

By Steve Kournianos

26. RW Vitalii Abramov (Gatineau, QMJHL): Everything Abramov does is electrifying. The diminutive Russian wing (5'9, 175 pounds) is not a one-trick pony – he can beat you with speed, deception, passing and/or a deadly accurate shot. Each asset is a cog in a wheel, relying on other skills to combine for an explosive on-ice tour-de-force. The style of play in the Quebec League (among others) is conducive to undersized finesse forwards, and Abramov is one of its best at exploiting it. You can argue that no draft eligible combines escapability and instincts as well as Abramov, who knows how to evade defenses and slip into a scoring area all on the same play. He has an innate feel for plays as they develop, and what we love about him is the way he shows no mercy – Abramov is a quick-strike playmaker with acute decisiveness. More slippery and shifty than blurring and blistering, Abramov is a very good skater with exceptional balance and lower-body strength. He's an elite stickhandler who can dippy-doodle the puck through tire spikes without it breaking into a million pieces. This kid may look small and can cherry-pick with the best of them, but his enthusiasm, skill and athleticism make him one heck of a workload to defend against.

148. LW Collin Adams (Muskegon, USHL): Undersized point-producer with speed who teamed with Rem Pitlick to form one of the USHL's top scoring duos. A native of Brighton, Michigan, Adams led all rookies with 22 power play points and his 61 points overall was second only to Cam Morrison in first-year scoring. A class act both on and off the ice, Adams will head to North Dakota in the fall. He's tenacious on the forecheck and uses a quick stick to swipe the puck away from unassuming defenders, but also highly effective on zone entries, where he'll slow the play down with his head up before threading the needle with a lead pass. Adams is tiny (5'9, 172), but he was blessed elite hand-eye coordination and incredibly soft hands that can deaden the toughest of passes. And though we'll classify him as a finesse forward, he works extremely hard to lend support in his own end, and will bust it on a backcheck every time.

121. LHD Dmitri Alexeyev (Russia U18, MHL): It's understandable if Russia's notable draft-eligible defensemen happen to play in North America. But it would be foolish to sleep on its outstanding collection of two-way blueliners who grace the U18 team's backline. Alexeyev is their catalyst, anchoring the top pairing for all critical situations. He's an agile skater with outstanding lateral movement, and he is a threat to either join the rush or create one himself. Alexeyev missed the chance to strut his stuff at the U18 worlds thanks to the team-wide melon issue, but he remains a multi-zone force who will only get better as he fills into his 6'0, 190-pound frame. He loves to involve himself in board battles and throw his weight around, but providing offense is definitely his bread and butter. Alexeyev owns a hard accurate shot without much backswing, and we love the way he settles the puck down and passes with precision.

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34. RHD Frederic Allard (Chicoutimi, QMJHL): Allard is a solid two-way defender who specializes in running a power play and using a cannon of a shot from the point. You couldn't ask for more from a blueliner who improved year-to-year before coming up on draft eligibility. Allard is a very good north-south skater with the ability to read formations and guide both the puck and his teammates towards the weaker portions of the enemy defense. He's not a finesse player, but he can make creative plays and pass the puck with flair if the situation necessitates it. From a defensive standpoint, Allard was the Saguenéens leader both on and off the ice. His defensive game improved dramatically, and was entrusted by head coach Yanick Jean in all situations, to include the penalty kill and top-line matchups. Allard isn't able to intimidate with physicality, but he doesn't overcommit and rarely will gamble towards the puck in a one-on-one. He has hampered by injuries this season, including broken ribs which limited his abilities in the postseason and forced him to sit out the NHL Draft combine.

84. RW Wade Allison (Tri-City, USHL): Rugged two-way power forward with a late-1997 birthdate who guided the Storm to a USHL title with a clutch playoff performance. Allison is headed to Western Michigan, where coach Andy Murray is probably chomping at the bit to pencil him into his top six. He's a versatile player who can change the momentum of a game in a variety of ways; deliver a big hit, duke it out in a tilt or use his quick hands and stick to convert a turnover into a scoring chance. Allison's skating is rather average, but his long reach allows him to protect the puck extremely well and render rear harassment useless. He plays a well-thought positional game, and his aggressive, in-your-face style can be infectious. Allison can take a beating all game long and still maintain his compete level, as getting hit hard only seems to motivate him more.

69. RW Joey Anderson (U.S. NTDP): Team USA's "other" top-line forward who earned and held his role as a goal mouth-area maven, depositing rebound after rebound into the back of the cage while playing with heralded prospects Clayton Keller and Kieffer Bellows. Anderson sure knows how to pick his spots, which is important for a forward on a line with two shoot-happy linemates. He likely won't develop into the kind of guy you can lean on above anyone else, but he's fast and reliable enough to develop as a top-six power play specialist. The 5'11 Anderson will play for the University of Minnesota-Duluth in the fall.

171. C/W Jonathan Ang (Peterborough, OHL): Creative speedster with the ability to fight through a dense network of opposing checkers. Ang is not only fast and skilled, but he has excellent on-ice awareness and overall hockey sense. His biggest issue is size, as he's listed at 5'11 but with a meager playing weight of 165 pounds. He's terrific in the open, which goes without saying. But Ang isn't your typical amateur roadrunner who relies solely on quickness to achieve results. He's dedicated towards making the right decisions that are in the team's best interests rather than for personal gain, and you will see Ang — as fast as he is — dig in and lend support to his defensemen below the circles or along the boards. Whether or not he makes an impact isn't the point — he's an offensive dynamo he clearly understands there's more to the game than scoring. Ang is slippery with the puck and uses his hands to finish off plays from in tight. If you play the puck, you're begging for a crooked number on the scoreboard.

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209. LHD Josh Anderson (Prince George, WHL): It was a rough year for the WHL's third overall pick in the 2013 Bantam Draft, as he suffered from injuries before shutting his season down altogether after an MRI in February revealed a cracked vertebra in his back. Anderson is a heavy-hitting defensive defenseman with above average mobility who loves to mix it up and provide reliable play inside his own end. He's an excellent crease-clearer who ensures any forward gets a wood massage to the back if daring enough to venture his way. Anderson's upper body strength is significant — he is strong enough to tie up his man (and often someone else's) long enough to allow his goalie to react or clear a loose puck in the goal mouth. He hasn't completely recovered from the back injury but was invited to participate in the interviews at the pre-draft combine. In terms of offense, don't expect much of anything from Anderson, as he owns an average shot and in quintessential stay-at-home type fashion, only uses it when the puck finds him rather than the other way around. All things considered, he still has NHL potential thanks to his footwork and size.

201. LW Jamie Armstrong (Avon Old Farms, HS-CT): Power forward who works hard and possesses enough skill to at least challenge for a top-nine winger at the next level. Armstrong will play for Northeastern and his USHL rights belong to Muskegon, which drafted him in the second round (23rd overall) in the 2014 draft. He's a strong skater with excellent balance and an aggressive mindset when he doesn't have the puck, which is quite often since he usually plays with finesse types. Armstrong is the perfect complement for a pass-first pivot, as he can unload a quick, accurate shot or take the puck right to the net via a power move. He's one of those prospects who takes what's given to him and exploits it rather than create an opportunity on his own. Armstrong is a responsible player as well, as he won't force the puck towards the middle or put his linemates in a vulnerable position by passing into traffic. We won't go as far as to call him a meat-and-potatoes forward, but his attitude and work ethic makes him an easy choice for a coach looking for a player with the kind of attitude for others to emulate.

25. C Rasmus Asplund (Farjestad BK, SHL): An excellent two-way center that didn't take long to earn a full-time job in Sweden's top league. Asplund was a polished sophomore for Farjestad in 2015-16, centering the third line and performing spot duty in the top six along with fellow 2016 draft eligible Oskar Steen and 2015 first rounder Joel Eriksson Ek. However, it was a breakout performance for Team Sweden while subbing for an injured William Nylander at the 2016 world junior championship that gave him dual-continent recognition, finishing the tournament with five points as Sweden's de facto top center. Asplund is quick and shifty, using his speed and turning ability to gain time and space. He has a good touch around the net, positioning his stick in the right place and takes a beating to complete a play. His SHL numbers might not show it, but he's a very good scorer with a quick, accurate shot. Asplund is strong on the puck and can make plays across the ice or diagonally while traveling at a high rate of speed. His work ethic off the ice is excellent, and it shows — he's a tenacious forechecker and competes every shift from start to finish. Asplund is far from physical, but his excellent work in the faceoff circle coupled with his smarts makes him a perfect fit for the NHL's puck-possession game.

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213. LW Egor Babenko (Lethbridge, WHL): Shifty overage playmaker on the smallish side (5'9, 170 pounds) that can dance inside and around traffic to create room for himself or free up others for chances of their own. His skating style is somewhat hunched and choppy, with speed considered to be slightly above average, but his edge work and quick first step makes up for an overall lack of breakaway speed. Babenko is a pass-first winger who likes to hang around the wall and whip loose pucks cross-ice with a decent amount of accuracy. He can control the puck for long periods of time and will cut and spin several times rather than throw the puck away. Babenko can fire an above-average shot with accuracy, as he will snipe the corners if the goalie is more concerned with the lower half. He'll never be confused with anyone who knows their way around the defensive zone, and there are times when he shamelessly cherrypicks. Still, he can take a beating in the offensive zone and has pretty good balance. Babenko, who was born in 1997, can be deadly from behind the net and doesn't tip his hand of his intentions. He played well in the MHL but left after KHL teams Lada and CSKA fruitlessly battled over rights. The Hurricanes took him 5th overall in the 2015 CHL Import Draft.

111. LW/RW Patrick Bajkov (Everett, WHL): One of the WHL's top two-way players whose talent scale tips heavily in favor of offense. Bajkov is a very good skater who can make plays at high speed regardless of degree of difficulty. He's feathery on his skates and cuts and weaves his way into open ice rather effortlessly. Playing for a goal-starved offense skews his numbers, but keep in mind that the Silvertips played tight affairs on a nightly basis, and Bajkov was entrusted with late-game situations in addition to assisting the top power play unit. He's a lethal passer and quite creative, and we get the feeling that he'll flourish in an up-tempo system.

170. C/LW Mitchell Balmas (Charlottetown, QMJHL): Hard-working puck shark who was one of the more consistent producers on an Islanders squad that struggled to generate offense. Balmas can play either center or wing, but the smarter choice would be to use him on the flank where he can use his above-average speed and tenacity on the forecheck to generate chances. Balmas is pretty thick (6'1, 193 pounds), and he can be tough to move off the puck. He was the seventh overall pick in the 2014 QMJHL Entry Draft, but he's not the atypical game-breaking prospect you'd expect considering how much buzz he once generated. Balmas has a hard shot with a quick release, but he loves to crash the goal area and fish around for rebound as well. There are times where he may seem like he's floating, but it's simply because he's constantly in motion. Balmas will pressure the points, dump and smash, or drop down below the hash marks to tie up somebody else's man. We like the fact that he doesn't fool around once the puck is on his stick, and he's always looking up ice for openings.

95. C/LW Travis Barron (Ottawa, OHL): Barron is a feisty two-way winger who settled into a support role for the 67's when it became apparent he wasn't living up to his potential on offense. He has good size to compliment an unquestionable work ethic, and even though he was a bit of a streaky player, Barron was able to stick within Ottawa's top-six as the games became more important. He was the third overall pick in the 2014 OHL Priority Selection and one of the 67's top players in the postseason. Barron is bound to find gainful employment in the NHL. The question is in what capacity.

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54. C/W Nathan Bastian (Mississauga, OHL): If your team has an abundance of skill players, chances are they're going to require somebody to get deep into trenches for chest-to-chest warfare, which is why a hard-charging, two-way forward like Bastian is so highly regarded. A versatile big man who can play any of the three forward positions, Bastian played alongside Mike McLeod and Alex Nylander for large chunks of the regular season, using physicality, net presence and constant hustle to make life easier for his linemates and allow them to do what they do best. He stands a whopping 6'4 and weighs in at 205, which is scary to think when assessing 18 year olds. Bastian won't wow you with any particular skill, but he's great to have both in the room and on the ice. He is a patient player who pounces on mistakes, and can fire off a heavy shot that will beat goalies from distances beyond the tops of the circles. Bastian isn't fast but will win his share of 50/50 battles and on occasion can barrel past a defender in a one-on-one scenario. When he played the pivot, he won 46 percent of his draws and was used on both the power play and on the penalty kill with some success.

41. LHD Jake Bean (Calgary, WHL): A nimble puck mover who grasps the intricacies of offensive-zone play, Bean is arguably the draft's biggest scoring threat from the back end. He loves to dictate the tempo once the puck is on his stick, and when he does, Bean's able to showcase elite stickhandling skills and pro-level instincts with cerebral shot selection. Simply put, he's the kind of threat who keeps opposing coaches hard at work during the day, and restlessly sleepless at night. He loves to utilize his teammates — possibly better than any draft-eligible rearguard, and war-gaming this facet can be problematic since he knows all too well how to sneak between the circles and use his hard, accurate shot. Bean is as agile as a cat with good up-ice quickness and solid balance for a kid who looks smaller than his listed 170 pounds. He's not a roadrunner, but his edge work is exceptional — similar to the great NHL finesse defenders of the past. Bean will effortlessly glide and weave into openings as he covers ground, but he's just as active and graceful within the confines of the offensive zone, especially on the power play. He's got great vision and will whip a tape-to-tape pass through traffic either cross-ice or diagonally. The downside? To be blunt, he's a liability in his own end. Bean tries to make up for deficiencies in physicality with smart positioning, but he's far too inconsistent in that regard. He's prone to lose his man during board battles or in slot coverage, and he will dangerously put the puck where it has no business going. Lastly, the way he defends odd-man-rushes is suspect, but the most fixable of his defensive-zone warts. Still, he's too good to overlook in the later stages of the first round, and you have to love the fact that this kid managed to get that kind of reputation without the benefit of being drafted into the WHL.

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15. LW Kieffer Bellows (U.S. NTDP): Bellows is a well-built goal scorer with a low center of gravity who can play a punishing, heavy yet cerebral game. He's a good skater with tremendous balance and moves well laterally. And while he used play center for Edina's powerhouse high school program, Bellows is most certainly better suited as a shooter from the flank. He's built like a Mack truck and plays with fire, using tremendous athleticism and work ethic to maintain his compete level, even during extended shifts. He's extremely difficult to move off the puck, and he's proven to be a load to handle for some of the NCAA's bigger defensemen. Bellows is a hard, accurate passer, but can also feather a pass off the rush or lead his teammates with timing and precision. Bellows' approach towards every shift is to keep him involved at all times in order to acquire the puck, using his physical gifts and wide frame to protect it as he maneuvers towards the net. Take our word for it – if a defender is nervous going back for the puck, Bellows will sniff it out and exploit that fear. He plays an aggressive, sometimes stubborn game, often too much for his own good. Getting whistled for bad penalties is a habit he's had since high school, and fixing that should be a training objective when he plays for Boston University next season. When he keeps his emotions in check, however, he can be an unstoppable force.

29. C/LW Tyler Benson (Vancouver, WHL): A cyst removal followed by a groin injury limited this fierce competitor to less than half a season. But when Benson played, he certainly lived up to his pre-draft standing as one of Western Canada's top prospects. The trips to sick call bumped him down from a likely lottery selection, but his elasticity and leg drive recovered in time for testing at the draft combine. A mature lad with decent speed but some serious drive and leadership qualities, Benson is an excellent finisher and an all-around offensive force that like to play physical. He is a nightmare to defend because he is as physically punishing with the puck as he is without it. There are only a few of his 2016 draft-eligible peers (Auston Matthews in particular) who make successful on-the-spot corrections once a chance to create offense in a specific area of the ice is no longer an option. Benson is very shifty with tremendous balance, meaning he can continue to move if he gets hit at the same time he decides to change direction. Possessing the kind of vision and IQ he owns makes it no surprise the CHL came close to giving him "exceptional" status to play a full season as a 15 year old (cut short by a knee injury). Benson can swarm the puck and do something with it thereafter that makes him to dangerous a prospect to overlook. We're still not sure whether to classify him as a playmaker or a scorer because he can be both, sometimes off the same cycle, when he will either create quality chances for others, or grab the puck and wire a heavy, accurate shot with a quick release. The sky's the limit for the Edmonton native, and as far as the CHL is concerned, we think he's almost there.

115. G Mikhail Berdin (Russia U18, MHL): It may have taken him a while, but Berdin played well enough to vault past incumbent starter Vladislav Sukhachev as the Russian U18 squad's top backstopper. Granted, he missed the U18 world championship because of team-wide doping practices, but he distinguished himself at several international tournaments as a netminder with NHL potential. An aggressive goalie with ideal size for tougher levels of play, the 6'2 Berdin is quick to his feet while flashing a plus glove hand. The meldonium accusations may sting him in terms of actual draft positioning, but he's easily one of the best goalies available for the draft.

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82. LHD David Bernhardt (Djugardens Jrs, Superelit): A big, somewhat mobile defenseman with room for improvement who can shoot the puck with authority and help run a power play. Bernhardt won't blow the doors open with speed, but he's a smart skater who makes up for his lack of first-step quickness with good instincts and the ability to see plays unfold. He is the perfect option for an organization known to breed quality defenders, and with older brother (and New York Rangers' draft pick) Daniel leaving Sweden for the London Knights, the chance to coach and mentor the younger Bernhardt without the burden of overseas travel makes the gamble palatable. He was one of the Superelit's top scoring rearguards this season, finishing second in both assists (28) and points (38).

20. C Will Bitten (Flint Firebirds, OHL): Feisty sparkplug with superior vision who's dealt with a ton of adversity while serving as Flint's captain and leader during its chaotic inaugural OHL season. To say Bitten carries his team is an understatement; he's scored 30 goals on the team who averages under three goals a game. But there's more to his game than offense, as he's used in all situations and serves as Flint's top option for both the power play and the penalty kill. Bitten is somewhat undersized, but he has tremendous balance and escapability. He is a very good skater with excellent breakaway speed, and can beat defenders to the outside or turn them inside-out thanks to a variety of on-the-go jukes and fakes. He's a disciplined solidier who follows instruction, always willing to dial down his role in order to do what's best of the team. Bitten knows what to do with the puck, owning a soft set of hands and excellent hand-eye coordination. He's one of the draft's best at making something out of nothing, and we think he'd be one of the circuit's top scorers had he had more finishers to work with.

218. LW Kasper Bjorkqvist (Blues U20, Liiga Jrs.): Finland likely doesn't win gold at the WJC without an under-appreciated bottom six and penalty kill the overage Bjorkqvist mightily contributed to. He plays a heavy, inside game thanks to a pro build (6'1, 200) and acute understanding of play development. His eye-popping stats in Finland's junior circuit (28 goals and 66 points in 45 games) have more to do with his size/strength advantage than anything else, as most of his points come via hard work and taking advantage of an opponent's weakness. Bjorkqvist may seem like a plugger, but he thinks things through shift after shift, and he takes excellent routes to the puck. Both his shot and skating are slightly above average, but he's shown the ability to shift gears towards the cage and dance around unassuming opponents. He definitely plays a North American style, which will come in handy when he suits up for Providence College next fall.

106. C Matthew Boucher (Quebec, QMJHL): It would behoove the brain trust of le bleu-blanc et rouge to add some fire to their lineup's belly, and taking the local route to nab the son of former NHL blueliner Philippe Boucher is something we strongly recommend. Boucher got no love from the NHL's scouting apparatus, going unranked despite leading a young Remparts team in goals (30), points (60) and penalty minutes (93). He plays bigger than his 5'9, 175-pound frame, as he loves to agitate, throw the body and involve himself in trench warfare. He missed some time with a shoulder injury, but advanced stats gurus are going to love a kid who centered the top line, played in all situations, won close to 60 percent of his draws, and fired 4.2 shots a game – the highest among all QMJHL centermen.

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87. C Henrik Borgstrom (HIFK U20, Liiga Jrs): Tall yet lanky skilled pivot who dominated Finland's junior circuit in his second year of draft eligibility. Borgstrom is crossing the pond to suit up for the Denver Pioneers, so the college schedule will provide him plenty of time to fill into his 6'3 frame. He's a dual-purpose threat from the middle, where he has a penchant for shooting first and asking questions later. But Borgstrom can also be a quick-pass threat on the power play and stickhandle his way through dicey situations in order to open up lanes. You always have to be leery about overagers, but teams can always afford to take a flier on a skilled centerman with size.

98. RW Jesper Bratt (AIK, Allsvenskan): A pesky waterbug with an arsenal of moves and a sick wrist shot who teamed with 2015 draft pick Robin Kovacs to form one of the Allsvenskan's top young lines. His footwork and play with the puck in traffic are excellent, and he's proven to beat defenders to the outside with regularity. He isn't very big or physical, and he's just over a month away from being eligible for next year's draft, but he uses his body advantageously and can separate his man from the puck. Bratt was one of Sweden's better forwards at the U18 worlds, and could be a real steal.

164. G Adam Brizgala (Sparta Praha U21, Extraliga Jrs): Wide-bodied backstop who began the year with a tremendous performance at the Ivan Hlinka, then got hurt and had to practically miss the whole season. There was a point when he was considered the best goalie available for the draft, albeit for only a few months, and for good reason. He's listed at 6'0, 209 pounds but is exceptionally quick and decisive, and his ability to properly reset after three or even four shots is almost pro-level. Brizgala plays a traditional butterfly and will venture outside of the blue paint to challenge shots, and he's quick with the glove either when static or sliding across. He's not the best puck handler, but it won't make or break his chance at making higher levels of play. Muskegon in the USHL recently drafted him, so he may cross the pond sooner than later.

