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THE ESSENTIAL HOCKEY ANNUAL

2025 NHL DRAFT

GUIDE

MATTHEW SCHAEFER: DEFENSIVE CORNERSTONE RISES TO THE TOP

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*Brady Martin - Canada vs Sweden
2025 U18 World Championship Final*

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Eklund and Frondell: Just Your Typical Everyday Exceptional Talents from Djurgården

This past season was nothing short of a Hollywood-style story for Sweden's famed Djurgården organization. Having spent recent years coming up short in its attempt to gain passage back into the big league SHL, where the storied franchise is always felt to have belonged, some major steps were taken last offseason to turn the goal of promotion into a reality.

One was hiring **Niklas Wikegård** to be the team's general manager, a former coach and Washington Capitals scout who had since become a media personality as one of Sweden's most recognized hockey pundits. Wikegård immediately went to work in giving aging stars Marcus Krüger, Linus Klasen, Daniel Brodin, and Viktor André some very seasoned assistance by adding former NHLer Patrick Thoresen (41) and vets of many years, Fredric Weigel, Ludvig Rensfeldt, Tyler Kelleher, and Colby Sissons. Topping off the wave of recognizable notables was his talking Djurgården legend (and former Detroit Red Wings draft pick) Dick Axelsson out of his leave of absence and all he did was come in and rack up 45 points in as many games.



Eklund and Frondell

cont'd.

There were other shrewd and clever adds from around the Swedish hockey scene as well as recent older draft picks such as Jonny Tychonick (OTT) and Arvid Costmar (VAN). At midseason, he brought in San Jose Sharks property Mattias Hävelid to bolster the blueline and later brought back current Montreal Canadiens prospect Linus Eriksson (2024 draft), who came up with Djurgarden but spent the bulk of the season gaining SHL experience with Växjö. Both came in on loans and immediately helped.

Topping off his onslaught of continual tweaking was Wikegard loaning in New Islanders goaltending prospect Marcus Gidlöf, one of the rising stars in the prospect scene this past winter. After dominating the U20 circuit (14-4, 2.00 GAA, and .911 SV%), the 19-year-old came out of nowhere to put up an 11-6 record for Leksands of the SHL and suit up for Team Sweden at the WJC. With nothing else going on, he stood in goal for Djurgarden for the final two games of the championship series and not only was the victor in both but flashed a 0.53 GAA and .980 save percentage along the way.

The fairy tale season concluded in a victorious 4-1 series victory over local archrival AIK Stockholm, getting the team to the long-desired promised land known as the SHL. At the same time, it's the rare occasion where it seems like everything a GM touches turns to gold.

Indeed, that phrase is becoming quite apt in connection with Djurgarden's prospect pipeline in recent years.

For all the wild headlines described above, the absolute cherry on top - especially for the world of NHL draft prospects - was the season experienced by super prospects Anton Frondell and Victor Eklund. Oh yes, our seventh and ninth ranked prospects in this summer's draft were key ingredients in Djurgarden's run at the title. In what's starting to feel like a yearly rite of passage, the team managed to experience its incredible run while working these two exceptional talents into the fold and they didn't just get their feet wet but played key offensive roles in the endeavor. Whereas Frondell was lights out for the majority of the period between the end of January and early March (9-12-21 in 12 games), Eklund's contributions were felt all season long and included one hattrick and nine multipoint outings.



Moreover, the two were seeing special teams play and gelling wonderfully with the old stars that dotted the team's roster, combining savvy ability with a world of youthful enthusiasm, an aspect that was honored greatly by one of the most passionate fanbases on the European continent.

Individually, their evolutionary paths to this point have been different. We'll start off with Frondell, whose DY-1 junior season saw him score well over a PPG in the U20 league and star at the U17 World Hockey Challenge. The husky center whose game just reeks of a power game, then spent last summer dealing with an injury that impacted the start of this season, one that also saw him miss time due to other physical difficulties throughout the fall. It wasn't until the World Junior A Challenge last December that he got back into the swing of things.

And boy did he!

He became an offensive beast. The one-timers were an absolute treat to watch, but there were moves and dishes that pulled the fans out of their seats as well. The way he moved around the ice, you'd never have known he's just an 18-year-old kid. The cage on his face was the only thing giving it away. Maybe it was all too much, too soon because he eventually slowed down once the playoffs

Eklund and Frondell cont'd.



came along, admittedly seeing his role diminished for such a veteran-laden team chock full of former NHL draft picks.

As soon as the league championship had been wrapped up, he was ushered to the airport for a flight to Texas to join the nation's U18 squad in the middle of the U18 Worlds. We didn't get to see the version of him we wanted, even seeing the coaching staff leave him on the bench when the going got hot in the playoffs, but he still put up three points in five games and came away with a silver medal.

We can't say all that about Eklund though, whose season never really slowed down or saw any dips. The still underdeveloped goal-scorer with incredible hockey sense, a player we already saw dress up for Djurgården 30 times in his DY-1, was a full-fledged top nine winger from the outset. And he just kept giving and connecting with his teammates throughout the season, never going more than five games (twice) without getting his name on the scoresheet. Even a midseason break that saw him in Canada for the WJC, where he collected six points and a +7 on his way to a silver medal, couldn't trip him up.

A hardworking, determined competitor, he was never afraid to go anywhere on the ice he needed to in order to get his job done. So great was the trust the scouting staff had in him that Eklund remained on one of the power play units even in

the playoffs, where he ultimately put up two goals and seven points in 16 games. Unlike Frondell, he got to hang around in Stockholm to experience the multiday celebration of this historic promotion and the lavish festivities that accompanied it.

Of course, what we experienced with Eklund and Frondell isn't all that surprising seeing as how Viktor is William's younger brother, who himself is coming off a career best season with San Jose (41 assists, 58 points) in just his second full season of NHL play. As brothers go, the two are very close and the distance between their humble abodes doesn't keep them from communicating regularly. And their father Christian "Fimpen" Eklund was a long-time heart-n-soul player for the Djurgården organization for much of the century's first decade. As such, Victor's coming from a proven line of pedigree, something that will surely soften any worries an NHL team may have right now about his 160-pound frame.

Then again, with the way he produced this winter, it's hard to have any concerns about his long-term viability as a scorer. He was arguably the top overall producer at a pro level of any kind among this draft's first year draft eligibles. And for comparison's sake, his 38 Allsvenskan points in his draft year for Djurgården topped Jonathan Lekkerimäki's 24 in his draft year, outscoring the similarly sized fellow right winger by 13 goals in the process!



Eklund and Frondell

cont'd.

Now, this whole story is certainly a good one, but it's not, well, the whole story. And that little note about Lekkerimäki leads us right into the juiciest detail of Djurgarden's overall success.

In recent years, the club has become a factory for NHL draft picks. Both the pro team and its junior program have long been the source of NHL draft picks on a yearly basis. Even just going back five years to 2020, the NHL world was given first rounder Alexander Holtz. A year later it was first rounder Eklund, fifth rounder Oskar Jellvik, and seventh rounder Carl Lindbom, who is on the brink of an NHL job with Vegas Golden Knights. In 2022, we saw forwards Lekkerimäki, Liam Öhgren, and Noah Östlund all go in the first round alone, much less second rounder Calle Odelius and third rounder Adam Engström.

2023 was a bit quiet for the club on the draft front (fourth rounder Vilmer Alriksson) but last summer delivered us the highly touted Linus Eriksson (2nd round). And on top of Eklund and Frondell this summer, who could each end up being top 10 picks (a club novelty!), we have every reason to believe that Djurgarden prospects Theo Stockselius, Erik Nilsson,

Arvid Drott, and perhaps even overagers Wilson Björck and Lucas Stockselius (there's that name again) will hear their names called or, well, see them listed on the electronic draft board of this year's decentralized event.

That'd be quite a turnout for a single European club.

Looking forward - and that's a big part of what we at McKeen's are all about - the highly touted 2026 draft also includes a Djurgarden prospect who is all the way up at the top of the rankings. His name is Viggo Björck and the only player for the 2026 draft to have been more anticipated longer is Gavin McKenna. In fact, Björck already saw a game of Allsvenskan action this season and promptly scored his first goal. Despite spending the bulk of the season as a 16-year-old, he was already the topscorer in Sweden's top U20 circuit, setting an all-time record among juniors with his 89 points in 51 total games. We saw him do really nicely for himself at the U17 WHC (5 points) and then put in a tremendous DY-1 effort at the U18 Worlds, going 4-4-8 with a +5 in seven contests.

Saying his star is very bright may be an understatement!

But as we spend the 25-26 season following his every step, perhaps even at the SHL level, we'll also be looking at forward Marcus Nordmark, who himself has star potential after dominating the U18 level and clipping at a PPG pace for Djurgarden's U20 squad this year. In 2027, we expect to be very excited about the names Alex Engman, William Hedlund, Leo Schlegel, and Hampus Zirath, but that's all literally music of the future to our ears.

Summing up, hardly a year goes by without us having to keep a watchful eye on the Djurgarden program. It continually develops top-flight talents and consistently finds ways to incorporate them into the pro team's plans. This is not even to mention the many players from the program who go on to dot the line-ups of other SHL and Allsvenskan clubs. As of next season, those aforementioned plans will mean SHL hockey once again. Until then, the fairy tale 25-26 season for the club will finally conclude when we see where Eklund and Frondell are selected, knowing each will soon be part of a very fortunate NHL franchise.



TOP SLEEPERS

FOR THE 2025 NHL DRAFT

BY: THE MCKEEN'S HOCKEY TEAM

One of the questions consistently asked of us on social media is “who are your favourite sleepers this year?” The concept of a draft “sleeper,” or a player currently flying under the radar is something that fascinates many draft followers. Everyone has their favourite, so we asked our scouting team to supply theirs!

BROCK OTTEN (DIRECTOR OF SCOUTING)

**ASHER BARNETT – D – USN U18 (USDP) –
MCKEEN'S RANK – #160**



For a large part of the year, I felt that Barnett was the NTDP's most reliable defender. It's part of why he was selected as the U18's captain. I'm not sure his upside is incredibly high, but I think his mobility and two-way sense are good enough for him to develop into a useful third pairing defender in the future; the kind of guy who can help anchor your penalty

kill and play 16-17 minutes a night without hurting you. In the middle rounds, you'd be happy to get that kind of organizational depth.

**CHARLIE PAQUETTE – RW – GUELPH (OHL) –
MCKEEN'S RANK – #192**



One of the best players in the OHL in the second half of the season. Through the last 40 games of the year, he had 30+ goals. He's long been a player with significant scoring upside thanks to his size, skill, and better than average skating ability, but consistency has been an issue. In his last year of draft eligibility, he finally put it all together and is a very worthy NHL draft selection. There is a

path to the NHL for him as a middle six winger so long as his game continues to develop.

DEREK NEUMEIER (ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF SCOUTING)

**VINCENT DESJARDINS – C –
BLAINVILLE- BROISBAND (QMJHL) –
MCKEEN'S RANK – #159**



“Desjardins went undrafted in 2024, and some teams must be kicking themselves about that now. He exploded offensively this year and even comfortably ended up with the most powerplay points in the QMJHL. He's a center with playmaking ability that is borderline elite, especially his ability to make no-look, tape-to-tape passes. Even though he's pretty light and not a burner he's still effective in his defensive duties because he's so positionally sound. When a prospect can make so much progress from one year to the next that's a great sign they'll be able to make other necessary improvements as they continue developing.”

**CARTER KLIPPENSTEIN – C – BRANDON (WHL) –
MCKEEN'S RANK – #229**



“It's incredibly difficult to find future stars in the later rounds of the draft, so scouts also need to be on the lookout for prospects who could become valuable role players. That's Klippenstein in a nutshell. The big, athletic center is already a polished shutdown forward. He's a smart penalty killer, he covers a lot of ice with his skating and reach, and he has some general hardness to how he plays. If he can keep mastering the kind of role he's playing now then he'll keep improving his chances of being asked to do it in the NHL one day too.”

TOP SLEEPERS FOR THE 2025 NHL DRAFT

REGIONAL SCOUTS

RYAN MILLER – C – PORTLAND (WHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #132

There are very few players outside the top of this draft that match Miller's pace and tenacity. He sprints up and down the ice to ensure he's engaged in the play and never backs down from puck battles. He gives defenders fits on the forecheck and hustles to tie up sticks and strip pucks on the backcheck. Coaches love guys who play his brand of hockey. His infectious energy level fits the profile of a bottom six forward at the NHL level, and he has room to grow his game offensively. – *Kyle Dalla Zanna*

MALTE VASS – D – FARJESTADS (SWE J20) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #142

I love Vass as a long-term project. Big, mean, and strong. Eager to punish puck carriers skating down his side of the ice. Decent defensive reads that will only get better with reps. Beautiful, long skating strides. Even though his straight-line speed and



acceleration need work, he's got a lot of headroom for growth. He won't give you much, if any, value offensively, but that's not what you're drafting him for. You're drafting him so he can slot into your bottom four in five years and make your opponents' lives miserable - especially come playoff time. Well worth the gamble in the mid rounds, if you ask me. – *Felix Robbins*

ISAC HEDQVIST – C – LULEA (SHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #276

As a D+2, you have to really impress to get drafted, and Isac Hedqvist has done exactly that. I felt like he was



one of the best draft eligible prospects playing in the SHL and brought consistent play through his great forechecking game. He showed improvement throughout the year and was playing his best with Luleå in the playoffs, contributing to clinching the gold. His feet are always in motion; he is tenacious on the forecheck and can also bring some offense through his blue-collar type play. There is legit bottom six potential with Hedqvist and grabbing him in the later rounds should be great value for any team. – *Simon Johansson*

JAMIRO REBER – C – HV 71 (SHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #146

We have no qualms in pointing out that Reber is one of those talents who can disappear in the production department for stretches at a time. Also, until this season, his 5-foot-10 and 176-pound frame really looked to be more on the smaller side.

And then there was an inability to show up for his native Switzerland in three straight major tournaments after being highly impressive at the U18 Worlds and the ensuing Hlinka Gretzky Cup in his DY-1. But the young man has the wits and wherewithal to generate offense and surprised many by becoming an SHL regular this season, often gaining upwards of 15 minutes of TOI throughout the season. Then he played a considerable scoring role (4 points in 6 games) in helping his team retain the class for another year of SHL hockey in the relegation round. The cherry on top of his 10 goals and 19 points in 53 total SHL games is that he did it all as an 18-year-old. With a September 4th birthday, he's one of the absolute youngest overagers in this draft. Heck, we wouldn't blame anyone for seeing him as a poor man's Marco Kasper. – *Chapin Landvogt*



TIMOFEI ZHULIN – LW – BARS KAZAN (VHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #250

Timofei Zhulin has been one of my favorite players over the past few seasons. He is a high motor player that checks all the boxes for me, getting it done on both sides of the puck. He is a talented puck carrier who uses his pace to beat opponents and can finish in a variety of ways with skilled hands and a heavy shot. Defensively he breaks



TOP SLEEPERS FOR THE 2025 NHL DRAFT

down opponents with harassing forechecking and board play. He battles hard and doesn't give up on plays easily. He is the exact type of player I would be looking to draft if I was in the GM chair and I was surprised to see him passed over last season. He is a hard-working grinder who has the skill and speed to create offense when needed. – **Henry Lawrence**

JERE SOMERVUORI – LW – HIFK (FIN-U20) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #140

Jere Somervuori is the type of player that coaches like because you know what you are going to get from him every night and, wherever he is put in the lineup, he will show the same intensity and engagement level on 200 feet. Somervuori was on one of the best lines in the U20 SM-sarja this season with Matias Vanhanen and Jasper Kuhta. Even if he produced less points than his linemates, he was clearly the driver of his line because of his effectiveness on the forecheck and his ability to force turnovers and create space for his teammates. He skates like a breeze and he is always in movement trying to find open space or giving support for his teammates. Somervuori is very tiring for the opponents because of his tenacity and he never gives up on plays. This is the kind of player that can make an impact in the playoffs as he will do every little detail to help his team win no matter what the score is. – **Jeremy Rivet**

MADDOX LABRE – D - VICTORIAVILLE (QMJHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #187



Playing for the worst team in the QMJHL this season, the Victoriaville Tigers, it was hard to evaluate Maddox Labre's game. Labre is a raw offensive defenceman who possesses great skills and puck control. He was starting to be more and more confident toward the end of the season, showing smart

and crafty plays. His defensive numbers were bad, but the team in general was. Offensively, in his last 18 games, he scored eight of his 19 points total, approaching 0.5 points per game. He still has a lot to refine in his game, especially his defensive game, but the interesting potential needs to be considered and he could get drafted sooner rather than later. – **Jeremy Tremblay**

ANDERS MILLER – G – CALGARY (WHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #167



In many ways, you could easily make an Anders Miller comparison to Hampton Slukynsky. Miller's biggest

drawback is that he is seen as "unproven" due to his role as a tandem with Calgary joining the team midseason. You can easily draw that comparison to Slukynsky, who was picked out of the USHS-MN, a notoriously unpredictable league to draft from, but he still made a fourth-round selection due to his strong visible skill set. Miller isn't the flashy type of goalie; he's someone who'd likely go under the radar to most people with an untrained goalie eye because it's harder to see the little things he does right. Miller, like Slukynsky, has the footwork, positioning, poise, intelligence, and the efficient and effective frame of a goalie to make him a worthy pick. As Miller should be stepping into a starter role in the WHL for next year, and given he previously remained in Jr A before the merger, there's a strong likelihood Miller has a D1 commitment in the near future, giving him a very similar development path to Slukynsky who is also stylistically similar to Anders Miller, and has been looking like one of the biggest steals of the 2023 draft. – **Liam Crouse**

AIDAN LANE – RW – ST. ANDREWS COLLEGE (CHS-O) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #141

Aidan Lane is a prime example of a player benefitting from the recent rule changes allowing CHL players to retain NCAA eligibility. A 2025 Harvard commit, Lane split the 2024-2025 season across three different leagues - starting in the Prep Hockey Conference (PHC)

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with St. Andrew's College, appeared in two USHL games with the Green Bay Gamblers before transferring over to the Brampton Steelheads of the OHL. Lane projects as a bottom-six winger through his combination of size, skill and hockey IQ. Lane lacks first-step explosiveness but compensates with a powerful stride and wide base to generate speed in motion. As he continues to grow into his frame, there is potential there for him to improve as a puck-protecting, physical winger. Adding more assertiveness to his game will elevate his effectiveness at the next level. The transition for some players joining the CHL, coming over from other junior leagues, was more gradual compared to others. The trouble for Lane was getting consistent ice time on an older, competitive Steelheads team that was built to go all-in this season. Lane played a bottom six winger role, averaging about 15 minutes a game. The tools of becoming a power winger are evident. Having the opportunity next season to play a full season under one program at Harvard could help his development significantly progress. – *Liam Staples*

MATOUŠ KUCHARČÍK – C – SLAVIA PRAHA (CZECHIA U20) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #147

Kucharčík is an interesting project, he has decent size at 6-foot-2 but needs to add a lot more muscle to his current frame (165 pounds). He does have promising offensive tools, he's not afraid to be flashy, he's strong with the puck on his stick, has a dangerous wrist shot and his skating



is also decent. He might have a future in the NHL as a middle six forward. He just needs to add more muscle to bring the physicality to his game and work on his overall skills. The potential to become a valuable NHL player with the right development is definitely there. – *Matej Deraj*

LIAM PETERSSON – D – VAXJO LAKERS (SWE J20) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #154



Pettersson is the kind of player who flies under the radar but has the makeup of a late season riser. A mobile defenseman with good size (6-foot-2), Pettersson plays a quiet, effective game, especially on breakouts, where his simple and smart puck movement stands out. He doesn't try to do too much, and that reliability is often overlooked in flashier prospects.

His skating is solid, though with some technical refinement, he could become even more efficient. He's not overly physical yet, but with added strength and a more assertive edge, particularly in puck battles, his defensive value will grow. Pettersson has room to compete harder in tough areas, and if he does, his ceiling shifts upward. Offensively, he has a decent skill set with a steady passing game and flashes of upside from the blue line. He's not going to quarterback a power play, but he can contribute as a secondary option. If he takes a step physically and sharpens his compete level, there's real potential for him to emerge as a dependable bottom four defenseman at the next level. – *Viktor Ahlund*

BRADY PEDDLE – D – WATERLOO (USHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #165



I see Brady Peddle as a really intriguing option in the mid-to-late rounds of the draft, and he jumped up many draft boards after equaling his regular season production in the playoffs. While he doesn't offer much upside, he plays a physical game and is smart on the breakout. Brady grinds in front of the net to keep his

TOP SLEEPERS FOR THE 2025 NHL DRAFT

crease clean and wins board battles galore against larger opponents, making him an attractive candidate to carve out a role as a reliable bottom-pair defenseman. He's one of the more well-rounded and mature defensemen outside of the top 100 pick range. - **Kaeden Ireland**

DAVID LEWANDOWSKI – LW – SASKATOON (WHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #178



Picks in the later rounds of the draft are players that need work, but it's important that there is a pathway to NHL success, and that is exactly what one team will get with Saskatoon Blades forward David Lewandowski. The 6-foot-1 German has some skill, is strong on the puck, and is willing to play physically. A sore spot for him? Skating, which happens to arguably be the skill that NHL teams are able to develop the most effectively. If the team that drafts him can work with him to grow into even an average skater, it is easy to see a third line winger in the NHL here. - **Jamison Derksen**

SHAWN CARRIER – LW – HALIFAX (QMJHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #123

At a certain point during the draft there comes a time when the remaining players are not very likely to turn into consistent NHLers. The available options will oftentimes be players who might turn into a bottom-of-the-lineup player if everything goes right. Although Shawn Carrier is expected to be drafted into those later rounds, he is an exception to the rule; he could, with the ideal development, turn into a great middle six forward. Carrier is consistently the fastest, most high-flying skater on the ice. He plays with overflowing confidence, driving the



play through the middle, dishing tricky passes and showing great lateral deceptive skills when attacking the opposing defence. He has the hands to keep up his high pace of play and has an underrated shot. Carrier could absolutely be one of the biggest steals of the draft down the road. - **Jeremi Plourde**

JACOB KVASNICKA - RW - USN U18 (USDP) - MCKEEN'S RANK - #164



Kvasnicka is one of the hardest workers of the entire 2025 draft class. He consistently finds himself in the right place at the right time as he creates opportunities for teammates. While his stat line makes him a long shot for the NHL, undrafted Frank Vatrano put up similar numbers before forcing his way into the NCAA, AHL, and then the NHL. Although his puck skills may not wow as much as his peers at the NTDP, his raw tools, vision, and unrivaled drive make him a tempting option in late rounds. Kvasnicka is playing college hockey next season where he aims to earn a top six role with the University of Minnesota. - **Sean Boyd**

SECOND CHANCES

Top Draft Re-Entry Candidates

In a normal year, scouting hockey is marred by imperfection. Every year high end players get skipped over at the NHL draft for various reasons. Maybe they suffered through injuries. Maybe their team struggled, and it prevented scouts from getting a good read on them. Maybe their team was too good, forcing them down the depth chart with limited minutes and exposure opportunities. Or...maybe they just were not good enough. But thankfully human development is nonlinear and therefore unpredictable. Teenage hockey players are far from a finished product on the ice as their games mature just as the rest of their body and mind does. That is why it is critical to track players as they move through their second and third years of draft eligibility (or fourth years of eligibility for some European players).

For those unfamiliar, North American players with birth dates from January 1st to September 15th, will be eligible for three NHL drafts. Players with birth dates from September 16th to December 31st, will be eligible for two NHL drafts. And for European players (in European leagues), extend that eligibility by one year in both cases. In the last decade, NHL scouts have increased the rate with which they are selecting "re-entry" candidates, or players previously passed over. Contract limits have made it critical for teams to spread out where they select players from, in addition to their age. This has made second- and third-year eligible U.S. and European based players especially attractive. Additionally, the new NCAA eligibility rules could also make later born CHL players more attractive as teams steer them towards the college route for additional development.

These players have had a lot of success in recent years too. Look around the league and you see these players everywhere. For example, Calgary Flames standout defender Mackenzie Weegar was one. Ottawa Senators standout forward Drake Batherson was one. So too was Winnipeg Jets starter Connor Hellebuyck. Pyotr Kochetkov, one of the top young net-minders in the NHL was also one.

SECOND CHANCES

Top Draft Re-Entry Candidates CONT'D

Last year, eight "re-entry" candidates went in the top four rounds; Ilya Nabokov, Jesse Pulkkinen, Ondrej Becher, Pavel Moysevich, Trevor Hoskin, Chase Pietila, Dmitri Gamzin, and Blake Montgomery. Nabokov and Pulkkinen were taken in the second round. In total there were 42 taken, right around the trend of other recent drafts (roughly about 20% of all players selected).

While you can read more about the many re-entry candidates that we have ranked in the ranking profiles part of our guide, here are our top ten previously passed over players:

1. KRISTIAN EPPERSON (W) – SAGINAW (OHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #55



Gritty winger out of the NTDP who formed instant chemistry with Michael Misa this year. Headed to the University of Denver next year to continue his development.

2. PETTERI RIMPINEN (G) – KIEKKO-ESPOO (FIN) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #79



The Rookie of the Year in Liiga and the top goaltender at the World Juniors. Rimpinen isn't huge, but you can't overlook his success this year.

3. CAEDEN HERRINGTON (D) – LINCOLN (USHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #89

One of the USHL's top two-way defenders this year as a rookie of the New England prep scene. Dangerous scorer from the back-end is headed to the University of Vermont

4. FRANCESCO DELL'ELCE (D) – MASSACHUSETTS (HE) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #92



Two years after being a big draft snub out of the St. Andrew's College program, Dell'Elce is back on the draft radar after a tremendous freshman season at UMass.

5. YEGOR BORIKOV (W) – DINAMO MINSK (KHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #93

Speedy Belarussian winger who was a force in the KHL playoffs, scoring 7 goals in 11 games for Dinamo Minsk.

6. SAM LAURILA (D) – FARGO (USHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #95



A detail oriented two-way defender whose offensive game made big strides post NTDP this year in the USHL. Was possibly the best defenseman in the USHL this past year.

SECOND CHANCES

Top Draft Re-Entry Candidates CONT'D

7. JULIUS SUMPF (W) – MONCTON (QMJHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #127



Sumpf helped Moncton capture a QMJHL title this year and helped Germany avoid relegation at the World Juniors. The big center has pro level attributes and keeps improving.

8. BRENDAN MCMORROW (C) – WATERLOO (USHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #130



Another former NTDP member, McMorrow slid to center this year in the USHL and was one of the best players in the Clark Cup playoffs. He plays with sand paper and has improved offensively.

9. LINARDS FELDBERGS (G) – SHERBROOKE (QMJHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #136



The unsung hero of the World Juniors this year for Latvia, helping upset Canada. However, he was good all year in the QMJHL too.

10. FINN MCLAUGHLIN (D) – FGO-MUS (USHL) – MCKEEN'S RANK – #144

A mobile, two-way defender who has captured the Clark Cup as USHL champion two years in a row. Last year he played a minimal role with Fargo, but this year, he was a standout for Muskegon.



BEST OF

BEST SKATER

1. MATTHEW SCHAEFER
2. CULLEN POTTER
3. JACKSON SMITH
4. CAMERON REID
5. SASCHA BOUWMEDIENNE
6. SIMON WANG
7. MICHAEL MISA
8. EVERETT BALDWIN
9. VICTOR EKLUND
10. CAMERON SCHMIDT

BEST SHOT

1. ANTON FRONDELL
2. MICHAEL MISA
3. PORTER MARTONE
4. JAKOB IHS WOZNIAK
5. CAMERON SCHMIDT
6. ALEXANDER DONOVAN
7. JUSTIN CARBONNEAU
8. DANIIL PROKHOROV
9. KASHAWN AITCHESON
10. COOPER SIMPSON

BEST BODY CHECKER/MOST PHYSICAL

1. BRADY MARTIN
2. KASHAWN AITCHESON
3. EDDIE GENBORG
4. MACE'O PHILLIPS
5. DAVID BEDKOWSKI
6. KURBAN LIMATOV
7. DANIIL PROKHOROV
8. PEYTON KETTLES
9. AIDEN FOSTER
10. CAEDEN HERRINGTON

SMARTEST FORWARD

1. CALEB DESNOYERS
2. COLE RESCHNY
3. JAKE O'BRIEN
4. JAMES HAGENS
5. MICHAEL MISA
6. BEN KINDEL
7. ANTON FRONDELL
8. VICTOR EKLUND
9. COLE MCKINNEY
10. CULLEN POTTER

SMARTEST DEFENDER

1. MATT SCHAEFER
2. BLAKE FIDDLER
3. RADIM MRTKA
4. CAMERON REID
5. SAM LAURILA
6. QUINN BEAUCHESNE
7. LUKA RADIVOJEVIC
8. KASHAWN AITCHESON
9. ALEX HUANG
10. LOGAN HENSLER

HARDEST WORKER

1. BRADY MARTIN
2. VICTOR EKLUND
3. CARTER BEAR
4. BILL ZONNON
5. COLE MCKINNEY
6. VOJTECH CIHAR
7. TOMAS POBEZAL
8. ETHAN CZATA
9. EDDIE GENBORG
10. LJ MOONEY

BEST OF

BEST PLAYMAKER/ PASSER

1. JAKE O'BRIEN
2. JAMES HAGENS
3. MICHAEL MISA
4. COLE RESCHNY
5. CALEB DESNOYERS
6. PORTER MARTONE
7. BEN KINDEL
8. MATTHEW SCHAEFER
9. VICTOR EKLUND
10. VINCENT DESJARDINS

BEST STICKHANDLER/ MOST CREATIVE

1. JUSTIN CARBONNEAU
2. MICHAEL MISA
3. JAMES HAGENS
4. JAKE O'BRIEN
5. ALEXANDER ZHAROVSKY
6. CULLEN POTTER
7. PORTER MARTONE
8. COOPER SIMPSON
9. LYNDEN LAKOVIC
10. COLE RESCHNY

BEST DEFENSIVE FORWARD

1. ANTON FRONDELL
2. COLE MCKINNEY
3. MALCOLM SPENCE
4. CALEB DESNOYERS
5. ETHAN CZATA
6. BRADY MARTIN
7. MILTON GASTRIN
8. JACK NESBITT
9. MATTHEW GARD
10. BRAEDEN COOTES

BEST DEFENSIVE DEFENDER

1. RADIM MRTKA
2. KASHAWN AITCHESON
3. BLAKE FIDDLER
4. MATTHEW SCHAEFER
5. CARTER AMICO
6. JACOB ROMBACH
7. LOGAN HENSLER
8. KURBAN LIMATOV
9. OWEN CONRAD
10. DAVID BEDKOWSKI

BEST OFFENSIVE DEFENDER

1. MATTHEW SCHAEFER
2. JACKSON SMITH
3. CAMERON REID
4. SASCHA BOUMEDIENNE
5. EVERETT BALDWIN
6. LUKA RADIVOJEVIC
7. ALEX HUANG
8. HENRY BRZUSTEWICZ
9. CARLOS HÄNDEL
10. FELIX OHRQUIST

MOST ATHLETIC GOALTENDERS

1. JOSHUA RAVENSBERGEN
2. PETERI RIMPINEN
3. PYOTR ANDREYANOV
4. JACK IVANKOVIC
5. SAMUEL MELOCHE
6. ONDREJ STEBETAK
7. ALEXEI MEDVEDEV
8. SEMYON FROLOV
9. YAROSLAV KUZMENKO
10. ROBERTO LEONARDO HENRIQUEZ

TWO ROUND MOCK DRAFT 2025

BY BROCK OTTEN

1ST ROUND

1. NEW YORK ISLANDERS – MATTHEW SCHAEFER – DEFENSE



Even though this year doesn't have the allure of the first pick next year (Gavin McKenna), the Islanders still hit the gold mine by winning the lottery with such low chances. There's been some chatter about a Hagens selection given his local connection, but you can't pick first overall based on that. The Islanders just locked up Ilya Sorokin long term as one of the better netminders in the NHL, so it truly makes sense to jump at the chance to draft Schaefer, a potential franchise defender who can play in all situations and eventually serve as the team's captain.

2. SAN JOSE SHARKS – MICHAEL MISA – CENTER



We've read some chatter that draft pundits believe Mike Grier could favor selecting someone like Martone or Frondell with this pick given his desire to add size/tenacity to the lineup moving forward. We'd argue that Misa is just as competitive, but more skilled. This is an extremely well-rounded player who gives the Sharks a ton of flexibility moving forward. He can slot at the wing or move another of their top young forwards to the wing. He also gives them a little more dynamic, play driving ability than they currently have in the system.

3. CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS – CALEB DESNOYERS – CENTER



If there has been one *modus operandi* of the Hawks management in recent years, it's that they've heavily focused on bringing in elite skaters. When we look at the players in this range, Desnoyers is the best skater of the remaining forwards. The Hawks could see Desnoyers filling a Jonathan Toews type role for them in the future, giving them a well-rounded two-way guy and helping to shore up their center depth moving forward.

4. UTAH MAMMOTH – ANTON FRONDELL – CENTER



Similar to the Hawks, Utah has also had an *modus operandi* related to size and physicality. If their picks aren't big, they

need to be competitive. The newly minted Mammoth could go a variety of directions. Porter Martone would provide that size on the wing they've been building up. Maybe they're enticed by Roger McQueen and not scared by the injuries. And while Frondell isn't huge, he plays a heavy, mature game. They liked a similar player in Cole Beaudoin last year, but Frondell has greater offensive upside. Utah's interest stems from the hope that Frondell can be their Sasha Barkov or Anze Kopitar.

5. NASHVILLE PREDATORS – JAMES HAGENS – CENTER



This is a system that needs to add a high-end playmaker and that's Hagens. Did he have a disappointing second half? Sure. Are there concerns about his size and ability to play center at the NHL level? Probably. But the Predators have trusted their U.S. scouts a lot in recent years and Hagens would really inject skill into a system that needs it.

6. PHILADELPHIA FLYERS – PORTER MARTONE – WING



On the one hand, this feels low for Martone, given that NHL teams are going to be drawn to his style of play in hopes that he can be a playoff warrior in the future. But, on the other hand, it's also possible that teams take a run on the centers available at the top of this draft. That allows Martone to fall into the lap of the Flyers. The perfect complement to Michkov in the future? Maybe there's hope that Martone could provide what the Flyers thought they'd be getting in Cutter Gauthier prior to the trade demand.

7. BOSTON BRUINS – BRADY MARTIN – CENTER



At this point it seems inevitable that Martin goes fairly high, perhaps even higher than this. NHL teams love his work ethic and his potential to be a top shelf NHL playoff performer. Look no further than what Sam Bennett is doing in the NHL playoffs currently. Martin is the kind of all situations impact forward that the Bruins need to kickstart their retool.

1ST ROUND

8. SEATTLE KRAKEN – RADIM MRTKA – DEFENSE



Is this the year that the Kraken finally uses a first-round selection on a defender? It has to happen at some point, right? The Kraken opt for Mrtko, a big Czech

defender who could develop into a top four defensive anchor. How much offensive upside is there? Can the physical game reach another level? They could go for Jackson Smith here, but it seems more likely that they go for the more polished Mrtko, especially considering he played in Seattle of the WHL this year, so they'd be very familiar with him.

9. BUFFALO SABRES – VICTOR EKLUND – WING



Eklund is the type of player that the organization badly needs to help them take that next step. He's an absolute warrior on the ice and projects as that

strong playoff performer because of his compete level. Yes, he's not huge and needs to fill out, but he could be the perfect complementary winger in their top six. He already had success as a pro in Sweden this past year and could move through their system quickly, fitting their timeline perfectly.

10. ANAHEIM DUCKS – JAKE O'BRIEN – CENTER



The Ducks have some great goal scorers right now, but a top shelf playmaker like O'Brien could really help the organization moving forward. Anaheim has

drafted out of the OHL a lot in recent drafts, and they obviously trust that region and their scouts from that region. O'Brien is going to need some time to bulk up and get quicker, but his upside is as high as any pivot in this draft class.

11. PITTSBURGH PENGUINS – ROGER MCQUEEN – CENTER



The true wild card of the draft because of his health. If McQueen's back wasn't an issue, he's likely a top five pick because of his unique skill set. But, on the heels of

Cayden Lindstrom, NHL teams are likely to be pretty skittish. The Penguins are a franchise who can afford to take this home run swing. Their system needs help; they badly need a home run on the heels of the end of the Crosby era. However, the Penguins scouting staff also loves physically assertive and competitive players so don't rule out someone like Kashawn Aitcheson here.

12. NEW YORK RANGERS – JACKSON SMITH – DEFENSE



Smith is unquestionably one of the highest upside players available in the draft this year. He is potentially the complete package on the blueline.

However, there are some concerns over his ability to process the game. For that reason, he's probably a longer-term project who will require patience. For the Rangers, while they could use a center more, it seems unlikely they reach on a player just for the sake of positional or organizational need. Smith gives the Rangers a potential home run and they've had some luck with a similar kind of player in K'Andre Miller.

13. DETROIT RED WINGS – KASHAWN AITCHESON – DEFENSE



The Red Wings have a type. Aitcheson is that type. The organization wants to build a team eventually engineered for the playoffs, so the focus has been

on compete level and physicality. There may not be a defender who exemplifies those characteristics more in this draft. But his offensive game is underrated, and it gives him a solid chance of developing into a Kevin Bieksa style two-way type. The Wings traded Andrew Gibson and Brady Cleveland hasn't developed well since being selected. Aitcheson is better than both.

14. COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS – JUSTIN CARBONNEAU – WING



One of the draft's most creative and skilled offensive players, Carbonneau has excellent offensive upside. The Jackets have not shied away from the

QMJHL in recent years and he would give them another high-quality offensive player on the wing to build around, given that their center depth is fairly solid. Could make a similar impact to Kent Johnson, who is coming off his best NHL season.

15. VANCOUVER CANUCKS – BRAEDEN COOTES – CENTER



Sometimes things just work out. The Canucks badly need a young center with upside in their system and Cootes just happens to be one of the best

players available. It's likely that they'd be very familiar with him too, considering he plays with Seattle of the WHL. Cootes is a well-rounded two-way center who projects as an all-situations type.

TWO ROUND MOCK DRAFT 2025

1ST ROUND

16. MONTREAL CANADIENS (VIA CALGARY) – CARTER BEAR – WING



With news that Bear's achilles injury was only a partial tear and that he's already back on the ice, his draft stock isn't likely to take much of a hit. Montreal would see Bear as a strong fit in their organization as a complementary piece. He's competitive and effective through the middle of the ice and would likely be the perfect fit with guys like Suzuki or Demidov.

17. MONTREAL CANADIENS – BLAKE FIDDLER – DEFENSE



With back-to-back picks, the Canadiens take back-to-back WHL players. Yeah, the Canadiens have Reinbacher and Mailloux waiting in the wings as right shot defenders, but the main club badly needs one to pan out. You can never have too many solid defenders who can play the right side in the NHL. Fiddler is a solid two-way presence and gives them a great security blanket.

18. CALGARY FLAMES (VIA NEW JERSEY) – JACK NESBITT – CENTER



This just feels like a fit. The Flames favored the OHL last year and their picks out of the league all had strong draft plus one years. Additionally, they've shown a desire to add size to their forward group. Nesbitt is a big pivot who showed really positive growth this year in Windsor. He is a potential all-situations, middle six center.

19. ST. LOUIS BLUES – LYNDEN LAKOVIC – WING



While there are some concerns over Lakovic's compete level and consistency, he's still a high upside swing as a big winger with skill. The Blues don't really have a player like this in their system right now, and at this point of the first round, the risks associated with Lakovic are worth taking.

20. COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS (VIA MINNESOTA) – JOSHUA RAVENSBERGEN – GOALTENDER



It just seems inevitable that someone is going to bite on Ravensbergen in the first round. He has all the tools to develop into

a topflight netminder. The Jackets are a likely candidate. They need a true incumbent in net. They have multiple first round picks. They've drafted a lot out of the WHL. Yes, they took Evan Gardner in the second-round last year, but he's not the same quality of prospect as Ravensbergen.

21. OTTAWA SENATORS – JAKOB IHS WOZNIAK – WING



Ottawa is a team that hasn't been afraid to go a little off the board in recent years. And they've primarily focused on players with unique skill sets or physical tools. Ihs Wozniak saved his draft stock with a strong second half and he has top six upside as a bigger scoring winger. Ottawa has also drafted heavily out of Sweden in recent years.

22. PHILADELPHIA FLYERS (VIA COLORADO) – CAMERON REID – DEFENSE



After selecting Martone earlier, the Flyers go back to the OHL again to take Kitchen-er's Cam Reid. Reid is a highly mobile, two-way defender. He's not big, but he's very intelligent and projects as a solid second pairing type who could possibly quarterback a powerplay unit in the future.

23. NASHVILLE PREDATORS (VIA TAMPA BAY) – LOGAN HENSLER – DEFENSE



Earlier the Predators selected James Hagens out of the NCAA, and they returned there with their second pick, opting for Wisconsin defender Logan Hensler. While his offensive production disappointed in his freshman season, his physical tools make him a potential defensive stalwart at the NHL level. It will also be interesting to see how his on puck game develops as he matures. The Preds traded for Andrew Gibson previously, so there's obviously a desire to add prospects like this to their pipeline.

24. LOS ANGELES KINGS – SASCHA BOUMEDIENNE – DEFENSE



There's definitely a need for the Kings to add a quality defensive prospect to their cupboard and Boumedienne would be a great selection here. He improved drastically in the second half of this year, helping Sweden to a silver medal at the U18's and Boston University to a second place finish in the NCAA. There's a need to refine his game and improve his decision making, but the mobility is great, and he has great upside as a top four defender.

1ST ROUND

25. CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS (VIA TORONTO) – MALCOLM SPENCE – WING



After taking Desnoyers with the third overall selection, the Hawks take a similar player in Malcolm Spence, only Spence plays the wing. This gives

Chicago another mature two-way player who skates well, who can help insulate some of their younger, higher skilled guys. Spence is leaving the OHL next year to play at Michigan (NCAA), but he could be an NHL'er in only a few years.

26. NASHVILLE PREDATORS (VIA VEGAS) – VACLAV NESTRASIL – WING



The big Czech wing finished the season on a high, with a strong Clark Cup playoff performance for Muskegon.

There's a need to improve his skating, but Nashville hasn't shied away from players who need to improve pace. With four picks inside the top 35, the Predators can afford to take a few big swings and Nestrail has solid potential as a top six support player.

27. WASHINGTON CAPITALS – HENRY BRZUSTEWICZ – DEFENSE



The Capitals would have seen a lot of Brzustewicz this year while keeping tabs on defensive prospect Cam Allen, and there's certainly been a previous con-

nection to London with the likes of Connor McMichael and John Carlson. Brzustewicz is a raw, but toolsy two-way defender who is going to get a ton of ice time and development opportunities in London moving forward.

28. WINNIPEG JETS – MILTON GASTRIN – CENTER



It seems likely that the Jets could take a center with their first this year, given the need to improve organizational depth.

They have lots of options at this point in the draft, but after what happened with Rutger McGroarty, I wonder if they steer clear of an NCAA player. Gastrin is an athletic, two-way center who projects as a middle six type.

29. CAROLINA HURRICANES – CULLEN POTTER – CENTER/WING



It seems like the Hurricanes always take the player who is highest ranked by the amateur scouting organizations left remaining on the board; in this case?

Speedy forward Cullen Potter. One of the draft's best skaters, there are concerns about his NHL effectiveness given his size and somewhat perimeter-oriented game. However, Potter is a player with significant NHL upside.

30. SAN JOSE SHARKS (VIA DALLAS) – MASON WEST – WING



It's starting to feel inevitable that West goes in the first round this year after fully committing to hockey. He's such a tremendous athlete and his upside is

quite high, as long as you're willing to exhibit patience. The Sharks already have a deep system and can afford to play the waiting game here. This is the type of home run swing you take when your system is already loaded.

31. CALGARY FLAMES (VIA FLORIDA) – COLE RESCHNY – CENTER



It's a chance that Reschny goes much higher than this. He's one of the draft's most intelligent pivots. However, he also has the feel of the type of guy who NHL

teams are a little wary of, with average size and average athleticism. This would be a coup for the Flames, who solidify their center depth with two great first round selections.

32. PHILADELPHIA FLYERS (VIA EDMONTON) – WILL HORCOFF – CENTER



When you've got three first round picks, you probably take a big swing with one of them. Horcoff is very raw and under-

developed physically, but when his frame fills out, he could end up being a quality pro. He had some really great moments in the NCAA as a true freshman in the second half.

2ND ROUND

33. SAN JOSE SHARKS – BILL ZONNON – CENTER/WING



GM Mike Grier has a type and that's Zonnon. He loves forwards who bring consistent energy and physicality. Zonnon is one of the draft's best forecheckers and he's a capable offensive player too.

34. CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS – SIMON WANG – DEFENSE



It seems likely that an NHL team jumps at Wang early, even if we have him ranked a little lower. The Hawks are probably a great fit. They have the depth to take a big swing like this that requires patience. They also put more emphasis on skating ability than pretty much any other organization at the draft.

35. NASHVILLE PREDATORS – KURBAN LIMATOV – DEFENSE



Last year, the Preds opted to take Russian Yegor Surin with their first-round selection and that looks like a tremendous pick. So why not go back and select mobile defender Limatov, who possesses significant upside as a two-way rock?

36. PHILADELPHIA FLYERS – JACOB ROMBACH – DEFENSE



With a few high-end offensive defenders in the system, including taking Cam Reid earlier in this draft, they take big, stay at home defender Rombach out of the USHL. He could really help to be a calming presence on the blueline in the coming years.

37. WASHINGTON CAPITALS (VIA BOSTON) – MICHAL PRADEL – GOALTENDER



The second goaltender off the board can often be a bit off the board and the Caps continue that trend by taking Pradel, a big netminder with a ton of potential as he gets stronger and improves technically. He gives them a future netminder to build around, a weakness in the system.

38. SEATTLE KRACKEN – ERIC NILSON – CENTER



The son of former NHL'er Marcus, Eric is a potential middle six, two-way center who gives the Kraken another pivot to pencil into their lineup in the future. They haven't drafted a ton out of Sweden, but he checks a lot of the boxes that they typically value.

39. BUFFALO SABRES – SHANE VANSAGHI – WING/CENTER



This is a franchise that needs to turn things around and become harder to play against. Vansaghi projects as a fierce competitor who can be tough to play against and who can provide a ton of versatility to the Sabres' coaching staff in a few years. The Sabres would be very familiar with Vansaghi after watching Maxim Strbak this year.

40. PHILADELPHIA FLYERS (VIA ANAHEIM) – DANIIL PROKHOROV – WING



There's definitely a chance that this big, budding power forward goes earlier than this. However, he'd look great in the Philadelphia organization as a crease crusher, powerplay triggerman, and overall physical nuisance.

41. MONTREAL CANADIENS (VIA PITTSBURGH) – WILLIAM MOORE – CENTER



The Canadiens have gotten some good players out of the NTDP in recent drafts. It's strange to think that it's possible (like forecasted in this mock) that none could be selected in the first round. Moore is a rangy pivot who has the tools but just needs to get stronger to become more consistent. Montreal can take a swing here in hopes that he puts things together to reach his upside.

42. NEW YORK ISLANDERS – BEN KINDEL – CENTER



A bit of a drop for Kindel due to concerns over his frame and skating ability, but he's a top tier playmaker and a potential all situations pivot. With Eiserman in the

2ND ROUND

system, it would make sense to target a high-end playmaker to help get him the puck in the future. Insert Kindel.

43. NEW YORK RANGERS – COLE MCKINNEY – CENTER



The Rangers have loved the NTDP in recent years and after taking Jackson Smith in round one, they opt for a bit safer prospect in round two. McKinney is one of the draft's best defensive centers and he improved a ton offensively over the course of the season. He is a great fit in the Rangers' system.

44. DETROIT RED WINGS – ALEXANDER ZHAROVSKY – WING



Detroit hasn't drafted a ton out of Russia lately, at least not like in the glory days, however this seems like the kind of player that they should be targeting here, especially if they go "safer" again with their first-round pick. Zharovsky is a skilled and creative playmaker who has terrific offensive upside. Gives them a player that they don't have a ton of in the system currently.

45. PHILADELPHIA FLYERS (VIA COLUMBUS) – RYKER LEE – WING



A late bloomer physically, Lee is an intelligent and well-rounded offensive player who just needs to get stronger and quicker. There's a bit of a similar profile to Alex Bump here, when the Flyers took him and that's worked out pretty well for them so far. Why not go back and try to strike gold twice?

46. UTAH MAMMOTH – IVAN RYABKIN – CENTER



At some point, someone is going to pull the trigger on Ryabkin early, even if his year was pretty disjointed. The offensive upside is simply too tantalizing to pass up and the Utah franchise has been all about swinging for the fences on Russian players in recent years. This feels like a fit.

47. VANCOUVER CANUCKS – SEMYON FROLOV – GOALTENDER



It definitely seems likely that the Canucks could look to bring in a goaltender with one of their early round picks this year, given the lack of a clear-cut top prospect in the pool. It seems pretty clear that the Canucks are size queens at the position and that screams Frolov, a big, athletic type that is likely one of the first off the board for the position.

48. PHILADELPHIA FLYERS (VIA CALGARY) – CAMERON SCHMIDT – WING



When you have THIS many selections, you're going to come to a point where the risk is worth the reward on a player. Schmidt isn't perfect as a smaller winger, but he has among the highest goal scoring upside of any forward available this year.

49. MONTREAL CANADIENS – JACK MURTAGH – WING



Back-to-back NTDP selections for the Canadiens in this mock. This is a bit of a fall for Murtagh, but his poor U18's might have left a sour taste in the mouth of some chiefs of staff. He's got the potential to be a solid complementary piece and that could fit in really well in the Canadiens system down the line.

50. NEW JERSEY DEVILS – MATTHEW GARD – CENTER



A big pivot with good two-way upside and enticing physical tools. The Devils need to upgrade the center depth in their organization and Gard would be considered one of the better pivots still left on the board.

51. BOSTON BRUINS (VIA ST. LOUIS) – JACK IVANKOVIC – GOALTENDER



Given his lack of size, it does seem likely that other goaltenders go before Ivankovic, even if it's debatable whether he's the most talented netminder in the class. The Bruins badly need goaltending in the system with the two Providence standouts (Dipietro and Bussi) set to

2ND ROUND

be UFA's. The Bruins have had good luck historically with smaller netminders like Tim Thomas, Byron Dafoe, and Andy Moog, so this...kind of makes sense.

52. MINNESOTA WILD – PETTERI RIMPINEN – GOALTENDER



With the Wild's first pick of the draft (after dealing their first), they take a goaltender who had a heck of a season in Rimpinen. He was the Liiga ROY and the top goaltender at the WJC's. The reality is that Wallstedt's development has stagnated and Rimpinen can push him pretty quickly.

53. SAN JOSE SHARKS (VIA OTTAWA) – CARTER AMICO – DEFENSE



The Sharks are loaded. We've already said it. But if there is a need in the system currently, it is a potential stand-out stay at home defender. Amico may just be this draft's best, but he missed most of the year with a leg injury. San Jose can be patient with him in hopes that he can develop into a potential partner for someone like Luca Cagnoni down the line.

54. CALGARY FLAMES (VIA COLORADO) – DAVID BEDKOWSKI – DEFENSE



After drafting so many high-end offensive defenders in recent years, you'd think Calgary could look to use one of their high end picks this year on a physical, stay at home type to pair with them down the line. We're a bit lower on Bedkowski than the rest of the industry, but we expect him to be drafted this high. Calgary has also loved the OHL in recent years.

55. NASHVILLE PREDATORS (VIA TAMPA BAY) – PYOTR ANDREYANOV – GOALTENDER



Another goaltender taken early because it's a strong goalie draft. The Predators go with another Russian, who could end up being the best goalie in this class. With so many picks in a strong goalie year, we'd be shocked if the Predators don't use one on a goalie to groom behind Saros.

56. TAMPA BAY LIGHTNING (VIA LOS ANGELES) – ADAM BENAK – CENTER



When you don't have a ton in your system and your best prospect (Issac Howard) sounds like he's spurning you, you've got to shoot for the stars. There's obviously a chance that he's a faller even further than this because of his size, but you get to a point where the risk is worth it. Benak could certainly end up being a great player for the Lightning.

57. SEATTLE KRACKEN (VIA TORONTO) – ETHAN CZATA – WING/CENTER



The Kraken have loved them some OHL since joining the league and even though they took a similar player in Nathan Villeneuve last year, you can't have too many of these types of players come playoff time. Czata is a staunch competitor and two-way forward who projects as a possible elite third line player down the road.

58. VEGAS GOLDEN KNIGHTS – MAX PSENICKA – DEFENSE



The Golden Knights haven't taken a defender in the first two rounds since Daniil Chayka and that isn't working out. So, with their first pick in the draft, they go to the WHL to select Import defenseman Max Psenicka. He's got some really intriguing tools, but he's still learning to use them to develop an identity.

59. PITTSBURGH PENGUINS (VIA WASHINGTON) – BEN KEVAN – WING



Kevan is a well-rounded offensive player with a chance of developing into a middle six piece in the future. He would instantly become one of the higher upside forward prospects in the system, even if there's a need for him to get quicker and refine his critical thinking skills on the ice.

TWO ROUND MOCK DRAFT 2025

2ND ROUND

60. ANAHEIM DUCKS (VIA WINNIPEG) – EDDIE GENBORG – WING



The Ducks have really loved drafting out of Sweden in recent years and here they take Genborg, one of the draft's most physical forwards. The offensive upside may be a bit limited, but he's the kind of player who fits in the system well because he projects as a solid complementary piece to the other talented players they have. He'd be a potential playoff warrior for them when the time comes.

61. BOSTON BRUINS (VIA CAROLINA) – EVERETT BALDWIN – DEFENSE



Prep kid from Rhode Island who is heading to Providence. Outstanding upside as a two-way defender and one of the better skaters in the draft. He's a long-term project who needs time to improve his decision making, but he's a somewhat local kid they would likely be very familiar with.

62. CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS (VIA DALLAS) – CHARLIE TRETHEWEY – DEFENSE



Coming into the season Trethewey was seen as a contender for the top defender selected along with Schaefer. Not the case anymore after a poor year with the

NTDP. However, he still has great upside as a two-way defender with good mobility. The Hawks can take that chance that he gets back on track.

63. TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS (VIA FLORIDA) – ALEXEI MEDVEDEV – GOALTENDER



The Leafs haven't used a pick in the first three rounds on a goalie since 2016 (when they took Joseph Woll), so they're due. They'd be very familiar with Medvedev and his development from scouting Easton Cowan this year. His timeline also perfectly lines up with when the pro system will need a new injection of youth. He has the upside to be an NHL netminder and is one of our top goalies available this year.

64. NEW JERSEY DEVILS (VIA EDMONTON) – THEO STOCKSELIUS – WING/CENTER



Stockselius is a player flying under the radar a bit right now who could go higher than the pre-draft consensus says. He's a high IQ type who could potentially be a very versatile player for the Devils down the line. As his frame fills out, it will be interesting to see how the offensive side of things becomes more consistent for him.

MICHAEL MISA
CELEBRATING A GOAL



MCKEEN'S 2025 NHL DRAFT FINAL RANKINGS

OUR FINAL 2025 NHL DRAFT RANKINGS HAVE ARRIVED!

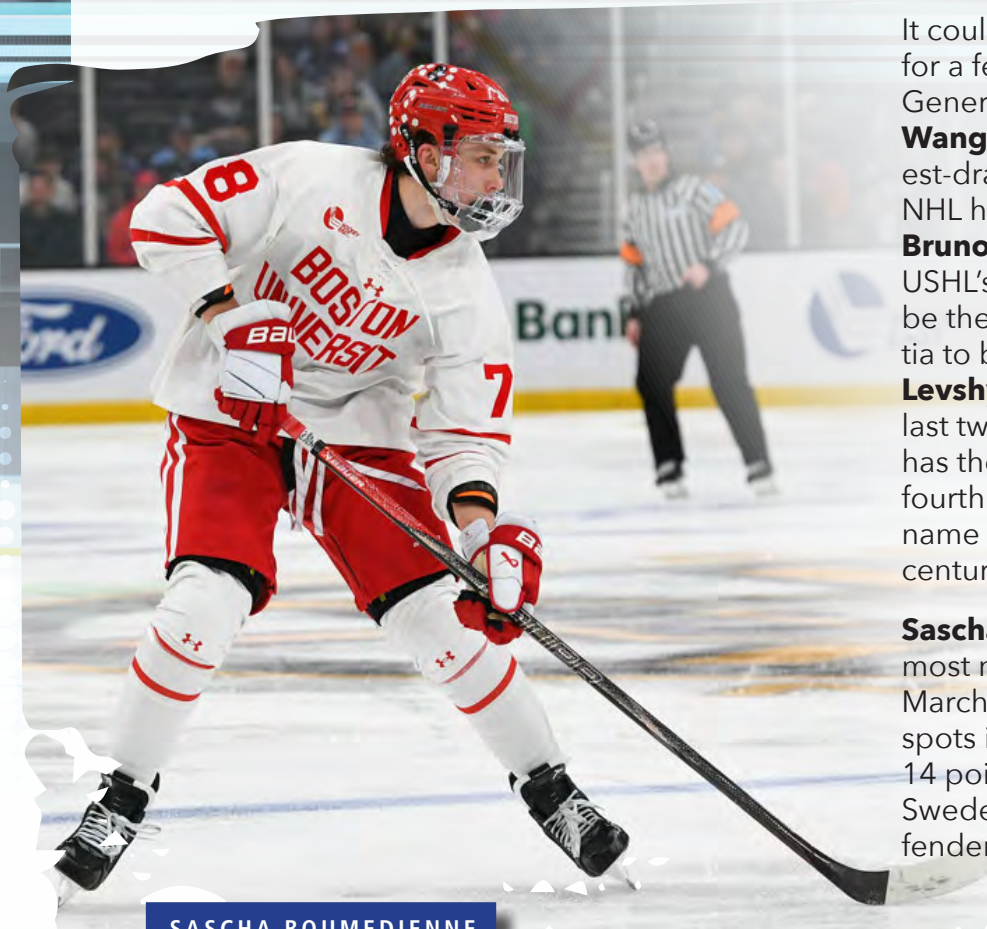
For the second year running, we have compiled a ranking of the top 300 prospects eligible, instead of a top 224 with honourable mentions. This list follows our [March top 100 ranking](#), our [pre-World Juniors top 64](#), and [preliminary top 32](#).

Our ranking is comprised of 176 forwards, 87 defencemen and 37 goaltenders. It is a strong class between the pipes, with Prince George Cougars netminder **Joshua Ravensbergen** at 30th, five goalies ranked in the top 64, and 10 in the top 100.

By nationality, Canada leads the way with 106 representatives, followed by the USA with 63, Sweden (36), Russia (20), Finland (20), Czechia (16), Slovakia (11), Switzerland (7), Germany (6), Denmark (4), Belarus (3), Latvia (2), and Norway (2).

It could be a milestone draft for a few countries. Oshawa Generals defenceman **Simon Wang** is projected to be highest-drafted Chinese player in NHL history. At the same time, **Bruno Idzan**, a winger for the USHL's Lincoln Stars, looks to be the first player from Croatia to be selected. **Alexander Levshyn**, who has spent the last two seasons in the OJHL, has the chance to be the fourth Ukrainian to hear his name called on draft day this century.

Sascha Boumedienne is the most notable riser from our March ranking, jumping 24 spots into the first round. His 14 points in five games for Sweden are the most by a defender in U18s history.



SASCHA BOUMEDIENNE

MCKEEN'S 2025 NHL DRAFT FINAL RANKINGS (CONT'D)

An improved second half of the campaign in combination with a strong showing at the U18s propels **Cole Reschny** from 38th to 28th overall. The Canadian centreman scored twice, including the OT winner, in the quarterfinals against Czechia, and finished with five goals and eight points in five games.

Roman Bausov and **Reese Hamilton** each fell 63 places from our last list—the most of any player. Following them are **Nathan Behm** (-60), **Maxim Agafonov**, and **Shamar Moses** (-45).

Matthew Schaefer and **Michael Misa** remain the clear 1-2 punch at the top of the draft on the back of two of the most impressive (albeit limited, in Schaefer's case) draft-year campaigns in recent OHL history.

At the NHL level, the Erie Otters' superstar projects as a prototypical, modern-day No.1 defenceman.

"Schaefer is just the complete package, McKeen's Director of Scouting, Brock Otten, explained. "A future perennial all-star who can play in all situations and be your future captain. This is someone you can build your franchise around."

Misa, one of nine players to be granted exceptional status by Hockey Canada, elevated his game to new levels in his third season with the Saginaw Spirit. His 62 goals and 134 points are the most by a draft-eligible OHLer since Patrick Kane (62 goals and 145 points in 2006-07).

"Misa is such a dynamic and exciting offensive player. But what's underrated is the fact



COLE RESCHNY



MATTHEW SCHAEFER



MICHAEL MISA

MCKEEN'S 2025 NHL DRAFT FINAL RANKINGS (CONT'D)



CALEB DESNOYERS



PORTER MARTONE

that he has a pro frame and made significant gains off the puck this year, sliding back to center," said Otten.

Beyond Schaefer and Misa, it could be a matter of personal preference or positional need for the remaining lottery picks.

"The sense we get from our scouts and people in the industry is that this class is viewed as heavily tiered," explained Otten. "There is a group of 10-12 guys at the top. Then, a small group of 10 or so are locked in as first-rounders. After that? It could be the Wild West."

This is reflected in our top eight players not changing from our March ranking: Schaefer, Misa, **Porter Martone, Caleb Desnoyers, James Hagens, Anton Frondell, Jackson Smith,** and **Victor Eklund.**

Martone, our third-ranked prospect, is one of the draft's premier playmakers. Standing at 6-foot-3, 207 pounds, he offers an enticing blend of high-end physical tools and has drawn comparisons to fellow Peterborough, ON native, Corey Perry. In his third season in the OHL, Martone broke the Brampton Steelheads single season record for assists (61) and points (98).

Rising two spots to fourth overall is Moncton Wildcats pivot **Caleb Desnoyers.** The 18-year-old led one of the most dominant QMJHL teams in recent memory and finished with nine goals and 30 points in 19 playoff contests.

"You have to appreciate his consistency this year in leading Moncton to a Q Championship. He's such a detail-orient-

MCKEEN'S 2025 NHL DRAFT FINAL RANKINGS (CONT'D)



JACKSON SMITH

ed player. This is a longtime pro who should provide serious versatility to his future coach," said Otten.

Following Desnoyers in fifth spot is **James Hagens**, our top-ranked prospect in October. The Boston College centreman enjoyed an impressive freshman campaign in the NCAA, scoring at a point-per-game pace on the top line in college hockey and winning gold at the World Juniors. However, Hagens did not reach the individual heights many expected of him this year, and as a result, slipped in our ranking.

Our sixth-ranked prospect, **Anton Frondell**, rounds out a run of three centers in a row, though it is not clear whether he will stick down the middle at the next level. The first half of the season was marred by injury for the Swede, as well as constant shifts between playing for Djurgardens men's and J20 teams. He finished with the second highest points-per-game (0.86) by a draft-eligible player in Allsvenskan history, trailing only Elias Pettersson.

