

The Draft Analyst 2021 NHL Draft Report

Steve Kournianos

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Final 2021 Draft Rankings

RANK	NAME	TEAM	LEAGUE	DOB	HT	WT	POS	S/C
1	Owen Power	Michigan	Big-10	11/22/02	6'6	213	LHD	L
2	Matthew Beniers	Michigan	Big-10	11/5/02	6'2	175	C	L
3	William Eklund	Djurgarden	SHL	10/12/02	5'10	176	LW	L
4	Kent Johnson	Michigan	Big-10	10/18/02	6'1	167	C	L
5	Carson Lambos	Winnipeg	WHL	1/14/03	6'1	197	LHD	L
6	Brandt Clarke	Barrie	OHL	2/9/03	6'2	185	RHD	R
7	Dylan Guenther	Edmonton	WHL	4/10/03	6'2	175	RW	R
8	Luke Hughes	U.S. U18	NTDP	9/9/03	6'2	184	LHD	L
9	Mason McTavish	Peterborough	OHL	1/30/03	6'1	207	C	L
10	Cole Sillinger	Sioux Falls	USHL	5/16/03	6'0	197	C	L
11	Fedor Svechikov	Lada Togliatti	VHL	4/5/03	6'0	187	C	L
12	Aatu Raty	Karpat	SM-Liiga	11/14/02	6'2	185	C	L
13	Jesper Wallstedt	Lulea	SHL	11/14/02	6'3	214	GK	L
14	Fabian Lysell	Lulea	SHL	1/19/03	5'11	172	RW	R
15	Samu Tuomaala	Karpat U20	SM-Sarja	1/8/03	5'10	174	RW	R
16	Chaz Lucius	U.S. U18	NTDP	5/2/03	6'1	185	C	R
17	Simon Robertsson	Skelleftea	SHL	2/5/03	6'0	190	RW	L
18	Isak Rosen	Leksand	SHL	3/15/03	5'11	156	RW	L
19	Nikita Chibrikov	SKA-Neva	VHL	2/16/03	5'10	170	RW	L
20	Ayrton Martino	Omaha	USHL	9/28/02	5'11	160	LW	L
21	Anton Olsson	Malmo	SHL	1/26/03	6'0	198	LHD	L
22	Simon Edvinsson	Vasteras	Allsvenskan	2/5/03	6'4	198	LHD	L
23	Matthew Coronato	Chicago	USHL	11/14/02	5'10	183	RW	R
24	Oskar Olausson	HV71	SHL	11/10/02	6'1	180	RW	L
25	Zachary Bolduc	Rimouski	QMJHL	2/24/03	6'1	175	C	L
26	Prokhor Poltapov	Krasnaya Armiya	MHL	2/1/03	6'0	176	LW	L
27	Brennan Othmann	Flint	OHL	1/5/03	6'0	175	LW	L
28	Samuel Helenius	JyP	SM-Liiga	11/26/02	6'6	201	C	L
29	Francesco Pinelli	Kitchener	OHL	4/11/03	6'0	185	C	L
30	Aidan Hreschuk	U.S. U18	NTDP	2/19/03	5'11	188	LHD	L
31	Ville Koivunen	Karpat U20	SM-Sarja	6/13/03	5'11	161	RW	L
32	Redmond Savage	U.S. U18	NTDP	5/15/03	5'11	180	C	L
33	Aleksi Heimosalmi	Assat U20	SM-Sarja	5/8/03	5'11	170	RHD	R

RANK	NAME	TEAM	LEAGUE	DOB	HT	WT	POS	S/C
34	Sasha Pastujov	U.S. U18	NTDP	7/15/03	6'0	184	RW	L
35	Liam Dower-Nilsson	Frolunda J20	Nationell	4/14/03	6'0	172	C	L
36	Dylan Duke	U.S. U18	NTDP	3/4/03	5'10	175	LW	L
37	Aleksandr Kisakov	Dynamo MSK	MHL	11/1/02	5'10	150	LW	L
38	Mackie Samoskevich	Chicago	USHL	11/15/02	5'11	191	RW	R
39	William Stromgren	MODO J20	Nationell	6/7/03	6'3	175	LW	L
40	Logan Stankoven	Kamloops	WHL	2/26/03	5'8	170	C	R
41	Scott Morrow	Shattuck	HS-MN	11/1/02	6'2	195	RHD	R
42	Conner Roulette	Seattle	WHL	5/13/03	5'11	180	LW	L
43	Oliver Kapanen	KalPa U20	SM-Sarja	7/29/03	6'0	166	C	R
44	Stanislav Svozil	Brno	Extraliga	1/17/03	6'1	182	LHD	L
45	Sebastian Cossa	Edmonton	WHL	11/21/02	6'6	210	L	19
46	Xavier Bourgault	Shawinigan	QMJHL	10/22/02	6'0	172	C	R
47	Zachary L'Heureux	Halifax	QMJHL	5/15/03	5'11	196	LW	L
48	Tristan Broz	Fargo	USHL	10/10/02	6'0	178	C	L
49	Jakub Brabenec	Brno	Extraliga	9/11/03	6'1	174	C	L
50	Samu Salminen	Jokerit U20	SM-Sarja	4/9/03	6'2	186	C	L
51	Corson Ceulemans	Brooks	AJHL	5/5/03	6'2	198	RHD	R
52	Wyatt Johnston	Windsor	OHL	5/14/03	6'1	178	C	R
53	Tyler Boucher	U.S. U18	NTDP	1/16/03	6'1	205	RW	R
54	Topias Vilen	Pelicans	SM-Liiga	4/1/03	6'1	194	LHD	L
55	Oliver Moberg	Aik J20	Nationell	2/23/03	6'3	190	LW	L
56	Sean Behrens	U.S. U18	NTDP	3/31/03	5'10	177	LHD	L
57	Ryder Korczak	Moose Jaw	WHL	9/23/02	5'11	174	C	R
58	Daniil Chayka	CSKA	KHL	10/22/02	6'3	187	LHD	L
59	Zach Dean	Gatineau	QMJHL	1/4/03	6'0	176	C	L
60	Justin Robidas	Val-D'Or	QMJHL	3/13/03	5'8	173	C	R
61	Roman Schmidt	U.S. U18	NTDP	2/27/03	6'5	210	RHD	R
62	Matthew Knies	Tri-City	USHL	10/17/02	6'3	210	LW	L
63	Kirill Kirsanov	SKA	KHL	9/19/02	6'1	198	LHD	L
64	Jack Bar	Chicago	USHL	10/7/02	6'3	193	RHD	R
65	Victor Stjernborg	Vaxjo	SHL	5/22/03	5'11	202	C	L
66	James Malatesta	Quebec	QMJHL	5/31/03	5'9	179	LW	L
67	Evan Nause	Quebec	QMJHL	1/20/03	6'2	186	LHD	L

RANK	NAME	TEAM	LEAGUE	DOB	HT	WT	POS	S/C
68	Jack Peart	Grand Rapids	HS-MN	5/15/03	5'11	186	LHD	L
69	Ryan Ufko	Chicago	USHL	5/7/03	5'10	181	RHD	R
70	Ty Gallagher	U.S. U18	NTDP	3/6/03	6'0	188	RHD	R
71	Colton Dach	Saskatoon	WHL	1/4/03	6'4	196	C	L
72	Chase Stillman	Sudbury	OHL	3/19/03	6'1	180	RW	R
73	Aleksi Malinen	JyP	SM-Liiga	5/26/03	6'0	176	LHD	L
74	Artem Grushnikov	Krasnaya Armiya	MHL	3/20/03	6'2	198	LHD	L
75	Liam Gilmartin	U.S. U18	NTDP	1/7/03	6'2	192	LW	L
76	Brett Harrison	Oshawa	OHL	6/7/03	6'2	188	C	L
77	Eric Alarie	Moose Jaw	WHL	1/27/03	6'1	197	LW	L
78	Shai Buium	Sioux City	USHL	3/26/03	6'3	209	LHD	L
79	Tristan Lennox	Saginaw	OHL	10/21/02	6'4	190	L	0
80	William Trudeau	Charlottetown	QMJHL	10/11/02	6'0	189	LHD	L
81	Olen Zellweger	Everett	WHL	9/10/03	5'9	175	LHD	L
82	Nolan Allan	Prince Albert	WHL	4/28/03	6'2	195	LHD	L
83	Brent Johnson	Sioux Falls	USHL	3/20/03	5'11	161	RHD	R
84	Peter Reynolds	Saint John	QMJHL	1/20/03	5'10	167	C	L
85	Vladislav Lukashevich	Loko Yaroslavl	MHL	5/23/03	6'2	167	LHD	L
86	Linus Sjodin	Rogle	SHL	10/2/02	5'9	163	C	L
87	Riley Kidney	Acadie-Bathurst	QMJHL	3/25/03	5'11	168	C	L
88	Vasili Machulin	Dynamo MSK	MHL	8/7/02	6'3	194	LHD	L
89	Albert Sjoberg	Sodertalje J20	Nationell	3/19/03	6'0	183	RW	R
90	Ryan Winterton	Hamilton	OHL	9/4/03	6'2	175	C	R
91	Henry Nelson	Maple Grove	HS-MN	3/25/03	6'1	180	LHD	L
92	Verner Miettinen	K-Espoo U20	SM-Sarja	4/7/03	5'11	166	C	L
93	Niko Huuhtanen	Tappara U20	SM-Sarja	6/26/03	6'2	204	RW	R
94	Ilya Ivantsov	SKA -1946	MHL	1/27/03	5'8	160	C	L
95	Viljami Marjala	Quebec	QMJHL	1/29/03	6'0	178	LW	L
96	Cameron Whynot	Halifax	QMJHL	5/5/03	6'1	180	LHD	L
97	Oscar Plandowski	Charlottetown	QMJHL	5/18/03	6'0	190	RHD	R
98	Zakhar Bardakov	Podolsk	KHL	2/24/01	6'3	198	C	L
99	Robert Orr	Halifax	QMJHL	9/1/03	5'11	176	RW	L
100	Dmitry Kuzmin	Molodechno	Belarus Ext.	4/23/03	5'9	178	LHD	L
101	Janis Moser	Biel	NLA	6/6/00	6'0	172	LHD	L

RANK	NAME	TEAM	LEAGUE	DOB	HT	WT	POS	S/C
102	Jayden Grubbe	Red Deer	WHL	1/12/03	6'2	200	C	R
103	Oskar Jellvik	Djurgarden J20	Nationell	2/8/03	5'11	175	LW	L
104	Daniil Tesanov (OA)	Loko Yaroslavl	MHL	8/1/01	6'3	199	CV/W	R
105	Danila Klimovich	Minskije Zubry	Belarus Vysshaya	1/9/03	6'2	202	RW	R
106	Atte Lehtikainen	KalPa U20	SM-Sarja	7/5/03	6'2	192	LHD	L
107	Benjamin Gaudreau	Sarnia	OHL	1/11/03	6'2	175	L	0
108	Dmitri Kostenko	Ladya	MHL	9/25/02	6'1	187	RHD	R
109	Ty Voit	Sarnia	OHL	6/10/03	5'9	160	LW	R
110	Jonathan Myrenberg	Linkoping J20	Nationell	4/11/03	6'2	185	RHD	R
111	Elias Ekstrom	Orebro	SHL	10/11/01	6'0	189	LW	L
112	Ilya Nazarov	Loko Yaroslavl	MHL	5/20/03	6'3	181	RW	L
113	Kyle Masters	Red Deer	WHL	4/9/03	6'1	175	RHD	R
114	Guillaume Richard	Tri-City	USHL	2/10/03	6'2	170	LHD	L
115	Joshua Roy	Sherbrooke	QMJHL	8/6/03	6'0	190	RW	L
116	Dario Sidler	Zug U20	Swiss U20	6/4/03	5'8	155	RHD	R
117	Sami Paivarinta	Lukko U20	SM-Sarja	6/8/03	5'10	158	C	L
118	Joe Vrbetic	North Bay	OHL	10/24/02	6'6	190	L	0
119	Stiven Sardarian	Krasnaya Armiya	MHL	2/7/03	6'1	156	RW	L
120	Justin Janicke	U.S. U18	NTDP	6/30/03	5'11	185	LW	L
121	Connor Kurth	Dubuque	USHL	7/30/03	6'0	207	RW	R
122	Jeremi Tammela	Lukko U20	SM-Sarja	9/12/03	5'9	185	C	R
123	Nikita Kiryanov	Loko Yaroslavl	MHL	5/7/02	6'5	180	RW	L
124	Andre Gasseau	U.S. U18	NTDP	7/3/03	6'4	205	C	L
125	Ethan Del Mastro	Mississauga	OHL	1/15/03	6'4	210	LHD	L
126	Cameron Berg	Muskegon	USHL	1/29/02	6'0	192	C	L
127	Olivier Nadeau	Shawinigan	QMJHL	1/15/03	6'2	204	RW	R
128	Vsevolod Gaidamak	Omskie Yastreby	MHL	4/4/03	5'11	198	C	L
129	Nikolai Makarov	Krasnaya Armiya	MHL	1/12/03	6'1	190	LHD	L
130	Cole Jordan	Moose Jaw	WHL	9/21/02	6'2	200	LHD	L
131	Aleksei Kolosov	Dynamo Minsk	KHL	1/4/02	6'1	185	GK	L
132	Sean Tschigerl	Calgary	WHL	4/11/03	6'0	189	LW	L
133	David Gucciardi	Waterloo	USHL	10/9/02	6'1	185	LHD	L
134	Michael Milne	WINNIPEG	WHL	9/21/02	5'11	185	LW	L
135	Jackson Blake	Eden Prairie	HS-MN	8/3/03	5'10	158	RW	R

RANK	NAME	TEAM	LEAGUE	DOB	HT	WT	POS	S/C
136	Dmitriy Zugan	Krasnaya Armiya	MHL	11/23/02	5'11	176	C	L
137	Carter Mazur	Tri-City	USHL	3/28/02	6'0	170	LW	R
138	Noah Meier	GCK Lions	Swiss League	9/24/02	5'11	172	LHD	L
139	Matvey Petrov	Krylia Sovetov	MHL	3/12/03	6'2	178	LW	R
140	Vladimir Sychov	SKA-Varyagi	MHL	3/17/03	5'11	156	LW	R
141	Kyle Kukkonen	Maple Grove	HS-MN	11/13/02	5'10	172	C	R
142	Nick Degrazia	Rayside-Balfour	NOJHL	12/3/02	6'0	180	LW	L
143	Ilya Fedotov	Chaika	MHL	3/19/03	6'1	176	LW	R
144	Daniil Lazutin	SKA -1946	MHL	7/25/03	6'2	180	C	L
145	Aku Koskenvuo	HIFK U20	SM-Sarja	2/26/03	6'4	173	GK	L
146	Cole Huckins	Acadie-Bathurst	QMJHL	5/14/03	6'3	200	C	L
147	Philip Granath	Frolunda J20	Nationell	10/5/02	5'7	167	RW	R
148	Connor Lockhart	Erie	OHL	1/21/03	5'9	165	RW	R
149	Ethan Straky	U.S. U18	NTDP	4/18/03	5'11	174	RHD	R
150	Petr Moravec	Litomerice	Chance Liga	2/24/03	6'0	181	C	L
151	Vincent Iorio	Brandon	WHL	11/14/02	6'3	191	RHD	R
152	Artyom Kolganov	SKA-Varyagi	MHL	2/10/03	6'3	187	LHD	L
153	Elias Stenman	Skelleftea J20	Nationell	12/23/02	5'10	165	C	L
154	Simon Becar	Slovakia U18	Slovak HL	4/16/03	6'0	168	LHD	L
155	Manix Landry	Gatineau	QMJHL	11/23/02	5'11	178	C	L
156	Joe Palodichuk	Hill-Murray	HS-MN	2/26/03	5'11	154	LHD	L
157	Nikolai Hakala	Ilves U20	SM-Sarja	7/11/03	6'6	218	C	L
158	Ryan St. Louis	U.S. U18	NTDP	6/13/03	5'10	168	LW	L
159	Joey Pierce	Hermantown	HS-MN	10/2/02	6'0	196	RHD	R
160	Lukas Pajer	Litomerice	Chance Liga	7/4/03	5'10	181	RW	R
161	Avery Hayes	Hamilton	OHL	10/10/02	5'10	175	RW	R
162	Arvid Sundin	Brynäs J20	Nationell	8/2/03	5'11	176	LW	L
163	Kirill Gerasimuk	SKA-Varyagi	MHL	8/22/03	6'2	181	GK	L
164	Eetu Liukas	TPS	SM-Liiga	9/25/02	6'2	198	LW	L
165	Semyon Vyazovoi	Tolpar	MHL	2/26/03	6'2	169	GK	L
166	Jacob Guevin	Muskegon	USHL	1/17/03	5'11	181	RHD	R
167	Edgar Varagyan	Stalnye Lisy	MHL	10/17/02	6'2	202	LW	R
168	Benjamin Zloty	Winnipeg	WHL	2/24/02	6'0	175	LHD	L

RANK	NAME	TEAM	LEAGUE	DOB	HT	WT	POS	S/C
169	Jack Matier	Ottawa	OHL	4/8/03	6'4	200	RHD	R
170	David Spacek	Pizen U20	ELJ U20	2/18/03	6'0	170	RHD	R
171	Arvid Eljas	Leksand J20	Nationell	6/1/03	5'10	172	C	L
172	Josh Doan	Chicago	USHL	2/1/02	6'1	183	RW	R
173	Hannes Hakkila	Karpat U20	SM-Sarja	9/22/02	5'9	165	LHD	L
174	Ilya Safonov	Kazan	KHL	5/30/01	6'4	205	C	L
175	Hunter Strand	Tri-City	USHL	11/13/02	5'11	185	C	L
176	Nikita Guslistov	Cherepovets	KHL	5/30/02	5'10	178	C	L
177	Kalle Vaisanen	TPS U20	SM-Sarja	1/28/03	6'4	178	LW	R
178	Martin Rysavy	Prerov	Chance Liga	3/6/03	6'3	218	RW	L
179	Luke Mittelstadt	Eden Prairie	HS-MN	1/22/03	5'11	175	LHD	L
180	Jiri Tichacek	Kladno	Chance Liga	1/30/03	5'9	170	LHD	L
181	Noah Hasa	Frolunda J20	Nationell	3/6/03	5'11	158	C	L
182	Carter Batchelder	Eden Prairie	HS-MN	2/25/03	5'10	168	C	L
183	Brody Lamb	Dodge County	HS-MN	8/30/03	6'1	165	RW	R
184	Jacob Martin	U.S. U18	NTDP	3/18/03	6'0	188	RHD	R
185	Carl Lindbom	Djurgarden J20	Nationell	5/20/03	6'1	165	GK	L
186	Dovar Tinling	Vermont	HE	3/3/03	5'11	185	C	L
187	Deni Goure	Owen Sound	OHL	7/15/03	5'10	182	C	R
188	Lorenzo Canonica	Shawinigan	QMJHL	9/3/03	5'11	179	C	L
189	Jake Chiasson	Brandon	WHL	5/25/03	6'2	165	C	R
190	Joel Nystrom	Farjestad	SHL	5/14/02	5'11	170	RHD	R
191	Matvey Averochkin	Krasnaya Armiya	MHL	5/15/03	6'6	210	C	L
192	Nick Roukounakis	Thayer	HS-MA	9/8/03	6'2	220	LW	L
193	Martin Schreiber	Linkoping J20	Nationell	10/31/02	6'2	183	LHD	L
194	Artem Kulakov	Omskie Yastreby	MHL	2/14/03	6'2	202	LHD	L
195	Ty Murchison	U.S. U18	NTDP	2/2/03	6'2	192	LHD	L
196	Daniil Sobolev	Spartak	MHL	3/3/03	6'0	210	RHD	R
197	Patrik Hamrla	Karlovy Vary	Extraliga	5/21/03	6'3	194	GK	L
198	Caden Brown	U.S. U18	NTDP	6/22/03	5'11	175	C	L
199	Shane Lachance	Junior Bruins	NCDC	8/30/03	6'4	195	LW	L
200	Yaroslav Busygin	Russkie Vityazi	MHL	2/14/03	6'3	185	LHD	L
201	Tomas Suchanek	Frydek-Mistek	Chance Liga	4/30/03	6'1	167	GK	L
202	Ruben Rafkin	TPS	SM-Liiga	1/8/02	5'11	190	RHD	R

RANK	NAME	TEAM	LEAGUE	DOB	HT	WT	POS	S/C
203	Charles-Alexis Legault	Lincoln	USHL	9/5/03	6'3	207	RHD	R
204	Simon Knak	Portland	WHL	1/27/02	6'1	194	LW	L
205	Olivier Adam	Blainville-Boisbriand	QMJHL	5/20/02	6'3	178	GK	R
206	Daniel Laatsch	Sioux City	USHL	2/13/02	6'5	182	LHD	L
207	Dru Krebs	Medicine Hat	WHL	2/16/03	5'11	182	LHD	L
208	Jalen Luypen	Edmonton	WHL	6/28/02	5'10	155	C	L
209	Cameron Rowe	Wisconsin	BIG10	6/1/01	6'3	215	GK	L
210	Vasily Atanasov	Mamonty Ugry	MHL	9/25/02	5'10	147	C	L
211	Andrei Buyalsky	Dubuque	USHL	8/18/00	6'3	178	C	L
212	Nikita Skoropad	Tolpar	MHL	4/2/03	6'3	163	RW	L
213	Nicolas Daigle	Victoriaville	QMJHL	9/27/02	5'9	158	C	L
214	Nikita Grebenkin	Stalnye Lisy	MHL	5/2/03	6'2	183	RW	L
215	Matthew Argentina	Waterloo	USHL	1/16/03	5'11	190	C	R
216	Victor Sjöholm	HV71 J20	Nationell	7/8/03	5'9	172	RHD	R
217	Jimi Suomi	Jokerit U20	SM-Sarja	3/1/03	5'9	147	LHD	L
218	Haakon Hanelt	Eisbaren Berlin	DEL	6/1/03	6'0	194	C	L
219	Theo Angesved	Linköping J20	Nationell	6/23/03	5'11	172	RHD	R
220	Isaac Belliveau	Gatineau	QMJHL	11/26/02	6'2	185	LHD	L
221	Jack Harvey	Chicago	USHL	3/31/03	5'10	166	LW	L
222	Viljami Juusola	Kalix	Hockeyettan	4/19/03	5'10	156	LHD	L
223	Matthew Fusco	Dexter	HS-MA	3/7/03	6'0	185	RHD	R
224	Arsenii Sergeev	Shreveport	NAHL	12/16/02	6'3	192	GK	L

Top-100 Draft Profiles



Owen Power • Michigan (Big-10)

Defense • 6'6 • 217 pounds • Shoots Left • Nov. 22, 2002 • Mississauga, ON • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
2	1	1	1	1	1

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Season Review

After two successful seasons the USHL's Chicago Steel, Power wasted little time establishing himself as one of the nation's top freshman defensemen. It was within that peer group where Power quickly jumped to the top percentile, eventually placing first in points (16) and tying for second in assists (13). He was nominated for Hobey Baker Award despite playing middle-pairing minutes behind 2019 first-round pick Cam York, who eventually joined the Philadelphia Flyers. Power's role on the squad, however, was far beyond nominal. He played in every conceivable situation while partnered with undersized junior puck rusher Nick Blankenburg, and the duo became one of the NCAA's most formidable. Although COVID shut down the Wolverines' Frozen Four hopes by kicking them out of the tournament, Power's first season in Ann Arbor was borderline impeccable -- he was a Big-10 Freshman of the Year finalist, named to the Big-10 All-Freshman Team, and most importantly, the Second Team All-Big 10.