16. C Logan Brown (Windsor, OHL): Massive playmaking two-way center with a lethal shot who centered Windsor's top line all season. The son of Ottawa 67's head coach Jeff Brown — a former all-star defenseman in the NHL — Logan is a physical specimen indeed, using a massive wingspan and strength to win his puck battles and transition quickly to offense. He can be a joy to watch, using above-average speed but a powerful long stride and reach to protect the puck off the rush. He's an excellent passer, blessed with a sixth sense to anticipate and dissect the defensive scheme presented to him. Brown owns a very heavy shot — one of the draft's best among forwards — which he can fire with accuracy off the pass via a quick release. He was a bit pass-happy the first few months of the season, but his coachability and dedication towards refining his all-around game resulted in a goal-scoring explosion since January. Brown has a nose for the net and rarely takes a low-percentage shot. And if he does, it's likely to create a rebound or make a goalie work hard for what would normally be an effortless save. When he's on his game, he's rarely guilty of puck gazing in the offensive zone, constantly moving his feet and keeping his head up for openings, or the possibility of an opening. And while Brown plays the finesse game at a high level, he has no problem crashing the net for a loose puck, or positioning himself in the trenches for a deflection. He's got a selfless sense about him and comes across as a mature kid who was raised and trained right. You'd love to see him play with fire on a consistent basis, and we get a sense that he should be far more dominant than his numbers indicate. Nevertheless, he has top-line center upside and isn't too far from making his NHL debut.

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92. LHD Vojtech Budik (Prince Albert, WHL): In a draft replete with two-way defenders, it would behoove teams to take a stab at the bigger models, especially if they can skate. Budik had a rather successful rookie season with Prince Albert after he was the 17th overall pick in last year's CHL Import Draft. The stats may not tell a whole bunch (16 points in 70 games), but he was one of the Raiders' more dependable blueliners defending from the dots down, and served as a crease-clearer on the penalty kill, which was somewhat surprising since he was expected to support the offense. Budik is a very good skater who lacks creativity, but the fact that he can defend and take the puck up ice makes him an attractive option.

118. C/W Connor Bunnaman (Kitchener, OHL): Bunnaman is one of those ever-important two-way forwards who achieve results from either hard work and determination or completing plays with a high degree of difficulty – the former more frequent than the latter. He's blessed with an NHL center's frame (6'3, 215 pounds) and does all the dirty work to free up the finesse players like Jeremy Bracco or Ryan MacInnis, but he seemed to have worked best with tough-as-nails playmaker Adam Mascherin. This is important because he's delivered when playing alongside skill or without, and that's with the bulk of his responsibilities coming in his own half of the ice. Bunnaman won over 50 percent of his draws and 14 of his 16 goals game at even strength or shorthanded.

155. C Brayden Burke (Lethbridge, WHL): Dynamic playmaker with exceptional vision who tied for the WHL lead with 82 assists. Burke is an overager who clicked with linemates Tyler Wong and Giorgio Estephan, giving the Hurricanes one of the Dub's most potent top trios. He's a battler who's quick-thinking and vision allows him to make high-percentage plays off of seemingly harmless puck battles. He's only 5'10 and weighs under 170 pounds, but you have to get up real early in the morning to even think about slowing Burke down, and even then you're in for quite a task. His overall skating is solid, but his footwork and edges help him make up for a lack of explosiveness. Burke finished second in the circuit with 48 primary assists, and though his goal total of 27 may seem low, he possesses goal scoring know-how in terms of stick positioning and can beat a goalie with a hard, accurate shot.

205. LW Nicholas Caamano (Flint, OHL): A very good skater with a long stride who can snipe on the fly, Caamano distinguished himself in an otherwise dreary season for Flint, using quickness and solid reads to create room for himself and convert chances. He is a finisher, using quick hands and a lethal release to beat goalies whether they're set or not. Caamano is well built (6'1, 188 pounds) for a kid who missed 2017 draft eligibility only by a few days, and his ability to keep the puck close to his body while engaged in tight spaces enables him to wire it, even if it's in his feet. He can kill penalties and play on the power play, but his vision and puck-sharing skills are average at best. Setting him up with a nice lead or a one-timer is the best way to maximize his abilities, but he's prone to turnovers and poor choices if he doesn't fire it right away. The effort is always there, however, as he'll engage in battles along the wall and slip away from scrums to appear in prime shooting areas.

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204. LHD Matt Cairns (Georgetown, OJHL): A strong skater with first-step quickness to compliment his NHL-ready frame (6'2, 200 pounds), Cairns is a Cornell-bound two-way defender who is quick to the puck for someone his size. He's an excellent backwards skater which allows him to make up for any ground he concedes on a pinch or a rush, but he can be creative once inside the offensive zone. Cairns plays with an edge and will deliver an open-ice hit, but he also likes to battle it out and make opponents pay for real estate in front of his goal. Whether he successfully ties up his man is hit or miss – Cairns needs to be more consistent getting between his man and the goal. He plays on the power play and will take chances deep into enemy territory, but he forces cross-ice passes or takes the easy route by dumping it down low. And while his shot is slightly above average and will get it on net most of the time, he comes across as more of a pass-first offensive defenseman. Skating ability aside, we love the fact that Cairns is an on-ice communicator and displays leadership traits.

153. LHD Cole Candella (Hamilton, OHL): Candella was on his way to a fine draft season when he was shelved with a broken wrist around the middle of the season. He and teammate Ben Gleason are both lefties who took turns alternating roles on the Bulldogs' top pairing. It was Candella, however, who distinguished himself as the more reliable option, using sound one-on-one technique and a quick transition game to earn the trust of the coaching staff with an expanded role. He can unload a very hard shot, so he played plenty on the power play. We were able to absolve him of any wrongdoing on almost all the goals scored against his squad while he was on the ice, which makes us think he would have been assessed differently had he played with a stronger supporting cast.

68. RHD Jacob Cederholm (HV 71, SHL): Cederholm would be a nice addition to any team's prospect pool, as he's one of the draft's calmer heads when things look like they're about to spiral out of control. He's got size and decent mobility thanks to a long stride, and he'll even take the puck coast to coast on occasion. Cederholm's most valuable asset is one-on-one play, specifically from the dots inward, but he also uses his noggin to make smart, subtle plays like timely pinches and gap-filling in the offensive zone. He owns a pretty good shot and makes clean, crisp passes, but a expecting him to develop into a 40-point blueliner may be a bridge too far. Still, his skill and leadership traits will undoubtedly benefit a lucky team in the long run.

127. LHD Dennis Cholowski (Chilliwack, BCHL): Steady two-way defender whose name started to ring bells following December's World Junior "A" Challenge. He's got good size to work with, and he makes smart plays, specifically picking the right time to either join the rush or sneak into the left circle for a quality scoring chance. Cholowski is bound for the University of Minnesota-Duluth, so a team can be patient with a defender with top-4 upside. He's far from physical, however, and it seems the way he processes the game is the biggest, possibly only reason why he's skyrocketed up the rankings. If Cholowski has one thing going for him, it's the way he understands and problem-solves the game under the most harrowing of circumstances.

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4. LHD Jakob Chychrun (Sarnia, OHL): No draft-eligible blueliner embodies what a top-pairing workhorse should be than Chychrun, who has the size, shot, speed and smarts to help offset the common defensive-zone problems confounding poor teams. He played close to 30 minutes a night for a tightly-run Sarnia squad and has exceptional recovery time between shifts. Only a few of the strongest draft-eligible prospects possess the type of skill to impact the game in all three zones, and by impact we mean significantly alter the course of a given game. Chychrun, Sarnia's towering blueliner who last season quickly established himself as one of the OHL's most complete players, is in our view a cornerstone defender with star potential, and the best blueliner for the 2016 draft. He can beat you inside and out, skate through you or around, and either nail you to the boards or laughingly absorb a hit at full speed. He can easily be classified as a two-way defender, but what makes him unique among his peers is the way he equally divides his elite play in accordance with the game situation. Chychrun's NHL bloodlines (father Jeff was an NHL defenseman) and God-given physical attributes presents opponents with a tough matchup on paper, but his ability to think the game at an extremely high level is what makes him such a tantalizing prospect. And while injury is an inevitable part of the game, the ability to heal up, and perform and produce on a consistent basis is generally what separates the stars from the pretenders. When he's defending from the circles and below, he possesses the uncanny ability to successfully differentiate between when to pressure the opposing puck possessor and when to support the friendly. When defending the rush, he has an active stick that can fix an oncoming rusher into no man's land, and he's lightning quick on the loose pucks he creates to quickly (and we mean quickly) transition up the ice with speed. He's a hard and accurate passer who owns a heavy shot that he can launch over shot blockers after walking the line for an open lane. Chychrun is perhaps a complete version of former top pick (and OHL'er) Aaron Ekblad, and in that we mean both offensively and defensively. And while Chychrun's invincibility coming into question before the age of eighteen is certainly reason for concern, we view him as the clear-cut top blueliner available in 2016.

31. LHD Kale Clague (Brandon, WHL): A wiry two-way blueliner with quickness and an exceptional understanding of his position, Clague had a strong enough second half to finish among the WHL's top scoring draft-eligible rearguards. Even more impressive is that he did so without the benefit of logging big minutes, as he took a back seat to older prospects Ivan Provorov and Macoy Erkamps. The Wheaties may be a stacked team, but there were periods when Clague was the back end's calming presence, a telling sign about his upside. He can break out with hard, accurate stretch passes or a smooth, calculated rush up ice. Clague's stick is always in the right position, and he's quick and decisive on his reads. His hands are soft enough to deaden an errant pass and whip a strike up the ice to a counter-attacking teammate. Clague's point totals can be viewed in two ways – either they were somewhat inflated via playing top big minutes with powerhouse Brandon, or the fact that 26 of his 37 assists were secondary says more about his quality breakouts than his playmaking abilities. He does have a hard shot and likes to sneak away from traffic to whip one on net, but he's also astute at the slap and touch passes. At 170 pounds, Clague needs to hit the gym, but keep in mind his lean physique keeps him agile and elusive. Board play defense consists of little physicality and a heavy dose of pushing, shoving and stick thrusting, and he's smart enough to avoid tripping minors. Clague, however, can be undisciplined with his lance – most of the minors he's whistled for are stick infractions like high-sticking, slashes and cross-checks.

By Steve Kournianos

178. LW Luke Coleman (Prince Albert, WHL): Speedy, in-your-face power winger (6'1, 193 pounds) who kills penalties and likes to throw the body. If there's one player in the WHL who deserved every point he registered, and probably a lot more, it's Coleman, whose momentum-changing hustle proved invaluable to head coach Marc Habscheid. He's fast and aggressive, but with the skill and touch to compliment his power game. Even more impressive is that he missed 2017 draft eligibility by a week, yet was still one of Prince Albert's better performers in a first-round series loss to Moose Jaw. Coleman has an excellent shot with a quick release that he can fire with accuracy if with defenders collapsing on top of him.

99. LW Ross Colton (Cedar Rapids, USHL): Late 1996-born New Jersey native who was the USHL runner up in both goals (35) and points (66). He plays a heavy, menacing game while contributing top-line production in any situation. Colton, who's headed to the University of Vermont, was the MVP of the 2016 USHL Top Prospects Game and scored four goals in five games for Team USA at the 2015 World Junior "A" Challenge. He's technically a double overager and is headed to an average NCAA program, but why wait for this kid to become a sought-after free agent when a diligent team can beat everyone to the punch? Colton is an agile skater who can hammer the puck without hesitation — his 209 shots in just 55 games was good enough for third in the USHL.

229. C Domenic Commisso (Oshawa, OHL): Fast two-way center that produced in bunches after a slow start to his OHL career. Commisso was a true freshman much like fellow Generals pivot Anthony Cirelli was a year ago. The duo provided a rebuilding Oshawa club with consistent second-half production from the center ice position, enabling the Generals to sneak into the postseason. The first thing you notice about him is his effortless breakaway speed. Commisso is a hustler, no doubt, and he's one of the better backcheckers on his squad. He always seemed to be involved in plays around the net at either end, which reveals a willingness to contribute beyond goals and assists. He's listed at 5'11, 180 pounds, and the lack of size/strength made him an easy guy to check — as long as you could find him. Commisso has very good vision and always looks for his teammates, sometimes to a fault. His shot is good enough to beat a goalie clean, but there are times when he's simply too cute with the puck on his stick.

46. LW Jonathan Dahlen (Timra, Allsvenskan): Predatory winger with an excellent touch around the net, much like his father Ulf who played over a dozen NHL seasons as a grind-it-out power forward. Jonathan's game differs from his father's in that he's a bit quicker and flashier but not nearly as physical. He had an outstanding season for Timra, with solid showings at both the U18 Hlinka and U19 Five Nations. He's a natural on the flank, moving up Timra's depth chart as the season progressed before landing a slot on the top line around mid-January. Dahlen is an exciting performer who moves the puck with confidence and flair, often dekeing his way around two or three opponents before setting his sights on the cage. He could stand to work on his balance, as the rigors of North American play will limit the amount of open routes he's accustomed to in the Allsvenskan. But the fact the hustling Dahlen can not only beat you in several ways, but also involve his teammates with regularity shows he's not a one-dimensional scorer.

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119. LHD Dawson Davidson (Kamloops, WHL): Undersized puck mover with strong instincts and a proclivity to take chances up the ice. Although he's not big (5'11, 177) and seems to avoid physical contact, Davidson was used in all situations to start the season before seeing his ice time reduced, especially on the PK and critical defensive-zone situations. Puck rushing, beefing up an attack and playmaking are his strengths, while his shot is above-average and used often. Davidson is a sound mid-round option for a team looking for a defenseman to run their power play, or at least help it function properly. He isn't strong defensively — he needs some help in that regard — but he was one of the WHL's top scorers among draft-eligible defensemen.

79. LHD Sean Day (Mississauga, OHL): Blessed with pro-level speed and massive size, Day couldn't piece them together this season into one explosive package. Rather, his three-zone (or any zone) consistency was up and down, and it took a solid showing at the Top Prospects Game and the subsequent second half to save his draft stock from bottoming out. In our view, he's worth the pick and worth the worry, because if things work out, he could be one of the best to come out of the 2016 draft. The fact that he was invited to Team USA's summer WJC camp shows the former top CHL prospect that was granted exceptional status is still held in high regard.

21. LW Alex DeBrincat (Erie, OHL): This diminutive winger is far too explosive to ignore late in the first round, and he's made a strong case for being a best-player-available type even sooner. DeBrincat crushed the OHL for the second straight year to a tune of 51 goals — 38 at even strength or shorthanded — and 101 points. But there's far more to his game than just offense — he's a tireless worker who competes every shift and will battle for (and win) positioning against any player, regardless of size. You simply can't avoid talking about DeBrincat without a mention of how tall he is. And while the professional leagues are inclined to take a chance on undersized skill forwards far more than they used to, even widespread agreement on just how darn good this kid is may still prevent him from being ranked where we think he would be if he was a bit taller than 5'7. Regardless, the Michigan native has done a pretty good job silencing critics who at first said he was too small for both the U.S. National Team Development Program (he was cut from the U17 squad) and the OHL (was passed over in two OHL Priority Selections). DeBrincat became one of the Canadian Hockey League's most prolific goal scorers, and there is nothing anyone can point towards to successfully argue that. Blessed with the softest yet quickest set of hands of any 2016 draft eligible, he continues to find ways to make up for the difference in size by identifying the correct time to shift gears and elude coverage. His release is devastatingly rapid, and can even wire off a shot if the pass is behind him or in his skates. DeBrincat may be small by hockey standards, but he's a tenacious battler who will get into those tough areas around the cage, as well as throw a hit without deviating from his primary objective of scoring goals. He thinks the game at a very high level, and is the last guy you would catch taking a shift off. You could even classify him as a glutton for punishment because he seemingly thrives when futile attempts are made to bruise and batter him into submission. DeBrincat is the ultimate competitor, but it's been so long since he's slumped, you have to wonder how he handles it at the next level, and against bigger, smarter opponents no less. He's certainly worth the risk, even in the later stages of the first round of next June's Entry Draft.

By Steve Kournianos

208. C Jeff de Wit (Red Deer, WHL): Two-way center that was a victim of the Rebels' scoring depth. He was relegated to a bottom-six role for most of the season but managed to sneak in time on the power play and penalty kill. Nevertheless, he took to his support role with aplomb, tackling tough assignments and winning critical defensive zone draws in pressure situations. De wit has skill — he's not a one-trick pony. The Rebels drafted him 14th overall in the 2013 Bantam Draft, and will expect him to take on a bigger role in 2017. At 6'3, 190 pounds, he can fill a variety of roles on either the wing or up the middle, and he's proven to be a threat on special teams. This kind of versatility in a teenage pivot is exactly what teams should look for in the later rounds, especially when a mobile kid like de Wit can boast a good shot and quick release, and show patience with the puck on his zone entries.

63. G Stephen Dhillon (Niagara, OHL): There are a handful of reasons we are extremely high on this native Buffalonian, who bit the bullet for Niagara and assumed an understudy role to Carolina 2014 second rounder Alex Nedeljkovic. This kid has a ton of potential, and he's one of the draft's youngest eligible goalies — he is only a few days from being eligible for next year. Dhillon plays an aggressive butterfly, and the kinks we noticed at the Hlinka (form, net awareness) were quickly addressed, albeit in limited opportunities. His size-quickness combination is rare, and we strongly recommend grabbing him early.

38. LHD Cam Dineen (North Bay, OHL): The talk around draft circles is the first three defensemen picked in 2016 will not only come out of the OHL, but could all be top-10 picks. But history's shown us that being a high-profile pick doesn't guarantee a thing, which is why drafting a sound puck mover like Dineen after Day One's fireworks could end up as one shrewd move regardless of whether a two-way blueliner is a team need or not. The Toms River, NJ native bested all his OHL peers in scoring with 59 points in 68 games while being used in all situations. Dineen is not big or overly physical, but he's silky-smooth with the puck and maintained his consistency even after opposing coaches realized how big of a three-zone threat he was. He's an exceptional passer with eyes in the back of his head, and he has soft hands to where he can deaden the puck and lay it flat to make a cleaner follow-on play. Dineen has an above-average shot, and he can fire both his wrister and slapper with authority and accuracy. He routinely makes high-percentage decisions and has all the makings of a solid top-four NHL defenseman.

180. LW C.J. Doderio (Sioux City, USHL): A strapping winger (6'3, 196) with good hands and a powerful stride who is tough to play against. Doderio's a Colorado-trained stud who can intimidate with his size-skill combination and play an in-your-face style. He recently committed to the University of Denver, where he'll join an impressive incoming class. His numbers don't jump off the screen (21 points in 53 games), but Doderio's was more of a depth player yet finished somewhat strong with seven points in his last 13 games. The Musketeers were one of the USHL's worst offensive teams, so it was hard for him to get quality minutes ahead of the squad's established forwards. He possesses a deadly shot and willingness to do whatever it takes to clear a path between the puck and the opposing goal. Doderio is also pretty mobile for a filled-out winger, and he can hit the corners while traveling at a high rate of speed.

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72. C/W Dillon Dube (Kelowna, WHL): It wasn't too long ago when Dube was a projected first round pick thanks to his non-stop motor and ability to create scoring chances off an intense forecheck. But the second half of his season was a bit of a battle as he blew so many "gimme" chances that you have to wonder if someone hexed him. The good news is that his struggles have nothing to do with work ethic or effort — this kid busts it every shift and bring a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and respect of the game to any organization he'll join. Plus, he finished the season as a point-per-game player with 66 points in 65 games, and was one of the WHL's best draft eligibles in even-strength scoring.

112. LW Konstantin Dubin (Sarmaty Orenburg, MHL): Lethal shooter with speed who scores goals in bunches for Samarty, tying for the team lead with 20 goals in 38 games despite not turning 18 until late August of this year. Dubin is only 5'10, but he's lightning quick and attacks the puck like a shark. He earned a late-season spot for the Russian U18 team for last February's Five Nations Tournament in Rauma, scoring a goal against the Czechs and making plays despite bottom-six minutes. And if the name rings a bell, it was Dubin who personally smoked Jesse Puljujarvi's Finland squad at the 2013 World Selects tournament in Biddeford, Maine.

6. C/LW Pierre-Luc Dubois (Cape Breton, QMJHL): Dubois is a fierce competitor with a linebacker's build (6'2/210) and the hands of a magician. He's a nightmare to match up against, and his freakish size is a result of a tremendous off-ice work ethic. Dubois' good at forcing opponents into catastrophic mistakes. A real leader with star potential. Dubois profiles as a high-end power forward with the ability to succeed at either center or wing. He's a skillful tower of strength in the mold of Jamie Benn or Patrick Marleau; Dubois is a mature specimen who combines God-given physical talents with a sort of sixth sense rarely seen in a teenage prospect. He's tough to play against on or off the puck, and uses a wide stance and long wingspan to keep the puck nestled within an impregnable zone of protection. Dubois has a long stride and reaches top speed quickly for a forward already above 200 pounds before his 18th birthday. He is a tough out in one-on-one situations, and changes gears fast enough to leave the smartest of positional defenders behind him. His pro shot and quick release are just part of a myriad of ways he can beat you. All that said, his hockey sense and ability to process plays in a nanosecond helps vault him to the upper tier of a very talented group of draft-eligible power forwards. Dubois, who plays center with aplomb, can be used in all situations regardless of how much time is on the clock, or what the scoreboard reads. He wins draws cleanly then positions himself properly immediately thereafter. Dubois does so many things exceptionally well, and playing with menace and snarl evokes memories of hockey's heroic warriors of the 1960's or 1970's. A real leader with elite offensive skills and off-the-charts intangibles, Dubois comes across as the perfect specimen who we feel is less than a year away from the rigors of the NHL. Being a gym rat does have its drawbacks, however, as he seems to forget how strong he is. Dubois shows an occasional lack discipline and has to learn how to play within the rules.