"Would we have liked to have seen him dominate the U18s? Sure. But we're happier with how well he played in helping Djurgardens earn promotion back to the SHL," explained Otten. "That should have more weight. He does so many of the little things well; things not consistently measured by offensive production."

Jackson Smith of the Tri-City Americans is our seventh-ranked prospect. He led all WHL draft-eligible defenders with 11 goals, 43 assists, and 54 points this season and played on Canada's top pairing as they won gold at the U18s last month.

MCKEEN'S 2025 NHL DRAFT FINAL RANKINGS (CONT'D)

Fronzell's teammate in Djurgardens, **Victor Eklund**, slots in two spots behind him in eighth. Despite a wiry frame, Eklund is at his most effective operating along the boards and below the dots. Like his brother William, Victor is a crafty winger with a tireless engine that has proven himself internationally and at the pro level in Sweden.

6-foot-5.75, 218-pound defenceman **Radim Mrtka** climbs eight spots from #17 in our preliminary ranking. Starting the season in Czechia, he flourished in Seattle following a November move to the WHL, posting three goals and 35 points in 43 contests.

Rounding out our top 10 is centremen **Brady Martin**. A fierce competitor equally as threatening in the corners as he is with the puck on his stick, the Soo Greyhounds star has shades of Tom Wilson and Brad Marchand in his game.

"I've been high on Martin all year. The rest of our Ontario scouts have been, too. The rest of our scouting team finally came around on him after his outstanding U18s performance," explained Otten. "This is the kind of player built to be successful in the NHL playoffs, the kind of guy you win with."



RADIM MRTKA



BRADY MARTIN

MCKEEN'S 2025 NHL DRAFT FINAL RANKINGS

RANK	PLAYER	POS	HT/WT	DOB	NATION	TEAM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS (GAA)	PIM (SV%)
1	Matthew Schaefer	D	6-2/185	5-Sep-07	Canada	Erie (OHL)	17	7	15	22	8
2	Michael Misa	C	6-1/185	16-Feb-07	Canada	Saginaw (OHL)	65	62	72	134	45
3	Porter Martone	RW	6-3/205	26-Oct-06	Canada	Brampton (OHL)	57	37	61	98	74
4	Caleb Desnoyers	C	6-2/180	11-Apr-07	Canada	Moncton (QMJHL)	56	35	49	84	39
5	James Hagens	C	5-11/185	3-Nov-06	USA	Boston College (HE)	37	11	26	37	24
6	Anton Frondell	C	6-1/205	7-May-07	Sweden	Djurgardens (Allsvenskan)	29	11	14	25	16
7	Jackson Smith	D	6-4/200	13-May-07	Canada	Tri-City (WHL)	68	11	43	54	48
8	Victor Eklund	RW	5-11/170	3-Oct-06	Sweden	Djurgardens (Allsvenskan)	42	19	12	31	37
9	Radim Mrtka	D	6-6/220	9-Jun-07	Czech	Seattle (WHL)	43	3	32	35	46
10	Brady Martin	C	6-0/185	16-Mar-07	Canada	Soo Greyhounds (OHL)	57	33	39	72	68
11	Jake O'Brien	C	6-2/175	16-Jun-07	Canada	Brantford (OHL)	66	32	66	98	18
12	Roger h	C	6-5/200	2-Oct-06	Canada	Brandon (WHL)	17	10	10	20	40
13	Lynden Lakovic	LW	6-4/200	12-Dec-06	Canada	Moose Jaw (WHL)	47	27	31	58	4
14	Cullen Potter	C	5-10/170	10-Jan-07	USA	Arizona State (NCHC)	35	13	9	22	6
15	Kashawn Aitcheson	D	6-2/200	21-Sep-06	Canada	Barrie (OHL)	64	26	33	59	88
16	Justin Carboneau	RW	6-1/205	25-Nov-06	Canada	Blainville-Boisbriand (QMJHL)	62	46	43	89	61
17	Braeden Cootes	C	6-0/185	9-Feb-07	Canada	Seattle (WHL)	60	26	37	63	18
18	Sascha Boumedienne	D	6-2/185	17-Jan-07	Sweden	Boston University (HE)	40	3	10	13	33
19	Ben Kindel	C	5-10/180	19-Apr-07	Canada	Calgary (WHL)	65	35	64	99	39
20	Cameron Reid	D	6-0/185	8-Apr-07	Canada	Kitchener (OHL)	67	14	40	54	44
21	Carter Bear	LW	6-0/180	4-Nov-06	Canada	Everett (WHL)	56	40	42	82	77
22	Blake Fiddler	D	6-5/220	9-Jul-07	Canada	Edmonton (WHL)	64	10	23	33	36
23	Eric Nilson	C	6-0/165	11-May-07	Sweden	Djurgardens (Swe J20)	37	12	26	38	56
24	Jakob Ihs Wozniak	RW	6-2/190	1-Feb-07	Sweden	Lulea (Swe J20)	40	23	34	57	18
25	Logan Hensler	D	6-3/200	14-Oct-06	USA	Wisconsin (B1G)	32	2	10	12	27
26	Jack Murtagh	LW	6-1/200	22-Aug-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	56	22	31	53	36
27	Jack Nesbitt	C	6-5/185	12-Jan-07	Canada	Windsor (OHL)	65	25	39	64	74
28	Cole Reschny	C	5-11/180	6-Apr-07	Canada	Victoria (WHL)	62	26	66	92	44
29	Milton Gastrin	C	6-1/195	2-Jun-07	Sweden	MoDo Hockey (Swe J20)	40	18	24	42	18
30	Joshua Ravensbergen	G	6-5/190	27-Nov-06	Canada	Prince George (WHL)	51	33	13	3.00	0.901
31	Kurban Limatov	D	6-3/195	20-Mar-07	Russia	MHK Dynamo Moskva (MHL)	46	8	15	23	44
32	Bill Zonnon	RW	6-2/185	3-Oct-06	Canada	Rouyn-Noranda (QMJHL)	64	28	55	83	32
33	Malcolm Spence	LW	6-1/190	22-Sep-06	Canada	Erie (OHL)	65	32	41	73	57
34	Cole McKinney	C	6-0/200	16-Mar-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	60	27	34	61	61
35	Will Moore	C	6-2/180	24-Mar-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	64	27	32	59	8
36	Will Horcoff	C	6-5/200	23-Jan-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	28	8	6	14	34
37	Henry Brzustewicz	D	6-2/200	9-Feb-07	USA	London (OHL)	67	10	32	42	77
38	Cameron Schmidt	RW	5-8/160	19-Jan-07	Canada	Vancouver (WHL)	61	40	38	78	44
39	Carter Amico	D	6-6/230	15-Mar-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	13	0	3	3	10
40	Ethan Czata	C	6-2/180	29-May-07	Canada	Niagara (OHL)	68	21	34	55	72
41	Vaclav Nestrail	RW	6-6/185	6-Apr-07	Czech	Muskegon (USHL)	61	19	23	42	51
42	Ryker Lee	RW	6-0/185	8-Nov-06	USA	Madison (USHL)	58	31	37	68	18
43	Alexander Zharovsky	RW	6-1/165	22-Feb-07	Russia	Tolpar Ufa (MHL)	45	24	26	50	30
44	Shane Vansaghi	RW	6-2/210	11-Oct-06	USA	Michigan State (B1G)	37	6	10	16	30

MCKEEN'S 2025 NHL DRAFT FINAL RANKINGS

RANK	PLAYER	POS	HT/WT	DOB	NATION	TEAM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS (GAA)	PIM (SV%)
45	Jacob Rombach	D	6-6/210	1-Apr-07	USA	Lincoln (USHL)	57	3	15	18	57
46	Luca Romano	C	5-11/175	25-Jun-07	Canada	Kitchener (OHL)	67	25	26	51	22
47	Ivan Ryabkin	C	5-11/210	25-Apr-07	Russia	Muskegon (USHL)	27	19	11	30	70
48	Ben Kevan	RW	6-1/180	3-Jan-07	USA	Des Moines (USHL)	51	13	30	43	43
49	Mason West	C	6-6/220	3-Aug-07	USA	Edina High (USHS-MN)	31	27	22	49	10
50	Daniil Prokhorov	RW	6-6/220	27-Apr-07	Russia	MHK Dynamo St. Petersburg (MHL)	43	20	7	27	14
51	Jack Ivankovic	G	5-11/180	22-May-07	Canada	Brampton (OHL)	43	25	12	3.05	0.903
52	Adam Benak	C	5-7/165	10-Apr-07	Czech	Youngstown (USHL)	56	17	42	59	36
53	Burke Hood	G	6-3/195	30-Apr-07	Canada	Vancouver (WHL)	42	19	13	3.13	0.910
54	Matthew Gard	C	6-5/195	7-Apr-07	Canada	Red Deer (WHL)	66	19	17	36	81
55	Kristian Epperson	LW	5-11/180	7-May-06	USA	Saginaw (OHL)	58	27	53	80	87
56	Hayden Paupanekis	C	6-5/200	4-Feb-07	Canada	Spo-Kel (WHL)	71	22	21	43	57
57	Lasse Boelius	D	6-1/190	16-Mar-07	Finland	Assat (Fin-U20)	34	4	14	18	16
58	Gustav Hillstrom	C	6-1/175	20-Jan-07	Sweden	Brynäs (Swe J20)	43	16	22	38	16
59	Jimmy Lombardi	C	6-0/180	16-Feb-07	Canada	Flint (OHL)	63	13	32	45	42
60	Sean Barnhill	D	6-5/215	8-Jan-07	USA	Dubuque (USHL)	54	4	7	11	14
61	Max Psenicka	D	6-5/185	18-Jan-07	Czech	Portland (WHL)	24	1	6	7	12
62	Aleksei Medvedev	G	6-2/180	10-Sep-07	Russia	London (OHL)	34	22	8	2.79	0.912
63	Everett Baldwin	D	5-11/175	15-Jan-07	USA	St. George's School (USHS-RI)	22	10	10	20	
64	Pyotr Andreyanov	G	6-0/205	22-Jan-07	Russia	Krasnaya Armiya Moskva (MHL)	37	23	6	1.75	0.942
65	Alex Huang	D	6-0/170	30-Jul-07	Canada	Chicoutimi (QMJHL)	64	7	33	40	16
66	Jan Chovan	C	6-2/190	9-Jan-07	Slovakia	Tappara (Fin-U20)	39	11	12	23	6
67	Carlos Handel	D	6-1/175	31-Mar-07	Germany	Halifax (QMJHL)	52	3	23	26	20
68	Michal Pradel	G	6-4/195	10-Mar-07	Slovakia	Team Slovakia U18 (Slovakia2)	15	3	12	4.59	0.898
69	Conrad Fondrk	C	6-0/190	1-Jun-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	40	13	14	27	6
70	Haoxi (Simon) Wang	D	6-6/220	27-Jul-07	China	King (OJHL)	38	4	18	22	73
71	Semyon Frolov	G	6-3/200	17-Jan-07	Russia	Lada-Spartak-Krylia (MHL)	27	16	7	2.12	0.921
72	Owen Conrad	D	6-2/210	10-Mar-07	Canada	Charlottetown (QMJHL)	64	7	19	26	32
73	Tyler Hopkins	C	6-1/185	23-Jan-07	Canada	Kingston (OHL)	67	20	31	51	18
74	Peyton Kettles	D	6-6/195	1-Sep-07	Canada	Swift Current (WHL)	53	5	9	14	65
75	Will Reynolds	D	6-2/185	11-Aug-07	Canada	Acadie-Bathurst (QMJHL)	64	4	10	14	69
76	Tommy Lafreniere	RW	6-0/175	16-Jan-07	Canada	Kamloops (WHL)	68	24	32	56	20
77	Zachary Morin	LW	6-1/185	25-Jan-07	Canada	Saint John (QMJHL)	56	16	20	36	21
78	Brandon Gorzynski	C	6-1/185	12-Mar-07	USA	Calgary (WHL)	68	17	25	42	16
79	Petteri Rimpinen	G	6-0/175	25-Apr-06	Finland	Kiekko-Espoo (Fin)	40	16	9	2.35	0.912
80	Michal Švrček	LW	5-10/175	26-Jan-07	Slovakia	Brynäs (Swe J20)	30	14	16	30	10
81	Zeb Lindgren	D	6-1/200	14-Apr-07	Sweden	Skellefteå (Swe J20)	38	4	15	19	76
82	Owen Griffin	C	5-10/160	8-Apr-07	Canada	Oshawa (OHL)	62	22	29	51	33
83	Luka Radivojevic	D	5-9/165	3-Jan-07	Slovakia	Muskegon (USHL)	38	3	19	22	39
84	Filip Ekberg	RW	5-10/165	14-Apr-07	Sweden	Ottawa (OHL)	53	16	29	45	8
85	Charlie Trethewey	D	6-1/200	2-Aug-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	63	6	14	20	35
86	Mads Kongsbak Klyvo	LW	6-2/195	3-May-07	Denmark	Frolunda (Swe J20)	24	6	5	11	4
87	Quinn Beauchesne	D	6-0/185	1-Mar-07	Canada	Guelph (OHL)	49	6	18	24	51
88	Theo Stockselius	C	6-3/195	24-Jul-07	Sweden	Djurgårdens (Swe J20)	40	22	29	51	50

MCKEEN'S 2025 NHL DRAFT FINAL RANKINGS

RANK	PLAYER	POS	HT/WT	DOB	NATION	TEAM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS (GAA)	PIM (SV%)
89	Caeden Herrington	D	6-2/205	26-Jan-06	USA	Lincoln (USHL)	56	16	18	34	67
90	Arvid Drott	RW	6-1/185	11-Aug-07	Sweden	Djurgardens (Swe J20)	40	18	18	36	14
91	David Bedkowski	D	6-5/220	7-Dec-06	Canada	Osh-OS (OHL)	37	3	4	7	73
92	Francesco Dell'Elce	D	6-0/170	23-Jun-05	Canada	Massachusetts (HE)	40	7	17	24	12
93	Yegor Borikov	RW	6-1/180	28-Aug-05	Belarus	Dinamo Minsk (KHL)	67	12	13	25	16
94	Nathan Behm	RW	6-2/200	18-Apr-07	Canada	Kamloops (WHL)	59	31	35	66	12
95	Sam Laurila	D	6-1/190	2-Sep-06	USA	Fargo (USHL)	57	8	33	41	46
96	Samuel Meloche	G	6-2/190	22-Jul-07	Canada	Rouyn-Noranda (QMJHL)	51	30	14	2.90	0.900
97	Shea Busch	LW	6-2/205	12-Jun-07	Canada	Everett (WHL)	39	11	8	19	23
98	Vojtech Cihar	LW	6-1/180	29-Mar-07	Czech	HC Energie Karlovy Vary (Czechia)	43	4	5	9	8
99	Eddie Genborg	RW	6-2/205	20-Apr-07	Sweden	Linkopings (Swe J20)	28	19	15	34	26
100	Lucas Beckman	G	6-1/180	23-Aug-07	Canada	Baie-Comeau (QMJHL)	52	31	18	2.65	0.914
101	Mason Moe	C	6-1/190	26-Mar-07	USA	Madison (USHL)	51	17	26	43	26
102	Drew Schock	D	5-11/180	7-Feb-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	66	9	28	37	28
103	Tomas Poletin	LW	6-1/205	30-Apr-07	Czech	Pelicans (Fin-U20)	25	13	7	20	14
104	Maxim Agafonov	D	6-2/195	10-Apr-07	Russia	Tolpar Ufa (MHL)	35	6	8	14	22
105	L.J. Mooney	RW	5-7/160	8-Mar-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	51	10	41	51	25
106	Maceo Phillips	D	6-6/225	25-Feb-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	60	2	4	6	103
107	Tomas Pobezal	C	5-10/180	18-Sep-06	Slovakia	HK Nitra (Slovakia)	42	15	8	23	24
108	Mateo Nobert	C	6-0/170	12-Aug-07	Canada	Blainville-Boisbriand (QMJHL)	57	28	39	67	24
109	David Rozsival	RW	6-0/185	1-Jun-07	Czech	Bili Tygri Liberec (Czechia U20)	30	17	20	37	8
110	Max Westergard	LW	5-10/160	3-Sep-07	Finland	Frolunda (Swe J20)	41	19	31	50	87
111	Dakota Rheaume-Mullen	D	6-0/180	18-Dec-06	USA	Michigan (B1G)	35	3	6	9	8
112	Kieren Dervin	C	6-1/185	31-Mar-07	Canada	St. Andrew's College (CHS-O)	50	33	46	79	75
113	Nathan Quinn	C	5-11/170	29-Aug-07	Canada	Quebec (QMJHL)	54	17	29	46	25
114	Lukas Sawchyn	LW	5-10/170	27-Feb-07	Canada	Edmonton (WHL)	66	15	40	55	27
115	Owen Martin	C	6-0/185	11-May-07	Canada	Spokane (WHL)	39	13	21	34	20
116	Atte Joki	C	6-1/190	21-Jul-07	Finland	Lukko (Fin-U20)	40	15	17	32	8
117	Noah Laberge	D	6-0/185	9-Oct-06	Canada	Acadie-Bathurst (QMJHL)	63	12	23	35	50
118	Carson Cameron	D	6-1/190	27-Jun-07	Canada	Peterborough (OHL)	63	7	16	23	24
119	Philippe Veilleux	LW	5-9/165	26-Mar-07	Canada	Val d'Or (QMJHL)	64	40	47	87	16
120	Tinus Luc Koblar	C	6-3/185	21-Jul-07	Sweden	Leksands (Swe J20)	43	8	13	21	14
121	William Belle	RW	6-4/225	14-Jan-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	55	4	12	16	67
122	Melvin Novotny	LW	6-1/185	3-Apr-07	Sweden	Leksands (Swe J20)	41	12	26	38	37
123	Shawn Carrier	LW	5-10/180	14-Mar-07	Canada	Halifax (QMJHL)	59	18	26	44	48
124	Eduard Bondar	D	6-4/185	31-Jan-07	Russia	Val d'Or (QMJHL)	54	3	9	12	48
125	Shamar Moses	RW	6-1/200	6-May-07	Canada	Bar-NB (OHL)	66	12	36	48	39
126	Grayden Robertson-Palmer	C	5-11/195	29-Aug-07	Canada	Phillips Academy (USHS-MA)	30	16	23	39	
127	Julius Sumpf	C	6-1/190	11-Jan-05	Germany	Moncton (QMJHL)	58	26	39	65	24
128	Love Harenstam	G	6-1/190	18-Jan-07	Sweden	Lulea-Skelleftea (Swe J20)	23	11	12	3.13	0.900
129	Jeremy Loranger	C	5-9/160	15-Jun-07	Canada	Sherwood Park (BCHL)	54	40	65	105	26
130	Brendan McMorrow	C	6-0/175	27-Mar-06	USA	Waterloo (USHL)	58	24	18	42	4

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RANK	PLAYER	POS	HT/WT	DOB	NATION	TEAM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS (GAA)	PIM (SV%)
131	Kale Dach	C	5-10/165	15-Feb-07	Canada	Sherwood Park (BCHL)	54	22	65	87	22
132	Ryan Miller	C	6-0/175	3-May-07	Canada	Portland (WHL)	50	16	15	31	48
133	Ondrej Stebetak	G	6-1/175	19-Jul-07	Czech	Portland (WHL)	47	23	18	3.72	0.891
134	Viktor Klingsell	RW	5-10/190	10-Feb-07	Sweden	Skelleftea (Swe J20)	43	17	22	39	6
135	Edison Engle	D	6-2/175	15-Feb-07	USA	DM-Dbq (USHL)	54	2	15	17	20
136	Linards Feldbergs	G	6-1/195	16-Aug-05	Latvia	Sherbrooke (QMJHL)	41	20	15	2.66	0.903
137	Lev Katzin	C	5-8/175	13-May-07	Canada	Guelph (OHL)	44	16	32	48	26
138	Stepan Hoch	LW	6-4/190	11-Oct-06	Czech	Ceske Budejovice (Czechia U20)	30	12	17	29	18
139	Jesper Kotajarvi	D	5-11/175	24-Jul-07	Finland	Tappara (Fin-U20)	30	8	7	15	44
140	Jere Somervuori	LW	6-0/155	10-Aug-07	Finland	HIFK (Fin-U20)	41	10	25	35	8
141	Aidan Lane	RW	6-1/190	4-Feb-07	Canada	St. Andrew's College (CHS-O)	55	34	52	86	52
142	Malte Vass	D	6-2/185	28-Mar-07	Sweden	Farjestads (Swe J20)	40	2	9	11	53
143	Elijah Neuenschwander	G	6-4/200	17-Oct-06	Switzerland	Fribourg-Gotteron (Sui-U20)	17	11	5	2.24	
144	Finn McLaughlin	D	6-2/200	28-Feb-06	USA	Fgo-Mus (USHL)	59	6	19	25	24
145	Cooper Simpson	LW	6-0/180	5-Feb-07	USA	Shakopee High (USHS-MN)	31	49	34	83	28
146	Jamiro Reber	C	5-10/175	4-Sep-06	Switzerland	HV 71 (SHL)	47	8	7	15	6
147	Matous Kucharcik	C	6-3/165	3-Feb-07	Czech	Slavia Praha (Czechia U20)	25	6	10	16	22
148	Hugo Orrsten	C	6-2/195	10-Jul-06	Sweden	Orebro (Swe J20)	47	21	46	67	40
149	Teddy Mutryn	C	6-1/205	16-Feb-07	USA	Chicago (USHL)	47	17	13	30	71
150	Charlie Cerrato	C	6-0/190	10-Mar-05	USA	Penn State (B1G)	38	15	27	42	58
151	Karl Annborn	D	6-1/185	6-Mar-07	Sweden	HV 71 (Swe J20)	39	3	21	24	4
152	Emile Guite	LW	6-1/175	31-May-07	Canada	Chicoutimi (QMJHL)	59	16	14	30	18
153	Roman Bausov	D	6-5/180	28-Apr-07	Russia	MHK Dynamo St. Petersburg (MHL)	41	2	9	11	20
154	Liam Pettersson	D	6-2/170	4-Jan-07	Sweden	Vaxjo Lakers (Swe J20)	39	6	15	21	8
155	Reese Hamilton	D	6-0/170	26-Mar-07	Canada	Cgy-Reg (WHL)	59	4	10	14	33
156	Luke Vlooswyk	D	6-4/200	9-Jan-07	Canada	Red Deer (WHL)	68	3	14	17	45
157	Roman Luttsev	C	6-0/170	1-Apr-06	Russia	Loko Yaroslavl (MHL)	50	30	33	63	26
158	Mans Goos	G	6-5/190	5-May-07	Sweden	Farjestads (Swe J20)	24	11	12	3.17	0.893
159	Vincent Desjardins	C	5-10/165	8-Sep-06	Canada	Blainville-Boisbriand (QMJHL)	64	18	63	81	37
160	Asher Barnett	D	6-0/195	16-May-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	58	8	14	22	24
161	Ludvig Johnson	D	6-0/180	27-Jul-06	Switzerland	EV Zug (Sui-NL)	31	4	6	10	10
162	Connor Davis	RW	6-0/185	9-Nov-06	Canada	Salisbury (USHS-CT)	31	21	23	44	
163	Linus Funck	D	6-3/185	10-May-07	Sweden	Lulea (Swe J20)	48	5	23	28	59
164	Jacob Kvasnicka	RW	5-11/175	10-Aug-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	66	18	21	39	10
165	Brady Peddle	D	6-3/195	23-May-07	Canada	Waterloo (USHL)	62	3	7	10	36
166	Viggo Nordlund	LW	5-9/165	22-Sep-06	Sweden	Skelleftea (Swe J20)	40	24	25	49	55
167	Anders Miller	G	6-1/195	4-Oct-06	USA	Calgary (WHL)	22	13	4	2.34	0.909
168	Benjamin Rautiainen	C	6-0/175	12-Jun-05	Finland	Tappara (Fin-Liiga)	50	10	23	33	12
169	Aron Dahlqvist	D	6-3/205	22-Feb-07	Sweden	Brynäs (Swe J20)	37	2	10	12	43
170	Ben Hrebik	G	6-2/190	4-Apr-06	Canada	Barrie (OHL)	34	21	9	2.87	0.920
171	Dmitri Isayev	LW	5-9/150	26-Jun-07	Russia	Avto Yekaterinburg (MHL)	44	22	23	45	30
172	Maxim Schafer	RW	6-3/180	17-May-07	Germany	Eisbaren Berlin (DEL)	31	1	2	3	6
173	Julius Saari	D	6-2/180	7-Mar-07	Finland	Jokerit (Fin-U20)	34	3	1	4	36

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RANK	PLAYER	POS	HT/WT	DOB	NATION	TEAM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS (GAA)	PIM (SV%)
174	Louis-Antoine Denault	G	6-8/205	26-Sep-06	Canada	Quebec (QMJHL)	41	17	17	3.13	0.902
175	Brent Solomon	RW	6-0/170	2-Jan-07	USA	Champlin Park (USHS-MN)	28	38	18	56	12
176	Bruno Idzan	LW	6-0/195	16-Jan-06	Croatia	Lincoln (USHL)	36	22	22	44	20
177	Matus Lisy	D	6-0/175	15-Jun-07	Slovakia	HK Nitra (Slovakia)	27	1	5	6	0
178	David Lewandowski	LW	6-1/175	20-Feb-07	Germany	Saskatoon (WHL)	52	15	24	39	21
179	Daniel Nieminen	D	6-0/185	1-Mar-06	Finland	Pelicans (Fin-U20)	39	4	7	11	10
180	Mikkel Eriksen	C	5-11/180	13-Sep-07	Norway	Farjestads (Swe J20)	40	22	21	43	8
181	Gabriel D'Aigle	G	6-3/210	21-Nov-06	Canada	Victoriaville (QMJHL)	55	16	33	4.52	0.883
182	Travis Hayes	RW	5-10/175	3-Sep-07	USA	Soo Greyhounds (OHL)	65	21	30	51	61
183	Richard Gallant	LW	5-8/170	12-Jun-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	66	29	24	53	32
184	Nathan Lecompte	C	5-9/165	19-Jan-07	Canada	Chicoutimi (QMJHL)	56	14	35	49	26
185	Ryan Cameron	G	6-1/175	21-Aug-07	USA	Lone Star (NAHL)	30	21	6	1.24	0.948
186	Aidan Park	C	6-1/185	6-Jan-06	USA	Green Bay (USHL)	55	33	33	66	49
187	Maddox Labre	D	6-2/180	15-Jun-07	Canada	Victoriaville (QMJHL)	61	3	16	19	42
188	Blake Vanek	RW	6-2/205	16-Aug-07	USA	Stillwater (USHS-MN)	29	22	31	53	23
189	Mikhail Fyodorov	RW	5-11/150	1-Dec-06	Russia	Stalnye Lisy Magnitogorsk (MHL)	45	17	26	43	8
190	Hayden Harsanyi	C	5-9/175	10-Jan-07	Canada	MH-Sas (WHL)	37	12	12	24	12
191	Nicholas Sykora	LW	6-0/180	24-May-07	USA	Oma-SC (USHL)	61	20	20	40	10
192	Charlie Paquette	RW	6-1/200	6-Dec-05	Canada	Guelph (OHL)	68	37	33	70	29
193	Nolan Roed	C	5-11/185	25-Oct-05	USA	Tri-City (USHL)	61	27	33	60	26
194	Savin Virk	RW	5-11/170	6-Jun-07	Canada	Tri-City (WHL)	50	22	24	46	4
195	Alexis Cournoyer	G	6-3/195	13-Dec-05	Canada	Cape Breton (QMJHL)	21	13	6	1.82	0.942
196	Graham Jones	C	5-8/150	16-Aug-07	Canada	Shattuck-St. Mary's (USHS-MN)	43	18	48	66	10
197	Anthony Allain-Samake	D	6-1/180	10-Sep-07	Canada	Sioux City (USHL)	61	0	14	14	30
198	Oliver Tulk	C	5-7/170	19-Jan-05	Canada	Calgary (WHL)	65	38	62	100	20
199	Carl-Otto Magnusson	D	6-7/225	11-Jan-06	Sweden	Frolunda (Swe J20)	44	3	5	8	48
200	Karl Sterner	LW	6-3/195	29-Mar-06	Sweden	Frolunda (Swe J20)	42	18	35	53	16
201	Liam Kilfoil	C	5-11/180	21-Mar-07	Canada	Halifax (QMJHL)	62	21	25	46	14
202	Yaroslav Kuzmenko	G	6-0/165	31-May-06	Russia	MHK Spartak Moskva (MHL)	31	23	5	1.73	0.938
203	Niklas Nykyri	D	6-2/190	26-Jan-06	Finland	HIFK (Fin-Liiga)	31	1	7	8	6
204	Theodor Hallquist	D	6-1/175	14-Jun-07	Sweden	Orebro (Swe J20)	41	5	17	22	48
205	Patrik Kerkola	G	6-1/195	29-May-07	Finland	KalPa (Fin-U20)	31	15	14	3.14	0.883
206	Daniel Jencko	C	6-0/185	9-Jan-05	Slovakia	Massachusetts (HE)	28	6	11	17	10
207	Jonathan Brown	D	6-2/200	9-Mar-07	USA	Shattuck-St. Mary's (USHS-MN)	56	4	22	26	20
208	Kirill Yemelyanov	C	6-0/170	8-Jan-07	Russia	Loko-76 Yaroslavl-Loko Yaroslavl (MHL)	38	13	11	24	16
209	David Granberg	C	6-2/195	14-May-05	Sweden	Lulea (SHL)	43	6	4	10	6
210	Philippe Blais-Savoie	D	6-0/190	10-Jun-05	USA	Colorado College (NCHC)	30	4	11	15	10
211	Eetu Orpana	C	6-0/195	17-Apr-07	Finland	Tappara (Fin-U20)	38	9	15	24	12
212	Topias Hynninen	C	5-10/170	19-Dec-05	Finland	Jukurit (Fin-Liiga)	51	12	23	35	6
213	Matthew Lansing	C	6-0/185	24-Feb-07	USA	Wat-Fgo (USHL)	54	12	15	27	51
214	Alex Misiak	RW	5-11/175	22-Jun-07	Slovakia	Waterloo (USHL)	28	7	11	18	12
215	Alexander Donovan	RW	5-10/170	8-Apr-07	USA	Shattuck-St. Mary's (USHS-MN)	58	45	46	91	26

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RANK	PLAYER	POS	HT/WT	DOB	NATION	TEAM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS (GAA)	PIM (SV%)
216	Jaromir Perez	LW	5-11/170	27-Jul-05	Czech	Bili Tygri Liberec (Czechia)	35	6	12	18	10
217	Kambryn Hendrickson	G	6-1/175	9-Jan-06	USA	Wat-Oma (USHL)	29	13	12	2.63	0.899
218	Gio Digiulian	C	5-11/180	25-Sep-05	USA	Lincoln (USHL)	58	22	29	51	32
219	Elias Schneider	LW	6-0/170	8-Jul-07	Germany	Eisbaren Juniors Berlin (DNL U20)	31	33	31	64	22
220	Mathis Langevin	G	6-4/180	18-Jun-06	Canada	Bat-Rim (QMJHL)	20	12	6	2.55	0.912
221	Felix Farhammar	D	6-1/185	11-Apr-07	Sweden	Orebro (Swe J20)	43	3	18	21	30
222	Ethan Wyttenbach	LW	5-10/180	10-Feb-07	USA	Sioux Falls (USHL)	44	24	27	51	28
223	Artyom Gonchar	D	6-0/165	25-Oct-06	Russia	Stalnye Lisy Magnitogorsk (MHL)	50	7	18	25	2
224	Lirim Amidovski	RW	6-1/180	22-Dec-06	Canada	North Bay (OHL)	67	19	13	32	38
225	Matthew Desiderio	D	6-3/210	16-Aug-05	USA	Dubuque (USHL)	62	14	24	38	34
226	Teodor Vapenik	D	6-4/210	26-Apr-07	Czech	HC Dynamo Pardubice (Czechia U20)	49	3	22	25	77
227	Bruno Osmanis	RW	5-11/170	16-Dec-06	Latvia	Bjorkloven (Swe J20)	31	12	25	37	12
228	Aapo Katavisto	RW	5-11/170	9-Jul-07	Finland	Kiekko-Espoo (Fin-U20)	40	12	14	26	12
229	Carter Klippenstein	C	6-2/180	25-Nov-06	Canada	Brandon (WHL)	58	14	14	28	50
230	Luke Mistelbacher	RW	6-0/195	2-Nov-05	Canada	Swift Current (WHL)	67	42	51	93	34
231	John Stout	D	6-1/190	20-Apr-06	USA	Madison (USHL)	58	4	14	18	8
232	Magomed Sharakanov	D	6-1/200	11-Oct-04	Russia	Lada Togliatti (KHL)	67	6	16	22	24
233	Jasu Mensonen	C	5-10/170	12-Jan-07	Finland	Lukko Rauma (Fin-U20)	40	5	21	26	28
234	Parker Snelgrove	C	6-0/190	20-Jan-07	Canada	Guelph (OHL)	67	11	13	24	43
235	Jack Brauti	D	6-0/165	24-May-06	Canada	Niagara (OHL)	64	8	38	46	47
236	Bobby Cowan	RW	5-10/175	12-Jun-06	USA	Madison (USHL)	57	22	29	51	61
237	Andreas Straka	RW	6-0/185	4-Jul-07	Slovakia	Quebec (QMJHL)	53	9	25	34	22
238	Harry Nansi	RW	6-3/185	10-Sep-07	Canada	Owen Sound (OHL)	67	7	16	23	14
239	Joe Wahlund	D	6-0/180	20-Apr-07	Sweden	Farjestads (Swe J20)	43	4	16	20	16
240	Noah Tegelaar	G	6-5/175	15-Oct-06	Canada	Collingwood (OJHL)	30	22	4	1.68	0.940
241	Connor Schmidt	D	5-11/180	20-Mar-07	Canada	Moose Jaw (WHL)	68	10	13	23	48
242	Guus Van der Kaaij	D	6-0/185	18-Apr-07	Switzerland	HC Davos (Sui U21-Elit)	33	3	13	16	18
243	Brendan Dunphy	D	6-5/205	2-Feb-06	USA	Wenatchee (WHL)	47	4	18	22	62
244	Bryce Pickford	D	6-0/180	2-Apr-06	Canada	Medicine Hat (WHL)	48	20	27	47	65
245	Nolen Geerdes	D	5-11/175	30-Apr-07	USA	Rogers High (USHS-MN)	30	11	35	46	10
246	Jeremiah Mundy	RW	6-2/195	25-Feb-07	Switzerland	HC Davos (Sui U21-Elit)	45	13	12	25	37
247	John Parsons	G	6-4/195	15-Jan-06	USA	Chicago (USHL)	35	12	18	3.49	0.903
248	Joshua Avery	C	6-0/170	30-Jan-07	Canada	Brantford (OHL)	53	9	12	21	18
249	Xander Velliaris	D	6-3/205	23-Apr-07	Canada	Kgn-Sag (OHL)	52	1	8	9	61
250	Timofei Zhulin	LW	5-11/165	29-Sep-05	Russia	Bars Kazan (VHL)	54	23	20	43	14
251	Aaron Obobaifo	LW	5-9/185	13-Feb-07	Canada	Vancouver (WHL)	13	6	4	10	6
252	Kristers Steinbergs	G	6-4/195	23-Mar-05	Denmark	Brynas (Swe J20)	12	8	3	2.32	0.911
253	Tanner Lam	RW	5-9/155	14-Jul-07	Canada	Kitchener (OHL)	67	13	40	53	24
254	Felix Ohrqvist	D	5-8/165	24-Jul-06	Sweden	Almtuna (Allsvenskan)	27	2	13	15	14
255	Rylan Brown	D	6-0/160	23-Jan-05	Canada	Michigan Tech (CCHA)	36	3	15	18	14
256	Frantisek Netusil	C	5-10/195	14-May-07	USA	Minnesota Wilderness (NAHL)	53	29	22	51	146
257	Aiden Foster	C	6-2/180	5-Feb-07	Canada	Prince George (WHL)	68	11	9	20	136
258	Robin Antenen	LW	6-2/195	21-May-06	Switzerland	EV Zug (Sui U21-Elit)	26	14	11	25	14

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RANK	PLAYER	POS	HT/WT	DOB	NATION	TEAM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS (GAA)	PIM (SV%)
259	Jake Crawford	C	6-3/180	5-May-07	Canada	Owen Sound (OHL)	65	8	17	25	22
260	Matias Vanhanen	LW	5-8/160	11-Sep-07	Finland	HIFK (Fin-U20)	42	17	30	47	22
261	Alonso Gosselin	D	6-1/195	13-Aug-07	Canada	Chicoutimi (QMJHL)	58	5	11	16	43
262	William Bundgaard	C	6-3/200	12-Feb-07	Denmark	Rodovre (Denmark)	28	3	2	5	14
263	Mateu Spath	C	5-10/170	20-Feb-07	Germany	Kolner EC (DNL U20)	12	12	7	19	4
264	Leo Henriquez	G	6-1/165	29-Apr-07	Slovakia	Anchorage (NAHL)	24	17	5	2.49	0.923
265	Will Sharpe	D	6-0/195	7-Mar-07	Canada	Let-Kel (WHL)	66	9	35	44	46
266	Elias Jansson	LW	6-0/185	13-Apr-05	Finland	Michigan Tech (CCHA)	36	12	11	23	4
267	Jasper Kuhta	RW	6-2/180	28-Oct-06	Finland	HIFK (Fin-U20)	38	18	25	43	10
268	Giacomo Martino	LW	5-10/170	29-Apr-05	Canada	Sioux City (USHL)	62	32	42	74	14
269	Alexander Levshyn	G	6-3/165	8-Jul-06	Ukraine	Toronto Patriots (OJHL)	35	23	10	2.43	0.935
270	Caden Taylor	LW	6-2/185	31-Mar-07	Canada	Peterborough (OHL)	68	15	16	31	51
271	Patrick Quinlan	G	6-1/185	19-Apr-07	USA	USN U18 (USDP)	28	16	7	3.21	0.886
272	Lucas Karmiris	C	5-11/190	27-Sep-06	Canada	Brampton (OHL)	40	13	22	35	28
273	Gavin Cornforth	RW	5-9/165	15-Dec-06	USA	Dubuque (USHL)	62	27	27	54	47
274	Gian Meier	D	6-1/170	10-Jul-06	Switzerland	Frolunda (Swe J20)	35	5	13	18	16
275	Wilson Bjorck	C	6-0/165	13-Jan-06	Sweden	Djurgardens (Swe J20)	43	28	39	67	98
276	Isac Hedqvist	C	5-10/165	22-Mar-05	Sweden	Lulea (SHL)	38	4	10	14	6
277	Anthony Cristoforo	D	5-11/190	23-Feb-06	Canada	Windsor (OHL)	65	12	49	61	45
278	Martin Johnsen	C	5-10/180	7-Mar-04	Norway	Mora (Allsvenskan)	49	17	30	47	90
279	Daniil Skvortsov	D	6-3/215	13-Jan-07	Russia	Guelph (OHL)	59	5	13	18	12
280	Samuel Murin	LW	6-0/185	21-Apr-07	Slovakia	Poprad-Spisaska Nova Ves (Slovakia)	27	1	2	3	0
281	Tomas Galvas	D	5-10/155	11-Feb-06	Czech	Bili Tygri Liberec (Czechia)	43	3	8	11	2
282	Michal Orsulak	G	6-4/225	26-Aug-07	Czech	Energie Karlovy Vary (Czechia U20)	34	14	20	3.23	0.902
283	Evan Passmore	D	6-5/210	5-Dec-06	Canada	Barrie (OHL)	62	3	8	11	58
284	Leo Sundqvist	RW	5-8/170	12-Jun-07	Sweden	Brynas (Swe J20)	33	15	11	26	10
285	Albin Laksonen	RW	6-4/210	16-Feb-07	Sweden	Vaxjo Lakers (Swe J20)	32	15	7	22	4
286	Raiden LeGall	G	6-0/175	16-Sep-06	Canada	Everett (WHL)	23	16	2	2.17	0.921
287	Makar Fomin	D	5-11/165	17-Dec-06	Russia	Almaz Cherepovets (MHL)	37	6	17	23	24
288	Roope Vesterinen	LW	5-9/170	12-Jan-06	Finland	HPK (Fin-Liiga)	46	10	14	24	10
289	Matthew Koprowski	G	6-3/195	5-Feb-07	Canada	Owen Sound (OHL)	20	8	9	4.29	0.866
290	Xavier Lebel	RW	5-11/170	25-Mar-07	Canada	Quebec (QMJHL)	35	7	11	18	17
291	Elias Straume Vatne	LW	5-9/165	21-Apr-06	Denmark	Farjestads (Swe J20)	38	14	32	46	22
292	Oliwer Sjostrom	D	5-11/165	8-Apr-07	Sweden	Lulea (Swe J20)	40	8	19	27	44
293	Will Murphy	D	6-3/210	24-Aug-07	Canada	Cape Breton (QMJHL)	54	2	2	4	45
294	Arseni Radkov	G	6-4/195	5-Aug-07	Belarus	Tyumenski Legion (MHL)	19	4	8	3.18	0.918
295	Vit Zahejsky	C	5-10/170	10-Aug-07	Czech	Kamloops (WHL)	46	3	12	15	15
296	Alex Weiermair	C	6-0/190	10-May-05	USA	Portland (WHL)	41	21	25	46	14
297	Blake Steenerson	RW	6-4/195	29-Apr-05	USA	Vermont (HE)	32	5	8	13	23
298	Otto Hannikainen	G	6-3/180	29-Jun-06	Finland	JYP (Fin-U20)	27	8	14	2.67	0.910
299	Yevgeni Prokhorov	G	6-3/170	27-Nov-06	Belarus	Dinamo-Shinnik Bobruysk (MHL)	28	16	7	2.19	0.903
300	Samuel Jung	RW	6-3/170	18-May-06	Czech	Karpat (Fin U20)	44	22	10	32	50

1



MATTHEW SCHAEFER

ERIE (OHL)



DEFENCE



6-2



185 LBS



CANADA



SEP-05-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	ERIE (OHL)	56	3	14	17	16
2024-25	ERIE (OHL)	17	7	15	22	8

In 2012, the Toronto Maple Leafs selected defenseman Morgan Reilly fifth overall after he missed nearly the entire draft season with a knee injury. Operating as the Leafs top defender for nearly a decade, things worked out pretty well there. The vibes here are similar, only Schaefer has been more dominant as a draft eligible defender than Reilly was with Moose Jaw.

There's no denying that this season has been a disjointed one for Schaefer. He started the season as one of the best players at the Hlinka/Gretzky Cup, captaining Canada to a gold medal. Then he contracted mono and missed the start of the OHL season. Upon returning to action, he required little time showing that he had taken that next step to become one of the best defenders in the OHL, which in turn earned him a spot on Canada's WJC team. Through pre-tournament action and the opening games, he was dominant, a rare feat for a still 17-year-old in that tournament. That's when disaster struck, as Schaefer's season ended thanks to a fractured collarbone.

With such a small sample size this year, that begs the question, has Schaefer done enough to warrant being the first overall selection? We believe so. This is a potential franchise altering defender who has no true weaknesses. He is an elite skater, possessing both exceptional quickness and effortless four-way mobility. He is highly intelligent; a player who is constantly one step ahead of his opponents at both ends. Schaefer rarely has a lapse in judgment with the puck; he mitigates risk so well for a young defender. He will look to be aggressive using his speed and skill to get pucks up ice, but he's also not turnover prone. He competes to make plays, be it to keep a puck in at the line or to block a shot in a key moment. His defensive game has improved considerably in the last calendar year, with Schaefer becoming more physically intense to close gaps or win 50/50 battles. Due to his excellent skating ability, he rarely gets hemmed in his own end at the junior level, almost always getting to retrievals first, allowing him to initiate clean breakouts. In a nutshell, Schaefer is someone who has the potential to be an all situations, true number one defender and those are incredibly hard to find.

If we are going to nitpick, Schaefer's shot is not a huge weapon for him at the moment. He doesn't one-time pucks well or even look to do so. He prefers to work inside with his quickness/skill and get quick shots on net. Will this impact his potential upside as a powerplay quarterback? We don't believe so, because it is something that he can and should improve.

It is also worth mentioning that Schaefer is one of the youngest players eligible for this year's draft with a September 5th birth date. There is still a ton of room for further physical maturation and the concept of that is scary considering how good Schaefer is already. Additionally, this is a very mature and driven young man who has already overcome significant tragedy in his life. He is a natural born leader who projects as a potential captain at the NHL level in the future.

Given his injury and age, it should not be expected that Schaefer plays next season in the NHL, something you rarely see from potential first overall selections. He needs to dominate the junior level for a year and continue to build strength and improve his conditioning. From there, he should be able to become a full time NHL defender in his draft plus two season and would likely be considered a top Calder Trophy candidate at that time.- Otten

20-80 SCALE

65

SKATING

50

SHOT

55

SKILLS

65

SMARTS

52.5

PHYSICALITY

59

OFP

2



MICHAEL MISA

SAGINAW (OHL)



CENTER



6-1



185 LBS



CANADA



FEB-16-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	SAGINAW (OHL)	67	29	46	75	26
2024-25	SAGINAW (OHL)	65	62	72	134	45

It was a record-breaking year for Misa, a former exceptional status player in the OHL. He finished the season with 62 goals and 134 points. This tied John Tavares for the most points by a U18 player in the last 25 years. His 2.06 points per game were the most by a U18 player since Connor McDavid averaged 2.55 in 2015 (and the fourth most in the last 25 years behind McDavid, Sam Gagner, and Jason Spezza). For this reason, he was named as the Red Tilson Award recipient, as the OHL's most outstanding player.

However, it wasn't just a record-breaking year, it was a transformative year for Misa. He returned to playing center after primarily playing the wing through his first two OHL seasons with the Spirit. Previously a complementary piece on strong Saginaw teams, Misa took the reins as the Spirit's go-to offensive player and ran with it. Coming into this year, the criticism against Misa was that we had yet to see him truly take over games and live up to the hype of being an exceptional status player. Needless to say, that's no longer a criticism.

Misa is the complete package as a dynamic pivot. He is a tremendous skater with an explosive first gear that gives him consistent separation when attacking from a stand still or in transition. What makes him so dangerous is that his hands work completely in sync with his feet, allowing him to keep the puck on a string while attacking down hill. Misa is also equal parts playmaker and goal scorer. He owns a lethal wrist shot with a lightning quick release but also shows good vision with the puck and operates efficiently as distributor. The two years spent as a complementary piece alongside other play drivers allowed Misa to develop strong off puck habits, such as timing cuts well, supporting breakouts, and providing value as a forechecker.

What is often forgotten about is that Misa does all of these things in a 6-foot-1, 185-pound frame. It is completely conceivable that he plays in the NHL at 6-foot-1, 200+ pounds. Already a tenacious player who can bring a physical element to his shifts, one has to wonder if this side of his game grows further and becomes more consistent as he matures physically. It is for this reason that there is belief among the scouting community that Misa can stick at center moving forward. His defensive awareness and engagement has improved considerably over his three OHL seasons and it should continue to improve given his high IQ.

Skeptics will point to Misa's disappearing act in this year's OHL playoffs, but it should be noted that he was banged up, so much so that he was not able to participate in the year end U18's. As mentioned, the reality that Misa slides to wing at the NHL level is a possible one and that does decrease his value slightly, especially with other more concrete centers available at the top of the draft. However, even if he does end up on the wing, he still projects as a potential first line player who can lead his team offensively. Just don't expect that next season. He is going to need another year of development to improve the consistency of his two-way game and strength on the puck. Where that year of development occurs remains to be seen, with rumours running wild that Misa will leave the OHL for the NCAA. Regardless of where he plays next year, Misa should develop into a perennial all star who can live up to the billing of being an extremely high selection.- Otten

20-80 SCALE

57.5
SKATING

57.5
SHOT

60
SKILLS

60
SMARTS

55
PHYSICALITY

58.375
OFP

3



PORTER MARTONE

BRAMPTON (OHL)



RIGHT WING



6-3



205 LBS



CANADA



OCT-26-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	MISSISSAUGA (OHL)	60	33	38	71	63
2024-25	BRAMPTON (OHL)	57	37	61	98	74

Even if you are on the fence about Martone being a true power forward or pest ala Matthew Tkachuk, Brad Marchand, or Corey Perry, there's no denying the unique skill set that he possesses. It is rare to find 6-foot-3 forwards who can impact the game in so many different ways like Martone can. He has the skill and sense to be a difference maker offensively. He has the length and awareness to be a difference maker defensively. Lastly, he brings an element of peskiness that makes him a pain in the arse to play against. This is why it would be shocking to see Martone selected outside of the top five this year.

In his third OHL season (as a late born 2006), Martone took another step forward offensively, setting new career highs in goals and points. It was his playmaking that really progressed positively this year; his 61 assists were no fluke. He routinely works his way deep into the offensive zone because he is so difficult to separate from the puck. From there, as he draws extra attention, he routinely finds open teammates. He really cut down on the offensive zone turnovers that plagued his game in the two years prior. Martone is more than just a power forward who pushes his way to the net front, he is highly skilled and creative. He can create extra time and space for himself with quick hands and pivots. Martone also owns a powerful shot that can beat goaltenders clean from the slot or the flank.

Martone's game, as impressive as it is, is not without question marks. For one, his skating and pace will need to improve in order for him to be a truly elite offensive player at the NHL level. It's not poor, but without improvements to his quickness, he likely ends up as more of a complementary piece. Secondly, even though he can play with tenacity as an offensive player, that same level of physical engagement is not consistently applied outside of the offensive zone. Thirdly, even with some outstanding production this season with Brampton, consistency was an issue at times as the Steelheads disappointingly suffered an early playoff exit despite loading up for a deep playoff run. Injuries were an issue, but Martone needs to shoulder some of the blame for a disappointing season.

That brings us to the aforementioned power game. Even our scouting team is divided about whether Martone truly projects as a traditional power forward; it is a polarizing topic of conversation. There is no question that he is at his best when he is operating as a pest, involving himself in post whistle scrums, driving the net, and getting under the skin of the opposition. However, he's not a consistent physical presence in puck pursuit or along the wall, and as mentioned, his defensive engagement wavers. Is Martone better classified as a highly skilled play driver who just happens to be big and pesky, rather than a true difference maker physically? This is the million-dollar question NHL scouting staffs will be asking themselves.

Regardless of the answer, there's no denying Martone possesses the upside to be a perennial all-star and offensive team leader. He should continue to improve his consistency away from the puck as his conditioning improves and that will make him the kind of player who has the frame and style of play to find success in the NHL postseason. An end of the year run with Team Canada at the World Championships can only benefit his development as he learns from NHL standouts on how to be a pro. If he can have a good summer of training, there is a chance that he could be in the NHL next year.- Otten

20-80 SCALE

52.5

SKATING

57.5

SHOT

57.5

SKILLS

57.5

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

55.875

OFP



CALEB DESNOYERS

MONCTON (QMJHL)



CENTER



6-2



180 LBS



CANADA



APR-11-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	MONCTON (QMJHL)	60	20	36	56	26
2024-25	MONCTON (QMJHL)	56	35	49	84	39

Caleb Desnoyers has done nothing but win hardware during his draft year. With a Hlinka Gretzky Cup Gold Medal, QMJHL Championship, playoff MVP award, and even QMJHL Personality of the Year, Desnoyers will need to invest in a spacious trophy display, as he's exactly the type of player to bring NHL teams from pretenders to contenders come playoff time.

Along with the awards came a jump in production from the Moncton center, tallying 35 goals and 49 assists in 56 QMJHL regular-season appearances. From there, Desnoyers led the QMJHL in playoff assists en route to a Memorial Cup appearance. He's truly done just about everything a player can do in the QMJHL, and as a result, has seen his draft stock boost to a potential top five pick.

Desnoyers possesses an incredible mind that allows him to rack up creative assists and lock down passing lanes against the rush and in his end. His ability to consistently find dangerous passing lanes and time the feeds perfectly was a feature of nearly every Wildcats game this year. He uses his intelligence to make life easier for his teammates, whether it's chasing attackers down low in his defensive zone to aid his defencemen or taking on multiple defenders before kicking it back to create space. Desnoyers is a player who will be able to slot in on any line at any time in the NHL.

Desnoyers' tools are what bring his incredible smarts to life. His skating is very strong, and he still has plenty of room to grow into his frame and build leg strength, weighing under 180 pounds. Caleb's athleticism on his feet is very apparent. He darts around the defensive zone, closing gaps quickly and pestering opponents. On offense, he uses his feet effectively to open lanes by moving laterally, drawing in defenders and slipping past checks, incorporating his high-end skills. Desnoyers' hands are very effective, attacking defenders to get them off their mark before swiftly driving past them.

With more weight added will also come bigger hits, not to say Caleb's physicality isn't already above average. He wears opposing teams out and separates opponents from the puck by tactically finishing checks. With his mix of tenacious competitiveness and strong skating, Desnoyers is likely going to be a top-notch playoff performer, fitting the blueprint the Florida Panthers have had so much success with in their recent playoff runs.

While Caleb Desnoyers did finish 12th in QMJHL scoring, we're doubtful that he'll be a frequent 30-goal scorer in the NHL. Caleb scored mostly from in-tight as a result of his other high-end traits rather than using his shot to snipe from distance. His wrist shot lacks power, and although he does get the puck on net quite frequently when he decides to shoot, we haven't seen him display the ability to force high-quality goaltenders to make saves, with most of his goals away from the netfront coming from shots floated to the net through traffic. Having an average release is hardly a detriment to a cerebral playmaker like Desnoyers, as we regularly see pass-first guys like Mitch Marner tickle the 30-goal mark by using their killer IQs and deception to get scoring looks in tight.

From this class, Caleb is one of the safest bets to become an NHL center and has a realistic floor of being an impactful middle six two-way center, and the ceiling of becoming a first-line center who rises to the occasion every year in the playoffs to provide high-end impact in all three zones. - Ireland

20-80 SCALE

55

SKATING

50

SHOT

57.5
SKILLS62.5
SMARTS55
PHYSICALITY57.125
OFP

5



JAMES HAGENS

BOSTON COLLEGE (HE)



CENTER



USA



5-11



185 LBS



NOV-03-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U18 (USDP)	58	39	63	102	34
2024-25	BOSTON COLLEGE (HE)	37	11	26	37	24

It may not have been imaginable even as late as January 5th of this year, but we do not have James Hagens ranked among the top three prospects for the 2025 NHL Draft. We see him as the fifth best prospect in this draft. After a great deal of thought, observation, and contemplation in assessing who Hagens is and what his upside will be as an NHL player, it's a conclusion we've had to come to in light of other highly ranked prospects advancing their developmental pace while Hagens' season, which was just fine statistically (a PPG as a true college freshman and nine points in winning gold at the WJC), showed too many phases of plateauing and a number of struggles against often physically stronger and older competition. And yet his story is simply bound to make him one of the most talked about figures at this summer's big event. Where exactly he'll be selected is one of the most anticipated questions the hockey community will be asking on June 27th.

The reason for this is largely twofold.

One year ago today, we would have told you that Hagens is the crystal clear number one prospect for the 2025 draft. There was a consensus on this in the scouting community. After all, he already looked like the top player for 2025 in his DY-2 season, suiting up for Team USA at the U18 Worlds (5 points in 7 games) and crushing the competition at the U17 WHC (21 points in seven games) while clipping at over a PPG pace in the USHL. Then he took things further with an historical DY-1, chalking up 149 points(!) in 84 contests before setting the scoring record at the U18 Worlds with 22 points in seven games. Despite a build most akin to that of Jack Hughes, all indications were that he would fit right in with recent young stars Bedard, Celebrini, and McKenna (2026-eligible).

Then there's the Long Island factor. Indeed, Hagens hails from the isle jettisoning into the Atlantic east of NYC and with all due respect to no less than Messrs. Pinto, McAvoy, Fox, and Coronato, Hagens is the top ranked prospect to ever come from the area. He's made no hesitation in pointing out his lifelong love and admiration of the Islanders. This would have been irrelevant had the New York Islanders not received the number one overall pick at the draft lottery. Now, we certainly advocate that a franchise use that selection to take the top player available, but with a new GM in place and a prodigal son scenario at the doorstep, the notion of selecting Hagens can't simply be dismissed as little more than a whim.

What we know right now is that it's difficult to say for sure that Hagens, who may be one of the best give-n-go players we've viewed to date, will be anything more than a complementary offensive player at the NHL level as his generally strong play-driving looked a lot different this season. At this pace, he'll have difficulties adjusting to the physical nature of the NHL game. His two-way game is looking like it could lead to struggles down the line. And it's already concerning how often he was held to the perimeter this past season.

Can all that change with growth, experience, and maturity? Absolutely. Does he have the skillset to be the best offensive player to come out of this draft? Certainly. Has the scouting community ever been guilty of overanalyzing a topflight prospect? Well, we'd never... But Hagens no longer possesses the aura of being a future franchise player. He does continue to be an exciting offensive prospect with considerable upside under the right circumstances. - Landvogt

20-80 SCALE

57.5

SKATING

50

SHOT

60

SKILLS

60

SMARTS

50

PHYSICALITY

56.5

OFP



ANTON FRONDELL

DJURGARDENS (ALLSVENSKAN)



CENTER



6-1



205 LBS



SWEDEN



MAY-07-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	DJURGARDENS (SWE J20)	29	18	21	39	16
2023-24	DJURGARDENS (ALLSVENSKAN)	9	0	1	1	0
2024-25	DJURGARDENS (ALLSVENSKAN)	29	11	14	25	16
2024-25	DJURGARDENS (SWE J20)	10	5	2	7	6

Our top Swedish prospect heading into the 2025 draft season remains our top Swedish prospect at the end of it. You wouldn't know it, but Frondell overcame a lot of adversity to hold the regional throne. A pair of lower body injuries he suffered in February put an end to his DY-1 season and completely disrupted his offseason conditioning, not to mention the start of his 2025 campaign.

When he did come back, he was not himself. Frondell could barely keep up with the pace of play at the HockeyAllsvenskan and was sent to the J20 for conditioning. Heading into the new year, many were questioning if Frondell was a talent worthy of the first round, let alone the lottery. And then, in late January, he flipped a switch.

He looked brilliant at the u18 5-nations in Ängelholm. He scored 19 of his 24 points in 11 games to close out the HockeyAllsvenskan regular season. He was an integral part of Djurgården's playoff run, helping them get promoted to the SHL for the 25-26 season. Despite a quiet u18 WJC (mostly because he was gassed), Frondell has completely silenced doubters and made his talent impossible to discredit or deny.

The only question is: how talented will he be? For starters, Frondell is "big as a mountain", as described by teammate Victor Eklund. Despite his average height, Frondell is a heavy kid and he plays a heavy game. He finishes his checks with some serious oomph, which was a big reason he stayed in Djurgården's playoff lineup when his production slowed down.

Equally as heavy is his shot. Frondell has an absolute laser of a wrist that he can locate with pinpoint accuracy. He doesn't need a lot of space to get it off, either. He's an expert at finding little pockets of real-estate in high danger areas to work in, and times his arrival perfectly. If the shot isn't there, he'll go to plan B and find a teammate in an equally dangerous area. He will even use his good hands in tight to dance around sticks and feet to open up more space for himself and extend possession. Frondell typically has a strong awareness of his options offensively, rarely running into defensive pressure he doesn't have an answer for.

Ditto on the other side of the puck. Frondell reads the game at an exceptionally high level. He can detect potential odd-man rushes against and prevent them before they happen. With his average-at-best straight-line speed, he has to stay ahead of the play in a prepared fashion since he can't always act on his reads quickly enough. His ankles are rather stiff so he can't get that dorsiflexion that the speedsters of the NHL can. That's not to say his skating mechanics are poor. In fact, Frondell has solid pivots and closes gaps well. Considering his aforementioned injuries, there's a chance he puts to rest any concerns about his quickness and acceleration after a full off-season of training.

Frondell has the tools to be a center at the NHL level in some capacity, there's no denying that. However, the speed-skill combo isn't as high-end as you'd typically want from a top six center prospect. There isn't that dynamic stick handling ability that lets him pick apart defences or that explosive three step quickness to blow past defenders through the neutral zone. His ability to drive play is limited. That being said, Frondell could still find himself in the top six of an NHL lineup on the wing as a complementary star to an elite center. Someone who can be a hammer and a clinical play-finisher. However, if NHL teams (and Frondell himself) really view him as a center, there's a chance he could get to be a pretty solid 2C with improvement to his quickness and acceleration. - Robbins

20-80 SCALE

52.5
SKATING

57.5
SHOT

55
SKILLS

60
SMARTS

57.5
PHYSICALITY

56.5
OFP



JACKSON SMITH

TRI-CITY (WHL)



DEFENCE



6-4



200 LBS



CANADA



MAY-13-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	TRI-CITY (WHL)	62	8	21	29	41
2024-25	TRI-CITY (WHL)	68	11	43	54	48

It's completely unanimous that Matthew Schaefer is the top defenseman available in this year's draft, and it's also abundantly clear that the overall crop of defensemen is much less appealing than it was in 2024. However, if one of the teams that is picking high decides that they really need a blueliner then don't be surprised if they take a big swing on Smith, a prospect who could become an out-of-the-park homerun if everything goes just right with his individual development.

In terms of pure, undistilled entertainment value, few players in this entire class can match Smith when he's at the top of his game and playing loose. He is exceptionally athletic and fit for his age, even among top prospects, and that underlies all of his strongest traits. He possesses skating ability that is truly explosive, with jersey-flapping speed and tremendous lateral movement, and he takes a lot of initiative to join the rush. And when he's flying around the ice at high tempos players on opposing teams need to watch out, because he loves to play the body, especially when he sees an opportunity to line someone up in his train tracks and let his momentum do most of the work. When you combine the different high-end elements of his skating ability, size and physical tendencies, you get a defenseman with uniquely lofty potential for making defensive stops.

While Smith is far from flawless when he's handling the puck, hindered by the occasional bobble or mishandle, he can nevertheless make slick moves and passes that the vast majority of other defenders simply cannot. What's most important right now, though, is that he's experimenting and trying to do difficult things at full speed on a regular basis, because his confidence is rising rapidly and he's getting better and better with the more reps that he takes. If that approach continues, long-term progress will remain inevitable. Some casual onlookers might note his modest point totals from this season and question just how good his offensive tools truly are, but Tri-City was a slow, grinding team that didn't score a lot outside of Smith and didn't have anyone else who could really play at his level and in his style.

All of this being said, hockey fans who have only watched Smith play internationally and not in the WHL would be forgiven for being confused or in outright disagreement with the above description. It's entirely fair to say that he didn't look especially exciting or talented with Canada at the spring U18s. However, it was clear to those who were familiar with him that he was intentionally dialing back his game, either by his own choice or by instruction from the Canadian coaches. A tournament like that is not the time or the place for a defender to play hero hockey and take big individual risks, and Smith had some trouble adjusting his game accordingly because his hockey sense and decision-making aren't at the same level as other top prospects, at least not yet. That is often still a problem for him in the WHL as well, with some turnovers that are so bad that you want to cover your eyes. The highs are stratospheric, but the lows can be all the way down in the Mariana Trench.