Power entered the late Spring with one of the thinnest international resumes for any recent top draft pick. He had played for one of Canada's three entries at the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge but did not make the 2019 under-18 Ivan Hlinka squad the August before last. In December of this season, Power was not released by Michigan to participate in the prominent under-20 world junior hockey championship. He was more than available four months later, however, when Canada asked him to represent his country at the IIHF Men's World Championship in Latvia. It was in Latvia where Power removed any doubts surrounding his potential by playing over 20 minutes a game for a Canadian squad who rallied to win the gold medal. But it wasn't just the fact that Power was playing big minutes for a championship team. Equally important is understanding how Power got there. Not only was he the youngest player on Canada's roster (which itself was on the inexperienced side by tournament standards), but Power started the tournament as the No. 8 defenseman, playing only three seconds in the first period in the opener against Latvia. By tournament's end, however, Power was averaging over 10 minutes a *third period*, including a team-high 10:31 in the third in Canada's 3-2 overtime win over Finland in the gold medal game.

Skating & Stickhandling

Power is an excellent skater in all directions for a defender of any size. The fact that he's 6-foot-5 adds additional problems to opponents trying to knock him off the puck, but the truth is that Power can be graceful and nimble while motoring up ice at top speed. His movements are fluid and pivots are effortless, and Power's first step in any direction seems to catch opponents by surprise. What shouldn't come as a shock is his exceptional balance, as Power can lug the puck up ice with a body or two draped over his back. The puck is on his stick a lot during a given game but intense pressure or a physical forecheck never seem to faze him. Power can put the perfect touch on any pass over any distance in any situation.

Shooting, Passing, & Playmaking

Power spends a lot of time below the circles and is willing to hover around the net. He uses a hard, low slapper or quick, heavy wrister from the high point, and Michigan has several set plays involving a one-timer or give-and-go for a direct route to the net. Power is not a fire-and-forget shooter who unloads every chance he gets, but goalies know they're in for a challenge when he's about to tee one up. Even when he's off target, you get the sense that those shots were not intended to score but rather to create disarray in the low slot and crease area. His head is always up, and Power's got a quick-strike mentality when looking for a pass option down low. The timing and precision of Power's passes have combined for several highlight-reel setups, and he can do so on either forehand or backhand. His first pass is clean and on the tape.

Defense and Physicality

Power's impact on his side of the red line is driven by his smarts. Every opposing rush is situational dependent, meaning he'll go from gapping up tight near his line with an extended stick to affording a puck carrier plenty room upon entry. His reach and footwork are obvious assets, and he already has the reputation of a defender who won't get beaten inside or out without a serious fight. On several occasions, Power against an entry would be backed into the top of left circle, only to close rapidly and eliminate the threat away from the middle of the ice and into the boards. He's used on the penalty kill and utilizes his size and stick to impact strong and weak sides without getting in the goalie's way. He's more of a hard shover than an open-ice hitter but Power finishes his checks and delivers successive firm crosschecks to an opponent's back. Power will stand up for teammates during scrums.

Hockey Sense

Power has an exceptional hockey mind for a defenseman and has revealed his high IQ multiple times in one shift, on and off the puck. There is no way to prepare for him off faceoffs because he picks and chooses when to activate or when to occupy/cover a high-danger area in either the attacking or defensive zone. Power reads a forecheck as well as any young defenseman we've seen and knows exactly how and where to make himself available for his partner. He joins a ton of rushes, steps up into the neutral zone to break up plays, and shows timely releases from chasing to re-occupy the slot. Power's head always remains on a swivel, and he'll shoulder check several times before deciding. There isn't a shred of indecisiveness in Power's puck carrying or puck handling. With all his jukes, look-offs, and head fakes you'd think Power was a flashy point guard but there are no unnecessary theatrics or selfishness to his game.

NHL Projection

Top-pairing, franchise-caliber defenseman for all situations. He's going to be a good one.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Chicago	45	12	28	40	68	0.89	18
2020-21	Michigan	26	3	13	16	41	0.62	6



Matt Beniers • Michigan (Big-10)

Center • 6'2 • 175 pounds • Shoots Left • Nov. 5, 2002 • Hingham, MA • U.S.

2

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
2	1	1	2	2	2

Season Review

Beniers has been a featured prospect in U.S. hockey circles for several years and for good reason — he continues to earn promotion after promotion while solidifying his reputation as one of the hardest workers you'll ever find at any level. He produced two successful seasons with the NTDP, including a bump up to the vaunted 2001 group (Jack Hughes, Trevor Zegras, Alex Turcotte, et al.) as a 16-year-old for the 2019 under-18 world championship and then serving as a top-six player for the 2019-20 NTDP. He reversed his initial NCAA commitment to Harvard in favor of Michigan after the ECAC suspended team sports, and the Wolverines certainly benefitted -- Beniers was among the NCAA leaders in freshman scoring with 24 points (10 goals, 14 assists) in 24 games. Critical to his numbers was that he started out as the fourth-line center alongside Kent Johnson, but the duo played so well in limited minutes that their ice time and roles were increased.

Most impressive on his pre-draft resume, however, was Beniers' performance for Team USA at the 2021 under-20 world junior hockey championship. Initially pegged for checking-line duties, Beniers played his way into the second-line center gig between wingers Matt Boldy and Cole Caufield. The Americans went on to win gold, and Beniers' work on the penalty kill and in late/close moments proved to be invaluable. The young man's efforts both on and off the puck were noticed on junior hockey's grandest stage, which in turn solidified his name in the conversation for first overall at the draft. Beniers later made the NHL-heavy American roster for the IIHF Men's World Championship, where he was used sparingly on the fourth line before he suffered an unfortunate lower-body injury.

Skating and Stickhandling

Beniers is a powerful and perfectly-balanced skater whose acceleration and violent stride can intimidate opponents at their own line. His style is a bit hunched and wide-based, but the kid gets to top speed in only a few scraping steps. There is absolutely zero hesitation in his decision making once the puck is on his stick, and Beniers is more than capable of covering up in his own end before blasting through the neutral zone and into prime opposing real estate. His cutbacks are incredibly pronounced — if you blinked and missed the plume of ice shavings, you would have at least heard it. Basically, go look up the word "escapability" in the scout dictionary and you'll find an image of Beniers with disheveled opponents in the background, as if they got hit by a twister. Puck possession, specifically the cycle game and keeping the puck down low, is a hallmark of Beniers' game.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Beniers has a nasty shot and quick release, but he doesn't use it as often as he should. Part of the reasoning is either his selflessness or willingness to go to the dirty areas to open room for his wingers. With Michigan, we're seeing his shot used more off set plays, and his above-average accuracy has helped create second chances near the net. Beniers seems more comfortable with his forehand than backhand, but his hands are quick enough to convert in tight areas with either side of his blade. His shooting percentage over his three combined seasons since 2018-19 is an impressive 18 percent (42 goals on 234 shots). As far as playmaking, Beniers is a highly accurate passer no matter the distance, and the timing of his leads or outlets come in handy when assisting defensemen during breakouts. He's also shown the ability to create bang-bang chances off the cycle or wall battle, and through traffic no less. His primary assists are most certainly earned, and on occasion he'll pull off passes of the no-look or behind-the-back variety.

Defense and Physicality

Beniers is the best two-way forward in the draft for several reasons. He has been highly effective when used in late/close situations his entire junior career. Whether it's on the penalty kill or protecting a lead with the opposing net empty, Beniers is exactly the type of center you want on the ice — relentless puck pursuit; heavy hitting within the rule book; and a willingness to sacrifice his body. He's always starting and stopping between the weak and strong sides, and rarely will you find him out of position or blowing coverage. If you want to teach young kids on the importance of backchecking and what it should look like the second possession changes, have them sneak a peak at Beniers, who routinely buries his chin into his chest and pressures opponents with all his strength and energy. His faceoff success rate, once a point of contention for being in the high-30 percent range, seems to have been rectified, as was stated in the opening. Another prominent feature of Beniers' play away from the puck is his blending of tenaciousness with discipline — he wasn't whistled for a single penalty this season.

Hockey Sense

Beniers gets it, simple as that. It's easy to label a kid as having a low ceiling because he excels on the defensive side, but Beniers doesn't need to be coached all that much. He simply knows when to pick his spots rather than keep the spotlight on him while ignoring his linemates. Beniers is very mature for his age, not just for the way he carries himself on the ice but also for his team-first mindset and the energy he brings to the bench. Naturally, you cannot excel as a two-way forward without making consistent reads, anticipating gaps, or juggling multiple options in a second or two. Therefore, Beniers' decision making should never be questioned for strategic approach he brings every shift.

NHL Projection

Top-line, all-situations center who delivers in the clutch. A skill set and style similar to Jonathan Toews in his 2005-06 draft year.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U.S. U18	44	18	23	41	88	0.93	24
2020-21	Michigan	24	10	14	24	57	1.00	0



William Eklund • Djurgardens, SHL

Left Wing • 5'11 • 175 pounds • Shoots Left • Oct. 12, 2002 • Haninge, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
17	17	11	3	3	3

3

Season Review

Eklund was a kid whose name rang bells for several years thanks to standout performances at 2019 Ivan Hlinka and during last season's J20 Superelit Norra, where he finished fourth in scoring (29 points in 24 games). It was in the SHL this season, however, where Eklund blew past the draft-year production of several notable Swedish Leaguers, namely 2020 top-10 picks Lucas Raymond and Alexander Holtz. With 23 points (11 goals, 12 assists) in 40 games, Eklund's 0.58 points-per-game average was the highest by an SHL first-year draft eligible since 2012-13, when Elias Lindholm (No. 5 overall in 2013 draft) netted 0.63 points a contest with Brynas.

Skating & Stickhandling

Eklund has very good speed and weave-ability, as he is far more east-west than he is north-south. Eklund's agility is off the charts so playing him tight can be a recipe for humiliation. He's not an explosive skater from a straight-line standpoint but you'll mark Eklund in open ice several times a period, let alone throughout the game. He'll use stutter steps, quick shoulder drops, or spin moves to gain the inside edge, and more times than not he's beating that defender to the inside post. Eklund's a high-motor forward who will put forth maximum effort at the end of shifts. One of the greatest strengths Eklund possesses is his ability to enter the zone under complete control regardless of speed or coverage. An underrated aspect of Eklund's skater is his balance — he rarely gets knocked off the puck and will snap back up the few times it happens.

Shooting, Passing, & Playmaking

Calling Eklund anything short of a puck wizard would be borderline insulting. He's the most talented of any draft-eligible forward in terms of pure puck skills and there isn't a situation or coverage that has proven to limit his creativity. There's simply no way to prepare for him as he can be as dangerous from the top of the right circle as he is behind the net or along the goal line. Eklund keeps his feet moving constantly and playing with a sniper like Holtz allows him to exploit defenses that may cheat towards the weak side out of fear of a one-timer. It is in similar situations when Eklund displays both the brilliance of his vision and ingenuity — he uses several features within offensive zone to create chances, to include the boards, the back of the net, etc.

Eklund is a multi-faceted goal scorer and open-ice threat. He can beat you with a slapper off the pass or hit his short-side targets with wrists from in close or sharp angles. Eklund also is incredibly dangerous near the goal and his confidence under the pressure of a collapsing slot or slot area doesn't force him into rushed attempts. He's been used at the point on the power play at every level.

Defense and Physicality

Eklund fits into the category of skilled point producers who care about their play off the puck. He's not a stopper or checker in the classic sense, and neither is he used on the penalty kill. But Eklund can be a tenacious forechecker who is willing to throw his weight around below the goal line or in the corners. He's also attentive with an active stick while in the defensive zone, plugging gaps in the danger areas and shoulder-checking the points for a potential backdoor play. He also has an abrasive side and will mix it up with older forwards after the whistle.

Hockey Sense

Eklund has a sharp hockey mind. His anticipation and awareness are at the highest levels for a teenager, and most of his better scoring chances are byproducts of beating an opponent to a spot or exploiting a gap as it opens. The timing of his passes under pressure are near perfect, and Eklund seems to factor in the speed on an oncoming opponent when deciding the perfect time to release the trigger on a dump-in, lead pass, or high flip. He's also disciplined for a player who performs at such a high energy level. Eklund is an electrifying talent who personifies clutch play, timeliness, and excitability.

NHL Projection

Top-line winger, point producer, and power-play specialist. A Mitch Marner-Nikolaj Ehlers hybrid who can be both a sniper and a set-up man.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Djurgardens	20	0	2	2	11	0.10	4
2019-20	Djurgardens J20	31	12	24	36	80	1.16	22
2020-21	Djurgardens	40	11	12	23	63	0.58	2



Kent Johnson • Michigan (Big-10)

Left Wing • 6'1 • 165 pounds • Shoots Left • Oct. 18, 2002 • Port Moody, BC • Canada

4

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
11	6	4	5	4	4

Season Review

Piling up points comes naturally for this super-skilled Michigan forward, who finished second in the nation in freshman scoring the season after he won the BCHL scoring crown by an impressive 30 points. It didn't take long for Johnson to confirm his reputation as a scoring machine, as he posted a four-assist effort in his very first NCAA game on Nov. 14 against Arizona State, and did so while on Michigan's fourth line. It soon became apparent that Johnson and his center Matthew Beniers were deserving of expanded roles (to include permanent power-play time), and their eventual promotion not only rewarded them for their efforts, but also set the example for the Wolverines' other top freshman to follow. Johnson is listed as a center, but he played left wing his entire 2020-21 season and finished among the leaders in NCAA freshman scoring (9 goals, 18 assists in 27 games).

Although it's tough to try and marginalize the gaudy stats of a freshman, it bears mentioning that the bulk of Johnson's points were a combination of secondary assists and insurance or garbage-time goals. Of Johnson's 18 assists, 15 were secondary, and only a handful were delivered with the game either tied or with a one-goal difference. Still, his total production is way beyond acceptable even without the added context of competing for ice time within the NCAA's deepest and most talented freshman class.

Skating & Stickhandling

Johnson is an elusive east-west skater with above-average speed and exceptional close-quarter footwork and puck control. He's a master stickhandler who can initiate, execute, and finish plays off the cycle or rush, and it was quite common to see Johnson spearheading lengthy offensive-zone possessions which lasted well over 90 seconds. He was in open ice quite a bit, and his quickness is driven more by a high motor and quick anticipation than blinding end-to-end speed. His stride is clean, and he can outpace back pressure on his own, but Johnson is a highly calculated puck carrier who knows when to accelerate and when to delay.

Johnson's ability to dominate the puck in the offensive zone for the entirety of shifts reveals all you need to know about his skating and stickhandling, and against physical college-age opponents no less. Maintaining possession and generating shots requires constant movement, and Johnson can put on a clinic for either one. His balance and timely peel-backs or reverses along the wall eventually tire out pressure, but Johnson also uses spin moves or jukes while taking direct or indirect routes into the scoring areas. Johnson is one of those rare players who can look both quick and energetic within the confines of an obstacle-laden offensive zone.

Shooting, Passing, & Playmaking

Johnson owns an arsenal of shots to select from and he usually dictates the terms of when and how he's going to attempt to score. Of his nine goals this season, several came on the backhand and another one from a booming slapper, but he's also attempted the "Michigan" move from behind the net and is more than comfortable dropping a toe drag or dangle. Johnson isn't as prolific a shooter as one might expect (2.04 shots a game ranked seventh on the team), but that doesn't mean he's indecisive or positioned poorly. Rather, Johnson is the definition of a playmaker — one who usually tries to create opportunities for anyone in his five-man unit before himself. Owning a heavy, accurate shot in addition to being a pinpoint (and unpredictable) passer is what makes Johnson so difficult to defend, and even keeping him to the outside fails to eliminate the danger of his nasty backhand.

Defense and Physicality

Playing sound defensive hockey off the puck is something you rarely see linked to high-scoring wingers, but Johnson is the farthest thing from a one-way forward. He is both attentive and active in the neutral zone and will apply noticeable pressure on the forecheck while using multiple starts-and-stops and keeping his head on a swivel. Being this engaged off the puck has benefited Johnson and his linemates, as either he or Beniers have single-handedly neutralized breakout attempts with a quick stick or timely read.

Johnson rarely gives room to opposing puck carriers and will harass them well into his own zone. Although he isn't a punishing checker and rarely separates an opponent from the puck by using his body, Johnson has a high battle level and will make his presence felt from the beginning of a shift to the end. He didn't kill penalties but most of the time was able to match and support the consistent 200-foot effort of his center Beniers during 5-on-5.

Hockey Sense

Being a tricky and creative scorer requires more than just soft hands, and Johnson has the tendency to outthink opponents several plays ahead. There are times when Johnson can seem like a puck hog, but he plays with his head up and gives signals during play or instruction before draws to everyone within his unit to maximize their time in the offensive zone. Again, he is a playmaker, and owning that moniker requires more selflessness than stubbornness. It can't be confirmed if Johnson is a hardcore student of the game, but he certainly acts and plays like it.

NHL Projection

Top-pairing, franchise-caliber defenseman for all situations. He's going to be a good one.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Trail	52	41	60	101	--	1.94	14
2020-21	Michigan	26	9	18	27	53	1.04	4



Carson Lambos • Winnipeg (WHL)

Left Defense • 6'1 • 195 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 13, 2003 • Winnipeg, MB • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
8	3	3	4	5	5

5

Season Review

After recording 8 goals, 24 assists, and 109 shots in 57 games for the WHL's Winnipeg Ice in 2019-20, Lambos wasted little time preparing for this nonstandard draft season by crossing over to Europe in October to play with JyP U20 in Finland's SM-Sarja. The decision proved to be a wise one, as Lambos not only was an immediate difference maker for JyP, but he played well enough to earn a promotion to the adult-age SM-Liiga, albeit for only two games.

It became apparent from his very first shift with JyP back on Oct. 30 that Lambos wasn't going to alter a two-way game built on mobility, physicality, and sharp decision making, and his team more than benefitted from it — JyP U20 were 6-9-1 with a -26 goal-differential before his arrival and went 7-3-3 with a +14 differential with Lambos in the lineup. In his 13 games, Lambos averaged 20:23 of ice time while serving on the middle pairing and used on the top power-play and penalty-killing units. Lambos went back to Winnipeg and appeared in the first two games before taking time off for what the team called a "medical procedure". It forced him out of the under-18 world championship and there is reason to believe

Skating and Stickhandling

Lambos possesses excellent mobility and quickness for a defenseman with a powerful, sturdy frame. He isn't a consistent end-to-end rusher like most high-end defense prospects but eluding or out-pacing forecheck pressure is one of Lambos' major strengths. His movements are incredibly efficient, especially when forecheckers try to fix him into a tough situation. Upon retrievals, Lambos will peel back multiple times, using his edges and balance (and quick shoulder checks) to keep the puck away from the side of the opponent's blade. His turns are both sharp and rapid, but Lambos drops a quick first step when he decides to head north and accelerate with a long, powerful stride.

Lambos is an integral part of his unit's breakout which means the puck is on his stick quite often. He tends to avoid decisions that force him into the teeth of an opposing zone scheme, but his ability to keep the puck glued to his blade while on the backhand or when making an aforementioned escape turn is critical to his high completion percentage of first passes.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Lambos is a shoot-first defender who has set plays designed for him, and he can make a goalie earn his paycheck thanks to a heavy, accurate slapper (with little backswing) or an elite wrister that has beaten quality goalies across multiple leagues and levels. As good a shooter as he may be, Lambos is a highly unselfish player who is more than capable of quarterbacking the top power-play unit, which he did with distinction for both JyP U20 and Canada-White at the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge. With Winnipeg a season ago, Lambos seemed to understand his role on a talented unit with the man-advantage and was successful at feeding accurate passes to the middle or circles. In Finland, seven of his 11 points came on the power play. Lambos knows how to create his own shot and uses his quick feet to walk the line or attack an opening closer to the goal.

Defense and Physicality

Lambos is an excellent defender, one who can be assigned for a shutdown assignment against a top line or blanket the neutral and grey zones against easy entries. It is in these areas of the ice where Lambos's physicality comes into play, as he uses his powerful leg drive and upper-body strength to eliminate puck carriers along the boards. He is a vocal on-ice communicator who shouts instruction and directs his forwards towards gaps in coverage. Inside his own end, Lambos stays active and uses a quick first step to pounce on pucks in the corners or behind the net. He makes timely reads following defensive-zone draws and will step up towards the top of the circle to break up any set-play attempts. Lambos is an excellent penalty killer and has the endurance to withstand the full two minutes in his own end yet still provide an active stick and physical play near the net.

Hockey Sense

Being charged with significant responsibilities on either side of the puck is a testament to Lambos's ability to make sound decisions in all situations. If he makes a mistake, it rarely involves puck management or unforced errors. Lambos seems to relish the opportunity to quickly transition up ice, mostly in the form of quick, no-nonsense first passes. Making accurate one-touch passes up ice with consistency requires a degree of foresight, yet Lambos seems incredibly confident when doing so. Although he makes a fair number of risky decisions per game, Lambos never comes across as a selfish player who wants to hog the spotlight. The poise he shows under intense pressure is among the highest of any draft-eligible defensemen.

NHL Projection

Top-pairing, minute-eating defenseman for all situations.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Winnipeg	57	8	24	32	88	0.56	18
2020-21	JyP U20	13	2	9	11	--	0.85	8



Brandt Clarke • Nove Zamky (Tipos Extraliga)

Right Defense • 6'2 • 185 pounds • Shoots Right • Feb. 9, 2003 • Nepean, ON • Canada

6

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
6	8	6	7	6	6

Season Review

It's rare to find a hasty decision that delivers positive strategic results, but Clarke's move from the Barrie Colts and OHL stagnation to the unfamiliarity of Slovakia's adult-age Tipos Extraliga turned out to be a wise one, at least in terms of maintaining draft-year notoriety. Within days of arriving in Europe in late December, Clarke suited up for HC Nové Zámky and logged nearly 23 minutes of ice without any noticeable signs of rust or ineffectiveness. It took him awhile to impact the scoresheet from an individual standpoint, as Clarke didn't register a point in 17 of his first 21 games. Nonetheless, he still played 19:40 a game while being used on their middle pairing (often partnered with lefty Peter Mikus) and quarterbacking the top power-play unit. Clarke caught fire in his final five games (2 goals, 6 assists) to end up leading all Nové Zámky defenders with a 0.58 points-per-game average, and he also fired an impressive 3.04 shots per game. Clarke returned to North America to star for Canada at the U18 worlds, where he was their No. 1 defender and helped them win the gold medal. Last season (2019-20) was equally as impressive for Clarke, albeit under standard conditions with the OHL. Barrie's late-season surge was driven by upgrades in the forward ranks, but the midseason trade of veteran Tyler Tucker allowed Clarke to showcase his abilities with an increased role. In the 31 games with Tucker as Barrie's No. 1, Clarke managed only 14 points (0 goals, 14 assists). From Jan. 8 onward, however, Clarke's production jumped to six goals and 18 assists in 26 games, all the while the Colts made a charge for the Central Division crown. For his efforts, Clarke was named to the 2019-20 OHL All-Rookie Team.

Skating and Stickhandling

Clarke has no problems with mobility whatsoever, but he was one of the most awkward upright stances you'll find. He can glide all over the ice and use quick feet to track the puck in any direction, yet his wide, bow-legged base can make him look clumsy. Aesthetics aside, Clarke is an end-to-end rusher and accelerates past zone pressure with ease, therefore rendering any debate over whether his base or short stride is a detriment to his overall quickness as irrelevant. Clarke's strength on his skates is average but he has shown improvement against thicker forwards, although his reverses in the face of heavy pressure are both rapid and timely. Even older, stronger opponents in Slovakia were unsuccessful when they tried to lean him off the puck.

Controlling the puck is a major strength of Clarke's game no matter how fast he's moving. He can be both a shooter and a playmaker, and he can breakout of his own end in a variety of ways without forcing the puck into an untenable situation. Clarke is as poised a teenage defender as you'll find and handling the puck under constant pressure reveals a kid who can play keep-away while moving in any direction before slicing a zone scheme in half with a dart of a stretch pass. Clarke's soft hands and elite hand-eye coordination combine with his wheels to help him enter the zone cleanly, and the decision to delay at the opposing line can jumpstart a lengthy possession with Clarke leading the charge. He's more than capable of protecting the puck in tight spaces and he uses his body effectively to keep harassing opponents lunging at nothing but air.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Clarke has one of the best shots among draft-eligible defensemen and he has no reservations about when or how to use it. Whether he's deep at the point or dropping down for a mid-range attempt, Clarke generates impressive velocity with either the slapper or the wrister. His reputation as a no-nonsense shooter appeared to have carried over from the OHL to Slovakia, where veteran goalies found difficulty controlling rebounds from both sharp-angle attempts and deep bombs with a clear line of sight. Owning an elite shot helps Clarke exploit a checker's indecision with look-offs and slap fakes. A clogged lane or seam doesn't intimidate Clarke, who will dance around in all directions until an opposing stick blade is swung the wrong way. Having soft hands and confidence in his stickhandling makes it easier for Clarke to outwait an opponent while simultaneously identifying multiple teammates to pass to from either forehand or backhand. Puck management, pass accuracy, and Clarke's touch and timing are all at a superior level.

