

NHL GMs Magic Trick: How to Make Bad Contracts Disappear

Written by Matthew Coller
Friday, 01 October 2010 20:34

The Summer of Kovalchuk ended with a “fair” contract for Ilya, a ridiculous penalty imposed on the Devils and the NHL with new restrictions on long-term deals. All’s well that ends well (unless you are the Devils or anyone who covered this mess). The words “circumventing the cap” were pounded into our collective brains as bad. The league sent a message to NHL executives to play nice or lose draft picks.

If the league thought it tied up all the loose cap circumventing ends, they were wrong. Just weeks after the Devils were penalized, the Chicago Blackhawks opened up nearly \$6 million of cap space by loaning goalie Christobal Huet to Switzerland. Huet was benched midway through last season for poor performance, leaving the ‘Hawks with a replacement level goalie with superstar salary. Shipping Huet across seas to get around his cap hit or, say, circumvent the salary cap, was no different than the Devils’ attempt to sign Ilya Kovalchuk to a 50-year contract.

The Blackhawks aren’t the only club using any means possible to erase their bad decisions. The New York Rangers dug an AHL sized hole and tosses Wade Redden’s \$6.5 million cap hit in it. The Toronto Maple Leafs’ GM Brian Burke told [SportingNews](#) that since these types of moves aren’t against the Collective Bargaining Agreement, there is nothing wrong with them. Sound familiar?

The SportingNews story notes that agents will be taking action on future big money contracts to include no-movement clauses to ensure teams don’t bury their clients in the AHL or send them to Prog.

Matthew Coller is a staff member of the Business of Sports Network, and is a freelance writer. He can be [followed on Twitter](#)

NHL GMs Magic Trick: How to Make Bad Contracts Disappear

Written by Matthew Coller

Friday, 01 October 2010 20:34

[Follow The Biz of Hockey on Twitter](#) 



[Follow the Business of Sports Network on Facebook](#)