Any NHL team that truly trusts its development staff should be aggressively interested in Smith, because it's entirely within the realm of possibility that he could be the second or third best player to come out of this draft if his talent is properly nurtured and his rough edges can be sanded over. - Neumeier

20-80 SCALE

62.5

SKATING

50

SHOT

55

SKILLS

50

SMARTS

57.5

PHYSICALITY

55.625

OFP

8



VICTOR EKLUND

DJURGARDENS (ALLSVENSKAN)



RIGHT WING



5-11



170 LBS



SWEDEN



OCT-03-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	DJURGARDENS (SWE J20)	30	7	18	25	26
2023-24	DJURGARDENS (ALLSVENSKAN)	15	1	3	4	6
2024-25	DJURGARDENS (ALLSVENSKAN)	42	19	12	31	37

What else can be said about Victor Eklund that hasn't been said before? He's had a dream season. He started the year off with a bang, scoring at a rate in the HockeyAllsvenskan which we hadn't seen since Elias Pettersson in 2017. He was a consistent and bottomless supply of energy and offence for Djurgården, playing his way to their top line and making that his home for much of the season. Then, despite not medaling at the tournament, Eklund was one of Sweden's top performers at the WJC U20 in Ottawa. He finished second to James Hagens in points for draft eligible skaters and earned more and more ice time as the tournament went on. Finally, alongside teammate and fellow draft eligible prospect Anton Frondell, he played a major part in helping Djurgården secure SHL promotion for the 2025-2026 season. A storybook beginning, middle, and end.

A lot like Frank Sinatra, Eklund did it all his way. He's still the same player he was entering the season, only better. His greatest skill may be his skating or his hockey sense, but the core of his very being as a hockey player is his elite compete. Considering the type of player his brother William is and father Christian "Fimpen" Eklund was, the infectious energy and work ethic is hereditary. Victor never backs down and never quits on pucks. Anytime he takes a knock along the boards, he gets back up and gives it right back. It doesn't matter who he's up against, he is battling to the death. He's always got another gear, and there's always a little more juice in the tank.

His skill set perfectly encompasses his competitive nature. He's a lightning quick and agile skater. As the primary puck carrier for his line, Eklund would blow past defenders through the neutral zone and effortlessly enter the offensive zone. Ditto on offensive retrievals. If he's the first one on the puck, good luck pinning him down. He's so darn slippery along the wall, shifting and changing directions on a dime. His ability to make plays from the wall to the slot at the pro level is especially impressive considering he's undersized and underweight for his level of competition. That's what strong body positioning skills and pit bull DNA will do for you. Not to mention, his brain works as quick as his feet move, so he's able to execute passing plays as soon as he sees an opportunity. Eklund's speed and skill are complemented by his laser of a wrist shot. He's got a nose for the net and times his cuts into the slot very well, and from there he can locate it wherever he wants. He's got so many ways to beat you offensively, and all of them project well to the NHL.

Eklund is a surefire NHLer. Is he a flawless player? No, he's got to add some muscle and could add a touch more explosiveness to his skating. Sometimes he skates into too much pressure and can't escape it. Those things should come with physical and mental maturation. He also doesn't have the strongest two-way game, but he's so smart and competitive that there's no reason he can't learn to chip in more. In addition, while Eklund has many exceptional qualities that should make him a very good NHLer in the future, he doesn't have a truly elite, game-breaking quality that would put him in that tip-top echelon of the draft. Scouts had similar views about his brother William during his draft year, too. Still, Victor, like his brother, should find himself playing in a top six role on the wing, making an impact in all three zones and probably earning power play time as well. - Robbins

20-80 SCALE

57.5
SKATING

55
SHOT

55
SKILLS

57.5
SMARTS

60
PHYSICALITY

57
OFP

9



RADIM MRTKA

SEATTLE (WHL)



DEFENCE



6-6



220 LBS



CZECH



JUN-09-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	HC OCELARI TRINEC (CZECHIA U20)	19	4	7	11	8
2023-24	HC OCELARI TRINEC (CZECHIA U17)	18	3	10	13	8
2024-25	SEATTLE (WHL)	43	3	32	35	46

How many 17-year-old defensemen could move from Europe to North America for the very first time, immediately start playing 25 minutes per game (and sometimes even 30), and then help turn around a struggling team and guide them to a surprise playoff appearance? The answer is: not very many. However, that's exactly how Mrtka's 2024-25 season went. And not only was he tremendously essential in getting the Seattle Thunderbirds into the playoffs in the first place, the underdog group even managed to win a pair of games in their first-round series against the Everett Silvertips, who had finished the regular season with the best record in the entire WHL. Add in the facts that he is 6-foot-6, shoots right, and can be used in all situations and it's easy to see why there's a lot of pre-draft chatter about him being a top 10 pick.

The Czechia native fits the textbook description of a workhorse defenseman. It's genuinely remarkable how he's able to play heavy, involved hockey across so many minutes of ice time, game after game, while remaining an effective presence and positive difference-maker. Going beyond Seattle, this has been his constant reality in international tournaments as well, and it's easy to see why. There's a certain calculated efficiency to his game that deserves to be properly appreciated. He keeps things simple in a very wise and mature way but also knows when to step up to make a play.

He leans more to the defensive side than the offensive, as he knows how to quietly and unceremoniously erase opposing forwards from the play without taking a penalty. While he is consistently physical in most regards, using the natural advantages of his size and strength to outright overpower his enemies, he doesn't get much momentum and velocity behind his hits, and he's not one to seek out trouble after the whistle or really try to intimidate and bully others. He's quick and accurate with his breakout passes, including stretch ones.

He skates well in straight lines and has a surprising amount of acceleration, enough to create space in open ice, but he needs to get quicker and more evasive in tight spaces, as sometimes his feet look a little clumsy. At this level he can manage the point on the powerplay and do a decent enough job as a poised connector of plays, though he's not a true quarterback and likely never will be.

While the major appeal of Mrtka lies with his excellent floor, there are fair questions that can still be asked about his ceiling. He's not particularly skilled or creative and probably won't contribute as much scoring at the NHL level that his nearly point-per-game pace in the WHL this season might suggest. Like a lot of other hockey giants, he can be slow when reacting to the play around him, getting turned around and falling a step behind when the puck is being moved along quickly. At the same time, though, how fast can a defender realistically be expected to perform shift-over-shift when he's on the ice for nearly half the game? There is a real chance that Mrtka could still have a lot of untapped upside, which could reveal itself in the coming years once he grows into his body more, has time for his conditioning to catch up, and isn't asked to carry such an extremely heavy load for his teams.

NHL teams value big, right-shooting, do-it-all defenders like Colton Parayko, Moritz Seider and Rasmus Ristolainen, and Mrtka is on track to join that kind of company in the league in a few years from now. - Neumeier

20-80 SCALE

52.5

SKATING

50

SHOT

55
SKILLS57.5
SMARTS57.5
PHYSICALITY55
OFF

10



BRADY MARTIN

SOO GREYHOUNDS (OHL)



CENTER



6-0



185 LBS



CANADA



MAR-16-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	SOO GREYHOUNDS (OHL)	52	10	18	28	40
2024-25	SOO GREYHOUNDS (OHL)	57	33	39	72	68

Born and raised on a farm outside of Elmira, Ontario, Martin possesses the work ethic and strength on the ice that you would expect from someone with that upbringing. One of the most tenacious and physical forwards available for the draft this year, Martin never seems to take a shift off. This energy level is infectious; he plays with his heart on his sleeve, which helps to explain why he wore an "A" for Sault Ste. Marie and for Canada at the U18's this year.

However, Martin is more than just a physical brute. We wouldn't have him ranked inside of our top ten if we didn't believe in his offensive upside and ability to develop into a top six NHL forward. Martin consistently attacks down hill in an effort to get himself or pucks to the net. He blends power and skill well, with the hands and creativity to beat defenders one on one. In fact, his stickhandling ability does not get enough credit; per advanced stats Martin led the OHL this year in successfully completed dekes. Martin also shows strong sense away from the puck in the offensive end. He routinely gets himself open near the crease and battles for positioning. He retrieves loose pucks and works to prolong possession along the wall. At the U18's, he played a lot on the wing and he showcased an ability to be a terrific complementary piece to other highly skilled players.

For as good and consistent as Martin is offensively, he's equally as effective as a three-zone player. He's tenacious away from the puck, consistently hunting down carriers. He hits to hurt and is extremely intimidating, which helps him to force turnovers or rush the decisions of opponents. He has strong stick placement in the defensive end and will block shots. For these reasons, Martin projects as an all-situations type who can provide versatility to his future NHL coach.

Currently, one of the biggest concerns regarding Martin is his lack of explosiveness and the overall dynamic qualities of his stride. However, his skating profile has already improved drastically in the last calendar year. He does build to a reasonable top speed that allows him to play his physically aggressive style effectively. There is reason to believe that as he continues to strength train and power skate, his skating will not be a barrier to his NHL success. Similar things were said about the likes of Mike Richards and Ryan O'Reilly in their draft years, and they were not held back by being average skaters.

Additionally, Martin did struggle with his puck management at times this year with the Soo Greyhounds. Not only did he lead the OHL in successfully completed dekes, but he was among the league leaders in offensive zone turnovers too. He will need to simplify his approach moving forward. However, we feel that these turnovers were a result of him trying to do too much for a middling team and are not representative of a lack of sense or awareness. Later in the season, he cut down on these and at the U18's, they were a non-issue.

When we look at the types of players finding success in the NHL playoffs, year in and year out, it is guys like Martin. He's combative. He's tenacious. He's intelligent. He's skilled. Martin isn't going to win any Art Ross Trophies, but he should settle in as a top six leader for a team who consistently finds itself in the hunt for the Stanley Cup.- Otten

20-80 SCALE

52.5
SKATING52.5
SHOT55
SKILLS55
SMARTS60
PHYSICALITY54.875
OFP

11



JAKE O'BRIEN

BRANTFORD (OHL)



CENTER



6-2



175 LBS



CANADA



JUN-16-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	BRANTFORD (OHL)	61	13	51	64	10
2024-25	BRANTFORD (OHL)	66	32	66	98	18

Let us present you with some statistical rankings. O'Brien finished first in the OHL in powerplay points, powerplay assists, and primary assists with the man advantage. But, at even strength? He was outside the top 50 in both total assists and primary assists. Is this a concern for scouts? It really depends on your perspective. On the one hand, you have to be impressed with his vision and playmaking ability with the extra time and space afforded to him; he truly is one of this draft's premier distributors and creators. On the other hand, you have to be concerned with the consistency of his production at five on five; he struggles to find the space necessary to utilize his creative gifts.

That said, you would be foolish to overlook O'Brien completely because of this. Intelligent pivots with a solid frame do not grow on trees; his upside is among the highest in this draft class. He is the kind of player who has high eyes in the back of his head; who is playing chess when everyone else is playing checkers. He sees plays develop on the ice in a way that others do not. Not only does he have that elite vision and anticipation, but his passing skill and touch are tremendous. He consistently threads the needle through traffic or finds the perfect touch on his saucers.

O'Brien has made some positive strides to round out his game this year too. He's improved his goal scoring ability by getting to the net more consistently, especially at even strength. He doesn't possess a high end shot, but his instincts are sound and he's willing to pay the price near the crease to score. Additionally, he's a competitive two-way player who has been consistently utilized on the penalty kill this season. He's not strong enough to be a physical force without the puck, but he uses his IQ to break up plays with an active stick and he'll block shots or work to clear the zone. As he matures physically, he should develop into a competent two-way asset at the NHL level.

The questions we have about his game revolve around that lack of even strength production. O'Brien is not a dynamic or explosive skater. He's also not a physically aggressive player. His frame is slight, and he can be easily muscled off the puck. Due to those things, his pace of play can lag behind at times and it's why he can disappear for stretches. It's certainly not from a lack of will; there are no issues with his compete level. However, execution with less time and space is currently an issue.

If you're drafting O'Brien inside the top ten, which we expect to happen, you are doing so with the hope that physical maturation and added strength do wonders for his game. Added lower body strength could help his stride become more powerful and allow him to play at a greater pace...or at least give him options in terms of varying it. Added upper body strength could allow him to be more effective making plays through contact, eventually becoming more difficult to separate from the puck. It all comes down to him being able to create that time and space for himself at even strength, because time and space come at a premium at the NHL level.

Best case scenario, O'Brien develops into one of the NHL's premier playmaking pivots. Worst case scenario sees him struggling with consistency at the NHL level without those elite "physical" traits. He's going to need some time to develop, but an NHL franchise's patience could pay off in a big way.- Otten

20-80 SCALE

50

SKATING

50

SHOT

57.5

SKILLS

62.5

SMARTS

47.5

PHYSICALITY

54.625

OFP

12



ROGER MCQUEEN

BRANDON (WHL)



CENTER



6-5



200 LBS



CANADA



OCT-02-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	BRANDON (WHL)	53	21	30	51	50
2024-25	BRANDON (WHL)	17	10	10	20	40

There is no other player in the 2025 class who is more of a wildcard, or that NHL clubs have dramatically different opinions about, than McQueen. Not only is his situation wholly unique for this year, it's one that usually doesn't come up in any year. On one hand, here you have a prospect with an utterly phenomenal package of traits, who could have legitimately been in the running to be the very first player picked if his circumstances were different than what they are right now. On the other hand, however, health issues have caused him to miss a lot of games in recent seasons, and some teams are terrified that those issues could follow him and hinder him for the remainder of his career.

McQueen is the type of player that scouts instantly can't take their eyes off of once they first start watching him. The Brandon pivot demands your attention initially with his hulking size and ease of mobility and then sucks you in even further with his assertive puck-handling. He's surprisingly agile and light on his feet for someone with his frame. He can protect the puck both in close to his body and far out from it, and is adept at swinging it around opponents with wide, sweeping dekes. There's good pace to his game, and he loves to work the give-and-go before darting to the net-front. His offensive contributions come from both in tight and range, making him tricky to defend. He's far from perfect, having some bad habits that lead to a frequency of turnovers, but there's just so much to love about where his game is right now and how much further it could all go moving forward.

No discussion about McQueen can be had right now, however, without addressing his ongoing difficulties with his back, which caused him to miss some time last year and then almost all of this season. He even made a comeback in the spring, played for a bit, and then had to get shut down again. The story goes like this, as he has been telling it: his initial injury was incorrectly diagnosed as a bulging disc, but when the issue wasn't improving it was re-evaluated and then re-diagnosed as a stress fracture, which his new doctor believes should heal completely. What's giving teams pause is that the fracture occurred seemingly innocuously, leading to worries that other new fractures or similar troubles could pop up down the road. There is fledgling scientific research out there that suggests that some athletes, especially very tall ones, have above-average risks of recurring back issues due to genetic reasons outside of their control. At this year's draft combine McQueen's interviews with team doctors (of which there were surely many) were even more important than his discussions with team scouts. Back issues have a history of being notoriously difficult for athletes to deal with, in hockey and in other sports, so when that happens with a prospect with this much potential it's no wonder why there has been such an emphasis on caution and diligence. You can't help but feel bad for McQueen, though, who probably wants nothing more than to put this whole ordeal behind him for good.

NHL teams with a shortage of draft capital or an empty prospect pipeline might hedge their bets and pick other players that they view as safer, but it wouldn't be surprising to see one that is already rebuilt and better equipped to manage a lost wager step and take him because the payoff is enticing enough to make it worth it. - Neumeier

20-80 SCALE

55

SKATING

55

SHOT

57.5

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

55.625

OFP

13



LYNDEN LAKOVIC

MOOSE JAW (WHL)



LEFT WING



6-4



200 LBS



CANADA



DEC-12-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	MOOSE JAW (WHL)	68	18	21	39	14
2024-25	MOOSE JAW (WHL)	47	27	31	58	4

In a lot of different ways, Lakovic is one of the most fascinating case studies in the 2025 NHL draft. There are just so many different variables that scouts need to balance when evaluating him. On paper, his collection of various tools is among the very best in this class, and he managed to produce a decent amount of points despite not having a lot of help around him, but his draft-year production doesn't really stand out, especially as a late-2006 birthday who was playing in his third campaign in the same league and with the same team. He plays more of a skills-based game and rarely uses his huge frame to its full advantage, but is that something that could eventually be worked into his approach?

He was part of the 2023-24 Moose Jaw Warriors team that won the WHL championship, which is always great experience for a prospect, but he contributed in more of a depth role and has played very little other high-stakes hockey up to this point. Late in the season he was named as the newest captain of his team, which is undeniably a great honour, but the team around him was underwhelming and inexperienced, so how much weight do you put into that? NHL teams are probably overwhelmingly intrigued by this player, but opinions about him and his placement on different team lists could vary wildly.

Catch one of his games where he's at his best and it's simply impossible to not walk away feeling impressed. Few prospects can flat-out take command of the ice and manipulate the flow of play to their whim like Lakovic can. His skating ability and puck control are incredibly fluid and work seamlessly in concert with each other. Mix in his long reach and he can carry the puck for long stretches, including circling wide around the offensive zone as he looks for openings.

As a playmaker, his vision and creativity are splendid, and he can effortlessly pull off slick seam passes, and saucer passes from both his forehand and his backhand. He has a very heads-up approach and will readily make smart little chips or bank passes to keep the play alive and move the puck into a better position. While he's not a particularly powerful shooter, he can still beat goalies clean with his wrister, and he utilizes his skating well to burst into high-danger scoring areas and attack opposing goalies with speed.

The concerns with his play are outlined above, but overall, you could almost summarize Lakovic as a kind of mystery or puzzle waiting to be solved. As good as he looks most of the time, he can often leave you wanting more, like he's not making as much of an impact as he should be, given all the weapons at his disposal. Is that something that can be fixed with enough experience and coaching, or is there a certain kind of edge or killer instinct that simply isn't part of his ingrained personality? That's a difficult question to answer and left unresolved there are a bunch of different possibilities for where his career will go from here. How he interviewed at the draft combine could go a long way, further than most other prospects, in determining how teams feel about him.

Lakovic could realistically be one of the first 10 players to hear their names get called on the Friday of draft weekend, or he might still be sitting available all the way into the 20s. Don't be surprised by either outcome. - Neumeier

20-80 SCALE

55

SKATING

55

SHOT

57.5

SKILLS

52.5

SMARTS

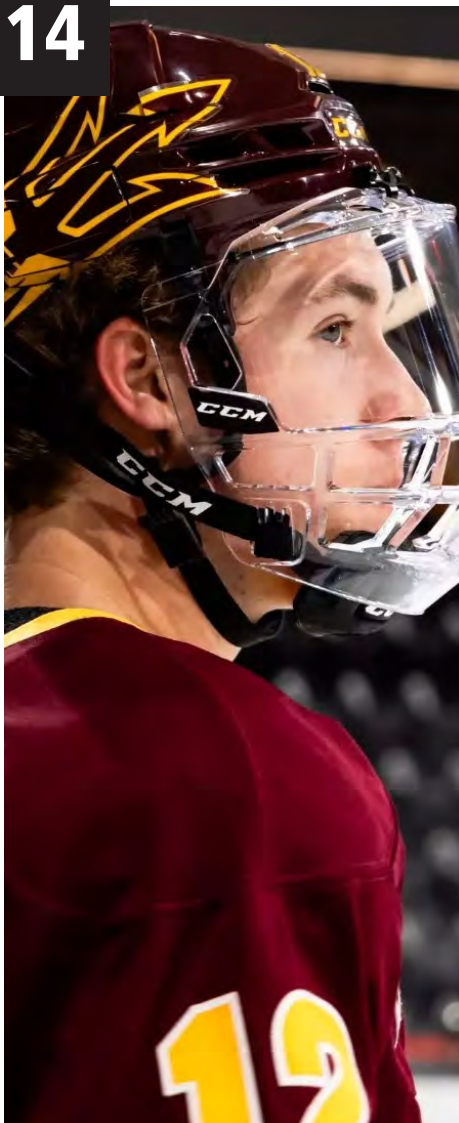
50

PHYSICALITY

54.25

OFP

14



CULLEN POTTER

ARIZONA STATE (NCHC)



CENTER



5-10



170 LBS



USA



JAN-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U17 (USDP)	54	17	29	46	28
2024-25	ARIZONA STATE (NCHC)	35	13	9	22	6

Every year, there's at least one draft prospect who splits opinions between scouting publications and NHL franchises. Often, it's a smaller, high-skill player who doesn't project as a safe bet but has the upside to become a difference-maker. Lane Hutson in 2022 and Fabian Lysell in 2021 come to mind. This year, that player is Cullen Potter.

Potter was one of the youngest players in college hockey this year, but that didn't stop him from playing a large role in Arizona State's top six. He picked up 13 goals and 9 assists in 35 NCAA games, placing him second in scoring for NCAA DY players, only behind James Hagens. After Potter's Sun Devils fell in the NCHC Semi-finals, he headed to the U18s, where he went over a point per game, earning bronze with the USA.

Potter's biggest strength is his skating. He moves at breakneck pace through the neutral zone, and just when you think he's at full speed, he'll kick it up another gear to break into the offensive zone. He generates a lot of power through quick crossovers, often catching NCAA defenders off guard. Potter also uses his feet effectively in the defensive zone, patrolling, waiting for a chance to pounce on a loose puck and start the breakout. It also allows him to add some versatility in his offensive game, making him a player who can retrieve pucks off the dump-in.

Another trait that makes Potter a lottery-quality pick is his skill set on the puck. In transition, Cullen executes his moves at many different ranges of speed, from a standstill to top speed, and can escape pressure to relentlessly advance the puck up ice. Often players will either try to attack traffic and slip past the defenders, or they will try to make their move early and avoid traffic, using speed to cut away from defenders. Potter can do both at an astonishingly high level for an NCAA freshman. The overall combination of his speed and skills simply makes Potter a player destined to thrive in transition at any level.

There are parts of his game that will make NHL teams wary to select him in the top sixteen come June. His compete is inconsistent, his even strength in-zone offense hasn't quite generated the results it should for a player of his skill level, and he does have some accuracy troubles with his shot. Potter's shot does have pop to it and gets it off well, showcasing many different release angles, but he struggles with getting it on net, especially considering he mostly shoots from great areas.

For a smaller player without outstanding smarts, Potter's impacts on the forecheck and defence will be largely driven by his compete level. While he's played games where he shows how he could fit into a depth energy role, particularly the playoff win vs Minnesota Duluth, where he had great success recovering his dump-ins and generated turnovers on the back check, there are plenty of times where he'll glide around looking disengaged. For an NHL team to take a chance on a 5-foot-10 skill forward who hasn't displayed the best scoring habits at even strength, it's a big red flag to see the player not hungry for the puck regularly.

It will be interesting to see if Potter can become more than an amazing puck carrier, get the puck on net more often, and create more consistent scoring chances for his teammates next season. If he can, he'll be a good bet to stick in an NHL top six. On the other hand, if he can't quite make an NHL top six, he'll need to achieve the level of compete seen in his better games on a more consistent basis to remain in the lineup. - Ireland

20-80 SCALE

60

SKATING

50

SHOT

57.5

SKILLS

52.5

SMARTS

50

PHYSICALITY

54.5

OFP

15



KASHAWN AITCHESON

BARRIE (OHL)



DEFENCE



6-2



200 LBS



CANADA



SEP-21-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	BARRIE (OHL)	64	8	31	39	126
2024-25	BARRIE (OHL)	64	26	33	59	88

Simply put, they don't make them like they used to. Defenders who relish the opportunity to be physically intimidating do not grow on trees in today's era...yet thanks to the playoff success of NHL teams who employ them, demand has never been higher. Insert Barrie defender Kashawn Aitcheson. He's one of the most intense competitors available in the draft this year and he projects as the type of player that every team is going to want on their blueline come time for playoffs.

Entering this season, Aitcheson's third in the OHL (as a late born 2006), the Colts blueliner was seen as a serious draft candidate. He had a strong second year in the league, stepping up to fill the void left by Beau Akey's season ending injury and he was rewarded with a spot on Canada's U18 team that ultimately won a gold medal. However, he was seen as a player with a somewhat limited ceiling due to some offensive limitations and that meant he was pegged as more of a second or third round type.

However, this year, his offensive game took off, even with the return of Akey. This has helped to push him into the upper half of the first round. He ended up finishing the season seventh in defenseman scoring and third in defenseman goal scoring. He took charge of both Barrie's powerplay and penalty kill, helping both units be among the OHL's best. He's still not the world's most creative defender with the puck, in fact, he's at his best when he keeps things simple with quick outlets, point shots, or dump-ins. But, off the puck or as a shooter? He's a major offensive weapon. Firstly, his point shot is a plus tool. He has both a powerful one timer and a quick snapper that he uses to get pucks through traffic. Secondly, he is so good at getting himself into open space as a passing or shooting option. He picks his spots well to pinch or cycle down deep. He slips back door. He jumps up as the third or fourth man in, sliding into open space. These are all the habits of an NHL defender who contributes offensively. There is reason to believe that Aitcheson can be a point producer and triggerman on an NHL powerplay. This has caused a re-evaluation of his upside.

Defensively, he just loves to set the tone physically. He has a habit of throwing huge hits in the opening minutes of games to plant the seed of fear in the opposition, while also motivating his teammates to compete at maximum effort. Aitcheson is aggressive when defending pace, often opting to step up early to close gaps, be it in the neutral zone or at the blueline. He will angle off attackers and eliminate them along the wall. He is not a high-end skater, but it's not an issue either. His four-way mobility is solid, and he rarely gets caught flat footed. However, there is room for improvement in his execution defensively. For as physical as Aitcheson is, he can lose battles for position near the crease or puck battles along the wall. He's more physical in open ice than he is in tight quarters. He also has to exhibit more patience at times, as he can get caught chasing the play, taking himself out of position. In order to take that next step as a true defensive stalwart, that will have to improve.

Additionally, if we're talking about weaknesses, he can be prone to lapses in judgment with the puck in the defensive end. He will have to clean up some of his exits by improving his scanning habits and retrieval routes. However, when you look at the big picture, you have a well-rounded, physical defender who projects as a top four anchor. The improvements made to his game this year suggest that he can continue to improve the weaker components of his game and reach his upside as an all situations type who can help you achieve playoff success.- Otten

20-80 SCALE

50

SKATING

55

SHOT

50

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

65

PHYSICALITY

54.75

OFP

16



JUSTIN CARBONNEAU

BLAINVILLE-BOISBRIAND (QMJHL)



RIGHT WING



6-1



205 LBS



CANADA



NOV-25-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	BLAINVILLE-BOISBRIAND (QMJHL)	68	31	28	59	32
2024-25	BLAINVILLE-BOISBRIAND (QMJHL)	62	46	43	89	61

Justin Carbonneau is undoubtedly one of the most talented and enjoyable players to watch from this draft class. His season may have come to a disappointing end in round one of the QMJHL playoffs after finishing seventh overall in the regular season standings, but Carbonneau boasted some impressive numbers, posting 46 goals and 43 assists in 62 games played. These totals earned him a spot on the first QMJHL all-star team alongside teammate Xavier Villeneuve.

Carbonneau's skills are fantastic. He's able to use his hands, size, and speed cohesively to burst down the wing like a train before using his explosive leg strength to dart laterally. Carbonneau has the raw strength needed to have incredible puck protection, the explosiveness to tear by defenders, and the short-range passing intelligence to execute give-and-gos and drop passes to a high level, keeping opposing teams guessing. One habit he does fall into sometimes is over-relying on his tools, trying to do everything himself. Typically, this will result in Justin putting himself in a poor position, leading to a less dangerous shot or a Hail Mary pass to the slot.

Carbonneau's shot is a laser. He gets his wrist shot off with a crazy quick release, generating tons of power and explosiveness, and on top of that, his one timer is even more thunderous. He has goal-scoring upside in the NHL as a complementary winger and would be a great fit in "Ovi's Office" on an NHL powerplay unit.

In terms of strength, Carbonneau is among the top players in the QMJHL. He bulldozes defenders and withstand hard knocks while keeping control of the puck. He also does his part in making sure defenders are uncomfortable holding onto the puck in the defensive zone, unleashing huge hits, often ending with the opponent multiple feet behind where the hit occurred, on their backs. This nastiness by Justin leads to a lot of penalties for his team and the opponents as they retaliate.

However, Carbonneau can be incredibly frustrating to watch. There are lapses when he is so disengaged he might as well not be on the ice, and in the defensive zone, it often looks like he's just going through the motions, rather than being hungry for a turnover. Additionally, he commits a ton of boneheaded turnovers, mostly coming off the rush. It doesn't matter if his teammate is there or not; the pass is coming. He also struggles with his shooting tendencies. Too often, Carbonneau will gain the line or spend a lengthy amount of time in the offensive zone applying pressure only to spin and fire a predictable shot on net. He will need to refine his offensive game and try to do a bit less, but this predicament can be seen with many skilled junior players who are just used to being "the guy."

Carbonneau's projection is tricky. His tools and playstyle suggest top six upside, but there's a real concern that his hockey sense could hold him back, particularly his inability to elevate his linemates. Offensively, Justin is good at creating space for himself and setting up chances he can finish, but he often relies on teammates to get him the puck, rather than facilitating play for them. At the NHL level, especially in a top six role, he will need to fit into a more cohesive offensive unit where he isn't a one-man show. This is why his best path forward is as a complementary winger who can carry the puck through transition, connect plays, and finish chances, without being the focal point of a line. There is a realistic possibility he could thrive in the bottom half of the lineup, given his tools and incredible strength. It will just require more discipline and a concentrated effort to stay involved.

- Ireland

20-80 SCALE

55

SKATING

55

SHOT

57.5

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

55.5

OFP

17



BRAEDEN COOTES

SEATTLE (WHL)



CENTER



6-0



185 LBS



CANADA



FEB-09-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	SEATTLE (WHL)	64	14	21	35	16
2024-25	SEATTLE (WHL)	60	26	37	63	18

In every draft there are prospects whose value is not reflected accurately whatsoever by their individual statistics, and in the 2025 class nobody is a better example of that lesson than Cootes. Yes, scoring points is incredibly important in hockey, across all leagues and levels, and especially for forwards more than defensemen. But his point totals from this season alone don't tell the story of how he was named the captain of the Thunderbirds before his 18th birthday, or how he always had to face the hardest defending from opponents because he was the best offensive weapon on his team, or how advanced his mental approach and understanding of the sport are, or how he already has NHL-style habits and details in his game. General managers and scouts surely have a ton of appreciation for him and what he brings, because they know that he has more to offer than what he has been able to showcase for the most part so far.

Cootes didn't get to participate in Seattle's 2023 WHL championship run, but he did dress for seven regular season games that year and spent other time around the team, which was chock-full of talented prospects who had already been drafted and went to NHL training camps. He was a regular in their lineup the next year, part of a roster that carried over a lot of players from the prior campaign. All of this is to say that Cootes's environment was a unique and advantageous kind of incubator, and the positive effects that it had on him are noticeable today through his maturity and leadership. It was unsurprising and non-controversial when he was named the captain of Canada's entry for this spring's U18 tournament (which ended up winning gold), even though there were other prospects who also would have been eminently qualified. It also should be noted that he produced better results on the score sheet in that event, just like many expected him to, with a team-high 12 points.

His shot, hands and playmaking are all above average when he's able to actually use them. Where his primary allure comes from, however, is how he's so easily projectable as a two-way center in the NHL. He has the smarts, the commitment and the skill to be a guy that his future coaches like and trust a lot, and he could reach the NHL sooner than most of his peers in his age group because he will probably be ready to be slotted into a depth role at a young age, until he's ready to take on more responsibility.

This description of Cootes might not get a lot of fans thrilled about the idea of him being a high pick for their favorite teams, and that's understandable. His game isn't about excitement or entertainment, and there will probably be other prospects who get picked after him who will go on to become better individual players. He's not uber-talented, and his physical tools are a little lacking. The best-case scenario for his projection is a second-line center, though a more realistic probability is that he ends up as the third man to line up down the middle of a roster. That wouldn't necessarily be a bad outcome for him, since that's still an important role to take on and he seems like someone who could really thrive in it.

Stanley Cup-winning teams almost always have solid depth at center, especially when those centers can do a variety of jobs and bring other intangibles. Cootes might not be an ideal target for every team picking in the back half of the first round, but he sure will be for some of them.

- Neumeier

20-80 SCALE

52.5

SKATING

55

SHOT

55

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

54.5

OFP

18



SASCHA BOUMEDIENNE

BOSTON UNIVERSITY (HE)



DEFENCE



6-2



185 LBS



SWEDEN



JAN-17-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	YOUNGSTOWN (USHL)	49	3	24	27	32
2024-25	BOSTON UNIVERSITY (HE)	40	3	10	13	33

Sascha Boumedienne played out his draft year with the Boston Terriers and progressed to the NCAA title game vs Western Michigan while being one of the youngest players in college hockey. Throughout the year, it was clear Boumedienne went through growing pains as almost all young freshman defenders do when transitioning to the faster, more physical college game. Similar trends can be seen when watching fellow 2025 draft prospects like Dakota Rheaume Mullen and Logan Hensler, who both struggled to find their identities at times.

Boumedienne's skating is his best trait. He looks extremely smooth, effortlessly moving around the ice with superb four-direction mobility. He's put a ton of work into refining his craft in order to build above-average edgework, top speed, and acceleration. He does struggle with rush defence, but that's less of a fault of his feet and more towards his lack of aggressiveness against the rush, as he tends to not commit to the hit/physical engagement enough, allowing attackers to sneak by along the wall. Boumedienne uses his top speed well on the rush to cut through the neutral zone and dump the puck in before recovering it himself. Particularly towards the end of the year and even more so during the Frozen Four, He took more rushes and helped the Terriers establish the offensive zone.

Boumedienne is decently smart and holds his own in the defensive zone, but this season didn't come without its fair share of turnovers. Sascha often seemed a little out of place when dealing with pressure throughout the season and most memorably, when facing the USA at the World U18 Championships. Often, he resorts to banking the puck off the boards or reversing it strongly along the boards to escape pressure despite having such a unique set of tools. Once again, it's important to remember his young age and large responsibility, but Boumedienne will need to utilize his feet more consistently when escaping forecheckers. A good first step would be to turn up the intensity on the breakout by moving with more intention.

Boumedienne's shot is nothing too special. His wrist shot isn't overly powerful or accurate, but it isn't his go-to tool on offense. The more projectable of his two shots is his slap shot, which has decent power. He keeps it low, often challenging the goaltenders' five-hole through traffic. His stick skills are more of a standout trait, as he uses them in collaboration with his feet to execute toe-drag and juke moves on the rush.

Right now, Boumedienne weighs just over 180 pounds and stands at 6-foot-2, leaving room for him to add weight over the next few years to improve his box-out game, to get the strength needed to be more confident when using physicality to rub out attackers along the boards. Boumedienne certainly has an above average level of compete as he often looks to jump up and get involved in play, frequently calling for the puck; sometimes, a little too much as he's prone to an extremely poor pinch here and there.

Going into 2025-26, expect to see great improvements from Boumedienne as he gets more comfortable in his second full season and gains weight, elevating his defensive game. He has top four upside as a puck-moving defenceman and is all around a solid, safe bet to be an NHLer in some capacity. Given Boumedienne's positive development throughout the year, it's not unreasonable to say a team like Los Angeles or Philadelphia could take a shot on him in the twenties. - Ireland

20-80 SCALE

57.5

SKATING

50

SHOT

55

SKILLS

52.5

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

54.5

OFP

19



BEN KINDEL

CALGARY (WHL)



CENTER



5-10



180 LBS



CANADA



APR-19-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	CALGARY (WHL)	68	15	45	60	14
2024-25	CALGARY (WHL)	65	35	64	99	39

Kindel was one of the best-kept secrets in the WHL at the start of the 2024-25 season, but that didn't last very long, as his reputation started to expand in tandem with his prolific point production, which he maintained for his entire campaign and then into the playoffs. While he might be a little annoyed that he was held one mere point shy of the prestigious 100 plateau, he is also probably feeling quite optimistic about his draft stock, because there's no denying that NHL scouts paid clear attention to what he accomplished.

In a way, Kindel's success this season was a pleasantly unexpected surprise. He's a small, slight forward with modest skating ability, so he's not necessarily the kind of player who drives play and puts opponents on their toes. However, he makes up for those shortcomings with exceptional vision and hockey sense. If he's not the single smartest forward available in this 2025 group, he's certainly not far from the top of the podium. There's something undeniably special about the way he sees and processes everything that's happening around him when he's out on the ice, and he enhances that by being able to execute perfect tape-to-tape passes through tight traffic or across long distances.

He does his best work on the powerplay, where he can switch things up as necessary between hanging on the puck and drawing in pressure to create openings, versus making quick, one-touch plays to keep defenders scrambling. And don't underestimate the threat level of his shot, either, both his wrister and his one-timer. The Calgary Hitmen used him in a lot of different ways this season, including as a center and a winger, and there were spells where he was one of the team's most-used forwards on the penalty kill. If he gets to the NHL his role will probably be more one-dimensional and streamlined than that, but it would be foolish to completely discount his versatility being able to translate to higher levels.

Like most prospects with his size and skating profile, there are physical concerns with Kindel. To his credit, he does compete hard and is usually willing to take a hit to make a play. He understands the kind of sacrifices to his body that sometimes need to be made for the greater success of his team. Unfortunately for him, he and his body can't withstand that kind of punishment quite as well as others can. The pace and jump in his game were lower towards the end of the season compared to the beginning, and it looked like certain things had caught up to him and worn him down. These are entirely valid issues that NHL teams always need to factor into their analysis of a prospect, especially knowing how grueling an 82-game regular season can be and how much harder the physical demands become once you get into a long playoff push. Players are always less effective when they're banged up, if they're healthy enough to draw into a lineup at all.

If there's one key thing that all of the scouts who watched Kindel all season long would probably agree on, it's that he's very good at surpassing people's expectations. And whenever a player has proven their capacity to accomplish that it becomes difficult to be too skeptical about them, regardless of other variables that would normally stir up doubt. Successful small forwards like Vincent Trocheck, Mikael Granlund and Mats Zuccarello are an exception, not the rule, but they provide realistic best-case-scenario comparisons for Kindel, and that's a worthwhile bet to make at the right point in the draft. - Neumeier

20-80 SCALE

50

SKATING

55

SHOT

55

SKILLS

60

SMARTS

50

PHYSICALITY

54.5

OFP

20



CAMERON REID

KITCHENER (OHL)



DEFENCE



6-0



185 LBS



CANADA



APR-08-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	KITCHENER (OHL)	49	2	21	23	17
2024-25	KITCHENER (OHL)	67	14	40	54	44

Skating is the foundation of Reid's game and that makes him the perfect modern day NHL puck moving defender. Reid has an effortless, but explosive stride that allows him to build speed quickly. This is a major asset for the transition game as Reid consistently leads the charge out of the defensive end, rarely getting hemmed in by the forecheck. His hands are high end too, working in sync with his feet to make him elusive as he navigates the neutral zone to gain the offensive zone. Reid is also a smooth lateral mover, confident and strong on his edges. This makes him a good powerplay quarterback who can evade pressure to help get pucks to the net or to the middle of the ice. His mobility also makes him a strong transitional defender. He maintains gaps well and rarely gets caught flat footed, allowing him to keep attackers to the perimeter even without sizable reach or strength.

The Kitchener Rangers had a very strong year in the OHL this season and Reid was one of the reasons for that, emerging as the team's top defenseman. No question, he was one of the league's most improved players from the year prior. He came into the season with high expectations after a solid rookie year, and Reid not only met those expectations, he surpassed them.

Not only is Reid a strong skater, but he's also a highly intelligent and detail-oriented player. He rarely makes mistakes with the puck and is calculated in his approach. He picks his spots well to jump up or pinch. He consistently executes clean breakouts and has great scanning habits in the defensive end. He has an active stick and clogs passing lanes through the middle of the ice. He wears an "A" in Kitchener already because he plays a mature game and leads by example.

The biggest concern regarding Reid is in the defensive end. He's not an overly physical player. He's not an overly aggressive player. He's not blessed with great size or strength. NHL teams may have concerns over his ability to defend effectively at the higher levels. There's no question that he needs to get stronger to win battles along the wall more consistently. He can also get outmuscled near the crease and fail to tie up forwards in the home plate area. As mentioned, his skating ability can be a major asset for him defensively, but that advantage will be neutralized at the NHL level without becoming a little more difficult to earn space against.

Additionally, we have also heard some concerns that teams may view Reid as a jack of all trades type of defender who could fail to find a permanent role at the NHL level. He didn't have a terrific playoffs for Kitchener, despite the team making it to the Western Conference finals; in a tighter checking environment he failed to be as effective offensively, while also struggling defensively at times. We would argue that Reid has the offensive upside to be a competent and skilled puck mover and powerplay quarterback, who at the very least can be a sheltered bottom three defender. We would also argue that Reid's IQ and three zone awareness does give him a leg up and that as he matures physically, his defensive game and effectiveness should become more consistent.

Best case scenario, Reid could be a consistent 40+ point, top four defender; his offensive upside is among the highest of those considered first round candidates. Worst case scenario, Reid could struggle to carve out a permanent role thanks to some physical deficiencies. He's going to take some time to develop, but we like the combination of mobility and intelligence. - Otten

20-80 SCALE

57.5

SKATING

50

SHOT

55

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

50

PHYSICALITY

54.125

OFP

21



CARTER BEAR

EVERETT (WHL)



LEFT WING



6-0



180 LBS



CANADA



NOV-05-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	EVERETT (WHL)	67	25	32	57	26
2024-25	EVERETT (WHL)	56	40	42	82	77

You'd be hard-pressed to find a single NHL scout who doesn't appreciate Bear and the presence that he brings to a roster. He exemplifies being a "heart and soul" player better than almost anyone else in this entire draft class, bringing a determined and high-spirited game that is clearly infectious for his teammates.

The Everett Silvertips finished the 2025-26 season with the best record in the WHL, and an argument could be made that he was their single biggest source of that success, as he led the team in both goals and points and was an emotional firing pin for them. The playoffs could be chalked up as more proof of that, as his team never quite looked right and was upset in the second round while he was forced to sit out with a lacerated achilles. While it would have been extra exciting for scouts to be able to watch him in the postseason, given the way that he carries himself and how it translates to a seven-game series, there is still more than enough evidence from his 56 regular season games to get a firm understanding of who he is and what he brings to the table.

Bear is a feisty, fearless winger who supplies a ton of energy and tenacity every time he steps on the ice. He attacks the offensive zone with reckless abandon, but in all the best ways. He engages puck battles like it's game seven of the Stanley Cup Final, and while he's often at a disadvantage of strength and reach in these situations, he's very smart about using his body to gain superior positioning. He likes to get right into the face of his opponents and will happily get under their skin. Most of his 40 goals this season were earned the blue-collar way, going hard to the net and doing everything in his power to ensure that his stick is the first one on a loose puck, but he also displayed a lot of pure finishing prowess, with some beautiful top-corner snipes coming off of both his forehand and his backhand. His relentless mindset also benefits him well defensively, as he backchecks hard to his own zone and is aggressive and disruptive as a penalty killer.

As good as all of this sounds, and as likeable as Bear is, there are still some questions that need to be asked about how repeatable and translatable these results will be. His high degree of success this season did come a little out of nowhere, as he was never really considered a top prospect for his age group in any of the previous years. Early on in the year the Silvertips were steamrolling over everybody in an unusually weak U.S. Division thanks to their unparalleled depth, but after the calendar flipped to 2025 and other teams shored up their own rosters Everett's momentum slowed down a lot, and so did Bear's individual production. It's almost like he ran out of gas because of his constantly rambunctious approach. While he's undeniably a physical difference-maker at his current level, will that be the same case in the NHL, where opponents are significantly bigger and stronger? At a height of 6-foot-0 and roughly 180 pounds, it's not like Bear is built like Tom Wilson. If his physical play takes a step back it's hard to see his skill pick up that slack, as his skating is choppy and unbalanced at times, and he has difficulties getting his feet and hands to work in conjunction while he's in full motion.

Bear could become the next Seth Jarvis or Brendan Gallagher, or he might end up closer to the next Luke Kunin or Kole Lind. The expected likelihood of each outcome could vary quite a bit from team to team. - Neumeier

20-80 SCALE

50

SKATING

55

SHOT

52.5

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

60

PHYSICALITY

54

OFF

22



BLAKE FIDDLER

EDMONTON (WHL)



DEFENCE



6-5



220 LBS



CANADA



JUL-09-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	EDMONTON (WHL)	63	5	10	15	12
2024-25	EDMONTON (WHL)	64	10	23	33	36

Sometimes, describing a prospect as “boring” is intended as more of a compliment than as an insult. After all, there are times where what a team needs and wants the most is to slow down their opponents and zap them of their energy, especially when it’s a road game and there’s a loud home crowd to contend with. There really is an art to being able to affect a game that way, and there can be a lot of value in the players who can do it well. That’s a lesson that Fiddler has already learned at his young age, and his ability to turn that knowledge into action is the main reason why NHL teams are so interested in him and view him as one of the top blueliners available in the 2025 draft.

Longtime NHL journeyman Vern Fiddler carved out an unlikely career for himself as someone who was really good at making life harder for opposing teams, and his son Blake is now following in his father’s footsteps, albeit at a different position and while putting a different kind of spin on things. Whereas his dad was energetic and scrappy and exasperating, he’s a lot more calm and calculating, though he can also still be a real thorn in your side if you poke the bear a little too much. He’s kind of like a big, wet blanket that can cover up and put out fires that get too close to the section of the ice that he is responsible for. His reach, stick precision and clean crossovers help him defend the rush, and he’s strong enough to contain or box out his man when play goes deep into his defensive end.

He’s grown up with and been around NHLers all his life, and that can be seen in how composed and efficient he is while doing this kind of work, rarely getting flustered, succumbing to pressure or taking bad penalties. There isn’t much to write home about for him right now when it comes to offensive contributions, but he will occasionally jump into the play with a burst of speed or show off some slick stick language, and that part of his game could still grow some in the coming years as the Oil Kings continue to use him more and more on their powerplay.

Now, in fairness, it’s time to outline the downsides of Fiddler’s boring style of hockey. For a guy of his size, it would be nice if he got his hands dirty a little more often and played a little harder on his opponents, but that doesn’t appear to be part of his persona. He could stand to play with more fire and intensity at times, to get himself more accustomed to having that in his game for times when the on-ice temperature rises for both teams. There just isn’t really enough there right now, and not enough that seems like it will come later, to project him ever becoming a top-pairing defender at the NHL level. But could he reach a point where he’s a rock-solid guy on a team’s second pair, an ideal partner for someone who is more dynamic and better up the ice, and a go-to penalty killer? Absolutely. If anything, that’s the most realistic outcome for how his career will unfold.

Fiddler is the type of defense prospect who could go on to play 1,000 games in the NHL and be a core piece of some great teams, even without ever garnering any individual awards or accolades. All 32 organizations would happily add someone like that into their systems. - Neumeier

20-80 SCALE

52.5

SKATING

50

SHOT

50

SKILLS

60

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

54.125

OFP

23



ERIC NILSON

DJURGARDENS (SWE J20)



CENTER



6-0



165 LBS



SWEDEN



MAY-11-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	OREBRO (SWE J20)	29	6	9	15	14
2023-24	OREBRO (SWE J18)	15	10	16	26	8
2024-25	DJURGARDENS (SWE J20)	37	12	26	38	56

Many scouts wondered if the off-season move to a stacked Djurgården J20 roster would give young Nilson the opportunity to shine, or if he'd simply fade into the background. The Canadian-born son of former NHLer Marcus Nilson forewent being "the guy" in Örebro in order to play closer to home. It's safe to say the move paid off in spades for both team and player.

To those who paid attention, Nilson was the versatile, unsung hero of the top nine. He played anywhere and everywhere he was needed. He took on both defensive roles down the lineup, scoring roles in the top six, as well as significant special teams' minutes. He had an ever-rotating cast of wingers, and he found chemistry with all of them. His play was instrumental in helping Djurgården secure a Junior SM sweep, winning both the J18 and the J20 championships. Save for a tough January/February, Nilson was a consistent high-level performer in all three zones for his team both domestically and internationally for Sweden.

He's a natural center whose game is built upon his exceptional hockey sense and his drive. He wants to win and hates to lose. He'll work his tail off to get the puck and get it moving the other way. Nilson's ability to read and anticipate play has been the backbone of his exceptional two-way game since before his draft year. He's hyper-vigilant on the forecheck. He can read the intentions of puck carriers and strip them of the puck, even at their own blue line, and swiftly counter-attack.

The biggest improvement from last year to now is the application of that drive and quick-thinking to his on-puck game. His ability to read defenders and quickly get around them through quick skating or deceptive fakes and handles has totally elevated his playmaking ability from good to great. He leans more set-up man than finisher, but Nilson has a deceptively lethal shot. While the goal totals aren't high, he consistently finds excellent looks. Those shots will fall eventually, and he'll be able to rip the puck harder once he matures physically.

That same physical immaturity is what kept him out of pro games despite playing at a skill level well above the juniors. In his four HockeyAllsvenskan games, he was consistently pushed to the outside and erased along the wall due to his lack of physical strength. This was a sticking point even in J20 action, even with good body positioning habits. He's going to have to put on a significant amount of muscle to hit his NHL ceiling. However, the outlook on Nilson is optimistic for two reasons. Firstly, his father Marcus was 6-foot-2 and well over 200 pounds during his playing days, so there's a chance those genes are passed on to Eric. Second, he's recently committed to MSU for the 2025-2026 season. It's much easier to put on weight on a college schedule than a junior team one, and MSU has state of the art athletic facilities. While there is always a risk that he remains relatively light and can't reach his full potential, the upside with Nilson is massive. If all goes according to plan, he projects as a middle six center who can play in all situations. - Robbins.

20-80 SCALE

55

SKATING

52.5

SHOT

55

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

54.625

OFP

24



JAKOB IHS WOZNIAK

LULEA (SHL)



RIGHT WING



6-2



190 LBS



SWEDEN



FEB-01-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	LULEA (SWE J20)	36	22	28	50	18
2024-25	LULEA (SWE J20)	40	23	34	57	18
2024-25	LULEA (SHL)	13	1	1	2	0

Ihs-Wozniak played an absurd amount of hockey over his past two seasons, across a wide range of different leagues and tournaments, with extensive travel and multiple trans-Atlantic flights connecting that dizzying array of appearances. Along the way he collected a bunch of medals for his trophy case, set a new scoring record for under-17 players in Sweden's top junior league (only to have it get broken just one year later), and got to celebrate a Swedish Hockey League championship (albeit while only seeing the ice in one game). At some points, he was pretty incredible. At a lot of others, he was the exact opposite. Trying to piece together what all of this means into a cohesive projection or analysis and then comparing that up against the same kind of conclusions for other top prospects in this year's draft, is no simple task.

In terms of individual traits, there's a lot to like about Ihs-Wozniak. He's a tall forward with a long reach, and he's good at handling the puck out from his body. It's rare to see him really undress an opponent, but he's pretty adept at keeping pucks under control and moving them into shooting positions, which is extra great for him because his shot is his single best tool. His wrists fly off his stick with a ton of accuracy, and the number of prospects in this draft class who can hammer a one-timer better than he can could be counted on one hand.

His skating mechanics are sound, and he can cover ice with a minimal amount of pushes because of his stride length. He's not a distinctly ferocious hitter, but he makes sure to finish his checks. While he probably ends up as a winger long-term, he did play center at different points this season, including the J20 playoffs. After two straight years of leading Luleå's junior team in scoring he'll probably be with their pro team full-time starting in the fall.

And yet, despite all of his success and all of those positive attributes, he can still be a frustrating player to watch at times. He goes long stretches, and sometimes even entire games, where he's quiet and not very impactful. The application of his different skills usually comes in singular bursts, as opposed to him blending things together. As of right now he's not very inside-driven, and he doesn't get as much work done as he should in the home-plate area, probably because he's never really needed to up to this point. Watch him play when things aren't clicking and it can seem almost impossible that he produces as much as he does.

The million-dollar question for scouts, though, is this: how much of this stuff is fixable? A lot of it certainly looks like it should or could be. Sometimes big scoring forwards keep gaining co-ordination as they grow further into their bodies and improve their conditioning, which leads to better skill blending. For others, they eventually learn the importance of going to the dirty areas and how to utilize their physical advantages there. This latter point is especially important for many European players, given the differences in ice sizes and how the game is played on each side of the pond. If he can already score this much in spite of those faults, just how dominant could he become if the light bulb finally does go off? That's a very tantalizing thought.

Ihs-Wozniak hasn't generated much draft buzz this season in the public sphere, but there's a good chance that some teams have been watching him like hawks for quite a while and are willing to take a surprisingly big swing on him because the potential payoff could be so massive. - Neumeier

20-80 SCALE

52.5

SKATING

50

SHOT

50

SKILLS

60

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

54.125

OFF

25



LOGAN HENSLER

WISCONSIN (B1G)



DEFENCE



USA



6-3



200 LBS



OCT-14-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U18 (USDP)	61	4	28	32	26
2024-25	WISCONSIN (B1G)	32	2	10	12	27

We headed into the 2024-25 season viewing the righty shot defenseman as not only one of the best American players in this draft, but perhaps one of the top three defensemen overall. His optimal build and solid four-way skating ultimately combine with two very solid years at the USNTD program, which concluded with a six-point performance at the 2024 U18 Worlds, to give us every reason to believe he was yet another in what's becoming a long list of solid NHL defensemen hailing from the US' top developmental factory. But this season as a true college freshman has given us pause in being too optimistic about his overall upside. Like James Hagens, we saw that older, more physically developed competition is something that Hensler has needed to adjust to and could, at times, be a bit overwhelming. Unlike with Hagens, the sound offensive contributions Hensler made with the USNTDP in recent years were not something he was able to apply at the level that was expected.

Looking into the future, this doesn't necessarily need to be understood as anything other than the typical learn-from-it roadblock that true freshmen tend to encounter in what has been becoming an ever-older NCAA field of competitors. Despite very mortal offensive numbers, Hensler did rush the puck on plenty of occasions. He did take shots, hard or placed, from the point and he did show aggressiveness in keeping pucks in at the blueline. He was a hound in pursuing pucks and going into battles for pucks along the boards. There were plenty of sound and credible decisions made in dishing off breakout passes or dumping the biscuit in when it was the right call. We did not see him stray from trying to impact games and there wasn't a lack of confidence involved in him going about his business. His effectiveness was another issue as it all just didn't culminate in the kind of results we'd seen in recent years. But it still looks like it will with time.

On the other hand, he spent a whole heck of a lot more time in his own zone than he probably had at any other time in his young career. There was some chasing around involved and dealing with heavy, tenacious forechecks that, at times, got the better of him. Some of the slick little breakout plays that had looked so smooth in past years were no longer working as often and instead, leading to unnecessary turnovers. The coaching staff gave him top four ice time along the way and he definitely got to learn on the fly, but be it coughed up pucks on the opponent's blueline or tough 'n tiring back-n-forth boardwork in his own zone, it was often a learning process that demanded all his effort. He definitely put in the work. There was no shying away in his game, even if the effectiveness left something to be desired here and there.

Hensler now enters the draft as one of the oldest players available, but he does so as a WJC gold medalist having been the youngest blueliner representing Team USA this past winter. His role there and with Wisconsin will only become more considerable next season. In essence, he brings quiet two-way ability and an always ready physical (not overbearing) game to the table. Although he has a few years before he's an NHL topic, he's very projectable as an NHL player. There's a lot of calm collectiveness in his breakout game and that'll get better with adjustment to every station along the way.

Come the draft, Hensler is a probable first rounder and feels like a safe pick as a future number 3-5 NHL defenseman in the modern era. - Landvogt

20-80 SCALE

55

SKATING

50

SHOT

55

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

54.5

OFP

26



JACK MURTAGH

U.S. NTDP U18



LEFT WING



6-1



200 LBS



USA



AUG-22-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U17 (USDP)	53	16	21	37	22
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	56	22	31	53	36

From start to (nearly) finish, Jack Murtagh was one of the engines that drove the U.S. NTDP this season. It wasn't an easy season for the program. They lost players to college. They lost players to injury. Their defense really struggled through the opening stages of the season. Through it all, Murtagh was a shining light who often willed the U18 team to victories. The only blemish was a poor conclusion to the year that saw him underperform at the U18's, where he looked noticeably fatigued and lost some playing time to the additions from the NCAA and the USHL. Hopefully, for Murtagh's sake, NHL teams look at his entire body of work this season where he was a standout.

Murtagh, a Boston University commit, has a lot of different levels to his game; he's multi-faceted and versatile. On puck, Murtagh tries to push pace with speed and can beat defenders wide to the net. He builds speed quickly with strong bursts and can score from anywhere thanks to a high-end shot and scoring instincts. His wrister and one timer make him a threat from both the slot and the half wall; he projects as a powerplay weapon at the NHL level. Off the puck, Murtagh brings a consistent effort level in all three zones. He forechecks hard. He will fight to gain or maintain possession along the wall. He supports defenders deep in the defensive zone and works to get pucks out. He could end up developing into an excellent penalty killing option at the higher levels. With the ability to push pace, strong scoring upside, and good off puck habits and compete level, Murtagh could develop into an excellent complementary piece on a scoring line; think of the impact a guy like Artturi Lehkonen has had in Colorado or Zach Hyman has had in Edmonton/Toronto.

The million-dollar question is can Murtagh drive play offensively at the higher levels or is he destined to strictly be a complementary piece who excels as a support player? Despite Murtagh's quickness, he can struggle at times to maintain possession or corral passes cleanly at top speed. He can also be prone to some poor offensive zone turnovers from trying to force plays downhill. He's not an extremely creative player; if he doesn't beat defenders with speed, he's often left to chip pucks in or he turns the puck over. Murtagh needs to learn how to vary pace as an attacker and continue to add the strength necessary to be more effective working the cycle. We'd also like to see him get to the net more consistently. Despite owning a quality shot, his goal scoring numbers the last few seasons have not been high. He has the frame, and he's not soft. It's about refining his approach.

And he'll do just that at the college level with Boston University, the recent runners up to Western Michigan as National Champions. Mustagh should be an immediate middle six winger and powerplay option for the Terriers. Chicago Blackhawks first rounder Sacha Boisvert is headed to BU as a transfer and Murtagh could end up being a good fit alongside him as a freshman. He'll likely need a few years at the college level to add strength and to learn to refine his decision making, with and without the puck. Three or four years down the line, Murtagh could be a potential 30 goal scorer and top six option for an NHL team and for that reason, he is a worthy first round candidate this year.- Otten

20-80 SCALE

55

SKATING

55

SHOT

55

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

50

PHYSICALITY

54.25

OFP

27



JACK NESBITT

WINDSOR (OHL)



CENTER



6-5



185 LBS



CANADA



JAN-12-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	WINDSOR (OHL)	58	9	9	18	58
2024-25	WINDSOR (OHL)	65	25	39	64	74

When the OHL Coaches Poll for this season was announced, Nesbitt was voted the most improved player in the Western Conference, an honor he deserved, and an honor that helps to explain his rise to potential first round selection this year. Last season, as an OHL rookie on a bottom dwelling Windsor team, Nesbitt struggled immensely. He had trouble keeping pace. His physical engagement lacked consistency, which was concerning given his size. He struggled making skilled plays. He ended up finishing the season minus 32.

Yet, there was a lot of hope in the scouting community that he would turn things around as a sophomore and end up firmly on the draft radar. Big pivots with athletic tools do not grow on trees. With the right adjustments, both in mindset and in execution, Nesbitt could be a terrific player.

Needless to say, he made those adjustments. His skating gained a step. He became more confident handling the puck. His physical engagement increased, and he embraced his role as a big body presence, both near the crease and along the wall. His two-way effort and awareness improved considerably, to the point where, even early on in the season, coach Greg Walters was using him to close out leads late in games and on the penalty kill. The transformation of Nesbitt into an elite, two-way second line center for the Spitfires was one of the main reasons they were able to go from worst to first in their division.

One of the most polarizing components of Nesbitt's game is his skating ability. Among the scouting community, there has been significant discussion about it being a weakness. We would both agree, and disagree. In a straight line, and without the puck, Nesbitt actually skates well and has significant power for a bigger forward. Earlier this year, at the OHL Top Prospect's event, he was tracked as having among the greatest speed bursts of any player. This allows him to have a positive impact in puck pursuit and allows him to beat defenders to spots. However, he does need to improve his ability to build speed with the puck. Additionally, his agility and edges could be better to make him more elusive inside the offensive zone, and less predictable when driving through the middle. As Nesbitt's conditioning improves, it will be interesting to see the impact that has on his overall skating profile.

As an offensive player, Nesbitt has embraced his role as a net front presence. He has excellent hands for redirects or to finish off second chance opportunities. Not only does he project as an immovable object from that spot, but he's an intelligent off puck player who anticipates plays well to know when to get to the net and when he's needed to support the cycle. Nesbitt also excels as a playmaker, especially coming off the wall or from behind the net. He has a great passing touch and can draw extra attention because of his size and protection ability.

For Nesbitt, it's all about perceived upside. Does he have the skill or creativity to be a top six NHL player? Or does he project as more of a bottom six center who can take some tougher defensive assignments and develop into a role player? Both obviously have value, but the latter may not be the type of player you feel comfortable using a first round selection on. It is important to keep in mind that bigger forwards like Nesbitt often take longer to develop their true skill and coordination. When you look at how much he has improved in the last calendar year, there is a level of excitement based around the fact that he could continue an upward trajectory.- Otten

20-80 SCALE

52.5
SKATING

50
SHOT

55
SKILLS

55
SMARTS

55
PHYSICALITY

53.75
OFP

28



COLE RESCHNY

VICTORIA (WHL)



CENTER



5-11



180 LBS



CANADA



APR-06-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	VICTORIA (WHL)	61	21	38	59	14
2024-25	VICTORIA (WHL)	62	26	66	92	44

Here's a quick story that succinctly epitomizes who Reschny is as a hockey player. He came into this season with high expectations, after leading Victoria as their number one center last year as a 16-year-old and then winning gold with Canada at the 2024 Hlinka Gretzky Cup. While he certainly wasn't bad to start off his 2024-25 campaign, both he and his coaches agreed that he had more that he could offer, that he could find a higher level in his game. So, he dug in, went back to work with a heightened sense of urgency as wind in his sails, and accomplished exactly what he set out to do.

Nobody else in the entire 2025 class did more to solidify their draft stock in the final months than Reschny did, torching WHL defenses and goalies all the way into the second round of the playoffs, and then joining his Canadian mates immediately afterwards to secure another gold medal, this time at the U18s. His character is off the charts, and that's the secret sauce that brings everything else in his game together so harmonically.

Reschny is a smart, humble kid with small-town roots and a childhood that included him helping his family farm goats. He's wired a certain kind of way, and that way shines through in his on-ice success. He's deceptively strong for a smaller player, especially in his lower body, and he's gritty and determined when it comes to hanging onto pucks. His hands play a major role in that as well, with an incredible combination of finesse alongside strength on his stick. He's actually very Sidney Crosby-like in how he handles and protects the biscuit.

When it comes to problem solving he's a master, utilizing fantastic patience and spatial awareness to find solutions even under duress and through heavy traffic. He's very cerebral when he's attacking offensively, making it hard for defenders to contain him because he's usually thinking two or three steps ahead of them. He leans playmaker much more than shooter, as his shot is a bit of a muffin and isn't a threat from outside the circles.

It also needs to be mentioned just how good he is as a matchup center. He's a monster in the faceoff dot (winning 56.4% of his 1283 draws in the regular season), he's a committed penalty killer, and right now he can hold his own going toe-to-toe against other top centers (which included Spokane Chiefs superstar Berkly Catton this past spring in a hard-fought playoff series).