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231. LW Brandon Duhaime (Tri-City, USHL): Overage power winger with a commitment to Providence College and a solid sense of the game, plus terrific puck skills. Duhaime is a three-zone beast who uses his above-average speed and sturdy frame (6'0, 200) to hit whatever is in sight. He's a tough customer who won't back down from any challenge, and his array of skills gives coaches an interchangeable weapon for any situation. His footwork, hand-eye coordination and decisions with the puck are at an advanced level, and he can play center if necessary. A native of Parkland, FL, Duhaime's shot is about average, but he makes up for it with very good puck control and the ability to weave in and around defenders to increase the quality of a scoring chance. He was putting up impressive numbers with the USHL's Chicago Steel before a trade to Tri-City, where he was a key top-six contributor during its run to the Clark Cup title.

77. C/RW Tobias Eder (Bad Tolz, Oberliga Jrs): A sniper who can play any forward position, Eder is the best of a rather thin, almost non-existent pool of worthy German draft eligibles. He's had a handful of strong tournaments, albeit against the IIHF's second tier of competition, and bounced back from a late-season high ankle sprain with a strong showing at the Division IA U18's. Nevertheless, he can scoot and shoot, using his 6'0 frame and reach to protect the puck as he bullies his way to the net. Eder takes smart routes up the ice, using agility and sharp cuts to make up for a lack of breakaway speed. He's a good skater, nonetheless, and will thread the needle cross-ice or diagonally.

166. LHD Marcus Ersson (Brynäs IF, SHL): There are a handful of big two-way defensemen who had a strong J20 Superelit season, but Ersson is a kid who doesn't get the coverage notable prospects like David Bernhardt and overager Filip Berglund have received. He's a wonderful talent with a hunter's mindset who loves to either create a rush up ice, or join it and gun straight for the net. His positioning in the defensive zone needs a little work, as he has a tendency to float away from his area of responsibility. His side of the ice wasn't attacked as often as you'd think, and there's a strong possibility he gets more than bottom-pairing minutes for Brynäs next season.

18. RHD Dante Fabbro (Penticton, BCHL): Quick-thinking puck mover who thinks the game at a level far superior than the majority of his peers. Fabbro bypassed the CHL route to maintain his NCAA eligibility, and his BCHL competition paid a heavy price for his decision to stay with Penticton, leading all defensemen in scoring. He served as the Vees' go-to guy in critical situations and provided his coaching staff with dependability while acting as their conduit between the bench and the ice. Fabbro likes to play an up-tempo game, breaking out of his zone with either short bursts of speed or a hard, accurate head-man. He can identify and exploit gaps, including ones with a closing window of opportunity. He has above-average balance and the type of coast-to-coast ability to thwart tight-checking schemes. Crossing the red line is rarely an adventure, as he will either slow down the pace or take the puck wide and into the opposing zone. He has very good hands and can handle a tough pass during the back-and-forth nature of a power play. Fabbro possesses a very good shot and an early-season issue with accuracy seems to have been rectified. On defense, he's positionally sound in coverage and combines excellent gap control with an active stick. He runs into problems, however, during puck retrieval as he's shown an aversion to physical contact and will dangerously throw the puck up the ice in the face of a heavy forecheck. Far from soft, Fabbro needs to learn to take a beating to complete a play rather than continue to rely on smarts and stick skills.

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49. C/W Matt Filipe (Cedar Rapids, USHL): The centerpiece of the Hockey East champion Huskies' best recruiting class in years is actually a legacy who spent many an evening as a kid at Matthews Arena. Filipe, whose father Paul played at Northeastern in the early 1980's, is a converted center who now plays a speed/power game from the wing. He was named to the USHL All-Rookie Team, and his instincts around the net are excellent. He's already listed at 6'2, 200 pounds, so the defensemen in the college circuit should certainly have their hands full.

185. RHD Casey Fitzgerald (Boston College, Hockey East): Former NTDP'er who should have been drafted a year ago but improved his case with a strong freshman campaign at The Heights. The son of former BC Eagle and NHL executive Tom Fitzgerald, Casey led all first-year Division I rearguards in assists (23) and placed second in scoring (27). He's a very good skater and sees the ice extremely well, which helps make up for somewhat of a size disadvantage (5'10, 185 pounds). But he's not just a finesse/playmaking type – Fitzgerald plays fearless and will do what it takes to win like block shots, challenge bigger forwards and protect his netminder.

90. G Evan Fitzpatrick (Sherbrooke Phoenix, QMJHL): Fitzpatrick is a classic butterfly goalie with an imposing silhouette that faced more rubber than most QMJHL goalies. Playing for a bad team has few perks -- one being the ability for assessors to analyze his play while under constant pressure. Fitzpatrick has prototypical NHL size (6'4, 210 pounds) with cat-like quickness and pro-level agility. A Newfoundlander who was the fourth overall pick in the 2014 QMJHL Entry Draft, he has the size most team's want in their netminders. And while he began the season with inconsistent play, he saw enough shots to steadily improve and make corrections. Fitzpatrick generally reads plays well, but he struggled with communication and rebound control at the U18 worlds – the complete opposite of how he performed during the regular season. Take out word for it – he gobbles up close to everything and will swat away a loose puck before waiting for a defender to lend support.

196. C/W Matt Fonteyne (Everett, WHL): Pesky speedster with an excellent shot and quick hands who was leaned quite often on to help Everett's goal-starved offense. He teamed with fellow 2016 draft eligible Patrick Bajkov to form a respectable 1-2 punch, albeit one lean in the experience department. Still, he was used in all situations and proved to be a special teams threat. Fonteyne can score off the rush, using his speed to beat defenders to the outside then make a quick directional change right for the cage. Once he gets there, he has an arsenal of moves to tickle the twine, specifically a pro backhand that he can elevate from in tight. He's not intimidating from a physical standpoint (5'10/185), but he plays fearless and will find a way to get under an opponent's skin. Even more impressive is that Fonteyne will dig into the low slot area regardless of how big the defender standing behind him is.

85. RW Maxime Fortier (Halifax, QMJHL): Relentless skill forward with blinding speed and a very good shot that carried the Mooseheads after star winger Timo Meier was moved to Rouyn-Noranda. Fortier led his club in scoring with 31 goals and 77 points, playing top-line minutes alongside pivot Otto Somppi. Teams that could use size on the flanks may overlook him, but much like Alex DeBrincat, Fortier is too talented a finisher to let an inch or two get in the way of drafting him.

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27. RHD Adam Fox (U.S. NTDP): A terrific playmaker from the back end with first-class vision and elite puck distributing abilities, Fox was Team USA's most consistent defender. He is yet another Nassau County native to grace the NTDP's blue line, using flair, creativity and astonishing puck control to wow onlookers and dizzy opponents all at the same time. He was beyond deserving of his nomination as top defenseman at the U18 worlds, which shows how far this kid has come since the start of the season when he was considered (and assessed) as merely a power play specialist. Nothing could be further from the truth, as Fox usurped fellow NTDP rearguard Chad Kryz as Team USA's best overall defenseman and most reliable at generating offense. Fox is a good skater who looks far more graceful in confined spaces than he does in open ice. His lateral movement and edge work are excellent — his twirls and pirouettes are strikingly similar to the way Ottawa star defender Erik Karlsson controlled his puck movement while playing for Team Sweden in his pre-draft years. Fox has an accurate shot that does not require velocity to beat a goalie clean in any of the corners, and he can juke and fake his way into prime scoring areas with relative ease. He is far from physical, and falling below the six-foot mark could work against him as his development path takes him through the bigger, thicker forwards. That being said, he ran the gauntlet of NCAA competition with significant success, as even the most mature NCAA opponents could not find an answer to his puck wizardry.

61. C Trent Frederic (U.S. NTDP): It would behoove teams to take an early stab at selecting one of the draft's top two-way centers; one who is more mature and dependable than most in his class. We're not saying Frederic will or will not be a big point producer, but he'll certainly appeal to any fan base with his hustle-and-bustle effort, and an affinity for crease crashing. He was Team USA's top penalty killer and took the majority of late defensive-zone draws while centering their second line. There's something about his compete level and endurance that stands out — he is as active and effective in the dying seconds of a penalty as he is in the first. Frederic is headed to the University of Wisconsin in the fall.

176. RHD Callum Fryer (UMass-Amherst, Hockey East): Dependable shutdown rearguard who had the tough job of protecting a turnover-happy group of forwards on an already overmatched squad. Fryer is a double-overager, but that shouldn't scare anybody away since he was one of the NCAA's top one-on-one defenders and shot blockers. A 6'3 blueliner with strong footwork, he's difficult to beat to the outside or outmaneuver. Fryer uses an active stick, and if he's got you pinned to the boards, the chances of escape are slim. He's a clean, accurate breakout passer who will take chances with the puck, but only through calculation and analysis. Fryer isn't a fast skater up ice, but he can backskate rather well and stays within the rulebook when eliminating an opponent on their dump-in. His shot is above average and he will not hesitate to use it.

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142. C Dylan Gambrell (Denver, NCHC): Double-overage playmaker whose impressive freshman campaign was overshadowed by 2015 first round picks Kyle Connor (Michigan) and Brock Boeser (North Dakota) — both 2015 first round picks. Gambrell finished third behind the aforementioned duo in first-year scoring with 47 points in 41 games. He was a key cog for the Pioneers' offense, alternating between center and wing on their top line and playing in all situations, including on the penalty kill. Gambrell is an excellent skater who makes precision plays off the rush and calm, calculated zone entries. He boasts a hard, accurate wrist shot that he won't hesitate to use, but that doesn't mean he's selfish — Gambrell has exceptional vision and selflessly lends puck support rather than float on the periphery for the chance at an open look. His hand-eye coordination is off the charts, as few can match his ability to deaden pucks out of mid-air. Gambrell's pretty close to being a complete player, although his lack of success in the faceoff circle (43% – 75th among NCAA freshman) needs to be addressed.

14. RW Julien Gauthier (Val-d'Or, QMJHL): Traditional logic tells us that most scouting departments will gravitate towards the prospect who is both skilled and mature over those whom are simply talented. When the time comes for teams to decide which players they choose to invest in, being wise beyond one's years is always a major consideration. This June, not many draft-eligible teenagers possess a type of overwhelming arsenal of characteristics like Val-d'Or power winger Julien Gauthier, who has (literally) dominated his age group within the CHL in each of the last three seasons. Blessed with a solid build (6'4, 225 lbs), good speed and a strikingly accurate shot, Gauthier validated his rightful place among the world's elite amateurs a few years back, when at 15 years old he was getting opportunities on the Foreurs' top line and actually contributing. Gauthier is very noticeable when it's his turn to hop over the boards – his stick is always in the right position whether to receive a pass on the rush or in the slot. He uses his size and reach to his advantage beyond puck protection; in other words, Gauthier's difficult to defend in front of the net because he can alter shots heading in a variety of directions. Furthermore, he keeps defenders further away from the net because he doesn't have to be close to the cage to fight for rebounds. He's had the misfortune of bouncing between Val-d'Or's top two lines this season by way of their incredible (and experienced) scoring depth, but he also kills penalties and produces plays while shorthanded. A recent injury seemed to have slowed him down after a torrid start (seven goals in his first eight games, one in the following six), but he's too complete a player to let a small slump impact his high standing within the scouting community.

167. C/W Max Gerlach (Medicine Hat, WHL): Burnsville, MN native with Texas ties who surprised the circuit with 30 goals, good for second among all WHL rookies. He's a speedster with a devastating wrist shot that he can wire rather effortlessly, and he's one of the better draft-eligible forwards at using a defenseman as a screen before unloading one through his wickets. Gerlach is undersized to say the least (5'8, 165 pounds), and he's a perimeter player of the highest order. But when you can shoot and scoot the way he can, why bother venturing towards the enemy center of gravity when you can unload from the safety of the flank? Gerlach is capable as a shooter, not so much as a set-up guy. He's not the least bit physical, and he can't be counted on once the puck exits the offensive zone aside from winning a neutral zone faceoff.

By Steve Kournianos

78. LW Tim Gettinger (Sault Ste Marie, OHL): Gettinger isn't your typical power forward in that he loves to handle the puck and chooses a deliberate playmaker's approach rather than mirror the lumbering dump-and-chasers of yesteryear. A native of Ohio, the 6'6 Gettinger was expected to do more for a Greyhounds squad hit hard by graduations, and examples of being the dominant player on the ice were spread thin throughout his season. Still, he's pretty nimble on his feet for such a big body, which he uses to his advantage during board battles. There's always the chance his skill-size combination bumps him up to an earlier round, but he is a project forward nonetheless.

56. C Brandon Gignac (Shawinigan, QMJHL): A real hustler with quick hands and very good instincts, Gignac exhibits the kind of all-out effort any fan base can only hope becomes infectious. He's one of the draft's fastest skaters, but he proved this season that he can blow past opponents with his head up to either find the open man, or take the puck strong to the net. And he's not just flash and dash – he won close to 60 percent of his draws and can be used in any situation. Gignac is ridiculously underrated and should be considered for a role on any of Team Canada's international squads for the upcoming season.

35. LHD Samuel Girard (Shawinigan, QMJHL): Playing with the burden of great expectations is never easy, but the swift-skating Girard lived up to his reputation as an elite-scoring rearguard by topping all CHL blueliners in scoring – a distinction he held almost from start to finish. He was the third overall pick in the 2014 QMJHL draft (behind Pascal Laberge and fellow defender Luke Green), and he's distinguished himself by playing a style efficient yet flashy at the same time. Scouts long have projected pro-level playmaking abilities, and Girard hasn't let them down, leading rushes up the ice with speed and decisiveness. He has very good first-step quickness and excellent top-end speed. He has above-average balance for a defenseman listed at 5'10, owning a good, strong stride. His lateral movement is excellent, using a strong lower body to cover ground in a hurry if a play expands the ice on the periphery. Girard's bread and butter, however, is playmaking. He's an exceptional puck distributor with a soft set of hands, using them to corral hard or inaccurate passes. He makes crisp passes on the tape and with authority — forehand or back – and leads the man with consistency. Patient and aware, Girard does not own a good shot, and will acquiesce to the pass nine times out of 10. Moreover, he is far from physical, but his positioning is developing and his reads are excellent. Girard is a real leader who will instantly improve a team's breakout and power play capability.

101. LHD Benjamin Gleason (Hamilton, OHL): Gleason is another aggressive two-way defender who can be hit or miss with his offense, but plays a generally sound positional game. He's better at moving the puck himself than making a tape-to-tape stretch pass, and on occasion he'll dazzle you with a neat fake or two. He doesn't look like an intimidating force, but Gleason plays with bite and will use his stick to make crease-crashers pay. Gleason played for an overmatched Team USA at the Hlinka but was one of their more physical performers, and he looked comfortable after assuming a top-pairing role for an inexperienced Hamilton club that had trouble scoring and even bigger issues defending.

By Steve Kournianos

161. C/RW Vasily Glotov (SKA St. Petersburg, MHL): Explosive overage scorer with sick hands and a deadly shot who finished fourth in the MHL with 55 points in 42 games. Glotov is lean and wiry (5'11, 160) but owns a tremendous first step and uses his speed and agility to evade physical punishment. He is an absolute hawk on the puck, relentless to the point where he can expend all his energy chasing it down from one end of the rink to the other. Glotov can stickhandle his way through a dicey situation and will attack a wall of defenders with no fear. This can get him into trouble, but he's no puck hog — Glotov is an excellent passer with keen vision and the ability to no-look a tape-to-tape job. There's a lot of flash to his game, but it'll be a while before he's ready to test his skills against older, tougher players. Pound for pound, he could be one of the draft's top offensive players, but the prospect of staying in Russia coupled with the small stature makes him better suited for the late rounds.

146. C/LW Michael Graham (Fargo, USHL): Minnesota-born power forward with skill who bolted the USHL to star for Eden Prairie High School, only to return to Fargo at season's end. Graham is a tantalizing prospect because of his combination of skill and size (6'2, 193). He once committed to Minnesota-Duluth, only to change his mind and opt for Notre Dame. The indecisiveness is a bit of a red flag, but he is a teenager, and a talented one at that. He was a finalist for Minnesota's Mr. Hockey award, and earned a nod in the state championship all-tournament team nomination despite a crushing loss to Wayzata in the finals. Graham can beat you in a variety of ways, as he's quick and practically unstoppable once he reaches top speed. He knows how to bury the puck thanks to a heavy wrist shot and quick release, but he also uses extreme precision and patience in and around the goal. Graham has posterized quite a few unfortunate souls with his dangles and dekes, but not against mature USHL or NCAA competition. Still, he's an excellent gamble to take for a late-round prospect.

65. RHD Luke Green (Saint John, QMJHL): One of the steadier defensemen available for any round who quietly had a strong season for an Ice Dogs' squad with a deep blue line. Green came to Saint John with high regard — he was the first overall pick in the 2014 QMJHL Draft — but he stagnated after a strong rookie season a year ago. Compounding things was a nasty hit from Cape Breton's Pierre-Luc Dubois in March which may have been the catalyst behind his average postseason. Still, Green is a very good skater with terrific instincts and is one of the draft's better shot selectors from the back end; if Green is taking a shot, it's going to be hard and accurate. You can count on him for making the sure play, but you'd love to see him play up to his potential.

102. LHD J.D. Greenway (U.S. U18, NTDP): We have to hand it to Greenway — he certainly knows how to pick his spots. The tall defender with above-average mobility and strong instincts made a nifty play to set up a goal in front of the NHL scouting community at the All-American Top Prospects Game, then closed out his season with a memorable, Forsberg-esque tuck-in tally in April's U18 world championship. These displays of offensive prowess, however, were few and very far between, but that shouldn't take away from his ability to poke, pin and hold with the best of his class. Greenway, whose older brother J.D. was a 2015 second round pick of the Wild, recently committed to Wisconsin after rumors indicated he was OHL-bound to Flint.

By Steve Kournianos

37. C/LW Noah Gregor (Moose Jaw, WHL): Gregor is a three-zone roadrunner that screams sleeper, as he bounced back from an injury-plagued rookie season to distinguish himself among Moose Jaw's forest of elite forwards. He is easily at or near the top of a very talented group of draft-eligible penalty killers, but what makes him worthy of a significant leap-frog are his speed and versatility. Gregor is ridiculously skilled, making plays at high speed and taking advantage of his linemates' strengths. He's a disciplined player who makes smart decisions and rarely do you see him fumbling with the puck if the game is close. Gregor has a very good wrist shot — he can pick corners or pump one inside the far post on his off wing. But he can also dish the puck as well — His 30 primary assists tied for the most among the WHL's first-year draft eligibles. And while he's listed at only 5'11, he plays fearless and will take the shortest route to the net even if there is an opponent or two blocking his path.

40. RW Carl Grundstrom (Frolunda, SHL): A spirited and energetic banging winger who off the puck is a nightmare to guard against. Grundstrom is a relentless forechecker who uses his strong build and powerful lower body to frighten defenders into careless mistakes. If there was ever a player to excuse for the constant dump and chase, it's Grundstrom, whose international resume for Team Sweden is beyond impressive when considering his nation's lack of elite scoring up front at the junior level. His skill set may resemble that of a grinder, but he's displayed flash and skill in the limited time he received with MoDo. He's a very good skater in terms of mobility and balance, but he lacks breakaway speed. Grundstrom has quick feet and can create separation with his first step, but it takes him a while to reach top speed. Still, this does not impede his ability to press and battle in a timely manner, as his instincts and positioning are excellent. Grundstrom has an above-average shot that he likes to fire from all areas and angles, sometimes to a fault, as you'd like to see him be a little more patient and creative with the disc. But he's a power forward who likes to use his body, so expect him to use those strengths to generate offense rather than fancy his way onto the scoresheet. He can also be undisciplined at times, but a solid depth option with discernable NHL upside nonetheless.

58. G Filip Gustavsson (Lulea, SHL): Gustavsson stylistically is rigid, upright and textbook. Standing an NHL-appealing 6'2, he's is a good bet to go higher as one of the top-trained European netminders in his class. He was stellar on the international stage, backstopping Sweden to success at the Ivan Hlinka and the February Five Nations tournament. Gustavsson is one of the top draft eligible goalies for a reason — he has the size (6'2, 190 pounds), the quickness and the technical superiority to form a complete package. His post-save recovery is exceptional, and rarely does he seem to lose the net when he's challenging a shooter. Gustavsson is a below-average puck handler, however, and is prone to communication lapses with his defenders — more so than most of his draft-eligible peers.

97. RW Brandon Hagel (Red Deer, WHL): A late August 1998 birthdate who's fast start made some people wonder how in the world he was overlooked in WHL Bantam Drafts. Hagel (6'0 / 170 lbs.) is one of the Rebels' many offensive weapons that can fill in on the flank on any of their first three lines. He's an accurate shooter with a quick release and will fight to get to the tough areas around the net. We view him as a pass-first forward with a ton of hustle and sandpaper that can top out as an excellent penalty-killing option.