Defense and Physicality

Clarke is a major risk taker who is running neck and neck with Luke Hughes and Simon Edvinsson for the title of Chief Riverboat Gambler among draft-eligible defensemen. Much like his peers, however, Clarke is an incredibly strong 1-on-1 defender who uses a mix of razor-sharp awareness, quick feet, and an intense competitiveness to eliminate plays away from high-danger areas. He may not look like an intimidating presence, but Clarke delivers hard hits in open ice and will finish his checks along the boards with authority, even from a static position. It became evident early into his Extraliga season that bigger, tougher opponents could not intimidate him physically, and Clarke himself was able to use his own physicality to send a message. He plays with a ton of enthusiasm, and it shows with his effort level from start to finish.

Hockey Sense

Smarts and sound decision making are both qualities that Clarke can reveal throughout the entirety of his shifts. He's a confident, decisive puck carrier who constantly scans the ice to his front and rear regardless of whether he has the puck. Most of the gambles he makes come in the form of reads or step-ups from within his zone, with the intent to swiftly wrestle away possession and counterattack immediately driving those decisions. Clarke understands the game and seems to understand his opponent's way of thinking, and it is common to see him either deliver instruction to teammates before a draw or using hand and arm signals while vocally identifying weak-side threats. These are all traits of a studious individual who even as a depth player would still think the game outside the boundaries of his reduced role.

NHL Projection

All-Star two-way defenseman and power-play quarterback

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Barrie	57	6	32	38	122	0.67	38
2020-21	Nove Zamky	26	5	10	15	79	0.58	41
2020-21	Canada U18	7	2	5	7	21	1.00	0



Dylan Guenther • Edmonton (WHL)

Right Wing • 6'2 • 181 pounds • Shoots Right • April 10, 2003 • Edmonton, AB • Canada

7

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
13	7	7	8	7	7

Season Review

A top-line right wing who poses a scoring threat in any situation, Guenther wasted little time establishing himself as the WHL's most dangerous forward this season, scoring 24 points (12 goals, 12 assists) in only 12 games before he was summoned for Team Canada's under-18 camp. Although he (like most CHL'ers) waited patiently for his league to resume play, Guenther gave the Alberta Junior Hockey League a chance by suiting up with the Sherwood Park Crusaders for only a handful of games before prepping for a return to his Edmonton Oil Kings, where he has combined with linemates Jake Neighbours and Kade Oliver to form one of the league's most prolific trios. This also was the case in 2019-20, when Guenther — the first overall pick in the 2018 WHL Bantam Draft — finished second in WHL rookie scoring (26 goals, 33 assists in 58 games).

Skating and Stickhandling

Guenther doesn't seem like an explosive skater at first or second glance, but he can drop a lightning-quick first step in any direction, and his rapid peel-backs consistently catch opponents off guard. One thing of note is that he has added nearly 20 pounds from last season without a decrease in agility or acceleration, and he remains difficult to contain in the neutral zone. Whether Guenther's frequent positioning in unchecked danger areas is a tribute to either his anticipation or speed (or both), the fact remains that the kid always seems one, two, or even three steps ahead of his closest opponent. He's in open ice a ton and displays smoothness and fluidity no matter the game speed he's operating at.

Blessed with soft hands and sharp hand-eye coordination, Guenther can make short work of defenders in one-on-one scenarios. Filling out has helped make his puck-protection skills even more impressive, as his constant shifting of body positioning with slight delays (while his head is up) can ankle-break an opponent to a good three or four feet off him. Guenther makes a lot of money stickhandling in tight spaces and knows how to use both the boards and switching/weaving teammates to his advantage, and it's quite common to see him turn your basic two-on-two into a coverage mix-up that results in an open lane to the net.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Guenther is your classic dual-threat who can differentiate between when it's time to play sniper and when to go the pass-first route. If there was a "best option available" category for scoring chances created, you'd probably find Guenther at or near the top of that list. In other words, he rarely settles for low-percentage plays and will reload a possession, if necessary, by staying in motion and alternating sides. But Guenther has a plus-plus shot-release combo, and he sure loves to use it, and you can say his "office" for a right wing is anywhere inside the left circle, especially on the power play. His shots per game in 2020-21 (4.25) took a massive jump in comparison to last season (2.87), albeit in a smaller sample size, but there's no reason to think he wouldn't have hit at least 50 or 60 goals and 250 shots had the WHL played a full season. As nasty as his wrister and one-timer are, however, Guenther probably is the best among his peers at depositing net-mouth chances or cross-crease feeds.

Having elite goal-scoring prowess affords Guenther the time and space to showcase his vision and passing ability. He's often the primary possessor during advances up the ice and will make smart timing plays to allow his entire unit to not only enter the zone but also have enough time to position themselves properly. Guenther on the power play is used as the "F4" who starts out high but eventually slips into the left or right circle, where he will deliver crisp, accurate passes across the seam from either forehand or backhand.

Defense and Physicality

Guenther's two-way game is a significant part of his overall skill set, but he has taken it to another level now that he has a thicker frame and is a year wiser. He is hyper-aggressive off the puck and will apply in-your-face pressure using an active stick, hard shoves, and rapid directional changes that allow him to harass either a mobile or static puck carrier. Guenther also is one of the more active penalty killers you'll find within the 2003 age group, as he constantly pressures the points and finishes his checks along the half wall. His desire to make life difficult for an opponent is quite strong, and it's blatantly obvious why coaches at multiple levels of competition have used him for the penalty kill or during late/close situations. Another testament to his maturity is how he can show a nasty or gritty side while staying within the rule book — Guenther's totaled only 24 penalty minutes in nearly 80 WHL games. Although Guenther's zeal off the puck can lead to occasional overcommitments or lapses in coverage, any coach would gladly welcome his efforts and the mostly positive results that go along with them.

Hockey Sense

It goes without saying that a top-flight winger who possesses the qualities in versatility and playmaking must think the game at a higher level, which is exactly what Guenther does on the regular. Whether opponents know his intentions or not is practically irrelevant because Guenther still manages to outfox them and beat them to a desired spot far more times than not. He makes so many smart plays in the neutral zone that result in immediate counterattacks, and what he does with the puck from that point forward is usually calculated and strategized. Some might call him opportunistic or taking advantage of what's given to him, but a deeper analysis of Guenther's game shows highly-intelligent play in all three zones. He is an effective player and contributor whether he's scoring or not.

NHL Projection

Premier scoring winger with star potential.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Edmonton	58	26	33	59	167	1.02	22
2020-21	Edmonton	12	12	12	24	51	2.00	2



Luke Hughes • U.S. U18 (NTDP)

Left defense • 6'2 • 184 pounds • Shoots Left • Sep. 9, 2003 • Manchester, NH • U.S.

8

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
4	12	13	10	8	8

Season Review

The top-rated defenseman for this year's NTDP class who in March suffered a season-ending foot injury, Hughes still delivered one of the most productive seasons by a recent NTDP rearguard. Although this current group of 2003-born prospects is deep at every position, Hughes distinguished himself while playing the right side on the top pairing with Aidan Hreschuk. He served as the primary power-play quarterback and as a penalty killer, and his 0.90 points-per game average was similar to notable NTDP alums such as Adam Fox (0.92), older brother Quinn Hughes (0.82), and Cam York (1.03) in their respective under-18 seasons. Although this year's NTDP schedule was thinner on powerhouse NCAA and European under-18 opponents than in previous seasons, Hughes was just as productive against older collegiate competition (13 points in 12 games) than against junior-age USHL'ers (21 points in 26 games). He's committed to the University of Michigan.

Skating and Stickhandling

Skating unsurprisingly is at the heart of Hughes's ability to dictate pace and tempo. Much like his brother Quinn, Luke is an effortless skater with a long, clean stride and instant acceleration. There are several factors that tie into his willingness to take the puck the length of the ice with ease, but multi-directional quickness, balance, and agility are at the forefront. Hughes's mobility when combined with a strong will to attack pressure is a major problem for opposing forecheckers and in turn, opposing forechecking strategy. There's simply no real way to prepare for him and pray for the ankles of the checker who attempts man-to-man coverage, especially when Hughes is controlling the puck at the point. All that said, the most impressive aspects of Hughes's skating are his elite edgework and his ability to maintain speed throughout his forward or backward transitions. He is a more than a handful to contain. Hughes is the rare gem along the blue line whose hands can keep up with the quickness of his feet. Having soft hands and an aggressive mindset helps him deal with pressure in either safe or risky fashion, yet there is a high degree of finesse in the way Hughes outmaneuvers a dogged forecheck. It also helps having the puck glued to his blade under harrowing circumstances

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Hughes has a hard, accurate shot that he likes to keep low, but he can pick the corners without much backswing. He uses both the slapper and the wrister while manning the right point, and set plays are designed for him off the pass. The more you watch Hughes, the more you notice the confidence he has in his ability to fit the puck through any window, shot or pass. He always plays with his head up but is known to look off or slap-pass towards the weak side. Having elite maneuverability in any direction quickly opens the ice for him, and the passes Hughes delivers are always right on the tape. Bet the farm that if he makes 100 pass attempts a game, no less than four or five will be off the mark, and not by much.

Defense and Physicality

These are two areas where Luke in his draft year already has separated himself from where his brother Quinn was back in either 2017 or 2018. Luke has the bigger frame, and he certainly knows how to use it, but he also has the occasional mean streak where he'll muscle up on an opponent along the boards. Additionally, Luke plays very close to his line and will hold firm against the quickest of onrushing puck carriers, using his long reach and an effective stick-on-puck technique. He's by no means an eraser, nor does he intimidate with physicality. But the NTDP coaching staff clearly trust him for critical penalty kills and late-close situations. Hughes likes to roam from the slot, however, but most of his reads towards the line come across as well intentioned. Of course, having a thoroughbred on the back end comes with a few disadvantages in zone coverage, especially once he's unbridled.

Hockey Sense

Having an acute sense of the ever-changing tactical situation on the ice seems to be a hallmark of all three Hughes brothers, so watching Luke dart or weave his way into an opening nobody saw developing shouldn't be surprising. Luke also possesses an incredibly high panic threshold and is willing to delay (and delay more) while backskating or moving laterally to chase away a pesky checker. Every decision he makes on a given night can be both explained and justified, but Hughes walks that tightrope near his line when it comes to handling the puck and the desire to attack closer to the goal. Quite frankly, his riverboat gambler mentality on the puck seems to be delivering a higher completion rate in 2020-21 than in his under-17 campaign last season, which says a lot about his growth and potential.

NHL Projection

Top-pairing, franchise-caliber defenseman who perennially should rank among the top scoring rearguards.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U.S. U17	48	7	21	28	39	0.58	10
2020-21	U.S. U18	38	6	28	34	60	0.90	20



Mason McTavish • Peterborough (OHL)

Left Wing/Center • 6'1 • 207 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 30, 2003 • Zurich, SUI • Canada

9

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
15	15	15	21	9	9

Season Review

A top OHL prospect with the Peterborough Petes who took his heavy North American game to Switzerland during the shutdown, McTavish has consistently maintained a strong reputation as a potential top-10 pick in this draft. He was selected fifth overall in the 2019 OHL Priority Selection and followed that up by leading all 2003-born players in both goals (29) and points (42) during the shortened 2019-20 season. McTavish in 2020-21 played in 13 regular-season games (9 goals, 2 assists) for Olten HC in the adult-age Swiss League, but it was his dominant performance in the playoff quarterfinals (2 goals, 5 assists in a four-game sweep of Sierre) where his ice time jumped nearly four minutes to 22:29 a game. McTavish, who played left wing his entire time in the Swiss League, finished third overall with a 23.7 shooting percentage and placed in the top-10 with 2.31 "slot shots" per game. EHC Olten dearly missed McTavish (and fellow OHL prospect Brennan Othmann) in their semifinal series loss to Kloten, as the duo were summoned back to North America to play for Canada at the IIHF under-18 world championship. It was at that tournament where McTavish's took his play to the highest level we've seen, as he was a team leader and finished with an impressive 11 points (5 goals, 6 assists) in helping Canada win gold.

Skating and Stickhandling

McTavish is what you'd classify as a strong skater but more for the actual power in his stride and ability to keep his balance while he checked from any direction. He wins footraces mostly because of his anticipation and economical routes rather than an explosive first step or separation speed, but McTavish is far from cement-footed. His cutbacks are sharp and pronounced and although his stride is short, McTavish still reaches his desired spot to remain a threat or stay within a stick's length from the puck. McTavish is an excellent stickhandler and has no problem attacking heavy-traffic areas, but the best part is he rarely tries to do anything fancy. He simply uses his quick hands and sturdy frame to his advantage while allowing the rest of his unit to exploit any space he's creating for them. McTavish reverses direction rapidly while skirting the boards under pressure but he still manages to keep the puck glued to his blade.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

McTavish is a dual threat in that he can be just as effective a setup man as he can be a finisher. His Cy Young-esque goals to assist totals in league play may say otherwise, but McTavish has the instincts, vision, and hands to be a true center who can make any member in his unit a scoring option. But make no mistake about it — McTavish loves to shoot and owns an elite shot-release combination. He can absolutely wire it and he doesn't need the perfect conditions to go from pass receipt to shot execution in the blink of an eye. McTavish is more than willing to battle for net-front superiority or tire out checkers by starting and stopping throughout an entire offensive-zone possession. As already mentioned, McTavish's office clearly is the expanded slot from between the faceoff dots and below the hash marks. As an OHL rookie in 2019-20 on a competitive and talent-laden Petes' squad, McTavish fired off 177 shots in only 57 games and scored 24 of his 29 goals at 5-on-5. What's most impressive about his last OHL season is that he spent most of the campaign either centering or playing wing on the third line yet still managed to average over three shots per game. McTavish was mostly used as a wing on the third line with 2000-born center Max Grondin in the second half of Peterborough's season after their acquisition of Akil Thomas, and he occasionally saw time on the top power-play unit with Jason Robertson and Liam Kirk.

Defense and Physicality

Violence and aggression are just two of several commonplaces in your typical McTavish shift. He's a throwback who doesn't seem concerned with what opponents think of him or what an opposing star player's reputation is, all while showcasing his own impressive skills in the process. There's simply no quit in his game. He kills penalties, supports his defensemen below the faceoff dots, and backchecks with a purpose. These traits were incredibly consistent in McTavish's shifts at the under-18 world championship, but he played the same in-your-face style against older competition in Switzerland. It goes without saying that Swiss League opposition probably threw a big party when he had to leave to join Team Canada. When he plays center, McTavish can be effective on draws. He won 59.5 percent of his 220 faceoffs in the OHL in 2019-20 and another 61 percent of the 92 attempts at the dot during the U18 worlds.

Hockey Sense

McTavish is a smart player both on and off the puck. He can add a layer of deception to his puck handling by shifting his shoulders and pivoting before darting in another direction, but McTavish also times his chips perfectly and seems to gauge the speed and quickness of an opposing defender before dumping pucks in. He also anticipates which side a rim will be directed towards and will pick off neutral-zone passes for immediate counterattacks. Unforced errors are quite rare over a full game, and he works hard at avoiding lazy penalties.

NHL Projection

Top-line power forward with two-way ability who sets the right example for others to follow.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Peterborough	57	29	13	42	177	0.74	31
2020-21	Olten	13	9	2	11	38	0.85	6

10



Cole Sillinger • Sioux Falls (USHL)

Left Wing/Center • 6'0 • 197 pounds • Shoots Left • May 16, 2003 • Columbus, OH • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
7	9	9	9	10	10

Season Review

The son of 17-year NHL veteran Mike Sillinger, Cole was a high WHL bantam pick in 2018 (11th overall) who delivered a strong pre-draft season in 2019-20 with the Medicine Hat Tigers. There he served as a top-six forward and power-play specialist (26 power-play points) but also killed penalties and delivered 53 points and 181 shots (3.77 per game) in only 48 games. Although he was born in Ohio, Sillinger represented Team Canada-White at the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge and tied for third in the tournament with five goals in six games. As if his impressive WHL production from a season ago wasn't enough to give him a strong reputation, Sillinger's pandemic-driven move to the USHL's Sioux Falls Stampede for the 2020-21 season all but cemented his standing as a premier draft prospect. Not only did he lead the Stampede in scoring, but Sillinger's 1.48 points-per-game average doubled that of his closest teammate. Much like his rookie WHL season, Sillinger also fired 3.65 shots a game and still finished top-10 in overall goal scoring in spite of missing over 20 games. It should be noted that Sioux Falls finished second to last in the USHL and had a terrible close to the season to miss the playoffs. The Stampede was slightly better without Sillinger (8-13-2) as they were with him in the lineup (10-19-2). Lastly, Sillinger was expected to play for Team Canada at the IIHF under-18 world championship but was forced to miss the event because of COVID protocol.

Skating and Stickhandling

Sillinger's unorthodox skating style has made him one of the most scrutinized top-level draft prospects this year. Much like fellow 2021 draft-eligible Brandt Clarke, the criticisms center on aesthetics rather than the result. He's an upright skater with a clunky stride; that much is true. But Sillinger's straight-line speed is average at worst, and he is both deceptive and rapid with his directional changes in traffic, especially during zone entries. His balance is outstanding and helps him load up a hammer blow towards the net in spite of being draped by opposing pressure. If Sillinger's skating was problematic, it didn't impact his ability to generate a high volume of shots and torch defensemen and goalies in two premier junior circuits known for defense and goaltending. There is a high level of finesse and skill involved when Sillinger is controlling the puck, although he can be guilty of overhandling. He's the one you want orchestrating possessions from the second the puck crosses the red line, but his shot proclivity and set plays make him just as dangerous away from the action. Sillinger uses deception during puck control and uses tactics like gear shifting, delays, look-offs, toe drags, and blade changes to open a lane, beat a defender to the inside or out, and get a goalie to commit first.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Sillinger is a dual threat with keen vision and incredibly soft hands, but his bread and butter is owning one of the nastiest shot-release combinations of any draft prospect in the last several years, and potentially beyond that. There's simply no way anyone can deny it and saying he's already at an NHL level would be somewhat of an insult since most NHL'ers can't wire it with as much power as Sillinger can. The puck explodes off his blade and he doesn't require optimal or even standard shooting conditions to beat a goalie cleanly from the high slot or circles. Nearly all his goals this season came via the wrist or one-timer and on several occasions, he literally knocked a goalie off balance with his shot. Sillinger also has a series of highlight-reel setups from either his forehand or backhand and wastes little time spotting and then connecting with a teammate either diagonally or across the seam. He likes to set up at the right half-wall on the power play, where his shot and passing abilities cause coverage issues.

Defense and Physicality

Sillinger can be classified as a 200-foot forward because he shows an aggressiveness on the forecheck, kills penalties, and is more than willing to throw his weight around in the defensive end. But his most noticeable off-the-puck trait is reading plays and anticipating puck travel, especially in the neutral zone. Sillinger isn't always a hounding checker and sometimes remains static for long periods, but opponents must be aware of his quick-strike mentality and penchant for picking off lazy passes. Physical play is a prominent feature in Sillinger's game. He shoves hard in the corners, crunches puck carriers into the boards, and will deliver open-ice hits. He also battles hard for net-front positioning and shows fearlessness taking the puck to the net at top speed. You rarely see him get outmuscled off the puck.

Hockey Sense

Sillinger's sense for the game is very high and his decisions that impact plays range from subtle to pronounced. The unpredictability he shows the second he crosses into the opposing end is the mark of a cerebral forward. As already mentioned, Sillinger uses deception in nearly all facets of the game and has the versatility to play either center or wing.

NHL Projection

Top-six power forward and high-volume shooter.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Medicine Hat	48	22	31	53	181	1.10	22
2020-21	Sioux Falls	31	24	22	46	113	1.48	39

11



Fyodor Svechkov • Lada Togliatti (VHL)

Center • 6'0 • 187 pounds • Shoots Left • April 5, 2003 • Togliatti, RUS • Russia

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
NR	22	16	16	11	11

Season Review

A gifted two-way center who established his reputation as a top-line player several years ago, Svechkov pieced together an impressive draft year in which he carried a thin Ladya squad in Russia's junior-age MHL before he spent the remainder of the season playing against men for an equally inept team in the adult-age VHL. Since historical data shows that barely any of the nearly 100 under-18 prospects who have played in the VHL produced anything noteworthy over more than a 10-game sample, it's important to credit Svechkov for recording the league's second-most points (15 in 38 games) by an under-18 prospect in his first year of draft eligibility. Svechkov's season with Ladya in the junior circuit from an individual standpoint was just as impressive, especially since neither of his squads made the playoffs. Although he appeared in only 15 games, Svechkov led the club in points-per-game (1.00), time on ice (19:19), and faceoff percentage (53.7), and ranked second in shots per game (3.5). And it wasn't just the rate at which Svechkov was scoring, but *how* and *when* he was accumulating his impressive numbers. All 15 of his points (4 goals, 11 assists) were primary and 12 came during 5-on-5. Svechkov also has represented his country with distinction at several international tournaments, specifically the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge (second in goals; third in overall scoring) and the 2021 under-18 IIHF World Championship (fifth in overall scoring), where he won gold and silver, respectively. Svechkov recently was traded to the powerful SKA program, where next season he should either center the top line on the SKA-1946 junior club or get a regular shift with SKA-Neva in the VHL.

Skating and Stickhandling

Svechkov is an expert stickhandler who can maneuver through or around multiple obstacles. As dangerous as he can in the offensive zone, Svechkov is just as much of a threat in the neutral zone when faced with seemingly limited options. A lot of this has to do with his vision and anticipation, but those mean little if one can't protect the puck for the extra second required when both time and space are nearly eliminated. Svechkov can do that and then some, especially with his back to the play, and his linemates and defense pairings know he can outfox or outmaneuver an opponent just in time to hit a friendly in stride for a clean zone entry. His skating is more powerful than it is quick, but Svechkov is strong in both departments. He's an east-west skater who can change speeds and directions several times in one shift, including quick bursts into the middle of the ice that either trap defenders in the neutral zone or back them well off their own line. Svechkov is very strong on his skates and can take a beating without losing possession or balance, and physically-mature defenders in the VHL seemed to find knocking him off the puck harder than anticipated.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Svechkov is a premier playmaker with sharp vision and soft hands. The timing and accuracy of his passes are already at a pro level, which puts him at or near the top of all centers in this draft class. The confident way Svechkov works the puck around the horn or splits the seam lends more to his high hockey IQ than the actual delivery of the puck, as he'll use look-offs, delays, slap passes, or saucers via his forehand or backhand to render opposing sticks ineffective. Svechkov likes to shoot the puck, but he seems far more comfortable looking to set up his linemates. He usually slots in the right circle on the power play and will use the one-timer with limited effectiveness and accuracy. Svechkov's wrist is far deadlier, however, and he is successful at sneaking shots through the legs of a defender during 1-on-1 scenarios.

Defense and Physicality

It is no exaggeration to also call Svechkov an elite defensive forward, at least within the context of his age, scope of responsibility, and actual effectiveness. Not only does he show speed and tenacity when reacting to puck travel, but Svechkov seems to fully understand the concept of supporting his unit by NOT trying to do their jobs. His head is always on a swivel, which helps him maintain elasticity from below the goal line and back to the slot if or when his defenseman release into the corner. Svechkov also is a critical piece in board-side breakouts, which he and linemate Danila Yurov executed to perfection repeatedly at the under-18 world championship. His stick activity and read-and-react game are phenomenal for such a young center, so any team who drafts him needs to allow Svechkov to be used in roles where he will continue to improve to be a difference maker off the puck. He may not be mash-and-bash in the physicality department, but Svechkov is a puck hound who will stick to an opponent like Velcro.