There are so many different things to love about Reschny, which is why it's so unfortunate that the things that could hold him back are largely outside of his control. To put it plainly, there aren't a lot of elite NHLers who are his size and have his skating profile, and that raises questions about just how effective he will be once he reaches that level. The NHL is the fastest hockey league on Earth, but the last few years of the playoffs have also shown that physical play is an essential ingredient for clubs with championship aspirations, which is causing changes to how rosters are constructed, and which types of players are prioritized. There isn't a scout in the league who doesn't respect the hell out of how Reschny plays and what he brings to the table, and most would agree that he'll land in the NHL in some capacity, but at the same time, they might feel an unavoidable pull to prioritize other top prospects ahead of him.

Regardless of where Reschny does end up getting picked, the team that made the call will undoubtedly be proud to add someone like him into their organization. - Neumeier

20-80 SCALE

50

SKATING

50

SHOT

55

SKILLS

60

SMARTS

50

PHYSICALITY

53.75

OFF

29



MILTON GASTRIN

MODO HOCKEY (SWE J20)



CENTER



6-1



195 LBS



SWEDEN



JUN-02-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	MODO HOCKEY (SWE J20)	41	7	9	16	8
2024-25	MODO HOCKEY (SWE J20)	40	18	24	42	18
2024-25	MODO HOCKEY (SHL)	8	0	0	0	2

Long before this season, Gästrin has been the epitome of hard work and reliability. He's a leader who leads by example. He's worn the "C" for Sweden at every level he's played at. He's already played a full year of J20 hockey before his draft year, where he was mostly a defensive forward still getting accustomed to his teenaged body. The questions heading into the year were all concerning his offensive upside. After he put up 10 points in five games at the Hlinka Gretzky, those questions went from "can he score?" to "how much will he score?"

Gästrin quickly became one of the more exciting prospects to watch in 2025. For starters, he can skate like the wind. He's easily one of the quickest skaters in a straight line in the draft class. He takes away time and space from opposing puck carriers on the forecheck in a flash. He wins footraces to loose pucks with a resting heart rate. He effortlessly and efficiently moves pucks from coast to coast and he springs free for at least one breakaway opportunity every game. His strength in transition is probably his most NHL-projectable tool. One of the biggest improvements in his game from last year to now is his ability to control pucks and make plays at high speeds. While it's still an area of his game that he's working on, it's what has led to his offensive explosion this season. Gästrin has made tons of highlight reel passing plays by blowing past defenders in the neutral zone and putting on a little shimmy-shake to freeze a second defender or the goalie before sliding the puck over to a trailing teammate. He makes it look easy, but it really isn't. Gästrin doesn't have the quickest or heaviest shot, but what he lacks in shot quality he makes up for in shot quantity. Given his development curve, I wouldn't be surprised if his shot is the next offensive tool that takes a step.

The downsides are perplexing. Gästrin is a pacey forechecker, ultra-competitive, and has a pretty good frame, but he doesn't have much of a physical game. Given his speed and work ethic, you'd think he'd try to line a guy up every now and then, but nope. He barely finishes his checks. You don't need to hit everything that moves to be competitive or successful in the NHL, but you can't get by without a physical game. It's kill or be killed. In general, his two-way game leaves something to be desired, which will need improvement if he wants to project as a center in the NHL. Somewhat paradoxically, he's a hard worker, yet is content to let his teammates do the work to recover the puck while he waits for an opportunity to sprint up ice and get some offence going. He's a smart, competitive kid with a wealth of tools at his disposal. The potential is there. He just has to tap into it.

As of right now, Gästrin projects safely to a bottom six role. He has the size, the skating, the smarts, and the work ethic to fill some type of role in the NHL. Whether or not he'll be a center will depend on how strong his defensive game becomes over time. Conversely, how high up in the lineup he plays at will depend on how strong his offensive game becomes over time. It'll be made abundantly clear once he starts getting consistent reps against men. Despite getting relegated from the SHL to the HockeyAllsvenskan, the assumption is that Gästrin will stay with the club. He's a local kid and an academy product, just like his father Magnus in the 90s-2000s. In fact, the lower level of competition should make it easier for him to acclimate to a role on the senior team. - Robbins

20-80 SCALE

55

SKATING

52.5

SHOT

52.5

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

54

OFP

30



JOSHUA RAVENSBERGEN

PRINCE GEORGE (WHL)



GOALIE



6-5



190 LBS



CANADA



NOV-27-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	W	L	GAA	SV%
2023-24	PRINCE GEORGE (WHL)	38	26	4	2.46	0.907
2024-25	PRINCE GEORGE (WHL)	51	33	13	3.00	0.901

In 2020, Russian phenom Yarsolav Askarov was picked 11th overall, making him a part of an exclusive club of goalies drafted in the first round. The unorthodox southpaw goalie made headlines for being an otherworldly athlete with a big frame. When you look at Joshua Ravensbergen, you can't help but see a Canadian Yaroslav Askarov. The two goalies share numerous similarities, from the play style to the frame, and even to the hand with which they catch. While Ravensbergen may not be to the same level as Askarov in his draft year, it's still very likely that the North Vancouver native will be the first to join the exclusive club of first-round goalies since Cossa and Wallstedt in 2021.

Joshua Ravensbergen has the best raw upside of any goalie since Sebastian Cossa. Towering at 6-foot-5, his level of athleticism shouldn't be possible. His skating, quickness, agility, flexibility, and explosiveness are hardly ever seen in undersized goalies, let alone those at his height. With his frame and mobility tools, the ice and net he can cover is practically as good as it gets. Combining his frame, athleticism, mobility, and flexibility with his extreme competitiveness, you have a goaltender who covers more net and ground than most goaltenders who've ever stepped foot on the ice.

Even with his impressive tools and gifts, it's worth little without any technique or intelligence. Thankfully, Ravensbergen is not hindered by either. He's an aggressive goalie, which has its pros and cons. An aggressive style gives him an advantage in playing the shooter, cutting down the angle much better, allowing for easier saves. On the other hand, this aggressiveness can cause goalies to struggle with changes of direction and lateral plays because they'll have to travel farther. But given Ravensbergen's longer legs and speed, he can easily compensate for the increased travel time.

Furthermore, he has still shown good depth management at times and is also consistently on angle and square to the shooter. On top of his positioning and framing, Ravensbergen has some of the best hands in the class. He reads shots very well and can react extremely quickly, keeping his hands loose and active, making a plethora of huge glove saves throughout the year.

When it comes to intelligence, Ravensbergen has shown great flashes, but he still has mental lapses. He can sometimes just misread the situation and make poor save selections, but he's also shown a great aptitude for predicting passes and adjusting to compensate. It enables him to utilize his mobility much more efficiently, rather than as his only option. More experience can refine his play reading to reduce his lapses.

Ravensbergen isn't immune to having flaws. There are some pretty serious issues in his game that hold him back from being worthy of being picked as high as Askarov was. Given his competitiveness and athleticism, it's not unusual for Ravensbergen to be a highly erratic goalie. While his base technique is very strong, he lacks the physical composure to keep it in check at all times. His structure can easily break down, often in high danger situations, where he will open up and allow some very weak goals. It's led to him being a very inconsistent goalie, reflected in his numbers in the WHL this year. You get a lot of shades of Binnington, a very athletic goalie who shows up in big games but can be very inconsistent and allow weak goals. It's not an impossible issue to overcome, but it will take time to develop Ravensbergen because of it. There's serious potential to become a starter and even be an elite goalie in the NHL, but because of the erratic, inconsistent nature, Ravensbergen could take a bit longer to develop, just like Jordan Binnington. - Crouse

20-80 SCALE

60

ATHLETICISM

55

TEMPERMENT

52.5
VISION55
TECHNIQUE

50

REBOUND CONTROL

50

PUCK HANDLING

54.125
OFP

KURBAN LIMATOV

MHK DYNAMO MOSKVA (MHL)



DEFENCE



6-3



195 LBS



RUSSIA



MAR-20-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	MHK DYNAMO MOSKVA (MHL)	30	1	5	6	24
2024-25	MHK DYNAMO MOSKVA (MHL)	46	8	15	23	44
2024-25	DYNAMO MOSKVA (KHL)	1	0	0	0	0

Kurban Limatov came into this season with lots of untapped potential. Last year, he showed off brief flashes of high-end transporting, shutdown defense, and the occasional high danger setup. All of that plus a bulky 6-foot-3 frame gives us a very intriguing defensive prospect. To start the 2024-25 season, Limatov was not our top ranked defenseman in Russia due to many of his decision-making habits but there was an underlying feeling that he may be holding back and his true talents were ready to burst out for a dominant season. He silenced any doubts very quickly, surpassing all competition and proving himself to be a dangerous two-way defenseman with a high ceiling.

One of the first things that stands out about Limatov's game is his skating. For such a big player, he moves very smoothly up ice and is able to generate an impressive amount of speed. He has started to develop into a very strong transition defenseman. He makes smart decisions, quickly reading the ice in front of him and deciding to switch lanes or pass up ice depending on the situation. His speed, agility, quick hands, and decision making make him a difficult player to challenge in transition. Once he learns to take the puck towards the net and create offense with more confidence, he could become a very dangerous transition weapon in the NHL.

The timing to all of his cuts, fakes, and pivots are very impressive. He reads opponents body positioning very well and exploits those that give him the opportunity to do so. He has begun to learn how to drag guys to a spot and quickly shift the opposite way, leaving them in his dust.

Defensively, Limatov made drastic improvements to his game this year, becoming one of the toughest defenders to compete against in the MHL. He uses his size and strength well to bulldoze his opponents, angling them to the wall before sealing players off with thundering checks. His timing has looked very good, cutting across to cover potential threats, poking pucks away when the opportunity presents itself, and stepping up on opponents in transition with impressive results.

Playmaking is an area of his game that will need some more work, but we feel he deserves more credit than he is given. He does a good job of reading what's in front of him and making quick decisions based on all available options. Off the rush, he is able to quickly switch lanes before opponents have a chance to apply pressure. In the offensive zone he keeps his head up and is able to find the appropriate option more often than not.

His decision making still needs some work. At times he picks his head up in transition or walking across the line, spots a good option and hits them with a pass in a timely manner to create chances but these moments are not too common right now. He often attempts to force plays through opponents, and his shot selection needs work.

There are many things that Limatov still has to improve. He will need to work on his playmaking and shooting abilities to help his offensive consistency. With that being said, he has constructed a great base to build upon and has shown a lot of potential to continue to improve in all aspects of his game. If all goes well, Kurban could become a true two-way threat at the NHL level and a potential steal in this year's draft. At his peak, Limatov could be a skilled puck transporting defenseman with the ability to create offense through his passing, and shut down plays in his own end with strong positioning, quick footwork, and physical play. A good comparable is Moritz Seider. - Lawrence

20-80 SCALE

57.5

SKATING

47.5

SHOT

52.5

SKILLS

52.5

SMARTS

57.5

PHYSICALITY

54.25

OFP

32



BILL ZONNON

ROUYN-NORANDA (QMJHL)



RIGHT WING



6-2



185 LBS



CANADA



OCT-03-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	ROUYN-NORANDA (QMJHL)	68	18	40	58	28
2024-25	ROUYN-NORANDA (QMJHL)	64	28	55	83	32

Bill Zonnon's production took another jump this year, placing him 7th in QMJHL scoring, just one point behind potential top five pick Caleb Desnoyers. Zonnon's progression was very visible throughout the year, where his tenacity translated to an impressive will to improve his skating. While Rouyn-Noranda's playoff run ended in just four games to the eventual champions, Zonnon gave an impressive two-way performance throughout and proved he's a player you want in the lineup for a deep run.

Zonnon entered the year with concerns about his wonky skating style, and while it's still unorthodox, he's looking faster and more fluid. It's enough to complement his hunger for chasing down pucks, helping him spring into corners and use body positioning to shield opponents off, starting the breakout. His stance is very upright, which can limit his stability despite his well above average strength, but this is something that the team drafting Zonnon must accept as this far into his development, reworking his entire posture isn't an option, and he's able to make it work.

Zonnon's smarts are very impressive. He reads the offensive zone well with the puck and can facilitate plays by opening passing lanes himself. He can throw defenders off with spin moves and no-look passes while maintaining accuracy and touch on his feeds. Zonnon's shot has also been a problem for QMJHL goalies this year, as his release is sharp and accurate, generating solid explosiveness. Many of his goals came as a result of him picking a spot he saw was open and wiring the puck past the set goaltender. I can see a powerplay role in Zonnon's future at the next level as a player who jumps on rebounds quickly and acts as a bumper down low with crafty passes.

Another feature that will make Zonnon an effective NHL middle six forward is his physicality. He has a very active motor and doesn't stop moving even after throwing a hit. Bill proved it was impossible to escape his combination of strength and hunger for turnovers (and he still has room to grow stronger). Zonnon uses his physicality on the puck to shield off opponents and make his plays safely, taking advantage of his larger frame and reach. The Huskies had Zonnon playing over 30 minutes per game regularly and handled the task well, showing endurance and the will to compete even while likely tired. In the pros, Zonnon likely won't be required to play more than 20 minutes per night, allowing him to play even harder as the game goes on.

At times, Zonnon's lack of high-end skills becomes quite apparent. For the most part, he's good at masking this with his smarts and size, making quick passes to get out of pressure. However, he's not the type of player to beat defenders with his hands alone and often struggles when he must attack defenders head-on without resorting to spinning and shielding the puck.

At the NHL level, Zonnon projects to be a 3C. He has the defensive capabilities, smarts to facilitate play for bottom six shooters, and a sneaky shot to complete his status as a dual threat on offense. A knock on Zonnon is that he won't ever be a very refined player due to his posture and body type, and that does limit his upside as the game gets faster. Nonetheless, his understanding of how to use his frame on the puck and eagerness to do everything makes him a solid option to bolster a future middle six with a late first round pick. - Ireland

20-80 SCALE

52.5

SKATING

55

SHOT

52.5

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

57.5

PHYSICALITY

54.25

OFP

33



20-80 SCALE

57.5
SKATING50
SHOT50
SKILLS55
SMARTS55
PHYSICALITY53.625
OFF

MALCOLM SPENCE

ERIE (OHL)



LEFT WING



6-1



190 LBS



CANADA



SEP-22-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	ERIE (OHL)	66	19	43	62	26
2024-25	ERIE (OHL)	65	32	41	73	57

To quote DJ Khaled, all Spence does "is win no matter what." As a U16 player he won an OHL Cup with the Mississauga Senators. Last year, he won gold medals at the Hlinka/Gretzky Cup and at the U18's, scoring the game winner at the Hlinka. In this year's OHL playoffs, he was phenomenal for the Otters in helping them upset the Saginaw Spirit in round one. While his production and play through three seasons in the OHL may not have progressed to the level some expected it would, you simply cannot argue against the fact that Spence is a big game player who elevates his game when the stakes are high.

At his best, Spence is a competitive two-way winger who projects as a terrific, middle six complementary piece at the NHL level. He's an explosive skater and he has great instincts in all three zones. When you combine his power skating ability with his frame, you have a player who is difficult to separate from the puck and who finds a lot of success driving to the net and playing through the middle of the ice. When he has played internationally for Canada, Spence has excelled in a shutdown, defensive role. That size and skating combination makes him a potentially elite defensive forward, as he smothered and shadows the opposition's best.

The concern we have is that his on-puck play and playmaking ability never took a next step in the OHL, and this points to some possible limitations in production at higher levels. However, he is moving to the NCAA next year, leaving Erie to play with Michigan. The NCAA will be a great new test for him and his style of play and skill set will fit in exceptionally well with the Wolverines. Even if his upside may be capped, he should be a slam dunk NHL player in some capacity.- Otten

34



20-80 SCALE

50
SKATING50
SHOT55
SKILLS57.5
SMARTS57.5
PHYSICALITY54.25
OFF

COLE MCKINNEY

U.S. NTDP U18



CENTER



6-0



200 LBS



USA



MAR-16-07

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U17 (USDP)	44	12	19	31	24
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	11	1	0	1	2
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	60	27	34	61	61

Through the middle part of the season, leading up to the U18's, McKinney really stepped up for the NTDP, emerging at the team's number one pivot. He went on a torrid scoring stretch in the USHL, at the Nations tournament, and through the latter half of the U18's NCAA exhibition schedule. Heading into the IIHF U18's, McKinney was on a clear upward trajectory towards locking in a place in the first round. However, like his often linemate Jack Murtagh, McKinney had a disappointing U18's that saw him lose time and responsibility to other additions to the NTDP's lineup.

The big debate surrounding McKinney relates to his upside. Skeptics point to a lack of standout trait, in combination with a lack of elite size or skating ability and question whether his skill set is truly translatable to the NHL level. Believers in McKinney point to his marked improvement over the year, in addition to his high IQ and mature two-way game, having faith that he can develop into a versatile, middle six pivot.

We fall into the latter category. McKinney is competitive. He shows strong three-zone awareness and was the best defensive forward for the NTDP this year. He has good vision as a playmaker, especially out of the cycle. He routinely makes quick decisions with the puck; his overall management is excellent. The skating does need to tick up a bit, but the other components are there for him to become a Scott Laughton type. He will head to the University of Michigan, where he should slowly become a go-to player for them over two or three years with the program. The focus on improved strength and conditioning at the NCAA level should do wonders for his consistency.- Otten

35



20-80 SCALE

55 SKATING	50 SHOT	57.5 SKILLS
55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	54.125 OFP

WILL MOORE

U.S. NTDP U18

CENTER

6-2

180 LBS

USA

MAR-24-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U17 (USDP)	50	23	20	43	20
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	64	27	32	59	8

William Moore's season with the USNTDP has come to a close, and he remains in the early second round range. Moore projects to fit into an NHL middle six as a center who can play reliable defence and create some offense with skill moves.

Moore's skating is by no means explosive, and his top speed is just okay, but he excels in his cutbacks and use of deception when skating. Moore often drives into the zone before making a sharp change in direction to evade defenders, seemingly coming out of nowhere.

Moore's skills are refined. He almost always has a clear goal to achieve and a spot he wants to get to. Moore's dekes allow him to slip by defenders and change pace, opening opportunities for cross-crease passes. His smarts help him to find complex lanes through defenders, which make him a dangerous threat with the puck anywhere in the offensive zone, particularly down low, as he's had success finding feeds to the slot. Moore's above-average smarts also enable him to patrol the slot and pick off loads of cross-seam passes. His ability to turn the puck over on defence makes him a good fit as a 3C.

William does have some concerning holes in his game. He isn't very strong or mean, he doesn't play with high intensity, and he isn't an ultra-dynamic player. It's very concerning to see these traits considering he's likely to be in a defensive role, as it's rare to see bottom six centers who don't possess top-end speed, high intensity, or a physical edge.

While his upside is high, offering promise to be a skilled, smart 3C, he will need to ramp up his level of compete in the coming years at Boston College. - Ireland

36



20-80 SCALE

50 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS
55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	53.25 OFP

WILL HORCOFF

MICHIGAN (B1G)

CENTER

6-5

205 LBS

USA

JAN-23-07

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U17 (USDP)	54	11	8	19	44
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	28	8	6	14	34
2024-25	MICHIGAN (B1G)	18	4	6	10	6

It's hard to imagine a better familial advantage that a prospect could have than growing up as the offspring of former NHLer Shawn Horcoff. Not only was the elder Horcoff one of the smartest players in the league back in his heyday, the moment that he hung up the skates he immediately began working in player development for the Detroit Red Wings, before then moving on to coaching and management. He even coached his son for a couple of years. Will looks very different on the ice than his dad did, though, and he has a genuine shot to become an even better player.

A lot of other prospects out there would kill to have Horcoff's toolkit. He towers over almost everyone he plays with or against, he covers ice easily with his long legs, he has soft hands and a good feel for the puck, and his shot is pretty snappy. Playing against him must be tiresome, because at times it seems like he's everywhere at once. The scariest part is that he's clearly still growing into his body and has a lot of remaining runway for improving his balance and co-ordination.

There are still stretches where all the different synapses aren't firing at once, and his modest point production over the past couple of years could be pointed to as evidence of that, he's already so mature and coached up that that he gives off the impression that he's going to figure everything out and put all the pieces together sooner rather than later.

The sky is the limit for Horcoff, and even if he only gets part of the way toward reaching his ceiling he'll still likely settle in as a valuable and rare kind of player in the NHL. - Neumeier

37



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING52.5
SHOT55
SKILLS50
SMARTS55
PHYSICALITY53.5
OFP

HENRY BRZUSTEWICZ

LONDON (OHL)



DEFENSE



6-2



200 LBS



USA



FEB-09-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	LONDON (OHL)	52	2	4	6	20
2024-25	LONDON (OHL)	67	10	32	42	77

The London Knights model of development is pretty tried, tested, and true. Last year, Brzustewicz was sparingly used as an OHL rookie on an OHL Championship team, even seeing time at forward to get into the lineup. This year, Brzustewicz was a top four defender who routinely saw action alongside Sam Dickinson on an OHL Championship team. The development was significant.

The younger brother of former Kitchener standout and Calgary Flames prospect Hunter Brzustewicz, Henry is a different kind of defensive prospect. While Hunter was more cerebral in nature, Henry is more raw and athletic. He's a more explosive skater at the same age. He's a more physically engaged defensive player at the same age. He's bigger and longer. However, he can struggle with his decision making, on and off the puck, which was not something that his brother often struggled with.

In a lot of ways, the full scope of Henry Brzustewicz's upside is not yet known. There is a future where he develops into a top defensive prospect out of the shadows of Sam Dickinson and Oliver Bonk. At the beginning of the year, Brzustewicz was doing a great job running the London powerplay without Dickinson in the fold. He has a big point shot. His puck skill and ability to slip coverage are underrated. He has the intensity, mobility, and length to be a defensive standout. It's just about cleaning up those mental errors. Making quicker decisions with the puck. Chasing the play less. If you really trust the Hunter's, you are likely to believe Brzustewicz has among the highest overall upside of any defender available this year. He's going to have the keys to one of the top programs in junior hockey as early as next season. - Otten

38



20-80 SCALE

57.5
SKATING57.5
SHOT55
SKILLS50
SMARTS45
PHYSICALITY53.625
OFP

CAMERON SCHMIDT

VANCOUVER (WHL)



RIGHT WING



5-8



160 LBS



CANADA



JAN-19-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	VANCOUVER (WHL)	59	31	27	58	25
2024-25	VANCOUVER (WHL)	61	40	38	78	44

If there was one prospect who needed to have an exceptional showing at this spring's U18 tournament to assuage the concerns of scouts, it was Schmidt. But unfortunately for him, that's not how things unfolded. The waterbug winger was simply alright more than he was anything else, and as a result his draft stock likely kept sliding in the eyes of NHL teams, like it steadily has all season, as they continue trying to find the right nuance in how to evaluate him.

Something that everyone can agree on is that Schmidt is a prospect with some legitimate talent. The way that he can explode down the wing, hone in on the goalie like a missile and bury a perfect shot never gets old to watch. He's a high-end finisher in the offensive zone, whether that means firing wrist shots or one-timers with velocity or using his lightning-quick hands in tight to open up holes in goalies.

What's holding him back isn't so much his tiny stature, per se, but rather the incomplete or missing traits that guys like him need to counterbalance their size. In other words, there isn't much of a "B" game to speak of. His compete level fluctuates too much, possibly because he runs out of gas quickly from his frequent moments of high exertion, and when he's playing slow he can be a flat-out liability since his off-puck awareness isn't overly sharp. It's almost like he needs to be going a million miles per hour in order to be effective, but that's not a sustainable way to be successful, especially at the professional levels.

Schmidt could conceivably become an NHL-caliber goal-scorer with enough time and the right hands-on assistance, but the risk might be too high for many teams to use a high pick on him. - Neumeier

39



20-80 SCALE

55	50	50
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	55	53.5
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

CARTER AMICO

U. S. NTDP U18



DEFENSE



6-6



230 LBS



USA



MAR-15-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U17 (USDP)	41	1	13	14	30
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	13	0	3	3	10

A massive stay at home defensive prospect, listed at 6-foot-6, 230 pounds, Amico lost the majority of his draft year to a leg injury. The Boston University commit seemed to be slowly emerging as a go-to defender for the NTDP before the injury, so the timing couldn't have been worse for the scouting community. Amico was becoming more comfortable and confident with the puck and was beginning to showcase some offensive upside when the injury occurred.

However, the offensive side of things, even with some untapped potential, is likely never going to be Amico's bread and butter. The main attraction here is Amico's combination of size, mobility, and physical intensity. He swallows up time and space and is especially dominant below the goal line, where he rarely loses a one-on-one battle for the puck. He initiates contact and is an intimidating presence to match up against. Amico also shows good defensive instincts, using his length to be disruptive to passing and shooting lanes. His backwards and lateral quickness/mobility are not always the cleanest, but for a defender of his size, he moves quite well and that makes him tough to play through too. There is certainly some fear that the knee injury negatively impacts the further development of his mobility, but that's likely not a major issue for most clubs.

Had Amico continued to play the year, he probably would have been a minute eater by the U18's and it would have been interesting to see just how much his puck management and passing ability would have improved. However, there's enough here to select him highly based on his defensive upside alone.- Otten

40



20-80 SCALE

55	50	50
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	57.5	53.375
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

ETHAN CZATA

NIAGARA (OHL)



CENTER



6-2



180 LBS



CANADA



MAY-29-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	NIAGARA (OHL)	62	7	10	17	42
2024-25	NIAGARA (OHL)	68	21	34	55	72

There's a very clear path to the NHL for someone like Czata and it's why we have him ranked so aggressively. He checks a lot of boxes. He's one of the most intense physical competitors available at the center position this year. He's versatile, with the ability to play both center and the wing or play in any situation thanks to a well-rounded skill set. He's an intelligent off puck support player who is active in puck pursuit and who likes to play through the middle of the ice. He's also an underrated playmaker who has good vision and who can play with pace or slow the game down; he's adaptable. Lastly, he's a strong skater who builds speed very well when attacking North/South.

Are there upside concerns? Most certainly. Czata can struggle to make skilled plays when he's playing with pace and that points to some skill limitations. His shot isn't a terrific weapon currently, which could hold back his offensive production if he's playing the wing at higher levels. He's most effective attacking in straight lines and there isn't a ton of variance in the way that he creates offense.

Yet, players like Czata are valuable to teams with playoff aspirations. Maybe he's only a third line type at the NHL level, but he's going to be well liked by his coaches. He's strong. He's physical. He's quick. He is effective at both ends. He can play the net front on the powerplay or anchor a penalty kill. This is the kind of player NHL organizations give up quality draft picks for come deadline time, so why not just draft them? Additionally, there is a chance that we're underselling his offensive potential because he is an intelligent playmaker. A strong U18's for Canada in a supporting role really helped to showcase Czata's value.- Otten

41



20-80 SCALE

52.5

SKATING

55

SHOT

55

SKILLS

50

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

53.375

OFF

VACLAV NESTRASIL

MUSKEGON (USHL)



RIGHT WING



6-6



185 LBS



CZECH



APR-06-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	HC SPARTA PRAHA (CZECHIA U17)	27	24	19	43	26
2024-25	MUSKEGON (USHL)	11	0	0	0	4
2024-25	MUSKEGON (USHL)	61	19	23	42	51

Vaclav Nestrasil's second season in North America was much more fruitful than his transitional season last year, where he went pointless in 11 regular season games. This year, he got to display his toolkit much better, scoring 19 goals and tallying 23 assists before scoring at nearly a point per game pace during Muskegon's playoff journey.

Nestrasil offers a combination of skill, compete, size, and an above-average shot to boot. For being a larger guy at 6-foot-6, he looks exceptionally fluid and can dance around defenders by being light on his feet and using his hands. Vaclav loves hitting and won't pass up an opportunity to lay the body on defenders after they make a breakout pass; although, the hits aren't the hardest yet. He also has a bit of a devious streak, giving casual shots to opponents as he skates by. Once Vaclav reaches his NHL weight, he could be a menace of a checking forward given his will to be involved.

Nestrasil gets quick elevation on his shot, helping his effectiveness in tight and on rebounds. His wrist shot has a snappy release, allowing him to freeze opposing goaltenders. He also has natural goal-scoring instincts when going to the net, finding lanes that leave him open for rebounds and tap-in goals.

Nestrasil's playmaking game is ultimately what will limit his ceiling. He seems panicky with the puck and forces far too many tight windows. He also lacks consistent pass execution, making his playmaking game even more untranslatable. A lot of the time, he seems to just not put enough mustard on his passes, which doesn't bode well for quick-paced games.

At the next level, Nestrasil projects as a middle six energy forward that can contribute some goals and provide grit. He won't be relied on as much to make creative plays and will likely be more of a passenger on his line. - Ireland

42



20-80 SCALE

52.5

SKATING

55

SHOT

55

SKILLS

55

SMARTS

50

PHYSICALITY

53.625

OFF

RYKER LEE

MADISON (USHL)



RIGHT WING



6-0



185 LBS



USA



NOV-8-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	SHATTUCK-SM 18U PREP (USHS-MN)	57	45	54	99	24
2024-25	MADISON (USHL)	58	31	37	68	18

Ryker Lee has undergone a large growth spurt over the past couple of years, but it certainly hasn't harmed his production. The Madison forward scored 31 goals and 37 assists through 58 regular-season games, finishing fourth in the entire USHL.

Lee has a great shot, creativity, and hands. He elevates the puck very well in tight, suiting his hands, which he uses to toe drag past defenders and drive to the middle. Ryker has displayed the ability to place his shots accurately in many different situations, whether he's at a standstill, moving laterally, or in stride. His release stands out as one of the more explosive in the class.

Where some players would settle for a poor shot, Ryker uses fakes to break past traffic and extend plays. He may commit a large number of turnovers, but as the main offensive threat on his team and a young player learning how to apply his skillset, there's truly an x-factor in his creative playmaking abilities.

The two main criticisms of Ryker Lee are in regard to his defensive game and his skating. While not awful, right now his skating doesn't allow him to blow by his defenders after making a deceptive move, which, unless improved, may limit him to more of a complementary player. Ryker's defensive game was atrocious throughout most of the year. It looked like he didn't care and wouldn't help block lanes in the slightest. He needs to simply put more effort into defence.

Ryker Lee has two large hurdles to overcome, and maybe with an outstanding skating coach and improved competitive mentality, he can become a top fifteen player from this class a decade down the road. However, these issues can't be minimized as they are two of the tougher aspects to fix in development, making him a bit riskier than some of the guys in our first round range. - Ireland

43



20-80 SCALE

50	47.5	62.5
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
57.5	50	53.5
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OPP

ALEXANDER ZHAROVSKY

TOLPAR UFA (MHL)



RIGHT WING



6-1



165 LBS



RUSSIA



FEB-22-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	KHORS PODOLSK (NMHL)	35	25	22	47	18
2024-25	VITYAZ PODOLSK (RUSSIA REGION U17)	16	19	13	32	0
2024-25	TOLPAR UFA (MHL)	45	24	26	50	30

Alexander Zharovsky has emerged as one of the most intriguing players in this year's draft. Despite being a rare case of a player entering the MHL as a rookie in his draft year, Zharovsky played like a veteran, dominating play like few others can at this level. He put up 50 points in 45 games in his first season and looks as if there are many more levels that he can take his game further.

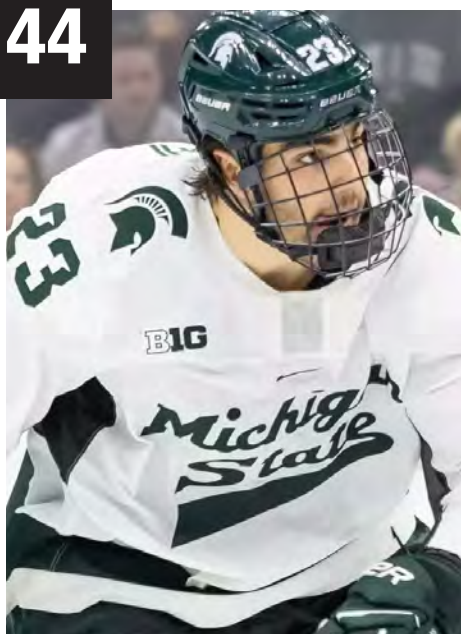
Zharovsky has some of the best hands in this draft class, able to quickly adapt to coverage and escape from difficult situations with ease. His reaction times and control are well above average. Very few players can navigate themselves out of the most difficult situations as gracefully as he can, executing each play in the most nonchalant way possible. Every stickhandle seems perfectly mapped out, moving at the right time to avoid checks and slip through multiple opponents into space to make a play.

He does a great job of blending his dekes and cuts around the offensive zone with precision passing that directly leads to offensive chances. He has a great understanding of his options and uses his skill to manipulate defenses into opening up passing lanes to create for his teammates. He is a smart player who understands how to use his strengths to drive play.

Skating and shooting are weak points in his current game. His skating is quick enough to beat defenders and circle the zone at the MHL level, but improvements will need to be made to his straight-line stride and agility to continue to mimic this production at higher levels. On the shooting front, Alex can pick corners well in tight but anything from distance quickly turns into a weak, wobbly puck that gives goalies little trouble.

Zharovsky's dominance this season has been very impressive. What makes him such a promising player is the fact that he has found offensive success while still looking raw with many remaining levels he can take his game. Once he improves his skating and adds a more lethal shot to his dangerous stick handling and playmaking talents, Zharovsky could turn into an elite top six weapon at the NHL level. - Lawrence

44



20-80 SCALE

50	55	55
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	55	53.75
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OPP

SHANE VANSAGHI

MICHIGAN STATE (B1G)



RIGHT WING



6-3



210 LBS



USA



OCT-11-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U18 (USDPA)	59	12	11	23	56
2024-25	MICHIGAN STATE (B1G)	37	6	10	16	30

Vansaghi had an excellent freshman year at Michigan State, out of the spotlight of the U.S. NTDP. Last year, as part of the U18 team, Vansaghi was relegated to a fourth line role by season's end and his offensive game stagnated. This year, he blossomed under Adam Nightingale as a Spartan, emerging as a reliable top nine forward, showcasing some intriguing pro tools and power forward upside. He started the season exceptionally well with 11 points in his first 15 games but then hit a bit of a wall to close out the year, scoring only five points in the last 22. That consistency will need to be ironed out.

However, Vansaghi has a clear understanding of how he needs to play to be successful. He's relentless in pursuit of the puck. He drives through opposing players and uses every bit of his 6-foot-3, 210 pound frame to his advantage. He laid some absolutely monster hits this year on the forecheck. He consistently gets to the net, be it with the puck or without it. Lastly, he flashed some nice offensive upside as a playmaker this year, shielding the puck to draw in attention before dishing off to set up chances. He can play with pace, and he can grind it out.

In saying all this, we're not likely talking about a forward with significant scoring line upside as an NHL player. There's room for improvement in his skating, especially in terms of explosiveness and top speed. However, he plays a heavy game that should endear him to his coaches and make him a very versatile pro. It's easy to see Vansaghi developing into a nice complementary piece in the middle six, so long as his offensive tools continue to blossom at Michigan State. Even if that doesn't happen, there's a future for him as a Garnet Hathaway type who can be very effective with more limited minutes. - Otten

45



20-80 SCALE

52.5
SKATING55
SHOT50
SKILLS52.5
SMARTS57.5
PHYSICALITY53.25
OFF

JACOB ROMBACH

LINCOLN (USHL)



DEFENSE



6-6



210 LBS



USA



APR-01-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	LINCOLN (USHL)	59	3	6	9	14
2024-25	LINCOLN (USHL)	57	3	15	18	57

Rombach doubled his point totals from the year prior in Lincoln, but overall, his game remains defence-first. His shot didn't quite find success, but on select occasions, it showed some upside by getting pucks low and on net from rebounds.

Jacob Rombach is a monster. His overwhelming reach and 6-foot-6, 210-pound frame make him an imposing presence on the ice. Rombach is the perfect example of a player who knows how to use his tools to the greatest extent. His stick defence is extremely advanced and has considerable strength, allowing him to disrupt attackers with ease and keep them to the outside. When in close range in front of the net and along the boards, Rombach uses his strength to pin attackers in an inescapable prison. Rombach clears the net front with ease, and the scary part is that he can still add fifteen-plus pounds to his frame to get even stronger.

While he's a larger guy, Rombach moves well. He may not look the most polished and at times looks heavy-footed, but Rombach's skating is good enough to close gaps, spring into board battles, and maintain coverage of skill forwards despite their best efforts to evade him.

Rombach's breakout game is that of an efficient modern defenceman. When left unpressured, he likes to carry it up to the blueline and hit daring passes to catch his teammates in stride, tearing through the neutral zone. He isn't afraid to rim it around or hit his defenceman-to-defenceman looks when under stress and overall will be a net positive with the puck in his zone at the next level.

While Rombach's defensive game is super well developed, the same can't be said for his offensive upside. He doesn't find dangerous lanes in the offensive zone. This is what ultimately makes him more of a complementary defenceman who will need an offensively dynamic partner should he be utilized in more than a bottom pairing role. - Ireland

46



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING55
SHOT50
SKILLS55
SMARTS52.5
PHYSICALITY53.375
OFF

LUCA ROMANO

KITCHENER (OHL)



CENTER



5-11



175 LBS



CANADA



JUN-25-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	KITCHENER (OHL)	56	10	12	22	8
2024-25	KITCHENER (OHL)	67	25	26	51	22

For Romano, it's all about adding strength and improving his conditioning, which will in turn improve his consistency. He has all the tools, but he still gets overwhelmed physically at the OHL level and that limits his impact.

The Kitchener Rangers forward has a very well-rounded game. He's an excellent skater who is both explosive and agile. This gives him the elusiveness he needs to counter his lack of size. Romano is also a very intelligent player. He makes great reads with the puck and operates well as a playmaker, both in transition and out of the cycle. He also supports the play well in all three zones and has a clear understanding of his role as a pivot. One of the more underrated components of Romano's game is his shot. His wrist shot is excellent; the release is deceptive and he generates good velocity from both a stand still and in motion.

Romano is also a fairly tenacious player who does project as a high energy type moving forward. The issue is that he's not currently strong enough to be successful playing that way. His effort on the forecheck and backcheck is sound, but he can get outmuscled or overwhelmed in retrievals or tie ups. This lack of strength also affects him on the puck, where he can be kept to the perimeter and easily neutralized. There are also questions about his true high end puck skill and creativity, given that he can lose control when playing with pace. Is that related to his lack of strength or is it indicative of a player whose feet move faster than their hands? Given some of these issues, there is prevailing thought that Romano may project better on the wing as a pro. All that said, this is a player with NHL upside who has some intriguing tools. Patience will just be the key.- Otten

47



20-80 SCALE

50	52.5	57.5
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	50	53.5
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OPP

IVAN RYABKIN

MHK DYNAMO MOSKVA (MHL)

CENTER 5-11 210 LBS RUSSIA APR-25-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	MHK DYNAMO MOSKVA (MHL)	44	24	34	58	40
2024-25	MUSKEGON (USHL)	27	19	11	30	70
2024-25	MHK DYNAMO MOSKVA (MHL)	15	1	11	12	26

It wasn't too long ago that Ryabkin was mentioned in the same breath as Michkov and Demidov. On his best days, there's plenty of flash 'n dash, some sweet snipes, subtle vision, and even a penchant for solid checks, particularly when he finds himself backchecking. And when you put up the amount of points he did in the MHL as a 16-year-old, then eyebrows get raised. Yet he remains one of the most controversial prospects in this draft and it's very hard to get a read on what's going to come of him in the long run because he's gotten heavier, looks less athletic, and was clearly lacking in the conditioning department. Nonetheless, he's got some spectacular hands. He can do some special things with the biscuit and can be very slick and skillful around the net. There's a power forward aspect to him as well, which includes getting his nose dirty in the corners and slot and using that solid core to assert himself.

This season kicked off as one of considerable concern. He saw time in three different leagues, but primarily in the MHL again, where he wasn't even generating a PPG pace and thus, a far cry from the season prior. His two KHL games aren't worth mentioning (combined TOI of 2:06) and at the VHL pro level, he scratched together two points in eight games. There was concern about work habits behind the scenes. A jump to the USHL in January saved his season. After just three goals in his first five games, the points started coming. He became a rabid goal scorer (after looking like a playmaker in Russia) and played a key role in Muskegon's USHL championship with his 16 points in 14 playoff games. He'll be drafted with the knowledge that there's considerable potential if all the noise on the side is or can be made a thing of the past. - Landvogt

48



20-80 SCALE

52.5	55	55
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
52.5	52.5	53.5
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OPP

BEN KEVAN

DES MOINES (USHL)

RIGHT WING 6-1 180 LBS USA JAN-03-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	DES MOINES (USHL)	59	24	33	57	10
2024-25	DES MOINES (USHL)	51	13	30	43	43

Ben Kevan's point totals took a slight dip in his sophomore USHL year after earning All-Rookie Team honours the year previous. Kevan ultimately still led a Des Moines squad that failed to qualify for the playoffs in scoring rate and played with Team USA at the U18s.

Kevan's game has the potential to be well rounded with deceptive passing, quick feet, and an extremely quick release. Ben always knows where his teammates are when set up in the offensive zone and uses his hands to cut to the middle of the ice before completing no-look passes back to a shooter. Kevan's skating works extremely well with his hands. After a burst of speed to cut through the neutral zone and smoothly changing directions, evading defenders with his hands, he then sets up in the offensive zone by circling back. His toolkit on the puck is quite creative, regularly making USHL defenders look silly, however, there is some concern over whether his current puck handling habits will translate against better defenders.

Kevan's shot has the potential to be very good. He has a sharp, quick release that generates a good amount of power. However, he isn't the most accurate yet, and with nearly six shooting attempts per game, he misses the net a ton and doesn't always force goalies to make saves when he does get it on net.

Kevan also pesters defencemen trying to start the breakout with a relentless onslaught of stick checks and lifts. This is a trait that, along with his speed, will endear him to future coaches looking for a penalty-killer that offers some offensive upside.

Kevan is still very raw. He needs to work on displaying more consistency in his level of intensity in his end and refine his stickhandling to become more projectable instead of making three-plus moves to beat defenders. Kevan's strength is already visibly weak for his size in the USHL, which does hurt his projection as a bottom sixer. - Ireland

49



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING50
SHOT55
SKILLS55
SMARTS52.5
PHYSICALITY53.625
OFP

MASON WEST

FARGO (USHL)



CENTER



6-6



220 LBS



USA



AUG-03-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	EDINA HIGH (USHS-MN)	30	15	23	38	12
2024-25	EDINA HIGH (USHS-MN)	31	27	22	49	10
2024-25	FARGO (USHL)	10	1	8	9	6

The natural and most obvious comparison here is Anders Lee. Like Lee, West is both a high-end football and hockey recruit who needs to make a decision on his playing future. However, there are reports that West has chosen hockey and will make a decision soon as to an NCAA commitment (perhaps even committing after this was written and published).

As you might gather, West is a phenomenal athlete and that shines through on the ice. He's a behemoth at 6-foot-6 and over 200 pounds, but he moves well. He builds speed well and is agile on his skates, making him a tough cover for even USHL defenders, where he closed out the year. West also flashes high end skill, especially in transition. He can drive the net and can beat defenders one on one, both to the outside and to the inside. In his late season USHL stint, his playmaking ability really shined through. He was a dominant player along the half wall and deep in the offensive zone, working to extend plays and showing excellent vision with the puck exiting the cycle. His shot isn't yet a major weapon, but given his size, one has to wonder if it could be one day.

Perhaps the scariest thing in regards to West is that he's actually one of the youngest players available this year with an August birthday. The physical components of his game are still inconsistent. He could still stand to get to the net more consistently and he's not a big hitter or heavy player in puck pursuit. But after he fills out? Or after he gains more confidence and experience playing at higher levels? Look out, because the upside is immense as a power forward type. If an NHL franchise is willing to wait out his longer development path and is confident in his physical tools, he could easily come off the board on day one.- Otten

50



20-80 SCALE

50
SKATING55
SHOT55
SKILLS50
SMARTS60
PHYSICALITY53.5
OFP

DANIIL PROKHOROV

MHK DYNAMO ST. PETERSBURG



RIGHT WING



6-6



220 LBS



RUSSIA



AUG-27-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	MHK DYNAMO ST. PETERSBURG (MHL)	36	7	9	16	4
2024-25	MHK DYNAMO ST. PETERSBURG (MHL)	43	20	7	27	14

There might not be a single prospect in this class who had their every game and every shift scrutinized on video as closely as Prokhorov did, because not only would he already be an enormous wildcard under ideal scouting circumstances, him being a Russian who played in his home country all season meant that scouts could barely see him live. And he's the kind of player that needs to be seen an extra amount before a secure analysis of him can be formed, if one can even be formed at all.

At his best, Prokhorov is a delightfully chaotic player to watch. He's a grizzly bear of a winger who is always a threat to maul the opposition, whether that's with a goal or a body check. He possesses an aggressive mindset and will instinctively hunt down his opportunities or create them himself through sheer force of will. He plays in rigidly straight lines, and even though he's pretty uncoordinated with his hands and feet overall there are still moments where he can really dazzle on the rush, like blowing past a defender with a slick dangle and then taking the puck hard to the net with the momentum of a full-speed freight train. When he throws a hit, which is often, he can send his target all the way out to the nosebleed seats. Make no mistake, most of his shifts are still pretty ugly to watch, but a lot of it should work itself out naturally as he continues learning the mechanics of his own body.

Prokhorov is truly one of a kind for this draft class. Heck, there aren't many players like him out there anywhere, and that's what makes him so fascinating. Teams will have a hard time passing up on someone who could become a useful weapon that nobody else has in their arsenal. - Neumeier

51



20-80 SCALE

57.5	55	55
ATHLETICISM	TEMPERMENT	VISION
52.5	50	55
TECHNIQUE	REBOUND CONTROL	PUCK HANDLING
54.375		
OFF		

JACK IVANKOVIC

BRAMPTON (OHL)

GOALIE 5-11 180 LBS CANADA MAY-22-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	W	L	GAA	SV%
2023-24	MISSISSAUGA (OHL)	25	14	5	2.72	0.915
2024-25	BRAMPTON (OHL)	43	25	12	3.05	0.903

At 5-foot-11, the cards have been stacked against Jack Ivankovic from the very beginning. While his size may not directly negatively affect his play, there is a large dismissive stigma surrounding goalies of that stature, limiting opportunity and therefore development.

Despite being a prime candidate for being overlooked, Ivankovic has been blessed with opportunities. Not only has he played for every junior national team he's been eligible for, but Brampton also traded the year older Ryerson Leenders, one of the best goalies in the OHL, to give the reins to the 17-year-old Ivankovic. Not to mention his recent commitment to the University of Michigan, where he'll likely start next season.

It's all for good reason, too. Ivankovic is an incredible athlete, an elite skater, has a very impressive glove hand, is very reliable positionally, has a high level of anticipation, and is an elite puck handler. Where he faults is where you see many young athletic goalies stumble. He has very poor rebound control and can be a bit erratic and inconsistent. Thankfully, his erraticism and poor rebounds can generally be fixed with time.

The inconsistency, on the other hand, can stick with a goalie forever. Ivankovic can be very prone to bad games, evidently shown in his rather pedestrian OHL numbers, which don't match his skill level. But when hot, Ivankovic can be nearly unbeatable. He's shown many times how he can rise to the occasion with his international play and steal some OHL games too.

While the concerns in Ivankovic's game are valid, his raw upside in being a potential starter is undeniable. With the level of opportunity he has already been shown and a great developmental path ahead of him, he's easily worth a second-round pick. - Crouse

52



20-80 SCALE

55	52.5	55
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	50	53.875
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

ADAM BENÁK

YOUNGSTOWN (USHL)

CENTER 5-7 165 LBS CZECH APR-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	HC PLZEN (CZECHIA U20)	29	8	21	29	18
2024-25	YOUNGSTOWN (USHL)	56	17	42	59	36

It's been a long time coming, but mighty mite puck wizard Adam Benák is finally up for grabs at the NHL draft. We've been watching Benák's playmaking magic at the Hlinka Gretzky Cup since 2023, where he's had many dazzling moments in racking up 21 points in 10 overall games, making him the tourney's historical top scorer. Moreover, that's where we first found out that he's a brutally merciless power play specialist who can make opponents look silly with his slick mitts and what seems like eyes on all sides of his head. But be it beautifully placed set-ups or the odd crafty snipe in between, the overall burning question has always been whether a playmaker his size will survive at higher levels?

After three seasons of toying with the Czech Republic's U17 league, two of which also included PPG performances at the U20 level, Benák got into 18 pro games in Czechia's top league in his DY-1. Just two assists and a -4 there showed us that his physical immaturity was going to hold him back against bigger, stronger competition. Fortunately for the scouting community, the soft-handed center made the decision to spend his draft year with Youngstown of the USHL, where he could more aptly display just how far his skills and mechanically sound skating can take him. Despite struggling a bit out of the gates going 2-6-8 in 12 games while getting used to life abroad, his 62 points in 59 total games all but verified Benák's promise as a legitimate producer. Another seven points in four disappointing U18 Worlds contests felt like a damper but he was coming off the longest season of his career, one that had ended abruptly in a three-game playoff sweep against eventual champion Muskegon.

Put simply, Benák is a hardworking gamer and one of the best pure offensive creators and power play specialists in this year's draft, size deficiencies be damned. - Landvogt

53



20-80 SCALE

50	55	55
ATHLETICISM	TEMPERMENT	VISION
55	55	50
TECHNIQUE	REBOUND CONTROL	PUCK HANDLING
53.5		
OFF		

BURKE HOOD

VANCOUVER (WHL)

GOALIE 6-3 195 LBS CANADA APR-30-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	W	L	GAA	SV%
2023-24	BRANDON WHEAT KINGS (AAA)	22	21	1	1.99	0.923
2024-25	VANCOUVER (WHL)	42	19	13	3.13	0.91

It was a tale of two seasons for Hood in 2024-25. Things were quite rough for everyone on the Giants early on, and he was no exception. But some kind of switch got flipped after the calendar rolled over to 2025, and before long he had definitively claimed the starter's job even though he was a WHL rookie. By the final stretch he was fully sensational, stealing games outright and dragging his outgunned team toward the playoffs. The fact that he got lit up badly in a short postseason won't matter much: no goalie can carry his team indefinitely, and he showed just how much heavy lifting he can do when called upon.

Hood is a very modern style of goalie. Think of what the average NHL netminder looks like nowadays and you'll get a pretty good idea of what he's like between the pipes. He has the ideal frame and his gear is outsized, so when he's able to stay square to the shooter he can afford to be very intentional and economical with his movements. His footwork is pretty solid as well, though, allowing him to readily move around in his crease without opening up his form too much. There are some limitations to his general quickness and athleticism, but not enough that they should hold him back too much. His resilience in big moments and under a bright spotlight hasn't been tested yet, so the team that drafts him will have to take a small leap of faith in that regard.

There is usually a gold rush on goalies just outside of the opening round of the draft, and because Hood has done enough to stand out in a positive light, he will likely be one of the earliest ones to get scooped up this time around. - Neumeier

54



20-80 SCALE

55	50	50
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	55	53
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

MATTHEW GARD

RED DEER (WHL)

CENTER 6-5 195 LBS CANADA APR-07-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	RED DEER (WHL)	55	7	11	18	32
2024-25	RED DEER (WHL)	66	19	17	36	81

There's a very good chance that Gard gets picked much higher than this ranking, because there are surely NHL teams that want to draft him for the same kinds of reasons that a master Lego builder would want unlimited access to every little plastic piece imaginable. You would be hard-pressed to find other prospects, in this draft or others, who have such a fantastic foundation that still feels relatively untouched and is just sitting there, waiting to be built upon.

Growing up in an exceptionally athletic family (both of his parents are former volleyball stars, and his older twin brothers both play it now at the university level), his physical tools are extraordinary and already quite polished, which is an exciting thing to see in a 6-foot-5 center who is also an advanced skater. As important as skill and smarts are at the NHL level, athleticism plays a huge role as well. After all, it's a professional league, and playing in it requires an extreme, 365-day commitment to living and working as a pro athlete.

So, is Gard actually any good at the hockey part too? Yes, but he's still a work in progress. He competes well, skates well, and handles and moves the puck well, but his overall impact is still pretty muted. It's almost like he hasn't quite figured out yet just how much raw potential he has and just how amazing he could become. Red Deer is already starting to build their team around him, but that organization has a very questionable track record for developing talent. How much will he actually progress if he stays there?

If the team that selects Gard can work with him and develop him in the right ways then he could become one of the biggest steals of the 2025 draft. - Neumeier

55



20-80 SCALE

55	50	52.5
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	55	53.5
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

KRISTIAN EPPERSON

SAGINAW (OHL)

LEFT WING
 5-11
 180 LBS
 USA
 MAY-16-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U18 (USDP)	42	7	9	16	46
2023-24	USN U17 (USDP)	14	2	5	7	10
2024-25	SAGINAW (OHL)	58	27	53	80	87

Sometimes it just clicks in a new environment. Last year as part of the NTDP, Epperson's development stalled in a big way and he was eventually relegated to the U17 team to finish the year. This led to him going undrafted in 2024. In the offseason, he opted to sign with the Saginaw Spirit and he instantly formed chemistry with top draft prospect Michael Misa on the team's first line. This explosion in offense and development has led to Epperson being a candidate to be selected high in his second year of eligibility.

Epperson is best described as a spark plug. He's been the perfect complement to Misa because he brings both energy and skill. He can push pace with quick feet and quick hands and he's tenacious and determined to play through the middle. He is aggressive and physical in his pursuit of the puck, making him an excellent forechecker and someone who can work to both gain and extend possession in the offensive zone. Epperson is also an excellent playmaker who protects the puck well despite not owning terrific size. Think of the way a guy like Michael Bunting has been able to find success as a complementary middle six piece in the NHL.

There are some concerns though. For one, can Epperson continue to be as successful playing this high energy role at higher levels, or does he project as more of a tweener without high end physical tools? Secondly, there have been some reports of a poor attitude and poor interviews with NHL staffs, which could obviously negatively affect his draft status. A recent commit to the University of Denver, Epperson should fit in really well as a Pioneer given his tenacious playing style.- Otten

56



20-80 SCALE

55	55	55
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
50	52.5	53.375
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

HAYDEN PAUPANEKIS

KELOWNA (WHL)

CENTER
 6-5
 200 LBS
 CANADA
 FEB-04-2007

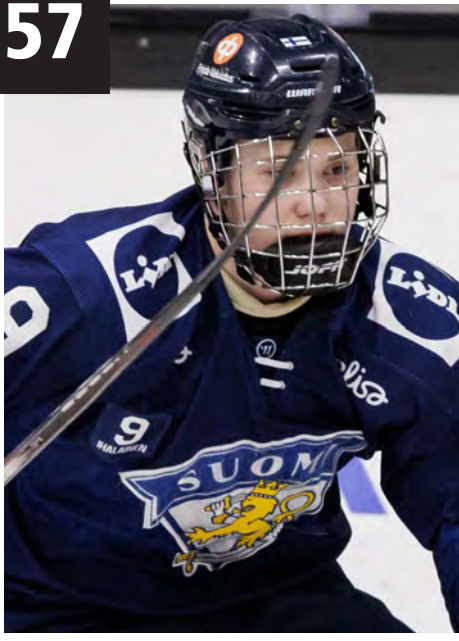
YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	SPOKANE (WHL)	61	10	10	20	29
2024-25	SPO-KEL (WHL)	71	22	21	43	57

Here's a fun game to play with Paupanekis: watch a lot of tape of his shifts and try to find an element that is missing or weak in his game right now and probably couldn't be added or improved over time with the right hands-on development. Actually, don't do that, because that challenge is a trick and you'd just come up empty-handed. The current quality of all of his various individual traits differs to a degree, but once you become familiar enough with him you begin to notice the many untapped reservoirs of potential, and that's a very exciting notion when trying to predict what his future will look like.

Paupanekis is a toolsy, well-equipped center who continues to make progress in all facets of his game. A mid-season trade to Kelowna gave him the opportunity to assume a bigger role, which helped to accelerate his refinement. There are already some fleeting moments of real brilliance with him, where he will explode into space or undress a defender with a great sweeping deke or rifle an unstoppable shot. At the same time, there are also a lot of moments where his skating and puck handling look clumsy, and he fails with whatever he was trying to pull off. What's most important is that the right ideas and materials are there, and there's still lots of time left for him to keep honing the execution. Even better, the Rockets are very vigilant about developing their prospects, and as the upcoming hosts of the 2026 Memorial Cup they're going to load up their roster with older and more experienced players, who could pass along tips and tricks to Paupanekis to help his game grow.

If a team is really feeling bold, Paupanekis could be one of the first prospects to hear their name get called on day two of draft weekend. - Neumeier

57



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING52.5
SHOT55
SKILLS52.5
SMARTS52.5
PHYSICALITY53.625
OFP

LASSE BOELIUS

ASSAT (FIN-U20)



DEFENCE



6-1



190 LBS



FINLAND



MAR-16-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	ASSAT (FIN-U20)	35	1	13	14	0
2024-25	ASSAT (FIN-U20)	34	4	14	18	16
2024-25	ASSAT (FIN-LIIGA)	7	0	2	2	2

Lasse Boelius played with the Assat juniors for most of the year, putting up pedestrian numbers despite his will to get involved in offensive play. However, the senior club saw enough in him to call up for a few games mid-way through the year. Boelius is committed to two more years in the Assat system.

Boelius is a mobile puck-moving defenceman whose NHL upside lies in his skills, mobility, and decision-making with the puck. He possesses good four-way mobility, which helps with his aggressive rush defence, stopping opportunities before they start with either an early pinch or by closing space on the puck carrier quickly. On the puck, Boelius is poised and doesn't panic under pressure, but this is a double-edged sword as he does have a history of getting stripped of the puck from behind as a result of being too nonchalant. His decision-making with the puck on his stick is simple but effective, finding his outlets and hitting passes early. His stickhandling is very smooth, keeping the puck relatively tight to his body and making simple but effective moves on the rush to slide by defenders.

In the defensive zone, it's clear Boelius has some work to do. He puck-watches too much, drifts out of position, and is sometimes too eager to leave his post and pursue battles on the other side of the zone. While he could benefit from more urgency on the breakout, Lasse is a calming presence who doesn't overcomplicate play and executes his breakout passes flawlessly.

At the NHL level, Lasse Boelius is likely to be a bottom four puck-moving defenceman who offers bursts of skill to generate offense. Boelius' solid technical fundamentals help his projection, and if he can rein in his sometimes erratic positioning in the defensive zone, he could be a trusted two-way defenceman. - Ireland

58



20-80 SCALE

52.5
SKATING50
SHOT52.5
SKILLS57.5
SMARTS50
PHYSICALITY53
OFP

GUSTAV HILLSTROM

BRYNAS (SHL)



CENTER



6-1



175 LBS



SWEDEN



JAN-20-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	BRYNAS (SWE J20)	28	4	6	10	4
2023-24	BRYNAS (SWE J18)	4	4	3	7	20
2024-25	BRYNAS (SWE J20)	43	16	22	38	16
2024-25	BRYNAS (SHL)	18	1	1	2	0

Hillström was one of five draft eligible Brynäs players to get into SHL games, but he may be the key piece for the future.

Hillström is a natural center, and a smart one at that. He keeps his head on a swivel and shoulder checks constantly before touching the puck, gathering as much data as he can so he can make a good decision with the puck. He positions himself where he needs to be to break up an opposing offensive push, finds wide open ice through the middle in transition, or within pockets of space down low in the offensive zone to get the passing game working. So much of Hillstrom's game has to do with timing, from his two-way prowess to his rebound-hunting and finishing ability around the crease.

Despite a lanky frame, Hillström has some good size and isn't afraid of battling in front of the net. He's got a notable physical game as well, but he's going to need to add some strength before he makes his presence felt in puck battles at the pro level. His passing vision and playmaking ability is markedly above average. While his puck handling skills are more practical than flashy, he controls the puck with his head up and utilizes cutbacks upon entering the offensive zone to see as much of the ice as possible before making a play.

Hillström is able to cover a lot of ice with his good straight-line speed and a strong motor, but his posture is a little hunched over and his agility is lacking. He still provides some value in transition, but he's not the guy you can rely on to dance his way around defenders with shifty or evasive maneuvers.

In terms of NHL projection, Hillström is incredibly reminiscent of Linus Eriksson (FLA 2024 2nd rd), who was in turn reminiscent of Calle Jarnkrök. A bottom six two-way center who can kill penalties and provide some depth scoring. - Robbins

59



20-80 SCALE

55	50	57.5
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	45	53.375
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

JIMMY LOMBARDI

FLINT (OHL)

 CENTER  6-0  180 LBS  CANADA  FEB-16-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	FLINT (OHL)	62	7	13	20	12
2024-25	FLINT (OHL)	63	13	32	45	42

We feel that Lombardi is truly one of this draft's hidden gems. Consistency was a major issue this year. Some games, he was a standout and in others he was completely invisible. However, he has a very projectable game as he fills out physically; we feel that his game will really pop once he matures.

On a lower scoring Flint team this year, Lombardi led the Firebirds in assists. He is a terrific playmaker thanks to strong skating ability and outstanding hands. Lombardi is a dynamic player with time and space who can turn opposing defenders into swiss cheese; he was among the league leaders in successfully completed dekes this season. Lombardi is also a committed two-way player who has excellent defensive instincts. He was among the league leaders (among forwards) in defensive and neutral zone takeaways this season in the OHL. Given his high IQ and high skill as a pivot, Lombardi's upside is almost limitless.

The issue and main culprit behind his inconsistency is a lack of strength. Lombardi is visibly lanky and a lack of strength hurts his effectiveness at this current moment. He gets smothered and easily separated from the puck. He can panic into poor decisions with the puck in the offensive end as he feels pressure closing in. He can be ineffective defensively when tasked with trying to tie up checks in the slot or near the crease. All that said, he should not be considered a "soft" player. He has a will to play through the middle and to have an effect on the game physically. He just lacks the way. We believe that the only thing truly holding him back is that conditioning.- Otten

60



20-80 SCALE

55	52.5	50
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
52.5	55	53.125
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

SEAN BARNHILL

DUBUQUE (USHL)

 DEFENCE  6-5  210 LBS  USA  JAN-08-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	PHOENIX JR. COYOTES (16U AAA)	47	7	19	26	0
2023-24	DUBUQUE (USHL)	2	0	0	0	0
2024-25	DUBUQUE (USHL)	54	4	7	11	14

Look up "modern day NHL shutdown defender" in the dictionary and you may just see a picture of Barnhill. He checks so many of those boxes. He has the size at 6-foot-5, 200+ pounds. He shows flashes of elite level physicality. He is very mobile and fluid for his size. As a bonus, he even plays the right side. We particularly love the way that Barnhill defends in transition. He's ultra-aggressive in closing gaps thanks to his length and quickness, and he's got an excellent stick and anticipation in the neutral zone to prevent clean entries.

The question is, does Barnhill have any offensive upside? He struggled at times with his puck management and his breakouts this season with Dubuque. However, it was his first year playing above the AAA level, as a product of the Phoenix Jr. Coyotes program. He showed growth in this area as the season went on and even showed flashes of being able to use his long, powerful strides to lead the breakout and be an offensive contributor off the rush. His shot also shows promise. If he can improve his release and get pucks on net quicker, he could generate offense that way too.

