Through 14 games, we've established three things about the 2011-12 Blue Jackets. They aren't very good. They will probably have a new head coach soon. Steve Mason probably isn't the goaltender of the future.

With media outlets left and right blasting the team, and rightfully so considering they have four more regulation losses than any other NHL team. Entering Wednesday night's games, the Jackets lead the league in goals allowed. Prostitutes in Amsterdam, jealous of the way people are scoring on Steve Mason, are flooding the Jackets netminder with emails and text messages trying to find out his secrets.

They are also one of two teams without a road win, though the Islanders, who they are tied with, have played just four road games. So, I'll give the Jackets the nod in this league leading category because the Islanders at least have one point on the road with an overtime loss. The Blue Jackets don't even have that.

It's all doom and gloom in Columbus right now. Ken Hitchcock, the assumed successor to Scott Arniel, has accepted the St. Louis Blues job, saying that he was never considered to replace Arniel and gave off the impression that he didn't want to anyway. Jeff Carter is still unable to skate pain-free with his fractured foot. James Wisniewski, who we all thought would ease the early season pain, is a minus-5 through six games.

Rearranging deck chairs on the sinking ship, Scott Howson made a trade this week acquiring depth center Mark Letestu from the Pittsburgh Penguins in exchange for a fourth-round pick in

the 2012 Draft. Letestu provides an element of grit and an additional piece for the penalty kill but will not be an impact player.

With spirits as low as they've been during the existence of the franchise, we may have to look to the future before flying unobstructed off the ledge. Is there any hope in sight for a resurgence? Well, for an emergence I guess we'd have to say.

Ryan Johansen seems to be starting to fit in. Interestingly enough, in Columbus's two wins, Johansen has the game-winning goal in both of them. Cam Atkinson was recalled from Springfield, so now Matt Calvert and Atkinson are going to get to go through the growing pains again. John Moore's growing pains have been clear as he has lived up to the inconsistent nature of young players.

But what about the rest of the Blue Jackets prospects? The ones who aren't in Springfield or with the Jackets. Is there a light at the end of that tunnel?

Obviously, it's up for debate. As somebody who is a big fan of the NHL Entry Draft, I was pleased to see the Blue Jackets draft for need over the last couple of drafts. They needed an offensive guy like Moore. They needed a big bodied, skilled center in Johansen. This after drafting high-talent busts like Gilbert Brule, Nikita Filatov, and Nikolai Zherdev.

Chris Roberts of HockeysFuture.com, the best prospect website on the internet, said in his October 27 Blue Jackets Depth Analysis
that the team has "one of the deepest prospect pools in hockey", but with the caveat that "they don't have many top-tier prospects." Roberts continues to add that they have an abundance of second and third line forwards and top-six defensemen.

This would explain the Jeff Carter trade. The team desperately needed someone to play with Rick Nash. We all knew that, but a lack of top flight prospect talent forced them to trade a top ten pick in last year's draft to get Carter. Of course, that draft pick, Sean Couturier, is already playing and thriving for the Philadelphia Flyers.

A couple names to keep an eye on for the near future are Boone Jenner and Dalton Smith. These are two high-energy players who can play a little bit of a physical game and possibly chip in 40-45 points. Those are the kinds of players that the Jackets are currently lacking. They are two players who could become fan favorites and develop into the unsung type of player that every team needs.

Unfortunately, where the Blue Jackets are extremely weak in terms of organizational depth is at goaltender. To add insult to injury, in a year where it looks like the Jackets will have a top five draft pick, the consensus best goaltender in the 2012 Draft Class is ranked 28th among all draft eligible players.

The Jackets will get a very talented forward in the top five and the majority of top five picks over the last couple of drafts have immediately played at the NHL level. But, in a goaltender-driven league, you can only outscore your opponent so many times with bad defense and goaltending.

In conclusion, the future doesn’t look overly bright either until the goaltender question is solved.