Hockey Sense

By this point in the assessment, one should already have a clear understanding that Svechkov is a gifted hockey player who thinks the game on a different level than most neophytes yet without trying to make paint him as the next Wayne Gretzky or Sidney Crosby. Anticipating, reading and reacting, isolating or trapping opponents with stick work, supporting pucks, and neutralizing zone schemes are all things he does to impact the game. His on-ice leadership style isn't very demonstrative, but he can be an enthusiastic teammate who competes hard and plays like he wants to win.

NHL Projection

Top-line, multi-situational center who can also produce points in the mold of a Sean Couturier or Patrice Bergeron.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Ladya	15	4	11	15	52	1.00	35
2020-21	Lada Togliatti	38	5	10	15	43	0.40	6

12



Aatu Raty • Karpas (SM-Liiga)

Center • 6'2 • 185 pounds • Shoots Left • Nov. 14, 2002 • Oulu, FIN • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
1	4	4	7	12	12

Season Review

A notable prospect for several years prior to his draft season, Raty entered the 2020-21 campaign in an exclusive group of neophytes who were considered potential top picks in a relatively thin class. The younger brother of Arizona Coyotes' prospect Aku Raty — a pure winger who has flanked him at both the club and international levels — Aatu at this point should no longer be considered a candidate for the No. 1 pick for several reasons. But his up-and-down draft year (that included a publicized snub from Finland's world junior team) should be contextualized by his role on a perennial contender locked in an ultra-competitive playoff chase, where nine of the SM-Liiga's 15 teams had a points percentage of .655 or higher, and only three points separated the third-place team from the seventh. Therefore, an adult-age environment could help explain not only Raty's 11:37 of ice time (which ranked 15th among 17 Karpas forwards), but also the fact that he was held off the scoresheet in 30 of his 35 games (and five more in the playoffs), including a 25-game goal drought to end the season. Raty's lack of finish was concerning, especially since he was frequently used on the second power-play unit. But it probably was a systemic issue more than anything else, as Karpas's 2.47 goals per game was among the league's lowest in a traditionally goal-stingy circuit. So yes, the overall numbers — 3 goals and 3 assists in 35 games — can be deemed "unbecoming" of a potential top pick, but Raty still generated 80 shots in limited time for an above-average 11.8 shots per 60 minutes.

Skating and Stickhandling

Raty's overall skating package is above-average for a center his size and it can be critiqued as either inconsistent or improving. Two certainties are his hustle and nonstop activity both on and off the puck, therefore helping him look faster than he probably is. He's had some jersey-flapping moments in open ice where he outpaces back pressure, only to look robotic soon thereafter. Raty has a wide stance and stride and is a bit of a heel-kicker when moving north to south, but you can tell he's working on his mechanics to limit any technical inefficiencies from his stride. In the end, the kid's balance under pressure is excellent; he still gets to where he needs to go, wins a fair amount of foot races, and turns on a dime. Raty became more of a shoot-first center this season; one who jammed the net-front area when he wasn't weaving or cycling his way into a shot attempt. His play last season in the U20 SM-Sarja revealed how confident and reliable he is at controlling the puck under pressure and attacking open lanes using multiple direction changes in the process. He also assists his defenders with breakouts and can carry the puck cleanly through traffic before pulling up at the line and letting support catch up. Raty knows how to use his frame to his advantage and keeps the flash in his short-distance game to a minimum. He also is adept at delivering precision hand-offs and executing set plays off the cycle or draw.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Raty has an excellent shot and release that must be respected, but refinement is needed. There were games when he clearly established a desire to shoot pucks from anywhere on the ice but with varying degrees of accuracy and sensibility. Although some feel like hitting the net is good enough for a teenager in a men's league, the reality is that Raty — an inside player more than capable of creating his own shot from in between the hashes — tends hit the goalie's crest or miss the net completely. He has the hands and agility to improve his angle and take it closer to the goal, but one of the bigger criticisms of Raty's game must be shot selection. On the positive side is his willingness to release from shooting areas and head straight to the net, where Raty will battle with defenders of any size for positioning. Raty's pass deliveries are mostly accurate and his touch can be fine, but he seems to have devolved from playmaking for his on-ice unit. Whether that impacts his development as either a center or wing is irrelevant at this point, but one should classify Raty as a goal scorer before a set-up man. One area where Raty's passing has a positive impact is on breakouts, where his first pass usually is hard and on the tape. Although his intentions are usually sound, Raty can be iffy with puck management by attempting passes that miss being intercepted by a hair.

Defense and Physicality

If Raty ever fails to live up to his scoring expectations, he should always find a role as an energy checker and physical presence. Nobody should ever question Raty's efforts, as he is a tireless worker from start to finish both on or off the puck, and he is consistent in covering the low slot and supporting his defensemen below the goal line. Although he can be guilty of flying the zone, the timing of these decisions can be defined as opportunistic rather than selfish or passive. In terms of special teams and intangibles, Raty never killed penalties for Karpas's A-Team and won 47 percent (142-for-302) of his draws, including 53 percent in the neutral zone. Raty will stand up to physical challenges and even has an abrasive side that stays within the letter of the rule book. It's common to see Raty mix it up in front of the net and give the occasional facewash after the whistle, but a lot of it seems to stem from a high battle-level during net-front confrontations that continue during stoppages.

Hockey Sense

Decision making is the area where Raty needs to find consistency, but his intentions are easily defined and mostly justified — for example, he sees his open linemate in a scoring area before anyone else but also needs to be quick with his risk assessment. Assuming risk is a big part of Raty's game either on or off the puck, but there are times when he has difficulty keeping his game simple with nothing more than strength and effort. Additionally, Raty likes to bunch up towards the strong side of the puck without exploiting a potential gap in coverage. This probably stems from his puck-hounding mentality, but he needs to trust his linemates more and support the puck behind or parallel to the direction of travel rather than right on top of it to create a numbers disadvantage elsewhere. What's perplexing is that Raty also can be a shark in the neutral zone and make the right reads in his own end, and as already mentioned, anticipate puck travel to kickstart a counterattack.

NHL Projection

Two-way, goal-scoring center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Karpas U20	31	2	19	21	--	0.68	28
2020-21	Karpas	35	3	3	6	80	0.17	18

13

Jesper Wallstedt • Lulea (SHL)

Goalie • 6'3 • 214 pounds • Catches Left • Nov. 14, 2002 • Vasteras, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
32	10	10	11	13	13

Season Review

Wallstedt is Sweden's most decorated goalie prospect in over a decade and has already drawn comparisons to his boyhood idol Henrik Lundqvist. Born into a family of netminders, Wallstedt has always played at least two or three levels above his age group. In fact, Wallstedt at 14 not only became the youngest player to ever debut in the J20 Superelit, but he also led the difficult Top-10 portion of the schedule with a .927 save percentage over nine starts. His upward trajectory continued thereafter, as Wallstedt backstopped Sweden in at least one of every major international prospect tournament in the under-17, under-18, and under-20 brackets, posting a combined .913 save percentage in 24 appearances. He spent the entire 2020-21 campaign with a competitive Lulea squad in the adult-age SHL, where he posted a solid 12-6-4 mark and periodically took hold of No. 1 duties while finishing 13th among 35 goalies with a .908 save percentage.

The regular season was far from rosy for Lulea, which made the playoffs but went through periods of inconsistency with both scoring and goaltending while using three different starters in net. Wallstedt began the season as backup to David Rautio but replaced him after a strong surge that began immediately after he returned from the world junior tournament. Wallstedt eventually lost his No. 1 job when Joel Lassinantti — Lulea's No. 1 the previous season — returned to the club in January from HK Sochi in Russia's KHL. Seventeen of Wallstedt's 22 starts came prior to Lassinantti's arrival but only five came in Lulea's final 17 games. Nonetheless, Wallstedt still had the benefit of playing behind one of the SHL's stingiest defenses and still received an adequate regulation goal support of 3.10 per game. Lulea limited opponents to under 30 shots in 45 of their 52 games, including 19 of Wallstedt's 22 appearances (22 shots or less in 11 of 22 starts).

To nobody's surprise, Wallstedt served as Lassinantti's backup during most of No. 5-seeded Lulea's first-round series with No. 4 Skelleftea, but he was hastily pegged as the Game 6 starter in what could have been the series clincher for Lulea. Although he took the loss and Lulea was eliminated in Game 7 with Lassinantti back in net, Wallstedt's first taste of pressure-packed SHL hockey was a major milestone in his development.

Style

Wallstedt is like most notable Swedish goalies in that he uses a standard butterfly style and classifies as an "inside-out" — meaning he sets up from the goal line and moves towards the top of the crease when he deems it necessary. One of several significant aspects of Wallstedt's "style" as a teenager is that he is incredibly consistent with his deep-in-the-crease preferences and doesn't seem to switch back and forth from attack mode to staying deep. He stays narrow and upright as the puck moves east to west from up high, then he quickly drops (and stays) into his Reverse Vertical-Horizontal (RVH) once the puck drops below the faceoff dots. He's more aggressive on breakaways but you'll rarely see Wallstedt challenge a shooter beyond the top of the blue paint.

Post Integration

Wallstedt uses the RVH exclusively with his skate blade tucked inside the post and stick blade perfectly horizontal to the ice. His post seal borders on textbook and Wallstedt even has the presence of mind to tilt his mask to cover the near-side top corner. Only once this season was he beaten on a sharp-angle shot from below the bottom of the circle and that particular example was simply a footwork foul-up rather than losing his bearing or cheating towards the weak side. You will see Wallstedt remain in his RVH as he shuffles from post to post while the puck gets worked around from behind the net.

Glove and Blocker

Although one must evaluate Wallstedt's season within the context of a teenage goalie playing against near-NHL-caliber shooters in Sweden's top league, the reality is that neither Wallstedt's glove nor his blocker (at this point in his development) are areas of significant strength. He relies mostly on squaring to the puck and keeping his angles aligned from pass reception through shot release. But there is no doubt that seasoned SHL snipers were targeting Wallstedt's upper half throughout the entire season — specifically high-blocker — and a late-season slump that probably cost him the No. 1 job could be traced back to a rough patch where he was regularly being beaten middle or high blocker (or glove) with wrist shots. Still, there's no reason to overanalyze Wallstedt's blocker-hand or glove-hand positioning since the biggest factor for the spike in goals allowed is tied to his playing deep in the crease — the Achilles' heel for most elite inside-out goalies, to include Wallstedt's idol Lundqvist. If Wallstedt studies NHL shooter tendencies throughout his career, he should be able to make it more difficult for them to exploit any openings in the upper half.

Read and Tracking

Wallstedt's hockey IQ for a teenage goalie is high but it's hard to determine if his high-danger saves are a byproduct of anticipation and acknowledging weak side or slot threats, or simply via his size and staying down to blanket the lower half. He was mostly conservative in the way he treated low-slot and backdoor dangers but playing for an excellent defensive team like Lulea usually kept the puck out of critical areas for nearly the entire game. Although Wallstedt's quickness allows him to react and set during passes from across the seam or behind the goal line, he's usually a split second slower at reading the intended destination for the setup. He's also been victimized by guessing incorrectly on puck travel from behind the net and seemed to be saved by the post on at least a half dozen shots from the high slot or point without much traffic in front.

Rebound Control and Post-Save Recovery

Wallstedt's rebound control is adequate for his age and you must assume he will continue to make refinements to minimize the number of medium-danger and sharp-angle chances he puts back into the low slot. He did show a tendency to lose pucks after stopping them, but Wallstedt's cat-like quickness for his size and strong net awareness allow him to recover in good order to make any follow-on attempt from in close look as stoppable as the initial chance from a greater distance.

Quickness and Footwork

Wallstedt's quick pads and post-to-post coverage are as close to elite as one can find in a teenage or amateur netminder. He dominates the lower half and is just as explosive recovering from the butterfly as he is dropping down into it. Wallstedt does not stay down in the butterfly for long and there were multiple examples this past season where he dealt with second- and third-chance attempts from in close without ever keeping either pad on the ice for more than a second. He also shows a rapid five-hole seal as he drops down and recovers. Unless it was on a breakaway or deflection, you rarely saw Wallstedt get beaten five-hole.

Puck Handling/Stickwork

Wallstedt has become more active on dump-ins than in previous years but he's still a novice when it comes to timing rims and handoffs to his defensemen. His wrists are adequately strong to move the puck over distances within his blue line, but those instances are the exception and not the rule. Wallstedt isn't much of a poke checker and will allow cross-crease passes to sneak through to the weak side to maintain his tight post seal. Although he doesn't have to adopt a more active stick during close-in chances, Wallstedt could stand to improve his blade positioning and every so often attempt a poke check to keep opposing stickhandlers honest as they inch closer to his cage.

Endurance

Wallstedt stays upright during most of an opposing possession but will drop into and stay in his RVH the second the puck goes from high to low. He's rarely on his belly or "swimming" in the crease and his post-to-post movement while tracking is economical. Therefore, Wallstedt doesn't burn energy unnecessarily, but then again, his workload was ridiculously low which makes it hard to gauge how quick he'd be in the third period or overtime of a game where he's faced 15-20 shot attempts a period instead of 18-25 shots the entire game.

NHL Projection

No. 1 franchise goaltender

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	W-L	GAA	SV%	Shots	GA	SO
2019-20	Lulea J20	28	16-11-0	2.53	.923	829	67	1
2020-21	Lulea	22	12-6-4	2.23	.907	531	49	2

14



Fabian Lysell • Lulea (SHL)

Right Wing • 5'10 • 172 pounds • Shoots Right • Jan. 9th, 2003 • Gothenburg, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
18	16	16	15	14	14

Season Review

Another blue-chip prospect developed by the Frolunda organization, Lysell has been considered one of Sweden's top forward prospects for this draft for several years. Although he was traded to rival Lulea early this past season, Lysell was more than distinguishable in his 11-game with Frolunda J20, recording 13 points (3 goals, 10 assists) and a whopping 58 shots while serving as a top-line winger and fixture on the first power-play unit. His decreased role and ice time with Lulea, however, were reflected in his SHL stats – Lysell scored two goals and registered 16 shots in 26 games while playing only 7:22 a match. Lysell was Sweden's top-line right wing at the 2021 under-18 world championship, where he tied Isak Rosen with a team-best nine points and six assists helping the Swedes win the bronze medal.

Skating and Stickhandling

Lysell is one of the fastest skaters in this draft. His first step is explosive, and it only take him two or three stride to gain significant separation from back pressure. His speed is a constant threat to the opposition; not only because Lysell is deadly in open ice but also for his quickness to the puck in any direction while forechecking. Always starting and stopping, Lysell can cover a lot of ground in each shift and does so with an active stick. He's a confident puckhandler who will maintain control while making sharp cuts to the inside or strong dashes to the goal.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Although he's a pure winger who boasts a plus-plus shot, Lysell could be classified as a dual threat. He's shown a nice touch on his passes to the middle and sharp vision during either odd-man rushes or tight-quarter play along the boards. When Lysell's on the puck, he can keep it cycling in the offensive zone for chunks at a time while causing visible confusion within the opposition. But make no mistake – Lysell's offensive game is driven by his shoot-first mentality. He's been used as a point man on the power play and will not hesitate to use a heavy wrister, especially when there isn't much of a lane to begin with.

Defense and Physicality

Lysell as a fourth liner in the SHL revealed a consistent effort off the puck and was one of the more aggressive forecheckers on his team. He didn't kill penalties at either the junior, senior, or international level but rarely came across as ineffective or confused when covering his area of responsibility in the defensive zone. Lysell in a support role can provide energy and a high battle level which is less prevalent when tasked with the responsibilities of a top-line scoring winger. He isn't physical from a check-finishing standpoint but will not shy away from contact and compete hard along the boards.

Hockey Sense

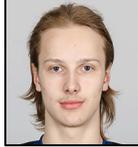
Lysell appears to have a clear understanding of his strengths and how they relate to his role as either a checker or a scorer. He is decisive and confident on the puck but also anticipates puck travel and can be an effective forechecker. Additionally, Lysell's vision in the offensive-zone set can be just as dangerous as his elite shot-release combination. Lysell is a high-speed decision maker, meaning he can execute timely precision plays while operating at top speed. He can, however, be guilty of the occasional "tunnel vision" moment when he looks to create for himself when the situation required otherwise.

NHL Projection

Top-line sniper and primary shooter on power play.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Frolunda J20	11	3	10	13	58	1.18	12
2020-21	Lulea	26	2	1	3	16	0.12	8
2020-21	Sweden U18	7	3	6	9	18	1.29	4

15



Samu Tuomaala • Karpas U20 (SM-Sarja)

Right Wing • 5'10 • 174 pounds • Shoots Right • Jan. 8th, 2003 • Oulu, FIN • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
14	13	13	17	15	15

Season Review

Tuomaala is one of the top Finnish draft prospects who produced another impressive performance as a featured winger in Karpas U20's attack. He ranked among the team leaders in every major offensive category, including first with 10 goals in 15 games during group play. Tuomaala represented Finland at the under-18 world championship, where he led his country in scoring with 11 points (5 goals, 6 assists) and scored several timely goals in late/close situations.

Skating and Stickhandling

Tuomaala is an excellent skater with a quick first step who can be a handful in one-on-one situations. He wins most of his foot races and can be an effective chip-and-chaser, but Tuomaala is also a capable stickhandler who can enter the zone at top speed before settling things down while puck support arrives. Many teenage speedsters find difficulty in marrying speed with sound decision making, but Tuomaala will consistently catch opponents flat footed and appropriately time his bursts to the inside. Tuomaala also possesses quickness while controlling the puck along the boards, making him incredibly slippery and elusive. He will gladly take any opening you give him regardless of whether he has the puck or not.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Tuomaala boasts a plus-plus slapper and his one-timer from the left circle is one of the deadliest individual weapons you'll find on a 2021 draft prospect. Set plays off faceoffs at both the junior and international level were designed for him, specifically on the power play or in late-close situations. But Tuomaala is equally as dangerous in open ice as he is from a static shooting position. He can finish in a variety of ways; often attempting highlight-reel moves from in close after getting the goal to bite from a shot fake.

Tuomaala didn't handle the puck as often as linemates Ville Koivunen and Arttu Tuomaala (no relation), both of whom are natural playmakers. Where he showed his best passing attributes was in open ice, albeit in smaller samples. Tuomaala on occasion would fool opponents by looking off or pump-faking before sliding or saucering a pass on the tape. To his credit, Tuomaala didn't seem like a puck hog and should not be criticized for loving to shoot in bunches.

Defense and Physicality

Tuomaala isn't known for his individual defensive play, but he's shown adaptability by fitting into Karpas's traditionally stingy group. He is an aggressive forechecker who will hunt puck carriers down and either finish his check with authority or hound them all the way up the ice. Tuomaala's efforts on or off the puck are noticeable most shifts and he'll even give maximum effort when he's gassed.

Hockey Sense

Tuomaala shows sharp decision making off the puck but is more of a risk taker while on it. Teaming with two skilled puck handlers on that top line makes Tuomaala's game simplified to two responsibilities – get open and shoot. These marching orders were followed to the letter, much to the chagrin of opposing goalies. The Tuomaala-Koivunen duo had visible chemistry, with Tuomaala getting open consistently for one-timer attempts. It's within this context that one can credit Tuomaala for choosing to stay in constant motion rather than hog or bunch up near the puck when it wasn't necessary.

NHL Projection

Top-line sniper and primary shooter on power play.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Karpas U20	41	15	8	23	--	1.53	12
2020-21	Karpas U20	30	15	16	31	--	1.03	28

16



Chaz Lucius • U.S. U18 (NTDP)

Center • 6'1 • 185 pounds • Shoots Right • May 2, 2003 • Lawrence, KS • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
3	14	14	12	16	16

Season Review

Lucius came into his draft season with high expectations after a 2019-20 campaign in which he led the under-17 NTDP in goals (31), shots (110), and tied linemate Sasha Pastujov with a team-best 50 points. He suffered a lower-body injury (believed to be knee related) before this season even started, thus missing the first 30 games. Lucius on Feb. 19 returned to the U18 lineup with a bang, scoring two goals to lead the NTDP to a 5-4 win over powerhouse Chicago. He was on a short leash thereafter, however, as he didn't play in back-to-backs and seemed to be limited to shorter shifts at 5-on-5. Although he is the nominal top-line center alongside Pastujov and Dylan Duke, Lucius's usage and deployment are sheltered, and he never kills penalties. On several occasions, he didn't see his first shift of a period until nearly four minutes in. Again, the reported knee injury and his ongoing recovery are likely driving these decisions. He shut his season down after the All-American Prospects Game on April 7 and did not play at the under-18 world championship.

Skating and Stickhandling

Any assessment of Lucius's speed, agility, and balance must consider his injury and how long it took him to get back into game shape. If you go back to his play a season ago — specifically at the World under-17 Hockey Challenge (November 2019) and the Five Nations Tournament (February 2020) — Lucius displayed average quickness and a nondescript first step but made up for it with excellent balance, edgework, and tight turns on a dime. Fast forward to this season, and it's clear that Lucius is working hard to knock off the rust in all areas of movement and mobility. His skating lacks pop and explosiveness, and it's doubtful he will ever dominate in these areas simply because of the mechanics of his short stride. All that said, his plus stickhandling and the escapability should continue to serve him well at higher levels, and his ability to shift gears while in traffic can throw off an opposing zone scheme. There are stylistic comparisons to fellow native Minnesotan Derek Stepan, who has carved out an impressive NHL despite limitations in speed and dynamism. Lucius has soft hands and can make plays on either his forehand or backhand. Although he can go through consecutive shifts without ever touching the puck, he is more than capable of successfully attacking traffic at top speed while maintaining possession well beyond the zone entry. He does, however, lose a fair amount of 1-on-1 puck battles along the boards, which normally isn't an issue for skilled centers with his ideal measurements. It is best of Lucius to stay within himself, work give-and-go's, and attack the net while off the puck.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Lucius is a lethal goal scorer, and he is far more of a shoot-first pivot than anything else. The bulk of his possessions in the offensive zone usually end up with either Lucius or Pastujov positioned in their respective off-wing circle for a one-time chance at the net. His office is anywhere in the slot, and Lucius's wrist is heavy with a bowhunter's accuracy. It's quite common to see Lucius stationary in the offensive zone, especially since this year's NTDP has multiple playmakers from the blue line and activate a ton. Another impressive aspect of Lucius's shot is the velocity and marksmanship he demonstrates when receiving and teeing up off-target feeds, especially in his skates. Lucius is accurate with his deliveries and can time a feed perfectly to an onrushing teammate. Most of his setups are the type the opposition can expect, but he has good enough vision to spot and connect with a backdoor option. He also doesn't force passes through the seam or from behind the net, but that doesn't mean Lucius isn't capable of creating a sweet look-off or slap fake intended for the weak side. Still, he's a sniper, and it seems like most plays designed for his line require him to remain stationary in the slot with the hammer cocked.

Defense and Physicality

Lucius never should be confused with a stopper off the puck, and he is as big a one-way center as you'll find in this draft class. More times than not, Lucius is either the last man on the back check or hovering up top, and he is not a physical presence on the ice. Keep in mind that this probably has more to do with his rust and an adjustment to game speed as Lucius recovers from injury, and he's shown an improvement in understanding his contain spacing while assisting his defensemen in board battles. For whatever reason, Lucius does not kill penalties no matter the situation or what the scoreboard reads, although he is excellent on faceoffs, particularly in the neutral and defensive zones (over 60 percent success rate combined). If he finishes a check, however, it usually isn't enough to separate an opponent from the puck.

Hockey Sense

Lucius is both creative and heady when it comes to play on his side of the red line. The more Lucius gets healthy, the more you will see him stay in constant motion and follow the appropriate path of the puck without overcrowding his linemate's space. Sometimes he's guilty of tunnel vision and telegraphs his intentions, but his reads and general awareness in any zone are adequate. The truth is simple — Lucius acts and positions himself more like a winger than a center, and if this is by design, then the potential for a position switch should be considered.