Make no mistake, Barnhill is very much a longer-term project. As mentioned, he doesn't have a ton of experience playing at higher levels. This shows in his decision making at both ends. However, the athletic tools are very enticing and give Barnhill a unique upside. He's slated to play at Northeastern at some point, perhaps next year or the year after (if he repeats with Dubuque) and he's probably not a pro for another three or four years. However, patience is a virtue in prospect development and Barnhill could reward an NHL franchise in a big way.- Otten

61



20-80 SCALE

55	50	55
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
50	55	53.25
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

MAX PSENICKA

PORTLAND (WHL)

DEFENCE 6-5 185 LBS CZECH JAN-18-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	HC SLAVIA PRAHA (CZECHIA U17)	39	10	25	35	48
2024-25	PORTLAND (WHL)	24	1	6	7	42

Psenicka came over to North America from his native Czechia and joined the Winterhawks in January, and despite how much time he's had to adapt his game since then (including three playoff rounds), he's still quite a big question mark to scouts. However, that mystery could be a negative or a positive, depending on the perspective.

The lanky blueliner has quite a large radius of influence when he's on the ice. Not only is his reach enormous, but he also possesses smooth, elongated strides and crossovers that allow him to casually patrol a wide territory of ice and help him glue himself to opponents. His poke checks are precise, and he knows how to use his stick and his angles to steer opponents into the corners, though he is a little too stick-dependent and could stand to use his body more. Trying to get through him or around him one-on-one is a serious headache.

There's a real ease to his mobility, and he can eat up a lot of minutes without worrying about running out of gas. While he does a good job of staying in motion, that sometimes causes him to glide out of position, which in turn leads him to chasing the play. He needs to stop harder on his edges to prevent too much drifting. He's not necessarily bad at handling the puck, including while in full flight, but he makes some baffling decisions with it, and he can be easily pressured into throwing it away.

Psenicka undoubtedly possesses a skillset that's desirable, it's just not very polished yet, and no one is really sure how much polishing he'll be able to accomplish long-term. It could turn out to be a lot, and if that happens the team that lands him will be rewarded handsomely for their investment. - Neumeier

62



20-80 SCALE

55	55	55
ATHLETICISM	TEMPERMENT	VISION
52.5	50	50
TECHNIQUE	REBOUND CONTROL	PUCK HANDLING
53.375		
OFF		

ALEKSEI MEDVEDEV

LONDON (OHL)

GOALIE 6-2 180 LBS RUSSIA SEP-10-2007

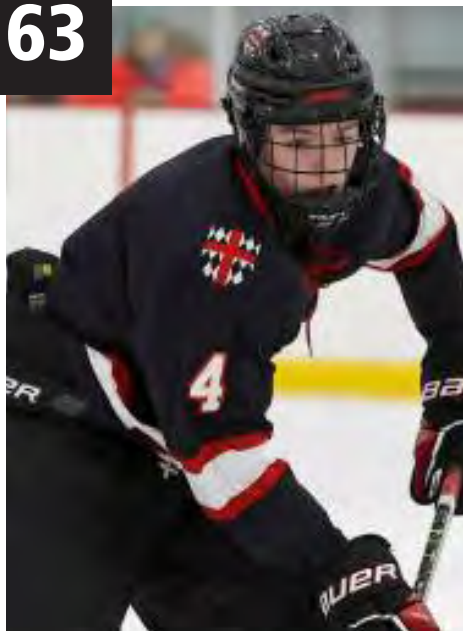
YEAR	TEAM	GP	W	L	GAA	SV%
2023-24	ST. THOMAS (GOJHL)	28	11	15	4	0.904
2024-25	LONDON (OHL)	34	22	8	2.79	0.912

If you are looking for an all-around goaltender, Aleksei Medvedev is that guy for 2025. Medvedev is one of the best goalies in his class in any skilled category. He's a phenomenal skater with excellent positioning and an ideal stance, maximizing efficiency for movement and filling the net. He also boasts some of the best hands in the class, which is helpful in hiding his lack of size.

Balancing that Canadian-developed technique, he still has the raw athletic nature of the Russian goalie. His agility and quickness are elite, while also having impressive joint mobility and flexibility. Where all of these attributes culminate is in his poise and decision-making. Having such refined control of this level of athleticism is exceedingly difficult. But this is exactly where Medvedev shines. Medvedev is a very calculated goalie; he's effective at analyzing play and controlling his body, only springing into action when needed. But when it comes to explosive movements, most disregard the process, focusing only on the destination. Medvedev controls every aspect, whether it's managing to explode into lateral movements with his chest up or hands projected outward, Medvedev is always attentive to the process of making the save. These constant good habits have made him automatic in making the right decisions, which should give him an advantage in chaotic play.

Skillset-wise, Medvedev lacks a true weakness. The only tangible knock on him is his lack of size. The problem with Medvedev as a prospect is his situation in London. Playing as a tandem on the best junior team in the world lightens the load on the goalie. Practically every game he played, he had adequate rest, along with having the far superior team in front of him. This has created a low-stress environment and has left him untested. How he adapts to a starter role facing adversity will dictate his future. But when it comes to drafting on skill upside alone, Medvedev is one of the best there is. - Crouse

63



20-80 SCALE

57.5
SKATING50
SHOT55
SKILLS50
SMARTS52.5
PHYSICALITY53.375
OFF

EVERETT BALDWIN

ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL (USHS-RI)



DEFENCE



5-11



175 LBS



USA



JAN-15-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL (USHS-RI)	28	6	21	27	0
2024-25	ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL (USHS-RI)	22	10	10	20	0
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	5	0	2	2	2
2024-25	CEDAR RAPIDS (USHL)	2	0	1	1	2

This is a high upside defender. A lot of that is owing to his outstanding skating ability. Baldwin has some of the best straight line acceleration of any defender that we've watched this year. He's very aggressive all over the ice because he understands that his quickness can allow him to play that way. Baldwin is very active in transition and will consistently look to lead or join the attack. Even joining the USHL and playing with the NTDP, he showed confidence in his carrying ability. At the prep level, he's certainly more aggressive inside the offensive zone in terms of getting shots off and looking to play down low, but that's to be expected.

From a skill perspective, he escapes pressure well; his hands and feet work in sync. Like any prep player, used to dominating touches against lower-level players, Baldwin's puck play and decision making will need refinement. He had a few bad turnovers at the USHL level. However, it did seem that with every game played at that level (between Cedar Rapids and the NTDP), he mitigated risk better. Perhaps most impressively, Baldwin has a positive impact in the defensive end too. He's a staunch rush defender with his mobility and he plays with some jam, looking to be aggressive by defending high. He's not big and he's not always effective, but he does try to apply himself physically; he's tenacious. Again, it just comes down to the decision making and the application of his skill set in the defensive end too.

Baldwin is a long-term project; he'll play with Cedar Rapids full-time next year before heading to Providence, but the upside is going to be too significant to pass up inside the first three rounds.- Otten

64



20-80 SCALE

60
ATHLETICISM52.5
TEMPERMENT52.5
VISION

55

47.5

50

53.375

OFF

PYOTR ANDREYANOV

KRASNAYA ARMIYA MOSKVA (MHL)



GOALIE



6-0



205 LBS



RUSSIA



JAN-22-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	W	L	GAA	SV%
2023-24	KRASNAYA ARMIYA MOSKVA (MHL)	20	9	8	3.04	0.916
2024-25	KRASNAYA ARMIYA MOSKVA (MHL)	37	23	6	1.75	0.942

There are concerns for any 6-foot-0 goalie entering the NHL draft. There's a natural disadvantage in filling space, and as a result, a much smaller margin of error for positioning. Where they have to make up ground is in the athletic and skating departments. Most undersized goalies are the fastest for their position. If they can't naturally take up more space by being big, they have to be able to travel through the crease faster so they can cover more net on the lateral, high-danger plays. This archetype has worked before, namely in Igor Shesterkin, and luckily for Pyotr Andreyanov, he's his ideal NHL comparison stylistically.

Andreyanov is one of the most athletic, quickest, and best-skating goalies eligible to be drafted in the past five years. He plays at a very high intensity, never giving up on a play, and is willing to do whatever it takes to make a save. He also draws a lot of comparisons to last year's second round pick, Ilya Nabokov, as well. Like Nabokov, his stance can be very compact, and his hands are weaker, which can be harmful for an NHL projection. However, their cognition is what sets them apart. Andreyanov reads the play well, showing a high level of anticipation and predicting play at high speeds and chaos. Combine that with his level of athleticism and skating, and there is a serious potential starting goalie in the making.

The area he will have to work on, like most hyper athletic undersized goalies, is his poise. Shesterkin didn't win a Vezina on raw talent alone. His control, precision, and calmness are what got him there. Andreyanov is a chaotic goalie; he will require refinement to reach his potential, but with Shesterkin and Nabokov as comparisons, there's a good bet here in Pyotr Andreyanov. - Crouse

65



20-80 SCALE

55	52.5	52.5
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	50	53.25
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

ALEX HUANG

CHICOUTIMI (QMJHL)

DEFENCE 6-0 170 LBS CANADA JUL-30-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	CHICOUTIMI (QMJHL)	61	8	28	36	16
2024-25	CHICOUTIMI (QMJHL)	64	7	33	40	16

After an outstanding rookie year in the QMJHL, our expectations for Huang were sky-high. Unfortunately, his point totals remained stagnant from last year and dropped during the playoffs.

Huang's largest strength is his skating. He displays incredible mobility in all facets of his skating, helping his game in all three zones. In the offensive zone, Huang walks the line well, maintaining distance from defenders and looking for his next passing target. Chicoutimi's offense largely benefited from just how big of a threat Huang is to activate from the blue line and drive into the zone with rapid acceleration. It helps him on the rush, allowing him to put defenders on their heels and gain the zone. On defence, he uses his refined edgework to close gaps off the rush, getting him into range to make a play on the puck.

Huang is creative in transition sensing and executing his passes without losing speed. He often does this by making a quick shift laterally and in one motion, hitting his target with a sharp pass. By being able to make his reads quickly, he elevates the impact of his speed.

Physicality is certainly not Alex's strength; he stands just around 6-foot-0, 170 pounds, and is still pretty weak for his size. However, Huang does possess a great eagerness to get involved all around the ice. He regularly dives into the corners to retrieve the puck and is very pesky when pursuing the puck carrier. Alex will also need to work on his shot, as a lot of the time, it feels more like an escape option when pressured rather than a viable weapon. He won't be a shooting threat at the next level.

While Huang is a project, he certainly has the tools and will to become a bottom four offensive defenceman who can lead the rush and make dynamic plays in the offensive zone. - Ireland

66



20-80 SCALE

50	55	52.5
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	55	53.375
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

JAN CHOVAN

TAPPARA (FIN-U20)

CENTER 6-2 190 LBS SLOVAKIA JAN-09-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	TAPPARA (FIN-U20)	30	7	6	13	4
2024-25	TAPPARA (FIN-U20)	39	11	12	23	6

Chovan played domestically for Tappara U20 and earned an "A" as one of the younger players on the team. Internationally, Chovan was busy, playing in both the World Juniors and the season-end U18 Championships, where he scored over a point per game. Chovan won't be a high scorer at the next level, but it's encouraging to see he's finding the back of the net in junior.

Chovan pretty much exactly fits the prototype of an NHL bottom six forward who can be deployed around 15 minutes per game and play low-event hockey when needed. He endears himself to coaches with a blend of hard work, physicality, and defensive smarts. Chovan backchecks hard, attacking opponents with a slew of relentless stick checks. He reads lanes in the defensive zone exceptionally well, consistently deflecting passes away.

Chovan's shot is also interesting. He doesn't have a ton of power or a sharp release, but he consistently found the back of the net this year by simply fooling goalies with a wonky touch. He follows up on his shots to take advantage of when goaltenders leave scraps around the net.

Chovan has several glaring weaknesses. He doesn't have any explosiveness in his skating, and overall, isn't too mobile. He isn't the most creative offensively, so his game at the next level will likely consist of digging for rebounds and playing net front offense. Chovan's puck skills aren't too impressive, although it's encouraging to see him drive to the middle of the ice when he has the puck on the rush.

One lucky NHL team should be able to snag Chovan past pick 50, and if developed well, he could be an impactful member of an NHL penalty kill and shutdown unit in late-game situations. - Ireland

67



20-80 SCALE

55 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS
55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	53.25 OFF

CARLOS HANDEL

HALIFAX (QMJHL)

DEFENCE 6-1 175 LBS GERMANY MAR-31-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	MALMO (SWE J18)	28	6	17	23	16
2023-24	MALMO (SWE J20)	9	0	0	0	2
2024-25	HALIFAX (QMJHL)	52	3	23	26	20

A righty shot defenseman posing a straight back and shifty skating guided almost entirely by his lower body strength, we've been following Händel since he excelled for Mannheim's U17 team as a 15-year-old and decided to jump to Swedish club Frölunda midseason in 22-23. He proceeded to spend his DY-1 season with Malmö's U18 team, putting up 24 points in 31 games as a 17-year-old and seeing time with the club's U20 team. More eye-catching were his international appearances for Germany at what's now been two Hlinka Gretzky Cups and two U18 Worlds. After gaining promotion in the first, he averaged over 23 minutes of TOI as part of a team that first bowed out to Slovakia in a 3-2 quarterfinals loss.

That latter result came on the tails of a 2024-25 season spent with Halifax of the QMJHL, where Händel had a modestly productive first CHL season that saw a dip at the end. He finished second on the team in blueline scoring while being the fifth oldest blueliner on the team. Indeed, Halifax struggled mightily this season but that afforded the open ice seeking Händel plenty of space to expand his game.

What we now have is a player who, on his best days, is terribly efficient in warding off attacks, can dangle with the puck, then find solid first-pass options or rush it up ice without hesitation. Händel mans the point on the power play, where he makes solid decisions, rarely giving the impression of feeling pressured. Sure, it leads to mistakes and turnovers at times but his confidence in his abilities seems endless and he never ceases to call upon them. He needs to gain weight, but there are tools, sound instincts, and mental fortitude in this package.

Nowadays, talented German defenders are measured against Moritz Seider. Händel is no Moritz Seider. But he is clearly the best German blueline prospect since Moritz Seider. - Landvogt

68



20-80 SCALE

52.5 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	55 VISION
55 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING
52.875 OFF		

MICHAL PRADEL

TEAM SLOVAKIA U18 (SLOVAKIA2)

GOALIE 6-4 195 LBS SLOVAKIA MAR-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	W	L	GAA	SV%
2023-24	DRACI LIPTOVSKY MIKULAS (SLOVAKIA U18)	38	21	17	2.83	0.922
2024-25	TEAM SLOVAKIA U18 (SLOVAKIA2)	15	3	12	4.59	0.898
2024-25	TRI-CITY (USHL)	14	9	4	2.41	0.899

One impressive showing at an international tournament could be downplayed or dismissed as an anecdote, but two impressive showings could start to be considered evidence. That's what happened with Pradel to bookend his 2024-25 campaign, and that kind of success in best-on-best competition always earns brownie points in the eyes of scouts.

The mammoth Slovakian checks off almost every box that NHL teams are looking for these days in a goaltender. He covers up a ton of open net simply by existing in the crease, his butterfly form is impressively technical, he doesn't waste any energy in his movements, and he has the stoic kind of mindset that doesn't waver much when he has to face a lot of rubber coming his way.

He left his home country in the middle of winter to come play in the USHL instead, and did better than his numbers might suggest, given the weak group of skaters in front of him and allowing him a bit of leeway when considering the significant adjustment he would have had to work through when he changed his environment. Where he'll play next season is still up in the air, but he'll have a lot of options, and the organization that gets his rights will undoubtedly lend their opinion in favor of one direction or another.

Pradel is similar in a lot of ways to Czech goalie Michael Hrabal, who was taken 38th overall by Utah in 2023 and has made a lot of progress in the two seasons since, so it wouldn't be shocking if he was one of the very first players to get selected on day two of this year's draft, or maybe even snuck into the first round if a club was really desperate to add a top goalie prospect. - Neumeier

69



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING50
SHOT52.5
SKILLS52.5
SMARTS55
PHYSICALITY53
OFF

CONRAD FONDRAK

U.S. NTDP U18



CENTER



6-0



190 LBS



USA



JUN-01-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U17 (USDP)	54	20	25	45	4
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	40	13	14	27	6

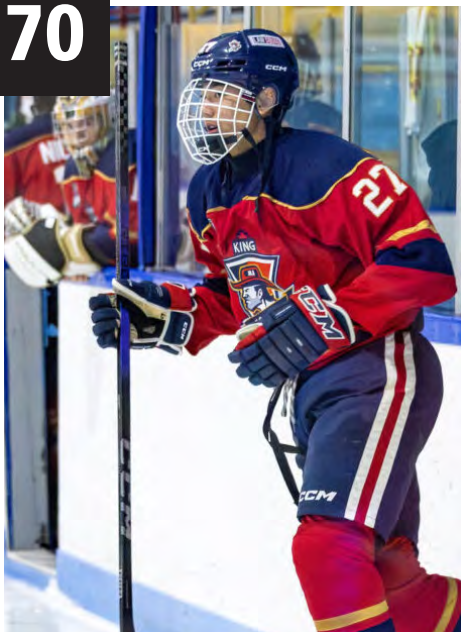
Conrad Fondrk's season ended February 28th due to injury and saw his production take a drastic hit when he was healthy. The Boston University commit will need to improve his consistency from game to game, as he looked wildly different throughout different stretches of the season.

The positives of Fondrk's profile are that he's got decent skating, a well-developed defensive game, and a solid motor. Conrad can hold off a defender draped all over him by using his stocky build to shield the puck. Fondrk builds speed by constantly keeping his feet moving and looks deceptively fast. He may not have the speed to blow by pro players, but his overall skating level is above average. Conrad plays his best hockey in the defensive zone. He springs in and out of passing lanes, taking options away from opponents, and gets involved in puck battles, using his strength to come out victorious. He backchecks hard, pestering opponents, keeping them from getting clean zone entries.

Fondrk's transition game is very rough right now. After carrying the puck into the offensive zone, he struggles to create anything substantial and, more times than not, turns it over. His upside as a north-south puck carrier in transition is very limited, and he will be forced to mainly look for dump-ins. His offensive intelligence is also underdeveloped. He struggles to complete his plays and doesn't quite have the skills or vision to be an above-average playmaker.

Conrad Fondrk projects to be a bottom six defensive forward who can log penalty kill minutes. He doesn't have the upside of some of the other top USNTDP guys of years past, but his mature frame, defensive play reading, and agility when blocking lanes make him a solid depth option should he rein in his consistency issues. - Ireland

70



20-80 SCALE

60
SKATING55
SHOT50
SKILLS45
SMARTS55
PHYSICALITY52.75
OFF

HAOXI (SIMON) WANG

KING (OJHL)



DEFENCE



6-6



220 LBS



CHINA



JUL-07-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	KING (OJHL)	28	0	7	7	22
2024-25	KING (OJHL)	38	4	18	22	73

Perhaps no prospect this year has been more divisive than Haoxi Simon Wang. The massive Chinese born defender and Boston University commit oozes upside thanks to his huge frame and impressive skating ability. However, he's also a major boom/bust candidate because his game is extremely raw and requires significant development to be an AHL defender, let alone a high-end NHL one. The rankings on Wang run the gamut, from potential first rounder to DND. We fall in the middle. In the early third round (where we have him ranked), you would be hard pressed to find a defender who could potentially impact the game as much as Wang.

The 6-foot-6, 200+ pounds blueliner is quick and nimble for such a large defender. He closes in on puck carriers so impressively, and he shows flashes of being a play creator in transition too, thanks to his long, powerful strides. Early on in the year, he was turning heads in the OJHL with the King Rebellion, impressing with his ability to shutdown opponents physically, but also quarterback the powerplay and use his skating and puck protection ability to funnel pucks to the middle of the ice. However, the transition to the OHL with Oshawa was a rough one for Wang, especially initially. His offensive production dried up and he struggled to make skilled plays with the puck under pressure; the increased pace of the OHL really gave him fits.

However, there is also no denying that Wang played his best hockey in the playoffs for Oshawa, showing progression in the defensive end especially. He was making better and quicker decisions with the puck and he was blowing up plays defensively, flashing his upside as a defensive stalwart. There's reason to believe that he could continue to evolve and reach that upside. However, there's also the risk that he just doesn't process the game well enough or have the skill to be an NHL defender. - Otten

71



20-80 SCALE

60 ATHLETICISM	55 TEMPERMENT	50 VISION
52.5 TECHNIQUE	47.5 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING
52.75 OFF		

SEMYON FROLOV

LADA-SPARTAK-KRYLIA (MHL)

GOALIE 6-3 200 LBS RUSSIA JAN-17-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	W	L	GAA	SV%
2023-24	LADA TOGLIATTI (MHL)	16	7	4	2.51	0.907
2024-25	LADA-SPARTAK-KRYLIA (MHL)	27	16	7	2.12	0.921

Getting a confident feel for Frolov and his long-term potential is a challenging task for various reasons, including the fact that he hasn't played any notable hockey outside of Mother Russia. It's indisputable that he has desirable tools, but his application of them has fluctuated so far, both on tape and in his stats. Still, there's a worthwhile risk-reward balancing act that NHL clubs will be doing for him well into June as they finalize their draft lists.

Frolov already looks the part of an NHL goalie. His size is already ideal at 6-foot-3, though he does have an older brother who is listed as being 6-foot-7, so he might still have more growing left to do. Like a lot of the top Russia goalies out there right now, he wears the biggest equipment that he can to increase the number of pucks that get caught up in it yet is still comfortable and quick with his movements.

There's also a certain spark to his personality and approach, as he likes to be aggressive and challenge shooters more than a lot of other netminders his age, rarely sitting back too much in his net. This can get him into trouble sometimes, though, as he'll occasionally overcommit to chances happening against him, and there's an emotional rollercoaster element where the highs are very high, but the lows go too low. It's too bad that he didn't stay in the Ladia system, as his performance dipped once he joined the Spartak system, and unless things change he might get stuck as a backup in 2025-26, like he was this past postseason.

As far as goalie prospects go, there's enough to like about Frolov that it sets him a tier above most of his peers who are also available to be picked this year. - Neumeier

72



20-80 SCALE

50 SKATING	55 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS
55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	53.25 OFF

OWEN CONRAD

CHARLOTTETOWN (QMJHL)

DEFENCE 6-2 210 LBS CANADA MAR-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	CHARLOTTETOWN (QMJHL)	59	6	23	29	12
2024-25	CHARLOTTETOWN (QMJHL)	64	7	19	26	32

Owen Conrad was held pointless through four playoff games in which his Charlottetown Islanders were crushed by the Rimouski Oceanic. Conrad saw his regular season point totals remain stagnant from the year prior. However, his value comes from his presence as a defensive blueliner and his combination of smooth skating and size.

Conrad stands at around 6-foot-2, 210 pounds and offers mobility, although his speed isn't exactly a key feature of his game. Conrad is very conservative positioning-wise, maintaining control of the net front and any passing lanes in front. He can get caught watching play and missing an opponent sneaking in behind him, but with his strength and some coaching, he looks to be a solid net front defender. Against the rush, Conrad is excellent at using his feet to close gaps and using his physicality to finish off attackers against the boards, but he could benefit from using his stick a bit more, putting pressure on the puck carrier with more aggressiveness.

His offense is far from the catalyst of his game, but he navigates the offensive zone well with the puck, walking the line to find lanes for his wrist shot, which has great accuracy in getting through traffic, forcing goalies to make saves. On the breakout, Conrad executes simple passes and rarely tries anything too flashy, relying on defenceman-to-defenceman passes to escape pressure.

Conrad projects to be a meat-and-potatoes defender who can be paired with a riskier partner with offensive dynamism. His role will likely be either on the bottom pair or as a fourth defenceman with more penalty killing responsibilities. If Conrad can smooth out some awareness issues when covering a zone and clean up his passiveness against the rush, NHL teams can expect a reliable playoff performer. - Ireland

73



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING50
SHOT55
SKILLS52.5
SMARTS52.5
PHYSICALITY53.25
OFP

TYLER HOPKINS

KINGSTON (OHL)



CENTER



6-1



185 LBS



CANADA



JAN-23-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	KINGSTON (OHL)	59	6	7	13	17
2024-25	KINGSTON (OHL)	67	20	31	51	18

The allure of Tyler Hopkins is that he's currently a bit of a blank canvas. He has a lot of interesting tools, and he has shown an ability to play a lot of different roles; in a way he is a bit of a Swiss Army Knife. Coming into the OHL, he was billed as one of the most talented offensive players in his age group, which is why he was the fourth overall selection in the OHL Priority Selection. As an OHL player for Kingston, he's become more of a change of pace, high energy playmaker, reliant mostly on his speed to make plays. When he has suited up for Canada internationally, he's taken on a checking line role and killed penalties effectively. The question is, who is the real Tyler Hopkins and what kind of role does he project to play at the NHL level?

The key for Hopkins moving forward is to find that identity and lean into it. The first step would be to continue to bulk up and improve his strength, on and off the puck. He made huge gains in this department from his first OHL season to this past year, however, further growth is needed for him to be able to create consistent offense, especially through the middle of the ice. He also flashes a pest-like mentality that he would be smart to utilize more often; it would give him an edge as a versatile pro who can utilize his speed to be a nuisance. Hopkins also has to improve his shot, especially if he doesn't end up sticking at center. He doesn't get enough pucks on net and can struggle with his release under pressure.

All that said, and as mentioned, Hopkins' skating ability, off puck awareness, and playmaking ability could end up making him a middle six NHL player who could be a valuable role player. - Otten

74



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING50
SHOT50
SKILLS50
SMARTS57.5
PHYSICALITY52.75
OFP

PEYTON KETTLES

SWIFT CURRENT (WHL)



DEFENCE



6-6



195 LBS



CANADA



SEP-01-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	SWIFT CURRENT (WHL)	61	2	11	13	44
2024-25	SWIFT CURRENT (WHL)	53	5	9	14	65

Sometimes, scouts prefer to know exactly what they're getting when they draft a prospect, even if it's not the most exciting package. And with Kettles in particular, there won't be any doubts in the minds of the team that picks him.

He's a long, mobile, nasty customer of a defenseman. There are certain longstanding stereotypes about western Canadian hockey and the blueliners who come up through the prairie provinces, and a lot of them are true here. He takes care of his own zone first and foremost and isn't shy about doling out some punishment to any opponent who crosses a line against him or his teammates. He skates pretty well for a bigger guy and knows how to use his mobility to line himself up for big hits. He'll also jump up into the rush from time to time to open more space or put a little extra pressure on enemy defenders, but he's not someone that should be carrying the puck a lot, and he even seems to know that about himself.

After a rough showing at last summer's Hlinka Gretzky Cup he wasn't invited back by Hockey Canada to try out for their roster for this spring's U18 tournament, which is never a good sign, but his game shouldn't have as many warts in the future as it does right now, especially when you consider that he's one of the youngest players in this draft and his birthday was only two weeks short of him being pushed back to 2026.

Guys like Brandon Carlo and Johnathan Kovacevic have carved out nice careers as large, physical, right-shot defenders who can also keep up at an NHL pace, and the team that drafts Kettles will do so because they think they can eventually mold him in a similar fashion. - Neumeier

75



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING55
SHOT50
SKILLS52.5
SMARTS55
PHYSICALITY53.375
OFP

WILL REYNOLDS

ACADIE-BATHURST (QMJHL)



DEFENCE



6-2



185 LBS



CANADA



AUG-11-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	FREDERICTON CAPS (NBPEIMU18HL)	35	2	14	16	12
2023-24	ROU-BAT (QMJHL)	30	0	4	4	6
2024-25	ACADIE-BATHURST (QMJHL)	64	4	10	14	69

Reynolds is another of the potentially elite shutdown defenders available this year. The 6-foot-2 blueliner is an excellent athlete who is very mobile; he is nearly impossible to beat off the rush already. His four-way mobility is excellent and this allows him to not only shutdown the transition game of the opposition, it makes him routinely first to retrievals so that he can kickstart his own team's transition game. Over the course of the QMJHL season, Reynolds' play with the puck greatly improved, making him a much more effective two-way defender. While his skill and creativity with the puck are pretty limited, he can make a solid first pass and that bodes well for a future pro career.

Reynolds is also a staunch physical defender who takes away time and space effectively in the defensive end and who clears the crease well. He has an active stick in both the slot and the neutral zone and excels on the penalty kill. Again, as the season went on, Reynolds became incredibly effective for the Titan and was one of the team's most important defenders by the time the playoffs rolled around, often pairing with fellow draft eligible defender Noah Laberge.

Like other similar players available this year, many ranked in this range by us, the key for Reynolds is to continue to improve his confidence with the puck and overall decision making. While guys like Brandon Carlo and Erik Cernak were never offensive contributors in the CHL, the majority of the league's best stay at home defenders were at least competent on puck players by the time they turned pro. Reynolds' late season play and progression suggests that he is a player trending upwards. - Otten

76



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING50
SHOT50
SKILLS55
SMARTS55
PHYSICALITY53
OFP

TOMMY LAFRENIERE

KAMLOOPS (WHL)



RIGHT WING



6-0



175 LBS



CANADA



JAN-16-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	YALE HOCKEY ACADEMY (CSSHL U18)	30	27	31	58	8
2023-24	KAMLOOPS (WHL)	9	2	2	4	2
2024-25	KAMLOOPS (WHL)	68	24	32	56	20

There's something to be said about a player who can really make the most out of a bad situation, and that description certainly fits Lafrenière. It was obvious right from the start of the year that the Kamloops Blazers were going to struggle, and they unsurprisingly ended up being one of the six WHL clubs to miss the playoffs this season, but you wouldn't have been able to tell that with the way that he played, as he laid everything on the line on a consistent basis and always kept doing everything within his power to drag his team into the fight.

Perhaps his high compete level is borne out of his hockey path up to this point. He was never one of the more purely skilled young players — as evidenced by him not being selected until the 8th round, 174th overall, in the 2022 WHL Bantam Draft — so he needed to outsmart and outwork others in order to be successful, which is what still underpins his game today. And when you have a player like that on a team that always needs help, it's imperative to send them over the boards often to see what he can accomplish, which is what the Blazers coaches do, giving him more than 20 minutes of ice time most games in the back half of their season. He's used on both sides of special teams, he plays center and wing, he forechecks, he goes hard to the net when he needs to, he does anything that's asked of him. He probably won't score as much once he leaves Kamloops, but he'll find ways to contribute.

Lafrenière's NHL ceiling probably caps out as a fourth liner, but he has a great chance to get that far, and he could turn out to be one heck of a fourth liner. - Neumeier

77



ZACHARY MORIN

SAINT JOHN (QMJHL)



LEFT WING



6-1



185 LBS



CANADA



JAN-25-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	YOUNGSTOWN (USHL)	54	8	11	19	114
2024-25	SAINT JOHN (QMJHL)	56	16	20	36	21

Zachary Morin returned to Canada after a year with the Youngstown Phantoms and saw a large boost in his point totals. Morin is a raw but skilled forward who lacks the offensive vision to achieve the upside his natural tools afford him.

Morin's skating is above average in open space, with good top speed and some pop. However, when trying to escape defenders, Morin struggles as his posture is very hunched, allowing himself to be knocked off the puck easily. Unfortunately, this posture also limits his effectiveness in stickhandling at higher speeds and, as a result, hurts his pace of play. Morin's open ice dekes are a different story, he's put his share of Quebec defencemen in the blender when they give him room, using pre-emptive body fakes to keep opponents guessing.

While Morin's compete levels vary, he has grit and gets under his opponents' skin with antics after the whistle. His ability to be an agitator shows his passion for the game and will surely win coaches over.

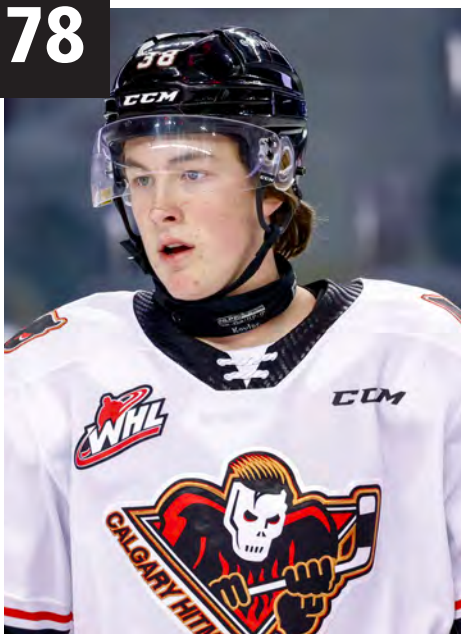
Morin's offensive intelligence can be rough to spectate, as he often ends a clean zone entry by turning and firing the puck into space, hoping a teammate will receive it. He lacks the composure needed to create plays, and when the pace is turned up, Morin's effectiveness fades. On the powerplay, he can be seen executing some impressive plays with the extra space, but as of yet, those sparks haven't transitioned to anything monumental in five on five play.

To be an effective bottom sixer, Morin will need to bulk up and show his sometimes high motor in every game, while working on his offensive composure. The ceiling is high, but these large areas of improvement certainly will cause Zachary Morin to fall out of the first couple of rounds of the draft come June 28th. - Ireland

20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING52.5
SHOT55
SKILLS52.5
SMARTS47.5
PHYSICALITY52.875
OFP

78



BRANDON GORZYNSKI

CALGARY (WHL)



CENTER



6-1



185 LBS



USA



MAR-12-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	CALGARY (WHL)	42	4	5	9	6
2024-25	CALGARY (WHL)	68	17	25	42	16

There's a philosophy of scouting argument that can be made that how a prospect finishes their season is more important than their overall body of work. One could go even further and say that for some players, such as Gorzynski this is the single most important lens through which to view them, because it provides important evidence that they are able to convert their hypothetical potential into real, tangible progress.

He is a highly athletic winger with above-average size, strength and skating prowess, and prospects like that are prioritized because there's such a good chance that they could pop later on in their development after the right amount of assistance and experience. What's especially interesting about Gorzynski, though, is that he could pop in different ways. He's been a bit of a Swiss Army Knife for the Hitmen, playing in different roles and with different linemates, and that has helped him grow in all areas. He's good already as a straight-line attacker on offense but shows flashes of becoming much better. Likewise, he's already pretty good defensively, to the point where he was playing on Calgary's top penalty kill unit by the season's end but still has so much runway left that he could improve with. He's steadily learning how to use all of his different tools, and he'll likely get to keep doing that next season as one of the most used forwards on that Calgary team.

When Gorzynski is done developing will he be better suited to a scoring line or a checking line? Will he be a power forward or more of a scorer? There's value in him having different possible outcomes, because a team with a specific need could pick him and try to shape him into the kind of player that they desire. - Neumeier

20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING50
SHOT55
SKILLS50
SMARTS55
PHYSICALITY53
OFP

79



20-80 SCALE

55 ATHLETICISM	57.5 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION
52.5 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING
53.125 OFF		

PETTERI RIMPINEN

KIEKKO-ESPOO (FIN)

GOALIE 6-0 175 LBS FINLAND APR-25-2006

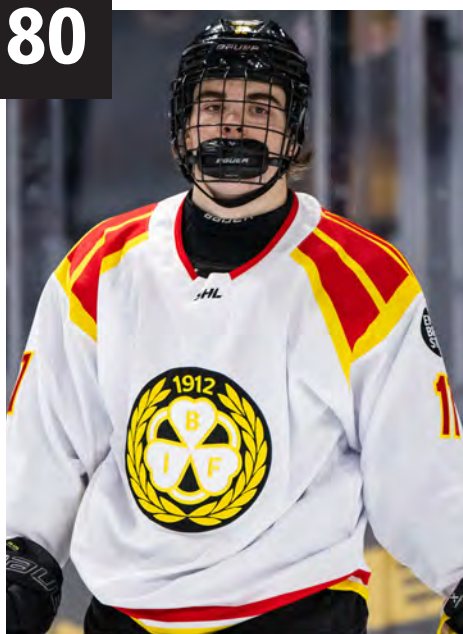
YEAR	TEAM	GP	W	L	GAA	SV%
2023-24	KIEKKO-ESPOO (FIN-U20)	18	10	7	2.32	0.905
2023-24	KIEKKO-ESPOO (FIN-MESTIS)	14	6	4	1.94	0.925
2024-25	KIEKKO-ESPOO (FIN)	40	16	9	2.35	0.912

You rarely see 18-year-old goaltenders starting in high-level European pro hockey. Even rarer are those who have yet to be drafted. Petteri Rimpinen would be the one match in this draft, doing so all the while backstopping Finland to World Junior silver, and getting named a finalist for the league's top goalie and rookie of the year.

Having excelled at the pro level as a re-entry candidate brings shades of Ilya Nabokov's KHL run and subsequent second-round selection last year. The big difference is that Nabokov was two years older. Rimpinen bears many similarities to Juuse Saros, both in terms of physical stature and abilities. Saros has proved that undersized athletic goalies can make the NHL in today's league and even be an elite goalie. However, Saros is still a rarity. Very few undersized goalies have been able to crack NHL rosters over the past 10 years, which still makes Rimpinen an uncertainty. But the barrier has been broken before, and it can be again.

He has the skating, speed, and athleticism in abundance that's a necessity for a small goalie. He has also shown good positioning before movement and an aptitude for reading the play at high speeds. Where he begins to deviate from Saros is in poise and control. At their height, playing too erratically can be detrimental. Being of small stature, the margin for error in positioning is much smaller. With the incredible intensity that Rimpinen plays at, it will be a difficult hurdle to overcome, but it can be done. He's already shown that he can play at an elite level in pro, shouldering a heavy workload, both in games and shots, and often coming out on top. It shows a lot about his mental, to be able to handle that adversity and strain, and bodes well for his development. NHL starter may not be likely, but it is not out of the question for the 18-year-old. - Crouse

80



20-80 SCALE

55 SKATING	55 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS
52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	53.375 OFF

MICHAL SVRCEK

BRYNAS (SWE J20)

LEFT WING 5-10 175 LBS SLOVAKIA JAN-26-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	BRYNAS (SWE J20)	22	5	7	12	12
2023-24	BRYNAS (SWE J18)	4	2	3	5	0
2024-25	BRYNAS (SWE J20)	30	14	16	30	10
2024-25	BRYNAS (SHL)	17	1	2	3	2

Like all players who seemingly only operate at full-throttle, Svrcek is a player that is easy to root for. He gives his all out on the ice. Hard working, pesky, disruptive on the forecheck, throwing himself at foes much larger than he is. Cliches are cliches for a reason: Svrcek has that dawg in him. He is a quick and explosive skater with good-but-not-great agility. While not elite, Svrcek's on-puck skill is really coming along. He's got nice hands and deceptive fakes. He rarely defers on offence and makes great passing plays from the boards to the slot. In addition, Svrcek has a howitzer of a one-timer for his size and an above average wrist shot.

Despite limited puck touches, Svrcek looked arguably just as good in the SHL. He looked more than at home with the pace of play and the level of physicality. Across all levels, his competitiveness bordered on recklessness at some points. If he just used his teammates more rather than skating into too much pressure, or took a moment to read the play before throwing himself into the corners, he'd have a whole new dimension to his game.

Right now, Svrcek has an outside chance to be something incredibly useful at the NHL level. While somewhat nebulous of a projection, he's got the tools and the mentality that are worth betting on. His ability to play with pace, his compete, his skill, his budding two-way game, and his goal-scoring upside makes him a great fit for a bottom nine role in the NHL. Naturally, being undersized, he'll have to keep proving himself at every level of competition he reaches, but he's the type of player who will endear himself to fans and coaches alike. If you miss out on Victor Eklund, Svrcek is sort of a poor man's version of that. - Robbins

81



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING50
SHOT52.5
SKILLS55
SMARTS52.5
PHYSICALITY53.5
OFF

ZEB LINDGREN

SKELLEFTEA (SWE J20)



DEFENCE



6-1



200 LBS



SWEDEN



APR-14-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	SKELLEFTEA (SWE J20)	22	2	2	4	8
2023-24	SKELLEFTEA (SWE J18)	9	3	4	7	4
2024-25	SKELLEFTEA (SWE J20)	38	4	15	19	76
2024-25	SKELLEFTEA AIK (SHL)	5	0	0	0	0

Despite finding himself atop the board for defencemen in the Swedish region, the 2025 campaign was a tale of two Zeb Lindgrens: the one from the first half of the year, and the one from the second.

The Lindgren from the second half looked like a stud. Physical, assertive, and competitive in his own zone. A quick and nimble puck transporter from his own end and through the neutral zone. An offensive blueline patroller and a willing activator. He took initiative on retrievals and read forecheckers intentions well. He was (and is) a little raw, so there was the odd mistake or two, but he worked hard to make up for them.

Lindgren was "the guy" on the back end, and he embraced it. He was a horse when Skellefteå J20 sorely needed one. And then, from December to January, that player disappeared.

The second half Lindgren looked a lot like the rest of the team – apathetic. Even when Skellefteå had a late resurgence and made the playoffs, he still couldn't get it going. The fire was gone and he was just going through the motions. Still physical, but less competitive and assertive. Lots of deferring, rarely skating the puck up himself or getting involved offensively. When he made a mistake, he let it get to him.

The difficult part for interested NHL teams is to determine which Lindgren they're going to get. At the end of the day, Lindgren has a ton of fantastic tools that could take him to the NHL level. The only worry is that the second half inconsistency and the mental game may hold him back from his potential. With some seasoning, Lindgren could be a solid bottom four defenceman who could provide decent value in all three zones – provided that the second half version of him was just an anomaly. - Robbins

82



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING47.5
SHOT55
SKILLS55
SMARTS50
PHYSICALITY53.125
OFF

OWEN GRIFFIN

OSHAWA (OHL)



CENTER



5-10



160 LBS



CANADA



APR-08-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	OSHAWA (OHL)	61	1	5	6	13
2024-25	OSHAWA (OHL)	62	22	29	51	33

Since 2000, the only U18 players with more points in the OHL playoffs than Owen Griffin (29) were Connor McDavid, Taylor Hall, Jeff Skinner, Max Domi, and Ryan Ellis. It tied or surpassed the likes of Sam Gagner, Robby Fabbri, Mike Richards, Matt Duchene, and Nazem Kadri. Not bad company. That helps to explain Griffin's late season surge up draft boards. He went from being a draft long shot to a potential top three round pick. His meteoric rise of 127 spots on NHL Central Scouting's final rankings is evidence of that.

So why not higher than this? There are still concerns regarding Griffin's potential impact at the higher levels. He's an undersized pivot who is not an exceptional skater or physical player. The hit rate for said players is relatively low; most end up as tweeners or high-end European pros. However, you also can't overlook Griffin's improvement over the course of the season. His skating has improved drastically from a season ago, when he had a single goal a year after being the sixth overall pick in the OHL priority selection. His two-way play and physical engagement have also improved considerably, to the point where he has become a quality penalty killer and forechecker for the Generals. Who's to say that these components of his game can't improve even further to the point where they are considered strengths?

Griffin's bread and butter is high-end processing ability. He's a quick thinker in the offensive end who is equally effective playing with pace or setting up plays from behind the net out of the cycle or following a successful retrieval. He has also developed a tenacious on ice persona that has helped him to overcome some size deficits; his tireless work ethic was often infectious and was a key to his and Oshawa's success in the postseason. Many of his goals this year were scored in tight and it points to his success playing through traffic despite lacking size/strength. Griffin's high-end upside remains a bit of a mystery, but you have to give credit where credit is due. He has turned himself into a viable NHL prospect. - Otten

83



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING50
SHOT55
SKILLS55
SMARTS50
PHYSICALITY53.5
OFF

LUKA RADIVOJEVIC

MUSKEGON (USHL)



DEFENCE



5-9



165 LBS



SLOVAKIA



JAN-03-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	OREBRO (SWE J20)	43	4	29	33	10
2023-24	OREBRO (SHL)	6	0	0	0	0
2024-25	MUSKEGON (USHL)	38	3	19	22	39

Luka Radivojevic made his way overseas after starting the 24-25 season in the Orebro system. He didn't disappoint, putting up 22 points in 38 games. The Slovak will now head to Boston College to play with the star-studded Eagles.

Radivojevic is as pure of an offensive defenceman as you can get. He is insanely evasive on the puck, regularly snapping opponents' ankles with quick changes in direction and his quick hands. His mobility on the offensive blueline is extremely impressive, using crossovers to find shooting lanes. Radivojevic is a threat every time he acquires the puck, looking to take off and put the defence on their heels whenever possible. Radivojevic's shot found some success later in the year through traffic, as he got it on net more consistently, leading to a couple of goals and some assists via rebound. Although it's not a key part of his game, His shot could prove to be yet another valuable offensive tool a few years down the road.

Radivojevic's defensive positioning can get him into some hot water, especially when getting caught at the offensive blueline looking to make a play. In front of the net, he competes well to hold his own, but ultimately, being 5-foot-9 has its limitations against larger opponents. His defensive impact is overall negative and will likely continue to be so in college next year, where faster opponents will punish his aggressive positioning.

Due to the pure offensive nature of Radivojevic's game, it's unlikely NHL coaches will be enthusiastic about slotting him into their bottom pair, making his projection a little riskier. Radivojevic will have to bulk up to even be a passable defender along the boards and will need to keep developing his skating to get to an even higher level of pop. If Radivojevic is in search of an NHL role model, he should look no further than five hours north to Montreal, where Lane Hutsun has found great success as a 5-foot-9 offensive defenceman. - Ireland

84



20-80 SCALE

52.5
SKATING55
SHOT52.5
SKILLS55
SMARTS52.5
PHYSICALITY53.5
OFF

FILIP EKBERG

OTTAWA (OHL)



RIGHT WING



5-10



165 LBS



SWEDEN



APR-14-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	ALMTUNA (SWE J20)	33	12	17	29	24
2023-24	ALMTUNA (ALLSVENSKAN)	19	0	2	2	2
2024-25	OTTAWA (OHL)	53	16	29	45	8

It's been a tumultuous year for Ekberg. He entered the OHL with a ton of hype as a potential first round selection, but an average showing at the Hlinka/Gretzky Cup and a slow start to the season with the Ottawa 67's really put a damper on that hype. Illness and injury may have played a role in his slow start, but he had a difficult time earning ice time and responsibility from 67's head coach Dave Cameron.

His start was so lacklustre that we're not sure a lot of folks in the scouting community took notice of his terrific finish to the OHL season, where he had 24 points in the last 18 games of the year. But they certainly took notice of his performance at the U18's, where he led the tournament in scoring and was named tournament MVP, dominating touches on a Swedish team with several first round candidates.

Ekberg doesn't have elite physical tools. However, his skating unquestionably improved over the course of this year and he's both skilled and intelligent with the puck. He's also a tenacious off puck player who is a willing combatant near the crease, along the wall, and on the forecheck; he works to earn his touches. Ekberg also owns a powerful one timer and wrist shot that give him terrific goal scoring upside, even if his goal scoring numbers were pretty low with the 67's. The lack of size is going to concern some scouts, especially when you consider that he probably profiles best as a complementary scoring line winger at the NHL level. However, you simply cannot ignore the progress he made this season and the incredible finish he had in both the OHL and internationally. - Otten

85



20-80 SCALE

57.5
SKATING50
SHOT55
SKILLS50
SMARTS50
PHYSICALITY52.875
OFP

CHARLIE TRETHEWEY

U.S. NTDP U18



DEFENCE



6-1



200 LBS



USA



AUG-02-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U17 (USDP)	52	12	23	35	43
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	63	6	14	20	35

Charlie Trethewey saw his point totals drop from the year prior, and throughout the year, his draft stock took a bit of a hit. He has now committed to Boston University for next year, joining fellow 2025 draft hopeful Haoxi Wang.

Trethewey is very mobile, possessing skating that allows him to manage gaps, evade pressure, and achieve clean zone entries. He has the tools to be an offensive defenceman with some slick hands but plays a more meat-and-potatoes game. Off the puck, Trethewey's stick defence is above average. He uses his lengthy reach to bother puck carriers and steer them away from the middle of the ice.

The problem with Trethewey is that while he wants to be a safe, reliable player, he isn't. He makes routine plays look difficult and leaves us often wondering, "What just happened? How did that breakout go so wrong?" His positioning is also suspect. Charlie can wander a bit too much and, on occasion, overreaches and gets walked by when playing one on one defence. While his skating and skills allow him to be an offensive threat, he often remains uncreative and doesn't try plays that are high-risk-high-reward. In terms of physicality, Trethewey neglects to use his size properly. He isn't nasty in front of the net, and his box-out game is weak; however, he does smother smaller opponents along the boards, allowing his teammates to come grab the puck.

Perhaps the coaching staff at Boston University will be able to iron out the wrinkles in his execution of simple plays and help him with his rush defence, where he frequently gets walked by fast or skilled opponents. Nonetheless, Trethewey's profile remains intriguing for NHL teams looking to acquire a project deeper into the draft. - Ireland

86



20-80 SCALE

52.5
SKATING50
SHOT52.5
SKILLS55
SMARTS55
PHYSICALITY52.875
OFP

MADS KONGSBAK KLYVO

FROLUNDA (SWE J20)



LEFT WING



6-2



195 LBS



DENMARK



MAY-03-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	FROLUNDA (SWE J18)	16	8	8	16	2
2024-25	FROLUNDA (SWE J20)	42	14	15	29	6

There always seems to be at least one uncut gem of a prospect that gets unearthed from one of the "other" Scandinavian nations. This year, that prospect is Mads Kongsbak Klyvø.

While rough around the edges, Klyvø fit in with Frölunda's fast-paced, counter-attacking identity right away. He's an explosive skater with good straight-line top speed and good agility for his size. Combined with his quick hands and deceptive handles, Klyvø really pushes the pace with the puck on his stick. He can be relied on to carry pucks in transition and be a very effective rush attack QB. He leans more passer than shooter, using cutbacks to assess his options and look for trailers. His playmaking game really took a step in the second half of the season, but still has a ways to go before becoming truly projectable to the NHL.

As stated earlier, Klyvø is quite raw. He's has the tools, but not a well-rounded game. In fact, he's a fairly low event player when his team doesn't have the puck. He's also has a decent physical game, but a player with his profile really should throw his weight around more. He doesn't have the strongest motor, nor does he use his size, strength and speed advantage to get inside as often as one would hope. He took the middle when he could, but struggled to get all the way to the inside. Klyvø has the makings of a modern power forward, but, paradoxically, needs to improve the "power" part of his game. It's hard to see him fill a role in the NHL, even as a bottom six, without that. Any team looking to draft Klyvø should be prepared to wait a while for any ROI. He's a long-term project. If he hits, he could be the type of top nine power winger that NHL teams dream of acquiring. - Robbins

87



20-80 SCALE

52.5	50	52.5
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
57.5	50	53
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

QUINN BEAUCHESNE

GUELPH (OHL)

DEFENCE 6-0 185 LBS CANADA MAR-01-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	GUELPH (OHL)	33	2	5	7	28
2024-25	GUELPH (OHL)	49	6	18	24	51

Beauchesne is a detail oriented two-way defender who had a difficult time standing out on a weak Guelph Storm team this year. However, when tasked with other challenges, such as the Hlinka/Gretzky Cup or the year end U18's, Beauchesne shined and likely did enough to convince NHL scouts that he can be a valuable second or third pairing defender in the future.

He is best described as a jack of all trades type. Beauchesne skates well in all directions. He consistently makes quick decisions with the puck and is dependable as a transition starter. He shows upside as a puck mover who can lead the attack; it's just a matter of gaining confidence in his ability to pick his spots to push aggressively through the neutral zone. Defensively, he is both a solid rush defender thanks to his mobility, and solid in coverage because of his sound defensive instincts and awareness. Simply put, Beauchesne is an intelligent defender who also happens to play the right side.

The concern is that similar OHL defenders have had a tough time carving out NHL roles in the last decade. The likes of Roland McKeown, Stuart Percy, Stephen Silas, Markus Phillips, etc, just never found a niche. Without elite size, reach, and physicality, will Beauchesne be as effective defensively at the NHL level? And without drastically improving his puck skill or ability to quarterback the powerplay, will Beauchesne be a reliable puck mover? At this point in the third round, it's worth the risk to find out because right shot defenders who move well and think the game as well as Beauchesne do not grow on trees. Maybe there's a path to a long NHL career similar to Calvin de Haan? - Otten

88



20-80 SCALE

50	52.5	52.5
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	52.5	52.375
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

THEO STOCKSELIUS

DJURGARDENS (SWE J20)

CENTER 6-3 195 LBS SWEDEN JUL-24-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	DJURGARDENS (SWE J18)	15	8	16	24	4
2024-25	DJURGARDENS (SWE J20)	40	22	29	51	50
2024-25	DJURGARDENS (SWE J18)	5	1	9	10	0

An immensely intriguing prospect who is a unique case in the region. The upside is sky-high, but so is the risk.

Let's start with the obvious: Stockselius is a big kid who plays with a ton of skill. He has the foundations of a physical game that should only get better with added muscle. He uses his big frame and slick handling ability to get around defenders in open ice and to insulate the puck in small areas. He can carve up his foes to open up passing lanes and convert playmaking opportunities with a nice passing touch. Naturally, he does his best work in the offensive zone. His ability to read the ice is among the best in the region. Thanks to his above-average shot, he keeps defenders guessing if he'll shoot or pass.

While Stockselius generally makes good decisions with the puck, he can sometimes skate into defensive pressure he just can't stickhandle his way out of. He tends to get over-reliant on his handling in order to work around his poor skating. Unfortunately, Stockselius doesn't have anything resembling escape speed at the moment. He's slow to build speed and his poor mechanics aren't helping. It's holding his game back. He can read play at a high level, but can't reposition himself fast enough off-puck to play reliable defensive hockey. His quickness has improved over the course of the year, but he still isn't at the level he needs to be at in order to crack the Swedish pro levels, let alone the NHL. Could it get to NHL average one day? Maybe, which would give him a clear path to a top nine role in the NHL. In the meantime, Stockselius will have to rely on his skill, his IQ, and his physicality to work around this wart, but there's no guarantee it will carry him to the NHL. - Robbins

89



20-80 SCALE

52.5

SKATING

55

SHOT

50

SKILLS

52.5

SMARTS

55

PHYSICALITY

52.75

OFF

CAEDEN HERRINGTON

LINCOLN (USHL)



DEFENCE



6-2



205 LBS



USA



JAN-26-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	HOLDERNESSE (USHS-NH)	29	7	42	49	0
2023-24	GREEN BAY (USHL)	16	1	3	4	4
2024-25	LINCOLN (USHL)	56	16	18	34	67

We had Herrington ranked as a late round selection (198th overall) last year thanks to his pro frame, decent mobility, and standout year in Tier 2. Herrington starred for the Holderness School in New Hampshire, as part of the New England prep loop. But we had concerns that his game was a bit too vanilla; that he lacked a standout trait that would carry him to the pros. His stint in the USHL to close out the year left a lot to be desired and it was probably one of the main reasons he went unselected.

This season, playing for Lincoln, Herrington emerged as one of the USHL's top two-way defenders and it has altered his pro projection. He led the USHL in goal scoring among defenders; his point shot and off puck instincts in the offensive zone are excellent. Think of the same way Kashawn Aitchison is effective as an offensive weapon in the OHL with Barrie. He's also showing well in the defensive end, combining his good mobility with improved physicality to close gaps quickly and shut down rush attackers. He can be downright suffocating as a defensive player and his compete level is extremely admirable. There's room for further fluidity and explosiveness in his stride, but he's making gains.

A Vermont commit, Herrington should be an immediate impact defender at the NCAA level in the same way Eric Pohlkamp was after being a re-entry favourite of ours. With an improving two-way skill set from the right side, Herrington has to be considered one of the better defenders in their second year of draft eligibility. There is a clear path to the NHL for him as a second pairing, all situations type. Don't be surprised if he's one of the first re-entry players selected in 2025.- Otten

90



20-80 SCALE

55

SKATING

52.5

SHOT

52.5

SKILLS

52.5

SMARTS

52.5

PHYSICALITY

53.125

OFF

ARVID DROTT

DJURGARDENS (SWE J20)



RIGHT WING



6-0



185 LBS



SWEDEN



AUG-11-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	DJURGARDENS (SWE J18)	14	18	10	28	12
2023-24	DJURGARDENS (SWE J20)	7	3	2	5	2
2024-25	DJURGARDENS (SWE J20)	40	18	18	36	14
2024-25	DJURGARDENS (SWE J18)	4	2	0	2	4

Speed kills, and so does Arvid Drott. The Stockholm native filled an important role for Djurgården en route to their J20 and J18 SM championship runs. That role was playing hard and fast. It was being a fly on honey. It was being in high-speed pursuits of pucks all over the ice. If that didn't paint a clear enough picture, Drott is a relentless forechecker. He uses his speed to swarm puck carriers and his strength to lower the boom on them. Once play goes the other way, Drott is pushing the pace, no matter if he has the puck or not. If defenders don't respect his speed, he's off to the races. There are few players in the J20 who can hold a candle to Drott's puck moving abilities. Even few can catch passes at high speeds as reliably as him. He's just as fast with the puck as he is without it. Naturally, Drott is a formidable rush attacker. He's more of a finisher than a playmaker. That is mostly due to his playmaking ability being a bit under developed. His small area game is effective enough, but still a work in progress. He can create some space for himself, but not enough to make paths to the net and drive inside. He'd be on everyone's radar if he could.

Drott is a raw talent, no doubt about it. Despite his physical strength, he's lanky. He's also a bit all over the place when it comes to hockey sense and decision making. There are lapses in concentration off-puck and a tendency to force plays when handling the puck under pressure. The processing speed isn't as fast as the speed at which he plays. However, he's got a late birthday and a lot of development runway left. A lot has to go right in his development for this to come true, but Drott might be one of the most overlooked potential power wingers in the draft class. Even if his offensive upside never materializes, he's got the physicality, the work rate, and the skating to fill a checking role in the NHL. - Robbins

91



20-80 SCALE

55	50	47.5
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
50	60	52.75
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

DAVID BEDKOWSKI

OWEN SOUND (OHL)

DEFENCE 6-5 220 LBS CANADA DEC-07-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	OSHAWA (OHL)	68	2	10	12	48
2024-25	OSH-OS (OHL)	37	3	4	7	73

Bedkowski is a player that divided our scouting staff this year; there was wide variance in opinion and in ranking suggestion. The hulking right shot defender has the upside to be a dominant defensive defender at the NHL level. He's mobile. He's physically assertive. However, he's also error prone and that could hurt the likelihood that he reaches his upside; thus the division of our staff's opinion.

A third year OHL player, Bedkowski got significant ice time on a rebuilding Owen Sound Attack team this year, after being a part of the trade that sent Colby Barlow to Oshawa. At 6-foot-5, his long, powerful strides allow him to cover ground incredibly efficiently and he's very difficult to get around; Bedkowski can usually keep attackers to the perimeter. He's also a very physical player who has a penchant for the big hit, but who also clears the crease and wipes out players along the wall. He's a bit of a man child in that regard.

However, the concerns we have are in relation to his play with the puck. He can struggle with his puck management in the defensive end and turnovers are too commonplace currently. His reads and routes need to greatly improve; his poor scanning habits can make him susceptible to the forecheck, and it can cause him to get hemmed in his own end. If Bedkowski were a younger player, we'd have more forgiveness for this, but as a late birthday and a third year OHL player, we wonder just how much further this can improve. As such, some on our staff are concerned that his upside is very limited.

That said, we do expect him to be drafted quite early because of his size and athleticism combination from the right side. We just have other preferences among the stay-at-home types that we have ranked earlier.- Otten

92



20-80 SCALE

57.5	50	52.5
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
52.5	50	53
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

FRANCESCO DELL'ELCE

MASSACHUSETTS (HE)

DEFENCE 6-0 170 LBS CANADA JUN-23-2005

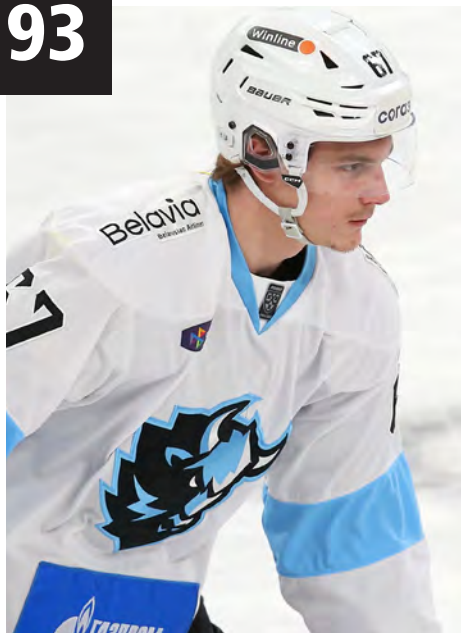
YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	PENTICTON (BCHL)	54	9	29	38	26
2024-25	MASSACHUSETTS (HE)	40	7	17	24	12

Back in 2023, Dell'Elce was one of the only players inside of our top 100 (ranked 97th) to go undrafted. Even after a solid showing with Penticton of the BCHL, he didn't really reappear on the draft radar last year. NHL teams wanted to finally see Dell'Elce play at a higher level of competition after a season of prep and a season of tier 2. Well, they got just that and then some this season, where Dell'Elce was one of the top freshmen in the entire NCAA. His 24 points for UMass were good for top 30 among defenseman scoring in the entire nation and were third among freshmen blueliners.

Dell'Elce has made terrific gains since his original draft year with St. Andrew's College, especially in the defensive end. He's never likely to be a defensive stalwart at the higher levels, but he's learned to use his plus mobility to his advantage as a rush defender and has drastically increased his physical intensity level; it's clear that he's been hitting the gym at UMass.

Offensively, he can be a difference maker. He's aggressive in looking to lead or join the rush and with his quickness, he's rarely prevented from gaining the offensive blueline. Dell'Elce is also a competent powerplay quarterback and generally extremely effective inside the offensive zone thanks to his ability to walk the line, get pucks through traffic, and slip coverage to work inside. Again, he's progressed enough with his decision making to the point where he could be a viable powerplay option at the higher levels. For these reasons, we fully expect Dell'Elce will finally have his name called by an NHL team this time around.- Otten

93



20-80 SCALE

55	47.5	55
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
57.5	50	53.25
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

YEGOR BORIKOV

DINAMO MINSK (KHL)

RIGHT WING 6-1 180 LBS BELARUS AUG-28-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	DINAMO MINSK (KHL)	41	5	3	8	6
2024-25	DINAMO MINSK (KHL)	67	12	13	25	16

In his third year of eligibility, Yegor Borikov has finally broken through as a superstar in the KHL. Over the past few years, there were obvious flashes of talent on display, but Borikov struggled to put his skills together with any sort of consistency. This season everything seemed to click, opening up an offensive outpouring that looks very promising for a potential NHL career.

He's a confident puck carrier who sees options as they appear and makes smart, high-impact decisions. Borikov drives play with intent, constantly pushing toward the slot with slick passes or sharp off-puck movement. He can create chances with his feet just as well as with his passing. His small area game is very impressive, using his hands to quickly escape pressure and put himself in opportune situations.

Borikov has developed physical tools over the past few seasons that really benefited him when combined with his high-end puck handling when possessing the puck. He uses his body well to protect the puck under pressure and battle effectively along the boards. He has a good motor which allows him to be effective on both the forecheck and in the defensive zone.

