O'Donnell, Jody Shelley and Matt Walker? Suspend this team right now! The goaltending is the real issue though; can Michael Leighton and Brian Boucher truly do what they did last playoff?

10. Pittsburgh Penguins

Mike Comrie was a nice addition, as was Hillary Duff. But it will take more than a few good high notes to get the Pens over the hump; that's why they still send out Sid the Kid and friends. The defense has even improved, adding Paul Martin and Zbynek Michalek to the mix. The only real weakness is Marc-Andre Fleury's goaltending. Penguin fans are not incorrect when they say that he is the worst of the best goalies.

9. Buffalo Sabres

With one of the strongest goaltenders in the league, it's easy to see where the strength of the team sits. They have built a solid core around Miller though. This is all without mentioning Lindy Ruff, the longest-tenured coach in the NHL and the hardest working man in professional sports. The only thing keeping them from the top-five teams is my disbelief that Miller can actually be as good again as he was last year.

8. Boston Bruins

How many times do you think that Bruins GM Peter Chiarelli has called up Brian Burke of Toronto to just simply laugh? Adding Tyler Seguin with the Leafs' number two pick from this summer's draft will help a starving Bruins offense. As a rookie, he won't be the complete saving grace, so goaltender Tuukka Rask will have to stay strong with his blistering defense playing well in front of him. No problem for this crew.

7. Chicago Blackhawks

After taking the Central Division Champion tag from the Red Wings who held it for the last bazillion years, the Hawks struggled to keep their lineup together. But they kept the core of a strong team, and even added cheap but great replacements for all of the depth they lost. Marty Turco will be the key to this team though. If he can return to his form from about six years ago, the Hawks could be celebrating another Cup Championship. It would be just as exciting this time around though because the city of Chicago has a whole new team to learn about in April.

6. New Jersey Devils

Are we seeing a different Devils team for the first time since Brodeur's first season? With the likes of Ilya Kovalchuk, Zach Parise, Patrik Elias, Travis Zajac and Jason Arnott, this team is an offensive threat. The defense is still something to be desired, and they have the disputed greatest regular season goalie in history backing all of that up. Let's see if the NHL can find another way to take them to court to try and slow them down.

5. Los Angeles Kings

This is my big upset call. The Kings will be the team to watch this season. Drew Doughty is one of the smoothest skaters in the league, and Jonathon Quick is going to stop everything shot at him this season. They don't have a superstar forward, but the team gels so well together that

it is not even an issue. Dustin Brown is truly one of the greatest leaders in the game and he will lead his team to victory this season.

4. San Jose Sharks

This really should not be a surprise to see this team sit this high in the rankings. Joe Thornton continues to be the best passer in the game, and Dany Heatley will keep putting those passes behind opposing goalies. The defense is not as staggering as I thought it would be heading into training camp (Dan Boyle is definitely a great guy to have on your team, but he is not a shutdown type of player). The goaltending had me scared until they brought in ex-Blackhawk and former Stanley Cup Champion Antti Niemi to lead the way, making Antero Niittymaki the backup and Thomas Greiss the third guy in the mix. With all of this goaltending depth, it could lead to a big trade for the Sharks to bring in even more help up front…

3. Detroit Red Wings

I hate to say it folks, but the Wings are back on top in the Central. Jimmy Howard will be enjoying his second NHL season as the Wings return to form. If you remember, the team finally faced injury problems last season, forcing them into tenth place in the West at one point. Injuries healed, and all of a sudden they are back in Stanley Cup contention. If this team stays healthy with a strong season from Howard, there is no way this team finishes lower than third.

2. Vancouver Canucks

Make fun of the Sedins all you want (I know I will), but they are two first-class players who will lead their team to ultimate victory. To complement their dynamic offense, they have bolstered their defense with the likes of Keith Ballard and Dan Hamhuis. Luongo is still the man in goal, and he will pick on all of those other defenseless teams in the Northwest Division.

1. Washington Capitals

Even without Alexander the Great for portions of last season, the Capitals still scored goals and still shut teams down. Ovechkin will be needed for the team to stay on top, but they have vastly improved over the years. Losing Theodore is an addition by subtraction in goal, so the Caps will rely on their youth, sending forth Semyon Varlamov and Michal Neuvirth to man the pipes. But the Capitals do not need to put too much pressure on their goaltenders, since their puck possession is the best in the game. If their offense can stay strong, this team will be the best for the second season in a row.

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