NHL Projection

Top-line center and power-play/faceoff specialist

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U17 NTDP	46	31	19	50	110	1.09	10
2020-21	U18 NTDP	13	13	7	20	34	1.54	6

17



Simon Robertsson • Skelleftea J20 (Nationell)

Right wing • 6'0 • 190 pounds • Shoots Left • Feb. 5, 2003 • Pitea, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
10	17	17	14	17	17

Season Review

Robertsson is a multi-use winger with good size and impressive speed who can blister the puck from just about anywhere. He was the overall leading scorer (9 goals, 11 assists in 15 games) and fifth in shots (52) in the J20 Nationell's North Division, which is the more defense-oriented circuit in Sweden's top junior league. Robertsson was one of the top players in the league and for his team, and he later slotted on Sweden's first line at the under-18 world championship. His production (3 goals and 18 shots in 7 games) and overall play at that tournament were somewhat nondescript when you consider the high expectations coming into the event.

Although his stay with Pitea in the third-division HockeyEttan was short lived (2 goals, 1 assist in 7 games), Robertsson throughout his draft season showed how effective his speed and size can be against adult competition. Although his role and usage varied, Robertsson showed enough energy and effort in his short shifts to eventually earn an ice time bump during an 11-game winning streak. Overall, his SHL numbers are less than pedestrian (1 goal, 1 assist, 13 shots in 22 games), but keep in mind that he played five minutes or less in 10 of those matches.

Skating and Stickhandling

Robertsson is an excellent skater for his size as he displays a clean, powerful stride and pull-away speed. His quickness when combined with physicality and keen anticipation can have a profound impact on an opposing breakout, but Robertsson looks his best when he corrals a lead pass in full flight and powers into the zone for an effective wrister attempt. He's shown soft hands and full control when peeling back sharply or spinning off checks into time and space, and Robertsson will use his point men frequently if he stickhandles his way into a jam.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Robertsson not only has a plus-plus wrist shot but also the desire and willingness to get open as often as possible. Always ready to receive a pass and bring his elite shot to bear, Robertsson can score from distances above the hash marks, with his wrister being the preferred weapon of choice. As impressive as his shot can look, however, Robertsson does not keep to the outside and will attack the net in a straight line. He is more than willing to set up in front and will battle hard for net-front superiority.

Defense and Physicality

Robertsson is highly attentive off the puck and reveals a strong compete level in the defensive zone. He is quick to the puck and knows how to use his long reach for stick-on-puck checks as he backskates into the zone. Robertsson plays with his head on a swivel and showed a willingness to drop down and cover up a vacated low slot or net front in both SHL and J20 play. He killed penalties in junior hockey was rarely saw time on special teams in the SHL.

Robertsson is a physical forward who shows a willingness to use his strength to his advantage. Not only does he finish his checks, but Robertsson will track down a puck carrier from across the ice before lining him up for a massive hit. He also gets involved after the whistle and will not back down from a challenge.

Hockey Sense

Robertsson is a generally sound decision maker who can be difficult for the opposition to telegraph. He was a handful for Sweden's J20 Nationell, and one can say Robertsson against his peers produced an MVP-caliber performance. He deserves credit for simplifying his game as a checker in the SHL but looked more like a passenger at the U18 worlds. Regardless of level, however, Robertsson was consistent in his stickhandling approach and often showed the poise and maturity to keep a possession alive.

NHL Projection

Top-line power winger and goal scorer

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Skelleftea J20	27	7	6	13	65	0.48	26
2020-21	Skelleftea J20	15	9	11	20	52	1.33	14
2020-21	Skelleftea	22	1	1	2	13	0.09	0
2020-21	Sweden U18	7	3	1	4	18	0.57	6

18



Isak Rosen • Leksands J20 (Nationell)

Left wing • 6'0 • 160 pounds • Shoots Left • March 15, 2003 • Solna, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	26	26	20	18	18

Season Review

Rosen has been a notable prospect from Sweden's 2003-year group for some time. He was one of several productive forwards for Leksands J20 during the 2019-20 regular season but kicked it into high gear in the tougher "Top 10" portion with seven goals in 11 games. This season, Rosen quickly established himself as one of the team leaders and was scoring at over a point per game against junior competition when the A-Team promoted him for a 22-game stint (1 assist, 7 shots, 5:45 TOI). Rosen has represented Sweden in several prominent tournaments, most recently the 2021 under-18 world championship. He led the team with seven goals and a whopping 32 shots – 14 more than his closest teammate.

Skating and Stickhandling

Rosen ranks among the finest skaters available in this draft. He doesn't lack in the confidence department and has the mental toughness (and hands) to take the puck inside with speed. Once Rosen finds an opening, it's usually too late for opponents to react accordingly and his speed can throw an opposing five-man unit into disarray. He moves quickly in all directions and most defenders at every level respected Rosen's speed at the line. Rosen is more than comfortable being the center of gravity with the puck every shift and he can multitask between playing set-up man and shooter. He's slippery yet controlled and confident in the process.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Rosen is a pure scorer who delivers the heat with his shot but also makes perfect setups from across the seam. He has the traits and tendencies of any of today's top scorers, specifically confidence and decisiveness. Rosen's shot can appear borderline elite, especially when he snipes the short side off the pass well before the goalie's outstretched glove can cover the post. Rosen is quick with flashy playmaking abilities and buttery-soft hands who can deliver precision setups under pressure.

Defense and Physicality

Rosen is an offensive-minded forward who showed improved play away from the puck as the season progressed. His effort away from the puck is acceptable, as Rosen's speed can be an effective tool against breakouts. Most of his puck pursuits end in Rosen opting for harassing stick work rather than a heavy hit or hard shove. There's only so much he can do with his 155-pound frame in one-on-one battles, so Rosen does tend to fish for puck.

Hockey Sense

Rosen's high hockey sense should be implied by his versatility, various roles, and overall usage. He can be a scoring threat in any situation and knows how to make anyone in his unit a threat at well. You rarely see Rosen carelessly give the puck away, but he is a creative forward who usually thinks attack. Coaches usually don't entrust weak decision makers with critical roles, and Rosen's consistent domination of the puck has as much to do with his smarts as it does with his hands or wheels.

NHL Projection

Top-line scoring center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Leksands J20	12	7	5	12	45	1.00	6
2020-21	Leksands	22	0	1	1	7	0.05	2

19



Nikita Chibrikov • SKA-Neva (VHL)

Right wing • 5'10 • 170 pounds • Shoots Left • Feb. 16, 2003 • Moscow, RUS • Russia

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	18	18	19	19	19

Season Review

A tough yet skilled winger who plays bigger than his listed measurements, Chibrikov posted solid numbers early into his second MHL season to eventually earn promotions to the tougher, adult-age VHL and KHL. He quickly established himself as a regular for the VHL's SKA-Neva, where he was used on both special teams and averaged nearly 16 minutes a match over his 20 games with the club. Chibrikov would later make his KHL debut for SKA and appeared in 16 games with an average time on ice of 7:44. He captained Russia's silver-medal-winning entry at the 2021 under-18 world championship, where he recorded 13 points (4 goals, 9 assists) in seven games to rank among the overall scoring leaders.

Skating and Stickhandling

Chibrikov has average straight-line speed and overall quickness, but he anticipates well enough to get an extra step or two when involved in 50/50 foot races. He has a clean and powerful stride to help him outpace back pressure, and Chibrikov knows how to stabilize his body and use his strong edges to prepare for any contact. Entering the zone is conducted several ways, as Chibrikov isn't married to a north-south approach and will button-hook at the line to allow support or any trailers to join the possession. He maintains a low center of gravity when involved in board play and can delay or stickhandle his way into a favorable position for set ups across the seam or towards the net. Chibrikov can play keep-away long enough to discourage a checker from pursuing him with tighter coverage.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Chibrikov is a dual threat who can sling a well-respected wrist shot that has beaten goalies from several different angles or distances, but he also is an excellent set-up man in tight areas. Chibrikov is dangerous from either circle and he postures like he's going to dial up a shot attempt once he commits towards the net. The threat of his heavy shot can force goalies and their defensemen to cheat his way and think less about the pass, only to see Chibrikov feather or saucer a 10-foot feed into the slot for a one-timer attempt by his linemate.

Defense and Physicality

Chibrikov reveals a solid effort off the puck and seems to understand positioning when defending against an opposing cycle or entry. He was used on the penalty kill at both the adult and junior levels and should be considered a scoring threat while short-handed. Chibrikov is both physical and abrasive, and he can be either a tone-setter to get his team going or be the guard dog who'll keep the opposition honest. Although he is more undisciplined than reckless, Chibrikov tends to save his big wallops for strategic moments rather than attempt to hit anything that moves.

Hockey Sense

Being able to dupe the opposition away from the structure of their zone defense is a strong feature in Chibrikov's game. He frequently uses deception and even his fancy hot-doggish passes or shot attempts are sound in theory and successful in execution. Although he is a natural winger who plays like a winger, Chibrikov an overall skill set that is more common in centers than forwards from the flank. He can be trusted with the puck and doesn't like to cede possession unless it's necessary.

NHL Projection

Top-line power winger and goal scorer

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	SKA-1946	11	3	6	9	31	0.82	12
2020-21	SKA-Neva	20	3	5	8	55	0.40	49
2020-21	SKA	16	1	1	2	8	0.13	6
2020-21	Russia U18	7	4	9	13	22	1.86	14

20



Ayrton Martino • Omaha (USHL)

Left wing • 5'10 • 170 pounds • Shoots Left • Sep. 28, 2002 • Toronto, ON • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	39	39	34	20	20

Season Review

Martino proved to be a godsend for the USHL's Omaha Lancers, leading them in scoring with 56 points (18 goals, 38 assists) in only 38 games. He scored in bunches but also maintained impressive scoring consistency by registering at least one point in 30 of his 38 matches and even recorded a 16-game point streak. The Clarkson recruit came to the USHL after a successful 2019-20 campaign with St. Michael's in the OJHL, where he ranked third in overall scoring and represented Canada-East at the 2019 World Junior "A" Challenge. Martino was named to the 2020-21 USHL All-Rookie Team and was Second Team All-USHL.

Skating and Stickhandling

Martino is an above-average skater who attacks open ice with confidence and maximum effort. He is consistently driving or joining odd-man rushes and knows how to keep himself properly distanced from his linemates whether he's on or off the puck. Martino is slippery from the corners or near boards and has a habit of coming away with the puck from bigger opponents. Once he's free to attack the net, Martino can move quickly in any direction and still get shots off with an opponent draped on his back. He has strong edges and is tough to knock or lean off the puck.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Martino is a dual threat who is equally as dangerous in a shooting or scoring position than he is with an open passing lane or odd-man situation. He is incredibly patient and plays a selfless, team-first style that allows his linemates and defensemen to reap the benefits of his hard work and strong cycle game. Martino has pure puck skills, however, and he is more than capable of running an entire possession or lead power-play unit. He has scored via the wrist shot with pinpoint accuracy from in tight or inside the circles, but it's on breakaways or 2-on-1's where Martino's flash comes to light. He can score in a variety of ways and isn't shy about using his backhand.

Defense and Physicality

Martino is a capable checker who uses his smarts and positioning to impact shifts if in the defensive zone. He plays higher near the line than lower and applies serious pressure to point men if he has enough left in the tank, especially while killing penalties. Martino isn't overly aggressive on the puck, but he uses his stick effectively and will keep it active as he tries to defend a passing lane. He seems to favor defending the middle of the ice and rarely gets caught overloading the strong side unless it's necessary. Martino can't outmuscle many bigger opponents but he's certainly willing to battle.

Hockey Sense

Martino is an intelligent winger who plays like a center. He is one of the USHL's bigger breakaway threats and most of his opportunities are created from subtle decisions he makes off the puck. Martino is known for exploding towards an opposing pass and darting into open ice well after everyone else on the ice notices what happened. If he isn't outmaneuvering a defender with his wheels, Martino will delay or fake to open neutral-zone traffic. His anticipation of puck travel is a major component of his game-breaking abilities.

NHL Projection

Top-line power winger and goal scorer

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	St. Michael's	48	29	50	79	--	1.65	19
2020-21	Omaha	38	18	36	54	87	1.42	12

21



Anton Olsson • Malmö (SHL)

Left defense • 6'0 • 198 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 26, 2003 • Helsingborg, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
16	21	21	18	21	21

Season Review

Olsson is one of the top Swedish defense prospects from a group that is thinner than in previous years. He has more SHL experience, however, than all first-year draft eligible defenseman thanks to a 39-game stint for Malmö in 2020-21. It was during this season where Olsson played his way into a promotion and saw his ice time jump from 9:37 a game at midseason to 14:24 over his final 14 matches. Although he only produced four assists in his 39 games, Olsson did register 28 shots and even posted a 5-shot effort in a playoff game.

Olsson has played for Sweden at the international level since his early teenage years; specifically at the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge (2 goals, 1 assist in 5 games) and the 2021 under-18 World Championship (3 assists in 7 games). His experience at the latter was nothing short of unforgettable, as both Olsson and partner Victor Sjöholm were victimized quite frequently while serving as the middle pairing.

Skating and Stickhandling

Olsson is an above-average skater who has a long, powerful stride that helps him go end to end. He activates off faceoffs in any zone and must be considered a potential threat for taking the puck into the offensive end on his own. Olsson was more aggressive with his decision making in junior hockey than in the SHL but he's too confident a skater and puck handler to overlook no matter the opposition. He is confident in his retreat or backskating speed to frequently patrol his circle or drop deeper into the slot.

Confidence is not lacking in Olsson's puck-handling game as he is known to attempt high-risk plays. Those moments are more the exceptions and not the rule, but Olsson management of the puck was far more consistent in SHL than it was at the U18 tournament. He will attack openings without hesitation but will quickly opt for a safe dump-in once his advance is blocked at the line.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Olsson loves to shoot the puck and understandably so. His slapper is a legitimate weapon and Olsson keeps it low and usually on target. He's also good at creating his own shot attempts and delivers them from anywhere in the offensive zone. He's been used as the primary point man during the man-advantage and will look to unload a one-timer or deliver accurate cross-point or cross-seam passes. Teammates must be aware of Olsson's quick-strike mentality and the velocity he generates on his lead passes. His d-to-d deliveries can be as loud as his slapper, and Olsson also has the tendency to slap pass or look off from as far back as his own goal line.

Defense and Physicality

Olsson is an excellent one-on-one defender and takes his slot coverage seriously. There are several aspects of Olsson's defensive game which when combined with his size, strength, and speed can present him as a seasoned NHL veteran. He's textbook with his stick-on-puck at the line and will shoulder check even on a hard dump-in. Olsson has excellent zone awareness and can dominate either individual battles or in multiple-player scrums along the boards. He is an punishing hitter and will deliver loud cross-checks to opposing forward's who set up in front of his net. Olsson is difficult to beat to the outside and has a strong upper body to hard-shove an attacker even further outside.

Hockey Sense

Nightmarish U18 worlds notwithstanding, Olsson usually is a sound decision maker and will effectively manage the puck under any kind of forecheck pressure. Off the puck, Olsson's constant "swivel head" and adherence to slot positioning reveals a young defenseman who takes pride in his craft and understands his role.

NHL Projection

Physical top-four defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Malmö J20	26	6	11	17	64	0.65	18
2020-21	Malmö	39	0	4	4	28	0.10	31

22



Simon Edvinsson • Frolunda (SHL)

Left defense • 6'4 • 198 pounds • Shoots Left • Feb. 5, 2003 • Kungsbacka, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
19	23	23	26	21	21

Season Review

Edvinsson has spent several years carving out his reputation as a premier draft prospect for his play at both the club and international level. After spending almost all last season in the former Superelit (now Nationell) with Frolunda's loaded 20 squad, Edvinsson after only 14 games essentially graduated juniors in 2020-21 and spent the remainder of the slate between the adult-age Allsvenskan and elite SHL. His role and usage differed between second-division Vasteras and Frolunda's A-Team, with his ice time ranging from close to 14 minutes with the former and six minutes a game with the latter. Edvinsson was Vasteras' No. 4 and was used on the power play but rarely killed penalties, which also was the case for both his J20 and U18 national teams. In total, Edvinsson scored one goal and added 11 assists in 38 combined games between all three levels of Swedish hockey, but he was Sweden's No. 1 defenseman at the under-18 world championship, and he finished that tournament with a goal and three assists in seven games to help his team win the bronze medal. Although Edvinsson's size and skill set has drawn comparisons to current NHL star Victor Hedman, their respective draft years could not have been more different; specifically, when comparing Hedman's top-pairing, minute-eating role with MODO back in 2009 to Edvinsson's 10-game sample as Frolunda's seventh or eighth defenseman. It also should be noted that it was a down year for Frolunda, which limped into the playoffs before being swept by Rogle in the quarterfinals.

Skating and Stickhandling

The two most impressive aspects of Edvinsson's overall game are his abilities to bypass or outmaneuver both backpressure and neutral-zone congestion. His size regarding puck protection also plays a role, but Edvinsson's agility and elasticity are obvious strengths he has the utmost confidence in. He can play keep-away as well as any teenage defender we've seen in recent years, and his timing between fakes and the subsequent acceleration into an escape route is both precise and pro-level. He also makes plays on his backhand while protecting the puck. As already explained, Edvinsson is an elite skater, and shows phenomenal maneuverability in any direction. He's also gained a lot of strength on his edges and doesn't fall nearly as much as he did last season. Edvinsson is not a roadrunner with an explosive first step, as he's more east-west than north-south. But he can and will continue to go end-to-end regardless of whether the conditions are favorable or not.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Edvinsson is flashier in terms of shot creation than setups, as he uses his skating attributes and stick skills to open a lane in the middle of the ice. He can deliver a hard slap shot without a big windup, yet it is his accurate wrist that appears to deliver better results in both scoring and rebounds created, specifically on the power play. Edvinsson is not a high-volume shooter, however, as his shot generation at every club level and in international play has been moderate — his 2.0 shots-per-game average in 14 games with Frolunda J20 ranked near the bottom among regulars. Delivering the puck comes effortlessly for Edvinsson, whose combination of fluidity and swagger can make a simple lead pass look fancy. He has very strong wrists that help him fire crisp stretch passes of his back foot, and his accuracy in any direction or off the boards is usually pinpoint. Edvinsson has soft hands and quickly transitions from backhand to forehand, and he's also executed perfect lobs over neutral-zone traffic to catch a streaking forward in stride. Most of the power plays he's run at the junior and international levels used the 1-3-1, where Edvinsson is more of a facilitator than a quarterback but still stays in motion with his head up to find a lane or seam to exploit.

Defense and Physicality

"Defense First" isn't a mantra Edvinsson always lives by, but he is by no means a liability and can be smothering in 1-on-1 play, either along the boards or by quickly gapping up on an onrushing forward while wielding an active stick. He's also quite versatile for being a lefty by seamlessly transitioning from the left to right side. But Edvinsson in these last two seasons frequently ran into consistency issues specific to positional awareness in the defensive zone, which is a nice way of saying he's prone to leaving gaps in coverage. Although a simple study of his game can excuse this with Edvinsson's strong desire to remain unbridled (while shifting pressure towards the opponent), he still chases around without enough shoulder-checking to identify developing threats. It's not always like this, but Edvinsson's snap decisions to vacate his post eventually puts the onus on his forwards or partner to cover the low slot, with the results being somewhat mixed. Edvinsson can play a physical and spirited game off the puck and has a knack for getting under an opponent's skin; to the point where he is targeted with major wallops. He's a solid body checker who on occasion can deliver a hard smash or hip check himself, but sometimes he'll take himself out of position just to get his point across. Yet even with this abrasive side, Edvinsson deserves credit for keeping it within the rule book and avoiding penalties of any kind, although he was whistled for four minors in six playoff games after taking none in 14 regular-season contests.

Hockey Sense

From a puck-possession standpoint, Edvinsson clearly shows high intelligence in the way he executes breakouts and keeps things organized in the offensive zone. But playing smart, composed hockey off the puck over a full 60 minutes is something he had difficulty doing for most of this season. He has had several performances where's he's been among the best players on the ice for the first 40 minutes, only to lose focus (and the faith of his coach) in critical moments. Edvinsson's best play has been saved for the international level, which makes sense considered it's against his peers. Nonetheless, Edvinsson is both a massive risk taker and a rover who when choosing to activate or step up has had both positive and negative implications on the team game, sometimes all within a three or four shift sequence. There were positive signs, however, at the end of his season and into the playoffs with Vasteras, as Edvinsson appeared to cut down on his mistakes and carried his sharp play over to the U18 worlds, where he was decisive and clean in almost every game outside of two blowout losses to Canada. After looking nonchalant and a bit reckless with Frolunda J20 to start the season, Edvinsson in league play started cutting down his options and settled for safe plays when the situation called for them.

NHL Projection

Top-pairing defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Frolunda J20	8	0	6	6	12	0.75	10
2020-21	Vasteras	20	1	7	8	21	0.38	0

23



Matthew Coronato • Chicago (USHL)

Center • 5'11 • 183 pounds • Shoots Right • Nov. 14, 2002 • Huntington, NY • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	59	59	28	23	23

Season Review

Coronato delivered one of the greatest pre-draft seasons by an 18-year-old in USHL history. He finished first or second in at least eight offensive categories, including a league-best 48 goals, 19 power-play goals, and four short-handed goals. Coronato, who also registered a USHL-record 28-game point streak, was even better in the postseason in leading Chicago to the Clark Cup title, as he scored a league-high nine goals in eight games and finished first in overall scoring with 13 points. He was named the USHL's Forward of the Year and is committed to Harvard.

Skating and Stickhandling

Coronato's skating can be tough to assess because his motor is running high practically every shift and he'll look quicker just by effort alone. He presents a wide base and short stride once he gets into open ice, but Coronato is more than capable of maintaining control and the initiative as he's being checked from behind. With elite balance and agility, plus deceptive explosiveness, Coronato has posterized defensemen attempting to hold their line or maintain a gap. He dominates the puck in any zone and will keep the puck glued to his blade as he enters the zone cleanly.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Coronato is difficult to neutralize in only one shift, let alone an entire game. He appears to treat every shift as the final minute of a close playoff game, reading and reacting to every inch a puck will travel until he has it for himself. Whether he plays center or wing, Coronato will get his chances almost at will – he recorded at least four shots in nearly 60 percent of his 51 games and was second in the league in shots with 191.

Coronato buries the puck in a variety of ways, but his weapon of choice appears to be his wrist. He has phenomenal hands and can deaden the puck the second he corrals it. His constant hunger for the puck keeps him around the slot area or in corners but Coronato on his own can cycle the puck from low to high if necessary. He buried a fair amount of garbage to win the USHL's goal-scoring crown, but it's hard to argue against a kid who outscored the runner-up by 16 goals.

Defense and Physicality

Coronato's efforts off the puck are exemplary. Being a puck hound usually includes drawbacks in the endurance department, but Coronato finds a way to maintain the intensity from start to finish. He covers the danger areas for his defensemen but also darts to the corners to begin a relentless pursuit of the puck. He isn't physical and prefers to use his stick over body checks or shoves. Coronato is an effective penalty as either a center or wing.

Hockey Sense

Easily one of the smartest forwards available in this draft, Coronato can be trusted with every conceivable situation. He takes the game seriously and quickly adapts to any changes by an opposing coach who is attempting to slow Coronato down. Although it's hard to ignore all blue-chip prospects who played with him this season, Coronato is a low-maintenance self starter who expands the ice for his linemates. He can play center or wing and be effective as the central figure on the power play and penalty kill. His active stick gets him into trouble, however, as he took an excessive number of minor penalties this season.

NHL Projection

Top-line scoring forward

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Chicago	45	18	22	40	89	0.89	69
2020-21	Chicago	51	48	37	85	191	1.67	57

24



Oskar Olausson • HV71 (SHL)

Right wing • 6'1 • 180 pounds • Shoots Left • Nov. 10, 2002 • Stockholm, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
24	20	20	24	24	24

Season Review

Olausson is an excitable forward prospect who entered this season with high expectations after a strong draft-1 campaign with HV71 J20. He was a top-line winger from the start and scorched the Nationell with 27 points (14 goals, 13 assists) and nearly 90 shots in his first 16 games. He was quickly summoned to a struggling A-Team, where Olausson appeared in 16 games (3 goals, 1 assist) while averaging 9:25 in ice time. Olausson also spent time with Sodertalje in the second-division Allsvenskan. He's also played for Sweden at international events such as the 2019 under-18 Ivan Hlinka and the 2021 under-20 world junior championship.