He has developed into a very smooth skater using his agility and quick feet which allows him to create offense with his feet and stick with opponents in the defensive end. His transition game is fast, and he thrives on quick one-touch plays in the offensive zone.

On paper, Borikov's numbers don't pop but his consistent improvements each year have been very impressive. The offensive side of his game came together in a way which we have not seen before, and we believe that he is just scratching the surface. Sometimes it takes skilled players a while to put all the pieces together. Borikov has shown consistent offensive habits, playmaking, high-end hands, rush ability, finishing touch, and high motor play. - Lawrence

94



20-80 SCALE

50	55	55
SKATING	SHOT	SKILLS
55	45	52.25
SMARTS	PHYSICALITY	OFF

NATHAN BEHM

KAMLOOPS (WHL)

RIGHT WING 6-2 200 LBS CANADA APR-18-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	KAMLOOPS (WHL)	68	12	19	31	27
2024-25	KAMLOOPS (WHL)	59	31	35	66	12

It's not often that a 6-foot-2 forward who crossed the 30-goal plateau and scored at a full point-per-game pace would be this low on the list, but Behm is a peculiar prospect who is difficult to get a confident read on.

On paper, there's undeniably a lot to like. The son of a figure skating coach, he's smooth and fluid when he moves around the ice. He handles, passes and shoots the puck with impressive precision. His vision is deceptively good, allowing him to lull opposing defenders a bit before setting up a dangerous scoring chance that they didn't see coming. Despite all these good attributes, though, there are frustrating concerns about Behm that all stem from how he approaches the game. His physical play is almost non-existent, which is extra disappointing because he has a big enough frame that it would give him an advantage over others. The main concern, however, is his overall lackadaisical attitude and approach. He's usually much more of a passenger than a true driver of play. His game is very perimeter-focused, and it's far too easy for defenders to beat him in battles around the net or along the boards. He's managed to find ways to score in the WHL in spite of these shortcomings, but that won't be the case at the professional levels, where space and puck possession often have to be earned through hard-fought puck battles. Perhaps you could cut him a bit of slack because the Blazers didn't have much to play for this season, but the source of the issues seems more deep-rooted than that.

If a team is desperate for future scoring help and is willing to take a shot on a boom-or-bust forward in the middle rounds, then Behm should be right up their alley. - Neumeier

95



20-80 SCALE

55
SKATING50
SHOT52.5
SKILLS55
SMARTS50
PHYSICALITY53
OFF

SAM LAURILA

FARGO (USHL)



DEFENCE



6-1



190 LBS



USA



SEP-02-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2023-24	USN U18 (USDP)	61	3	8	11	36
2024-25	FARGO (USHL)	57	8	33	41	46

Sometimes players just find more individual success outside of the NTDP. As part of the U18 team last year, Laurila was relegated to more of a depth defensive role and as a result, he didn't impress NHL teams enough to warrant a draft selection. This year, repeating the USHL level with Fargo, Laurila was a star. A member of the USHL's first all-star team, it seems highly unlikely that he goes unselected the second time around. We firmly believe that he is in contention to be the first re-entry off the draft board this year.

Laurila is a valuable and intelligent two-way defender; his profile is incredibly well rounded. He's an excellent skater with smooth four-way mobility. His gap control is excellent when defending downhill, and even though he doesn't project as an overly physical pro defender, he's great at angling off attackers and neutralizing transitional opportunities. He blocks shots. He's got great instincts when defending the slot and rarely misses an assignment. For our money, he may have been the best defensive defender in the USHL this past season.

It's the progression in his offensive game that truly has him in contention for the first three rounds. He's become a confident puckhandler who can use his skating ability to clear the defensive zone and start the breakout. He gets pucks on net under pressure and can hold the offensive blueline very effectively with his soft hands and lateral mobility. He likely doesn't project as a powerplay quarterback at higher levels, but it will be interesting to see how his puck play progresses further at the University of North Dakota. In a few years, he very well could develop into a John Marino kind of solid #4 defender.- Otten

96



20-80 SCALE

60
ATHLETICISM50
TEMPERMENT50
VISION55
TECHNIQUE50
REBOUND CONTROL50
PUCK HANDLING52.75
OFF

SAMUEL MELOCHE

ROUYN-NORANDA (QMJHL)



GOALIE



6-2



190 LBS



CANADA



JUL-22-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP	W	L	GAA	SV%
2023-24	CHATEAUGUAY GRENADIERS (QM18AAA)	29	12	15	3.21	0.911
2024-25	ROUYN-NORANDA (QMJHL)	51	30	14	2.90	0.900

There aren't too many NHL goalies in recent memory to match Samuel Meloche's style and stature. But there is one who is finding a lot of success, and that goalie is Dustin Wolf. The Calgary rookie goalie stands at six feet tall, the same as Meloche, and is one of the best athletes and skaters in the NHL.

Within his draft class, Meloche is at least top three in each of these aspects. His movement is completely fluid, moving laterally like he's floating with grace and precision, all while not sacrificing explosiveness. Another key attribute of Meloche is his flexibility. Specifically, he's able to stretch out for huge saves, retaining full mobility in any position, a trait that is what makes Dustin Wolf so special. These elite traits alone should bring him to the NHL, as they are some of the most difficult skills to improve, and skating is the most vital attribute of a goaltender.

Where Meloche begins to deviate from Wolf is erraticism, rebound control, and intelligence. Meloche can be a very jumpy goalie, with many of his goals against stemming from moving excessively or bad rebounds. Additionally, he tends to rely upon his athletic ability to make saves, which can lead to him being a more inconsistent goalie. Wolf, in contrast, is much more poised and controlled, playing very efficiently, prioritizing positioning and maximizing his movements when he can explode anywhere. At their diminutive stature, it's important to be calm because if they move carelessly, they can end up out of position, and the already smaller amount of net they take up will be accentuated tenfold. Meloche is a project because of this, but the starter potential is there. Even Wolf had to overcome similar issues to become who he is today. - Crouse

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

97 SHEA BUSCH

LEFT WING 6-2 205 LBS CANADA JUN-12-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	47.5 SKATING	55 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	57.5 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFF
2024-25	EVERETT (WHL)	39-11-8-19-23						

Hockey lineage can express itself in interesting ways at times. Take Busch as a prime example of that. His father, Robert Busch, is a Canadian who carved out a long and modestly successful professional career in Germany as a power forward and enforcer. You don't make it all the way down that kind of gritty path without learning a lot of lessons, and it's obvious that many of them have been passed down to his son, Shea.

The younger Busch plays a style of game that could be described, in a very complimentary way, as "effectively simple." The rambunctious winger is built like an ox and has an incredibly defined understanding of how to be successful by playing to his strengths. He hits like a truck, he fights hard in every puck battle, and he goes to the net like his livelihood depends on it (which it does, in a way). While he doesn't have much traditional skill to work with, especially with his skating, he's already an ace at scoring in the dirty areas. This includes the timing and accuracy of his deflections, which is an underappreciated art that is becoming more and more important in today's NHL. Every team nowadays appreciates the value of a forward who can consistently make it to the front of the opposing crease, stand his ground in that space, and get his stick on pucks in the right ways.

He got better and better with Everett after joining them mid-season from the BCHL, but he'll be heading to Penn State in the fall like he originally planned.

Watch a team like the Florida Panthers in the playoffs and it's not hard to imagine what a player like Busch could contribute to a group like that at some point in his future. - Neumeier

98 VOJTECH CIHAR

LEFT WING 6-0 180 LBS CZECH MAR-29-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	60 PHYSICALITY	52.75 OFF
2024-25	HC ENERGIE KARLOVY VARY (CZECHIA)	43-4-5-9-8						

ihah is a well-built winger with a strong skating stride. He loves to charge the net with reckless abandon, doing so to create time and space for his teammates, looking to pounce on loose pucks. Not one to shy away from sacrificing his body to block shots or take away passing lanes, we've come to know ihah as a gritty player you can go to war with. This is something his nation has obviously recognized, having supplied him with a fourth line role at the WJC this past winter and then force feeding him top six ice time at the U18 Worlds, where he often saw more than 19 minutes of playing time, garnering nearly 23 in the team's 3-2 quarterfinal loss to Canada.

This all came on the heels of a very solid winter, one in which he spent plenty of time suiting up at various tournaments with both the U20 and U18 squads whenever he wasn't filling the role as the 9th/10th forward for Karlovy Vary in Czechia's top pro league. Having spent the entire domestic season at his nation's highest level, which is no doubt a notable accomplishment for a first time draft-eligible player, it's extremely difficult to gauge his offensive upside. He wasn't placed in many offensive situations and his international production was slight with just two points at the WJC and three at the U18 Worlds. Nonetheless, his skating is an absolute strength featuring a crouched stance that helps him generate power for quick acceleration. He pressures the defense, forcing defenders to respect his speed on the attack or by aggressively causing turnovers on the forecheck. He's also adept at creating picks and engaging in physical play along the boards.

We'd love to see him in the CHL next season and thoroughly expect him to be off the board by the end of the fourth round. - Landvogt

99 EDDIE GENBORG

RIGHT WING 6-2 205 LBS SWEDEN APR-20-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	60 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFF
2024-25	LINKOPINGS (SWE J20)	28-19-15-34-26						

Sometimes, simplicity is perfection. Genborg is far from perfect, but what you see is what you get - and what you get, rocks.

Genborg will rock you, if you don't keep your head up. His physical game is electric. He throws big hits to set the tone or to spark his team. He's a nightmare to play against. He showcased that at the Hlinka Gretzky and made a name for himself by completely getting under the skin of his opponents. This continued back home in the J20 with like-minded individuals on Linköping HC - a heavy, suffocating, counter-attacking unit in a league where that certainly isn't the norm. While Genborg isn't the most creative offensive player, he's a strong north-south skater and effective rush attacker. He protects the puck with his frame from defenders and gets to the inside. His ability to read and adapt to changes in play, especially offensively, looked quite good at the junior level. However, his lacklustre performance at the U18 Worlds called his hockey sense into question as he was constantly chasing play.

Beyond the simple passing play, Genborg isn't a very good puck manager. You'd love some more complexity to his offensive game, but it just isn't in his DNA. He doesn't have a good small area game, nor does he have the agility to shake off pressure off the cycle. As a result, he turns the puck over more often than he's able to make a play. He's most at home in front of the net, tucking home rebounds and collecting garbage - the same way he scored his first SHL goal.

Genborg's game is simple, yet very projectable. He has the edge you need to survive and thrive against men. While his skating still needs work, he already plays like a fourth liner in the NHL. Unless something drastic happens, that's most likely his floor and his ceiling. - Robbins

100 LUCAS BECKMAN

GOALIE 6-1 180 LBS CANADA AUG-23-2007

Unfortunately for Beckman, Jack Ivankovic exists in the same birth year as him. Otherwise, he may well have been able to create even more hype surrounding his draft status. Beckman operated as the backup to Ivankovic for Team Canada at both the Hlinka/Gretzky Cup and the U18's, performing extremely well both times with the minimal starting assignments that he received. He'll likely continue to be on Hockey Canada's radar moving forward too, albeit behind Ivankovic.

The 6-foot-2 netminder had a terrific year in the QMJHL with Baie-Comeau, who finished in the top four of their conference, but ended up losing in round two of the playoffs to the eventual QMJHL champion Moncton Wildcats. He finished just outside of the top five in save percentage this year but was even better in the playoffs for the Drakkar; his .922 percentage was third best in the QMJHL postseason. Not bad for a goalie who played only nine games in the QMJHL last year.

Beckman is a composed technical netminder who competes to make saves and exhibits solid rebound control for a younger goalie. He reads and reacts to the play well and is aggressive in closing off angles; he's confident playing to the top of the blue paint. He's not large by today's goaltending standards, but he competes for sight lines, and he was remarkably consistent this year. He's quick in and out of his stance and is fairly agile, but there's probably more room for him to improve his overall quickness and athleticism in the crease, especially given his relative average size (again, by today's standards). This is something that can be improved upon and we would expect Beckman to continue to develop into one of the QMJHL's elite netminders over the next few seasons. Beckman is one of several goaltenders ranked in our top 100 that we could easily see developing into an NHL starter.- Otten

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

101 MASON MOE





 CENTER  6-1  190 LBS  USA  MAR-26-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	53.25 OFF
2024-25	MADISON (USHL)	51-17-26-43-26						

The big center has the potential to play a complete, pro-style, heavy game. His skating has improved dramatically over the course of the calendar year, allowing him to become a way more impactful player on and off the puck. He can put defenders on his back and drive the net; his puck protection ability is a major strength of his game. Additionally, Moe has excellent scoring instincts as he gets himself to the net and finds soft spots in coverage. The release on his shot needs to get quicker, but his shot is heavy and has the upside to be a big weapon for him moving forward.

Consistency was the big issue for Moe this season. His physical engagement level wavers too much for a player of his size and playing style. He could definitely stand to be more physical in puck pursuit and is currently too often a passenger who needs others to make skilled plays for him. Additionally, while his skating has improved drastically, his ability to sustain speed is still a work in progress and was a visible issue for Moe when playing internationally (at the Hlinka/Gretzky Cup, Nations tournament, and the WJAC). Hopefully the University of Minnesota can encourage the growth of his power game to help him unlock his upside as a middle six contributor.- Otten

102 DREW SCHOCK

 DEFENCE  5-11  180 LBS  USA  FEB-07-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	53.5 OFF
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	66-9-28-37-28						

Scouts always need to be careful to not put too much stock into how a player performs at the IIHF U18s in the spring, the last big, annual international event for draft-eligible prospects, but Schock elevated his game so much compared to how he looked throughout most of the season that it shouldn't be undervalued or dismissed out of hand.

Schock is a utility kind of defender who chips in for his team in divergent ways. Sometimes that's with great penalty kill work, sometimes that's with smart puck movement on the powerplay, and sometimes that's with an assertive rush up the ice at five-on-five that opens up space and pushes opposing defenders back. It's debatable whether he'll ever be a standout in any of these areas as a professional player, but it's never a bad thing for a prospect to have different avenues for growth that they could go down.

He's heading to the powerhouse University of Michigan next, so his development should be in good hands in that regard. - Neumeier

103 TOMAS POLETIN

 LEFT WING  6-1  205 LBS  CZECH  APR-30-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	57.5 PHYSICALITY	53.25 OFF
2024-25	PELICANS (FIN-U20)	25-13-7-20-14						

A husky, deceptively quick winger who has put in noticeable effort in trying to become a well-rounded 200-foot player, Poletin is coming off a season in which his overall production can only be chalked up as disappointing. After good showings at the WHC 17 and U18 Worlds in his DY-1, which he spent with Finnish Lahti's junior program, there were greater expectations of him this year. He did ultimately see 23 games of Liiga action, looking more well-rounded and acquiesced in the relegation round, but was a non-factor offensively. His scoring pace for the U20 squad was decent, but not noteworthy.

He concluded the season as Czechia's U18 Worlds captain, but he only managed to hit the scoresheet twice at the tourney. With lofty expectations having gone unmet, we can still say there's enough raw ability in the skating and stickhandling departments, as well as an understanding of how to play an aggressive, physical game, to one day become a solid lower line winger at the NHL level. The Czech program has great faith in him, and we see him as a lock for the WJC next winter. Further development is required. - Landvogt

104 MAXIM AGAFONOV

 DEFENCE  6-2  195 LBS  RUSSIA  APR-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	55 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.75 OFF
2024-25	TOLPAR UFA (MHL)	35-6-8-14-22						

Maxim Agafonov has emerged as a strong puck-rushing defenseman with a physical defensive game. He uses a combination of smooth footwork and skilled handiwork to move himself into open ice and create offense.

Activations into offensive attacks are one of Maxim's biggest strengths. He does a great job reading the play and picking opportune moments to jump up and make himself an option. He uses smooth edgework, skilled hands, and well-timed cuts to work his way into space and create offensive opportunities nearly every time.

Defensively he uses his footwork to stay in front of opponents in transition, angling them to the outside, shutting down play with his body and a quick stick. He is a physical defender who likes to close opponents off with big checks.

There is still quite a bit of work that has to be done to bring Agafonov to an NHL level, especially with his decision making and confidence under pressure but with the right improvements, there is a lot of potential for him to become a strong bottom four defenseman in the NHL. - Lawrence

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

105 L.J. MOONEY

 RIGHT WING  5-7  160 LBS  USA  MAR-08-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	54 OFF
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	51-10-41-51-25						

One of the smallest players in this draft, you'll be hard-pressed to find a more electrifying player than Mooney. His skating immediately separates him from most of his peers, allowing him to dart by defenders at full speed or cut 'n chase to open ice as he sees fit, almost always with the puck in tow. That's also why a knee-on-knee check suffered last fall against Notre Dame had the prospect world gasping and questioning how susceptible Mooney will be to such abuse at higher levels. Fortunately, little could be detected of the injury by the time the U18 Worlds rolled around, where he reinforced the belief that he's the best pure stickhandler the USNTDP had to offer this season. Crisp passes, smooth dekes, thread-the-needle playmaking, and impressive goal-rushing gumption combine with a constantly running motor. Mooney's eyebrow-raising 23-24 season in which he was a DY-1 weapon at the U18 Worlds (6 points), paved the way to high expectations for a 25-26 season that was light on goals. He saved his best for last with a team-leading 11-point outing at the U18 Worlds. Cool sidenote: Logan Cooley is a cousin. - Landvogt

106 MACE'O PHILLIPS



 DEFENCE  6-6  235 LBS  USA  FEB-25-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	45 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	62.5 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFF
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	60-2-4-6-103						

Without question, Phillips has to be considered one of the most feared physical players eligible for the draft this year. The 6-foot-6 blueliner is a menace in the defensive end. He's not only looking to separate opposing players from the puck, he's looking to plant them on their behinds or plaster them along the boards, removing them from the play all together. He rarely loses a 50/50 battle at the junior level. A throwback to yesteryears, Phillips is also a reasonably solid skater for someone his size. He closes gaps quickly and can defend downhill, even if his transitions could use a bit of work to help him retrieve pucks and not allow attackers to get behind him.

The issue is that Phillips' decision making is extremely raw. His exits are not clean, and he can have trouble with the forecheck. Additionally, he can chase the play physically, taking him out of position. His game needs major refinement at the collegiate level with Minnesota. The proof of this is the fact that Phillips was pretty much relegated to a seventh defender role by the U18's, rarely even seeing time on the PK. He has the upside to be an impact defensive player, but only if his game matures.- Otten

107 TOMAS POBEZAL

 CENTER  5-10  180 LBS  SLOVAKIA  SEP-18-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	57.5 SMARTS	60 PHYSICALITY	53.375 OFF
2024-25	HK NITRA (SLOVAKIA)	42-15-8-23-24						

Pobežal has been on our radar for quite a few years now, granted he's one of the older players in this draft. He's the veteran of two Hlinka Gretzky Cups, 2 U18 Worlds, and a WJC. And he's coming off his second full season of pro hockey at the highest level in Slovakia. For a player his age, we haven't really seen these numbers in that league since <gulp> Marian Gaborik. To make it clear though, Pobežal does not skate or shoot like Gaborik.

We've always liked Pobežal's tenacity. He makes life hard on opponents while on the attack and he's difficult to get a hold of because he hops around and twists his body in ways that keep his stick free. He backchecks well and threw his weight around quite a bit this season, showing good reads in avoiding hits too. His 15 goals this year were almost double his assist total and we never saw a hesitation to shoot. Of average height and speed, he'll be a project for whoever selects him, but he's a clever player. He's going to push for an NHL job one day. Recently Pobežal's OHL rights were traded to the Kingston Frontenacs and it looks like he'll continue his development in the CHL next season.- Landvogt

108 MATEO NOBERT

 CENTER  6-0  170 LBS  CANADA  AUG-12-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	47.5 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFF
2024-25	BLAINVILLE-BOISBRIAND (QMJHL)	57-28-39-67-24						

Nobert was electric in the playoffs. He combined with Carboneau for some instant classic goals and showcased his skills and playmaking smarts.

Mateo Nobert's playmaking is incredibly advanced as he manages lanes well, using his hands to delay and time openings before executing beautiful passes to his teammates. His high goal totals were a product of scoring off rebounds and tap-ins. Nobert is responsible defensively and hustles to knock opponents off the puck. His skating is above average, giving quick bursts to break away from crowds and chase down the puck carrier.

As a bonus, Nobert's energy after a goal is scored is infectious, and he's invested in the success of his team and the players around him.

Nobert isn't the strongest and has little physical impact against larger players. His off-puck offensive game is akin to that of Ashton Jeanty's pre-snap stance. He stands around waiting for his teammates to involve him instead of proactively looking for opportunities to get involved.

He projects to be a middle six center if he can address his strength and give a more consistent level of compete. - Ireland

109 DAVID ROZSIVAL

 RIGHT WING  6-0  185 LBS  CZECH  JUN-01-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	57.5 PHYSICALITY	52.75 OFF
2024-25	BILI TYGRI LIBEREC (CZECHIA U20)	30-17-20-37-8						



It was an inconsistent campaign for Rozsival from front to back, but when things actually were clicking for him he left a positive impression in the minds of scouts.

His contributions on the ice are mostly built around what he can do with his feet. He's a serious speedster in a straight line, able to blaze past enemy defenders on the outside or cut right between them before they can converge on him. And his favorite thing to do with that speed is directly attack the net for an individual scoring chance, with the finishing ability to back it up. There isn't much else to the rest of his game right now, though. He's fairly one-dimensional and often struggles to leave an impact in other ways, so he'll need to find a few other dimensions to add to it moving forward.

If a team is looking to use a pick in the middle rounds on someone that could help their group play a little faster then Rozsival should be a leading candidate. - Neumeier

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

110 MAX WESTERGARD

 LEFT WING  5-10  160 LBS  FINLAND  SEP-03-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	47.5 PHYSICALITY	52.875 OFFP
2024-25	FROLUNDA (SWE J20)	41-19-31-50-87						

If you want a high-end offensive forward, then look no further. Westergård has the total package. Quick hands, quick release on his shot, and superb playmaking instincts. Reads the ice like a dream. He's always been agile, but his skating quickness has improved over the course of the season. Of all the players who fit the "skilled, undersized, top-six or bust" mould in the region, Westergård has shown the most dynamic skill and offensive upside to bet on. If you consider his chemistry with phenom Ivar Stenberg (2026 NHL Draft), it's very easy to see Westergård playing a complementary offensive role in the NHL on the wing of an elite C.

The biggest obstacle in his path is finding a consistent way to make himself playable when he doesn't have the puck. He can't drive a line on his own, and he isn't exactly a strong two-way player. He looked much more competitive and tenacious in his SHL games compared to his J20 games, but he's still got a way to go before an NHL coach would give him the time of day. - Robbins

111 DAKODA RHEAUME-MULLEN



 DEFENCE  6-0  180 LBS  USA  DEC-18-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	57.5 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	53.25 OFFP
2024-25	MICHIGAN (B1G)	35-3-6-9-8						

The first thing mentioned in connection with Dakota is that he's the son of history-making Manon Rhéaume, the famous women's goaltender who once signed a contract with the Tampa Bay Lightning. Unlike his mother and half-brother Dylan St. Cyr (now retired), he is not a goaltender. But he has been in the business of blocking pucks and opposing attackers as part of the USNTDP for two years running and then as one of the youngest freshmen (turned 18 last December) in the nation for Michigan this past season.

Of decent size, Rhéaume-Mullen dances at the blueline with his wide stance, looking to find shot pathways to the goal. With his ice time often exceeding 15 minutes, including several 19-minute outings along the way, the quick-footed defender clearly gained the trust of Coach Naurato as a hustler with a very active stick. He's plenty mobile but every aspect of his game still requires refining and repetition. A solid candidate for next winter's WJC, Rhéaume-Mullen is an overall heady player with solid hands and a good set of tools. We wouldn't blame you for thinking he's an underrated prospect. - Landvogt

112 KIEREN DERVIN

 CENTER  6-1  185 LBS  CANADA  MAR-31-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.875 OFFP
2024-25	ST. ANDREW'S COLLEGE (CHS-O)	50-33-46-79-75						

Dervin, a Penn State commit, is someone who has greatly benefited from the ruling that opened up the NCAA route for CHL players. He played most of this year with St. Andrew's College but joined Kingston full time when the prep season was over, allowing Dervin to be along for the ride during Kingston's playoff run. He probably spends all of next year (perhaps more) with the Fronts before joining Penn State. Now, this is great because Dervin's biggest weakness is a lack of strength and conditioning; he'll have a ton of time to work on that. This has been most obvious at the OHL level with Kingston where he had trouble keeping possession of the puck and playing through traffic. There's a will there, and that's obvious when he's playing with SAC. He competes for space and pucks and he's an improving three zone pivot. However, consistency was a huge issue for him this year. The basic foundation of a quality middle six center is there. He skates well. He has good vision as a passer and, as mentioned, shows promise as a two-way threat. However, is he skilled enough? Again, his on puck play and production have been wildly inconsistent. A long-term project who has some intriguing skills.- Otten

113 NATHAN QUINN

 CENTER  5-11  170 LBS  CANADA  AUG-29-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	57.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.875 OFFP
2024-25	QUEBEC (QMJHL)	54-17-29-46-25						

Nathan Quinn had one of the biggest production boosts this year, exhibiting his incredible playmaking skills.

Quinn's intelligence is his best trait. Whether it's finding creative cross-crease passes, using quick feeds on the rush to cut through the neutral zone, or his excellent understanding of positioning. Quinn gets into dangerous areas in the offensive zone to finish rebounds and makes himself a threat off the puck. In the defensive zone, he understands each position's role and covers for teammates frequently. Quinn may be small, but he competes hard in the corners and offers some physicality. He also possesses above-average hands, which he uses to buy time for passes and evade pressure.

However, as a 5-foot-11 center with limited skating abilities and a weak shot, He has a long development road ahead of him. He is a very late birthday, giving him a touch more runway, but historically, very few players of his profile can land full-time roles in the NHL without elite skill.

Quinn projects to be a bottom six center who uses a blend of intelligence and compete to play in a shutdown role and add some playmaking upside. - Ireland

114 LUKAS SAWCHYN

 LEFT WING  5-10  170 LBS  CANADA  FEB-27-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFFP
2024-25	EDMONTON (WHL)	66-15-40-55-27						

It's pretty obvious that Sawchyn closely models his game after his big brother Gracyn, a highly talented prospect in the Florida Panthers system. The two even got to play together this season on the Oil Kings. Talk about having a great role model in your life, and one who will be able to keep sending a steady stream of tips and tricks. And while Lukas doesn't quite have the same panache as his older sibling, he's still pretty slick in his own right.

The younger Sawchyn is a dynamic stickhandler and shrewd playmaker. He's one of those forwards who can make it look like the puck is glued to his stick, and he's not shy about showing off those skills whenever he has the chance, sometimes to a fault. He likes to slow things down and let his hands do all the work, but that style of hockey doesn't really work in the NHL, so he'll need to find better ways to utilize his expertise.

With the right adjustments he could grow into a support scorer and powerplay specialist. - Neumeier

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

115 OWEN MARTIN

 CENTER  6-0  185 LBS  CANADA  MAY-11-2007


YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFF
2024-25	SPOKANE (WHL)	39-13-21-34-20						

When it comes to the top prospects who emerged from the WHL this season, none flew under the radar as much as Martin did. Not only did he miss a lot of his Spokane's games due to injury, when he did play he was always under the shadow of superstar Berkly Catton, whose performances sucked up the attention of onlookers like a black hole. However, those who managed to get good looks at Martin learned that he's not someone who should be glossed over.

He is a center who can contribute in all three zones to a roughly equal degree. He possesses great attention to detail and is very responsible in his shifts, regardless of the situation. He's the type of player that coaches can trust pretty easily and early on when they begin working with him. It's hard to foresee him accomplishing much further development physically, but there might be another level to his offense that can be unlocked once he's able to play higher up the Chiefs lineup.

There's something there with Martin, even if it's not clear yet exactly what that is. - Neumeier

116 ATTE JOKE

 CENTER  6-1  190 LBS  FINLAND  JUL-21-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	55 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	LUKKO (FIN-U20)	40-15-17-32-8						

It's a real shame that Joki had his worst international performance of the season right at the very end at the U18s, where there were the most eyes on him, because he was Finland's best forward at all the other previous events, such as the 5 Nations. Luckily for him, scouts won't forget what he looks like when he's at his best.

There isn't much that really stands out about Joki. He's mostly just a sturdy, responsible center who plays a hard and heavy style of hockey across all three zones. It may not be exciting to watch, but you can find players like that throughout the league, including on Stanley Cup-winning teams (like Kevin Stenlund and Steven Lorentz with Florida in 2024, or Mike Amadio with Vegas in 2023). Any time that a team can find a roster player like that outside of the first 100 picks of a draft should be counted as a win.

Give Joki a few more seasons to cook at his own temperature in his home country and he should be ready to transition to North America pretty seamlessly. - Neumeier

117 NOAH LABERGE

 DEFENCE  6-0  185 LBS  CANADA  OCT-09-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.875 OFF
2024-25	ACADIE-BATHURST (QMJHL)	63-12-23-35-50						

Noah Laberge is a smooth-skating defenceman who saw his offensive skillset translate to impressive point totals for the Titan.

He uses his skills and patience to time his passes well, hitting tight windows with ease thanks to his refined pass execution. Laberge isn't afraid to activate from the point and dive deep into the zone, looking to beat goalies with a deke driving the net. In the defensive zone, Laberge isn't quite as active but still holds his own by keeping an active stick.

Laberge struggles when challenged physically but isn't particularly light for his height. His net front defence isn't particularly resistant, and after an initial few pushes, opponents setting a screen didn't seem too challenged by his box-out attempts.

Laberge's role is tough to project at the next level as he will likely need to crack a top four roster spot to stick in the lineup given his offense-oriented game and lack of physical strength in the defensive zone. There's a good possibility he maxes out as a good AHL offensive defenceman. - Ireland





118 CARSON CAMERON

 DEFENCE  6-1  190 LBS  CANADA  JUN-27-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.875 OFF
2024-25	PETERBOROUGH (OHL)	63-7-16-23-24						

It just wasn't a great year for Cameron, playing on a poor Peterborough Petes team. The de facto number one defender for the Petes, Cameron was tasked with trying to play outside of his comfort level this year and it hurt his on-ice performance. Coming into the season, he was firmly on the radar as a potential top 50 pick. Now, he's looking like a mid-to-late round selection. When Cameron is at his best, he's keeping things simple. He skates well. He has great defensive instincts. He competes hard in the defensive end. He can make a clean exit, and he can make plays inside the offensive zone; his shot shows the upside of being a plus weapon for him. However, he often seemed rushed this year; it seemed like he was trying to impact the game offensively more than he was truly capable of at this time. That meant poor puck management in the defensive end or bad pinches to take himself out of the play. Additionally, his physical game didn't take that step forward many expected it would. Consistently playing from behind in Peterborough did not allow him to shine through. There's still upside for him to develop into a quality NHL prospect and that's why we have him ranked in the mid rounds. - Otten

119 PHILIPPE VEILLEUX

 LEFT WING  5-9  165 LBS  CANADA  MAR-26-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	52.875 OFF
2024-25	VAL D'OR (QMJHL)	64-40-47-87-16						





Philippe Veilleux torched the QMJHL for 40 goals and 47 assists this year, combining extremely proficient offensive instincts with a quick, strong shot and dangerous hands.

Veilleux's playmaking brain is incredible to watch. He knows where the puck is going and how he's going to get it there as soon as he receives a pass. It doesn't matter where he's looking, the pass could be going anywhere. Veilleux continues moving as soon as he makes a pass, looking to get to the net for an opportunity to finish a pass to the back door.

Veilleux was frequently the last one back on the backcheck, showing little effort on the defensive side of the game. Often, he floats around in his zone waiting for an offensive opportunity to arise rather than posing as a threat to create turnovers. His physicality is also very rough and unlikely to get much better. Veilleux gets pushed around and is rendered useless in most board battles. This makes Philippe a tough add to a bottom six, making his road to a full-time roster spot much more difficult. - Ireland

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS





120 TINUS LUC KOBLAR

 CENTER  6-3  185 LBS  SWEDEN  JUL-21-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFF
2024-25	LEKSANDS (SWE J20)	43-8-13-21-14						

The point totals won't jump out at you, but Koblar was a versatile two-way force down the stretch for Leksands J20 on a line with two one-dimensional players in Melvin Novotny and Jonas Lagerberg Hoen. His greatest strength is his hockey sense. He makes astute reads and positions himself well off-puck. He can be physical when he has to be, despite needing to add some muscle to his frame. Koblar uses his size to insulate pucks from forecheckers and win body positioning along the walls. He's got great vision and a creative, reliable passing touch. The quality of his shot isn't anything special, but his shot selection is quite good. His weak point is definitely his skating. He has a hard time accelerating quickly and his foot work needs improvement. That being said, skating can be improved. If an NHL team is willing to invest some time and energy into him, Koblar could be a long-term bet for a mid-six forward. He's already got a great two-way game and he's poised to breakout offensively next season. - Robbins

121 WILLIAM BELLE

 RIGHT WING  6-4  225 LBS  USA  JAN-14-2007






YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFF
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	55-4-12-16-67						

Scouts always want to see prospects improve over the course of their seasons, not regress, so Belle probably had to field a lot of difficult questions at this year's draft combine. Despite a solid start to his year his ice time gradually got reduced, and things deteriorated so badly that he wasn't even one of the 14 forwards named to USA Hockey's roster for the U18s in Texas. NHL teams will still have plenty of time for him, though, because he possesses a clear identity and translatable tools.

Belle is a real wrecking ball of a player. He's built like a firetruck and loves to go out there and throw his weight around. What's really scary is that he skates pretty well too, so when he goes in for a hit with some momentum behind him it can shake the arena. He does the same kind of good work as both a forechecker and a penalty killer, using his energy and reach to apply pressure on opponents.

Belle has no qualms about what kind of player he is, and the team that picks him will know what they're getting. - Neumeier

122 MELVIN NOVOTNY

 LEFT WING  6-1  185 LBS  SWEDEN  APR-03-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFF
2024-25	LEKSANDS (SWE J20)	41-12-26-38-37						

One of Leksands J20's main offensive drivers. Novotny is a speedy offensive forward with quick hands and manipulative stick-handling. He pushes the pace in transition through his strong passing game and through his own puck carrying. He's possesses skill at high speed. Spectacular passing vision and playmaking ability below the goal line and around the net. He's a dangerous scoring chance generating machine. Definitely more passer than shooter. He's got some junior habits to unlearn, like poor shot selection, blind pass attempts, and poor body positioning. That won't play at higher levels. In addition, Novotny is one-dimensional. Dynamically skilled and creative with the puck, but suffers from a lack of an off-puck game. Very limited physicality, despite a good-sized frame. He can sometimes turn on the "compete" switch in loose puck battles in the offensive zone, but otherwise there is no want or need to get the puck from opponents. Lots to work on, but the upside is high. NHL teams looking for top nine upside beyond the first two rounds should have Novotny on their shortlist. He recently signed on with Muskegon of the USHL for next season; playing in North America could help iron out his inconsistent off puck play.- Robbins

123 SHAWN CARRIER

 LEFT WING  5-10  180 LBS  CANADA  MAR-14-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFF
2024-25	HALIFAX (QMJHL)	59-18-26-44-48						

Shawn Carrier quadrupled his point totals from his 23-24 Wildcats campaign. He showed he possesses some playmaking smarts and isn't afraid to go to the net for dirty goals.

Carrier's nastiness will endear him to future coaches, always mixing it up after play and throwing shots at opponents along the boards. Despite his size, Carrier isn't an easy target as he grinds for loose pucks, drives to the middle, and has presence in front of the net digging for rebounds. His skating is slightly above average, and his stamina helps him to keep churning, making himself a nuisance to opponents. Defensively, he pressures the puck carrier and looks to hit the ice for shot blocks whenever possible. Carrier's commitment to a two-way game is highly evident.

Carrier isn't exactly dynamic and will not be a highly offensive player in the pros, rather, he'll likely fit into a role in the cycle game along the boards. His biggest hurdle will be overcoming his smaller stature as NHL roles for 5-foot-10 gritty forwards are limited without a standout trait. - Ireland

124 EDUARD BONDAR

 DEFENCE  6-4  185 LBS  RUSSIA  JAN-31-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	55 SHOT	47.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	VAL D'OR (QMJHL)	54-3-9-12-48						




Nobody ever knows for sure which prospects are going to be the diamonds in the rough to come out of a draft class, but what you can do is look for players who have seeds that could eventually sprout with the right portions of water and sunshine. Bondar is one of those guys.

The 6-foot-5 Russian blueliner got little to no fanfare this season, which was his North American debut. His passport barred him from all the main international events, his individual numbers were underwhelming. Val-d'Or is a fairly remote junior market in Quebec, and the Foreurs haven't been good for years. Spend enough time watching him closely, though, and you'll see that there's plenty to like. He moves pretty well in all directions, he's a frequent and heavy hitter, and he can be trusted as an important penalty killer. If that rings a bell, that's because that's the type of defenseman who seems to be appearing more and more on the teams that go deep in the NHL playoffs.

If teams sleep too much on Bondar they might regret it. - Neumeier

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

125 SHAMAR MOSES





 RIGHT WING  6-1  200 LBS  CANADA  MAY-06-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFFP
2024-25	BAR-NB (OHL)	66-12-36-48-39						

Big forwards who think the game at a high level and can operate as premier playmakers are rare. Moses is such a player. He's very hard to separate from the puck and is highly dangerous operating the half wall or coming out of the cycle. He drives North/South well, using his size, but he doesn't have tunnel vision and identifies passing lanes well once he draws in extra attention. Moses is also a committed two-way player who shows a great stick and instincts in the defensive end.

The issue is that his feet are fairly heavy. His quickness and agility will need to improve in order for him to be an NHL player. He also did not finish the year well with North Bay after starting the season so well following a trade from Barrie. He had a single goal in the last 25 games of the season (including the playoffs). He plays a power game with the puck, but he needs to find a way to be more consistently impactful physically without it. Get to the net. Win 50/50 battles. Be an impactful forechecker. As Moses' conditioning improves, it will be interesting to see how it rounds out his game and gives him a clearer identity and path to the pros. - Otten

126 GRAYDEN ROBERTSON-PALMER


 CENTER  5-11  195 LBS  CANADA  AUG-29-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFFP
2024-25	PHILLIPS ACADEMY (USHS-MA)	30-16-23-39-0						

High octane playmaking center who consistently skates circles around lower-level prep players. His speed is a major factor to his success, especially when you combine it with his tenacity. This is a pivot who is physically engaged in all three zones and who makes himself difficult to play against, despite lacking size. He plays down low and wins battles along the wall and then he's off on the breakout, transitioning quickly. Or he's winning races to loose pucks or retrievals easily and establishing possession for Phillips Andover.

The captain of Andover Academy is also an excellent play creator because of his vision and passing ability. He pushes pace and routinely finds open linemates at full speed, showing excellent anticipation and awareness. He also operates well behind the goal line, keeping his feet moving to keep plays alive until he can find a passing option in the slot. A Dartmouth commit, we'd probably be talking about Robertson Palmer as a potential top two round selection out of prep if he were bigger. However, he's only a few weeks shy of being first time eligible in 2026, so there could be a lot of physical development left for him. Patience will be key, but if his skating ability holds up at the higher levels, he's going to be someone who could develop into a versatile middle of the lineup piece at the NHL level. Robertson-Palmer was recently selected by Moncton in the QMJHL draft; there is a possibility that he makes a stop there before heading to college. - Otten

127 JULIUS SUMPF

 CENTER  6-1  190 LBS  GERMANY  JAN-11-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFFP
2024-25	MONCTON (QMJHL)	58-26-39-65-24						

Out of all the prospects who didn't get picked in last year's draft, Sumpf was one of the most surprising. He's just such a toolsy, useful player, and he proved that once again this year with Moncton, playing a top-line role and doing a lot of heavy lifting to help the Wildcats win the QMJHL championship.

The German forward can do anything that his coaches ask of him, which is why he gets so much ice time. He can play both a skilled style of hockey and a harder style, he's comfortable at center and on the wing, and he does good work on both sides of special teams. He also keeps taking steps forward in his individual development year over year, which is a great sign for him long-term and needs to be part of the equation.

Sumpf has a good chance to become one of the earliest players from this draft to make his NHL debut, given his age and how well his style of hockey can fit at the bottom of a roster. - Neumeier

128 LOVE HARENSTAM

 GOALIE  6-1  190 LBS  SWEDEN  JAN-18-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	50 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	52.5 TECHNIQUE	55 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	52.75 OFFP
2024-25	LULEA-SKELLEFTEA (SWE J20)	23-11-12-3.13-0.900							

There are lots of reasons why Love Harenstam was once considered a top goalie prospect going into this season. He's an athletic, extremely mobile goaltender with great skating. Harenstam is never behind the play, either, always staying on top of it. It's just a matter of whether he will execute the appropriate plan for the given play. When play isn't chaotic, he is an aggressive but effective positional goalie, but when play breaks down, he often chooses athleticism over technique and starts taking bad routes.

Additionally, he struggles with tracking shots high, often hardly twitching his hands when the puck is in the net. That said, he improved on serious weak points such as his stance, composure, and moving with more purpose throughout the year. Yet, he still reverts to bad habits in chaotic situations. While he may not be a guaranteed second rounder anymore, there's still a lot to like. Harenstam is expected to jump to Allsvenskan next year, a fantastic pro league that'll give him a developmental advantage over the majority of his draft-eligible peers. - Crouse

129 JEREMY LORANGER

 CENTER  5-9  160 LBS  CANADA  JUN-15-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	57.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	52.75 OFFP
2024-25	SHERWOOD PARK (BCHL)	54-40-65-105-26						

It's certainly hard to compare, given that the BCHL has been slightly decimated thanks to the NCAA's ruling, but Loranger's production does compare favorably to some of the other high end draft picks to come out of the league in the last few decades, right on par with the likes of Kent Johnson and Alex Newhook.

Loranger is an exciting player to watch and it's easy to see why he's been as successful as he has been this year. Tons of skill. Very good shot with a lightning quick release. Gets to the middle of the ice consistently even though he lacks size/strength. He largely shows as an intelligent player who really has a clear understanding of how to vary pace and control the tempo of the game. He skates well enough in straight lines and routinely builds in stops/starts to freeze defenders, but his edgework and pushes aren't the cleanest and lack power. Will he have the same elusiveness at the higher levels? From a physicality perspective, it's obvious that he needs to bulk up. He can get bullied off the puck and he will occasionally give up possession under pressure in a panic. As an undersized winger, his pro future will be tied to his ability to improve his skating further. He's slated to go to the University of Nebraska-Omaha, but one would guess he spends a year elsewhere first, perhaps with Dubuque of the USHL. - Otten

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

130

BRENDAN MCMOR-

CENTER

6-0

175 LBS

USA

MAR-27-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFF
2024-25	WATERLOO (USHL)	58-24-18-42-4						

After being relegated to the fourth line on last year's U.S. NTDP U18 team, McMorrow's draft stock really took a hit. He showed some positives as a high energy, two-way winger, but his offensive production and contribution were nearly non-existent. This year with Waterloo, he shifted back to center and played a key role for the Blackhawks, allowing McMorrow to shine in other ways. He's shown that he can handle playing center and demonstrated greater vision and off puck anticipation than he had during his two years with the NTDP. He's still finding success as a forechecker, as a tough defensive player, and as a north/south crease crasher, but the improved on-puck play and finishing ability have really altered his projection, putting him back on the draft radar. He's still not going to win any skills competitions. He's not going to be a high scoring player at the higher levels. He's also not a truly dynamic skater; he builds speed well North/South but can lose it when he needs to alter his path. However, there is a path for him to make the NHL in a checking line role, especially if he can continue to blossom as a center. Scouts are bound to be impressed with how he elevated his game in the USHL playoffs for Waterloo.- Otten

131

KALE DACH

CENTER

5-10

165 LBS

CANADA

FEB-15-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	57.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFF
2024-25	SHERWOOD PARK (BCHL)	54-22-65-87-22						

In what one would call one of the strangest coincidences ever, Kale is not related to Kirby and Colton, despite also being from Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta, a town with just over 25,000 people in it. Dach has signed in the CHL with the Calgary Hitmen, intending to play there next year (or for two years), before attending Penn State. As you might expect from someone who led the BCHL in assists, Dach excels as a pass first playmaker. He's a really intelligent player. His game is predicated by quick touches. From time to time, he'll look to beat a defender one on one to create some extra time and space, or to help him get to the middle, but he mostly operates by getting the puck off his stick quickly in the offensive zone. He's not a dynamic skater; there's a need to improve the power of his strides to be more explosive, but he does operate well in transition. Dach also excels away from the puck in all three zones and flashes a physical game, especially on the forecheck, however, there's a need to get stronger for that to be an above average attribute moving up the levels. While the lack of elite physical tools scares us a bit, we do certainly appreciate Dach's IQ and play creation ability. With the right physical development, he could easily play his way into some kind of NHL role in the distant future.- Otten

132

RYAN MILLER

CENTER

6-0

175 LBS

CANADA

MAY-03-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.338 OFF
2024-25	PORTLAND (WHL)	50-16-15-31-48						

Portland exceeded a lot of expectations this year and made it to the third round of the playoffs, and the unsung hero of that run was Miller, a scrappy forward who brought an abundance of gumption. His ability to provide a spark seems ingrained in his - NeumeierA, and that's something that should open doors for him in the years ahead.

It's impossible not to root for a guy like Miller. His hockey IQ is sharp, and you can tell that his brain spins at a high RPM. He outworks and out-hustles almost everyone he goes up against, and he doesn't hesitate to engage physically even though he still has more of a boy's body than a man's (which will change for him eventually). There are also occasional bursts of skill that catch you by surprise, such as him getting behind a defender and making a high danger pass or taking the puck to the net himself for a chance in tight.

It's not difficult to envision Miller carving out a nice career as a sparkplug winger whose work ethic sets a standard for his teammates to follow. - Neumeier

133

ONDREJ STEBETAK

GOALIE

6-1

175 LBS

CZECH

JUL-19-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	60 ATHLETICISM	55 TEMPERMENT	50 VISION	50 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	52.75 OFF
2024-25	PORTLAND (WHL)	47-23-18-3.72-0.891							

To call Št. beták's performance in this spring's WHL playoffs heroic wouldn't be an exaggeration. If anything, it might even be an understatement. The young Czech stopper faced a torrential barrage of pucks every night and still turned away enough of them to win two series against stronger opponents, even though this was his first year in North America and he was immediately thrust into the job of being his team's starter.

The plucky netminder likes to play fast and loose, which is a good fit for him because he doesn't cover up a lot of net by default. He reacts and recovers quickly and can make those big desperation saves better than most, even if it means throwing his body chaotically around his crease. There are a lot of parts of his game that will need to be cleaned up, but he can rely on his athletic base for a while.

It's hard to foresee Št. beták becoming an NHL starter one day, but a backup along the lines of a Casey DeSmith, Alex Nedelkovic or Alex Lyon is more feasible. - Neumeier

134

VIKTOR KLINGSSELL

RIGHT WING

5-10

190 LBS

SWEDEN


FEB-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFF
2024-25	SKELLEFTEA (SWE J20)	43-17-22-39-6						

Klingsell set himself up for a massive season after his bombastic performance at the Hlinka Gretzky tournament. However, he wasn't able to live up to the hype. At his core, Klingsell is pure offence. He's a quick and agile skater. He's got a quick release on his shot. His peripheral vision and passing ability is obscene. His puck handling ability is high-end. When he's on, Klingsell is one of the most skilled players in the J20. There isn't a defender he can't get around or a play he can't make. The trouble is he can't get going on his own. He lacks any semblance of a physical game. He needs to play with teammates who will do all the heavy lifting and get him the puck in the offensive zone. Klingsell has flashed the potential to be a top six forward, but due to his limited impact on play outside of the offensive zone, he's very boom-bust. If an NHL team thinks they can put him in a situation where he'll thrive, or better yet, help him thrive on his own, Klingsell is well worth the gamble in the mid to late rounds. - Robbins

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

135 EDISON ENGLE

 DEFENCE  6-2  175 LBS  USA  FEB-15-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	47.5 PHYSICALITY	51.5 OFFP
2024-25	DM-DBQ (USHL)	54-2-15-17-20						




Edison Engle has an intriguing skillset that offers some upside for teams looking for later-round projects. His four-way mobility and evasive stickhandling could help him become a valuable puck-moving defenceman.

Engles' edgework is very good, and he uses it effectively to maintain coverage on opponents who try to slip by him with a deke. However, he doesn't quite use his skating to close gaps with physicality but rather stick defence that is above average. Although the skating does bail him out, Engle will need to use his body more; perhaps that comes with the confidence of added weight.

Engle can also work on his poise. He's far too panicky in the defensive zone, and with the skillset of a breakout specialist, he'll need to rein in his dangerous tendencies. Too often, he throws pucks back to the defence rather than being patient and using his tools to gain a controlled exit.

Engle projects to be a two-way bottom-pairing defenceman who should be paired with a physical DFD capable of clearing the crease and winning board battles, allowing him to be the puck-mover. - Ireland

136 LINARDS FELDBERGS




 GOALIE  6-1  195 LBS  LATVIA  AUG-16-2005

Linards Feldbergs exploded onto scouts' radars with his legendary World Juniors performance for Latvia this year, being a low-profile double draft re-entry. He's a goalie with above-average athleticism, refined technique, and the poise, mental makeup, and compete level of a true pro. Feldbergs is generally well-rounded and lacks glaring holes.

The biggest questions surrounding him are his underwhelming play in the QMJHL and a lack of dynamism, as outside of his strong mental abilities, he lacks true stand-out raw talent as a 19-year-old goalie. In terms of comparables, Akira Schmid is a similar goalie who relies upon his mental abilities without true raw talent. While he has found success as a backup in New Jersey, when the confidence drained, Schmid remained mostly in the AHL.

To develop into a starting-level goalie, defining traits are required. His poise, refinement, and ability to rise to the occasion are valuable assets to have, but the turnout is most likely to end up as a valued third stringer with potential to be a backup. - Crouse



137 LEV KATZIN

 CENTER  5-8  175 LBS  CANADA  MAY-13-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFFP
2024-25	GUELPH (OHL)	44-16-32-48-26						

Katzin was one of the first players to take advantage of the new NCAA eligibility rules, signing with Guelph of the OHL into the season. The dynamic, but undersized winger is an intelligent play creator. He's extremely elusive in the offensive end with his ability to control the puck and vary pace. Katzin also plays a fearless, competitive game that allows him to find success in high traffic areas despite being undersized. His offensive upside is significant for any level. The concern for Katzin is that he's not as quick or explosive as you like to see for an undersized winger. He has a similar physical and skill profile to other former junior stars who had difficulty transitioning to the NHL level. Consistency was also an issue in Guelph this year, especially away from the puck. He's likely someone who will need to play in your top six forward group to be truly successful at the NHL level. However, the Penn State commit is going to have a lot of time to develop. He also surely impressed scouts with his strong performance at the U18's for Canada, where his playmaking ability, especially on the powerplay, was on full display.- Otten

138 STEPAN HOCH

 LEFT WING  6-4  190 LBS  CZECH  OCT-11-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFFP
2024-25	CESKE BUDEJOVICE (CZECHIA U20)	30-12-17-29-18						

If Hoch doesn't fully realize yet just how good of a player he could turn into, someone close to him needs to inform him immediately, to ensure that he keeps putting in the necessary training. It appears that his Czech club team at least is aware, considering how they gave him massive minutes as a center at the junior level and regularly called him up to play with their pro roster.

Hoch is a tall, well-built forward who already looks like a man out there. He sees the ice in front of him very well within his rigid and upright skating stance, which doesn't hinder him as much as one might expect, as he still gets around pretty quickly and readily. It's surprising that his numbers aren't more eye-catching, because he can handle, move and fire the puck better than most. He's not someone who hits to hurt, but he knows how to finish his checks.

If Hoch gets picked it might seem to fans of that team that the decision came out of left field, but it will probably be one that a regional scout pounded the table for. - Neumeier

139 JESPER KOTAJARVI

 DEFENCE  5-11  175 LBS  FINLAND  JUL-24-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	53.125 OFFP
2024-25	TAPPARA (FIN-U20)	30-8-7-15-44						

The good-sized defender is yet another one of those tooly Finns who mans the blueline with sound skating and the desire to get pucks towards the net with blazing wrist shots. His stick work can be quick, but he tends to suss out his options whenever his opponents afford him time and space. However, he's very much a player who does everything just fine but nothing exceptionally, save for perhaps his pension for faking a shot at the blueline just to take a further step towards open ice before letting it rip. It's a move he's gotten away with plenty of times, both domestically and internationally.

A member of this spring's U18 Worlds outfit, Kotajarvi was a key defender for his U20 squad back home, where he saw plenty of time in all situations, with his offensive role growing in the playoffs. His play there earned him a 12-game audition in the Finnish Liiga this past season, where he's penciled in for next season. With decent size and a pension for dishing out hits whenever the opportunity arises, you can expect Kotajarvi to be a later round selection with modest promise. - Landvogt

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

140

JERE SOMERVUORI

LEFT WING

6-0

155 LBS

FINLAND

AUG-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFF
2024-25	HIFK (FIN-U20)	41-10-25-35-8						

Somervuori is a bit of a blank canvas. Toosy might be the best word to describe him. He skates well. He has good off puck instincts. He flashes the skill to be a solid transitional player. He brings energy in puck pursuit. He can operate as a Swiss Army Knife to his coaches who can utilize him in any situation. The issue is consistency and a lot of that stems from the fact that Somervuori is badly in need of greater strength and conditioning. One of the younger players eligible this year, he lacks the strength to play the style of game that he seems to want to play. This leads to soft off puck play and poor puck management on the puck as he can be easily neutralized, even at the Finnish U20 level. As such, Somervuori should be viewed as a major long-term project. What will his game look like if he fills out his frame? He could easily end up developing into a quality middle six winger at the pro level. There is a significant runway available for him to improve. - Otten

141

AIDAN LANE

RIGHT WING

6-1

190 LBS

CANADA

FEB-04-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	47.5 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	50 SKILLS	57.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.125 OFF
2024-25	ST. ANDREW'S COLLEGE (CHS-O)	55-34-52-86-52						

The most admirable thing about Lane's game is that he already has a clear on ice identity. This is a player who already very clearly understands his strengths and limitations as a player. He also plays a mature, pro style of game that has a chance to make him a longtime pro. He is a tireless worker in the offensive end. He drives the net, with or without the puck. He has excellent off-puck instincts in all three zones. He uses his size well to shield the puck and consistently makes quick decisions to limit turnovers and prolong possession. The Harvard commit was terrific for the Brampton Steelheads of the OHL to close out the regular season. The biggest issue is that Lane is a below average skater. He lacks power and quickness in straight lines and given his style of play, that could be problematic for the higher levels. In today's NHL, teams are looking for quick and athletic wingers to play through the middle of their lineup and Lane isn't skilled enough to play higher in the lineup. His projection as an NHL regular hinges on his ability to get quicker. - Otten

142

MALTE VASS

DEFENCE

6-3

195 LBS

SWEDEN

MAR-28-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	57.5 PHYSICALITY	52.125 OFF
2024-25	FARJESTADS (SWE J20)	40-2-9-11-53						

If you want hits, hits, and more hits, look no further. Vass was the only draft eligible defenceman from the region supplying that kind of physicality this season. At his core, Vass is big, strong, and mean. He's also quite raw and has some filling out to do. Vass has good gap management and makes pretty good reads defensively that will only get better with time. While he's not explosive or quick in a straight line, his skating strides are long and his mechanics are sound. There's a lot of headroom for growth there. Vass probably won't ever give you much value offensively, but might have some upside to his transition game. That being said, anything he gives you beyond his defensive value is a bonus. Vass plays a projectable style of hockey that will never go out of style and always be in demand. In a couple years, provided his skating and reads keep improving, he could slot into any NHL team's bottom four and give them hard-nosed, defence-first hockey. - Robbins

143

ELIJAH NEUENSCHWANDER

GOALIE

6-4

200 LBS

SWITZERLAND

OCT-17-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	50 TEMPERMENT	55 VISION	52.5 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	45 PUCK HANDLING	52.125 OFF
2024-25	FRRIBOURG-GOTTERON (SUI-U20)	17-11-5-2.24-							

Last year, fellow Swiss national Christian Kirsch was drafted in the fourth round out of the Swiss-U20 league. His transition to NA hockey this year was rough, failing to make his USHL squad, and failing to dominate the NAHL like you'd expect an NHL pick should. Neuenschwander is a very similar goalie to Kirsch. Both have a 6-foot-4 frame, are very athletic, have great explosiveness, flexibility, and speed.

But where they both fall short is that they are erratic and have gaps in their technique. While both are still good prospects, Kirsch's early development projects that Neuenschwander, too, will be a long-term project. The leg up he has on Kirsch is his play reading and his experience in the Swiss second-tier pro league.

Neuenschwander is excellent at predicting plays even against pro players. Drafting out of the Swiss system is risky, as there are few success stories, but coaches have a lot to work with in Neuenschwander. With enough care and patience, allowing him to naturally progress in pro in Switzerland, his erratic nature should dissipate, and he will grow more refined. - Crouse

144

FINN MCLAUGHLIN

DEFENCE

6-2

200 LBS

USA





FEB-28-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.125 OFF
2024-25	FGO-MUS (USHL)	59-6-19-25-24						

McLaughlin is an interesting draft prospect in his second year of eligibility, who finished the season on a real positive note as a Clark Cup champion with Muskegon. This was actually his second consecutive Clark Cup after he won last year with Fargo as a depth piece. He combines solid size (6-foot-2, 200+ pounds) with excellent mobility. McLaughlin's edgework is really strong and this helps him evade pressure to start the breakout and with transitional defense. As the USHL season progressed between Fargo and Muskegon, McLaughlin's puck management really improved as he worked to cut down on turnovers and picked his spots better to take liberties with the puck. Defensively, McLaughlin has the potential to be a real asset at higher levels because forwards have a difficult time shaking his coverage; again the mobility is impressive. It's also worth noting that he captained Team USA at the World Junior A Challenge and was one of the more effective defenders at the event. McLaughlin isn't likely to be more than a bottom pairing guy, but he could develop into excellent defensive depth after a few years at the University of Minnesota. - Otten

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

145 COOPER SIMPSON

 LEFT WING  6-0  180 LBS  USA  FEB-05-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	57.5 SKILLS	47.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52 OFP
2024-25	SHAKOPEE HIGH (USHS-MN)	31-49-34-83-28						

Simpson came into the year as a potential top two round pick after a strong draft minus one year split between Shakopee High (Minnesota high school) and Tri-City of the USHL. His pro frame, combined with his scoring ability and skill gave him significant upside. However, his draft year was somewhat tumultuous as repeating the high school experience did not help his development. There's no doubting Simpson's skill and scoring ability. He has a rocket of a shot. He gets himself in good scoring position and earns open looks all over the ice. He can beat defenders one on one and creates time and space for himself with strong edgework and puck protection skill. However, there's still a need for him to improve his explosiveness. He's also the kind of player who's faster without the puck than with it; there's a tendency for his strides to become shorter and choppy when he carries. Additionally, Simpson's decision making continues to be inconsistent. He flashes high end vision and playmaking ability. But also operates as a high-volume shooter who can force plays under pressure resulting in low percentage shots or turnovers. His compete and physicality are equally inconsistent. He's going to be seen as a major project pick for those reasons. However, outside of the first couple of rounds, you would be hard pressed to find a player with a higher offensive ceiling.- Otten

146 JAMIRO REBER

 CENTER  5-10  175 LBS  SWITZERLAND  SEP-04-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52 OFP
2024-25	HV 71 (SHL)	47-8-7-15-6						

We've known that Reber can be a sneaky good offensive creator for several years now. We weren't even all that surprised that he put up 41 points in 48 Swedish U20 league games last season, which wasn't enough to get him drafted. But raise your hand if you saw this overage prospect becoming a full-time SHL player this season. Come on now, be honest. Fact is, Reber spent the whole season with HV71, gaining various amounts of ice time along the way, but rarely south of double digits. His offensive contributions came in bunches, but the most important batch came with his four points in six relegation round games, playing a good role in helping HV71 retain the class.

There, two things stick out as having been most impressive, namely that he often drives the puck to the net, beating a defender along the way, and he's displayed a Johnny-on-the-spot aspect around the net, finding the right spots to be ready for passes or rebounds in tight. We're still waiting for Reber to shine internationally for Switzerland but otherwise bear in mind that the 18-year-old is just 11 days shy of being a first-time eligible prospect this summer. - Landvogt

147 MATOUS KUCHARCIK

 CENTER  6-4  180 LBS  CZECH  FEB-03-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52 OFP
2024-25	SLAVIA PRAHA (CZECHIA U20)	25-6-10-16-22						

Pretty tall, slender, underweight, and often very tricky, Kucharčík will jump out at you first thanks to his wiry frame and the wide stance in his legs. He can be a wizard with the stick though. Particularly his breakaways can be a cause of dizziness. In general, Kucharčík is a battler not only in the offensive zone but all around the ice. His long reach assists him in pokechecking and lifting sticks. At the U18 Worlds, we saw him put in a heavy game and regularly seek to enter the zone with puck control. He can crank up the motor when there's some leeway and has soft hands in accepting hard, if not difficult, passes.

After offensively dominating Czechia's U17 league in his DY-1, his production at the U20 level left a bit to be desired until he scored at nearly a PPG pace in seven playoff games. He also spent half the season suiting up for famed Slavia Prague in the country's second pro circuit, where he was busy learning to hold his own against men. He's got a great frame to add weight and the tools to become an offensive threat. There's significant promise here. - Landvogt

148 HUGO ORRSTEN

 CENTER  6-2  195 LBS  SWEDEN  JUL-10-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.75 OFP
2024-25	OREBRO (SWE J20)	47-21-46-67-40						

Among European prospects who were passed over in the 2024 draft, Orrsten had one of the best glow-ups in the time since. He was named the captain of his junior team, he more than tripled his production at that level while handling the duties of being a first-line center, and he got a cup of coffee in the SHL.

He's not as purely skilled offensively as his point totals might suggest, but he's smart enough to be around the puck a lot and can bring it with him as he goes to the net. In other words, he should be able to keep chipping in points, but it would be in more of a secondary way than a primary one. He's more of a worker bee than anything else, someone who can take draws and grind down opponents and is rarely a liability, with any production that gets sprinkled in coming as a bonus.

Orrsten's father played twenty years of high-level hockey in Sweden but was never quite good enough to take his game far from home. Does Hugo have what it takes to take his family legacy even further? - Neumeier

149 TEDDY MUTRYN

 CENTER  6-1  205 LBS  USA  FEB-16-2007






YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52 OFP
2024-25	CHICAGO (USHL)	47-17-13-30-71						

While Teddy's younger brother Casey is getting a bit more hype as part of the U.S. NTDP (U17's), he's a solid player in his own right. The Chicago Steel weren't very good this year, but Mutryn was one of their most effective players. The power forward (who has played both center and wing) is very inside driven. He drives the net hard and puts defenders on his back. He shows upside as a goal scorer thanks to a powerful and quick release. He brings a physical element in puck pursuit. The Boston College commit looks every bit the part of a future middle six contributor at the pro level.

