All's quiet on the lockout front as Hurricane Sandy shut down the NHL offices in New York City for a few days and no progress has been made between the league and the players' association. The latest blurb on the lockout is that games through the end of November have been canceled and more cancellations could come once the league returns to business as usual as the hurricane heads back out to sea.

According to NHL Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly, the league has already lost $720M due to canceled games. This tremendous Puck Daddy post from Greg Wyshynski outlines a lot of the issues plaguing the negotiations. Animosity is growing between the two sides and the players who have chosen not to go overseas to play or join teams in North America are certainly the most vocal about what's going on. It truly has become the players vs. the league, especially on social media, and the fans are also taking sides. Labor stoppages, no matter what line of work, are very hard situations to rectify and neither side will come out of this one smelling like a rose.

Following the hire of John Davidson, which I detailed last week, things certainly look up for the Columbus Blue Jackets. Of course, they need to be playing games in order to create progress. Davidson and some of the staff have been following along with some of the team's younger players who are currently playing for the Springfield Falcons of the American Hockey League.

There are several names to keep an eye on in Springfield. Forwards Cam Atkinson, Ryan Johansen, Matt Calvert, and Dalton Smith are all players who have or will make an impact in Columbus. On defense, Tim Erixon, acquired in the Rick Nash deal, is playing for the Falcons, along with John Moore, David Savard, and Dalton Prout.

With help from these players and long-time NHL backup Curtis McElhinney, the Falcons are off to a 5-1-0-1 start, leading the Eastern Conference with 11 points. Johansen and Atkinson both have three goals and three assists in seven games. John Moore is a plus-8, with a goal and three assists. He also leads all defensemen in shots on goal.

As far as prospects go, 2012 first-round pick Ryan Murray is sailing right along with the Everett Silvertips of the Western Hockey League, with two goals and 13 assists in 16 games. Oscar Dansk has struggled with the Erie Otters in his first season in North America, with a 3.73 goals against average in 13 games. 2011 second-round pick, and first draft pick of that year due to the Jeff Carter trade, Boone Jenner has 23 points in 16 games with the Oshawa Generals of the Ontario Hockey League.

Hockey’s still being played in Cleveland, well, not for a while as the Monsters embark on a two-week, seven-game road trip. The Monsters were at home last weekend, splitting a pair of games with the Abbotsford Heat. They dropped a 5-3 decision on Friday before winning 4-3 in a shootout on Saturday night.

It’s been a scoring-by-committee approach for the Monsters, who have 12 different goal scorers so far, led by newly-named captain Bryan Lerg with four. Perhaps the biggest surprise thus far is that Stefan Elliott, who played 39 games with the Colorado Avalanche last season, has yet to register a point through eight games.

Calvin Pickard and Sami Aittokallio continue to split time in net, with Pickard having a nicer stat line. Pickard is 3-2 with a couple of shutouts, while Aittokallio is 2-1 with a 3.04 GAA.

The Monsters kick off their long road trip with three games in three days from Thursday-Saturday with contests in Peoria, Milwaukee, and Rockford.