By Steve Kournianos

30. LHD Libor Hajek (Saskatoon, WHL): Hajek's game is simple – find the puck, get the puck, move the puck. Sounds pretty easy, doesn't it? Well, there aren't many defenders anywhere, let alone teenage draft-eligibles, which can be counted on to do all three with consistency. Hajek had the misfortune of playing smack in the middle of a Saskatoon rebuild where the ice was routinely tilted towards his own end. To call his nightly efforts valiant would be an understatement – he was a man on an island for long stretches, to include the Czech Republic's nightmarish performance at the recent U18 world championship. Hajek converts speed into power in either direction, using athleticism and sound judgment to attack openings or create them himself. He has a decent first step for a big guy, yet only requires a few strides to reach top speed. If you see open ice ahead of you, better make it quick, as Hajek will chase you down and smother the puck with relative ease. His positioning and slot coverage are excellent, and rarely is he guilty of wandering or puck gazing. You can make the argument that Hajek is the draft's best defender from his own goal line to center ice. Offensively, he's a good passer with a decent shot, and uses his wheels to make creative plays. He plays a smart and poised two-way game, and should be groomed for the top pairing.

113. C Mikael Hakkarainen (Brookings, NAHL): Hakkarainen didn't get a lot of attention until later in the year, but he's a hard-working two-way center with sound hockey sense and playmaking ability. He's an above-average skater who turns well and can maneuver his way out of tight spaces, but there's still room for both improvement and growth (6'0, 176). His upside likely tops out as a third line center who when called upon can seamlessly fill in for a top-six forward. Hakkarainen can also play wing, and furnishes a heavy, accurate shot while using a variety of fakes and movements to throw the goalie and/or a defender off. He was drafted by the USHL's Chicago Steel and has a commitment to Providence College. Hakkarainen has a good attitude towards the game and can be trusted with any kind of situation, to include killing penalties and taking defensive zone draws

130. LHD Connor Hall (Kitchener, OHL): The heavy-hitting Hall is what we call a "Steady Eddie" in that he can be counted on to make no-nonsense plays that get the job done. His season began rather inauspiciously — he was belted with a 10-game suspension for a hit to the head before the regular season even began, then broke his jaw against Guelph in November to miss 17 more. Still, Hall was able to shake off the rust and provide a team with physical, shutdown play with the occasional fight or two (...or three). His skating is decent and he can fire the puck with accuracy, but we view him more as a top-four enabler for a risk-taking partner with wheels.

36. G Carter Hart (Everett, WHL): Hart, who won the WHL's Goaltender of the Year award, is still a few years away, but he's technically superior to any netminder in this class. He's a classic butterfly goalie with good net awareness but even better tracking ability, and his size (6'1) shouldn't be a problem at higher levels. Hart has excellent post-to-post quickness and reset ability, and he rebounded from an average second half to star in the postseason. Lanky with an August, 1998 birthday, Hart was nothing short of a brick wall for the Silvertips, leading them with a WHL-best 35 wins -- and you can say that he earned every single one of them. Don't be fooled if he flashes you an opening from time to time – Hart has cat-like quickness and may be doing it just to tease you.

By Steve Kournianos

96. C Cameron Hebig (Saskatoon, WHL): It's easy to say a specific player "runs an offense" and not back it up with anything valid. But in the case of Saskatoon's speedy overage pivot, he truly is its most invaluable cog. Hebig is an exceptional playmaker, especially off the rush, where he uses his advanced hockey sense and vision to quickly identify more than one option. You simply have to get open, and Hebig will find you with a perfectly timed set-up. Rating him against his age group reveals that he was fifth among 2015 and 2016 draft eligibles with a .915 primary points-per-game average. Remember, Saskatoon was a doormat this year, so it wasn't like Hebig had much to work with. The Blues like to have quick-strike forwards, and he has the kind of pop suited for their style of play.

215. C/LW Ludvig Hoff (Chicago, USHL): Overage point producer from Norway who is committed to North Dakota following a solid sophomore USHL campaign with Lincoln. Born in 1996, the 6'0, 190-pound Hoff is an exceptional set-up man with the ability to identify multiple options on one shift. He's a very good skater with a quick burst who uses body language, head fakes and dekes to maneuver defenders out of position and open up passing lanes that he'll exploit with timeliness and accuracy. Hoff is a sturdy playmaker who will take a hit to complete a play, and will even skate into traffic to draw a double or triple team before slipping the puck to the open man. He is one of the better draft eligibles at using the boards for bank passes, and he doesn't get rattled if he paints himself into a corner. He has a very good shot and can fire it with accuracy off the pass, and the fact that he will fight to get into the low slot tells us he's more than just a pass-first option. Hoff played for Norway at the Division IA WJC, where he scored three goals in five games and led the tournament by winning close to 70 percent of his draws.

32. C/W Brett Howden (Moose Jaw, WHL): Heady playmaker with good size and a "Follow Me" attitude who played on Moose Jaw's top-six thanks to a combination of strong hockey sense and tenacity. One thing we noticed is how fine a passer he is — especially off his backhand — and how he threads the needle across long distances. Brett isn't as fast as his brother (and 2010 first rounder) Quinton, but he makes up for it with the kind of no-quit attitude and sound positioning necessary for teenage centers to exploit the obvious advantage in puck skills. He's strong on his feet and will eat defenders alive if they aren't squared to him, but he's more of a thinking-man's puck rusher in that he'd rather stop short and re-asses rather than try to blow past or through a defender. Howden owns a hard, quick wrist shot that he favors over the slap shot, but also carries a strong backhand he can elevate once inside the hash marks. He's also strong on faceoffs and can be used in both shorthanded and late-game situations.

55. RHD Filip Hronek (Mountfield HK, Extraliga): Hronek is an excellent prospect to kick-start a team's replenishment of its prospect pool of defenders. He's delivered on some tough assignments as a teenager thanks to a fearless mentality and excellent breakout abilities. Whether with stick or skate, Hronek contributes towards consistently dictating the tempo, and his mental agility and mobility makes us think the offense will quickly follow. He was beyond impressive as the junior-most member of the Czech Republic's defense corps at the WJC. He's not big or strong, but his positioning is sound and rarely is he caught out of position.

By Steve Kournianos

139. C Juha Jaaska (HIFK U20, Liiga Jrs.): Gritty yet skilled two-way center who always seems to be in the right place. Jaaska was a fixture on Finland's under-18 squads, and his three-zone play proved valuable at their gold-medal run at the recent U18 worlds. He's a speedy and responsible forward who plays with a high compete level, which is why he's always stood out over the course of several tournaments. Jaaska plays without fear, and he's at his best when taking the puck strong to the net. He kills penalties extremely well, but there's more to his game than sound play. Jaaska is a victim of circumstance, as Finland's scoring depth is the greatest it's been in years. One of the undervalued aspects of his game is the ability to find open ice; a testament to his understanding of the game. There's a good bet he'd flourish with an expanded role, but for now he has to be considered one of the better checking options in the lower rounds.

53. LHD Lucas Johansen (Kelowna, WHL): Kelowna's top defender who has excellent instincts and makes very good reads. What makes him stand out is that he understands the nuances of becoming a consistent three-zone player. Johansen is a very good skater who loves to jump into the attack and even outskated his forwards in order to lend puck support. He can run a power play with efficiency, but he needs to fill into his 6'2 frame in order to be more consistent during chest-to-chest battles. Johansen has a very good shot and makes clean plays in tight spaces in the offensive zone.

145. LHD Kenny Johnson (Shattuck St. Mary's, HS-MN): Towering, rugged defenseman who'll play for Red Berenson at Michigan just like older brother (and current Columbus Blue Jacket) Jack Johnson did over a decade earlier. Kenny isn't quite the offensive threat as Jack was, but he's already got an NHL build (6'2, 220 pounds) that allows him to focus on developing the nuances of his position. He's a very good skater with a plus-plus slap shot that enabled him to man the point on Shattuck's top power play unit. But Kenny is most certainly more advanced in his defensive game — he shut down top line after top line, likely because of his ridiculous wingspan and size advantage. Still, his combination of tenacity and proper positioning makes venturing into the low slot somewhat of a death wish by opposing forwards. He cleaned up his play as well, slicing down his after-the-whistle minors and focusing more on playing a hard-hitting game in between the whistles. Johnson, who injured his shoulder late in the season, will likely play a year in the USHL before playing for the Wolverines in 2018.

By Steve Kournianos

22. LW Max Jones (London, OHL): Jones is a big, strong two-way power forward with a goal scorer's acumen that can reach top speed in a hurry. If there's one 2016 draft prospect who skates angry but manages to look graceful in the process, it's definitely Max, the son of former NHL'er Brad Jones. He is quite agile, using solid footwork and a decent first step (for a power forward) to catch defenders flat footed. His anticipation skills are fairly strong, as he knows his long reach allows him to loiter near his own blue line without giving away much in positioning. If he intercepts a cross-ice pass, forget it...it's off to the races with little to do about it. He can shift gears and change direction, making him difficult to defend in one-on-one or two-on-two situations...From a physical standpoint, Jones does not get cheated, as he uses all 75 inches and 200-plus pounds to wear down opponents along the boards, with the occasional butt end, slash or knee to keep them honest. He's tough to out-muscle, and his overall strength is equally distributed between his upper and lower body. Jones has a pretty big wind up for his hard shot, but he's shown to get velocity on his wrist without much backswing. He's been durable for the Knights this season, and it was Jones who took the reins and dominated the OHL's landscape while its top players were busily shining in Helsinki at the World Juniors. He oozes some serious top-line upside, but he can go through long periods without producing, albeit not from a lack of effort. It may be a few more years until Jones can harness his natural-born talents and marry them with a complete understanding of the game's intricacies, but for now, he's should be considered an unbridled thoroughbred who is a good mentor or two away from being one of the game's best within the power forward genre.

13. C Tyson Jost (Penticton, BCHL): We consider the North Dakota-bound Jost a deceptive prospect, and it had nothing to do with playing in the less-visible BCHL. He is a star on the ice without question, and nobody can deny his high standing as one of the draft's super-skilled puck wizards. So what keeps him off the radar? Well, we're talking about on the ice, people. And lets just say his opponents have trouble dealing with his elite anticipation skills and prodigious instincts on a nightly basis. Jost is a shark, appearing out of nowhere with speed and tenacity to ruin the breakout play a coach worked on for weeks. Once the puck is on his stick is where his artistry comes to the forefront, as he protects it with his head up while travelling at a high rate of speed before shifting down a gear, curling and weaving in and around the offensive zone for as long as he has to. His coach can convey simple marching orders to his players when it's his turn on the ice — Get open...he'll find you. Jost has an excellent shot to compliment his extraordinary passing acumen, using soft hands and a quick release to turn a bad pass in his skates into a well-placed attempt at the net. His shot accuracy is top notch, and he will beat you from the inside of the ice or outside from his arsenal of moves. He is a three-zone center with decent size that will not necessarily avoid physical play, and he's shown to control the puck while taking a beating. Jost was Team Canada's top player at the U18's in Grand Forks — he led in scoring with 15 points in seven games to break Connor McDavid's Team Canada record for most points in one tournament.

By Steve Kournianos

168. RW Grant Jozefek (Lincoln, USHL): New Jersey-born scorer who was one of the Garden State's top point producers before tearing up the USHL for Lincoln. Jozefek, a late-1997 prospect with a commitment to Northeastern, is a smaller-sized wing (5'10, 185 pounds) who can play in traffic and win puck battles against bigger forwards. He can be an electrifying player who makes opponents pay for their mistakes, especially in open ice. His best assets are his vision and hands – Jozefek will deaden a puck out of mid-air then thread the needle with a perfectly timed head man. He's an above-average skater with good lateral movement and a quick first step, and he'll take the puck strong to the net. Jozefek can protect the puck well for somebody without much of a wingspan, and he can wire a heavy and accurate backhand within tight spaces.

9. LHD Olli Juolevi (London, OHL): Playing in the OHL did not seem like much of a priority for this big-bodied puck mover, who was earmarked to stay in Finland with Jokerit of Russia's Kontinental Hockey League before signing with London right before the 2015-16 season started. And what a season it's been, as Juolevi turned out an impressive first season in North America that culminated with a Memorial Cup triumph. While it doesn't hurt to engineer an attack alongside the likes of London's Mitch Marner and Matt Tkachuk (among others), we think Juolevi had a lot more to do with the Knights' prolific offense than simply riding shotgun. He is a powerful and cerebral skater who makes carrying the puck up the ice seem effortless. What really stands out is his agility and quickness moving both laterally and backwards. You can classify him as your atypical offensive-minded defenseman who always looks to make a play or expand on one that has already developed. Transitioning from blue line to blue line is his bread and butter, and he expands his options not only from mobility, but also from exceptional passing prowess and vision. Juolevi's passes are hard and on the tape, and the acumen he provides while doing so is why he's so highly regarded. He owns a hard, accurate shot and uses it with authority on a power play chock full of snipers. The problem is that his vast arsenal of contributions begins and ends on the offensive side of the red line, as we've seen him struggle in corners and dealing with the OHL's more zealous power forwards. That will certainly be a developmental area to address, particularly his leg strength and ability to pin and hold in order to wait for help to arrive. Still, this kid is so entertaining to watch that you draft him first and worry about the teachable stuff later.

184. C Jiri Karafiat (Zlin U21, Extraliga Jrs): Disciplined two-way pivot with good vision and solid playmaking abilities. It wasn't a banner year for the Czechs in terms of international tournament success, but Karafiat was one of only a handful of their forwards to distinguish himself. He is generally a hard worker who will involve himself in board play, albeit without using much of his 6'2, 170-pound frame to gain control of the puck. He is quite talented for a kid buried on the third or fourth line, which wasn't the case for Zlin in the Czech junior league. He's an above-average skater and has good hands from in close, but he needs to bulk up and work on his faceoffs. There's some real potential here, as Karafiat is a natural center with size that makes his linemates better.

By Steve Kournianos

125. C/LW Tanner Kaspick (Brandon, WHL): Bruising two-way power forward who was a depth player for both Team Canada at the Hlinka and with Brandon's loaded title squad. Kaspick is the kind of versatile, hard-nosed prospect the stats don't do justice, as he'd be far more productive had his role been expanded. You can't fault his coaching staff in Brandon though; the Wheat Kings are a perennial powerhouse. Still, he took to his support role with aplomb, and his production from the regular season (0.59) wasn't that far off from his playoff output (0.48). He missed a chunk of the season due to an undisclosed upper-body injury but looked fine since.

50. LW/RW Boris Katchouk (Sault Ste Marie, OHL): Katchouk has a reputation as being one of this draft's hardest workers, and it doesn't take long into a game to realize it. His instant energy from shift to shift can be both infectious and momentum swinging, and it's rare to see a prospect seemingly enjoy working hard all the time. But make no mistake — this kid is no grinder. Katchouk was tasked with top-six minutes in all situations, and delivered with 24 goals in 63 games and a spot on Team Canada's U18 squad in April. He has very good speed and a quick wrist shot to tangle the twine upstairs, requiring little backswing to generate velocity. Katchouk has exceptional balance and will maintain control of the puck despite multiple shoves and swipes, using his quick feet and edges to evade danger and create enough room to identify an option or two.

51. LW Artur Kayumov (Russia U18, MHL): We'd be lying if we said we weren't disappointed Kayumov (among other Russians) was banned from participating at the U18's when he and his entire squad tested positive for the substance meldonium. Life certainly goes on, but the incident likely hurts his draft stock. Quick and decisive, Kayumov is usually the one orchestrating the attack for the Russians, especially on the power play. He's dandy on the zone entry, and his balance is strong for a kid listed under six feet tall. There were periods where he was the best player for Team Russia, and we see him as a high pick in the upcoming CHL Import Draft.

By Steve Kournianos

8. C Clayton Keller (U.S. NTDP): A razor-sharp finesse pivot with off-the-charts vision and a predator's mindset, Keller's now part of a short but elite list of talented NTDP'ers who crushed the competition before moving on to face tougher challenges. Not that it will matter to Keller, who this season centered the top line and was Team USA's top player at every international event he participated in. He's a fiery competitor who refuses to take a shift off and his nonstop motor allows him to perform at a high level regardless of how long his shifts are. Keller's arrival to the U.S. Under-18 team last March wasn't surrounded with much fanfare. Not only were he months away from his 17th birthday, but he also had to find a role on a team already loaded at the center ice position. Still, the pivot cut from superstar cloth made the most of his short time there, dominating play at a tune of almost a point and a half per game and winning gold as a key contributor at the U18 Worlds. This season, he's been the brightest of stars on a team overflowing with draft prospects, leading his squad in scoring by a country mile. The development of talent-rich forwards like Keller generally follows a common pattern, but we're starting to see there's nothing common about him. Some like to compare him to special talents such as Toronto prospect Mitch Marner. Others see a resemblance to Doug Gilmour. He's going to be in the NHL one day, regardless, and we simply cannot call him a consolation prize in a draft substantially devoid of top-end centers once you get past the early stages of the first round. Keller is a strong, shifty skater with a powerful shot, displaying brilliance and hockey sense strikingly similar to what Marner brings to the ice. And while Marner is a winger, Keller is equally adept at bringing you out of your seat while leaving amazed opponents on the very edge of theirs. He's schooled amateurs of all ages — U.S. college seniors, European stars, NHL-bound Canadian juniors -- it doesn't matter. He's a hard-nosed, fearless player with a lot of flash, but he's been Team USA's leader and go-to option for every critical situation — defensive zone draws, killing penalties, gaining entry into the offensive zone, etc. Does he have franchise potential? We'll let you judge for yourself, but keep in mind he's nearly produced as much as Jack Eichel and Auston Matthews did with the NTDP. Keller is also nearly a year younger than Matthews, who set the NTDP scoring record a year ago with 117 points.

141. LHD Ilya Karpukhin (Russia U18, MHL): Karpukhin joined the Russian U18 squad a month or so into the season, but his impact was immediate. He's a big, strong two-way defender who has a very hard shot and can chip in with occasional offense. But what he's best at is positional defense and slot coverage — we rarely saw him wander from his post or try to make low-percentage plays. The way he defends and can skate the puck out of harm's way is reminiscent of fellow 2016 draftee Libor Hajek, albeit with a lower ceiling. Simply put, Karpukhin is a hard, accurate passer with good wheels who likes to attack only when the situation makes sense.

159. G Jake Kielly (Tri-City, USHL): It's a shame one of the best amateur goalies in any league is barely on the pre-draft rankings radar, and we'll own up to the fact that we slept on this double-coverage Clarkson-bound netminder, who capped off an amazing first year in the USHL with a well-deserved Clark Cup championship. Kielly missed 2015 draft eligibility by only five days after a solid season with the NAHL's Austin Bruins, which he followed up by finishing sixth in the USHL in both goals against (2.33) and save percentage (.919). He was a brick wall in the playoffs, posting four shutouts in just 11 games. Kielly is an athletic, well-positioned goalie blessed with NHL size (6'3, 205) and a seriousness towards his craft in the mold of a young Henrik Lundqvist.

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93. RW Willie Knierim (Dubuque, USHL): Another wide-bodied power winger who has a soft set of hands and a patient outlook with puck distribution. Knierim got off to a rough start after he had an average Ivan Hlinka tournament for Team USA. But the Illinois native's game picked up steam right around December with the World Junior "A" Challenge, and used a strong second half to lead Dubuque into the USHL's Clark Cup finals. He's a pugilist who can intimidate defenders as they go back for the puck, and making him lose possession is a tall order for opponents of any size. Playmaking and finding the open man are two aspects of his game that get overlooked. Knierim is committed to Miami University.

132. LW Otto Koivula (Ilves U20, Liiga Jrs): A somewhat gentle giant on skates who couldn't crack a top-six role on any of Finland's early-season U18 entries dating back to the Hlinka in August, then wasn't invited to any after the November Five Nations. It's probably more of a case of ridiculous depth than an indictment on the kind of player he is or can be, but the truth is that Koivula – all 6'4, 225 pounds of him – still had a strong junior season in which he was one of the top scorers in Finland's U20 circuit. Koivula has a deadly wrist shot and a quick release, and while his average skating hinders his ability to score off the rush, he knows exactly where he needs to be to get clean looks while displaying proper stick positioning. At this point he's a one-trick pony who happens to draw big crowds with that singular trick.

91. LW Jack Kopacka (Sault Ste Marie, OHL): A rebuilding year in Sault Ste Marie turned out to be a good thing for its young forwards, as the strong yet elusive Kopacka got a chance with top-six minutes to finish tied for fourth on the squad with 20 goals while firing off 179 shots. He's a classic power forward in terms of size (6'2, 190) but he's very quick and owns a pretty good shot. Like all big men, however, he can pull a lengthy vanishing act, and he doesn't always battle through adversity in the form of clogged skating lanes and slogging matches.

122. C Joona Koppanen (Ilves U20, Liiga Jrs): Dominant defensive-minded center with skill that at 6'5 can use his massive reach to break up play after play. Koppanen has the ability to create and finish plays, but he was an obedient soldier for Finland's under-18 squads by tackling the tough top-line checking assignments. He's quite mobile and covers ground in a hurry, using a long stride and good anticipation skills to get to where he needs to be. Koppanen is not as raw as you would think – there are times where he resembles a polished veteran who simply understands the nuances of responsible, three-zone hockey. He leads his man very well, and uses deft stickhandling to either hide the puck when he's moving down the wall, or drag it around a poke check to open up the ice for him.