The key for Mutryn will be finding greater consistency. He will need to prove that he can drive play, that he can be an effective three zone player, and that he can elevate the play of his linemates by making better reads with the puck. Additionally, there's a need for Mutryn to improve his skating. He's a bit sluggish; his first step quickness needs to improve to help him be a more dynamic player with the puck on his stick. This was especially evident at the U18's, where Mutryn joined Team USA to play a depth role.- Otten

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

150 CHARLIE CERRATO

 CENTER  6-0  190 LBS  USA  MAR-10-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	57.5 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFFP
2024-25	PENN STATE (B1G)	38-15-27-42-58						

The highest scoring freshman forward in the NCAA this year? Not James Hagens, or Michael Hage, or Cole Eiserman. It was Cerrato, whose 42 points for Penn State put him inside the top 20 of overall scoring. In his final year of draft eligibility, the former NTDP member has come a long way since being cut from the U18 team prior to the IIHF U18's in 2023. He was over a point per game last year in the USHL with Youngstown and has now proven that his game can be successful at a higher level.

Cerrato's game is all about energy. He skates hard. He plays hard. He's tenacious and hungry for the puck in all three zones. He plays with a physical edge. He has good instincts in the offensive zone and routinely beats opposing defenders to the net. He's not a creative or dynamic player, but efficiency can play at the NHL level, especially in a third line role where Cerrato would project to play. It seems extremely unlikely that he goes unselected for a third time. - Otten

151 KARL ANNBORN

 DEFENCE  6-1  185 LBS  SWEDEN  MAR-06-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFFP
2024-25	HV 71 (SWE J20)	39-3-21-24-4						

Many of the right-handed defencemen from the region have similar DNA, but Annborn is the original link in that chain. His greatest strength is his calmness and poise with the puck in his own zone. Goalies and forwards can relax when Annborn is in charge of leading the breakout. He doesn't let forechecking pressure get to him. He carefully surveys the ice before making a play, and typically makes the safest play he can see. If a play breaks down, he works hard to make up for his (or his teammate's) mistake. He's a smooth and mobile skater, but could stand to add some quickness to his step. Solid up ice vision and reliable passer, but, besides his steady mental game and hockey sense, his overall toolkit is rather humdrum. He doesn't have the big shot, playmaking skill or creativity to activate below the blue line and create a scoring chance for his team. As a result, it's tough to project him any higher than a bottom pair defensive defenceman at the NHL level. - Robbins

152 EMILE GUITE

 LEFT WING  6-1  175 LBS  CANADA  MAY-31-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFFP
2024-25	CHICOUTIMI (QMJHL)	59-16-14-30-18						

Emile Guite's fall-off in production from his rookie year in the QMJHL is almost unheard of, as he saw his point totals nearly fold in half. Guite was playing around 13 minutes per game for long stretches and was passed on the depth chart.

Despite a rough season in Chicoutimi, Guite remains a gifted offensive talent. His shot is among the best in his range of the draft, blending a quick release with top-end power. Guite's offensive toolkit also includes elusive hands, helping him to delay and find passing lanes, especially on the power play.

Unfortunately, Guite doesn't have the consistent drive needed to stick in an NHL bottom six. His backchecking efforts are few and far between, and his in-zone defensive coverage is spotty at best, rarely putting pressure on the point man. His skating also hinders him from being an explosive rush option.

Guite does have some size and could benefit from being more consistently engaged, but as of now, he's looking like a long shot to become an effective bottom six offensive threat. - Ireland

153 ROMAN BAUSOV

 DEFENCE  6-5  180 LBS  RUSSIA  APR-28-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	47.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	60 PHYSICALITY	51.175 OFFP
2024-25	MHK DYNAMO ST. PETERSBURG (MHL)	41-2-9-11-20						

Roman Bausov has been a standout defender in the MHL this season. His physical style adds bite to an otherwise subtle, quiet style of play. Boring in this case is a good thing; He is a positionally sound defender who stays in front of play while taking away multiple options with his reach and frame.

He has become a player that opponents dread facing, as their chances of scoring drop while their odds of returning to the bench banged up rise dramatically. He steps up with physical body checks and makes sure to seal off opponents with big hits along the wall.

Though it has improved over the course of this season, puck handling is a weakness of Bausov. He has shown some patience when the puck is on his stick, able to break the puck out effectively and select safe passing options but it is unlikely he will be much of a puck handler or distributor at higher levels.

Lots of potential to become a physical but responsible defensive defenseman you can rely on to eat minutes against talented opponents with ease. - Lawrence

154 LIAM PETTERSSON

 DEFENCE  6-2  170 LBS  SWEDEN  JAN-04-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFFP
2024-25	VAXJO LAKERS (SWE J20)	39-6-15-21-8						

An incredibly speedy and mobile defenseman cut from the same cloth as former Växjö teammate Alfons Freij. Very high highs, featuring coast to coast puck carries and strong playmaking moments. Pettersson was one of Växjö's most valuable defencemen in transition and in the offensive zone, despite his average production. Pettersson is a strong puck manager and power play QB. Excellent passing vision, decent shot from the point, and a willing activator below the blue line. The downside is a story we've all heard before. He's a defenceman who doesn't play defence well. He's incredibly raw, lanky, and lacks much of a physical game. Players who profile like Pettersson don't have the easiest time holding down NHL jobs unless the offensive upside is out of this world. I'm hesitant to say that he does, but the potential he's flashed as an offensive puck moving defenceman is enough to keep an eye on. He's easily worth a swing in the mid-to-late rounds, and definitely one to keep an eye on for next season if he goes undrafted. - Robbins

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

155 REESE HAMILTON

 DEFENCE  6-0  170 LBS  CANADA  MAR-26-2007



YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFF
2024-25	CGY-REG (WHL)	59-4-10-14-33						

Few prospects saw their stock fall as far as Hamilton's did this season. He began the year in high regard but has slid so far since that there's a possibility he doesn't get picked at all. He timidly crawled out of the gate with the Calgary Hitmen, then failed to reset things after a trade to the rebuilding Regina Pats. Now scouts are left wondering what happened and whether his potential can be salvaged.

Luckily for Hamilton, he still retains his main calling card, which is his skating. He really is a standout there, with remarkable balance, agility, edges and footwork, all of which allow him to effortlessly glide around the ice. The problem is that he's often at a loss for how to use this gift. His gaps, retrievals, breakouts and blueline activations all need to be better. The value he brings to special teams is minimal, and he's not an especially impactful puck-mover at even strength.

The Pats are going to be a bottom feeder again next year, and Hamilton will be given a leading role. What he does with that opportunity is in his hands. - Neumeier

156 LUKE VLOOSWYK

 DEFENCE  6-4  200 LBS  CANADA  JAN-09-2007





YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	RED DEER (WHL)	68-3-14-17-45						

It might turn out to be a fortunate twist of fate that Vlooswyk was drafted by the Red Deer Rebels, because that's an organization that understands a player like him and can reinforce the kind of identity he needs to embrace.

The appeal of his game is pretty clear-cut: he's a strong, lanky, right-shot defender who can disrupt enemy attacks. While he offers little assistance up the ice, teams always need players who can make defensive stops. He's not quick and can get penned into his own zone, but he already shows an aptitude for being able to bend without breaking. He has a wide base to his skating, which gives him balance at the cost of agility, but that's a manageable tradeoff. Sometimes he brings some snarl and fire, though you'd like to see more of both from this kind of player.

Would it be better if Vlooswyk had more standout elements? Sure. But at a certain point in the draft teams are happy to add prospects who have clear pathways to the NHL, even if that's only as a third-pair defenseman and penalty killer. - Neumeier

157 ROMAN LUTTSEV

 CENTER  6-0  170 LBS  RUSSIA  APR-01-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	57.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	47.5 PHYSICALITY	53 OFF
2024-25	LOKO YAROSLAVL (MHL)	50-30-33-63-26						

Roman Luttsev is an overager whose game improved far above expected over the course of the last year. Previously, Luttsev was overshadowed in a deep Yaroslavl system, but now that teammates have moved up to the KHL, he was given a top six role and did not waste the opportunity, scoring 63 points in 50 games.

He plays the game at an incredibly high pace, flying around the ice while locking in and working hard to dominate possession. He explodes up ice in transition, embarrassing defenders with quick dekes, smart pass decisions, and a heavy, accurate wrist shot.

Defensively he has looked just as strong at the junior level. He keeps the pace and energy up on both sides of the puck, hustling after 50/50's and getting physical along the boards. His defensive IQ is not as high as his offensive instincts but the effort is definitely there.

Luttsev's pace, elite hands, playmaking prowess, and laser accurate wrist shot combine for a very intriguing offensive dynamo. He is a hardworking player that has the potential to become a top six dual threat forward if he keeps up the behind the scenes effort. - Lawrence

158 MANS GOOS

 GOALIE  6-5  200 LBS  SWEDEN  MAY-05-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	52.5 TECHNIQUE	52.5 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	52.75 OFF
2024-25	FARJESTADS (SWE J20)	24-11-12-3.17-0.893							

Even as one of the tallest goalies in the draft, Mans Goos does not fall short in the mobility department. He's fast, explosive, and flexible for his size, but also a really good skater, something rarely seen at that height. He has an efficient and effective stance that allows for power generation, quick movements, and projected hands that take up most of the net.

He has shown to be capable of having very quick hands, and like former Farjestad 6-foot-6 goalie Damian Clara, is incredible along the post. Due to his size, he seals the post extremely well, and with his mobile joints, he's able to freely transition in and out of RVHs with ease. Where he begins to struggle is down low. Goos tends to struggle reacting quickly to low shots, often looking hesitant to go down, and freezes up. It causes him to get beat either five-hole or fail to read above the pad shots and misread pucks, allowing easy goals.

His tracking could use a lot of work, but his technical and athletic skills at his size are very easy to work with for goalie coaches and could develop into a good NHL goalie. - Crouse

159 VINCENT DESJARDINS

 CENTER  5-10  165 LBS  CANADA  SEP-08-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	BLAINVILLE-BOISBRIAND (QMJHL)	64-18-63-81-37						

All eyes were on the highly entertaining Justin Carboneau during Armada games this season, but his success was enhanced dramatically by Desjardins, the Robin to his Batman. The two proved to be a dynamic duo together, with the latter emerging as one of the best pure playmakers in the QMJHL, if not all of junior hockey.

It's OK for a center to be heavily pass-focused when they're successful enough playing that style, and that describes Desjardins to a tee. He's so incredibly sure with the puck, and he pairs that with extrasensory vision and timing. He simply oozes panache with all his puck touches. It would be great if he did make more of an effort to use his shot, though, because it's actually pretty darn good as well. Bulking up will be of the utmost importance for him, because he loses most of his effectiveness when his space is taken away.

He is heading to the University of Nebraska-Omaha in the fall, and they're turning over a bunch of their main forwards. If he slots into a top role could his game make further big leaps forward? - Neumeier

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

160 ASHER BARNETT

 DEFENCE  6-1  200 LBS  USA  MAY-16-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	58-8-14-22-24						

Barnett was a bit of an unsung hero for the U.S. NTDP this year. The team struggled with injuries and underperformance, but through it all, Barnett was a steady force on the blueline. This is why he was named captain of the team.

On one hand, there are some projection concerns regarding Barnett. He's not a true standout in any particular area and he's not huge. We wouldn't call him an athletic or creative defender. This probably limits his upside at higher levels. However, he's smart and competitive. He consistently makes smart plays with the puck in the defensive end to help initiate the breakout. He makes you earn touches in the defensive end through physical assertiveness but also has an active stick and great awareness and poise in coverage. Later in the year, we even saw him trying to operate more as a playmaker by jumping up in the play, although that also led to some poor pinches. At the end of the day, we like Barnett's well-rounded profile and steady play and believe that his game could progress further at Michigan. Although, there's a chance he plays elsewhere first, like the OHL where Ottawa holds his rights.- Otten





161 LUDVIG JOHNSON

 DEFENCE  6-0  180 LBS  SWITZERLAND  JUL-27-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFF
2024-25	EV ZUG (SUI-NL)	31-4-6-10-10						

The half-Swedish Johnson is a rather young overager (late July birthday) who arrived on the scene in the Swiss NL as quite the up-n-comer for EV Zug. After offensively dominating U20 play to kick off the season, he was called up to the bigs on October 26th and never looked back, often getting over 16 minutes of ice time per game right on up to the playoffs, where he dipped from 17 to nine in the course of a first round sweep at the hands of HC Davos. Crouched at the knees, Johnson is sneaky good with the stick and has the skating to be a plus factor against seasoned pros. Still not a physically overwhelming player by any means, he'll often be found playing a careful game, but with flashes of well-assessed timing that allow him to dart into offensive areas. A top four defender for Switzerland at the WJC, it's hard to imagine the combination of his establishment as an NL regular and the fact that he'll be 18 right on through the draft won't have an NHL team selecting him this summer. - Landvogt

162 CONNOR DAVIS






 RIGHT WING  6-0  185 LBS  CANADA  NOV-09-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFF
2024-25	SALISBURY (USHS-CT)	31-21-23-44-0						

The Northeastern commit is a competitive two-way winger with the potential to develop into a solid middle six, complementary piece at the NHL level. It's pretty rare to say that a prep player plays a very mature, pro style game, but that's Davis. He skates hard North/South and gets to the net. His stride isn't the most efficient and there's room for more power, but he builds to a solid top speed and can beat prep defenders to the net, to spots, and to the puck pretty consistently. His compete level would definitely be classified as solid. Seems to be more physical in the defensive end and neutral zone than he is in the offensive zone, a testament to his will and desire to force takeaways and be hard to play against.

Offensively, he shows well as a playmaker with excellent vision, especially for the kind of North/South game he likes to play. Is particularly dangerous on the man advantage, working the half wall. Davis flashes some creativity with the puck too, but he's probably best suited to be more of a workhorse alongside a more skilled pivot at the higher levels. Evaluating later born prep players can sometimes be difficult (Davis has a November 2006 birthday) because of the physical advantages they hold over other prep players. However, Davis impresses with his attention to detail and well-rounded skill package.- Otten

163 LINUS FUNCK


 DEFENCE  6-3  185 LBS  SWEDEN  MAY-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	LULEA (SWE J20)	48-5-23-28-59						

Funck spent the entire 2024-25 season as a 17-year-old predominantly playing in Sweden's top U20 circuit (followed by a dominant U18 playoff run). It was already his second season in the U20 league and ultimately, he was the team's top scoring defender. We'll boldly go so far as to say he may be Sweden's top defensive prospect in this draft "not" to have spent any time representing his nation at any major tournaments to date. In fact, he's one of the few not to have seen a lick of pro play at any juncture to date either.

He's an interesting case from a draft perspective because he's got size and mobility, and his positioning and some of the decisions he makes lends credence to the belief that there's a thinking man here. Tall and rangy, there's nothing overly dangerous about his shot, but he does get it off quickly and often, hitting the net frequently. We love his propensity for one-timers as well. What stands out is that he's careful and not overly aggressive. He can seem aloof as well. Alas, there's good reason to see a very developable player in Funck and he's got plenty of time as a project. - Landvogt

164 JACOB KVASNICKA

 RIGHT WING  5-11  175 LBS  USA  AUG-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	66-18-21-39-10						

Jacob Kvasnicka brings a speedy, intelligent, defence-first game to the bottom six and should be a valuable asset to a stacked University of Minnesota team next year.

Kvasnicka's smarts lie mostly in his defensive game. He reads the puck-holder well, assessing their intentions and taking away options before closing the gap with relentless defensive effort. While he is active with poke checks and in board battles, he doesn't have the physical profile needed to knock opponents off the puck consistently.

Kvasnicka has his creative offensive plays here and there, but he does have a bit of a turnover issue where he tries too much. Kvasnicka relies mainly on his speed in transition, driving away from traffic and turning on the jets. His skills aren't quite enough to beat defenders in one-on-one situations when he doesn't have his speed to fall back on.

As far as an NHL projection goes, Kvasnicka will likely be a fourth line/13th forward who can play penalty kill minutes and munch up defensive zone starts. - Ireland

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

165 BRADY PEDDLE

 DEFENCE  6-3  200 LBS  CANADA  MAY-23-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	WATERLOO (USHL)	62-3-7-10-36						





Brady Peddle has been a late-season riser on many draft boards for a good reason. He fits the mold of a modern two-way defenceman with decent mobility, good smarts, and a very effective physical game.

Peddle doesn't have the offensive skillset of some of the more dynamic defencemen in this class. He prefers to keep things simple, facilitating offense through passes down the wall to his forwards and activating infrequently. In front of the net, Peddle is excellent at gaining positioning and maintaining it, holding opponents to the outside. Peddle wins board battles at a high rate, even against larger opponents, where he ties them up with his upper body and works the puck back to a teammate.

Peddle's hands aren't at the highest level and sometimes cause trouble when trying to escape pressure. His shot also isn't too strong, and he has trouble getting it through multiple layers of traffic, often getting blocked.

Peddle's upside is that of a bottom-pair defenceman who can play on the penalty kill. His reliable game will endear him to future coaches. - Ireland




166 VIGGO NORDLUND

 LEFT WING  5-9  165 LBS  SWEDEN  SEP-22-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.75 OFF
2024-25	SKELLEFTEA (SWE J20)	40-24-25-49-55						

There was a lot of responsibility on the shoulders of guys like Nordlund during Skellefteå J20's tough start to the year. It seemed like he had to do everything offensively, which showed both his good and bad traits. First, Nordlund is truly gifted with the puck on his stick. Great hands, great shot. He's a quick and agile skater (which you have to be at his size) and he pushes the pace on and off the puck. Intelligent, but showed a lot of carelessness with the puck at the J20 level. Constantly skating into pressure, forcing plays, or making poor shooting decisions. Much of that disappeared once he got called up to the SHL. Nordlund proved that has that gear that lets him operate at 110% and play at the pace of the pro game during his time in the SHL. The worry is that he has to play at that level all the time to make it work in the NHL. It might not be sustainable. As such, the undersized forward will have an uphill battle trying to land an NHL job with his skill set. - Robbins

167 ANDERS MILLER

 GOALIE  6-1  195 LBS  USA  OCT-04-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	50 ATHLETICISM	55 TEMPERMENT	55 VISION	55 TECHNIQUE	55 REBOUND CONTROL	47.5 PUCK HANDLING	53.25 OFF
2024-25	CALGARY (WHL)	22-13-4-2.34-0.909							

One of the best goalie prospects in the NHL is the 6-foot-1 Carter George, an average athletic goalie who excels in being poised, technical, anticipatory, and skating. Anders Miller checks all these boxes, too. So, what's the difference? Well, George was one of the best OHL goalies at 17, playing 56 games on a bad team. Miller, in comparison, joined the WHL mid-season post-NCAA deal and had to ride shotgun to the elite WHL veteran Daniel Hauser.

Miller's biggest weakness is his lack of experience. To be the consistent goalie that George is, he needs to be able to face adversity and a heavy workload so that he can learn how to push through adversity. Even though he can get beaten cleanly frequently, his hands are still active and are otherwise fine. He will have to learn how to speed up his game, reacting quicker and playing more intensely.

With Hauser aging out, the starting job is his. The hope is that he will be able to develop into a promising goalie with the much-needed added experience. - Crouse

168 BENJAMIN RAUTIAINEN

 CENTER  6-0  175 LBS  FINLAND  JUN-12-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	47.5 PHYSICALITY	52.125 OFF
2024-25	TAPPARA (FIN-LIIGA)	50-10-23-33-12						

The name of this overager may ring a bell for Toronto Maple Leaf fans as the soon-to-be 20-year-old forward attended the organization's development camp in 2023. Since then, he's put up a monster season in Finland's U20 league and then topped it off by being the third highest scorer among U20 players in the Finnish Liiga this past season. There, he found himself in a top six role that included power play time and plenty of opportunity to let his slick hands and solid offensive instincts blossom. At times, he was able to put on puckhandling shows that left fans dazzled. Still in a phase of continual development, Rautiainen showed enough this season to garner the surefire interest of the NHL scouting community, looking like a seasoned veteran by the time the playoffs rolled around. There are still steps to be taken in the skating department, but a solid WJC further entrenched him as an NHL topic moving forward. With another year on his contract with Tappara, we expect him in North America for the 26-27 season, one way or another. - Landvoigt

169 ARON DAHLQVIST



 DEFENCE  6-3  205 LBS  SWEDEN  FEB-22-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	BRYNAS (SWE J20)	37-2-10-12-43						

Another one of the Brynäs boys who saw SHL games this season. Dahlqvist was the only defenceman among them. Given his towering frame and physical playstyle, it's easy to see why. Dahlqvist is a defensive defenceman who prides himself on his hockey sense and heavy hitting. He reads puck carrier's intentions well and monitors his gaps effectively. He's mobile for his size and uses his skating to stay with puck carriers, angling them to the outside with his big frame and long reach. Being huge and defending with your feet rather than your hands is a green flag. Dahlqvist does not have the quickest straight-line speed nor the best puck handling ability, so he doesn't provide much value as a puck mover. His offensive toolkit and instincts are pretty much non-existent. Dahlqvist's NHL hopes rest on the continued development of his mobility and defensive game. His upside is that of a stay-at-home defenceman who can deliver bone crunching hits and block shots. Someone you plug in on your third pair and second PK unit when you need some extra defence for a certain matchup. - Robbins

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

170 BEN HREBIK

 GOALIE  6-2  190 LBS  CANADA  APR-04-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-GAA-SV%	57.5 ATHLETICISM	57.5 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	47.5 TECHNIQUE	47.5 REBOUND CONTROL	45 PUCK HANDLING	52 OFF
2024-25	BARRIE (OHL)	34-21-9-2.87-0.92							

This year was supposed to be the Sam Hillebrandt show in Barrie; the U.S. WJC netminder was considered a preseason favourite for OHL goaltender of the year. While Hillebrandt wasn't bad, he wasn't as good as OHL rookie Ben Hrebik, who came out of nowhere to be one of the OHL's best netminders this year. His strong play created a platoon between the two of them. NHL Scouting staffs are bound to be intrigued by Hrebik's upside given his size (at 6-foot-3) and athleticism combination. He's very active and quick in the crease. He covers the net really well and never seems to quit on a play. A traditional butterfly netminder, he has lightning quick pads and scrambles to make saves in a way that makes one believe Hrebik is/was a Jonathan Quick fan growing up.

The technical components are a work in progress. He can struggle with rebounds and often has to make an extra save or two than he needs to. He can overcommit on his pushes and not cover his angles properly. He can be susceptible in the five hole when teams get him moving. That said, these are correctable issues, especially given how athletic Hrebik is. The only real blip on the radar was a poor conclusion to the year that saw him lose the starting job in the playoffs.- Otten

171 DMITRI ISAYEV

 LEFT WING  5-9  150 LBS  RUSSIA  JUN-26-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	AVTO YEKATERINBURG (MHL)	44-22-23-45-30						

Dmitri Isayev was one of the standout stars on Avto Yekaterinburg's underdog team this season. He is an incredibly hard-working, high-energy forward who brings his effort on both sides of the puck. He may be undersized at 5-foot-9, 150 pounds but he brings more than enough energy to make up for it on a nightly basis.

Offensively, he speeds after loose pucks, winning battles before circling the zone scanning for passes. He is a high IQ playmaker who finds quality options with consistency and places accurate setup passes, creating easy opportunities for his linemates.

Defensively, Isayev brings that motor 200 feet to hunt down opponents, battle along the wall, and win back pucks for his team. His lack of size does not factor into his decisions, fearlessly joining battles and often coming away with pucks.

Isayev brings the speed, IQ, hands, energy, and effort every single game. The team who takes the risk on him this year will gain one of the hardest workers in Russia and a player who is not afraid to put in the work to make it to the next level. - Lawrence

172 MAXIM SCHAFER

 RIGHT WING  6-3  180 LBS  GERMANY  MAY-17-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	EISBAREN BERLIN (DEL)	31-1-2-3-6						

Maxim Schäfer spent the bulk of this season playing for DEL champion Eisbären Berlin and was immediately noticeable due to his considerable size and solid athleticism. Although his DY-1 already raised eyebrows (61 points in 42 total U20 DNL games), few reckoned with him being a DEL option this season and yet his 37 total games there, sometimes seeing 9+ minutes of ice time, repeatedly displayed coach Serge Aubin's belief in his development and contributions. When he did find himself suiting up for the club's DNL team, he was busy collecting 44 points in 18 games. He was also part of the U20 squad at the WJC and then a captain at the U18 Worlds, collecting three points at each tournament. Nonetheless, Schäfer is definitely a player still getting comfortable with his body. His footspeed is lacking, and he generally requires too much time to make puck-related decisions, often finding it difficult to keep things simple. He's clearly a pass-first player and we long to see him shoot more. Any team selecting Schäfer will know that he's a project requiring plenty of patience and guidance. - Landvogt

173 JULIUS SAARI

 DEFENCE  6-2  180 LBS  FINLAND  MAR-07-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-P-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	JOKERIT (FIN-U20)	34-3-1-4-36						

For a good-sized player who will likely be a later round selection, there's a lot to like about Saari. His game is very all-round in that he engages himself in all aspects of play, in all three zones. He's got good size and an aggressive, physical nature. He'll rush with the puck when the opportunity presents itself and makes good reads on when to pinch. He can move the puck quickly when need be, or carefully assess a situation and make a sound decision. He really leans his left shoulder into his shot, preferring to rifle off wrists over all other forms of shots. In fact, you'll be hard-pressed to find him taking a slapshot, but there's no hesitation in getting the puck to the net. Leadership traits are a strength as evidenced by having captained Team Finland at the U18 Worlds. There are times he runs around too much in his own zone or overdoes it with the stick when defending, but aside from little offensive production to date, Saari is extremely solid and looks to just get better over time. - Landvogt

174 LOUIS-ANTOINE DENAULT

 GOALIE  6-8  205 LBS  CANADA  SEP-26-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	52.5 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	50 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	51.5 OFF
2024-25	QUEBEC (QMJHL)	41-17-17-3.13-0.902							

It's no secret that goalies keep getting bigger and bigger, and that this trend is happening across all leagues in all the main hockey countries. Denaault is on an almost entirely different level, though.

If someone were to watch one of Denaault's worse QMJHL outings from earlier this season they would be forgiven for assuming that it was the 6-foot-8 teenager's first time ever putting on the pads in his entire life, because boy, was it rough to watch him play. And to be frank, it's still very ugly a lot of the time now. Everything he does is slow, stiff, and lacking in coordination. In his defense, however, he is improving, and he usually digs deep and battles hard to make saves in whatever ways he can. A lucky save is still a save, and with his size he gets more of those than anyone else does.

Denaault would be a fascinating development project for a team to take on, and it would require some true mastery and expertise from that organization's staff to actually make something out of him. Expect a team to step up and accept that challenge. - Neumeier

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

175 BRENT SOLOMON





 RIGHT WING  6-0  170 LBS  USA  JAN-02-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFF
2024-25	CHAMPLIN PARK (USHS-MN)	28-38-18-56-12						

Solomon is an exciting and dynamic offensive star who became Champlin Park's first ever Mr. Hockey finalist. He's best classified as a shoot first kind of player who routinely beats high school defenders one on one, turning them into swiss cheese, with the way that his hands work in sync with his feet. He's not an explosive North/South player, but he can play through defenders, catching them flat footed with his ability to cut to the inside quickly. He flashes high end passing and playmaking ability, but then also forces shots, forces dekes and gets caught with his head down; his game will need major refinement. Additionally, at this stage, he's not a consistently committed two-way player or physical player. He'll get to the net for scoring opportunities, but he's not strong along the wall or a high impact forechecker.

As a skater, Solomon shows very good edge work and agility, which he uses to work more on a lateral plane than North/South. His first step quickness and overall top speed could use some improvement as he moves up the higher levels, but he does project as an above average skater. Headed to the University of Wisconsin, Solomon possesses significant offensive upside that can be unlocked with the right coaching and development.- Otten

176 BRUNO IDZAN






 LEFT WING  6-0  195 LBS  CROATIA  JAN-16-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFF
2024-25	LINCOLN (USHL)	36-22-22-44-20						

Idzan started last year on the draft radar. Partially because it was a great story, as a Croatian born potential NHL selection, and partially because he had previously shown promise in the Swedish junior leagues. However, he had a poor year in Sweden and ended up falling off the radar. This year, he returned home to Croatia to play in the AlpsHL, where he was dominant. However, an opportunity to join Lincoln of the USHL arose around the new year and Idzan took off from there. He was a revelation for the Stars. He's good at pushing pace with his ability to build to a solid top speed; I wouldn't call his first few steps explosive, but he builds well to create separation. He has shown a real nose for the net and an ability to find soft spots in coverage, getting open to utilize his quick release.

Idzan has also shown great work ethic in the offensive end, helping to force turnovers with a quick stick and tenacity; although that same effort isn't really replicated in the defensive end. Overall, Idzan has shown himself to be highly skilled and intelligent off the puck, two things that could make him a potential pro in North America. He recently committed to Wisconsin, and he has, unquestionably, put himself back on the map with his second half performance in the USHL.- Otten

177 MATUS LISY

 DEFENCE  6-0  175 LBS  SLOVAKIA  JUN-15-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	HK NITRA (SLOVAKIA)	27-1-5-6-0						

It can't be easy for some of these young Slovak defenders to find a ton of success playing against men in the top Slovak pro league. Playing against his peers, Lisy stands out. He was especially effective at the U18's as one of Slovakia's best defenders. However, against men, his struggles defensively are magnified and his game is effectively neutralized.

Lisy does have intriguing upside as a puck mover. His lateral quickness and agility are impressive, and it allows him to work inside with the puck, consistently slipping coverage. He needs to get stronger on the puck and show more patience, but he has the quick feet and hands to consistently create plays in the offensive zone. Defensively, his frame and mobility give him a chance to develop into a competent player once he fills out, but his physical intensity level needs to increase. We see a raw player with intriguing tools who flashes the ability to be a dynamic offensive defender, and we'd love to see him in the CHL next year as an Import; it could really further his physical development.- Otten

178 DAVID LEWANDOWSKI

 LEFT WING  6-1  175 LBS  GERMANY  FEB-20-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	45 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	SASKATOON (WHL)	52-15-24-39-21						

Look up the term "mercurial talent" online and you might just see a picture of Lewandowski posted with it. He's a prospect who often oozes talent but rarely puts it all together for anything more than flashes at a time. Most notably, his strong stickhandling skills are accompanied by the ability to make quick turns while retaining speed. Of decent, but average size, he can make a large impression on the ice due to a burly style of play and impressive puck-protecting mechanics. He'll throw some checks too. His wrist shots and one-timers can be deadly, and he's been known to display some real razzle and dazzle with the puck. This was all evident with the Saskatoon Blades after joining the squad last October. Whereas his production was little more than "good", he did acclimate to his new league and environment rather quickly, finding himself on the powerplay and more or less entrenched in a top six role. This all said, his game is maddeningly inconsistent and disappearing acts have been the norm for years now. His skillset and promise may be too good to overlook, but talents with his inconsistency have seldom etched out NHL careers. - Landvot

179 DANIEL NIEMINEN

 DEFENCE  6-0  185 LBS  FINLAND  MAR-01-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	45 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	PELICANS (FIN-U20)	39-4-7-11-10						

We ranked Nieminen 204th overall last year and are re-ranking him this year after a strong rookie showing in Liiga with Pelicans. Only Aron Kiviharju had more points than Nieminen as a U19 defender. Nieminen was also a difference maker for Finland at the World Juniors, playing a key defensive role for them as they captured a silver medal.

The allure of Nieminen is that he skates well and is an aggressive physical defender. That combination gives him upside as a two-way pro defender. He's not extremely creative or skilled as a handler, however, he can have a positive impact in transition with his ability to use his feet to start the breakout. In the defensive end, Nieminen is aggressive in closing gaps, and he will look to catch opposing forwards with their head down. His quickness allows him to be first to pucks and he routinely escapes pressure. As he gains confidence, perhaps his playmaking ability improves; he certainly has the feet to be a powerplay quarterback. As a comparison, Flyers defender Rasmus Ristolainen had a similar point per game average in Liiga at 18.- Otten

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

180 MIKKEL ERIKSEN

 CENTER

 5-11

 180 LBS

 NORWAY

 SEP-13-2007


YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFP
2024-25	FARJESTADS (SWE J20)	40-22-21-43-8						

Eriksen's second go around in the J20 was much better than the last. The nephew of Espen "Shampo" Knutsen had a great season by all accounts, but still left something to be desired. Eriksen is a pure offensive forward. Highly skilled, highly creative passing and playmaking. Quick hands. Dangerous shot. He's a quick and nimble skater, showing off nice control from his edges and a good top speed in a straight line. He reads defenders well and can manipulate their feet to open up passing lanes, and his passing vision is superb. Is it all projectable to the NHL? Hard to say. The quality of his shot and the passing ability, at least. The hockey world knew he could score going into the season, at least at a junior level. The big issue with Eriksen is that he is very one dimensional. He has no physical game. He is unwilling to battle for pucks or position. There is little to no dawg. Eriksen might have the upside of a top six forward, but he'll never, ever make the NHL if he doesn't show some compete. - Robbins


181 GABRIEL D'AIGLE

 GOALIE

 6-3

 210 LBS

 CANADA

 NOV-21-2006

Once seen as a prodigy, Gabriel D'Aigle is already a three-year veteran of the QMJHL. So far, those years have been rocky, to say the least, but in all of his shortcomings, it's not hard to see why the former QMJHL second overall pick was thought to be the future of Canadian goaltending. At 6-foot-4, 207 pounds, D'Aigle possesses the ideal size—big enough to fill out the net, but not sacrificing mobility.

He pairs that frame with great flexibility and explosiveness, competent initial positioning, and play-reading capabilities. He does, however, struggle with tracking the puck and has an inefficient stance that often leads to him losing position to a change of direction.


While he lacks consistency, it can be attributed to playing behind the worst team in the QMJHL. In a way, the inconsistency is a positive, as his ability to battle his way into stealing several games while facing 50+ shots says a lot about his mental fortitude.

Despite the once heralded upside, D'Aigle seems more of a project that, with enough guidance and correction, could turn into an NHL backup. - Crouse

182 TRAVIS HAYES

 RIGHT WING

 5-10

 175 LBS

 USA

 SEP-03-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFP
2024-25	SOO GREYHOUNDS (OHL)	65-21-30-51-61						

Travis is the third Hayes' brother to come through the OHL, with older brothers Gavin and Avery both earning NHL contracts. Travis is a bit of a hybrid of his brothers. He's in between their height as an average sized winger. He projects more as a high energy playmaker like Avery, but he has the physical, pest-like drive of Gavin.

Offensive consistency was an issue for Travis this year on a middling Greyhounds club, but he did finish the season on a real high note. In the last 27 games of the year (including the playoffs), Hayes had 32 points, including 13 goals. He excels playing through traffic because of his compete level. He gets to the net. He wins 50/50 battles along the wall. He's an excellent forechecker. He's not a play driver. His shot isn't a huge weapon. He's also not the kind of high end skater that you'd prefer to see in a sub six-foot, complementary winger. However, Hayes is intelligent, hardworking, and could end up carving out a career for himself as a bottom six, role player. He's going to continue to grow with a good Greyhounds group that includes Brady Martin and he should be able to gain more confidence in his on puck play over the course of his junior career.- Otten

183 RICHARD GALLANT

 LEFT WING

 5-8

 170 LBS

 USA

 JUN-12-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	57.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFP
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	66-29-24-53-32						

Richard Gallant fits the mold of many USNTDP high-speed forwards before him. He used his relentless competitiveness and blazing speed to drive very good numbers with the program and will head to Harvard next year.

Gallant's rush offense is extremely dangerous in the sense that if you give him an inch, he'll turn on the jets and blow by you. His foot speed is extremely impressive, making him very explosive. On breakaways, Gallant's go-to move is a fake into a quickly elevated shot that's proved difficult to stop. In the defensive zone, he is relentless, tracking down the puck carrier and throwing constant stick checks.


His smaller stature does cause some issues in his projection, as the amount of 5-foot-8 energy forwards is limited in the NHL, and he struggles in front of the net when met with physical force. Gallant's speed masks some puck protection issues, but in small spaces with a defender draped all over him, he struggles.

Gallant doesn't possess a deadly shot or great skills, so his upside is limited to being a bottom six forward who can be a PK option. - Ireland

184 NATHAN LECOMPTE

 CENTER

 5-9

 165 LBS

 CANADA

 JAN-19-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.75 OFP
2024-25	CHICOUTIMI (QMJHL)	56-14-35-49-26						

Nathan Lecompte showed off his fusion of skill and offensive smarts in the 2024-25 season, where he improved production from his rookie year in the QMJHL.



Lecompte's patience on the puck serves him well, incorporating quick changes of direction to get out of situations he doesn't like. Lecompte does hustle back, but he doesn't necessarily pursue the puck carrier and usually picks up passing threats to the outside. Lecompte's skills and shot are both decent tools, but they don't necessarily stand out as elite traits due to a lack of dynamic moves and troubles getting his wrist off.

Lecompte's skating is not enough to make up for his smaller stature, as his top speed is mediocre and his acceleration isn't explosive. He struggles to generate separation after making moves.

It's tough to project what Lecompte is at the next level, as his ceiling isn't quite enough to get him into a skill middle role, and his physical limitations make him a tough sell to stick in a bottom six. Lecompte seems like solid organizational depth that can fill in to give the fourth line an offensive boost. - Ireland

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

185 RYAN CAMERON

 GOALIE  6-1  175 LBS  USA  AUG-21-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	55 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	52.5 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	52.75 OFF
2024-25	LONE STAR (NAHL)	30-21-6-1.24-0.948							

While the NAHL often develops NHL-drafted goalies, the success stories are few and far between. The NAHL produced Hellebuyck and Stolarz from 2012, and the only current promising prospects are Arseni Sergeev (Calgary) and Adam Gajan (Chicago). This factor, alongside his diminutive size at 6-foot-0, should make Ryan Cameron a draft longshot.

However, Cameron isn't just any NAHL goalie, statistically, he's the best. Cameron is a good positional goalie with great footwork, quickness, and agility, and despite his small stature, he maximizes his frame to fill more net. He's also very poised, rarely breaking his structure. He comes up short when it comes to his hands and his vision. He can lose track of the play, having a mental lapse and ending up a step behind, and he often has difficulty tracking pucks with his hands.

186 AIDAN PARK





 CENTER  6-1  185 LBS  USA  JAN-06-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFF
2024-25	GREEN BAY (USHL)	55-33-33-66-49						

Ranked by most scouting services as a draft selection last year (including us at 199), Park went undrafted due to pace and projectability concerns coming out of Shattuck St. Mary's. However, after finishing fifth in USHL scoring this year as a rookie, he's firmly on the draft radar again in his second year of eligibility.

Park is a competitive and intelligent pivot who consistently outworks opposing defenders to earn touches and to create scoring chances. He is a terrific forechecker. He advances and prolongs possession along the wall. He gets himself and pucks to the net. He is a competent three zone player who can be utilized in any situation. Really the only concern remains his average skating. Progress has been made in regards to his quickness in the last year, but he still has a ways to go. If you're drafting Park, you're banking on his IQ and compete level carrying him to a bottom six role in the NHL. He has taken advantage of the new NCAA eligibility rules by signing with Calgary of the WHL for next year before heading to Michigan.- Otten

187 MADDUX LABRE

 DEFENCE  6-2  180 LBS  CANADA  JUN-15-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	47.5 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFF
2024-25	VICTORIAVILLE (QMJHL)	61-3-16-19-42						




Maddux Labre is by far one of the most interesting players to watch in this draft class. Despite being stuck on the dreadful Victoriaville Tigres, Labre displayed dynamic skill in his rookie QMJHL season.

Labre understands how to beat opponents in one-on-one situations using his deception and deep bag of skill moves to masterfully dismantle defenders. He also uses stretch passes on the breakout to spring teammates for odd-man rushes. His best skating trait is his ability to weave and change direction.

Where Labre can be frustrating is his level of competitiveness. There are times when he doesn't even try to clear the net front and just stands around watching the play. He needs to be way more dialed in when in the defensive zone and be an active contributor at all times. Labre's skating is solid, but he will need to develop more explosiveness to find success with his puck-carrying-oriented play style.

Labre projects to be a puck-moving two-way defenceman at the next level but is very raw and will need to rein in his aggressiveness to fit into a bottom pairing role. - Ireland

188 BLAKE VANEK

 RIGHT WING  6-2  205 LBS  USA  AUG-16-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.625 OFF
2024-25	STILLWATER (USHS-MN)	29-22-31-53-23						

The son of long time NHL scoring forward Thomas Vanek, Blake gained a lot of traction as a potential NHL pick with a strong finish to his season, both at the high school and USHL levels. One of the youngest available this year (mid August birthday), Vanek is already 6-foot-4, 200+ pounds. However, he doesn't use his size consistently yet, which was always a criticism of his father Thomas.

For a bigger forward, Blake does skate well in straight lines and it is that powerful stride that makes him successful as a North/South attacker. He has good hands in tight to finish off plays and shows potential as a goal scorer because of his ability to work the net and get into the slot. His decision making with the puck requires some maturation and refinement; that was very noticeable at the USHL level with Chicago. However, the hope is that Vanek can continue to blossom as a longer-term project. If he can continue to upgrade his puck skill and the consistency of his physical engagement, he could be a nice find for an NHL team. Vanek has yet to commit to an NCAA program, but his WHL rights are owned by Wenatchee. That could be a possible next step, although we're sure there's interest in following his father's footsteps to the University of Minnesota.- Otten

189 MIKHAIL FYODOROV

 RIGHT WING  5-11  150 LBS  RUSSIA  DEC-01-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	57.5 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.875 OFF
2024-25	STALNYE LISY MAGNITOGORSK (MHL)	45-17-26-43-8						

If you put all of the fastest skaters in this year's draft class in a race, I would not be afraid to put some money down on Mikhail Fyodorov to win. The pace and acceleration that he brings is pretty hard to miss and comparable to few others at the junior level.



His foot speed allows for dangerous looks off the rush. He is constantly being sprung on breakaways and odd man rushes where he does a great job quickly distributing and getting pucks to the slot.

His playmaking and puck carrying abilities made good strides this season. He is much more confident with the puck on his stick, and he has been able to set up many highlight reel goals with quick set ups.

He is not the most consistent player and will need to continue to improve his soft skills to increase his offensive output to continue creating at higher levels. Mikhail brings a unique combination of unmatched speed with a big bulky frame that he uses well along the boards. A potential steal in the later rounds with some more work. - Lawrence

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

190 HAYDEN HARSANYI

 CENTER  5-9  175 LBS  CANADA  JAN-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	55 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	MH-SAS (WHL)	37-12-12-24-12						

You have to feel a little bad for Harsanyi, who was traded mid-way through this season from the eventual championship-winning Medicine Hat Tigers to the weaker Saskatoon Blades, who got swept in the opening round of the playoffs. Making matters even more difficult, he was injured for much of the first half of the campaign, which slowed down the considerable momentum he had built up as a 16-year-old WHL rookie. But looking at the big picture, there are still things to like about this player.

He is a fast, pacey forward who brings a lot of versatility. He's comfortable as both a center and a winger and can contribute to both sides of special teams when called upon. He's a bit of a blank slate and lacks a clear identity at this point, but he won't be rushed to find one.

Harsanyi will get to spend the next two seasons on one of the most well-run organizations in the WHL, so the door is wide open for him to take control of his future. - Neumeier


191 NICHOLAS SYKORA

 LEFT WING  6-0  180 LBS  USA  MAY-24-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	OMA-SC (USHL)	61-20-20-40-10						

Another son of a former NHL player available this year, Nic is the son of former New Jersey Devil great Petr Sykora. Nicolas is a high octane, potential goal scoring winger who was much better in the second half of the USHL after a trade from Omaha to Sioux City. He finds soft spots in coverage well and works to earn touches, showing both a high compete level and strong o-zone awareness. He uses his speed well to attack the offensive zone and can also be relied upon as a three-zone player who can apply pressure in puck pursuit. He works best currently as a complementary option because his on-puck play is inconsistent. He can try to force plays to the middle of the ice and, under pressure, he can lack poise, firing low percentage shots on net or blind passes to the slot. He needs to get stronger to be more consistent and effective as a scorer. Recently drafted by the Owen Sound Attack in the OHL draft, Sykora has this route as an option before heading to the NCAA. The Attack program would be a great spot for him to improve his strength, on and off the puck, because developing well rounded, competitive players is a strength of the organization.- Otten




192 CHARLIE PAQUETTE

 RIGHT WING  6-1  200 LBS  CANADA  DEC-06-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	55 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.125 OFF
2024-25	GUELPH (OHL)	68-37-33-70-29						

A big winger in the last year of his draft eligibility, Paquette broke out in a big way the second half of the OHL season with the Guelph Storm. He was among the top scoring players in the last 40 games, operating around 0.75 goals per game. Paquette has long been a player with offensive upside because of his power game and finishing ability, but consistency was previously a major issue. It's as if the light bulb finally went on. He flat out took over games for the rebuilding Storm, driving play North/South with his speed and ability to drive the net. He has a big shot and can score in a variety of different ways. Paquette also can be a hard worker away from the puck, excelling on both the forecheck and backcheck with his size and athleticism. There's no doubt that NHL teams will be wary that he's a flash in the pan; obviously it would have been great to have seen this production sustained over a full year. However, sometimes it just clicks for players and Paquette has the frame and skill to be a middle six NHL player and powerplay option. Teams would be wise to jump on him now.- Otten

193 NOLAN ROED

 CENTER  5-11  185 LBS  USA  OCT-25-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFF
2024-25	TRI-CITY (USHL)	61-27-33-60-26						

One of our highest ranked players (105th) to go unselected last year, we loved Roed based on what we saw at the USHL level and in the Minnesota high school loop. Playing in the USHL full time this season, Roed has consistently been one of the league's best players and highest scorers. The St. Cloud State commit plays a mature game tailored to being a top end NCAA player, and perhaps a pro. He consistently looks to get to the middle of the ice, driving the middle and getting to the net. He's under six-foot, but he plays a power game and protects the puck well through traffic to help funnel pucks to the home plate area.

His vision and playmaking ability have improved this year, with Roed showing an ability to alter his pace and be more poised with the puck, fighting to prolong possession along the wall. He's also improved his defensive game to be a more consistent two-way player at the USHL level, even if there is a need for him to get stronger. He wasn't selected last year over concerns regarding his projection and upside, and while those still may be present, we feel that he's done enough to warrant a look from teams hoping that he develops into a middle six piece.- Otten

194 SAVIN VIRK

 RIGHT WING  5-11  170 LBS  CANADA  JUN-06-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	TRI-CITY (WHL)	50-22-24-46-4						

When Virk moved from the BCHL to the WHL in November he gave his Tri-City team a much-needed shot in the arm offensively, more than anyone expected he would. And the ease of his transition and the degree of his success didn't go unnoticed by scouts.

He is a very cohesive player, with all the different parts of his game working well in conjunction, even though none of them stand out much individually. He has a low center of gravity and a wide skating base, and he's good at swiveling his torso to keep the puck away from danger on either side of his body. His shots and passes both offer a decent blend of power and accuracy. For a prospect who is quite strong in some ways, he is the exact opposite in others. He seems almost allergic to throwing hits, and his low willingness to battle for pucks in tight spaces will keep him out of the NHL entirely if it's not rectified.

Virk's WHL tenure appears to be short-lived, as he is now set to join Michigan State in the NCAA. - Neumeier

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

195

ALEXIS COURNOYER

GOALIE

6-3

195 LBS

CANADA

DEC-13-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	55 VISION	55 TECHNIQUE	52.5 REBOUND CONTROL	47.5 PUCK HANDLING	52.5 OFF
2024-25	CAPE BRETON (QMJHL)	21-13-6-1.82-0.942							

While there is righteous concern in drafting a 2005-born goalie with average athleticism who was a mid-season QMJHL call-up, in this case, there is also major upside. While most goalies who will get drafted this year will have better athleticism than Alexis Cournoyer, it is exceedingly rare to find a draft-eligible with his technique, poise, and smarts, even when accounting for his age.

In his short but dominant QMJHL tenure, he exemplified exceptional footwork, perfect positioning, great save selection, and active anticipation of the play. In that stretch, he managed to outplay his goalie partner, recent Predators fourth-round pick Jakub Milota, in the regular season before ultimately losing the battle in the playoffs.

There's real value in a goalie of his style. Guys like Anthony Stolarz or Jakub Dobes, too, lack speed and athleticism, but have a combination of frame, technique, and smarts that cannot be developed. Cournoyer is fairly unproven with just 25 games of Major Junior experience as a 19-year-old, but with him being primed to be Cornell's starter next year, his development path has gone from questionable to fantastic.

With that in mind, the upside of Cournoyer is undeniable, and with the added NCAA opportunity, there are hopes that Cournoyer could become a reliable NHL backup. - Crouse

196

GRAHAM JONES

CENTER

5-8

150 LBS

CANADA

AUG-16-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	45 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	SHATTUCK-ST. MARY'S (USHS-MN)	43-18-48-66-10						

A former first round selection of the Portland Winterhawks (WHL), Jones instead opted to join the Shattuck's program and has since committed to Boston College. He's a high-end skater who loves to attack defenders head on. He plays the game at a blistering pace. He routinely beats defenders on the outside and cuts to the middle or drives the middle lane and gets to the net, proving that he's not a perimeter player despite his lack of size.

Jones' skill as a playmaker is evident too. He gets pucks to the middle of the ice and can maintain possession while operating at full speed, keeping the puck in his hip pocket to shield it from bigger defenders. His hands and feet work in sync, and he varies pace to keep defenders guessing. His shot isn't a major weapon; he's a pass first pivot. He's also not likely to be much of a factor physically at higher levels, even if he's not a perimeter player at the prep level. However, he does show well in the defensive end, a testament to his three-zone awareness. He anticipates passing lanes well and forces turnovers on the backcheck and forecheck, then it's off to the races as he storms up the ice in transition. The lack of size is obviously a concern, however, he has the speed, smarts, and tenacity that you like to see from smaller players.- Otten

197

ANTHONY ALLAIN-SA-

DEFENCE

6-1

180 LBS

CANADA

SEP-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	SIOUX CITY (USHL)	61-0-14-14-30						

Anthony Allain Samake is a very raw but athletically talented defenceman who has committed to the University of Connecticut for the 2025-26 season.

On the rush, Allain Samake beats defenders by throwing them off-stride and using his speed to power through. His hands are above average and allow him enough advantage to sneak by and gain the offensive zone. He offers crosschecks to anyone willing to stand in front of his net, which does help fill in for a lack of size when facing larger opponents.

Allain Samake often gets outmuscled in front of the net but does throw some open ice hits and finishes hard along the boards. His shot is pretty weak and inaccurate, getting poor results during his draft year, whether it be rebound generation or scoring. His understanding of positioning is solid, but he over-pinchs at the blueline, leading to odd man rushes against.

Allain Samake projects into a bottom pairing role who can provide lock-down rush defence and throw some hits while moving the puck at an above-average level. - Ireland

198

OLIVER TULK

CENTER

5-7

170 LBS

CANADA

JAN-19-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	47.5 PHYSICALITY	52.875 OFF
2024-25	CALGARY (WHL)	65-38-62-100-20						

Will the third time be the charm for Tulk when it comes to the NHL draft? The past two times he was, if nothing else, worthy of consideration as a late-round selection, but it didn't materialize for him. Give him credit where it's due, though: he has never stopped working to improve his game, getting progressively better and better

He's a tenacious center who strikes quickly and incisively. His focus is always sharp, allowing him to pinpoint weaknesses in opposing defensive structures that he jumps to exploit. Players of his short stature are always at a disadvantage, but he has learned a lot about how to work around that limitation.

Tulk will be heading to the University of Wisconsin in the fall, and that change of scenery could make a crucial difference in a team's willingness to draft him, because now he'll get to develop in the NCAA instead of staying in the WHL as an overager or turning pro, which is a much better and more achievable next step for him. - Neumeier

199

CARL-OTTO MAGNUSSON

DEFENCE

6-7

225 LBS

SWEDEN

JAN-11-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	45 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	60 PHYSICALITY	51 OFF
2024-25	FROLUNDA (SWE J20)	44-3-5-8-48						

Just how much of a late bloomer is Magnusson? He didn't even play at Sweden's highest junior level in 2023-24, which was his first year of draft eligibility. He progressed so rapidly this year, however, that he already got to make his debut in the SHL. It's understandable why his Frölunda organization might be interested in trying to fast track his individual development, because what team wouldn't want to have a 6-foot-7 defenseman at their disposal?

Magnusson would be an incredibly safe draft choice in some regards, because players like him can play such a simple, straightforward style of hockey and still be effective. You can tell that he already understands this, as he always plays to his same strengths: getting his long stick on pucks, plowing opponents away from his own crease, getting his gigantic body in shot lanes for blocks. This kind of work doesn't show up on highlight reels, but it helps teams win games.

Magnusson might never be more than a third-pair defender on any team, but he might be able to fill that role all the way up to the NHL. - Neumeier

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS


200 KARL STERNER

 LEFT WING  6-3  195 LBS  SWEDEN  MAR-29-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFFP
2024-25	FROLUNDA (SWE J20)	42-18-35-53-16						

Despite another strong season in the J20, Sterner couldn't crack the SHL this season either. The re-entry from Trollhättan was an offensive weapon for Frölunda, especially on the powerplay. Great volume shooter, but he's started to lean into his playmaking ability in order to diversify his offensive game more. Defensively and on the forecheck, it's another story. One of Sterner's main issues last year was inconsistency and a lack of compete. This year, he's started leaning into his size a bit more and actually hitting guys. However, he still tends to disappear for shifts, even whole games at a time. His loan to Södertälje for the upcoming season should be a great test for him as you can't take shifts off at the pro level. Another concern is whether or not his skating will be good enough for the HockeyAllsvenskan level. It may be second division, but it is still fast and physical. With Sterner's lack of quickness and agility, he may have a tough time keeping up with the pace of play. He still has an outside chance to be a bottom six checking winger with some goalscoring upside. - Robbins

201 LIAM KILFOIL

 CENTER  5-11  180 LBS  CANADA  MAR-21-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFFP
2024-25	HALIFAX (QMJHL)	62-21-25-46-14						

Kilfoil is one of the most easily likeable players available this year. He went out there as Halifax's first-line center and emptied the tank every single shift, even though the team was usually overpowered and he was just 17 years of age. His coaches asked him to do more heavy lifting than they probably preferred to, but he always managed to keep his head above water. He fits much better in a checking and defensive role, though, which is the work he did for Canada when he won his two gold medals within the past 365 days, at the Hlinka tourney and the U18s. Can he become a similar type of support player in the NHL one day? - Neumeier

202 YAROSLAV KUZMENKO

 GOALIE  6-0  165 LBS  RUSSIA  MAY-31-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	52.5 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	47.5 PUCK HANDLING	52.125 OFFP
2024-25	MHK SPARTAK MOSKVA (MHL)	31-23-5-1.73-0.938							

Last year, NHL teams jumped at the thought of bringing three-time draft re-entry Ilya Nabokov. This year, teams can make a similar gamble with re-entry candidate Yaroslav Kuzmenko. He fits the same bill as Nabokov as an athletic, undersized goalie with good smarts and skating ability. Kuzmenko dominated the MHL's regular season and playoffs and is primed for a jump to the VHL. While there's more risk in taking an unpolished overager who's still playing junior, teams may consider throwing a late pick on the 2006-born goaltender given just how closely his path and style match with one of the NHL's top goalie prospects. - Crouse

203 NIKLAS NYKYRI

 DEFENCE  6-2  190 LBS  FINLAND  JAN-26-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52 OFFP
2024-25	HIFK (FIN-LIIGA)	31-1-7-8-6						

Nykyri is a good skater who plays on his toes and has decent size to work with, though everything else with him is mostly a question mark. He breaks even in his shifts more than he wins or loses them. That was the case last year when he was playing in Finland's top junior level and it's still the case now, though he did upgrade himself to a full-time player in the Liiga as an 18-year-old blueliner. That's not exactly a rare feat, but it's not an easy one either. If he can stick at that level for a few years and stack something else, anything, onto his game then there could be something here. - Neumeier






204 THEODOR HALLQUISTH

 DEFENCE  6-2  185 LBS  SWEDEN  JUN-14-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	47.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFFP
2024-25	OREBRO (SWE J20)	41-5-17-22-48						

Brother of Swedish WJC defenceman Wilhem Hallquist. Big, physical RHD who's a nightmare to play against. Loves to get under the skin of his opponents. He really shines in the defensive zone, but can move pucks up ice and contribute offensively as well. Can sometimes defend too much with his hands and not enough with his feet, despite being decently mobile. Hallquist was Örebro J20's most used defencemen, but plays a very understated game. As a blank slate with rather average tools, it's difficult to project Hallquist to an NHL role right now. However, if a team has an idea of what they want him to be and has a plan for him to get there, he

205 PATRIK KERKOLA

 GOALIE  6-1  195 LBS  FINLAND  MAY-29-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	52.5 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	52.375 OFFP
2024-25	KALPA (FIN-U20)	31-15-14-3.14-0.883							

Kerkola may have started off the year poorly, but as the season progressed, so did he, improving significantly by the playoffs. Kerkola is a positional goalie with good size, whose frame improved strongly this season. He reads and anticipates the play well, a rare ability, and has good mobility and speed. While the flaws have improved, they will hold him back from going early, as he's struggled to slow the play down, sometimes doesn't set his feet, has tracking issues, and can be beaten along the post. However, his tools and progression this season are tantalizing. - Crouse

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

206 DANIEL JENCKO

 CENTER

 6-0

 185 LBS

 SLOVAKIA

 JAN-09-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	MASSACHUSETTS (HE)	28-6-11-17-10						

Jencko has been ticking the draft radar the last couple years, performing well internationally, in Sweden, and at the USHL level. However, this year could finally be the year he gets selected after a strong performance for Slovakia at the World Juniors and a solid freshman year for UMass. Jencko excels as a high energy guy thanks to his speed and physicality. He can be very successful working the net front on the powerplay and he has soft enough hands to finish off second chance opportunities in tight. Jencko is also an effective forechecker because of his speed and the consistency of his physicality. NHL scouts will probably wish he were bigger (6-foot-0) given the kind of role he projects to play, but he's shown enough progression playing at higher levels to be worthy of a draft pick. - Otten

207 JONATHAN BROWN

 DEFENCE

 6-2

 200 LBS

 USA

 MAR-09-2007


YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	45 SHOT	47.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	SHATTUCK-ST. MARY'S (USHS-MN)	56-4-22-26-20						

There's nothing glamorous or dynamic about his game, but he skates well, has a pro frame, and shows great instincts at both ends of the ice. He is a really solid four-way mover and he's an aggressive stick on puck defender who takes away space really efficiently. He's not an extremely physical defender, but he does tie up checks, win battles along the wall, and suffocate attackers. Brown is also efficient with the puck in the defensive end. He keeps things simple. He flashes an ability to lead or join the rush offensively, but these instances are rare. Recently signed by Windsor of the OHL, then headed to Yale at some point, it'll be interesting to see how the rest of Brown's game comes together. However, there's definitely pro upside as a stay-at-home defender. - Otten

208 KIRILL YEMELYANOV

 CENTER

 6-0

 170 LBS

 RUSSIA

 JAN-08-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	47.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	60 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFF
2024-25	LOKO-76 YAROSLAVL-LOKO YAROSLAVL (MHL)	38-13-11-24-16						

Kirill Yemelyanov is an interesting riser in this year's draft. He is a big, sturdy two-way center with upside on both sides of the ice. Defensively, he attacks opponents when they have possession, angling them towards the wall and forcing turnovers with unrelenting pressure. Offensively, he has pulled off some slick dangles on high energy rushes up ice, but he is more of a secondary option who sneaks into open space to become a shooting threat.