Skating and Stickhandling

Olausson is a strong skater with first-step quickness and breakaway speed. He can play either a high-energy or methodical style and tailors his game to the on-ice environment. Controlling the puck for lengthy periods appears to come naturally for Olausson, who reveals a high panic threshold while in possession along the wall. He can be quick in any direction which puts added pressure on opposing defensemen who must respect Olausson's speed and penchant for picking off passes in full flight. He is an inside player willing to be engaged physically but fast enough to avoid unnecessary entanglements.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Olausson is a high-volume shooter who gets his money's worth from his wrist shot. Although his line-driving ability was more prevalent in junior hockey than in the SHL or Allsvenskan, Olausson is better suited at creating his own shot before anything else. His release is explosive, and Olausson doesn't require perfect conditions to fire off a shot that requires a tough save. He also wields a nasty backhand for targeting the top corners. His passing ability is more accurate and limited rather than risky or creative.

Defense and Physicality

Olausson is a strong two-way forward. He uses his size, speed, and reach to apply pressure on the forecheck and to react to opposing counterattacks. Olausson's stick is highly active in the neutral zone, and he'll rely on it more than a body check or hard shove to disrupt the opponent's possession. He kills penalties and is dangerous short-handed threat.

Hockey Sense

Thinking and playing simultaneously allows Olausson to be as opportunistic as he is – you don't average nearly six shots a game by just standing around. The puck seems to follow him, and it has more to do with his anticipation and goal-scorer's instincts than puck luck. Olausson has already outgrown the J20 Nationell and his coachability should keep him at higher levels for the foreseeable future.

NHL Projection

Two-way scoring winger

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	HV71 J20	16	14	13	27	85	1.69	10
2020-21	HV71	16	3	1	4	13	0.25	2

25



Zachary Bolduc • Quebec (QMJHL)

Center/Wing • 6'1 • 175 pounds • Shoots Left • Feb. 24, 2003 • Trois-Rivières, QC • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
12	19	19	23	25	25

Season Review

A top pick in the QMJHL draft and seen as Alexis Lafreniere's heir apparent in Rimouski, Bolduc was able to piece together a solid draft season, albeit one with a few bumps in the road. Take away the injuries he suffered this year, and you'd probably see more people talk about Bolduc — a gifted center and deft stickhandler with ideal size and a deadly shot. Whether it's a track meet or a slogging match, Bolduc can tailor his game to meet any demand. He also likes to play physical and will stick up for his teammates.

Bolduc won the 2020 QMJHL Rookie of the Year and this year took home the Mike Bossy Trophy for best QMJHL draft prospect. He finished second on Rimouski in scoring with 29 points (10 goals, 19 assists) in 27 games but barely ranked in the QMJHL's top 50 in any major scoring category. A weak supporting cast had something to do with that, but Bolduc also played hurt and even shifted to wing for the entire second half of the season. He'll play for the Quebec Remparts in 2021-22.

Skating and Stickhandling

Bolduc is an impressive skater in multiple areas. He has a long, clean stride and accelerates past defenders inside or out. What also makes Bolduc a bigger threat are his dog-on-a-bone mentality and nose for loose pucks. He has a quick first step to begin with, but Bolduc with a two-stride head start almost guarantees a lost foot race. He is quick with the puck in any direction, and he plays with his head up just in case a rapid directional change is required.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Bolduc has an elite shot, and it's one of the better shot-release combinations in the draft class. He is a no-nonsense shooter and will fire pucks from anywhere inside the offensive zone. Bolduc at the junior level appeared to have mastered the art of creating his own shot and would often combine his speed and shot power into an impressive display of classic north-south hockey. In fact, Bolduc had a late-season stretch where he was averaging over eight shots a *game*. But he can also serve as a playmaker and deliver accurate passes on either forehand or backhand, especially from the half wall on the power play. Shooting the puck simply comes more naturally.

Defense and Physicality

Bolduc is not a classic two-way forward, but his motor and speed make him useful off the puck. He hounds the puck and will use all his strength to finish a check with authority. He saw occasional time on the penalty kill but his usage in tough situations varied since he was dealing with injuries. That did not stop Bolduc from playing physical, however, and he is equally as aggressive in initiating contact as he is reacting to it.

Hockey Sense

Bolduc relies plenty on his physical gifts to make him a consistent scoring threat at the major junior level, but his creativity beyond getting pucks to the net is limited. Much like with fellow center prospect Matt Beniers, appreciating Bolduc's playmaking and vision can be difficult to notice if one is fixated on his speed or effort. But there are subtle decisions he makes with the puck under pressure that prove to be highly effective in escaping trouble. Bolduc can have a shift where he'll make at least two smart decisions related to anticipating or positioning, and do so in all three zones.

NHL Projection

Two-way power center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Rimouski	55	30	22	52	150	0.95	36
2020-21	Rimouski	27	10	19	29	120	1.07	18

26



Prokhor Poltapov • Krasnaya Armiya (MHL)

Right wing • 6'0 • 176 pounds • Shoots Left • Feb. 1, 2003 • St. Petersburg, RUS • Russia

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
26	24	24	25	26	26

Season Review

A hounding two-way winger who as a 17-year-old during the regular season led a veteran Krasnaya Armiya forward group in scoring, Poltapov is a Team Russia mainstay who now has strong performances at two major international tournaments to go with his solid work in league play.

Poltapov in the MHL posted team-best totals with 25 goals, 27 assists, and 46 hits in 61 games, and he proved he can score goals in every conceivable fashion. His 52 points ranked 12th in the entire league. Poltapov also isn't a stranger to international competition, as he netted a hat trick against Canada-Black in the 2019 World U17 Hockey Challenge quarterfinal and finished that tournament with seven points in six games to help Russia win its second of back-to-back gold medals. At this year's under-18 world championship, Poltapov recorded seven points and 23 shots in seven games as Russia took home the silver.

Skating and Stickhandling

Poltapov may not appear to be an elite skater, but his footwork can be a thing of beauty. Poltapov is an east-west sidewinder who uses delays, stutter steps, and cut-backs to escape pressure rather than attempt to explode down the wing. He has average straight-line speed, but Poltapov can make a defenseman look silly if he catches him puck gazing. His puck control is driven by his elite hands, but Poltapov can incorporate his close-quarter agility and sturdy frame into the process of maintaining possession.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Poltapov is a dual threat who in one-on-one situations is as dangerous as they come. He's able to create his own shot from any position and regardless of whether he is moving or not. He can score with his wrist from beyond the circles but where Poltapov really shines is in the high slot with room to attack the net. Not only will he deliver a series of ankle-breaking curls or fakes, but Poltapov can bury the puck through the shrinking upper-half windows once he's within a stick-blade's length of the goalie. He also snaps pucks on net from his feet or if overextended to reveal how strong his wrists are. Poltapov can be crafty with his setups but he usually sticks to working the puck off the cycle while keeping in motion, delivering occasional feeds into the low slot for a one-timer.

Defense and Physicality

Poltapov is aggressive off the puck and will hound an opposing puck carrier by covering them staying stride for stride and wielding one of the quickest sticks you'll find. He is a dogged checker who will execute successive stick lifts while maintaining the required speed. Poltapov also plays physical and will deliver hard hits in open ice. The best way to describe Poltapov is by calling him a tough out. He is a relentless puck pursuer and uses Pavel Datsyukian stick work to loot unsuspecting opponents, but he's also quick to counter and cash in on his stolen treasure.

Hockey Sense

Poltapov is intelligent both on and off the puck, but his flashy moves and highlight-reel finishes can't be executed without assuming significant risk. There are times when Poltapov stickhandles himself off the puck and will attempt an escape move rather than pitching it back to a defenseman. These moments aren't frequent, however, and Poltapov is competent at generating and then executing set plays on the breakout and in the offensive end.

NHL Projection

Top-six two-way winger

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Krasnaya Armiya	28	8	4	12	35	0.43	10
2020-21	Krasnaya Armiya	61	25	27	52	169	0.85	30

27



Brennan Othmann • Flint (OHL)

Left wing • 6'0 • 175 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 5, 2003 • Pickering, ON • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
23	32	32	33	27	27

Season Review

A nasty in-your-face competitor with a plus-plus shot, Othmann may not have the measurements to be called a “power forward”, but don’t tell that to the growing list of victims who he’s plastered to the ice. He too opted for European hockey after the OHL shutdown before playing a massive role in Canada’s triumph at the under-18 world championship (3 goals, 3 assists, 23 shots in 7 games). None of this should be too surprising, as Othmann’s draft pedigree (second overall behind Brandt Clarke in the 2019 OHL Priority Selection), along with strong play in the Swiss League and an outstanding U18 tournament, has kept him locked in as a first-round candidate.

Skating and Stickhandling

Othmann is another prospect who fit into the “quicker than expected” category after his speed and timing in various in-game scenarios were evaluated over time. He can look jersey-flapping in one moment and average speed the next, but Othmann is not one to take a shift off or reserve his speed bursts for the end of a shift when he’s headed towards the bench. Rather, Othmann keeps his legs moving and involves himself where he’s wanted most. He’s a confident stickhandler with soft hands to handle passes cleanly but Othmann rarely attempts any cute or risky maneuvers with the puck.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

There’s no fooling around when Othmann has the puck on his stick, as he doesn’t mask his intentions. He likes to shoot and shoot from anywhere, and his nearly 3.00 shots-per-game average was among the leaders on his Swiss team. Othmann has an excellent wrist shot and he can pick the corners from any angle. His shot proclivity was on display at the U18 worlds where he ranked among the team leaders in attempts and scored from greater distances. Othmann’s a meat-and-potatoes playmaker and passer who can make bang-bang plays off the cycle or board battles but is more of a soft dump-and-chase type when entering the zone.

Defense and Physicality

Othmann combines hard work and physicality into aggressive off-the-puck play. He is a hungry and dedicated forechecker who looks to create havoc during opposing breakouts rather than settle for static play in the neutral zone. Othmann will chase down both defensemen no matter how many times they try to reverse the puck away from him, and he’s delivered sobering body checks to different opponents on the same shift. Othmann blew up several peers at the U18 worlds after doing the same to adult-age competition in Switzerland. His physicality and hard open-ice hits can have a strategic impact on an entire game, let alone or or two shifts a period.

Hockey Sense

Othmann is an elite worker bee who appears ready to handle a significant role on Flint for the upcoming 2021-22 season. He’s at his best when things are simplified to chasing, hitting, countering, and shooting. Anything beyond that can get Othmann into trouble, which is why it’s unfortunate his entire OHL season was cancelled since the Firebirds were expected to entrust him with an expanded role. Nonetheless, Othmann shouldn’t be punished for working hard and playing a physical north-south game.

NHL Projection

Top-six power winger

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Flint	55	17	16	33	87	0.60	36
2020-21	Oltén	34	7	9	16	95	0.47	64

28



Samuel Helenius • JyP (SM-Liiga)

Center • 6'6 • 200 pounds • Shoots Left • Nov. 26, 2002 • Dallas, TX • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
30	30	30	33	28	28

Season Review

A towering center with NHL bloodlines who plays a tough 200-foot game, Helenius spent most of his draft season as a bottom-six pivot for a struggling JyP squad that finished near the bottom of Finland's SM-Liiga standings. He was frequently summoned for defensive zone draws, penalty killing, and late/close situations, but there were times when Helenius was rewarded with an extended role in the top six and even saw power-play time as a net-front presence. A frequent addition to Finland's rosters at prominent tournaments, Helenius was one of the better defensive forwards at the 2021 under-20 world junior championship. He also represented his country at three under-18 events in his draft-1 campaign of 2019-20, recording two goals and 35 penalty minutes in 12 games.

Skating and Stickhandling

Helenius has a massive frame so evaluations of any aspect of his skating must be contextualized. He won't look graceful, but Helenius can motor into open ice and create visible separation. His stride is long which helps with acceleration, although his first step is average for players his size. Helenius shows average quickness in tight spaces such as along the boards, but his balance and wide frame can often be too difficult a combination for an opponent to overcome. Critical to Helenius' possession game is his decision making that focuses more on safety and risk aversion than flair and creativity, and his selfless style built on hard work and physical intimidation allows his linemates to focus on the playmaking and puck handling.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Helenius is a shoot-first center who is more effective along the boards or in front of the net than he is handling the puck. He owns an impressive wrister that is both accurate and released quickly, and Helenius used this weapon to score most of his goals this season. Helenius also uses the slap shot when given the time and space, and he can generate enough power to catch a goalie by surprise. He isn't much of a playmaker, but he has soft hands to play catch with the skilled and finesse types before taking a direct route to the net-front area to establish positioning.

Defense and Physicality

Big, mean two-way centers with a nasty shot don't grow on trees, and they're even hard to find in Europe. But Helenius is exactly the type of hard-nosed pivot teams always seem obsessed with developing. He spent his entire draft year in the adult-age SM-Liiga and was a strong penalty killer in both league and international play.

Hockey Sense

You'd probably have to go back a few years since the last time Helenius wasn't used exclusively as a checker, which is both an indictment of his upside as a point producer and a testament to his maturity to handle defense-related tasks at the elite league level. He plays a safe game and seems to know his limitations as a playmaker and possession driver, with occasional lapses centering mostly on ill-timed penalties or overdoing it with his hitting.

NHL Projection

Shutdown middle-six center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Jokerit U20	52	13	11	24	--	0.46	40
2020-21	Finland U20	7	2	2	4	9	0.57	18
2020-21	JyP	54	7	7	14	87	0.26	61

29



Francesco Pinelli • Kitchener (OHL)

Center • 6'0 • 184 pounds • Shoots Left • April 11, 2003 • Stoney Creek, ON • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	25	25	22	29	29

Season Review

Pinelli is a heralded Ontario-born prospect who was drafted 13th overall by Kitchener in the 2019 OHL Priority Selection. He finished fourth in OHL rookie scoring in 2019-20 with 41 points (18 goals, 23 assists) and 122 shots in 58 games for a deep, veteran-heavy Rangers' squad that had at least nine players eclipse the 40-point mark. He took his talents to Slovenia's second division during the 2020-21 shutdown, recording 11 points (5 goals, 6 assists) in 13 games for Jesenice, which used Pinelli on the top six and lead power-play unit. He returned to North America to suit up for Canada at the 2021 IIHF under-18 world championship, where as a role player he registered 11 points (4 goals, 7 assists) in only seven games.

Skating and Stickhandling

Pinelli is a high-end skater who can be effective with either his straight-line speed or his elusiveness in tight areas. He can pull away from back pressure but is smart enough to choose between maintaining his advance or peeling back on a dime to attack the net from a different approach. He is one of the few high-end centers available in the draft who can create chances for any teammate in his unit and do so in a skillful manner.

Maintaining control of the puck while under pressure appears to come naturally for Pinelli, who can use his lateral quickness and rapid thinking to play keep-away for extended periods. He's highly effective operating in the cycle and his teammates can count on him to make the right decision with the puck. Keeping the puck under pressure.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Pinelli is one of the more perplexing center prospects in this draft because his puck skills and mannerisms scream NHL point producer, but those instances are spaced out rather than being revealed consistently. He is a crafty and creative dual-threat pivot who owns a deadly wrist shot that has beaten goalies at multiple levels. Being elusive and slippery in one-on-one scenarios almost makes it automatic that opponents will respect Pinelli's individual scoring abilities, thereby affording him more time and space to exploit any openings with quick, accurate feeds into scoring areas.

Defense and Physicality

Pinelli is both sound and reliable defensively, and coaches at various levels have tasked him with penalty killing and late/close draws. He didn't play center his whole time with Kitchener in 2019-20 but that should change in 2021-22 when you consider all the graduations. Pinelli usually wins less than half his faceoffs, but he competes hard after draws and knows where he should be positioned. He's a solid backchecker and will blanket the neutral zone with quick reads and step-ups. He has a strong upper body and will not shy away from contact, especially when executing soft dump-ins or supporting his defensemen during a breakout.

Hockey Sense

Pinelli is one of the most unselfish and versatile prospects available in the draft as he can play any forward position, provide effective play on special teams, and put out small fires for his coaching staff. Although he wasn't given a critical role for Kitchener or with Canada at the U18's, Pinelli showed flashes of his potential as a line driver while playing overseas against adults. For whatever reason, his shots seemed labelled and passes of all kinds were usually right on the money. But no matter where he has played, Pinelli has shown excellent anticipation and reaction timing while off the puck to quickly wrestle possession away from the opposition.

NHL Projection

Top-six two-way center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Kitchener	59	18	23	41	122	0.70	18
2020-21	Jesenice	13	5	6	11	--	0.85	8
2020-21	Canada U18	7	4	7	11	14	1.57	0

30



Aidan Hreschuk • U.S. U18 (NTDP)

Left defense • 5'11 • 182 pounds • Shoots Left • Feb. 19, 2003 • Long Beach, CA • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
21	48	48	34	30	30

Season Review

Hreschuk (pronounced *Her-shuk*) was Team USA's top-pairing defender with blue-chipper Luke Hughes for most of the 2020-21 season until his partner went down with a season-ending injury in early March. A California native who is committed to Boston College, Hreschuk proved to be a critical piece to a deep NTDP blue line and was used in all situations, although his role on the power play was limited to the second or third unit. His overall numbers were impressive – Hreschuk was second to Hughes among NTDP defensemen in points per game (0.74) and led the group in assists (31) and total points (37). His per-game averages in points production and shot generation, however, were greater with Hughes in the lineup (0.78/1.13) than without (0.58/0.83). Hreschuk was one of the top players at the 2021 All-American Prospects Game but was inconsistent at the under-18 world championship.

Skating and Stickhandling

Hreschuk is a strong skater in nearly every category. He is quick off the hop and displays a long, smooth stride as he glides from zone to zone. Hreschuk's fluidity and grace can paint him as a pro-level skater, especially when he reaches top speed and takes the puck deep into the opposing zone. The NTDP is known for pushing for tempo in their frontal attacks, and Hreschuk's wheels and confidence suit that style perfectly. He's hard to knock off the puck and will allow opponents to lean on him after activating off a faceoff. Hreschuk's hands are soft but he's rapid with his pass deliveries and whips crisp, accurate passes over long distances. You won't see him overhandle the puck all that often and he seems inclined to keep his puck handling to a minimum.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Hreschuk is a two-way defenseman through and through, as he can involve himself in the play, when necessary, after tidying things up in his own end. He's a strong skater with a long, clean stride who can go end-to-end if required, but being paired with a playmaker like Hughes required restraint more times than not. It is within this context where Hreschuk's numbers look more impressive since he wasn't the main point man on the power play and couldn't race up ice whenever he felt inclined to do so. His powerful shot and deadly first pass drove his point totals, but Hreschuk has shown occasional flair and creativity to make plays deep inside the offensive end.

Defense and Physicality

Hreschuk can be a bit of an enigma on defense as he has shown spurts of physicality and sharp decision making but also was prone to lapses in coverage. Your annual NTDP defense corps will be a mix of playmakers and mashers, and Hreschuk seems more reliable when he's bland and quiet in the defensive zone but loud and pronounced on the attack. Opponents still must label him as a threat for open-ice hits, but Hreschuk is more effective at holding his line with an active stick and timing his retrievals properly rather than looking for a target to mash into next week. Consistency off the puck should be one of Hreschuk's bigger off-ice homework assignments, although he is an effective and trustworthy penalty killer thanks to his reads and quickness to the puck.

Hockey Sense

Defensemen who pile up points rarely stumble across scoring chances and should be recognized as sharp thinkers for their ability to play two positions in one. Hreschuk is an apt pupil of the game and can spot and connect with the open man without hesitation. How he defends the rush can be improved, but his decision making on offense, specifically his reads that lead to counterattacks, must be considered an area of considerable strength.

NHL Projection

Top-four two-way defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U17 NTDP	49	4	20	24	36	0.49	40
2020-21	U18 NTDP	50	6	31	37	53	0.74	14

31


Ville Koivunen • Karpat U20 (SM-Sarja)

Left wing • 5'11 • 161 pounds • Shoots Left • June 13, 2003 • Oulu, FIN • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	43	43	43	31	31

Season Review

Koivunen is a shifty two-way winger with soft hands and a strong compete level who played himself into a first-line role early into his draft season with Karpat U20. Not only did Koivunen keep the job, but he ended up leading his team in scoring during the regular season (23 points in 23 games) and finished second in league scoring with 26 points (10 goals, 16 assists) during the group stage that preceded the playoffs. Although Karpat lost in the final to Lukko, Koivunen proved to be an invaluable possession driver and multi-use forward.

Finland has summoned Koivunen for international tournament duty on several occasions, including four under-17 tournaments in 2019-20 where he combined for 12 points in 15 games. He later delivered an impressive performance as Finland's top-liner at the 2021 under-18 world championship, where he finished second to Tuomaala in team scoring with 10 points (4 goals, 6 assists) in addition to playing responsible 200-foot hockey.

Skating and Stickhandling

Koivunen overall skating package ranges from average to below average, but he makes up for a lack of straight-line speed, short stride, and hunched style with exceptional balance and deceptive escape moves when backed into a corner. Granted, Koivunen isn't exactly a roadrunner on skates, and his limitations in the speed department can be apparent when he's in open ice. But his shiftness and domination of the puck in tight spaces allows him to exploit weaknesses in the defensive zone and buy enough time to draw a passing or shooting lane open.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Slots as a winger but acts and plays like a center, Koivunen as a left shot looks comfortable controlling the puck under pressure, either with his back to the boards or if operating behind the net. Processing and stickhandling simultaneously come easy for him, which is why he was effective as a half-wall option of the power play and Tuomaala's favorite set-up man for his patented one-timers. Koivunen's vision is excellent, but he'll put the perfect touch on passes into areas where opponents are preparing for.

Defense and Physicality

Koivunen is a responsible two-way winger is equally attentive and engaged whether at even strength or killing penalties. His anticipation of puck travel is advanced, and he consistently positions himself in an area where he can pick off an errant pass. Koivunen isn't listed as a forward who would be considered thick or sturdy, but his ability to absorb hits and lean bigger opponents off the puck are added bonuses to a 200-foot game that already was strong from Koivunen's instincts and stick use.

Hockey Sense

Koivunen is a highly intelligent winger who can serve as playmaker and possession driver for his line. The fact that he is entrusted with top-line and special-teams duties in spite of shortcomings in the skating realm pays tribute to Koivunen's usefulness and the respect he's earned from coaching staffs at various levels.

NHL Projection

Top-six two-way winger

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Karpat U18	37	27	44	71	--	1.92	20
2020-21	Karpat U20	38	23	26	49	--	1.29	16

32



Red Savage • U.S. U18 (NTDP)

Center • 5'11 • 180 pounds • Shoots Left • May 15, 2003 • Scottsdale, AZ • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	73	73	73	32	32

Season Review

The son of former NHL goal-scorer Brian Savage, “Redmond” was nearly a point-per-game player while manning the NTDP’s second line and anchoring the top penalty-killing unit. He ranked among the team leaders in goals (18) and points (42), but one must consider that Savage did not see significant time on the power play and scored the bulk of his points at even strength. Savage was quiet offensively at the under-18 world championship for Team USA, recording one goal and only five shots in five games but finished third overall with a 63.8 percent faceoff percentage (51-for-80). He’s committed to Miami University.

Skating and Stickhandling

Savage is an above-average skater with outstanding balance whose high motor can help offset the lack of explosiveness, as he is able to predict puck travel appropriately to get the extra step or two required to win a foot race. Savage usually moves in a straight line and likes his chances during chip and chase, but he’s smart enough to gauge the situation before he enters the zone in the event he needs to peel or cut back and wait for support. Although Savage doesn’t seem like the type to make a possession all about himself, he’s a confident puck carrier who can change direction numerous times while keeping his head up for trailers or cutters. Opposing defensemen must take him seriously when he’s entering the zone with speed, as Savage will cut sharply to the inside or make a powerful drive to the inside post while curling or dragging the puck into a shooting position.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Savage earns his points from hard work more than he does creating out of nothing or executing precision plays off the rush. He has a fearless mindset when operating in the tough areas and is willing to pay a price to get the puck settled onto his blade. Savage played most of the last two seasons with similar energy/hustle forwards and served as their playmaker and setup man, although he has shown creativity in one-on-one scenarios where he was able to undress a defenseman and tee up a shot. His vision and pass accuracy are critical to his point production, as Savage earned multiple primary assists off pure finesse or precision.