109. RW Yegor Korshkov (Lokomotiv, KHL): Double-overage two-way winger who had an accomplished campaign for both Lokomotiv in the KHL and Russia's National Team. You can't dent the hockey sense and creativity he oozes, but you'd only hope that a 20-year-old who wingers stands 6'4 would impose his will against younger international competition. He was a depth forward for Loko, but the handful of games we watched revealed a competitive player with shiftiness and a tremendous work ethic in board battles. Korshkov is a good skater who can shift gears to catch opponents off guard.

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156. RW Ivan Kosorenkov (Russia U18, MHL): Dynamic puck magnet that is strong on his skates and can stickhandle his way out of a jam. Kosorenkov is pretty quick on his feet, using exceptional agility and balance to maintain control of the puck. He split the season between MHK Spartak and the Russian U18 team, playing on the top six for each club. Kosorenkov comes across as more of a playmaker than a goal scorer, but he scored a combined 13 goals in 33 games, converting a ridiculous 27 percent of his shots thanks to a quick release and the ability to break the ankles of defenders and he cuts and grooves his way to the cage. Scoring pretty goals is something Kosorenkov is capable of doing, but he doesn't bogey the tap-ins and slam dunks. He is listed at 6'0, 185 pounds but looks a bit stockier and his skating style is somewhat hunched. Nevertheless, it certainly works for him, as keeping the puck close to his body makes him more difficult to defend. Kosorenkov is physical when he needs to be and will fight for the puck or get in on the forecheck, but his bread and butter clearly is making plays. Knock this kid down, and he'll get back up.

66. LHD Chad Krys (U.S. NTDP): Once considered a possible top-10 pick for 2016, Krys's season with the NTDP was more plain than reassuring. He still maintained a top position and was a key cog in all situations, and you can't blame him for teammate Adam Fox's record-breaking campaign. We like the fact that he didn't look out of place against older competition at the WJC's, and there were periods when he played like the leader many expect him to become. The Boston University commit is mobile and an excellent stretch passer, and should be a favorite to man Team USA's top four at the world juniors in 2017.

12. RW/C Luke Kunin (Wisconsin, Big-10): Figuring out which 2016 draft prospects will have the honor of being called first round picks may not be as tough as in previous years. But Wisconsin forward Luke Kunin, the sharpshooting St. Louis product who flew somewhat under the radar while playing two seasons for the NTDP, is a virtual lock to get his name called on the draft's opening night. An honest, clean player with very good speed and strength, Kunin is a natural goal scorer, blessed with a laser of a shot and excellent instincts. He was unstoppable at last year's U18 World Championships, scoring six goals in seven games without the benefit of playing on the top line. He's been just as prolific as a freshman for the rebuilding Badgers, who entrusted him with top line duties. He's taken advantage of the NCAA schedule by hitting the weights, and you can tell by the way he's been plastering collegiate opponents. Kunin is an excellent skater who is always looking for his shot – a process that doesn't take a lot of time to bear results. Wisconsin coach Mike Eaves has raved about his maturity and leadership, and the fact that Kunin continues to improve while fighting Type 1 Diabetes tells us there's more to his game than just scoring.

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48. W/C Janne Kuokkanen (Karpas U20, Liiga Jrs): Tall, lean puck-distributor who we expect to beef up when it's time to make the jump to North America. Kuokkanen is a highly-cerebral player, using patience and precision passing to carve up any defensive scheme. He's been a star for Finland in the international circuit, culminating with a superb performance and a gold medal at the U18 World championship. His instant chemistry with Jesse Puljujarvi is something to keep an eye on — both should play for Karpas if Puljujarvi decides to stay in Europe. Kuokkanen is an average skater who uses his reach and a wide stance to protect the puck as he moves towards the net. His sense of awareness is extraordinary, so catching up to him won't always nip an opportunity in the bud. Kuokkanen makes good use of time and space, and even though he has a good shot with a quick release, he is most certainly a pass-first winger, albeit one you should keep an eye on near the low slot. Get used to the fact that he maintains the same demeanor start to finish — Kuokkanen stays within himself but rarely engages in physical play when the situation necessitates it.

75. RW Vladimir Kuznetsov (Acadie-Bathurst, QMJHL): A fearless, crash-and-bang sniper who is super quick on his feet and can unload a heavy shot, Kuznetsov was the top overall pick in last year's CHL Import Draft. The thick Russian winger didn't disappoint either — he finished fourth in QMJHL rookie scoring. He was one of only two draft-eligible CHL players to suit up for Russia's U18 squad at the world championship, and his tournament was a microcosm of the regular season in that there were times he looked lost on the ice, if you were keen enough to even notice him.

76. RW Jordan Kyrour (Sarnia, OHL): A prodigious playmaker with breakaway speed and finishing abilities, Kyrour bounced between Sarnia's top two lines and has the potential to be an impact forward. He's battled through inconsistent play and is prone to turning the puck over at inopportune times, but he's too tantalizing a prospect to pass over in a draft thin in pure skill. Kyrour's what we'd call a "Spotlight Ranger" who beefed up his stock with solid all-around play at high-profile events like the U18 Hlinka, the CHL Top Prospects Game and the U18 worlds. You can say almost any skill forward in this year's draft leaked defensive prowess from start to finish, but in Kyrour's case, it's a serious concern. Nevertheless, he's a dangerous player at even strength — more so than on the power play, as only five of his 51 points came with the man-advantage. He can play either center or wing, and won close to 50 percent of his 301 faceoffs (72 percent in the postseason).

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19. C/LW Pascal Laberge (Victoriaville, QMJHL): If there was ever a prospect that manages to go about his business without the kind of ballyhoo you'd expect from one of Quebec's top amateur players, it's definitely Pascal Laberge. The slick offensive dynamo went from being a top pick in the QMJHL draft, to draft prospect obscurity. A memorable performance at the CHL Top Prospects Game in January, however, shed light on what was an excellent pre-draft season. Laberge can play both center and wing, although his ability to elude or confront detection and fire off a lethal shot with a quick release makes us think he'd be a tremendous compliment to a top-notch set-up guy. Laberge is a good skater with a compact style yet strong enough to deal with a hit while maintaining possession. He keeps the puck close to his body, and his ability to change gears can catch a gambling defenseman flat footed. And while it's cliché to say a skill player would be a devastating adversary with time and space on his side, Laberge truly is a player you don't want to sleep on, as he unpredictable both with and without the puck. A true offensive threat who needs to get stronger and learn how to because an equal contributor in his own end.

207. C Tanner Laczynski (Chicago, USHL): Competitive two-way center that bulked up after being passed over last summer in his first draft look. The future Ohio State Buckeye has a tremendous nose for the net and a generally solid understanding of the game. He takes good routes to the cage and can cause serious problems on the forecheck since his stick is active and in the proper position. He is committed to positionally-sound hockey in his own end, and if he vacates an area on the ice, he'll either communicate with a teammate beforehand or simply take a calculated risk. Offensively, the tools are all there. He skates well for his size and can unload an accurate shot with a quick release, plus a set of soft hands and strong net awareness. Laczynski looks for teammates and makes nice lead passes, plus he can thread the needle going cross-ice or diagonally. One thing that stands out is that he can dominate a game from wire to wire without ending up on the scoresheet. He doesn't have any major flaws, and it's somewhat surprising he didn't get drafted a year ago.

110. G Jack Lafontaine (Janesville, NAHL): Mature and personable big-bodied goalie from the NAHL who will don the blue and gold of Michigan in the fall. Lafontaine is an active goalie who reads plays well, especially cross-ice passes. He's quite athletic for a big kid (6'3, 200 pounds) and plays an aggressive style. The fact that he has an active stick and exceptional puck-handling abilities almost makes a third defenseman, but his timing on dump-ins is somewhat inconsistent. Still, his positioning is solid, and his reset ability coupled with a quick glove make him hard to beat when he allows rebound attempts. Lafontaine has a great attitude towards both his craft and the game of hockey, and will likely develop faster than most of his peers.

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2. LW Patrik Laine (Tappara, Liiga): Laine is not only the best pure goal scorer in his draft class, but is the most lethal draft-eligible sniper since that guy named Alex Ovechkin back in 2004. A big-bodied winger with a deadly shot, Laine was a catalyst behind Finland's WJC gold medal and was recently named the Liiga playoff MVP. One of the telling signs of maturity is how one deals with adversity, specifically when it's admittedly self-inflicted. It was just over a year ago when a frustrated, 17-year-old Patrik Laine flipped Finland's National Team coach Mika Marttila the bird during a game against the Czechs. He also reportedly issued him physical threats, thus leading to his expulsion from the 2014 Hlinka tournament after only three games. Since then, however, he's done nothing but crush the opposition while maintaining a seemingly mature outlook and approach. Laine's become the best power winger prospect in the Finnish Elite League, and all before his 18th birthday. He's a big-bodied scoring threat with a devastatingly accurate wrist shot and a penchant for eluding detection, so when you combine the two, you get the desired result. From a skating perspective, he's shown an improved stride, which allows him to go zone-to-zone in a hurry. But what's been most impressive about his Liiga campaign beyond burying the puck has been the accuracy of his passes off the rush. Laine's been dominating both his peers and those slightly senior in age for a while now, and by that we mean both physically and statistically. And though he was slotted behind countryman and fellow-2016 draft eligible Jesse Puljujarvi in most pre-season draft rankings, Laine's domination of the men's league coupled with a slightly more impressive international resume shifted the pre-draft rhetoric towards Laine's corner. We think he's the best winger in the draft, and the closest among any draft-eligible winger to becoming a regular contributor in the NHL.

108. LHD Max Lajoie (Swift Current, WHL): An up-and-down season notwithstanding, Lajoie is one of the better options for teams who lack a pure puck mover within their system. Tall and lean with an offense-first mindset, he shook off a horrid first half to emerge as one of the WHL's most productive defenders, finishing with 24 points in his last 27 games. Lajoie is a graceful skater with excellent vision and owns an above-average shot. At 6'1, 183 pounds, he can stand to build up his body without leaking mobility, and possibly develop into the power play quarterback most teams yearn for. Lajoie's defensive game was at times disconcerting, but he steadily improved while taking on added responsibility.

206. C Alex Limoges (Tri-City, USHL): An engaged skill center with soft hands and a hard, accurate shot that was one of Tri-City's top players during its Clark Cup run. Limoges likes to compete and will position himself in areas where he knows he'll pay a stiff price, but he's also slick enough to take the initial hit and then dart into a better location. He's not the fleetest of foot, but he makes sharp cuts and turns to buy himself just enough time to make a play, especially on zone entries. At 6'1, 185 pounds, there's plenty of room to fill out and become more of a physical presence, but he doesn't shy away from dirty work. Limoges is a Virginia-born playmaker with a commitment to Cornell. He keeps his head up when he's in control of the puck and can make difficult passes through a dense network of stick blades and skates. Limoges has a quality shot and doesn't gun it towards the net for the sake of doing so. He is a calculated shooter who will shoot against the grain or shoot low when he sees linemates heading towards the net.

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60. LHD Ryan Lindgren (U.S. NTDP): This future Minnesota Gopher served as captain for Team USA, and you can certainly see why he was chosen. He's a strong young man with very good offensive instincts, using his size (6'0, 200) and strength to lean on opponents as he separated them from the puck. He's a very good skater with a keen eye for openings. Lindgren is a battler and a tough one-on-one matchup, and can be trusted to move the puck up the ice without it breaking into a million pieces. He can play a mean, physical game when the situation warrants it, and is not intimidated by an opponent's speed or size. Lindgren has outstanding leadership traits and should continue to play roles of importance and responsibility.

123. C Linus Lindstrom (Skelleftea J20, Superelit): Canadians may remember this crafty two-way pivot as the kid who ended Team Canada's tournament with a shootout winner at the U18's last April. Maybe knowing that he did the same thing to Russia at the Five Nations in February soothes the sting a little, but he's nevertheless a solid later-round option. Lindstrom won't blow you away with any specific skill, but he's a reliable depth forward who can surprise you with an accurate, above-average wrist shot. His skating is slightly above average, but he's a tenacious forechecker who finishes his checks and can sniff out a half-hearted clearing attempt.

105. RW Will Lockwood (U.S. U18, NTDP): Lockwood is near the top of a decent list of draft-eligible sandpaper forwards thanks to excellent straight-line speed and a fearless mindset when engaging opposing skaters. He gets most of his points from a crash-and-bang style that would normally compliment line mates of the finesse variety. Lockwood, however, played most of the season with similar players, yet he was easily one of the NTDP's most reliable and consistent in that regard. He'll don Wolverine blue and yellow next season, and when you consider how well he played against NCAA competition in 2016, the transition should be relatively seamless.

182. LHD Griffin Luce (U.S. U18, NTDP): A steady positional defender who seems comfortable in most one-on-one situations and refuses to let speed intimidate him. The Michigan-bound Luce's footwork and mobility is about average in comparison to his draft class peers, but he plays a pretty tight gap and uses his long reach to his advantage. Entering the zone against him is quite difficult, as he doesn't concede much territorially and knows how to time his poke checks. Luce won't put up many points, but then again, he's never been given much of an opportunity to. Naturally, it goes both ways, as offensive zone starts and power play time are two things he hasn't really earned outside of having a decent shot. Luce can over-handle the puck at times, and he's at his best when he keeps things simple and acquiesces to his more competent puck-controlling ice mates. At 6'3, 220 pounds, Luce can be a hard-nosed, physical force on the ice, which served him well against older NCAA competition.

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62. LW Alan Lyszczarczyk (Sudbury, OHL): A super-skilled winger with good speed who can also fill in at center, Lyszczarczyk had a fine season in Sudbury, finishing sixth in OHL rookie scoring with 50 points in 67 games. At 6'0, 185, he's got the kind of size an NHL team can work with, as he's already a very good playmaker and owns an excellent shot that he needs to use more. Born in Poland and raised in North America, Lyszczarczyk tore up the Czech junior circuit before signing with Sudbury as a free agent, then performed as one of the top players for Poland at this year's Division I U18's. He can play in the trenches and shows interest in fighting tooth and nail for loose pucks, but building upper-body strength and learning the intricacies of three-zone play will make him tougher to deal with beyond the puck artistry and hard shot. Lyszczarczyk is at this point a one-dimensional point producer who can be entrusted with power play duties but nothing during penalty kills and late-game lead holds.

59. C Otto Makinen (Tappara U20, Liiga Jrs): Finland had one heck of a season on the international stage, where a puck-distributing pivot like Makinen made a name for himself. His play took off as early as the Hlinka, and you can argue he was his nation's top draft-eligible forward immediately following Patrik Laine and Jesse Puljujärvi for quite some time. He's a decent skater, but what Makinen can do best is stickhandle and make precision plays off zone entries. And don't sleep on his finishing abilities – he has butter-soft hands and a quick release.

103. RW Kyle Maksimovich (Erie, OHL): Diminutive yet responsible sparkplug who was a consistent scorer for a deep Otters squad, finishing the season with an impressive 71 points in 68 games. Maksimovich plays fearless, as if he's 6'9 rather than his listed 5'9. He hits, hustles, scratches and claws his way to scoring opportunities, but he can also whip a pretty accurate through a seemingly clogged lane. His speed and endurance make him a perfect penalty killing option, and a willingness to take a beating but remain on his skates enabled him bury quite a few power play markers from within the minefields of the low slot.

135. C/W Seamus Malone (Wisconsin, Big-10): The luck of the Irish wasn't enough to provide Badgers fans with a winning season, but the double-overage Malone played a pivotal top-six role in their revival from a horrid campaign in 2015 in which they only won four games. He's an excellent stickhandler and playmaker who will rock a defender to sleep with his puck skills before slicing through passing lanes with a hard, tape-to-tape set-up. Malone is an excellent skater with very good edges, and his ability to combine speed with skill helped him solidify a top-six role throughout the season. His size (5'10/180) was part of the reason why he went undrafted for two straight years, but any team would be smart to snag a pivot who was one of the NCAA's top freshman set-up men.

232. LW Beck Malenstyn (Calgary, WHL): If real awards were handed out for effort and desire, this power forward would wear out the awards show circuit. Malenstyn is a classic power forward with good speed who would lay out the Zamboni machine if it had an opposing jersey on it. He has a very good shot with a quick release, but he hits the crest far too often. The intangibles are off the charts — his head is always in the game and rarely does he get cheated on a shift. There are no inconsistencies with Malenstyn in terms of effort, and he has the makings of a solid two-way player. There was a point during the season when we felt he was snakebitten, and that may be somewhat true. But the kid has to start burying the quality chances he most certainly earns. At 6'2, 193 pounds, he should be groomed for Calgary's top six and a look for Team Canada at the summer WJC camp.

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24. LW Adam Mascherin (Kitchener, OHL): This power forward's overall numbers are impressive — only Matt Tkachuk (107) and Alex DeBrincat (101) had more points than Mascherin (81) among OHL first-year eligibles. Short but solid, he's an excellent playmaker and elite stickhandler who makes up for a lack of significant foot speed with patience and grown-man strength. The poor kid has issues accelerating, but again, his lethal shot (and it is lethal) and vision make him too good a prospect to pass on. Mascherin is the hockey equivalent of an elite quarterback who can carve up a zone or man-to-man defense without impunity, and he uses a long stick and quick thinking to steal passes and exploit a numerical advantage or create one himself. Mascherin, a former top pick in the OHL Priority Selection, plays a clean, disciplined game and has legitimate top-line potential.

169. LHD Joe Masonius (UConn, Hockey East): An overage power-play specialist who played for the NTDP in 2015 before heading to Storrs to help the Huskies establish credibility in Hockey East. Masonius is neither big nor physical, but he is extremely agile and loves to jumpstart the offense with a quick pass or a rush up the ice. He doesn't have blinding speed, but the New Jersey natives is both confident and competent at taking direct routes with the puck into heavy traffic. Masonius is always on the prowl, dropping down well below the dots to either uncork an above-average yet accurate shot, or make a quick cross-ice pass to a wide-open teammate. His hockey sense is pretty high, and it's no coincidence that UConn scored nearly a third of their total goals on the power play with Masonius at the helm.

1. C Auston Matthews (ZSC, NLA): Matthews is a dynamic, franchise-changing pivot who nearly won the Swiss League's MVP award as an 18-year-old. A dominant player whether he's shooting it or dishing it out, he's ready for the rigors of the NHL, and his upbringing will prevent any pressure cooker from bugging him. Inspired by the oft-overlooked hockey community ensconced within America's southwestern desert, the Arizona-born Matthews is a feel-good hockey story on many levels. And though he is certainly destined to influence the sport's growth in the region, the question is simply whether he'll do it directly or indirectly. Yes, Matthews is the likely top pick in next year's draft, and it's a good bet his hometown Arizona Coyotes will have no problem finishing next season with the best chance to land him. And why not? He's a generational, franchise-changing prospect who nearly hit the 200-pound benchmark right around the time he turned 16. But size and strength do not define what Matthews brings to the ice every night. He is a ridiculous playmaker and puck possessor, shifting and twirling around defenders who at times will both be within inches of the puck. Matthews comes from good stock — his uncle, Wes Matthews, was a football star in Oklahoma and earned a brief appearance for the Miami Dolphins in 1966. But his vision and hand-eye coordination while wearing skates are things he focused on, to the point of having an unparalleled ability to corral pucks out of midair and nestle them softly onto his stick. Matthews' decision making is off the charts; he can be used in different scenarios, but he's at his best when he's picking apart small gaps in passing and/or skating lanes below the opposing blue line. He's also a no-nonsense shooter with a quick release, but not at the risk of wasting a better opportunity. Matthews will hold onto the puck for an eternity, but in his case, it's a good thing thanks to exceptional balance, footwork and stickhandling. Clearly the best forward prospect among his draft-eligible peers, and is so for many reasons.

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129. C/LW Mitchel Mattson (Bloomington, USHL): Whether you love his game or are indifferent, you can't deny how enticing a prospect the big-bodied Mattson is. He's a 6'4 center who simply makes his linemates better, albeit the linemates he had in high school. He opted to ditch the USHL for a return season at Grand Rapids, which obviously benefited from his return. The problem is that we don't think Mattson himself gained anything from a developmental standpoint, and he looked lost and out of place when he returned to Bloomington for the playoffs. Still, this kid has a ton of potential, and going to a loaded college program like North Dakota should only help. He's an above-average skater with incredibly soft hands and a keen understanding of play development – if a seam is about to open, Mattson will find the best option with timing and precision.

28. RHD Charlie McAvoy (Boston University, Hockey East): Sturdy two-way defenseman who immediately became a key cog on Boston University's blueline. A native of Long Island who was reared in the Gulls' program before a run with last year's NTDP under-18 squad, McAvoy is built for the modern game – thick, explosive and assertive. He's a strong skater with excellent balance and superior mobility both up and across the ice. McAvoy loves to join the rush and can read a play as good as any of his draft-eligible peers – something we saw last year as a defenseman on Team USA. He's a confident puck carrier who attacks openings with speed, but can also slow it down and patiently weigh his options. Always moving his feet, McAvoy is capable of slipping through gaps without the puck, or stickhandling around traffic while keeping the puck close to his body. He has a heavy shot that can be delivered with accuracy, and his passes are tape to tape. An undervalued part of his game is physicality, which gets him in hot water as he's still learning the difference between a timely, legal bone-crushing hit and gross negligence of the rule book. The nuances of the defensive part of the position are still a work in progress, and there was a period when McAvoy had difficulty assuming roles of greater responsibility. His strong second half was reassuring to say the least.

