These are literally the dog days of the NHL hockey fan's summer.

It's now August; all the excitement of Free Agent Frenzy is now over, the Draft is in the rear view mirror and now is the time fans wait patiently for training camps to open. This summer there is a layer of uncertainty. The NHL Collective Bargaining agreement is about to expire and now the league and the players are in the midst of negotiations for a new one.

Join the conversation here on the 2012 CBA Thread . There is much to discuss, and much to catch up on if you're not following it too closely, but several good reads on what is happening with the league's proposal and the counter from the NHLPA, are musts on your reading lists:

From Sportsnet.ca: Cloaked in Compromise

USA Today's Kevin Allen

From Justin Bourne @ The Score: Backhand Shelf Blog

If you're on Twitter- some real good people to follow:

Aaron Ward the former Hurricane & SC Champ has become prolific on all things CBA is @aaronwardnhl

Michael Grange is Toronto based and typically covers the Leafs, he's @michaelgrange

James Mirtle @mirtle and Adam Proteau @proteautype are also excellent follows.

Stay tuned all- things have just started up with the CBA talks; here's hoping to a season that starts on time. Would be a shame for Coach Kirk to have a shortened training camp and for fans not to be able to see this new look Canes team on time.