Defense and Physicality

Savage easily sits as one of the top defensive centers in the draft, and perhaps in all junior hockey. He is physical, determined, and heady when marked against an opposing power play or top line. Being staunch in his defensive responsibilities doesn’t preclude Savage from executing his duties and responsibilities in other areas, but the young man clearly puts a premium on neutralizing an opposing possessing. Savage is a tireless worker who will battle until the very end while showing a natural understanding of the clock and game situation.

Hockey Sense

Savage is a highly intelligent center who is always ready to handle the toughest assignments. His effort on or off the puck is never questioned and as cliché as it sounds, Savage typifies the “plays the right way” attitude most coaches want out of their players. One must also consider Savage’s contributions while No. 1 center Chaz Lucius was shelved with a knee injury. Being a near-elite defensive stopper requires a combination of effort and tactical understand, and Savage consistently reveals both in abundance.

NHL Projection

Middle-six two-way center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U17 NTDP	30	8	17	25	31	0.83	26
2020-21	U18 NTDP	47	18	24	42	74	0.89	39

33



Alekski Heimosalmi • Assat U20 (SM-Sarja)

Right defense • 5'11 • 170 pounds • Shoots Right • May 8, 2003 • Pori, FIN • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	33	33

Season Review

A physical and decisive puck rusher who can go end to end, Heimosalmi is a tough customer who was one of the better junior-age defensemen in Finland. He was Assat U20's clear-cut No. 1 defender from start to finish and served as one of the team's leaders. After producing at an average rate during the regular season (7 points in 23 games), Heimosalmi's scoring took flight in the group stage of the SM-Sarja season (14 points in 12 games) and carried over into a dominant performance at the 2021 under-18 world championship (8 points in 7 games), winning top defenseman honors for the entire tournament.

Skating and Stickhandling

Heimosalmi is an excellent skater in every facet. He bursts quickly into open ice and is willing to attack at maximum speed. Not only can Heimosalmi win most of his foot races, but he also makes rapid directional changes or sudden stops once he's faced with any formidable obstacles. Oozing with confidence whether he's motoring up ice or attacking deliberately, Heimosalmi is the defenseman you want to carry the puck up ice. He has the speed, agility, and power to handle any zone scheme.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Heimosalmi loves to shoot the puck and is a key cog on the power play. He can serve as either a quarterback in a facilitator's role or a shoot-first option who is targeted by teammates. Heimosalmi does not stay static and will frequently alternate sides with the hammer cocked or with his blade ready to receive the pass. Once the puck is on his stick, Heimosalmi will walk the line and pump or slap fake across the point or seam. Critical to his puck skills is that Heimosalmi doesn't appear to be a showboat or selfish; he simply takes the game very seriously and uses his creativity for team success.

Defense and Physicality

Heimosalmi can be tough and physical with a noticeable adherence to slot protection. Although there is significant risk in his decisions to attack up ice, Heimosalmi is not one to be negligent of his duties near the slot and is elastic in his outward coverage. His ability to cover gaps in his own end is a work in progress but it has more to do with his desire to be physical than laziness or bewilderment. Heimosalmi plays with bite and uses his stick a ton, albeit in a mostly borderline fashion.

Hockey Sense

Heimosalmi is advanced in his decision making both on and off the puck. He is an on-ice leader who is both confident and competent in his abilities to run a breakout and drive the possession once opposing territory is breached. One of the more telling signs of Heimosalmi's intelligence is how he cleanly he handles pressure in high-danger areas such as the point in the opposing end and behind his own net when faced with forecheckers.

NHL Projection

Top-four defenseman and power-play quarterback

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Assat U18	25	7	8	15	--	0.6	12
2020-21	Assat U20	35	4	17	21	--	0.6	22
2021-21	Finland U18	7	2	6	8	22	1.14	2

34



Sasha Pastujov • U.S. U18 (NTDP)

Right wing • 6'0 • 184 pounds • Shoots Left • July 15, 2003 • Bradenton, FL • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
9	5	5	5	34	34

Season Review

A hard-shooting winger who led Team USA in scoring in each of his two seasons with the NTDP, Pastujov is one of the more dangerous finishers available in the draft. Committed to Michigan, Pastujov led the U18 squad in goals (30), assists (35), points (65), and points per game (1.59). His 0.73 goals-per-game average is one of the highest recorded by a recent NTDP player and Pastujov would have come close to cracking the 50-goal mark had he played a full season. He also led his team in goals (5), points (8), and shots (31) at the under-18 world championships, where Team USA finished in fifth place.

Skating and Stickhandling

Pastujov is between an average and below-average skater. Although he didn't appear to play with an injury, Pastujov seemed to have lost a step in the quickness department when compared to his under-17 season. He has a clean stride, and balance and agility are both more effective than his first step or straight-line speed. Pastujov spends almost an entire possession in the offensive end looking to shoot and tends to limit his movements to within a small perimeter on the right side. Pastujov can be an effective stickhandler and puck protector thanks to his soft hands, sturdy frame, and pronounced cutbacks that buy him an extra second or two. His stick is quick, and he will take pucks away from unassuming defenders, especially when his compete level is running high.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Pastujov is a natural shoot-first winger with a near-elite shot-release combination. He positions himself in or near the right circle looking for a seam pass to clobber in one motion. Pastujov has always had a shoot-first mentality, but he took his shot generation up a level once center Chaz Lucius went down with a season-long injury -- Pastujov went from averaging 1.9 shots per game in 2019-20 to 3.66 last season. This spike can be explained in several ways, but the important result was Pastujov scoring a team-high 30 goals, including nine on the power play.

Pastujov has the potential to be a dual threat because of his soft hands, keen vision, and chemistry with regular linemates. He was more inclined to involve himself in puck battles two seasons ago and was making bang-bang setups from tough areas. Last season was a different story, however, as Pastujov was more static in looking for shots rather than consistently supporting board battles or driving possession with his puck control, agility, and hockey sense.

Defense and Physicality

Pastujov is a one-way forward whose consistent contributions off the puck center on takeaways via a quick stick. His compete level varies from nonexistent to impressive, but Pastujov has shown occasional determination on the backcheck. He isn't used on the penalty kill and likely won't be summoned for a late draw if his team is holding a one-goal lead. When he gets going, Pastujov will go shoulder to shoulder with the big boys, but those moments were few and far between in the second half and into the U18 worlds.

Hockey Sense

Pastujov is a limited player whose shoot-first tendencies mask his ability to think the game at a high level. He simply didn't control the puck enough as a top-line winger to consider him a line driver or possession fiend. If he is given strict marching orders by his staff to focus on shooting and shooting alone, then his elite finishing ability will be able to carry him to success at higher levels. Pastujov deserves credit, however, for improving his discipline and doubling his goal scoring in spite of playing without his center for most of the season.

NHL Projection

Top-line power winger and goal scorer

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U17 NTDP	49	14	36	50	95	1.02	85
2020-21	U18 NTDP	41	30	35	65	150	1.59	18

35



Liam Dower-Nilsson • Frolunda J20 (Nationell)

Center • 6'0 • 172 pounds • Shoots Left • April 14, 2003 • Gothenburg, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	35	35	30	35	35

Season Review

Dower-Nilsson is a playmaking center has the distinction of being Sweden's top-rated pivot for the upcoming draft. Although that says more about the depth of the pool than Dower-Nilsson's draft resume and upside, he still is an intriguing prospect who skills and contributions appear to be built to withstand the physicality of the North American game. Playing on a loaded powerhouse like Frolunda's J20 squad kept his usage and role limited to a degree, but Dower-Nilsson still produced impressive numbers (5 goals, 12 assists in 16 games), albeit on a team who averaged nearly five goals per game. His J20 season was cut short due to the pandemic, but Dower-Nilsson was able to get a handful of SHL games under his belt with Frolunda's inconsistent men's team. He later captained Sweden's under-18 team at the world championship, where he centered the top line with Fabian Lysell and Simon Robertsson but fell short in producing up to his level (1 goal, 3 assists in 7 games).

Skating and Stickhandling

Dower-Nilsson is an average skater who relies on strong balance and tight-quarter quickness to avoid pressure. His anticipation of puck travel is strong enough to give him an extra step or two once possession chances hand, but his execution of odd-man rushes appears more deliberate than rapid. He plays with energy and passion to make him seem quicker than he would be in a straight-line foot race, but Dower-Nilsson is crafty enough to drive possession and attack the net even while being harassed by tight checking. Another advantage he has is stickhandling cleanly in tight areas such as the half-wall, corners, and behind the net.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

A pass-first center who selflessly taps into his linemates strengths, Dower-Nilsson is the quintessential playmaking center who can be a consistent line driver for either of his team's top two forward units. He is a deft puck handler who can vary his pass selection over all distances and be counted on to create his line's best scoring chances in each game. His shot is better than average and you'd like to see him use it more, but Dower-Nilsson is at his best when he's patiently controlling the puck near the boards and luring opponents away from his linemates.

Defense and Physicality

Dower-Nilsson doesn't scream defensive specialist when you look at his numbers and sheltered minutes, but his battle level and involvement in physical play kills the idea that he's purely a finesse center. He makes things happen on or off the puck, and he's shown an angry side when locked into one-on-one battles along the boards. Dower-Nilsson is more of a shover than a hitter, but he does so with authority and is willing to help teammates who were bullied early into a puck battle. He also won close to or more than half his draws at both the club (49.8 percent) and international (52.6 percent) levels.

Hockey Sense

A highly intelligent center for the manner he distributes the puck and where he positions himself, Dower-Nilsson appears to be both coachable and respected. His work on and off the ice sets a good example and he will rush to defend his teammates. He was involved in major scrums that resulted in ejections at the SHL and international level but he usually is well disciplined and plays his aggressive style within the rules.

NHL Projection

Top-six center and power-play specialist

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Frolunda J20	16	5	12	17	28	1.06	10
2020-21	Frolunda	5	0	0	0	0	0.00	25
2020-21	Sweden U18	7	1	3	4	13	0.57	31

36



Dylan Duke • U.S. U18 (NTDP)

Left wing • 5'10 • 181 pounds • Shoots Left • March 4, 2003 • Strongsville, OH • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	31	31	29	36	36

Season Review

A top-line winger in each of his two NTDP seasons, Duke led the program with 58 goals in that two-year span; most of which came at even strength. He is a physical, in-your-face forward who is used in all situations and can deliver momentum-changing plays with his physicality or finishing ability. Duke finished second to linemate Sasha Pastujov in goals (29) and points (49) but tied him for the most power-play goals (9), led in shots (156) and scored a pair of short-handed goals.

Much like Pastujov, Duke had a significant spike in shots from the previous season as he had to play most of his draft season without goal-scoring center Chaz Lucius. He also spread out his shot generation almost equally during competition against the NCAA (3.83 shots per game), IIHF (4.00), and USHL (3.11). Duke was second in goals (3) and shots (21) in five games at the under-18 world championship. He's an Ohio native but will play college hockey with the University of Michigan.

Skating and Stickhandling

Duke is an above-average skater who usually finishes every game as one of the quicker-looking forwards. Most of that has to do with his motor, effort, and anticipation rather than an explosive first step or long, quick stride, but the results speak for themselves. Duke plays an angry north-south style that involves more soft chips and 50/50 foot races than puck domination or controlled, deliberate entries.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Duke scores a lot of dirty goals, but he also has an effective one-timer that can be labeled for the inside post. He is both create and deceptive. His office, however, is the areas immediately behind and in front of the net; the former for outdueling bigger defenders to come away with the puck, the latter for his ability to make slick plays in tight and roof pucks in his skates. Duke isn't fancy with the puck unless the situation calls for added flair, but his overall playmaking from high-traffic areas or board battles became critical in setting up Pastujov for his patented one-timers from the right circle.

Defense and Physicality

It's easy to label Duke as purely a goal scorer based on his numbers and listed measurements, but he is effective off the puck and uses his high motor and competitiveness to consistently harass puck carriers as they attempt to move up ice. He's killed penalties in each of the last two seasons, albeit as a secondary or tertiary option. Nonetheless, Team USA's coaching staff made it clear that they trust Duke in critical situations, and he rewarded them with inspired play up and down the ice.

Duke also delivers hard hits, especially on the forecheck, and some might consider him a glutton for punishment for all the times he's crashing into anything within the confines of the ice sheet. He will play through pain and not change his rambunctious style no matter how big or imposing the opponent who challenges him.

Hockey Sense

Duke plays the game at a feverish pace but also shows sound decision making when moving at a high rate of speed. He's neither a classic playmaker or natural sniper, and most of the good he produces comes from a commendable effort and nose for the net. Duke also has played on the NTDP's top line in each of his two seasons with the program, and never once did he appear to be riding his linemates coattails.

NHL Projection

Middle-six energy forward

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U17 NTDP	46	29	18	47	83	1.02	28
2020-21	U18 NTDP	50	29	20	49	156	0.98	32

37



Alexander Kisakov • MHK Dynamo (MHL)

Left wing • 5'10 • 150 pounds • Shoots Left • Nov. 1, 2002 • Solikamsk, RUS • Russia

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	36	36	36	37	37

Season Review

A dangerous winger who forces opponents to wake up early in the morning for a chance to slow him down, Kisakov missed the MHL scoring title by just one point, finishing with an impressive 73 points in 61 games in helping Dynamo MSK win the regular season crown and take the Kharlamov Cup in five games. Although he didn't play in any notable international tournaments this year or last, nor has he ever played above the junior level, Kisakov had one of the most impressive wire-to-wire draft years of any Russian-league prospect going back at least a full decade, to include his postseason performance during a title run. Since Dynamo MSK rolled four lines and received production from wingers on every unit, Kisakov's ice time dropped from 17:22 in the regular season to 14:53 in the playoffs. The decrease certainly wasn't because of performance, as he was on the top power-play unit throughout, was the most dangerous player on the ice in two of the five games and was involved in at least three or four high-danger chances each match.

Skating and Stickhandling

An excellent skater with fantastic edges, Kisakov also has a quick first step and breakaway speed that help him consistently make something out of nothing. Stacking the line or neutral zone is no guarantee to slow him down, and if Kisakov loses possession, it's usually his own doing rather than a specific tactic or strategy by the opposition. Getting inside the zone comes easily, and Kisakov can score in several ways. Kisakov is a dynamic playmaker who is equally as dangerous in open ice and he is in the offensive-zone set, and he is an expert and agile puck handler who exudes confidence and competence. The knee-jerk impression if looking at both stats and body measurements is to label Kisakov as a one-way finesse forward, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Yes, he likes to handle the puck and is guilty of forcing things with support nearby. But Kisakov also creates problems by staying in motion and applying pressure on the puck as much as possible.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Kisakov is a pure scorer with a deadly shot and has beaten goalies with snipes aimed at either the short or long side, Opponents have no choice but to accept that Kisakov is going to get looks and deliver quality chances regardless of time or space. More times than not, it will take an excellent defensive play or quality save to stop Kisakov in his tracks. Opponents must prepare for him to make bang-bang plays off faceoffs in either pass or shot form.

Defense and Physicality

Although Kisakov is a gifted offensive weapon who has the ability and reputation to be the best player on the ice, he's also as physical as a 5-foot-9 scoring forward can be without taking himself entirely out of the play, and Kisakov has a noticeable competitive edge that can have an impact on how opponents check him. Kisakov's defensive play is not an area of weakness and should not be considered a red flag or concern. He is an aggressive forechecker who on occasion will pursue a defenseman relentlessly while wielding an active stick all the way up to center ice. He killed penalties quite frequently but his quick hands and stick in the defensive zone are more visible during desperate or late/close moments.

Hockey Sense

Kisakov always drives the offense and relies on his natural abilities over outthinking his adversary when it comes to getting into open ice or exploiting a mistake. That isn't to say he isn't a smart and creative forward because he proved time and again that he can adjust in the face of tougher checking. Still, Kisakov may have star potential, but he needs to play with discipline, plus delay more at the opposing line during entries and cut down on his forced passes into the middle.

NHL Projection

High-scoring top-line winger

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Dynamo MSK	34	2	16	18	51	0.53	24
2020-21	Dynamo MSK	61	36	37	73	200	1.20	90

38



Mackie Samoskevich • Chicago (USHL)

Right wing • 5'11 • 176 pounds • Shoots Right • Nov. 15, 2002 • Newtown, CT • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	27	27	27	38	38

Season Review

A slick scoring forward who was the yin to Matthew Coronato's yang on Chicago's top six, Samoskevich is an excellent skater capable of pulling off highlight-reel moves at top speed. He also was one of the leading playoff scorers to help the Steel claim the Clark Cup title. Although there was a sizable disparity in production between Coronato and Samoskevich, one must consider the latter's unselfish play and hard work to get his linemate clean looks. Samoskevich still ranked sixth among USHL draft-eligibles with a 1.03 points-per-game average. The Connecticut native missed a small chunk of the season with an injury but came back in time for a successful playoff run. He is headed to the University of Michigan.

Skating and Stickhandling

Samoskevich is an elite skater who attacks the middle of the ice with confidence and control, and his entries forced defenders to back in further off the line than usual. When presented with open ice of any form, Samoskevich will exploit the gap with a burst of speed and taking the puck to the inside if necessary. His slick puck skills in conjunction with his elite speed can cause severe breakdowns in coverage, but one must consider just how deep Chicago's lineup was and how Samoskevich had the benefit of a premier support group. Nonetheless, driving possession and being the central figure inside the opposing end are two areas Samoskevich is built for. It's just a matter of giving him a longer leash and more pass-friendly linemates.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Samoskevich is one of the draft's more electrifying forwards and he owns a plus-plus shot. Although he played on a loaded title-winning team with depth at every position, Samoskevich was able to distinguish himself with highlight-reel moves, keen vision, and consistent scoring. He can beat forwards and defensemen in the same shift before creating an open route to the goal. It is in these one-on-one situations where a goalie can be at Samoskevich's mercy, as he is capable of highlight-reel dekes, jukes, and finishes. Compounding matters for the opposition is Samoskevich's vision and passing ability into tough areas. He boasts a feather-soft touch and will deliver passes of any kind with the appropriate touch or timing.

Defense and Physicality

Samoskevich is an offensive forward who wasn't used with regularity on the penalty kill or in late/close situations where a lead needed protecting. He plays with a ton of pace and likes to keep pressure on opponents by owning possession, but he's at the stage of his development where nobody is going to confuse him with Mark Stone or Patrice Bergeron. Samoskevich isn't shy about engaging in puck battles and has been drilled for the sake of getting the puck to safety, but he isn't a physically intimidating presence on the ice.

Hockey Sense

Samoskevich is a sharp multi-threat forward who can play center or wing. His game lacks versatility because of shortcoming on defense, but that's a problem any coach can fix with a diverse support group. Unbridled scorers are quite rare in this draft class and include Samoskevich in the exclusive list of elite finishers who can embarrass an opponent's entire five-man unit before doing the same to a helpless goalie.

NHL Projection

Top-six scoring winger and power-play specialist

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Chicago	47	13	21	34	84	0.72	28
2020-21	Chicago	36	13	24	37	72	1.03	27

39



William Stromgren • MODO J20 (Nationell)

Left wing • 6'3 • 175 pounds • Shoots Left • June 7, 2003 • Örnsköldsvik, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	70	70	70	39	39

Season Review

A soft-mitted winger with impressive puck skills, Stromgren is a Team Sweden regular who spent his draft season playing in three of Sweden's four major circuits, serving in prominent roles in each of them, mostly with the MODO organization. He finished second to Simon Robertson in scoring in the J20 Nationell's North Conference with 18 points (10 goals, 8 assists) in 14 games, with his 10 tallies tying for first. He was promoted to the adult-age Allsvenskan, where Stromgren appeared in 27 games for a lowly MODO squad, recording three goals and six assists while seeing time on the power play. He also played briefly in the third-division HockeyEttan, where he notched three assists in four games for Örnsköldsvik. Stromgren played for Sweden in 14 combined international games, including a 2-goal, 3-assist performance in seven games at the 2021 under-18 world championship.

Skating and Stickhandling

Stromgren is one of the better-skating big men in the draft, and the way he was able to keep pace with speed-burning linemate Isak Rosen at the under-18 world championship is a testament to his quickness. He isn't the prettiest skater and can look clunky or robotic at times, but Stromgren has plenty of speed and agility to exploit either open ice or tight areas. He is slippery and deceptive with his back to the boards and will reverse or change direction multiple times in a 10-15 second span. Stromgren's quickness on the puck serves as the perfect complement to his long reach, soft hands, and deft stickhandling, as he can cycle the puck on his own using timing and precision in the face of pressure to maintain control of the puck. He also knows how to play keep-away in one-on-one situations and is a dangle or toe-drag threat when moving down the wing. The puck always seems to find him.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Stromgren is a finesse winger trapped in a power forward's body. Although his compete and engagement levels are high, Stromgren can be fancy enough with the puck where you would want to classify him more as a pure playmaker than anything else. But his sharp puck skills work in concert with his size and reach, and Stromgren's ability to consistently create chances for either himself or any member of his unit was critical in maintaining a regular shift no matter the level he played in. Stromgren is a precision passer who can put the perfect touch on his deliveries. He is a key figure on the power play from either half wall because of his dual-threat capability – Stromgren can blister the puck with accuracy off the pass and his wrist is heavy from distances beyond the slot.

Defense and Physicality

Stromgren is both active and heady off the puck, and he will start and stop throughout his shifts. Although his time on the penalty kill was limited to the second or third unit, Stromgren's reach and quickness to the puck can be effective in intercepting rims or pressing the point for a hurried play. He wasn't as physical as you'd expect considering his size and the competition he faced, but Stromgren makes up for it with inspired board play and attentiveness in the neutral zone.

Hockey Sense

Stromgren is an intelligent and versatile wing who is summoned for all critical on-ice situations. He senses puck travel and anticipates in the neutral zone is borderline elite. Additionally, Stromgren is a constant shoulder-checker who based on his route taking seems to process situations before collecting the puck. His penchant for deception and trickery while stickhandling into traffic is far cleaner and justifiable than with most teenagers.

NHL Projection

Top-six scoring winger

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	MODO J20	14	10	8	18	34	1.29	8
2020-21	MODO	27	3	6	9	15	0.33	2
2020-21	Örnsköldsvik	4	0	3	3	7	0.75	0
2020-21	Sweden U18	7	2	3	5	9	0.7	1

40



Logan Stankoven • Kamloops (WHL)

Center • 5'8 • 170 pounds • Shoots Right • Feb. 26, 2003 • Kamloops, BC • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	105	105	105	40	40

Season Review

A high-energy sniper who can serve in a variety of roles, Stankoven is a well-respected prospect and teammate who was critical to Kamloops' success each of the last two seasons. Selected fifth overall in the 2019 WHL bantam draft, Stankoven tied for the goal-scoring lead among WHL rookies in 2019-20 with 29 tallies in 59 games in spite of having a limited role. Although he appeared in only six games this season, Stankoven averaged more than a goal per game and ranked among the league leaders in that category before leaving to join Team Canada for a successful 2021 under-18 world championship (4 goals, 4 assists, 26 shots in 7 games).

Skating and Stickhandling

Stankoven is a strong skater with good speed and acceleration. He plays with a ton of pace that keeps him near the top of the list of fastest or quickest players on a nightly basis. There's nothing eye-popping about his mechanics and his stride can be short and choppy, but he feverishly churns his legs when attacking in a north-south manner and can be tough to knock off balance from the front, rear, or side. Strength on the puck is a common sight when Stankoven is operating in the offensive zone, and he will reverse or change direction on a dime while keeping his head up.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Stankoven is a dog-on-a-bone grinder who lives in the tough areas near the net. He's more of a finisher than a playmaker, although he has shown keen vision and precision when connecting with a linemate in the low slot. The problem is that Stankoven isn't creative with the puck and seems more like a winger than a center – he's recorded only 10 primary assists at 5v5 in his 73 career WHL games and none came in his six matches this season. His elite shot and release more than make up for it, however, as Stankoven is a power-play threat from anywhere in the offensive end. He can wire a labeled shot from any blade position and is willing to battle into tough areas with his stick at the ready.