212. LHD Luke McNinnis (Youngstown, USHL): Sure-handed mobile defender with NHL bloodlines who spearheaded Youngstown's attack with speed and playmaking from the blueline. McNinnis, whose father Marty was drafted by the New York Islanders in 1988, is an offensive type of defender who skates extremely well and will hang on to the puck as he slices through the neutral zone. He's not big or physically intimidating (5'10, 167 pounds), but he maximizes his size and reach with sound positioning and an active stick. Defending his position is still a work in progress, however, as McNinnis is good with coverage, but is inconsistent with the timing of his pinches and defending against odd-man rushes. Playing aggressive is part of his make-up, and he will flash a move or two to elude a heavy forecheck. McNinnis loves to not only join or create a rush, but he'll chase after his own dump-ins and use the boards to his advantage. He has an average shot but is able to hit his spots, keeping it low if a teammate is in position for a tip-in. He will join Boston College for the 2017-18 season and has a late-July, 1998 birthday.

By Steve Kournianos

10. C Michael McLeod (Mississauga, OHL): Mississauga was loaded with draft-eligible talent this year, but the one guy who drove the proverbial engine was this lightning-quick playmaker who gelled with Alex Nylander to form one of the OHL's lethal duos. McLeod has size and a soft set of hands, but he won close to 60% of his draws and is used in critical situations. He is an exciting two-way player with leadership qualities who happens to be one of the best skaters available for the coming NHL draft. McLeod has one-step acceleration that helps him keep defenders off balance once the puck ends up on his stick. From that point forward, it's off to the races, as McLeod combines his speed with keen vision to not only identify others for an option or two, but create one for himself. The best word to describe his game is rapid — everything he does is with effort and a sense of urgency. What separates McLeod from the lot of draft-eligible speedsters is that he has the size, strength and puck-control skills to go along with it. He's an excellent passer either up the ice or diagonally in the offensive zone, and his ability to thread the needle while moving his feet can force opponents to cheat towards the pass. This creates a parting of the seas, and many times you'll see McLeod zoom into a massive opening for a scoring chance of his own. Therein lies the rub, however, as McLeod generates a ton of shots towards the cage without the kind of finish you'd like to see from a high-end scoring forward. Nevertheless, he's a pure center with good faceoff skills and a relentless desire to succeed. There's no quit in McLeod; something many of his peers are clearly lacking.

149. LW Graham McPhee (U.S. U18, NTDP): If the NTDP gave out a construction hat or black lunch pail as a postgame tradition recognizing the kid who gave his all, McPhee would have to get some kind of own storage space. This kid works his tail off, which came in handy for a program that was somewhat top heavy in the production department. His ice time was reduced when Team USA brought in a trio of ringers as a second line for the U18 worlds, but he still provided some punch with timely hitting and an aggressive forecheck. McPhee is Boston College-bound, so he's going to have scratch and claw his way into a top-six role. He won't dazzle you with any specific skill, should he be leaned on to provide offense. But his aggressive, hard-charging mentality and ability to kill penalties is what makes him both a safe pick and one with legitimate bottom-six potential.

81. LHD Josh Mahura (Red Deer, WHL): A top defense prospect before an early-autumn knee injury cost him the entire regular season, Mahura looks like he's rebounded nicely, helping the Rebels in their march to the Memorial Cup and playing on their second pairing. He is a mobile-two way defender with average size (6'0, 180), but he's known for a hard shot and ability to fend off pressure with smart plays and sound instincts. Mahura, who played for Team Canada at the 2015 Ivan Hlinka and was Red Deer's 2nd round pick in the 2013 WHL Bantam Draft, is a safe pick whose upside is between a fourth to sixth defenseman.

By Steve Kournianos

89. C Mikhail Maltsev (Russia U18, MHL): One of the draft's few two-way centers with size that tips towards the grinder side than that of a pivot with pure skill. Maltsev did a fine job as Team Russia's second-line center behind German Rubtsov, using his size/reach advantage to really give opponents the business. He can play an in-your-face style and uses good speed to get in on the forecheck without over-committing or leaving his linemates out to dry. At 6'3, 200 pounds, it's scary to think that he can get bigger, hopefully without costing him in the mobility department. On the power play, he likes to acquiesce to his gifted puck distributors and take a spot near or directly behind the net. Maltsev is very good on faceoffs, which is probably the reason he's playing with the man advantage to begin with.

128. C Mikhail Meshcherykov (Russia U18, MHL): Feisty and quick set-up man who was one of the Russian U18 team's top scorers this season. He ran the gauntlet of international competition with moderate success, but remember that affairs like February's Five Nations Tournament and the previous summer's Ivan Hlinka were checked tighter than in previous years. Meschryakov controls the puck with strength and responsibility while keeping his head up for multiple options. If there's one thing he can do well, it's definitely cross-ice passing, so when he looks like he's skirting the wall deliberately on a zone entry, there's a good bet he's waiting for that week-side cutter to appear in his periphery. Mescheryakov's balance is quite solid for a kid who weighs only 165 pounds, and he can drop the shoulder and shift into high gear to catch a checker flat footed.

57. LHD Victor Mete (London, OHL): Easily one of the toughest draft-eligible prospects to gauge because he does so many things at a high level, yet is an undersized defenseman on a loaded, powerhouse of a team. His biggest asset is speed — he is lightning-quick and doesn't have to tinker with his quickness in order to blow the doors off an opponent. This kid has made very sound checkers looked novice in their approach, and can cap off an end-to-end rush with a smart play towards the net, or a cut back in order to open up the ice around him. Mete relies on push-and-shove tactics to deny bigger forwards the opportunity to take the puck inside, but he needs to get stronger if he wants to be counted on at higher levels.

179. RW Carson Meyer (Tri-City, USHL): Talented 1997-born overage Ohioan with a devastatingly accurate shot who tied for fourth in the USHL with 32 goals in only 56 games. Meyer is committed to Miami University and should not have a problem ensconcing himself into a top-six role. He's an average skater but difficult to contain, and although his assist totals seem low (19), he has the ability to thread the needle and set up teammate with quality chances. He plays with enthusiasm and doesn't take shifts off. His size (5'11, 184 pounds) isn't that big of an issue since he's an inside player who fill take a hit to finish a play.

By Steve Kournianos

219. LHD Keaton Middleton (Saginaw, OHL): Menacing stay-at-home defender likely to require both patience and instruction if an offensive aspect is desired. Talent evaluators must accept that Middleton rarely puts himself in a position to dictate the tempo of a game on his own terms. The only game-changing aspect we see on a consistent basis is physicality; something we will neither overlook nor deny its importance regardless of whether positional blueliners are deemed trendy or not. He's the perfect "need" pick for a team lacking a crease clearer. Middleton is one of the draft's most imposing figures (6'6, 233 pounds), and he uses every inch to jab, slash and mug anybody within an earshot. Size and strength are obvious assets, but he's also a competitor who will work feverishly to win a one-on-one battle. If there's a physical confrontation on the ice, Middleton will step and play the Sherriff's role. His puck skills are average at best, but he is mobile with a long stride, and can unload a heavy shot that unfortunately is not of much importance to him.

134. C/LW Marco Miranda (GCK, NLB): Big-bodied finesse forward who is more of a finisher than a playmaker. In terms of skaters, Miranda is arguably the best the Swiss have to offer for the 2016 Draft as all of their draft-eligibles failed to distinguish themselves both individually and collectively over the course of a half-dozen international events. Miranda, however, was one of the few who stood out. He has very soft hands and a deadly shot to augment his above-average skating ability. He seems to sniff out when a less-than-agile defender is on the ice, then attack his weakness with speed to the outside. Miranda is a perimeter player of the highest order, and although he rarely gets involved in physical play, his shot-size combination makes him the perfect project to pluck from the lower rounds.

203. LW Daniil Miromanov (Acadie-Bathurst, QMJHL): Overage Russian sniper with a devastating shot who provided offense despite playing a depth role for more than half the season. Miromanov is crafty and athletic, using a lanky build (6'3, 183 pounds) and long reach to protect the puck and get a ton of velocity on his shot. His speed is slightly above average, and he's shown to break away from retreating defenders. One thing you'll notice about him is the way he chips the puck off the boards to himself in order to blow past an opponent in a one-on-one scenario. When the effort's there, he's all aces, especially on the power play where he can be used in the low slot or on the wing for a hard one-timer. Miromanov will hit the net under the bar if a goalie is sliding across and targets the short side during two-on-one's. The biggest concern is effort — he will dazzle you one night, only to disappear the next.

144. RW Evgeni Mityakin (Avto-Yekaterinburg, MHL): Goal-scoring power winger with a blistering shot who played a quarter of the season in the KHL in preparation for a full-time role in 2017. Mityakin is a big kid (6'3, 210) who is patient with the puck and knows how to create his own shot while opening up the lane for himself. He's deceptively fast, meaning he covers ground and can change gears despite owning a somewhat plodding skating style. What he does best is protect the puck using a wide stance and long wingspan. At times, it's somewhat comical watching opponents try to steal the puck from him with half-hearted swipes when the puck is a good three or four feet away from them. He's not much of a looker in the defensive zone, but his wingspan comes in handy on the penalty kill.

By Steve Kournianos

43. LW/C Cam Morrison (Youngstown, USHL): You might as well start calling him Mr. Touchdown, because watching this South Bend-bound monster on the ice is reminiscent of a bruising tight end that always finds the end zone. Morrison was named the USHL's 2016 top rookie after winning the OJHL Rookie of the Year in 2015. He's a classic power forward with a strong desire to get to the net and position himself to receive the puck in optimal scoring areas. Morrison, who boasts a heavy, accurate shot, plays like a bull in a china shop, but it's generally done while under control and with his head up at all times. He can play either wing or center, but did the most damage on the flank of the Phantoms' top line. While he's known for collecting garbage goals from time to time, his vision and understanding of play development make him a legitimate playmaking threat as well. Morrison doesn't have good separation speed, but he protects the puck well and makes sharp cuts to buy himself an extra second or two. Only 17 on Draft Day, Morrison will continue to bulk up as he utilizes the NCAA schedule while playing against older opponents.

74. LHD Jacob Moverare (HV71, SHL): The Swedes are known for producing sound, multi-purpose rearguards that know how to move the puck out of harm's way. And although it's been almost a decade since the Tre Kronor produced a defenseman with all-star acumen, you can add Moverare to the high-upside list of 2016 draft eligibles. He has good size (6'3, 200) but his mobility and passing are what will get him to the next level. Moverare has the ability to make game-changing plays – they are, however, few and far between. His shot selection is somewhere between confusing and downright maddening, meaning he will walk the line to open up a shooting lane, only to dump it down low. Making questionable decisions is par for the course for offensive-minded defenders, so the team that takes him should expect a bumpy development path.

187. LW Brett Murray (Carelton Place, CCHL): Big, strong power forward that can pass the puck and make plays in and around traffic. He's not a great skater, but he's good enough to occasionally beat his man to the puck or get to an opening in order to receive a pass to fire off an over-average shot. Murray will fight into the dirty areas and muck it up without giving up control of the puck, and can take a continuous beating while ensconced in the low slot. A useful power play option for either the low slot or the wall, Murray is headed to Penn State in the fall. He didn't necessarily stand out at the WJAC for Canada East, but at 6'5, 200+ pounds, he's a good option for a team who could work with size and strength on the flanks. He's almost a late-1998 birthday (7-20-98) with obvious room for growth, but we'd like to see him use his physical advantages to intimidate and out-muscle.

151. LHD Justin Murray (Barrie, OHL): A late riser who shot his way up the Colts' depth chart to earn a role on the top pairing alongside top scorer Rasmus Andersson. Murray is a mature defender with leadership qualities who can be counted on when the going gets tough. He's somewhat of an awkward skater, but he still mobile enough to either join rushes or evade heavy forechecks. Murray plays awake and makes far more smart plays than ones you could question, and the stats don't do him justice – he can deliver when the time is right. He did an exceptional job for Barrie's penalty kill, which finished fourth in the league and scored a mind-numbing 28 shorthanded goals. Overall, he's a strong positional blueliner with an above-average shot who competes hard and looks to better himself after every shift, which is all any team could ask for in a draft prospect. He's listed at 6'0, 180 pounds, but he plays far bigger than his measurements indicate.

By Steve Kournianos

117. C Ondrej Najman (Dukla Jihavla U21, Extraliga Jrs): Dependable two-way pivot with good puck skills and a knack for getting himself positioned properly. Najman is a deliberate playmaker who likes to hang on to the puck in order to draw defenders towards him, then freak them with a highlight-reel play. Blessed with a high IQ and good size (6'1, 190), Najman can be used in any situation at any stage of the game. His upside could be considered higher than that of teammate Kristian Reichel in terms of pure passing ability, but he's a bit slower which may hurt his chances to crack a top-six role. Najman can be a tough out once the puck crosses center.

126. LHD Markus Niemelainen (Saginaw, QMJHL): Some may view the Finnish Niemelainen as an uppercut pick that other staffs may possibly had slept on. To be frank, he's a project, using God-given talent to his advantage far more than taking steps to improve his shortcomings with decision making. The Niemelainen we saw in September was the same one from the recent U18's — big, mobile blueliner with a decent shot who is a beast from the dots down but makes a handful of bad choices per outing. At his absolute best, he's a less physical version of pre-injuries Marc Staal, so getting Niemelainen either early or late could end up becoming a steal.

7. RW/LW Alexander Nylander (Mississauga, OHL): Nylander is a silky-smooth sniper with world-class finishing skills. The OHL Rookie of the Year in 2016, he scored big goals for Sweden at Hlinka, and followed that up with top-line production at both the WJC and the U18's. Nylander is patient with the puck, but he's decisive and makes the right choices. It's never a bad thing to have a little "street cred" when Draft Day rolls around, and this Swedish speedster most certainly earned his following a dominant performance as Sweden's top wing at the 2016 WJC's. And while the Swedes failed to take home any hardware (they lost to the Americans in the bronze medal game), the ability of a youngster like Nylander to uplift his team after a crushing injury to his brother William spoke volumes about how gifted a talent Alex is. Truth be told, his play at a midseason exhibition is a small piece of the pie, however, as he's produced an outstanding rookie campaign for Mississauga. He's an excellent skater with a deadly shot, but he can score goals from in close thanks to a ridiculous set of hands. Nylander is able to make smart decisions as he maneuvers through traffic, and his ability to stickhandle in and around a dense field of sticks and skates while knowing exactly where his linemates will be makes him an indefensible threat on the rush. He's impossible to prepare for, as he can beat you with his playmaking or his heavy shot. And much like his aforementioned brother, Alexander loves to hang onto the puck for what may seem like an eternity, but is done in a sensible fashion without trapping himself into a corner. He can play either side of center ice, and kills penalties, so don't you dare consider him a one-trick pony. Nylander should be considered one of the draft's best goal scorers, but his ability to thread the needle and play selfless hockey makes him one of the few two-pronged threats available for 2016.

By Steve Kournianos

160. C Michael O'Leary (Dubuque, USHL): All the tools are there — size, skill, speed and vision — as he proved with a strong playoff for the Fighting Saints. It's just a matter of putting it all together into one complete, consistent package. O'Leary was one of Eastern Canada's top prospects — the Halifax native was the 14th overall pick in the 2014 QMJHL draft — yet struggled to find his way as a USHL rookie (USHL Top Prospects Game domination notwithstanding). Still, he can be a two-way force, at times unstoppable, when he's got his head into a given game. O'Leary can flat out fly, but he's got the build (6'2, 200) to make the notion of facing him even scarier. He can adapt to most game situations, whether grind-it-out or up-and-down, but like most power forwards, he goes through periods of invisibility and can look like he cares less. It's difficult not to label this kid a top prospect, but there's far more to the game than skill, even if he seemingly can do it all. He was originally committed to Cornell but rescinded that promise last month, thus making him an NCAA free agent or a flight risk to the CHL. Either or, O'Leary needs to mature and clean up his in-game antics and commit himself towards becoming the star we think he can become.

172. RHD Zach Osburn (Michigan State, Big-10): One of the nation's top freshman power play specialists whose five goals with the man-advantage was tops among all first-year defenders. The hard-shooting Michigan native is an excellent skater who loves to attack and exploit gaps in opposing coverage. He's a tad on the smaller size (5'11, 185), and having a size disadvantage against bigger NCAA forwards was evident from the start of the season. It was a rebuilding year in East Lansing, but it was Osburn who created legitimate buzz with his right-handed cannon and proclivity for firing pucks on net. He doesn't hide his desire for dropping down below the hash marks, and when you can skate as well as he can, the reward outweighs the risk.

130. G Tyler Parsons (London, OHL): It's easy to dismiss a goalie's mind-numbing win totals if you think he's a product of a system rather than the other way around. In the case of the Michigan-born Parsons, the OHL-champion Knights are undoubtedly lucky to have such a stellar netminder to count on when times are tough. Not every game began with a quick 3-0 lead, so it was usually up to Parsons to either steal a win or make a critical save early and allow the Knights to blow games wide open. A stand-up goalie with swift reset ability, he makes big saves in late-game situations and can move the puck into a scoring chance when opponents are snoozing. Parsons was outstanding in leading the Knights to the Memorial Cup title.

143. LW Nick Pastujov (U.S. U18, NTDP): Hard-working grinder with finishing abilities who was buried in Team USA's bottom-six for months until a late-season surge landed him with more minutes and some well-deserved exposure. Pastujov scored some killer goals for Team USA at the last Five Nations and the U18 worlds that soon followed. He's another Florida-born kid who'll make a name for himself on Draft Day, but he's going to have to overcome similar team-wide scoring depth when he suits up for a overcrowded Michigan squad next fall. Pastujov has above-average speed and a quick shot, and he likes to lay the body and dig into a defender's business with an active stick and physicality. He's never had the chance to strut his offensively capabilities over an extended period of time, so keep an eye on him as a late bloomer.

By Steve Kournianos

39. RHD Andrew Peeke (Green Bay, USHL): Labeling a defenseman as the “shut down” variety is not only cliché, but extremely subjective. Peeke, however, is in our view the draft’s best one-on-one defender, and it means something when you can impact a game’s complexion with this ability. He is big and mobile, using an active stick and mammoth wingspan to fix onrushing opponents into a failed decision. Peeke can also play the power play thanks to his wicked shot and ability to thread the needle. He could stand to increase the intensity from a physical standpoint, especially when he has the size and strength to do so. But he plays a clean, disciplined game and served as a fireman for most of Green Bay’s late-game lead holds. Add Peeke to the list of the growing number of Florida-born prospects with serious NHL upside.

211. RHD Andrew Peski (Tri-City, WHL): Attack-minded blueliner with good size (6’0, 195) who played a critical role in Tri-City’s Clark Cup championship, logging top-four minutes and helping on the power play. He’s a very good skater with speed and solid pivoting ability. Peski is an overager only by a year, and he’s committed to play for North Dakota, where his improvement in one-on-one play and cleaning up the crease will compliment his obvious skills with the puck. He makes smart, well-timed plays on the breakout and rarely turns the puck over in his own end. If something is brewing below the circles, he’ll drop down to create another option, but his backward skating is strong enough to where he can recover if the opponent grabs control. Peski is a mature young man who doesn’t complain and does what is asked of him, which helped make the Ontario native one of the CCHL’s top prospects in 2015.

140. C Garrett Pilon (Kamloops, WHL): The son of former New York Islanders’ defenseman Rich Pilon who was one of several bright spots during the Blazers’ resurgent season in which they improved 22 points in the standings and qualified for the playoffs. Garrett is an average skater but a very good playmaker – 22 of his 30 assists were primary – and he boasts a wicked wrist shot that he can fire with authority whether off balance or if the puck is in his feet. He loves to get in on the forecheck and use his upper-body strength to separate opponents from the puck, and once he gets it, there is no telling how many options he’s already surveyed. He can play center or either wing, and at times he played the point on the power play with fellow draft eligible Dawson Davidson. He has legitimate top-six upside with the kind of diverse skill set to fit and stay in anyone’s lineup.

228. C Rem Pitlick (Muskegon, USHL): The USHL’s top player as an overager who led the circuit in scoring and will play for Don Lucia at Minnesota in the fall of 2017. Pitlick is an excellent skater with shiftiness and escapability who keeps his head up and tends to avoid any major open-ice catastrophes. He bulked up in the offseason after not hearing his name called in Sunrise, but without any impact on his overall speed. He can change direction in the blink of an eye and put himself in a position where he can absorb a hit yet still complete a play. Pitlick has exceptional vision and hockey sense, and he boasts an above-average shot that he doesn’t mind hammering from distances. But he’s far from a fire-and-forget kind of scorer — Pitlick likes to maneuver as close to the goal as possible while maintaining a tight grip on the puck. He can play center or wing, but he is at his best up the middle. At 5’9, 196 pounds, Pitlick has the strength and determination to fight through checks and take a beating along the wall, but he has work to do on the defensive side of things. He did take key draws and killed penalties but was more of an offensive threat than someone you can rely on to shut down an opposing power play.

