With the NHL trade deadline pushed forward by one week this season, and now on February 28, there are more buyers and less sellers than ever. Every team seems to be looking for the same thing, and there is a very small market available. The goal of every team is to be a buyer on deadline day and the Blue Jackets recent stretch of good play has put them in a position to do that.

The NHL trade deadline is one of my favorite days of the year. Once you sift through the bogus rumors, Twitter is abuzz with completed deals, salary capologists talking about the trickle-down effect of supplemental trades necessitated by the addition of salary, and draft picks being traded like baseball cards on a seven-year-old's porch.

Twenty or more trades have been completed each year on deadline day since 2003, except for the lockout. However, a handful of trades have already been completed in the weeks leading up to the deadline, so some experts are predicting a quiet Monday. The Blue Jackets should be anything but quiet.

Entering the trade deadline, the Blue Jackets are four points out of the final playoff spot. They have more ammunition to be a buyer than a seller, not to mention, justifying selling at the deadline with a team playing well and within striking distance, is a tough task. They have a lot

of decent defensemen prospects to trade if the right deal comes along.

Scott Howson needs to improve this roster. The team is low on depth with scoring ability and that must be addressed at the deadline. With Derick Brassard's injury already causing issues, the Jackets, like many other franchises, will be trying to acquire secondary scoring.

In my estimation, as this team is constructed, it can make the playoffs. However, they do not have the depth to withstand a long series against a better team. The way to answer that is by acquiring what they need on deadline day. Usually, the trade deadline includes lots of third and four line role players being moved. There is the occasional superstar on the move. That is the impact the Blue Jackets need to find a way to make.

My solution: Milan Hejduk. His availability has not been discussed, but the right package should do it. The Colorado Avalanche are caught in between. They have a young roster with very few veteran players. Hejduk is in a contract year and likely to leave as an unrestricted free agent anyway. So, the Avalanche can maximize their value by getting a young player or a high draft pick to help the future.

The more likely acquisition that has been discussed is John-Michael Liles. He has a no trade clause, but Aaron Portzline reported that a source close to Liles said he would waive it to go to Columbus. Liles is not an earth-shattering name, but he is an upgrade over a Marc Methot type player.

Very few names have been linked to the Blue Jackets to this point. Big names like Brad Richards and Chris Phillips may get new addresses after the trade deadline, but the likelihood of them winding up in Columbus is slim to none. Howson will have to make subtle improvements to the roster, similar to the claiming of Craig Rivet off waivers. Rivet offers a right handed shot on defense with a physical presence and veteran leadership.

With one playoff appearance in franchise history, the Blue Jackets are in an advantageous position at the trade deadline for one of the few times in their existence. This is where general managers earn their money. For Scott Howson to get them the parts they need for the playoff chase would provide a spark to the locker room.

Developing players like Grant Clitsome and Matt Calvert are in-house acquisitions that have played a big role. But, nothing beats the motivation from a traded player trying to prove his old team wrong and his new team right. If the Blue Jackets are able to acquire that piece, they could become a very dangerous team come playoff time. The players in the locker room have gotten the Blue Jackets where they need to be. Now, it is up to the front office and the scouting staff to help get them where they want to be.