Yemelyanov is a strong two-way center who has shown flashes of talent on both sides of the ice. Consistency is an issue, but he could be a riser on draft day. - Lawrence

209 DAVID GRANBERG

 CENTER

 6-2

 195 LBS

 SWEDEN

 MAY-14-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	LULEA (SHL)	43-6-4-10-6						

Nephew of former "legion of doom" member Mikael Renberg. Granberg takes after his uncle in the grit and sandpaper department. He's a big C who plays a heavy game, goes to the net and battles, and collects garbage. That was the role he played for Luleå in their championship run. This year, however, he's added a layer of soft skill to his game which he showcased at the WJC with Sweden. There's a tangible, albeit minor, offensive upside which may help him stand out from the crowd of probable future bottom-sixes. Even if he never makes the show, Granberg's well regarded as a teammate and a leader in the locker room. You can't ever have enough good people in your organization. - Robbins

210 PHILIPPE BLAIS-SAVOIE

 DEFENCE

 6-0

 190 LBS

 USA

 JUN-10-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFF
2024-25	COLORADO COLLEGE (NCHC)	30-4-11-15-10						

After a strong freshman year at Colorado College, there's a strong chance that Blais-Savoie gets selected in his final year of draft eligibility. He was much more efficient with the puck than expected, but that's not his game nor his projection. Blais-Savoie is a stay-at-home defensive prospect through, and through. His defensive instincts are terrific, and he may be one of the top defensive defenders in the NCAA as early as next year. Thanks to good mobility and three zone awareness, Blais-Savoie could develop into a solid depth option. - Otten

211 EETU ORPANA

 CENTER

 6-0

 195 LBS

 FINLAND

 APR-17-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	51.5 OFF
2024-25	TAPPARA (FIN-U20)	38-9-15-24-12						

A strong U18's may have saved Orpana's draft stock after a disappointing season in the Finnish U20 league with the Tappara program. The heady, two-way center does play a mature, pro style game. He's effective at both ends. He drives play through the middle of the ice. He skates well enough for his frame. However, his game lacks finesse. He can struggle to make skilled plays under pressure and that points to a limited ceiling as a pro in North America. Additionally, for the kind of calculated, two-way game that he plays, you wish he were more consistently physically engaged. Good sized pivots with good three zone awareness can be hard to find, but he may not tick enough boxes to be an NHL pick. - Otten

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

212 TOPIAS HYNNINEN

 CENTER  5-10  170 LBS  FINLAND  DEC-19-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	51.5 OFF
2024-25	JUKURIT (FIN-LIIGA)	51-12-23-35-6						

The exact same size and weight as top prospect James Hagens, Hynninen is coming off an outstanding winter as his Liiga team's second best scorer before he upped the ante with 2-8-10 in five relegation round games. The 19-year-old is a two-way forward who displays fantastic instincts both with and without the puck, having even found himself manning the point on the PP at times. A rather upright skater with deficits in straightaway speed, the overager is nonetheless tricky in transition, agile, and can stop on a dime. Enjoyed a solid third line role at this winter's WJC (4 assists) and two years ago at the U18 Worlds (3 points in 5 games). - Landvogt






213 MATTHEW LANSING

 CENTER  6-0  185 LBS  USA  FEB-24-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	51.5 OFF
2024-25	WAT-FGO (USHL)	54-12-15-27-51						

It wasn't a surprise when Lansing made the U.S. roster for the U18s even though he spent most of his year with USHL clubs, because he had already shown the ability to step up in big games. He's a smart, highly consistent center who plays with pace and drives good results in all three zones. He can bring an offensive spark from time to time, but his main value lies in all the little things he does in his shifts that put his team in a better position. It's not hard to project him as a bottom-of-the-lineup support player. - Neumeier

214 ALEX MISIAK

 RIGHT WING  5-11  175 LBS  SLOVAKIA  JUN-22-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	51.5 OFF
2024-25	WATERLOO (USHL)	28-7-11-18-12						

The younger brother of Blackhawks prospect Martin Misiak, Alex plays a similar kind of North/South attacking game. He is active on the forecheck. He drives the net with good speed bursts. He can be reliable in any situation. Around midseason he made the move from Slovakia to the USHL with Waterloo and he performed well. You can probably expect him to be a selection in this year's CHL import draft. However, Alex is almost like a Martin "lite." His projection might be fairly limited for the higher levels without upgrades to his on puck play.- Otten

215 ALEXANDER DONOVAN

 RIGHT WING  5-10  170 LBS  USA  APR-08-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	47.5 SKATING	60 SHOT	55 SKILLS	45 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.375 OFF
2024-25	SHATTUCK-ST. MARY'S (USHS-MN)	58-45-46-91-26						

A Denver University commit and Shattuck St. Mary's product, Donovan's best skill is unquestionably his shot. He can absolutely rifle the puck. It's possibly a top ten shot in this entire draft class. Donovan is also a fairly physical player, especially in puck pursuit; he, largely, plays bigger than his size. But the rest of his game needs major refinement. Consistency has been an issue for him thanks to the fact that his first few steps lack power and he can be slow to pucks or spots because of it. Secondly, his decision-making leaves something to be desired, both with and without the puck. If you're drafting Donovan, you're hoping that he can gain a step at Denver and learn to take better advantage of his shot as a strong complementary piece. His upside is high, but the downside is quite low. Recently signed with Saint John of the QMJHL, which will delay his arrival to Denver by a year or two.- Otten


216 JAROMIR PEREZ

 LEFT WING  5-11  170 LBS  CZECH  JUL-27-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	BILI TYGRI LIBEREC (CZECHIA)	35-6-12-18-10						

The highest scoring U20 player in the Czech extraliga, ahead of a few already NHL drafted players, Perez could be an NHL pick this June. One of the reasons that he's found early success playing against men is that he skates very well. His first step quickness is especially solid, and it gives him separation from bigger defenders. Perez is also a skilled playmaker who can make creative plays when playing with pace. As his frame fills out and his off puck play improves further, he could have an NHL future. Fun fact, Perez was born in Spain and moved to Czechia at a young age. If he were to make the NHL, he would be the first player born in Spain to make it to the big show.- Otten

217 KAMBRYN HENDRICKSON


 GOALIE  6-1  175 LBS  USA  JAN-09-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	50 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	52.5 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	52 OFF
2024-25	WAT-OMA (USHL)	29-13-12-2.63-0.899							

It doesn't get more high-octane than Kambryn Hendrickson. Boasting powerful strides, quick play reads, and flashing his innate athleticism, everything Hendrickson does is at his top speed. He's got the raw skills, but not the refinement. It's an archetype seen all too often, one that lends itself to being a long shot at being a high-quality NHL goalie and more likely a third stringer. He's stolen many games in Omaha but has been exposed in Waterloo when the play slows down and his poor hands are an issue. His positioning initially and framing are his saving grace. One just hopes he can refine himself at UConn. - Crouse

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS


218 GIO DIGIULIAN

 CENTER  5-11  180 LBS  USA  SEP-25-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFP
2024-25	LINCOLN (USHL)	58-22-29-51-32						

One of our highest ranked Tier 2 players for the draft last year (142nd), we loved DiGiulian's speed and scoring ability but had concerns about his ability to play through contact and off puck play. This year, playing his first year in the USHL, DiGiulian was one of the highest scoring players in the league. He is now using his speed more effectively without the puck, developing into an excellent forechecker. He's also playing through contact to get to the net and to find soft spots in the home plate area to use his shot. The middle six scoring line upside is still very much present, even if we don't see him as a center at the higher levels. Cornell is going to be a great program for him given how well they develop defensive tendencies. - Otten


219 ELIAS SCHNEIDER

 LEFT WING  6-0  170 LBS  GERMANY  JUL-08-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	47.5 SKATING	55 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.125 OFP
2024-25	EISBAREN JUNIORS BERLIN (DNL U20)	31-33-31-64-22						

Schneider has been a low-key part of this stronger class of Germans that has piqued scouting interest in recent years. A topscorer for the Eisbären Berlin junior program three years running, he's coming off a dominant U20 league performance (fourth overall in scoring), topped by becoming the DNL playoffs' topscorer with 23 points in eight games. Having suited up for 13 DEL games (0 points), he arrived internationally this spring by starring for Germany's U18 Worlds entry, where his six points in five games in a first line center role paced Germany to their best finish in years. Strong playmaking ability is accompanied by a deadly wrist shot. Very raw but full of tools. - Landvogt

220 MATHIS LANGEVIN

 GOALIE  6-4  180 LBS  CANADA  JUN-18-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	50 VISION	52.5 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	51.75 OFP
2024-25	BAT-RIM (QMJHL)	20-12-6-2.55-0.912							

Langevin is a raw draft re-entry goalie who may have only gotten an opportunity to shine late in the season, but he possesses the raw tools that make him noteworthy. His 6-foot-4 stature is ideal, and at 181 pounds, that leaves room to bulk up to further improve his impressive explosiveness. He also has great joint mobility and flexibility, edges, generally good positioning, and a high compete level. However, he lacks the refinement and composure you'd hope for, especially in a re-entry. Given his development this year and stealing of Rimouski's starting job in the playoffs and subsequent playoff run, though, he seems to be catching up quickly. With proper coaching, he could develop into a backup in the NHL with his raw tool set. - Crouse



221 FELIX FARHAMMAR

 DEFENCE  6-1  185 LBS  SWEDEN  APR-11-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFP
2024-25	OREBRO (SWE J20)	43-3-18-21-30						

Like a lot of other defense prospects in this class, Färhammar stands out because of the sum of all his different parts. He's a spirited and energetic player who is always ready to step up for his team, no matter the job that needs doing. He's readily available as a puck mover and he's eager as a body checker. He doesn't really shine in anything he does, but it's easy to believe that he'll always keep honing his craft and find ways to exceed

222 ETHAN WYTTEBACH

 LEFT WING  5-10  180 LBS  USA  FEB-10-2007


YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFP
2024-25	SIOUX FALLS (USHL)	44-24-27-51-28						

Ethan Wyttenbach is an interesting name to look at in the closing rounds of the draft. He put up big point totals in his debut USHL season and has committed to the Quinnipiac Bobcats.

Wyttenbach's wrister is highly accurate and packs a punch. He specializes in shooting from a standstill and was a major power-play threat. Another attribute that helped make his offensive game effective was how he disguised his intentions. Wyttenbach often makes deceptive passes to target the center of the ice for high danger scoring chances.

Wyttenbach is a long shot due to his size and heavy footedness, which as a combo are often a death sentence for prospects without elite skill. - Ireland

223 ARTYOM GONCHAR

 DEFENCE  6-0  165 LBS  RUSSIA  OCT-25-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	47.5 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFP
2024-25	STALNYE LISY MAGNITOGORSK (MHL)	50-7-18-25-2						

Sergei Gonchar's nephew, Artyom stepped up as a flashy offensive defenseman for Magnitogorsk this season. He is an agile, smooth skater who uses his footwork well to walk the line effectively and create offensive zone time off the rush.

Some of his best plays come in the offensive zone. He is a talented line walking d-man who can trick opponents into biting before exploding the other direction. He has some playmaking prowess, able to set up offensive chances but will need to continue to improve his decision making.

He leans offensive and will need some more work defensively but could be worth a look in the late rounds. - Lawrence

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

224 LIRIM AMIDOVSKI

 RIGHT WING  6-1  180 LBS  CANADA  DEC-22-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	55 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.875 OFF
2024-25	NORTH BAY (OHL)	67-19-13-32-38						

For a late 2006 born forward, the production this year doesn't scream NHL draft selection. Consistency was a major issue for Amidovski. However, there are components of his game that could become NHL quality. He plays a power-based North/South game and skates well in straight lines. He shoots the puck well and can work inside the dots to earn chances. The physical components of his game are hit and miss and it's part of why his game lacks consistency. Sometimes he is an active power forward who hunts down pucks, other times he's hard to spot without the puck. Amidovski's overall skating profile needs work too. He can struggle with directional changes and lacks balance on his edges. An NHL team selects him if they believe they can round out his raw profile to create a power winger who can score.- Otten

225 MATTHEW DESIDERIO

 DEFENCE  6-3  210 LBS  USA  AUG-16-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	DUBUQUE (USHL)	62-14-24-38-34						

One of the most improved players in the USHL this year, Desiderio emerged as one of the league's top two-way defenders. He moves impressively well for a 6-foot-3, 210 pounds blueliner and he's really gained confidence in his ability to carry the puck. He surprises defenders with creative moves to escape pressure and his vision with the puck is solid. For a guy among the league defenseman goal scoring leaders, he doesn't have the kind of heavy point shot that you might expect; it's more about well-timed pinches to get into the slot and quick wristers from the point. Defensively, his mobility and reach gives him a real advantage. He's physical when he needs to be and minds his gaps well. Desiderio has improved to the point where an NHL team could see enough upside in him to select him this year in his final year of eligibility.- Otten

226 TEODOR VAPENIK

 DEFENCE  6-4  210 LBS  CZECH  APR-26-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	HC DYNAMO PARDUBICE (CZECHIA U20)	49-3-22-25-77						

Vapenik had a very respectable season for a Czech defender, spending some time in his home nation's pro leagues and with their under-18 national team, and he ended things on an even higher note when he helped his junior team win their league's championship while playing north of 20 minutes per game. He's a tall blueliner with workable mobility, physicality and puck management. While he'll never knock anyone's socks off with his play, he could be one of those types of guys who keeps quietly improving over in Europe for a while and then makes himself ready for a shift to North America, which sometimes results in NHL duty. - Neumeier

227 BRUNO OSMANIS

 RIGHT WING  5-11  170 LBS  LATVIA  DEC-16-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.125 OFF
2024-25	BJORKLOVEN (SWE J20)	31-12-25-37-12						

The most talented Latvian prospect in the draft class. At his best, Osmanis is an offensive playmaking winger with skill to burn. He was way too good for the J20, driving his line and surprising foes with his physical edge. Despite putting up some points, the pace of the pro game was a bit too fast for him. He doesn't have the quickness or the agility you really need from a prospect with his profile, and he couldn't read the game well. His overall impact was limited, but he made up for it by staying intense off puck and producing some highlight reel skill moments with the puck. Osmanis should get every opportunity to play a full season with the Björklöven senior team next year. Even with improved skating and a lot of seasoning, Osmanis is a boom-bust prospect with bottom nine upside. - Robbins



228 AAPO KATAVISTO

 RIGHT WING  5-11  170 LBS  FINLAND  JUL-09-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	55 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.125 OFF
2024-25	KIEKKO-ESPOO (FIN-U20)	40-12-14-26-12						

The projection and hope for Katavisto is that he can develop into a Jesper Fast kind of bottom six player at the NHL level. The skating ability is an asset; he's very quick. He's also tenacious off the puck and excels as a forechecker. The shot shows promise, but he doesn't consistently get himself into scoring areas. With the puck, his game has limitations too. Look no further than his goose egg as both the Hlinka/Gretzky Cup and at the U18's; he just wasn't much of a factor offensively playing against the best in the age group. A long-term play because of his speed and energy, Katavisto could be a useful NHL role player with some adjustments.- Otten

229 CARTER KLIPPENSTEIN

 CENTER  6-3  180 LBS  CANADA  NOV-25-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	BRANDON (WHL)	58-14-14-28-50						

Klippenstein hasn't produced very much up to this point, but that's OK, because his real value is on the defensive side of things. He's adept at taking space away from his opponents, using his agility, long limbs, advanced conditioning and committed mindset. He also plays on his toes and likes to play with a physical edge. Blend all of those traits together and you have a forward prospect who projects smoothly as a shutdown forward and penalty killer, which is already the role that he's learning to master in Brandon. NHL clubs will see the value in Klippenstein because he has such an obvious pathway that he can take to earn a roster spot. - Neumeier

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS






230 LUKE MISTELBACHER

 RIGHT WING  6-0  195 LBS  CANADA  NOV-02-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	SWIFT CURRENT (WHL)	67-42-51-93-34						

Mistelbacher was a revelation for the Broncos, emerging as their best player and leading scorer. He's a dangerous finisher who can score from distance as easily as he can between the dots. Uses bursts of acceleration to open up more time and space for his shots. He also got better as a playmaker after opposing defenses learned to take away his shot, making him more of a dual threat. While he doesn't cheat on his defensive responsibilities, he should add a little more jam when he's off the puck. He is a late bloomer who could eventually become a middle six scoring option if he keeps improving at his current rate. - Neumeier

231 JOHN STOUT

 DEFENCE  6-1  190 LBS  USA  APR-20-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFF
2024-25	MADISON (USHL)	58-4-14-18-8						

We had Stout ranked 190th for the draft last year after a standout performance in the Minnesota high school loop, however, we did also have concerns over his lack of a true standout or projectable skill. This year, playing in the USHL full time with Madison, Stout was a standout in the defensive end. Stout has a pro frame at 6-foot-2, 200+ pounds, he's fairly mobile, and he's quite intelligent. He'll probably make a great three- or four-year NCAA player at Wisconsin with his versatility. Stout does show enough flashes running the point on the backend to suggest that his offensive game could have more upside. As is, the improvements made to his defensive

232 MAGOMED SHARAKANOV

 DEFENCE  6-1  200 LBS  RUSSIA  OCT-11-2004

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.75 OFF
2024-25	LADA TOGLIATTI (KHL)	67-6-16-22-24						

In his final year of draft eligibility, Magomed appears to have finally proven himself as a pick after a strong year with Lada, a viral lacrosse goal, and some strong defensive performances.

He plays strong defense, using his nifty footwork to stick to opponents and shove them far from the net. He has added some good physicality over the past few years allowing him to lock down the d-zone.

Offensively, he makes good decisions a majority of the time but can sometimes over handle pucks and force plays that aren't there. He put up 22 points in 67 games, a strong first full season in the KHL.




233 JASU MENSONEN

 CENTER  5-10  170 LBS  FINLAND  JAN-12-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	51.375 OFF
2024-25	LUKKO RAUMA (FIN-U20)	40-5-21-26-28						

Mensonen's game is completely built around his skating ability and it's really his only standout quality at this time. He can be effective in transition with the speed to catch defenders flat footed and he can be effective on the forecheck thanks to his quick bursts that allow him to close in on defenders quickly to force turnovers. His offensive production just wasn't great for an average sized pivot this year and he struggled to be a consistent difference maker internationally for a Finland team that was desperate for play creators. His production might be best suited to going the NCAA route, given that he hasn't played pro in Liiga yet. His speed would play well in the NCAA and he would have time to bulk up to round out his game. - Otten

234 PARKER SNELGROVE

 CENTER  6-0  190 LBS  CANADA  JAN-20-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFF
2024-25	GUELPH (OHL)	67-11-13-24-43						

Things weren't easy for the Guelph Storm this year and many of the team's younger players struggled with consistency. Snelgrove didn't always receive a ton of ice time, but he usually passed the eye test. He's a player with both a clear identity on the ice, and the runway to be productive. The strong skating pivot is a determined two-way player who always seems to find his way to the net. He has quick hands, and he flashes upside as a strong transitional attacker. He's not an incredibly creative player, but we're very curious to see how he responds to greater ice time and responsibility moving forward. - Otten

235 JACK BRAUTI



 DEFENCE  6-0  165 LBS  CANADA  MAY-24-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	NIAGARA (OHL)	64-8-38-46-47						

Brauti blossomed into a quality two-way defender for the upstart IceDogs this year. We had him ranked just outside our top 250 last year, but he has improved his projection this year with improved on puck play and playmaking ability. He can lug the puck up with confident, smooth strides, and he gets shots through with efficiency. Brauti's best asset is his energetic and assertive approach to defending. He's a tough and physical competitor who blocks shots and who likes to take away space from opposing forwards. He can struggle, at times, defending pace; his lateral and backwards stride aren't always the cleanest. Does he have enough upside to entice NHL teams? There's a profile here similar to a guy like Tampa Bay's Darren Raddysh, who has taken some time to develop into a quality depth defender. - Otten

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

236 BOBBY COWAN

 RIGHT WING  5-10  175 LBS  USA  JUL-12-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	MADISON (USHL)	57-22-29-51-61						

He may not have elite physical tools; he's not a truly dynamic skater and he's not blessed with terrific size, but he was highly effective in the USHL thanks to high-end skill, high-end processing ability, and an excellent compete level. Previously known as more of a "sniper," thanks to a deadly release, Cowan's vision and passing ability stood out equally with Madison. He is excellent at spinning off checks or using delays to help him survey the ice, where he often threads the needle to slot or cross ice. Cowan also works hard off the puck, as a forechecker, as a boards player, and as a crease crasher. This is the kind of player NHL teams could take a chance on in the later rounds in hopes that he continues to blossom and mature physically to give him a better chance of being a solid pro.- Otten



237 ANDREAS STRAKA

 RIGHT WING  6-0  185 LBS  SLOVAKIA  JUL-04-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.625 OFF
2024-25	QUEBEC (QMJHL)	53-9-25-34-22						

Straka's production in his debut QMJHL season was pretty modest, but nobody scored much on the rebuilding Remparts. Beyond his import status, he's also pretty young for this draft class. He'll be a top-of-the-lineup player for Quebec in the coming years, and his skill should steadily unveil itself more and more over time. He's a crafty puck-handler who can make plays in tight spaces, and his skating ability looks like it will be good enough for the professional levels. There won't be many other prospects still available this late who will have as much top six upside. - Neumeier


238 HARRY NANSI

 RIGHT WING  6-3  185 LBS  CANADA  SEP-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	OWEN SOUND (OHL)	67-7-16-23-14						

There seems to be two schools of thought regarding Nansi in the scouting community this year. One has him as a diamond in the rough due to his raw physical tools and high work rate. The other is concerned about his upside due to his awkward stride and limited skill/production. We fall mostly in the second group. Nansi does have some intriguing tools. He protects the puck well using his big frame and once he fills out, he could really drive play below the goal line. He also has a high compete level. But he's a bit like bambi on the ice; his stride needs a lot of work. Simply put, Nansi is the epitome of a long-term project.- Otten

239 JOE WAHLUND

 DEFENCE  6-0  180 LBS  SWEDEN  APR-20-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	FARJESTADS (SWE J20)	43-4-16-20-16						



Wahlund was a reliable blueliner for Sweden at the U18 level. Wahlund showcased a steadiness under pressure and clean breakouts in the defensive zone, but was not afraid to take the puck up ice himself. Skating and mobility is the name of the game. Solid passing vision as well. Despite this, the offensive game wasn't as pronounced as one would expect. Wahlund doesn't have a punishing physical edge, a booming shot, or dynamic offensive skill. For him to make the NHL, even in a bottom pair role, he will have to find a way to build an impactful offensive or defensive game upon his strong skating foundation. - Robbins

240 NOAH TEGELAAR

 GOALIE  6-5  175 LBS  CANADA  OCT-15-2006

Don't look at Tegelaar's disastrous stint in the OHL this past year with the Soo; he was thrown to the wolves. In the OJHL and at the WJAC (for Canada East) he was a standout. Tegelaar is a big netminder who seals the bottom of the net really well. He collapses deep but has quick pads and tracks the play well in scramble situations. Tegelaar also moves decently post to post for a bigger netminder and can sprawl out to make highlight reel saves. Consistency is an issue, especially with his rebound control and aggressiveness in challenging shooters. He shows enough in flashes to suggest that he could develop really well under the right tutelage, and once he fills out and gets stronger. There's some early stages Matt Murray here.- Otten

241 CONNOR SCHMIDT

 DEFENCE  5-11  180 LBS  CANADA  MAR-20-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	55 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	MOOSE JAW (WHL)	68-10-13-23-48						

In a vacuum, Schmidt didn't have an impressive season. However, scouting is more about planning for the future than looking at the past, and within that logic he makes sense as a selection in the later rounds. He's a quick, right-shot defenseman with some offensive pop. His contributions stem primarily from his sense and opportunism, picking smart times to activate with the puck from the offensive blueline or quietly sliding down the far wall. He's not hesitant at all about shooting, and for good reason considering the quality of his release. You'd like to see a defender like this be more explosive on breakouts, but he's clean enough with his outlet passes that he makes it work. - Neumeier

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS


242 GUUS VAN DER KAAIJ

 DEFENCE

 6-0

 185 LBS

 SWITZELAND

 APR-18-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.5 OFF
2024-25	HC DAVOS (SUI U21-ELIT)	33-3-13-16-18						

Switzerland's captain at the U18 Worlds, Van der Kaaij is a thinking man's defenseman whose game looks well-schooled and methodical. Be it a hit, a pokecheck, a breakout pass, or the decision to hop on his horse and carry the puck, the lefty shot defender clearly prides himself in proper timing and choosing his spots wisely. A half Dutch Swiss, he gained traction this winter with a solid U20 season (particularly in the playoffs) and 11 games in the pro SL. Alas, although he did some good things at the U18 Worlds, he clearly hit a wall against a level of competition he wasn't used to facing. He's an underdeveloped project with an all-round skillset and sound skating. - Landvogt

243 BRENDAN DUNPHY

 DEFENCE

 6-5

 205 LBS

 USA

 FEB-02-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.125 OFF
2024-25	WENATCHEE (WHL)	47-4-18-22-62						

Dunphy is another player who boosted his stock after a change in scenery, in lieu of the CLH-NCAA rule changes. Wenatchee is rebuilding and that allowed him to eat up minutes and grow his game in different areas. The lanky defender is a fluid mover and does a good job staying active and engaged with the play, trying to be a difference-maker instead of gliding by as a passenger. He doesn't shy away from contact and isn't afraid to get his hands dirty protecting his net. His offensive instincts are good, both at the attack blueline and in transition, and he has some moments of success when trying to act upon them. There are far worse projects out there. - Neumeier

244 BRYCE PICKFORD

 DEFENCE

 6-0

 180 LBS

 CANADA

 APR-02-2006


YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	MEDICINE HAT (WHL)	48-20-27-47-65						

Pickford is a smart, confident, opportunistic defender who can do a little bit of everything at the junior level. He doesn't drive much play by himself but knows how to complement teammates who have more talent. He does his best work at the offensive blueline, as he's adept at seeing and analyzing what's unfolding in front of him. Possesses a good shot that he's always eager to utilize. He's likely learned a lot from being around elite prospects on championship-winning teams, first with Seattle and now Medicine Hat. However, he is held back by average size and skating ability, which will limit his long-term upside. If Pickford makes the NHL he would likely max out as a third-pair defender. - Neumeier


245 NOLEN GEERDES

 DEFENCE

 5-11

 175 LBS

 USA

 APR-30-2007


YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	45 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	57.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFF
2024-25	ROGERS HIGH (USHS-MN)	30-11-35-46-10						

Really the only thing missing from this young defender's game is size and high-end skating ability. There's a reason why he's one of the ten finalists for Minnesota's Mr. Hockey Award this year. Geerdes is a highly intelligent puck mover who relies on his excellent hands, terrific vision, and quick thinking to create offense. He doesn't need quick feet at the high school level to be extremely effective because he's consistently one step ahead of the competition mentally. He lacks speed North/South, and explosiveness in all four directions. How will that affect his game as he moves up the levels, especially considering that he is only average sized? That is the risk you take in selecting Geerdes this year. - Otten


246 JEREMIAH MUNDY

 RIGHT WING

 6-2

 195 LBS

 SWITZERLAND

 FEB-25-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFF
2024-25	HC DAVOS (SUI U21-ELIT)	45-13-12-25-37						

The hulking half Canadian entered the season as perhaps Switzerland's top prospect for this year's draft. That status was lost quickly in the course of a solid but unspectacular season for Davos' U20 team, one void of any looks at the pro level. Large and, at times, rambunctious, Mundy showed up at the U18 Worlds to the tune of four points in five games, but could do little in his top six role to prevent his country's untimely relegation. Although he packs good skills, speed, and competitiveness in a large body, a drafting is unlikely and a season in the CHL would be a logical next step towards that goal. - Landvogt

247 JOHN PARSONS

 GOALIE

 6-4

 195 LBS

 USA

 JAN-15-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	52.5 TECHNIQUE	47.5 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	52 OFF
2024-25	CHICAGO (USHL)	35-12-18-3.49-0.903							

Simply put, Parsons was not good last year for the U18 NTDP and as such, he fell off the draft radar. But the big netminder bounced back well this year as the starter for the Chicago Steel, providing stability for a rebuilding program. He's quite athletic for a 6-foot-4 goaltender and his play tracking and positioning improved a ton in the last calendar year. The only real issue still is his rebound control; he needs to do a better job of limiting second chances. He'll head to Providence College next year where he'll likely operate as the backup to Bruins prospect Philip Svedeback and be brought along slowly. - Otten


248 JOSHUA AVERY

 CENTER

 6-0

 170 LBS

 CANADA



 JAN-30-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFF
2024-25	BRANTFORD (OHL)	53-9-12-21-18						

Avery didn't receive a ton of ice time for the competitive Brantford Bulldogs this past year, but he performed admirably in a third line role and showed flashes of upside that suggest he could be a breakout candidate in future years. Avery is a power center who gets to the net and skates well for his frame. He has a good shot, but he needs to earn more touches to utilize it. Avery also competes hard away from the puck and projects as a two-way pivot. These are the kinds of players teams target late hoping that their development pops off with more ice time. - Otten

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS




249 XANDER VELLIARIS

 DEFENCE  6-3  205 LBS  CANADA  APR-23-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFFP
2024-25	KG-N-SAG (OHL)	52-1-8-9-61						

Raw. Toolsy. Athletic. A blank canvas. These are the types of words and phrases that best describe Velliaris. A mid-season trade to Saginaw allowed him to show a little more promise with more consistent ice time, but he's still a player without a true identity. He's a big defender who skates very well. Everything else is a work in progress but shows flashes of being a strength. He can play physical. He can lead the rush. He can quarterback the powerplay. But he does none of those things consistently. Lots of tools, but what about the toolbox? A draft and stash in hopes that something clicks because the upside could be big.- Otten

250 TIMOFEI ZHULIN

 LEFT WING  5-11  165 LBS  RUSSIA  SEP-29-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFFP
2024-25	BARS KAZAN (VHL)	54-23-20-43-14						

Overager, Zhulin had a monster year in his first pro season. He profiles as a high motor two-way forward who gets it done on both ends through hard work and some grit.

Offensively, he uses his speed to his advantage, flying up ice with purpose and crashing the net with the puck. He has skilled hands, a heavy shot, and quick processing which allowed him to pile up points in the VHL.

Defensively, he grinds down opponents with strong positioning and harassing play along the boards. He finishes checks hard and battles in the corners until he wins back possession.

One of my favorite players from the past few years. Worth a pick in my opinion. - Lawrence

251 AARON OBOBAIFO

 LEFT WING  5-9  185 LBS  CANADA  FEB-13-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFFP
2024-25	VANCOUVER (WHL)	13-6-4-10-6						

Obobaifo was limited to just 13 games this season because of injuries, but he still might have done enough in those appearances to get himself picked. He's a spirited, heart-and-soul kind of winger who plays with energy and tries to empty his tank every shift. He's more quick than fast, hustling around the ice and applying pressure on opponents both when he has the puck and when he's without it. His offense was trending in the right direction up until he got hurt. The Giants will have a steep uphill climb in the WHL next season, but Obobaifo should get top-of-the-lineup minutes, which will help him make up for all the time that he lost this year. - Neumeier



252 KRISTERS STEINBERGS

 GOALIE  6-4  195 LBS  DENMARK  MAR-23-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	50 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	52 OFFP
2024-25	HC DAVOS (SUI U21-ELIT)	12-8-3-2.32-0.911							

At 6-foot-4, Kristers Steinbergs is a very impressive athlete. His agility, quickness, and mobility are notable, and his movements are rapid and smooth, stemming from great footwork in his skating. However, as a 20-year-old, his technique and refinement are lacking, not just for someone of his age, but even among draft-worthy first-year eligibles. He frames his size inefficiently with a low-hanging glove, has trouble with inactive hands allowing clean goals, and his lack of rebound control can be problematic. His size and athleticism are good enough to warrant being on a watchlist, but being a D+2, he's more likely to end up as a depth piece. - Crouse





253 TANNER LAM

 RIGHT WING  5-9  155 LBS  CANADA  JUL-14-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	45 SHOT	57.5 SKILLS	57.5 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFFP
2024-25	KITCHENER (OHL)	67-13-40-53-24						

For Lam, it's all about whether you believe that he'll be able to be a productive top six NHL player at his size. He's incredibly talented and he's also an intelligent playmaker. The offensive upside is significant. He's going to end up as one of the higher scoring players in junior hockey at some point. Lam is incredibly agile with some of the better edgework in the draft. However, his explosiveness and straight-line speed are only average. When coupled with strength deficits, he has trouble shaking coverage and making plays consistently. The hit rate for undersized wingers without elite athletic tools is not high. Teams might take a wait and see approach.- Otten

254 FELIX OHRQVIST

 DEFENCE  5-8  165 LBS  SWEDEN  JUL-24-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	45 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	52 OFFP
2024-25	ALMTUNA (ALLSVENSKAN)	27-2-13-15-14						

Öhrqvist's offensive game exploded in his DY+1, showcasing dynamic playmaking activity below the blue line he simply didn't have last year. He showed this at the pro level, too. The defensive game got a bit exposed at the pro level, but he's still an effective rush defender and still competes hard in the corners - a necessity for a defenceman his size. No matter how skilled, quick, competitive or entertaining he is, the conversation stops at the fact that he's as undersized as undersized gets. While there is no real comparison between the two players (outside of size), perhaps the arrival of Lane Hutson could make some teams roll the dice on Öhrqvist. With him poised to be an everyday SHLer in 2025-2026, why not take a chance? - Robbins

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS


255 RYLAN BROWN

 DEFENCE

 6-0

 160 LBS

 CANADA

 JAN-23-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFF
2024-25	MICHIGAN TECH (CCHA)	36-3-15-18-14						

Brown received long looks from scouts last year as a re-entry when he was still playing at the Junior A level, but ultimately didn't hear his name get called. His fortunes could change this June, following an admirable freshman year in the NCAA with Michigan Tech. He's a quick, evasive blueliner who wants to have the puck on his stick all the time and has the handling ability to back it up. He gets outmuscled regularly but has plenty more time to keep beefing up in college. If he can keep honing both his powerplay contributions and his puck transportation at even strength he'll be twice as valuable as a depth defender. - Neumeier

256 FRANTISEK NETUSIL

 CENTER

 5-10

 195 LBS

 USA

 MAY-14-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	47.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	57.5 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	MINNESOTA WILDERNESS (NAHL)	53-29-22-51-146						

Czech born pest like player who has played the last two seasons in North America; last year with the New Jersey Rockets AAA program and this year in the NAHL with Minnesota. The Western Michigan commit is a real pain in the butt to play against. He consistently finishes his checks and gets under the skin of opponents. He's also a committed and versatile two-way player who shows great awareness and commitment in all three zones. In his cup of coffee at the USHL level this year, he had a bit of a tough time maintaining possession through traffic or making skilled plays with the puck; the creativity and overall skill are somewhat limited. Yet, there are enough pieces to the puzzle here to suggest that Netusil could end up being a pesky bottom six option down the line. - Otten

257 AIDEN FOSTER

 CENTER

 6-2

 180 LBS

 CANADA

 FEB-05-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	60 PHYSICALITY	51.5 OFF
2024-25	PRINCE GEORGE (WHL)	68-11-9-20-136						

A rambunctious forward with an indomitable personality, Foster was a well-liked leader for Prince George this season, even though he didn't score much or play high up their lineup. He's quite a throwback to the WHL's wilder days, acting as an enforcer and police officer for his teammates, and sometimes even as a showman whose job is to hype up the home crowd. He loves to get his hands dirty before and after whistles, and he'll drive opponents crazy as a pest, but he does all this in a cunning, Tkachuk-like kind of way. He'll get picked at some point for sure, because he's unique and what he brings could have value in the NHL. - Neumeier

258 ROBIN ANTENEN

 LEFT WING

 6-2

 195 LBS

 SWITZERLAND

 MAY-21-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	EV ZUG (SUI U21-ELIT)	26-14-11-25-14						

Having just turned 19, Antenen is a big-bodied overager who spent this season becoming more assertive and learning to use his size to his advantage. A hound in the corners and along the boards, he can be relentless in his puck pursuit. We've seen his nose for the net and some soft hands in the past, but this season was clearly about improving his positional game more than anything else. A PPG game in 34 U20 league contests accompanied 22 scoreless NL games. Enjoying a third line role at a disappointing WJC, he'll be a go-to player next winter. A draft afterthought at the moment, but it only takes one team... - Landvogt

259 JAKE CRAWFORD

 CENTER

 6-3

 180 LBS

 CANADA

 MAY-05-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	47.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFF
2024-25	OWEN SOUND (OHL)	65-8-17-25-22						

The prototype of the modern-day NHL third liner. Crawford has size. He skates well North/South and uses his speed to be a pest in puck pursuit. He can play both center and the wing. He has good defensive instincts and should develop into an elite penalty killer. The issue was that his offensive game just didn't develop much at all this year. He struggled to make plays with pace and his creativity and vision are currently limited. We really liked him early on this year, but we wish he had a better second half. - Otten

260 MATIAS VANHANEN

 LEFT WING

 5-8

 160 LBS

 FINLAND

 SEP-11-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	47.5 PHYSICALITY	52.375 OFF
2024-25	HIFK (FIN-U20)	42-17-30-47-22						

A smaller, skilled winger, Vanhanen was among the highest scoring players in both the Finnish U20 league this year and for Finland internationally at the U18 level. He has the speed and quickness you like to see from smaller wingers, and he plays the game at a feverish pace, possessing the skill to handle and create at full speed. When he's not able to beat defenders with speed, he can be easily neutralized; there's a huge need to add other layers to his game to become more consistent. There is going to be an adjustment period at higher levels. However, he is one of the youngest players available this year, so maybe there's a growth spurt in his future? - Otten


261 ALONSO GOSSELIN

 DEFENCE

 6-1

 195 LBS

 CANADA

 AUG-13-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	47.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.125 OFF
2024-25	CHICOUTIMI (QMJHL)	58-5-11-16-43						

Gosselin excels best as a rush defender. He has good four-way mobility and can neutralize attackers well by angling them off or disrupting entries with an active stick. He needs to become stronger and more physically assertive to be a top-notch defensive player, but the upside is there. Offensively, his game is currently pretty limited, but he can make a clean exit and keeps things simple. The kind of new age, athletic defender who needs to develop a true identity to escape the "jack of all trades" moniker. - Otten

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

262 WILLIAM BUNDBGAARD

 CENTER

 6-3

 200 LBS

 DENMARK

 FEB-12-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	45 SKATING	55 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	RODOVRE (DENMARK)	28-3-2-5-14						

Denmark is not a hockey hotbed, but one advantage that its top prospects have is that it's easier for them to get reps in best-on-best competition, and that's helpful experience. Bundgaard is the cream of the 2007 Danish birthday crop. He's a steamrolling winger who can lug pucks toward the net and has a moderate finishing touch. He'll need to get much quicker and learn the extra nuances of competing at hockey's highest levels, but he makes sense as a long-term investment. If he starts getting brought to the World Championships in a few years, and gets to work alongside good pros, that could help steer him in the right direction. - Neumeier


263 MATEU SPATH

 CENTER

 5-10

 170 LBS


 GERMANY

 FEB-20-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52 OFF
2024-25	KOLNER EC (DNL U20)	12-12-7-19-4						

Scorer of the all-important 5-4 gamewinner over Switzerland at the U18 Worlds (2-3-5 in 5 games), Späth is a mid-sized forward who shows a high level of hockey IQ and is very attentive in doing the little things right. Be it smart passes, stealing pucks, taking away time and space, conducting the odd spinorama or picking corners, Späth plays an intelligent game within his abilities and constantly looks to delimit the opponent's options. The counterattack is his offensive specialty. After a full DY-1 season of pro hockey (23 points), he missed considerable time this season and remains a player with an asterisk next to his name. Footspeed and weight deficiencies must improve. - Landvogt

264 ROBERTO LEONARDO HENRIQUEZ

 GOALIE

 6-1

 165 LBS

 SLOVAKIA

 APR-29-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	57.5 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	47.5 TECHNIQUE	47.5 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	51.75 OFF
2024-25	ANCHORAGE (NAHL)	24-17-5-2.49-0.923							

Henriquez has the innate skills a goalie coach would want to have in a goalie. His flexibility, explosiveness, and skating are near the top of the class, and he shows signs of good anticipation and decision making, skills that don't come easily. However, his arrival in the USHL has opened up some significant holes in his game, including poor positioning, his small frame, and inconsistent hands that lead to weaker goals. These problems can be difficult to translate to leagues with better shooters, and his chances at being an NHL backup or a draft pick are slimmer because of it. - Crouse

265 WILL SHARPE

 DEFENCE

 6-0

 195 LBS

 CANADA

 MAR-7-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	55 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	LET-KEL (WHL)	66-9-35-44-46						

Sharpe is a tricky prospect to get a comfortable bead on. He was a high pick in the WHL bantam draft and put up pretty good numbers this year, but he doesn't drive a lot of offense on his own and his physical tools are mostly lackluster. Every now and again there is a moment of brilliance, though. Getting to play on a Memorial Cup-bound Kelowna team could help foster some necessary improvements for him. There might not be enough going for Sharpe altogether to ever cleanly make the leap from junior to the pros, but teams are justifiably curious. - Neumeier

266 ELIAS JANSSON

 LEFT WING

 6-0

 185 LBS

 FINLAND

 APR-13-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.5 OFF
2024-25	MICHIGAN TECH (CCHA)	36-12-11-23-4						

Finnish winger who had a really good freshman year for Michigan Tech as the CCHA Rookie of the year. There's not much of a "B" game here. He doesn't project as a bottom six type, and he needs to get quicker to become more consistent. But he's skilled and creative with the puck. His offensive upside is pretty high, and he'll be a high scorer in Liiga at some point in his career. It's just a matter of whether you believe his game can translate to the pro level in North America. Maybe a guy NHL teams wait on and then look to sign as an NCAA free agent after a few more years at Michigan Tech. - Otten


267 JASPER KUHTA

 RIGHT WING

 6-2

 180 LBS

 FINLAND

 OCT-28-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	51.375 OFF
2024-25	HIFK (FIN-U20)	38-18-25-43-10						

Kuhta is a big pivot who is best described as rangy and intelligent. He's a well-rounded player, but doesn't own high end athletic tools. Given that he's a late born 2006, it has clouded his projection. NHL teams are going to like the combination of his frame and ability to operate as a steady playmaker. However, he doesn't have a true standout tool outside of being a quick thinker and poised with the puck. What's the true upside? NHL teams may wait to see how he adapts to a higher level of play. It would be great to see him in the CHL or USHL next year. - Otten

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

268 GIACOMO MARTINO

 LEFT WING  5-10  170 LBS  CANADA  APR-29-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	51.375 OFFP
2024-25	SIOUX CITY (USHL)	62-32-42-74-14						

The light bulb finally went on for Giacomo this season in the USHL, making him one of the highest scoring players in the league. In his last year of draft eligibility, the Northeastern commit has improved his strength and conditioning to make him better at playing through contact and thus, more consistent offensively. He's also become more of a dual threat offensively by improving his shot and ability to work to the inside. The real issue is that Martino is not the dynamic skater that his brother Ayrton is. Giacomo still needs to upgrade his first step quickness to improve his transitional play for the higher levels. - Otten



269 ALEXANDER LEVSHYN

 GOALIE  6-3  165 LBS  UKRAINE  JUL-08-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	57.5 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	47.5 TECHNIQUE	45 REBOUND CONTROL	45 PUCK HANDLING	51.125 OFFP
2024-25	TORONTO PATRIOTS (OJHL)	35-23-10-2.43-0.935							

A Ukrainian netminder who left the Dynamo Moscow program in order to play in Toronto with the Patriots of the OJHL. He's a good athlete who has lightning quick pads. He is a fierce competitor who never seems to quit on a play; scrambling to find ways to make saves ala Jonathan Quick or Dominik Hasek. He does all that in a 6-foot-3 frame. There's no doubt that Levshyn would have caught some eyes at last year's Division 1 U18's, where he nearly led Ukraine to promotion to the main group. This year at the Division 1B U20's, he led Ukraine to promotion and was the top goaltender at the event. However, he is very raw. He's technically underdeveloped and prone to some poor goals. But, several years at Clarkson could really help him refine things and become a legitimate pro prospect. - Otten

270 CADEN TAYLOR

 LEFT WING  6-2  185 LBS  CANADA  MAR-31-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	57.5 SHOT	55 SKILLS	47.5 SMARTS	47.5 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFFP
2024-25	PETERBOROUGH (OHL)	68-15-16-31-51						

Taylor is a big winger with excellent goal scoring upside. His shot is a potential plus weapon; he can really rip it. He's also a skilled transporter who can beat defenders one on one on the outside to help him create space for his shot. Taylor isn't a poor skater either and his quickness should improve further with a greater focus on conditioning. The issue for Taylor is consistency and work rate. He'll never reach his upside as a high-end goal scorer if he doesn't learn to work between the dots and earn better looks. He's not someone who projects as a power forward. Could be worth a look late because he'll pop off if he can become more of a workhorse. - Otten

271 PATRICK QUINLAN

 GOALIE  6-1  185 LBS  USA  APR-19-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	52.5 VISION	50 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	51.5 OFFP
2024-25	USN U18 (USDP)	28-16-7-3.21-0.886							

Quinlan is an undersized goalie who has impressive flexibility, moves with fluidity, and has surprising poise given how fast he plays. His real issues stem from screens and foot positioning, which, given his size, allows for him to get beat high or far-side. Additionally, he's struggled with edgework and grabbing onto ice during frenzies. On the bright side, he's got a quick glove, flashes of making good decisions, and reads play to the point where his flaws are fixable. With his signing in Sarnia next season and NCAA commitment to Notre Dame, his improved development path could make him worthy of a late pick. - Crouse

272 LUCAS KARMIRIS

 CENTER  5-11  190 LBS  CANADA  SEP-27-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.625 OFFP
2024-25	BRAMPTON (OHL)	40-13-22-35-28						

Tough year for Karmiris as he battled injuries that prevented him from showing progression from a year ago. He entered the season as a candidate to be a top two round pick, but his game just didn't pop off as a third year OHL player. He's a dedicated two-way pivot who can provide versatility and play up and down the lineup. He's intelligent and poised with the puck. He's an above average skater who can build to a decent top speed.

273 GAVIN CORNFORTH

 RIGHT WING  5-9  165 LBS  USA  DEC-15-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFFP
2024-25	DUBUQUE (USHL)	62-27-27-54-47						

Gavin Cornforth is a name to watch as we get into the depths of draft weekend. He showed more progression through his third USHL season, mostly driven by his skating and solid finishing at full speed. After making his pass, he does a good job of immediately making himself an option for a return feed or a screen for the opposing goalie.

Gavin isn't the strongest and is regularly shrugged off in physical battles, hurting his chances of being an effective bottom sixer. He doesn't quite have the skills to be a consistent scorer at the next level, making his projection more geared to suit a fourth line. - Ireland

274 GIAN MEIER

 DEFENCE  6-1  170 LBS  SWITZERLAND  JUL-10-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	52.5 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52 OFFP
2024-25	FROLUNDA (SWE J20)	35-5-13-18-16						

One of the more surprising snubs from the Swiss WJC team. Meier is a competitive RHD who loves to get involved in play as a whole. He loves to hit, he loves to shoot the puck from the point, and loves to get play moving up ice as soon as he can. For the most part, Meier is pretty good at those things. However, sometimes his intensity can lead to recklessness. Decision making in the defensive zone was spotty. He isn't much of a creative passer and he struggles to skate the puck up ice effectively. If he can work on his decision making and skating, there could be a long-term bet for a bottom pair defensive defenceman here. - Robbins

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

275 WILSON BJORCK

 CENTER

 6-0

 165 LBS

 SWEDEN

 JAN-13-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFF
2024-25	DJURGARDENS (SWE J20)	43-28-39-67-98						


Re-entry brother of phenom Viggo Björck (2026 Draft), with whom he topped the J20 scoring list. While not as highly regarded as his younger brother, Wilson has taken a massive jump in just about everything from last year to now. His coaches rave about his work ethic and he competes hard on the ice. He's got a ripper of a shot and has a physical edge to his game, despite his light weight. His decision making needs to get better and quicker to stick at the pro level, but he's the type of player who seems eager to improve. Björck may have the tools and the work ethic to carve out a role in a pro team's bottom six, but whether or not that is at the SHL or NHL level will depend on where his game goes from here. Still, he has the goal scoring upside to entice teams to take that bet. - Robbins


276 ISAC HEDQVIST

 CENTER

 5-10

 165 LBS

 SWEDEN

 MAR-22-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFF
2024-25	LULEÅ (SHL)	38-4-10-14-6						

Hedqvist looked great as one of the five surprise selections to the Swedish WJC squad, playing his role as a bottom six energy forward beautifully. That is likely the role he'll play if he ever breaks into the NHL. This season, his offence took a pretty sizeable step. He was one of the most productive forwards for Luleå en route to their second ever SHL playoff championship. It's tough to see if Hedqvist has more room for growth in his game, but the competitive kid from Örnsköldsvik has done all he can to earn draft consideration. Hopefully someone takes a chance on him. - Robbins


277 ANTHONY CRISTOFORO

 DEFENCE

 5-11

 190 LBS

 CANADA

 FEB-23-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	WINDSOR (OHL)	65-12-49-61-45						


Heading into last year, Cristoforo was seen as a potential top two round selection following a standout rookie year in the OHL. However, defensive and physical engagement issues, combined with offensive regression, led him to slide down lists and out of the draft altogether by June. This year, he was a key figure in the Spitfires return to the top of the standings as one of the OHL's time on ice leaders. He's still not a defensive stalwart; however, it can be said that he's been way more engaged and involved at both ends, blocking shots, killing penalties, completing breakouts under pressure, making better and quicker decisions as a powerplay quarterback. There's progression here in his draft +1 that leads you to believe that he can continue to evolve.- Otten

278 MARTIN JOHNSEN

 CENTER

 5-10

 180 LBS

 NORWAY

 MAR-07-2004


YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	MORA (ALLSVENSKAN)	49-17-30-47-90						

It isn't often triple re-entries make our list, but when they do, they have the kind of torrential offensive season that Johnsen did. He was the top offensive performer for Mora, driving play with quick skating and high-end playmaking ability. However, his scoring dried up when it mattered. He was pushed to the perimeter in the playoffs and couldn't fight his way inside. To project Johnsen to an NHL role is difficult. While his skill level isn't dynamic or inside-driven enough for the top six, nor is there the resilience or heaviness for the bottom six, there might just be enough to take a gamble on in the later rounds. - Robbins


279 DANIIL SKVORTSOV

 DEFENCE

 6-3

 215 LBS

 RUSSIA

 JAN-13-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	52.25 OFF
2024-25	GUELPH (OHL)	59-5-13-18-12						

The big Russian defender does have upside because he skates well and shows promise in the defensive end. He can be a real asset as a transitional defender because of his ability to mind gaps and angle off attackers. Skvortsov has also flashed some untapped offensive potential with his ability to lead the rush. However, we're just not sure he processes the game well enough or is skilled enough to be an NHL player. There's flashes of former Storm defender Daniil Chayka here and Chayka has had a very difficult transition to the pro level. He's likely an NHL pick, even if we view him as a longshot.- Otten

280 SAMUEL MURIN

 LEFT WING

 6-0

 185 LBS

 SLOVAKIA

 APR-21-2007


YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	45 SHOT	50 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	60 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	POPRAD-SPISSKA NOVA VES (SLOVAKIA)	27-1-2-3-0						


The question regarding Murin is does he have any offensive upside? He's a great skater and a tenacious worker. He competes hard in puck pursuit in all three zones and can be a reliable penalty killer because of it. However, outside of being a high energy guy, he doesn't yet bring much else to the table. His finishing skill lacks polish and he's not an adept carrier or playmaker. If he were bigger, you'd likely consider him as a potential fourth line agitator, but as is, it's hard to project him to the NHL, as admirable as his effort and physical engagement are.- Otten

281 TOMAS GALVAS

 DEFENCE

 5-10

 155 LBS

 CZECH

 FEB-11-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	60 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	40 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	BILI TYGRI LIBEREC (CZECHIA)	43-3-8-11-2						

We had Galvas ranked 71st overall last summer. His draft slight was a surprise for many but extreme frailty and low weight have contributed to that. Despite strong skating (particularly backwards) and stickhandling skills, he has not taken much of a next step this season, one in which he put up four more points in 11 more games as a #5/6 defenseman for Liberec in Czechia's top league. His WJC performance was nice with four assists and a +6 rating for a strong Czech team but the reality is that Galvas will most likely need to become an exceptional European pro in order to one day get a shot with an NHL organization. - Landvogt

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

282 MICHAL ORSULAK

GOALIE

6-4

225 LBS

CZECH

AUG-26-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	50 TEMPER- MENT	50 VISION	55 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	52.5 OFP
2024-25	ENERGIE KARLOVY VARY (CZECHIA U20)	34-14-20-3.23-0.902							

Orsulak is a very raw, athletic goalie who's stylistically reminiscent of Joshua Ravensbergen. Standing at 6-foot-4 and paired with effective mobility and skating should make him highly coveted by NHL teams. However, there are a good few reasons teams might have reservations. Namely, his technique can be flawed, getting burned on direct shots due to inconsistent positioning, poor hand tracking, or misreading the play. These issues have been exposed at the Czech U20 level and at the World U18s, where he played himself out of the starting role to a 16-year-old. As such, Orsulak should be viewed as

283 EVAN PASSMORE

DEFENCE

6-5

210 LBS

CANADA

DEC-05-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	45 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	60 PHYSICALITY	51.625 OFP
2024-25	BARRIE (OHL)	62-3-8-11-58						

Passmore is a big, physical stay at home defender. He would have fit right in as a defensive stalwart in the mid 90's. Passmore isn't a poor skater either, which helps his projection as a potential penalty killer and third pairing depth option. Early on in the year, he showed some offensive upside as someone who could jump up in the rush or initiate the breakout, however, that seemed to fade as the year went on. Turnovers became a problem later on; puck management is an issue. As a late born 2006, there's less runway for him to improve compared to some other similar defenders available this year. - Otten

284 LEO SUNDQVIST

RIGHT WING

5-8

170 LBS

SWEDEN

JUN-12-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.625 OFP
2024-25	BRYNAS (SWE J20)	33-15-11-26-10						

One of five draft eligible player from Brynäs to play in the SHL this season. Sundqvist is a speedy undersized forward who is disruptive on the forecheck and doesn't shy away from physicality. Offensively, Sundqvist has a sneaky good shot and gets a lot of value from it. Doesn't have the quickest hands and struggles with catching passes at high speeds consistently. Sundqvist is a long shot for a bottom nine role in the NHL. He competes hard and plays bigger than he is, which is always worth betting on, but NHL teams may balk at the lack of high-end skill to his game. - Robbins

285 ALBIN LAKSONEN

RIGHT WING

6-4

210 LBS

SWEDEN

FEB-16-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	45 SKATING	55 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	55 PHYSICALITY	52 OFP
2024-25	VAXJO LAKERS (SWE J20)	32-15-7-22-4						

Despite splitting time between the J18 and the J20, Laksonen turned heads with his massive frame and punishing physicality. While causing pain may be his calling card, there were flashes of legitimate goalscoring potential off the rush. No matter how enticing the thought of a 6-foot-4 sniper sounds, those were merely flashes. Laksonen has a whole lot to work on before he's ready to move up levels of play (skating and hockey sense, mainly). Keep an eye on him, though. He may be one to check back on in a year or two. - Robbins

286 RAIDEN LEGALL

GOALIE

6-0

175 LBS

CANADA

SEP-16-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	55 TEMPERMENT	47.5 VISION	52.5 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	52.5 PUCK HANDLING	51.75 OFP
2024-25	EVERETT (WHL)	23-16-2-2.17-0.921							

LeGall is one of this deep goalie class' best skaters and athletes. He plays with the intensity, frame, and style of Devon Levi, and in Legall's short WHL tenure, he's shown a similar level of dominance. Much like Levi, LeGall struggles with rebound control and occasionally makes incorrect decisions and reads. Levi's AHL dominance and NHL promise bode well for LeGall, but where he falls short is that he is joining Bemidji State University next year and likely will be the backup, slowing his progress, which could deter GMs from drafting an undersized mid-season WHL signing from a comparably weak Jr. A league like the MJHL. - Crouse

287 MAKAR FOMIN

DEFENCE

5-11

165 LBS

RUSSIA

DEC-17-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	45 SHOT	47.5 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.5 OFP
2024-25	ALMAZ CHEREPOVETS (MHL)	37-6-17-23-24						

Fomin started this year off rough, he struggled with decision making and wanted to rush too often. Over the course of the season, he really calmed down and finished strongly.

He leans offensive and can transition the puck well with both his feet and passes. He is a smooth, agile skater who can quickly accelerate past opponents and weave his way through tight lanes. He shows flashes of playmaking but will need to continue to improve decision making.

Defensively he improved a lot over the year. He uses his feet well to stick with opponents and breaks up plays with his stick. Worth a look in the 6th-7th rounds. - Lawrence.

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS






288 ROOPE VESTERINEN

 LEFT WING  5-9  170 LBS  FINLAND  JAN-12-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	51.5 OFF
2024-25	HPK (FIN-LIIGA)	46-10-14-24-10						

An overager who turned 19 this past January, Vesterinen's average size and speed certainly didn't hold him back from throwing his name into this summer's draft hat, having gone from nondescript two-way forward at the U20 level last season to being a top 9 producer in Liiga play. Now a vet of both the WJC (minimal action) and U18 Worlds, Vesterinen actually made some noise in his DY-1 with eight Liiga contests and 10 points in seven WHC-17 contests. Nifty hands, he has a strong goalmouth presence and is often found in the slot on the powerplay. - Landvogt


289 MATTHEW KOPROWSKI

 GOALIE  6-3  195 LBS  CANADA  FEB-05-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	52.5 TEMPERMENT	50 VISION	50 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	51.375 OFF
2024-25	OWEN SOUND (OHL)	20-8-9-4.29-0.866							

A big, athletic netminder who is currently blocked by standout Carter George in the Owen Sound crease. Does that hinder his development, or does he seek a trade? We know he has some fans in the scouting community because he's very quick and agile for a 6-foot-3 netminder. He's just very raw and has not yet learned how to properly harness that athleticism to be a consistent stopper. Technically he needs a lot of refinement. Could be a real diamond in the rough if you're patient. There are worse ways to use a late round pick.- Otten

290 XAVIER LEBEL

 RIGHT WING  5-11  170 LBS  CANADA  MAR-25-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	47.5 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	47.5 PHYSICALITY	51.375 OFF
2024-25	QUEBEC (QMJHL)	35-7-11-18-17						

Missed the majority of the second half of the QMJHL season with an injury and that likely puts a serious damper on his draft prospects. However, Lebel is a dynamic skater and transitional attacker. He is lightning quick and he plays the game at a feverish pace. He shows promise as a playmaker too, although that won't truly be unlocked until he learns to vary pace and adds strength to his average frame. If he's not drafted, he could end up as someone on the NHL radar down the line once his production ticks up on the Remparts, who could be quite good in a few seasons.- Otten

291 ELIAS STRAUME VATNE

 LEFT WING  5-9  165 LBS  DENMARK  APR-21-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	55 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	51.375 OFF
2024-25	FARJESTADS (SWE J20)	38-14-32-46-22						

Vatne's game really took a step in the right direction. The feisty, undersized re-entry is playing at a skill-level and pace beyond the J20, even scoring his first SHL point. However, he still faces the issue of being an undersized forward who just doesn't play big enough. He has committed to UConn for the 2025-2026 season, which should be very beneficial to his development. Even if he earns draft consideration, the odds of Vatne getting into an NHL lineup in the future are low. Even still, with suitable offensive roles being in short supply, there may not be enough staying power to keep an everyday job. - Robbins

292 OLIWER SJOSTROM

 DEFENCE  5-11  165 LBS  SWEDEN  APR-8-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.25 OFF
2024-25	LULEA (SWE J20)	40-8-19-27-44						

Assistant captain for the Swedish U18 WJC team. Regrettably, Sjöström wasn't able to build upon his promising DY-1 season. He seemed poised to compete for a minor SHL role with Luleå, but he only dressed for one in which he got no ice-time. Despite the setback, Sjöstrom possesses solid tools that any defenceman needs: fluid skating, solid up-ice vision and passing ability, and leadership intangibles. However, his below-average size in combination with his lack of dynamic skill and quickness make him a longshot for an NHL job. Perhaps he can salvage something while on loan to Björklöven in the HockeyAllsvenskan. - Robbins

293 WILL MURPHY

 DEFENCE  6-3  210 LBS  CANADA  AUG-24-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	50 SHOT	45 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	57.5 PHYSICALITY	51.75 OFF
2024-25	CAPE BRETON (QMJHL)	54-2-2-4-45						

Another of the big, stay at home defensive prospects that we have ranked at the back of our top 300. Murphy was a QMJHL rookie this year with Cape Breton and was an immediate impact defensive player with his physicality, ability to clog the middle, and shot blocking prowess. You could call him a throwback. There's just not much offensive ability at all and he doesn't skate quite as well as you would like for today's game. NHL teams may like the size and smarts combination.- Otten

294 ARSENI RADKOV

 GOALIE  6-4  195 LBS  BELARUS  AUG-05-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-W-L-GAA-SV%	55 ATHLETICISM	50 TEMPERMENT	50 VISION	50 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	51 OFF
2024-25	TYUMENSKI LEGION (MHL)	19-4-8-3.18-0.918							

Radkov is an intriguing prospect. He frames his 6-foot-4 size very efficiently and has impressive joint mobility and flexibility, especially given his size. He's shown flashes of good positioning and save selection, as well. Yet his explosiveness is lacking, and his skating isn't powerful or fluid. Given his size and his athletic capabilities, it's likely that he could improve his skating and explosiveness with time. Being an unpolished backup on a weak silver division MHL team, Radkov is a risky project that may be more of someone to watch for the future, however, teams who think they can unlock his athleticism further may consider him later in the draft. - Crouse


MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS


295 VIT ZAHEJSKY

 CENTER

 5-10

 170 LBS

 CZECH

 AUG-10-2007

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 SKATING	45 SHOT	55 SKILLS	50 SMARTS	45 PHYSICALITY	50.5 OFFP
2024-25	KAMLOOPS (WHL)	46-3-12-15-15						

Záhejský had an impressive showing with Czechia at last summer's Hlinka tournament, and then did it again at this spring's U18s, but in between really struggled all regular season with Kamloops, never finding his footing as a WHL rookie. He's undeniably a talented player, with plus skating ability and plus puck skills, and is sometimes flat-out dynamic when he combines those two things. So why didn't that happen with the Blazers, and how can that be fixed? If an NHL team believes they can help him answer that question, then they might find him worthy of using their last pick in this draft. - Neumeier

296 ALEX WEIERMAIR

 CENTER

 6-0

 190 LBS

 USA

 MAY-10-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	50 SKATING	55 SHOT	50 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	52.5 PHYSICALITY	51.875 OFFP
2024-25	PORTLAND (WHL)	41-21-25-46-14						

After leaving the University of Denver for Portland of the WHL during his sophomore year, Weiermair exploded as a standout for the Winterhawks. He improved every month in the league and was one of the team's best players in the WHL playoffs. He's a big body who skates reasonably well, has a heavy shot, and can play in any situation due to good off puck effort. We really liked him in his NTDP year (despite being cut before the U18's) and he's someone who definitely looks like he's finally put it all together. However, small sample size and upside concerns may be present. - Otten

297 BLAKE STEENERSON

 RIGHT WING

 6-4

 195 LBS

 USA

 APR-29-2005

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	45 SKATING	50 SHOT	50 SKILLS	55 SMARTS	60 PHYSICALITY	51.25 OFFP
2024-25	VERMONT (HE)	32-5-8-13-23						

It might sound odd, but some players are better in college than they were at lower levels, and Steenerson is one of them. He's bigger, tougher and meaner than most other hockey players, and there's a lot of appetite in the NHL right now for guys like that. It's a simple formula: go out, throw some heavy hits, back to the bench in a hurry, repeat. He's also getting more ice time with Vermont than he would at most other schools, and the


298 OTTO HANNIKAINEN

 GOALIE

 6-3

 180 LBS

 FINLAND


 JUN-29-2006

Otto Hannikainen has a few of the qualities desired in an NHL goalie. He's very good positionally, is a good skater, and has exceptional post transitions. However, he's shown trouble reacting to passes and tracking them cleanly, putting himself a touch behind the play. His frame and 6-foot-3 stance also make him worth a draft pick but being a draft re-entry playing in a weak U20 SM-sarja, he faces little adversity, making him a riskier pick. Which is why he gets a nod as an honourable mention, in place of a must-draft goalie. - Crouse


299 YEVGENI PROKHOROV

 GOALIE

 6-3

 170 LBS

 BELARUS

 NOV-27-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	55 ATHLETICISM	50 TEMPERMENT	47.5 VISION	50 TECHNIQUE	50 REBOUND CONTROL	50 PUCK HANDLING	51 OFFP
2024-25	DINAMO-SHINNIK BOBRUYSK (MHL)	28-16-7-2.19-0.903							

Belarussian netminder who had modest stats in the MHL this year as a late born 2006, but who is drawing NHL interest because of his size and athleticism combination. He was better in the second half of the season, showing improvement in his play tracking ability. He seals the bottom of the net well with quick pads and he could be an interesting long-term project. What will his game look like as he gains further experience playing at higher levels, since this was his first year out of the Belarussian junior leagues. - Otten

300 SAMUEL JUNG

 RIGHT WING

 6-3

 170 LBS

 CZECH

 MAY-18-2006

YEAR	TEAM	GP-G-A-PTS-PIM	52.5 SKATING	50 SHOT	52.5 SKILLS	52.5 SMARTS	50 PHYSICALITY	51.625 OFFP
2024-25	KARPAT (FIN U20)	44-22-10-32-50						

A favourite of our Finnish regional scout Jeremy Rivet, Jung is a big Czech winger playing out of Finland in the Karpat program. He's in his second year of eligibility, but he's improving rapidly. Jung finished seventh in the U20 league in goal scoring and is able to play a North/South game efficiently because of his strong skating ability for his frame. The compete level is solid, and he plays to his size with surprisingly soft hands. As he fills out, could he be a classic late bloomer? - Otten

MCKEEN'S TOP 300 PROSPECTS

The McKeen's Team

Our team of 16 scouts are based in key markets around the world, in the rinks, supported by video scouting. They utilize some terrific tools from Hudl/InStat, which can isolate so many aspects of a player's game, along with proprietary statistics. They spend countless hours in rinks and in front of screens and are deeply familiar with these players and their progression.

About the 20 – 80 Scale

We look at five attributes (skating, shooting, puck skills, hockey IQ and physicality) for skaters and six for goalies (athleticism/quickness, compete/temperament, vision/play reading, technique/style, rebound control and puck handling). Each individual attribute is graded along the 20-80 scales, which includes half-grades. The idea is that a projection of 50 in a given attribute meant that our observer believed that the player could get to roughly NHL average at that attribute at maturity.

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