By Steve Kournianos

194. G Colton Point (Carleton Place, CCHL): Colgate-bound behemoth (6'4, 220 pounds) that was one of the CCHL's top netminders as a first-year draft eligible. He's a structured backstopper with quickness and an outstanding head for the game, and being as tall as he is allows him to track pucks all the way through. Point is quick to his feet after goal-mouth scrums, and he's not much of a complainer when he gets run over. His reset ability after the first, even second shot is excellent as both his glove and stick are properly aligned. However, it's cliché to call a young, big-bodied puck stopper "raw" or a "project", but that sort of goes without saying for all goalie prospects. Point uses his size to his advantage in all areas except one — his angles while facing the shooter. He tends to be overconfident in thinking his ridiculous size covers everything, when in fact he's prone to leave a sizeable gap on the slightest of head fakes or dekes.

154. LW Greg Printz (Selects Academy, USPHL): Hard-nosed power forward with outstanding balance who works hard to get his name on the scoresheet. Printz is a Providence commit who likes to use his size (6'2, 200) in front of the net, where he plants his legs and stick like a tripod to form an unmovable barrier. Defensemen have a hard time getting positioning on him, but that may change once he faces older, physically mature NCAA blueliners. Printz is quicker off the puck than he is on it — he doesn't seem all that comfortable handling it unless he has time and space. But he's aware and decisive on loose pucks in both the crease and low slot, using his long reach to swat pucks in or prevent the goalie from covering up. His skating is average as he lacks first-step quickness, but he and center Matt Jakubowski (2017 draft) showed good chemistry to where Printz was able to beat defenders to a given spot to receive a pass from his center. He owns a good shot but shoots for the long side far too often, so working on his speed to the outside to gain territory off the rush closer to the goal should be a focus this offseason.

186. RHD Chase Priskie (Quinnipiac, ECAC): Athletic finesse defenseman with mobility and skill who improved game by game as a freshman with a renewed focus on positioning and coverage. Priskie is a double overager (he'll be 21 in March) from Florida who played for the BCHL's Salmon Arm Silverbacks before lacing them up for Quinnipiac's powerhouse NCAA program. He's one of their top defensemen who helps run the power play and generates chances with an aggressive style designed to make the transition to offense both rapid and lethal. He boasts an outstanding shot and uses his footwork to cut or glide beyond an opponent's reach in order to get a cleaner look at the cage. Priskie utilizes the slap-pass effectively and can set up a deflection from above the crease area. The biggest knock on Priskie is that he isn't physical enough, especially when you consider he's not that small (6'0, 185 pounds). He's a disciplined player reliable in one-on-one situations and rarely is he turned around or blown past by even the fastest of skaters.

By Steve Kournianos

71. C Cliff Pu (London, OHL): If you've been following our rankings, you might be saying "Cliff Who" when noticing a meteoric rise. Take our word for it when he say he's deserved every bit of the recent hype, delivering clutch play and two-way dominance for a London team almost anyone would have to scratch and claw their way to ice time. Why is he special? Pu's big, fast and can fire off a very good shot. But the biggest eye opener was how he was able to produce with limited minutes and next to nothing in offensive zone starts and/or power play time. When London's big names (Tkachuk, Dvorak, Marner etc.) were at the WJC, it was Pu and Max Jones who ran the offense. Pu doesn't have high-end hockey sense, but he busts his tail on every shift and learned how to use his length and quickness to cause problems for opposing defenders. There's a good chance he blossoms with more responsibility, but his upside is somewhat of a mystery since he was buried behind several of junior hockey's top players.

3. RW Jesse Puljujarvi (Karpas, Liiga): Puljujarvi's enthusiasm and high-end skill is almost certain to add a dimension almost every NHL team could use. He had a record-setting performance en route to gold for Finland at the WJC, and followed it up with both an excellent postseason and another gold for his country at last month's U18 tournament. Big, strong, yet flashy and graceful, Puljujarvi is ready to contribute immediately. Last year, when a 16-year-old Puljujarvi appeared for Team Finland at the 2015 World Junior Championship, the hockey world was still trying to figure out how good he really was. Although stifled by bigger, more mature netminding, the electrifying Finn became one of the few bright spots in what was an underwhelming performance by the Finnish collective. Puljujarvi used his power-speed combo to consistently catch defenders flat footed, but his lack of finish made you wonder if he was deserving of being called one of the 2016 draft's top prospects. Now, the question shouldn't be considered, as he earned top-six minutes on Karpas's senior team, and with fellow Finnish stud Patrik Laine presents one of the draft's top two goal-scoring wingers. Puljujarvi is a strong, powerful forward with an outstanding burst of speed and first step. He is tremendous at sniffing out opportunities before they happen, and once the puck finds some freedom, he collects it while in full flight in what seems like a millisecond. Puljujarvi is an extremely dangerous player who can be used in any situation, and being 6'3 doesn't hinder his ability to adapt to a variety of situations -- he can play on the power play, kill penalties, take a man out with a hit or cleanly stickhandle in very tight spaces. He owns an excellent shot, only it's slightly less accurate than the sharpshooting Laine. Puljujarvi's at his best when he's got the puck in full flight, but that doesn't mean he's rendered useless during the slogging matches. He's really mature and has a genuine "die hard" mentality. Even more impressive is that he rarely, if ever, gets complacent. Struggle he most certainly has, but the effort is never in question. We view him as an elite power forward with star potential, and quite possibly the best Finnish prospect in almost 30 years. His somewhat marginal production at even strength in the men's league is misleading; he was one of Karpas's most productive forwards in terms of generating shots.

By Steve Kournianos

73. RHD David Quenneville (Medicine Hat, WHL): Quenneville might be a 5'9 defenseman, and we all know how unteachable size can be. But taking the elephant outside the room for a lengthy jog reveals how wonderful a talent this Edmontonian is — a feisty pepper pot who loves to hammer the puck and make highlight-reel plays taking the disc to the cage. Quenneville is unpredictable and hard to war-game, but what surprised us is how strong he is from the waist up. He loves to throw the body and lay out bigger players with open ice hits, regardless of whether they see it coming or not. Mobile and engaged, Quenneville is easily in the top quarter of a talented group of draft-eligible two-way defensemen, and it wouldn't be a stretch to say he was an inch or two away from being a lock for the top-30 of most pre-draft rankings.

52. RW Taylor Raddysh (Erie, OHL): Goal-scoring power forward with an NHL-ready build who may be a bit undervalued playing alongside Erie's notable talent the last two seasons. He was able to rack up assists playing on the Otters' top line with Dylan Strome and Alex DeBrincat, but keep in mind that his speed and tenacity on the forecheck created scoring opportunities without the benefit of getting his name of the scoresheet. Raddysh is a good skater with good closing speed once he gets the wheels churning, and he uses a long reach to force turnovers. His first step isn't that quick, but his body positioning and wide silhouette allow him to maintain puck control on the rush despite a general lack of breakaway speed. One of the more cerebral power forwards in the draft in terms of reading plays and slipping behind coverage, Raddysh is more of an enabler than a difference maker, but one who will help on the power play. He's big, tough and physical enough to groom for additional duties beyond filling the scoresheet.

47. C Aapeli Rasanen (Tappara U20, Liiga Jrs): All signs point towards this special-teams dynamo becoming one of the better two-way players this draft produces. Not only does he do it all on the ice — playmaking, speed, escapability, tenacity, versatility — but he's a student of the game who spends time honing his craft away from the rink. Rasanen clubbed the international circuit to a tune of almost a point per game, and he's close to 200 pounds before turning 18 in June. He won't disappoint teams in search of skill players, but the fact that he forechecks and backchecks better than most of his draft peers makes him even more desirable. In a draft thin on two-way types with a strong understanding of both sides of the red line, there's a strong possibility Rasanen gets gobbled up earlier than anticipated. He's strong at the dot and can be leaned on for tough checking assignments, yet he has a hunter's mindset in that he is always looking to make opponents pay for the slightest mistake. Rasanen is a very good skater with a variety of moves to get inside the offensive zone, and he immediately identifies multiple pass options and greets them with a clean, crisp set-up. Rasanen has excellent work habits and should be groomed for positions of significant responsibility.

By Steve Kournianos

86. C Kristian Reichel (Litvinov, Extraliga): Reichel is a two-way playmaking pivot with top-six potential that earned his way to a promotion in the Czech Republic's senior circuit. He's a good skater with a decent first step whose agility helps him while killing penalties, and he makes good reads to help spearhead a counterattack. Reichel, the son of former NHL'er Robert Reichel, anchored the National Team's offense in several events and was usually on the ice with the top power play or penalty killing unit. He's very good on faceoffs and has the kind of size (6'1) conducive to three-zone play in the NHL. He hurts himself by hanging on to the puck too long, as he does not have a firm grasp of play development. In Reichel's case, the easiest play is usually the best play to make.

249. RHD Nolan Reid (Saskatoon, WHL): Undersized offensive defenseman who plays on Saskatoon's power play and can be counted on to create scoring chances. He owns a very good shot and a quick release, specifically when he defers to the wrister. Reid doesn't like to hesitate with the puck on his stick inside the opposing blue line. It's within his own territory, however, where he comes across as indecisive. He's proven to clear the puck with smart, subtle chips or leads, but he simply doesn't do it enough. If the puck isn't off his stick within two seconds, he's prone to focus more on avoiding getting crunched by a forechecker rather than take a beating to make a clean play. He looked quite comfortable and unbridled, when paired with top defense prospect Libor Hajek, and the duo seemed as if they were communicating well with one another. Reid's biggest problem is one-on-one play — he can make life easy for opposing puck carriers by tipping his hand and/or over-committing. These vices are fixable with time, which makes him somewhat of a steal in the late rounds.

136. LHD Tarmo Reunanen (TPS Turku, U20): Reunanen was once considered one of Finland's top blueliners, earning top-four minutes for both TPS's junior squad and in international events before an injury shelved him for over half the season. He is a wiry puck mover (6'0, 175 pounds) but with excellent vision augmented by pinpoint pass accuracy and very good mobility. Clean and simple may be the name of his game from an offensive standpoint, but rarely does he appear strong enough to dislodge either bigger or smaller forwards from the top of the crease. Reunanen like most young rearguards has a lot to learn in terms of positioning from the lower half of his zone on down, as he is guilty of fishing for pucks when the situation warrants playing the body. Still, he can quarterback a power play and stretch out defenses with his breakout abilities.

114. RW Ty Ronning (Vancouver, WHL): Anyone who's followed the CHL this year knows that Ronning is neither obscure nor a gamble. All signs point towards the diminutive sniper carving out an NHL career, especially with an NHL veteran like Cliff Ronning for a father to guide him along. Ty is more of a finisher than a playmaker, and he stepped up when the Giants were hit by a season-ending injury to star forward Tyler Benson in January. Ronning led Vancouver in goals (31), and he played the full season after missing three quarters of 2015 with a broken collarbone. He's quick on his feet and owns a hard, accurate shot, but concerns with size (5'9, 170) are legitimate as he's not physical and can be guilty of playing to the outside.

By Steve Kournianos

137. LHD Sam Rossini (Waterloo, USHL): Future Golden Gopher who is a mean, physical defender with a booming shot and sound checking abilities. Rossini likely tops out as a bottom-pairing support type, but there's no denying how good he is in a shutdown role. It was a bumpy second season for the native Minnesotan in terms of offense, as he was used sparingly on the power play and did not increase production from the previous season. He has quick feet for a 6'2, 200-pound teenager blueliner, and he's extremely difficult to dance around since he always plays the man. Point production aside, Rossini has to cut down on the after-the-whistle penalties and learn how to keep his emotions in check.

124. LHD Kristians Rubins (Vasteras, Superelit): A season of promise may have been altered following offseason shoulder surgery that sidelined him until December, but this Latvian tower of power recovered to play top-pairing minutes for Vasteras. Rubins is a beast who loves to use every inch of his 6'4 frame to pulverize risk-taking puck carriers. He's quite mobile for someone who already weighs 220 pounds, and his play in both Sweden's Superelit and with Latvia during April's European Hockey Tour revealed no ill effects from the injury. Rubins can blast the puck with authority which allowed him to play on the power play, but he's still pretty raw when it comes to the offensive side of the ice. This kid is a terror to play against.

17. C German Rubtsov (Russia U18, MHL): We don't know if German Rubtsov is representative of some sort of new breed of Russian-trained forward. What is clearly apparent to us is how "North American" his overall game is, and he's arguably the 2016 draft's best two-way forward. Rubtsov has been Russia's go-to guy when it comes to matching up against top opponents, and why not? He's been blessed with size and what seems like adult strength despite being only 17 years old. Rubtsov has had plenty of international exposure, winning gold at the 2014 U17's and contributing mightily to the Russian U18 entry that nearly knocked off Team Canada at the Hlinka semifinals. He was rewarded with a place on the U20 roster for the Four Nations in November, but was kept off Russia's preliminary list for the 2016 World Junior Championship. He took this disappointment in stride, however, as his two-way play and penchant for stepping up guided the U19 team to the gold medal game at the World Junior "A" Challenge. He is a very strong skater with excellent acceleration and balance. But mix in his mobility with strength and tenacity, and you get a coach's dream. Rubtsov is a "big play" center that preys on the weak, and his superior playmaking ability and vision enables him to be used in key situations regardless of which end of the scoreboard his team is on. He's an extremely competitive leader who will involve himself physically if the game is in need of a momentum shift. Rubtsov has a very good shot which he can wire off his back foot or unload via a slapper, and while he is very accurate in terms of getting it on net, we have a tendency to look for the pass as a primary course of action.

152. RHD Jake Ryczek (Sioux City, USHL): Providence-bound puck mover who oozes skill, quickness and smarts, and put forth the effort to involve himself (and win) puck battles. Ryczek is a disciplined player who comes across as quite flashy, and he owns a high-caliber howitzer which allows him to be a dual skating/shooting threat, especially with the man advantage. We like the fact that a midseason trade from Sioux City to Waterloo caused a huge spike in production, as he upped his points-per-game average by over half a point per game. A native of Springfield, MA, Ryczek led all USHL under-18 blueliners in scoring with 34 points in 47 games.

By Steve Kournianos

216. C Anthony Salinitri (Sarnia, OHL): Speedy two-way pivot with a ripper of a shot who was buried on Sault Ste Marie's depth chart in 2015, then slowly blossomed following his trade to Sarnia. Salinitri wasn't as complete player to earn top-line minutes, but that should change next year when Travis Konecny and Pavel Zacha are no longer around. He has excellent breakaway speed and quickness on the puck, and he possesses a wrist shot hard enough to beat goalies from beyond the high slot. Salinitri likes to get involved in board play and lend support, and he became a tougher out as he grew stronger in both size and confidence, albeit at a deliberate pace with plenty of room for growth. Remember, this kid was a first rounder in the 2014 OHL Priority Selection, so it's not like he's some underdog. Salinitri can be used in all situations, to include killing penalties, where he should become one of the league's top shorthanded threats. Still, he has to improve his on-ice awareness and balance in order to complete his game.

192. RHD Jordan Sambrook (Erie, OHL): It's odd that many like to call this raw talent a stay-at-defenseman when his better traits involve offense. Sambrook may resemble a defensive defender based on his size (6'2, 190) and the lack of a "wow" factor, but he played a top-four role with power play time for a talented Otters club that boasted one of the league's top attacks. He's a bit inconsistent in how he positions himself and executes the safe plays in his own end, but he seems to make up for it with timely pinches and puck support once the puck is inside the opposing zone. Sambrook is an accurate shooter with an above-average slapper, and he'll drop down low and away from the crease crowd to maximize the probability of success. He can play mean and physical but is guilty of far too many undisciplined penalties, especially when his team is either trailing or already on the power play. Still, he's a raw prospect with plenty of time to develop improved techniques, and he still managed to have a good draft-eligible season with a key role for a quality club.

131. G Antoine Samuel (Baie-Comeau, QMJHL): Tall, athletic butterfly-style goalie that had the misfortune of playing for a bad team that tilted the ice towards his crease for what must have seemed like an eternity. Samuel seems to do better, however, when he's involved in the game and facing a ton of rubber. He's got the prototypical build (6'2, 190 pounds) NHL teams looks for in a goalie, and he's actually quite sound from a technical standpoint. Samuel's biggest problem is an inability to maintain an even keel and not let a bad bounce or two get to him. He's got the quickness and reset ability to limit the amount of net to shoot at, and he doesn't get beat down low as often as others in his class. Any goalie will tell you how important the mental aspect of netminding is, so figuring out how to stay calm and composed for 60 minutes should be Samuel's offseason priority.

165. G Zach Sawchenko (Moose Jaw, WHL): It's not a great draft for goalies in terms of depth and upside, but Sawchenko is an interesting candidate in that he actually produced an impressive wire-to-wire campaign in his first year of eligibility. A butterfly goalie with decent length (6'1) and quick reflexes, he finished sixth among WHL goalies who played 50 or more games in both wins (28) and save percentage (.916). Sawchenko's biggest issue is net awareness – he loses himself despite properly facing the shooter, leading to a lot of short or long-side goals against. Still, he's young enough to fix these minor kinks and be considered a candidate for Team Canada's 2017 world junior squad.

By Steve Kournianos

11. LHD Mikhail Sergachev (Windsor, OHL): A thick-bodied defender with a howitzer for a shot and outstanding offensive instincts, Sergachev led OHL rearguards with 17 goals and finished third in scoring with 57 points. His transition from Russia to the North American style was seamless, and he was the Spits' top option for both the power play and penalty kill. He can be physical, but what makes him special is how quickly he transitions from defense to offense, and make momentum-shifting plays in all three zones. Sergachev plays an aggressive and punishing style, mixed in with offensive flair and a strong enough sense to either join the rush or create one himself. He anchored Windsor's top pairing since the season began, logging minutes on both the top power play and penalty killing units. Sergachev possesses above-average speed, and owns a powerful stride that makes him difficult to stop when in full flight. Additionally, Sergachev is a mobile playmaker from the back end, capable of connecting on and receiving difficult passes, whether up the ice or diagonally through a maze of sticks. Most impressive is his hard shot, which he can fire with substantial velocity from the point's deepest areas. The pace and complexity of the next level shouldn't intimidate him, but his slot coverage is one area where he must improve to complete his development.

70. C Igor Shvryyov (Stalnye Lisy, MHL): A brief stint with Russia's U18 team for the Hlinka was followed by an outstanding MHL campaign from this sublime offensive talent, who's deserving of more love than he's received. Shvryyov is an exceptional stickhandler and passer, and can do both while moving at a high rate of speed. He's a pure finesse pivot who can also play wing, lending immediate assistance to any power play, where he likes to position himself along the half wall in order to dissect passing lanes with pinpoint precision. Shvryyov is able to maintain balance on his skates and control of the puck as he bombs down the wing with his head up. He compliments a superior understanding of the offensive side of the game with a team-first attitude.

162. LHD Colby Sissons (Swift Current, WHL): Lanky puck-mover who can cover a lot of ground and make skill plays. Sissons has excellent first-step quickness and uses his wide stride to cover a lot of ground. Offense seems to come naturally to him, but he improved his defensive game enough to earn a spot in Swift Current's top-4. Sissons is very athletic and uses his sublime skating/footwork to his advantage in all three zones. He may be just a teenager, but his reads are excellent, especially getting in the way of cross ice passes to turn the steal into an instant counterattack. Sissons has soft enough hands to help him corral cross-point passes, and he can get off an above-average shot in the process. Defensively, he's smartening up, but all the smarts in the world won't make you strong enough to win the positioning battles of the low slot. Sissons needs to bulk up for sure, but without hindering his outstanding skating ability.

By Steve Kournianos

33. LW Givani Smith (Guelph, OHL): A freight train of goal scorer who like most budding power forwards can dominate through lengthy periods of invincibility. Smith is the perfect feast or famine player – he'll dictate the terms or not have a say at all. Still, he's the kind of goal scorer who can fill the net with impunity as long as he has anything resembling a competitive lineup to augment his power. Smith had the misfortune of playing for a doormat, but he was the team's second-leading goal scorer and led the OHL with 146 penalty minutes. An intimidating force with the power of a bulldozer, the chiseled winger is a menace around the net and has soft enough hands to bury the "gimme" chances. He loves to use every ounce of his muscular build to either pulverize opponents in open ice or crunch them along the boards on the forecheck. Smith can play out of control, however, but nobody likes passive linebackers. Once he gets going, there's very little stopping him. Smith is a very good skater with a hard, quick snap shot, and his ability to control the puck with force towards the net is helped by taking the shortest routes possible.

67. RW Dmitri Sokolov (Sudbury, OHL): If you judge a player solely on production, then Sokolov's rookie season was nothing short of outstanding – he led OHL rookies with 30 goals, including 15 over his last 23 games. But digging deeper in the power winger's season reveals disconcerting traits, to include accusations of laziness and poor off-ice work ethic. A shoulder injury may have had something to do with that, and the fact that he played the entire season should help his case. Remember, he's just a kid, and one who left Russia to play in North America no less. His size/shot combo is lethal, and he has a soft set of hands to bury the roughest of goal-mouth feeds. Sokolov on occasion is deceptively quick, but his straight-line skating is average. He can make sharp cuts and change speeds, but he's simply not fast enough to win many footraces. Still, he has an exceptional understanding of the lower half of the offensive zone, and he has a strong grasp of play development. Sokolov is clearly in the top 10 percent of all draft-eligible goal scorers, and it's scary to think what he could have done with a healthy shoulder.

173. C/LW Samuel Solensky (Liberic U21, Extraliga Jrs): USHL-bound Slovakian skill forward who was one of his nation's top prospects this past season. He's undersized (5'9, 170 pounds), but extremely shifty and sharp on his skates. Solensky's escapability is top notch, and there's no telling what he's going to do with the puck once he crosses center. He likes to stop on a dime and change direction before sliding an accurate lead pass to an onrushing linemate. He's a good skater with improving balance, and he can fire off an accurate wrister while off balance or outstretched. He's a puck artist who stood out at several high-profile international events, and did carry the offensive load for a thin Slovak roster at the U18's. Solensky is not just an offensive forward, however, as he killed penalties for both the national team and for his junior club.

104. C Otto Somppi (Halifax, QMJHL): A slick pivot with sound hockey sense and a keen eye for open teammates, Somppi had an up-and-down rookie season for the Mooseheads but still finished among the QMJHL's top rookie scorers. He's a solid two-way option and is good on draws, but he needs to get stronger in order to win those ever-important board battles. Somppi is not only fast, but he knows how to properly execute an odd-man rush — an often overlooked skill. He's one of the better late-round options for running a power play and adding pure skill to a depth chart.

By Steve Kournianos

94. C/LW Jordy Stallard (Calgary, WHL): The Hitmen had a bit of a rebuilding year, which gave this versatile forward the chance to play all over their lineup, to include periods of top-line duty. He played wing most of last season, but he saw more time at the pivot plus a consistent role on the power play in 2016. Stallard can play a physical game, using his NHL build (6'2, 190) to lean on defenders and bang around on the forecheck. His best assets are a pro shot and quick release – he can wire it off of any pass regardless of quality. Stallard's speed is above average, but his size coupled with the fact that he scored 21 goals without the benefit of playmaking linemates makes him a good sleeper pick in the fourth round.

64. LHD Logan Stanley (Windsor, OHL): Stanley is a towering project blueliner who is a perplexing figure in that his ceiling is a complete unknown. His height and stay-at-home style draws knee-jerk comparisons to a young Zdeno Chara, but it seems like any blueline prospect over 6'6 is going to be likened to the one or two established NHL'er who match that description. There is, however, a lot to like about Stanley's game, even if he should be kept on a short leash. He's physical, at times menacing while operation below the circles, and he's shown flashes of a rearguard that is certainly capable of positively anchoring a top pairing. He brings physicality and improved instincts within the offensive zone, which helps him get into position for his strong slap shot. Stanley is prone to make questionable decisions at inopportune times, but the right staff and environment should be able to work him through issues with reads and step-ups. He's not all that bad from a skating standpoint, and on occasion will bob-and-weave his way into a high-quality scoring opportunity. Stanley's play with the puck comes across as adventuresome, almost like a center in basketball dribbling the ball up the court. But he gets things done, and when all is said and done, the stars don't necessarily have to align for him to eventually become of the draft's better defensemen.

23. C Sam Steel (Regina, WHL): Steel made immediate noise in the WHL after Regina made him the second overall pick in 2013, placing among the leaders in scoring categories, and bridging his team's rebuilding gap. He's part of an impressive group of 1998-born draft eligibles to come out of Western Canada, and some might say he's at or near the top of an impressive list of WHL forwards. Steel is an excellent scorer from the center ice position, with the smarts to augment an elite finesse game. He's very good around the net, using his quick hands and keen vision to create multiple opportunities without the benefit of time or space. Slight of frame, Steel relies on his first-step quickness and acceleration to distance himself from opposing checkers. He keeps his head up as he blasts through the neutral zone, cutting, curling and shifting in order to maintain possession. He doesn't like to get hit, but plays a feisty enough game to get involved as long as he doesn't have to pay a heavy price along the boards. A power play specialist with a penchant for delivering in the clutch, Steel has a very good shot that he wires hard off the pass or off his back foot. He simply doesn't use it enough, but he gets a mulligan when you consider he uses common sense more than constantly deferring to the shot or pass on first impulse. He plays in all situations and can be groomed as a realistic two-way option for the pivot.

By Steve Kournianos

80. C/RW Oskar Steen (Farjestad BK, SHL): Quick winger with a knack for burying the puck who played well in a brief stint with Farjestad's senior club. Steen is a hard worker who can play on both the power play and the penalty kill, and you can fit him into the same category as fellow draft-eligible Swedish sparkplugs Carl Grundstrom and Jesper Bratt. The biggest knock on Steen is that he isn't very tall (5'9), but he's strong and can play a physical, in-your-face style, especially on the forecheck. He was superb at the Five Nations tournament in November, and made big plays at the U18 world championship in April.

163. C/W Tyler Steenbergen (Swift Current, WHL): Former top Bantam pick (12th overall in 2013) with leadership traits and a multi-tool offensive player. Steenbergen rebounded from a slow start to torch the WHL, but the effort was always there. His speed and hard wrist shot are his noticeable assets, but reports indicate he is full of intangibles. Steenbergen is a patient and accurate passer, but he'll stay in motion after the pass rather than just stand there and wait for the play to come back to him. He isn't big (5'11, 170) but will throw the body on occasion, as well as take punishment in order to complete a play. He may not top out as a consistent go-to guy, but on occasion will carry the offensive load. Has the potential to become one of the WHL's top under-19 scorers next season.

158. LHD Riley Stillman (Oshawa, OHL): Physical puck distributor with a heavy shot who was one of Oshawa's leaders after its roster was hit hard by graduations. The son of NHL veteran Cory Stillman, Riley is quick and athletic with a developing sense for how to jumpstart an offense. It took 20 games for him to register his first point of the season, only to turn it on with an impressive 21 over his final 42 matches. Stillman along the wall is a tough matchup for forwards regardless of their size (he's listed at 6'0, 180 pounds), but he could stand to work on his slot positioning as he's often guilty of chasing and vacating. We'd also like to see him commit to a puck possessor with confidence and authority rather than look indecisive, a weakness the pros will sniff out in a hurry. Stillman has very good catch-up speed and can win footraces to the puck, and has above-average first-step quickness which helps him get into scoring position near the net.

42. LW Simon Stransky (Prince Albert, WHL): Stransky is a mature, shifty playmaker whose pass-first mentality masks his underrated shot and goal scoring capabilities. He started off red hot with Prince Albert to earn a spot on the Czech Republic's junior team, only to return for a good — not great — second half with the Raiders. Nevertheless, he's a puck hound who can stubbornly control the disc in order to wait for options to appear. Stransky is a pure passer and excellent stickhandler, using a variety of tricks to deceive opponents into making the improper choice. He'll hold on to the puck for quite a while in order to overload the strong side, only to backdoor a set-up to a wide-open teammate. His 25 primary assists were fourth among the WHL's first-year draft eligibles. He can play physical when necessary, looking engaged although seeking loose pucks rather than create them himself. Stransky is quick to transition up the ice, and the lack of elite breakaway speed doesn't lessen the opportunity for him to create or exploit odd-man rushes. He's guilty of playing too cute, and it seems like most of the quality chances he creates are of the common sense variety — find the open man, pass it to him with accuracy. Stransky was productive running the point on a Prince Albert power play that collectively struggled.

By Steve Kournianos

177. LW Jakob Stukel (Calgary, WHL): A feel-good story that bounced back from two injury-ravaged seasons to lead the WHL with 18 power plays goals. Stukel may be an overager (March, 1997), but he sprouted into a 6'0, 185-pound frame rather quickly to become of the league's better power forwards, with outstanding speed to boot. He has very good hand-eye coordination and soft hands which prevents the normal shaking you normally see from teenagers. The Oilers last year gave him a look at their development camp, but something tells us they're going to regret letting him get away.

133. C Andrey Svetlakov (CSKA, KHL): Double-overage center that is quite versatile and can be counted on for instant offense. He distinguished himself as Russia's top two-way option at the world juniors, where Russia came within a goal of winning the gold medal. He's a strong skater with exceptional balance and he always seems under control, especially on zone entries. But at 6'0, 200 pounds, Svetlakov also plays a physical game that toes the line between dirty and downright outrageous. If there was one Russian-trained forward who is both built and wired for the North American style, it's Svetlakov.

210. RHD Gabriel Sylvestre (Shawinigan, QMJHL): Stay-at-home type who was paired with top prospect Samuel Girard for the majority of the season to form a good yin-and-yang pairing. Sylvestre is a meat-and-potatoes defender who does nothing flashy, but nothing consistent in terms of production. He is at solid bottom-pairing/depth option since he's raw — good positionally but goes down often and commits to shooter quite early into situations like a 2-on-1. Sylvestre uses an active stick to break up passes on the penalty kill and makes a smart play on the breakout more times than not. He's got a mean streak too, and he will always stand up for a teammate to give a guy the business if he's lingering around the goal mouth or crease. Sylvestre is prone to take dumb and/or lazy penalties, and his skating is about average, but he owns a hard shot and can blow it past a goalie from a significant distance. He's not much of a risk taker but on occasion he will drop down into the low slot and fish around for a rebound or centering pass. Overall, he has limited offensive potential, but has very real shut-down upside.

45. RW Tage Thompson (Connecticut, Hockey East): A former member of the NTDP who starred as a freshman for UConn, Thompson is a big-bodied sniper with an excellent shot whose development in terms of NHL readiness has a handful of years remaining. He's pretty one-dimensional at this point — all but one of his 14 goals were scored on the power play. But 5-on-5 production will come in time, as will his ability to continue battling well after initial contact with an opponent. He's got the kind of size you'd love to see on your flank, but there's some work left to do, especially in the defensive zone where he tends to get lost and wander. Thompson, the son of former NHLer Brent Thompson, is an above-average stickhandler who wisely uses his long reach when he's bombing down the wing or keep the puck close by as he tries to maneuver through traffic. He knows he's got a size advantage and he exploits it. His skating is decent but his balance and wingspan are what drive his ability to avoid giveaways.

By Steve Kournianos

5. LW Matt Tkachuk (London, OHL): In this forceful, rigid yet graceful sport, there are few who possess a diverse resume of skills necessary to display a consistent level of dominance practically on a shift-to-shift basis. Terms like “the complete package” are often used to describe these rare birds, and as cliché as it sounds, it certainly is the best way to sum up players like Matt Tkachuk. Born and reared in the St. Louis area’s under-appreciated hockey environment, Tkachuk, in reality, could have trained anywhere when you consider the mentorship he received right in his own home. And while his father Keith — close to a decade removed from an all-star NHL career — has left a huge imprint in both the looks and skills department, we view Matthew as a bit more patient and decisive with both his strength and his playmaking ability. The kid doesn’t have a glaring weakness, and while some may point to skating, he has a long and powerful enough stride to win the occasional footrace. And even the roadrunner types who can catch up to his up-the-ice attacks are generally limited in preventing him from doing what he wants or needs to do. Tkachuk has a very heavy and accurate shot which can change speeds and confuse goalies, but his penchant for delivering scoring-chance set-ups at the very last moment is yet another reason why he’ll be so coveted come Draft Day. Throw in leadership qualities and a desire to make opponents pay the price physically, and you have the makings of the best pure power forward prospect to get drafted come June.

44. LW Riley Tufte (Fargo, USHL): Tufte is tremendous prospect worthy of significant praise for a variety of reasons, namely for obliterating Minnesota’s high school circuit to a tune of over three points per game. He’s a freakish combination of size and skill. Tufte was the top pick in the 2014 USHL Futures Draft, then won the state of Minnesota’s famed “Mr. Hockey” award after starring for Blaine High School this season. He didn’t have the best season for Fargo, but you can see how big of a home run he’d be if all things pan out. Tufte is an excellent skater for a big man and his goal-scoring acumen is reminiscent of a young John Leclair from his Vermont days. His decision to quit the USHL and head back to high school still doesn’t sit well with us, but who are we to stop the young man from making life choices. Tufte has excellent hands and securely controls the puck while on the move, and he uses his massive reach to keep ownership even as he moves laterally. His shot is heavy enough to keep goalies honest, even if he’s wiring one from a bad angle or from just inside the blue line. Tufte killed penalties for Blaine but was relegated to limited role once he returned to Fargo. There are times when he plays out of control and takes undisciplined penalties, but he’s a power forward so they are more palatable than if he was a finesse player.

88. LW Eetu Tuulola (HPK U20, Liiga Jrs): Tuulola is the Finnish power forward who is not seeing his name plastered all over the place by hockey scribes in his native land and abroad. But not being a top-three pick shouldn’t detract from how good a goal-scoring prospect this kid currently is. Tuulola has a heavy shot and a quick release, and getting involved in the dirty areas is something he seems to enjoy. He is a very good open-ice hitter, and we wouldn’t be the least bit surprised if he snuck into the second round, which says a ton about the depth Finland provided for this draft.

By Steve Kournianos

116. LW Carsen Twarynski (Calgary, WHL): Another one of coach Mark French's hard workers who loves to throw his weight around and provide unrelenting pressure whenever the bad guys have the puck. Twarynski is a decent skater but can cover ground thanks to a long stride, and he likes to fire an above-average shot from anywhere on the ice. He's one of those "glue" guys who will stand up for teammates and drop the gloves when he has to, but provides a voice in the locker room. Twarynski is a very good penalty killer and can play on the power play as well, but only two of his 20 goals were scored with the man-advantage, which in his case is definitely a good thing.

83. G Veini Vehvilainen (JYP U20, Liiga Jrs): There are pros and cons for competing at the world junior championship, where Vehvilainen may have played himself out of getting drafted altogether. However, we don't think a brief tournament should outweigh a season's worth of accomplishments regardless of how bad one played in said competition, so we'll continue to maintain our position that Vehvilainen is one of the top goalie prospects for the 2016 draft. He had an exceptional rookie season in Finland's elite league, placing fifth in save percentage (0.925) and eighth in goals against average (2.04). From a puck-stopping standpoint, the positioning and stance issues he showed at the WJC were an aberration, as anyone who follows the Finnish league will tell you that one of Vehvilainen's many strengths is the way he presents himself and the net to the shooter. He loves to challenge and is confident in his glove hand, but he can also be patient and force a shooter into a nothing opportunity. He was passed over in last year's draft, and the Ducks gave him a look at their post-draft camp.

100. LW Nolan Volcan (Seattle, WHL): A two-way waterbug with skill who battled through inconsistent play during the regular season to produce a solid effort in the postseason. Volcan was expected to provide scoring depth beyond Mathew Barzal's top line, but was somewhat slowed by a lower body injury that put him on the shelf for a few weeks. He plays a physical, in-your-face style and every task he's given is executed with maximum effort. There were times when Volcan was the best player on the ice, especially when he gets going on the forecheck and uses his upper-body strength to wallop defenders off the puck. He's only 5'9, but the kid isn't afraid of anything, and consistently fights bigger, older players. He has a good shot and can dangle a bit, but finishing is not one of his strong suits. Volcan may have been a high bantam pick (2nd round in 2013), but he likely finds employment in the bottom six.

150. C/W Tim Wahlgren (MoDo J20, Superelit): One of the draft's best shooters who certainly knows how to make his way onto the highlight reels. Wahlgren is a classic sniper who scores in bunches and can do so without much help. He owns a ridiculous wrist shot, and the fact that he can handle a hard pass and rip one on net in an instant is probably why he was one of the Superelit's top goal scorers. He is a very good skater who plays with his head up and will weave his way into openings with the hammer cocked. Wahlgren has very soft hands and is one of the better draft-eligible forwards at getting blade on point shots. There is a downside, however, as he has issues with coverage in his own end thanks to what seems like an indifferent attitude towards defending.

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199. RW Zach Walker (U.S. U18, NTDP): Walker is a Boston College-bound depth player who loves to play physical and use his upper-body strength to lean on opponents. He's a big kid (6'0/200) with excellent speed who can play either wing position and use his strength to rub out bigger players. He's committed to Boston College where Jerry York will certainly find his size and assertiveness useful, especially around the net when he's banging and thumping to hold on to his positioning. There are times when Walker's quickness makes him seem a bit out of control, but he's one of those momentum-changers who can fill a much-needed role. He owns an average shot with inconsistent accuracy but will do whatever it takes to win his puck battles and at least get into position to fire one off. Walker's understanding of the game is sufficient considering his depth role, but he produces once it's expanded. Defensemen have to be cognizant where Walker is at all times or else they run the risk of becoming part of the boards.

157. LW Linus Weissbach (Frolunda J20, Superelit): Explosive winger with lethal hands and one of the draft's quickest first steps. Weissbach is a candidate to cross the pond and join Tri-City in the USHL, which makes the prospect of drafting him all the more legitimate. He's a crowd pleaser with the ability to create scoring chances via the pass or his skates in the blink of an eye. He's only 5'9, but he is tenacious on the forecheck and will take a pounding along the wall without relinquishing possession. Weissbach has an assortment of ways to score, but he can be guilty of puck gazing in his own end — if he ever finds it. He missed the U18 worlds because of an upper-body injury.

197. C Gustaf Westlund (The Gunnery, HS-CT): Swedish import who was born in Paris but spent the last season honing his hockey skills in the New England prep circuit. He'll play for Red Berenson at Michigan, who did a fine job developing a similar Swedish player (and current NHL'er) in Carl Hagelin. Westlund has very good speed and quickness with the ability to break free into open ice and outskate backcheckers, but he keeps his head up so he could slow the play down and wait for trailers. He's very agile with superb edges, and he'll maintain control of the puck if he has to overstretch his arms to protect it. Westlund is a serious power play option who can thread the needle from the wall or into the slot from behind the net, at times saucering the puck over sticks and skates and laying it flat so his teammate can get a clean shot away. The NCAA schedule will keep him in the gym longer, as he stands at 6'0 but with a listed weight of 165 pounds. He's excellent on faceoffs, winning over 60 percent of his draws when he centered a line with Alex Nylander and Jesper Bratt for AIK's J18 club in 2015.

190. G Joseph Woll (U.S. U18, NTDP): Woll is a Boston College recruit who had the plum job of backstopping the international hockey equivalent of a freight train. He was impressive at the U18 worlds, specifically in a 34-save performance against Sweden and a shutout against Switzerland when the kid made the tough saves with the outcome surprisingly (at one point) in doubt. He's a classic butterfly netminder with size (6'2, 200) and a well-balanced stance. He follows up shots with reset quickness and net presence, and his quick glove hand is generally in the right position when both static and stretching out. Playing for a strong team like the NTDP means he didn't have to work hard, but he's an attentive netminder who doesn't nap and reacts to plays the right way.

By Steve Kournianos

138. LHD Alexander Yakovenko (Russian U18, MHL): Puck-moving bomber with excellent mobility and the ability to run a power play. Yakovenko's numbers may not jump off the screen, but he was one of Russia's more reliable backliners and an obvious choice for a team lacking in the possession game. He sports a very hard shot and whips his breakout passes with accuracy, but at times he can be a little too aggressive and tries to force the puck through rather than take a second or two and let things transpire. His lateral movement and edge work are solid, and while he isn't blindingly fast going north to south, he has a long enough stride to catch up and even things out. Yakovenko isn't physical — it's not his role nor style — but his slot coverage and stick-use is competent enough to make up for his shortcomings in length and upper body strength. If there are two things that help him stand out among most of his peers, it's making accurate, decisive passes on the power play, and his ability to prevent pucks from exiting the offensive zone.

214. LHD Yegor Zaitsev (HK MVD, MHL): There seems to be a dozen Zaitsev's playing hockey in Russia on the current NHL radar, but we think this kid will turn out to be the best of the group. Yegor is a well-built puck-moving blueliner with solid offensive instincts and the ability to lay bone-crushing hits. He battled the injury bug while shuffling between the MHL and VHL, but a top-six role in Russia's competitive senior circuit is a discernible goal for 2017. Zaitsev is a rare blend of skill and aggression — he'll drop down to the hash marks for a shot, then belt an opponent in the chops if the chance doesn't materialize. In other words, this kid doesn't get cheated, as he will play the man and finish his check multiples times per shift. Zaitsev may come across as cocky, but it's somewhat understandable when you can move and hammer the puck the way he can. The kid is listed at 6'0, 180 pounds, but he hunts down and obliterates like a linebacker from the 1970's. Zaitsev is an opposite point option for the power play and is competent at killing penalties.

107. LHD Kristaps Zile (Riga, MHL): Easily one of the more underrated two-way defensemen in the draft, and it's probably because he's from Latvia and plays overseas more than anything else. He made somewhat a name for himself thanks to a wacky yet textbook hip check that went viral, but take out word for it when we say he's a five-tool defender — he's mobile, can hammer the puck whether off balance or not, make plays below the circles, obliterate opponents with big hits and most importantly, lead by example. Zile is primed for a top-four role in the KHL, but we're hoping he gets to North America just so we can see more of him. He makes excellent reads and has proven to shoulder the responsibilities of a top-pairing defenseman.

147. LW/C Max Zimmer (Chicago, USHL): Explosive scorer with an extra gear that can inside-out an opponent at the blink of an eye. A late-1997 prospect, the Wisconsin-bound Zimmer has been ringing bells for quite a while now, and he's maintained his reputation as an elite offensive talent thanks to timely plays like his big goal against Avto in the Junior Club World Cup last summer. He distinguished himself for Team USA at the World Junior "A" Challenge in December to a tune of five goals and three assists in five games, playing on the top-six and named one of the tournament's top players. There's a lot to like about a mature kid like Zimmer; an athletic playmaker with good balance who has been dealing with diabetes head-on since he was young. He has decent size (6'0, 187 pounds) and uses his speed and puck control skills to play an inside game. Zimmer has a tricky shot off the rush in that he'll shoot against the grain and rarely telegraph where he's placing it. He'll head to Wisconsin in the fall.