Defense and Physicality

Stankoven is one of the top defensive forwards in the draft and he is equally effective at wing and at center. He is both physical and aggressive on the forecheck and will deliver crunching hits on defensemen during breakouts, which says a lot considering he's one of the smaller players in the draft. Stankoven kills penalties with tenacity and is willing to sacrifice his body. He doesn't give up on the backcheck and seems to know where he's needed most before arriving at his own end. Although Kamloops was loaded at center and required him to play wing at time, Stankoven won 58 percent of his draws (44-for-76) after he had a 55-percent success rate (415-for-760) in 2019-20.

Hockey Sense

Stankoven is a smart player for mostly staying within himself and creating momentum shifts when required. His vision seems average, however, and his line-driving ability appears to be built on effort and strength on the puck rather than deception, creativity, or anticipation. Stankoven's motor is nonstop, so it's no surprise to see him create multiple turnovers a game. His ability to plays a rough-and-tumble style while maintaining discipline is a testament to his smarts.

NHL Projection

Middle-six two-way forward

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Kamloops	59	29	19	48	183	0.81	10
2020-21	Kamloops	6	7	3	10	31	1.67	0
2020-21	Canada U18	7	4	4	8	26	1.14	0

41



Scott Morrow • Fargo (USHL)

Right defense • 6'2 • 195 pounds • Shoots Right • Nov. 1, 2002 • Darien, CT • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	37	37	32	41	41

Season Review

A specimen to say the least, Morrow moved on from the vaunted Shattuck program to help Fargo march to the USHL's Clark Cup Final. He put up massive numbers in the prep circuit (22 goals, 45 assists in 2020; 8 goals, 40 assists in 2021) but his USHL experience has been limited to two regular-season games for Youngstown (0 goals, 1 assist) and six playoff games for Fargo (0 points, 13 shots). He's a big, strong kid with a hard shot, but Morrow's elite skating is what separates from most of this year's defense prospects. A Connecticut native committed to UMass-Amherst, Morrow played between Fargo's middle and bottom pairing during the USHL playoffs.

Skating and Stickhandling

Morrow is a near-elite skater who moves with confidence in grace in any direction. He is comfortable using his quickness to power through or around traffic and enter the zone with the intent to drive to the net or peel back at the point and wait for support. Always eager to create or join the rush, Morrow's combination of size and fluidity is a sight to see, as his footwork is quick, and his stride is both long and clean. He's a competent stickhandler who is a threat to dangle or spin away from pressure, and Morrow's agility becomes critical to his success at walking the line or sidestepping a checker to get a clean look at the net.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Morrow is a dual threat from the blue line who can clobber the puck and generate significant velocity with either his slapper or his wrist. He is a self-starter who can create chances for himself or anyone on his unit. Having a visible advantage in the skating department helps Morrow operate with time and space, but he also has a long reach and wide frame that help buy him precious seconds to retain the puck. Morrow usually shows soft hands to handle tough passes or put the right touch on short-distance deliveries, but he also whips the puck around with accuracy and is a home-run pass threat. One of his strengths is varying the touch he places on dump-ins to catch a streaking forward in stride or help him win the 50/50 race.

Defense and Physicality

There's a sizeable gap between the level of competition between prep and USHL hockey, and Morrow's small sample size in the latter is what adds a thick layer of ambiguity over his potential as an NHL'er. Although he was competent in his own end with Shattuck while holding a distinct size advantage over most of his opponents, Morrow's coverage and decision making were exploited in spurts at the next level. He's not a pure "offenseman" or "fourth forward", however, and showed moments in the USHL playoffs of being able to tightly gap up on speedy forwards, blanket the slot, and hard-shove opponents off the puck.

Hockey Sense

Although his moves with the puck occasionally border on high-risk, Morrow in terms of anticipation and reads is a highly intelligent defender whose decision making is generally sound. Morrow during breakouts showed a willingness to delay in traffic and force forecheck pressure to retrograde in the opposite direction. His turnover-to-takeaway ratio was probably higher in the USHL than in high school, but Fargo's coaching staff occasionally entrusted him with tough assignments against Chicago's powerful attack that bore positive results.

NHL Projection

Top-four defenseman and power-play quarterback

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Shattuck	46	22	45	67	--	1.46	44
2020-21	Shattuck	30	8	40	48	--	1.60	30
2020-21	Fargo (playoffs)	6	0	0	0	13	0.00	0

42



Conner Roulette • Seattle (WHL)

Left wing • 5'11 • 180 pounds • Shoots Left • May 13, 2003 • Winnipeg, MB • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	47	47	47	42	42

Season Review

A high-motor type who plays with a ton of energy but also can finish in key scoring areas, Roulette was one of the WHL's top rookie scorers in 2019-20 and a top point producer for Seattle this past season (12 points in 11 games). Selected 34th overall in the 2018 Bantam Draft, Roulette two seasons ago placed seventh among first-year scorers with 39 points (19 goals, 20 assists) in 54 games. He wasn't a top-line player in either of his two WHL seasons but was featured prominently on the power play and penalty kill. Roulette was named to Team Canada for the under-18 world championship and finished with five points in seven games while serving as a bottom-six winger.

Skating and Stickhandling

Roulette is a no-frills skater and puck handler who plays an energetic north-south game. There isn't anything noteworthy of his skating mechanics outside of his balance, and his quickness to the puck is far more effective and visible than his quickness while controlling it. If you see Roulette in open ice, chances are it was because of a smart read or takeaway that trapped opposition rather than blowing past someone. Once he's on the puck, Roulette usually stays within himself and doesn't attempt anything fancy unless the situation calls for it. He's been used on the power play but mostly as a net-front or bumper presence.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Roulette is a shoot-first winger who plays fearless and will take a beating to establish positioning in between the circles. He drives the net with courage and control, but he also has quick hand-eye coordination to tip home point shots or corral floating or wobbly pucks near the net. Seattle's power play has been weak each of the last two seasons which afforded a younger forward like Roulette to see significant time with the top unit. He boasts a quick, accurate snap shot and is able to create his own chances with agile inside moves, and there are times when Roulette will fire pucks without hesitation from anywhere inside the offensive end.

Defense and Physicality

Roulette is a gritty winger who is a nuisance to opposing defenders either in the low slot or on the forecheck. He'll probably score most of his goals in those dirty areas near the net, but his enthusiasm and sacrifice should not be overlooked. Roulette will deliver big open-ice hits but does so in a controlled and justifiable manner. He's an effective penalty killer who keeps his stick swaying back and forth while starting and stopping throughout the entire possession. Hustle and competitiveness highlight the average Roulette shift.

Hockey Sense

Roulette plays a quick-thinking game for someone with a visible willingness to lay it all on the line, and his decisions are far more calculated than reckless. Although, he's not creative in the playmaking sense and you rarely see him make a highlight-reel play that was created by pure puck skill or artistry, Roulette is an on-ice asset who can make any coach's job easier. He plays physical but does so within the rule book.

NHL Projection

Middle-six energy winger and penalty killer

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Seattle	54	19	20	39	112	0.72	21
2020-21	Seattle	11	6	6	12	41	1.09	4
2020-21	Canada U18	7	2	3	5	8	0.71	2

43



Oliver Kapanen • KalPa U20 (SM-Sarja)

Center • 6'0 • 166 pounds • Shoots Right • July 29, 2003 • Timra, SWE • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	75	75	75	43	43

Season Review

The top-line center and all-around everything for KalPa U20, Kapanen is a highly versatile pivot who has excelled in every role he's been given. From running the lead power-play unit to killing penalties, Kapanen produced as a top-10 scorer in the SM-Sarja, was impressive in a short stint in the adult-age Mestis (5 points in 5 games) and earned a strong enough reputation to anchor Finland's first line at the under-18 world championship. Although he missed a chunk of the tournament after being carted off the ice from a crash into the boards, Kapanen was able to return to the lineup and show no after-effects from the injury. He's the first cousin of Pittsburgh Penguins winger Kasperii Kapanen.

Skating and Stickhandling

Kapanen has above-average speed but it quicker and elusive along the boards than he is in open ice. One can make a strong argument that Kapanen's tight-quarter footwork and puck control, plus his sharp decision making, combine to make him one of the more reliable puck controllers available in the draft. Kapanen's speed was misjudged by several opponents, and he exploited their indecision by blowing past them for a rush to the inside. Kapanen is as reliable as they come in the possession game. He makes few mistakes throughout the course of a game, which is critical considering his multi-situational, minute-eating role.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Kapanen is a dual threat who can fire the puck with authority and accuracy, but also run a possession with multiple pass options being utilized. He is an excellent seam passer who puts the right touch on his deliveries into traffic, and Kapanen will delay and fake for several seconds until an opponent gets tired of alternating his stick between lanes.

Defense and Physicality

Kapanen is a strong two-way center and should be considered one of the better 200-foot pivots available in this draft. He was summoned by KalPa to put out fires in every situation, to include critical penalty kills or late/close faceoffs in his own end. Kapanen is the ideal teammate for defensemen, as he covers the low slot with diligence and is willing to push or cross-check opponents out of the net-front area while the blueliners battle in the corners.

Hockey Sense

Thinking and playing simultaneously is a Kapanen hallmark. He is cerebral in his decisions with the puck but also understands positioning and where he's needed most. His NHL bloodlines certainly helped him in understanding the nuances of the game, specifically the importance of poise and deception when stickhandling under pressure. Kapanen's ability to keep the puck under control when moving at top speed while maintaining situational awareness and marking pass options lends to his high hockey IQ. He's a young man who clearly understands the game.

NHL Projection

Top-six two-way center and team leader.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	KalPa U20	37	25	16	41	--	1.11	26
2020-21	JokiPoijat	5	3	2	5	--	1.00	12
2020-21	Finland U18	4	0	0	0	6	0.00	2

44



Stanislav Svozil • Kometa Brno (Extraliga)

Left defense • 6'1 • 182 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 17, 2003 • Prerov, CZE • Czech Rep.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
28	28	28	28	44	44

Season Review

Once pegged as a first-round lock for the 2021 draft, reality is starting to reveal Svozil as a cerebral but a somewhat unspectacular defense prospect. Although he was impressive for the Czechs at the under-20 world junior hockey championship, Svozil battled through an up-and-down sophomore season with Brno in the elite Extraliga, where he saw a minor reduction in role and usage compared to his 16-year-old campaign of 2019-20 when he won the Rookie of the Year award. After he shuffled between the second and third pairing and was used extensively on the penalty kill two seasons ago, Svozil averaged 13:29 of ice time per game compared to nearly 14 minutes the season prior. He also played for the Czech men's team at the Karjala Cup and was their alternate captain at the 2021 under-18 world championship.

Skating and Stickhandling

Svozil is a calculated and opportunistic puck mover who generally moves deliberately but must be marked by the opposition as a potential end-to-end threat. He has average speed and is a hunched skater, but Svozil's glide and grace come to the forefront once he's hit his third or fourth stride. Strong on his edges and sharp with his direction changes, Svozil can successfully navigate up the ice in any direction. He exudes confidence while controlling the puck and advancing with his head up, and Svozil's use of his backhand is outstanding, as he will use it to deliver hard d-to-d passes or even bank a stretch feed to catch a forward in stride.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Svozil is a tricky prospect to assess when it comes to his potential for producing offense because he can handle big minutes that include the power play but doesn't reveal any exceptional skills with the puck outside of an occasional juke or spin move. He has a hard shot that he keeps low, and Svozil will jump into an opening for a quick wrister that is accurate in terms of hitting the actual net. Whether it's adherence to the defensive side or respect he has for his teammates, Svozil is a hesitant shooter who needs to uncork more attempts, especially off the pass. He is used on the power play, where his soft hands and quick stick are effective tools at working the puck around, but he is far from your classic power-play quarterback.

Defense and Physicality

Svozil is a multi-situational defender who provides a steady, calming presence, a high panic threshold, and outstanding coverage of the neutral zone and dangers areas near his net. Few blueliners in this draft can blanket the neutral zone as well as Svozil, who holds his line firmly regardless of how quickly the onrushing puck carrier is advancing. Eliminating threats before they enter the zone is one of Svozil's strong suits, as are the timely reads he makes multiple times per period. He owns an acute grasp of slot and net-front coverage, especially the low slot and the circles. He can hard-shove an opponent off the puck and his retreat speed to the slot is a strength.

Hockey Sense

Svozil is a very smart defender who makes timely, calculated plays in all three zones. As already mentioned, his abilities in covering the neutral zone with decisive reads and exceptional stick placement are advanced for a teenager, and Svozil already has evolved into a near-ready NHL prospect. He is poised with a quick-strike mentality, albeit with his home-run passes more than his wheels. Svozil also knows when to activate off draws and keep himself involved in plays below the opposing faceoff dots without overcommitting or putting his partner at risk.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing two-way defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Brno	41	2	3	5		0.12	8
2020-21	Brno	30	1	2	3		0.10	8
2020-21	Czech U20	5	0	1	1	4	0.20	16
2020-21	Czech U18	5	0	1	1	12	0.20	6

45



Sebastian Cossa • Edmonton Oil Kings (WHL)

Goalie • 6'7 • 210 pounds • Catches Left • Nov. 21, 2002 • Fort McMurray, AB • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	96	96	96	45	45

Season review

Cossa is the No. 1 goalie for a loaded Edmonton Oil Kings' squad that is expected to contend for the WHL crown. He split duties with Beck Warm and Todd Scott a season ago, but it was Cossa who led last year's team in wins (21), save percentage (.921), and shutouts (4). Although Edmonton iced as formidable a lineup as you'll find in major junior, Cossa proved to be invaluable himself by going 11-2-2 with a .939 save percentage in games where he faced 30 or more shots. This season was even better, as he posted a ridiculous 17-1-1 mark with a 1.57 goals-against average and .941 save percentage. He was selected 36th overall by the Oil Kings in the 2017 WHL Bantam Draft.

Style

To call Cossa simply a "butterfly" goalie is redundant — every goalie at every level uses some form of the butterfly, therefore the tactic should be implied. Like bigger netminders, Cossa limits his positioning to inside the crease and will not extend outside of it to challenge shooters. If one would compare him to recent top-rated goalie prospects, Cossa is neither as jittery as Yaroslav Askarov nor is he as robotic as Spencer Knight. Rather, Cossa combines fluid crease shuffles with compact movements and limits the amount of time he spends on his back or his pads. He's not much of a risk taker and if Cossa gets beat, it's rarely from his own egregious mistake or over-committal to one side. Cossa also doesn't venture too far from the crease when facing a breakaway.

Post Integration

Cossa exclusively uses the RVH for post integration once the puck is moved closer to the goal line, although he seems to switch rapidly between remaining upright when his team controls the puck to dropping down when it's lost. He grasps the importance of a tight post seal and being 6-foot-7 allows him the option of using his shoulder rather than his mask to cover the top corner. When Cossa drops into his RVH, it's usually not for long, and he follows the doctrinal guidelines by limiting his RVH usage to moments when the puck is below the bottom of the circle and above the goal line. It appears as he favors the toe-to-the-post method when in the RVH, and Cossa looks quite comfortable when his body is flush. Only when pucks are behind the net will Cossa use an upright double skate-to-the-post technique. It goes without saying that the closer a goalie gets to the post, the bigger the gaps on the short side. But Cossa is so quick and smart that you rarely see him get beat on the long side period, let alone from a sharp angle.

Glove and Blocker

Cossa knows how to play his angles to limit the number of times opponents' gun for the upper half, but five of the first seven goals he surrendered this year were over his glove (three) or blocker (two). The same rang true a season ago, where his worst outings were riddled with medium-danger shots beating him high to the glove or blocker side. Fast forward to this season, and you get the sense that Cossa has made angle adjustments that require opponents to attempt the perfect snipe while a screen is established to beat him up top. Of course, neither his glove nor blocker should be considered a soft spot or weakness, as Cossa simply plays deep in the crease and covers the lower half so well that the upper half is all that's available to shooters. Cossa doesn't use textbook glove-hand positioning, as his palms aren't always flush with the angle of the puck, and he's even revealed a palm-down/yo-yo position. But when you consider his depth and the significantly low goals against, it's obvious Cossa knows how to play his angles and that WHL shooters are incapable of exploiting the upper half with regularity.

Reads and Tracking

You'll be hard pressed to find a teenage goalie who works harder than Cossa at tracking the puck's every move, to include when controlled behind the net. Two things that you will rarely see is Cossa losing sight of the puck or losing the location of the net behind him. It seems clear that Cossa spends a lot of time working on puck tracking by the way he can look/visualize attempts into his glove, blocker, and even toe saves. Most bigger goalies tend to rely on their size to compensate for slowed reactions to the bang-bang or cross-seam attempts, but Cossa's head movements are usually in concert with those of his arms or pads.

Rebound Control and Post-Save Recovery

Cossa is incredibly quick for his size and uses rapid T-pushes to adjust from the initial save to potential follow-on chances. He leans into most shots and keeps his body and equipment squared to the puck to minimize the distance of his rebounds. The Oil Kings have several crease clearers on their blue to help limit the number of second-chance opportunities Cossa will face on a given night, so you rarely see him get beat by a rebound chance in the slot. One of his better attributes is the way he tracks, reacts, and smothers wraparound attempts.

Quickness and Footwork

Cossa is impressively quick for a goalie of any size, let alone one who stands around 6-foot-7. His post-to-post movements are both explosive and clean, and it isn't often that Cossa pushes himself well out of position. He relies heavily on his squareness and cutting angles off and doing so requires rapidity in both movement and anticipation. Cossa's shuffles in any direction are limited to two or three taps and he can dart into a perfect post seal. There's no sign whatsoever of clumsiness, lack of coordination, or unnecessary steps that slows down the time it takes to get set or re-set.

Puckhandling

Cossa is an aggressive puckhandler much like Knight and Askarov. He seems more than willing to jump behind the net and interdict a dump-in but opposing forecheckers must be aware of Cossa's strong wrists and the confidence he has in moving the puck. There are times when he gets himself into trouble by misjudging the speed of either the dump-in or the forechecking pressure, but that is an easy fix that comes with experience.

NHL Projection

No. 1 goaltender with franchise-carrying potential.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	W-L	GAA	SV%	Shots	GA	SO
2019-20	Edmonton	33	21-6-2	2.23	.921	887	70	4
2020-21	Edmonton	19	17-1-1	1.57	.941	505	30	4

46



Xavier Bourgault • Shawinigan (QMJHL)

Center/Wing • 6'0 • 172 pounds • Shoots Right • Oct. 22, 2002 • L'Islet, QC • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	54	54	54	46	46

Season Review

An exceptional stickhandler with buttery-soft hands and a quick-strike mentality, Bourgault must be in the running for the flashiest winger available in the draft. Selected 33rd overall by Shawinigan in the 2018 QMJHL draft, Bourgault in his third year in the league played mostly right wing from start to finish and proved to be a low-maintenance threat who was just as dangerous without top center Mavrik Bourque running possessions. In fact, Bourgault registered a five-game point streak (4 goals, 3 assists, 26 shots) in the six-game stretch last November when Bourque was out of the lineup.

Bourgault was one of the QMJHL's top scoring first-year draft eligibles, recording 40 points (20 goal, 20 assists) in 29 games and was second on the Cataractes in points per game (1.38), shots (107) and dangerous shots (73). He didn't score a goal in his five playoff games but dished out four assists and fired 25 shots.

Skating and Stickhandling

Bourgault is an average skater who is more noticeable from his tight-quarter agility and escapability than he is while moving in a straight line or engaged in a foot race. He is hard to knock off the puck and will change direction multiple times in one possession as he dominates the cycle game. Bourgault is highly attentive in the offensive zone and stays in motion throughout his shift while facing the puck every time it changes location. Playing with several skilled teammates required him to be unselfish, but Bourgault with the puck on his stick and an open lane must be a considerably nerve-wracking site for an opposing coach. His hands are elite and work at a feverish pace as he alternates angles and draws the puck back and forth within a small radius. It almost goes without saying that Bourgault is a dangle or toe-drag threat, especially when he's operating in the right circle.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Bourgault is a dual threat with a knack for creating something out of nothing. He can play either center or wing and the responsibilities inherent in either position does not prevent him from driving possession or manufacturing a high danger scoring chance. Although there are multiple ways to describe or define an offensive forward, Bourgault's mannerisms and confidence on the puck paint him as the classic shoot-first winger who uses the pass as a means of deception during critical moments. His wrist shot can be both heavy and deadly, and the puck is released with intense velocity.

Defense and Physicality

Bourgault displays commendable efforts off the puck and was used occasionally on the penalty kill. He isn't a stopper and has adjustments to make in gauging the speed of his opponent in the neutral zone, but Bourgault will fight and battle for possession and involve himself in areas where he's needed. A dedicated worker who won't quit on a play no matter the score or time on the clock, Bourgault can be a dogged backchecker who lifts sticks or blankets a passing lane to thwart any scoring chances.

Hockey Sense

Examples of high intelligence are prevalent in the average Bourgault shift; specifically in the stickhandling and passing realms. He's outgrown the QMJHL by leaps and bounds after three promising seasons, so it's doubtful he serves as the top dog on his next club unless he decides to return to Shawinigan in 2021-22.

NHL Projection

Top-six point-producing winger

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2018-19	Shawinigan	62	7	13	20	56	0.32	12
2019-20	Shawinigan	63	33	38	71	153	1.13	20
2020-21	Shawinigan	29	20	20	40	107	1.38	6

47



Zachary L'Heureux • Halifax (QMJHL)

Left wing • 5'11 • 196 pounds • Shoots Left • May 15, 2003 • Mercier, QC • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
27	47	47	47	47	47

Season Review

A top-line winger with soft hands who plays with an edge, L'Heureux (pronounced *Luh-ruh*) is one of the QMJHL's leading prospects for the 2021 draft, but also one its notable enigmas. He was originally a top QMJHL draft pick of the Moncton Wildcats, and L'Heureux rewarded them in 2019-20 by winning the rookie scoring crown with 53 points in 55 games. Battling for ice time on a loaded team, L'Heureux was traded last offseason to Halifax, where he ended up ranking 16th in the league in scoring with 19 goals and 20 assists for 39 points in 33 games. He would have appeared in more contests had it not been for multiple suspensions, which included punishment for "fighting after the original altercation" or "unsportsmanlike conduct and taking off helmet". Skating on Halifax's first line with center Elliot Desnoyers and Robert Orr, L'Heureux also served on the lead power-play unit, but 30 of his 39 points came at even strength or shorthanded. The only concern regarding his numbers was a reduced schedule that limited his opponents to only a few teams and allowed him to stat pad against lowly Cape Breton but struggle mightily against powerhouse Charlottetown.

Skating and Stickhandling

L'Heureux is a strong option for spearheading possession tactics thanks to his ability to dominate the boards. He owns a low center of gravity and can maintain control while reversing direction in tight spaces. Always playing with his head up, L'Heureux can identify friendly routes before the opposition and exploit the gaps. Although he has strong balance and long, powerful stride, L'Heureux is barely an average skater in terms of speed and acceleration. Most of his open-ice moments with the puck tend to downgrade from fast to slow rather than the other way around. His zone entries are mostly deliberate, but calculated and controlled at the same time, and L'Heureux can posterize a puck-gazing defender with a dangle. L'Heureux also is an excellent puck handler who can make plays while being checked or harassed. How that translates at higher levels where checkers are four inches taller, and 30 pounds thicker will remain unanswered for at least three or four years.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

L'Heureux is a dual threat from the wing but one who loves to shoot the puck. He finished 10th in the league with 130 shots in 33 games, which increased his per-game average from 2.62 in 2019-20 to 3.94 last season. L'Heureux had seven games with six or more shots, including single-game efforts of 10 and 11. He has a no-nonsense release to his plus shot but also settles bouncing pucks and will attempt forehand-backhand moves from in tight. Having buttery-soft hands and pinpoint accuracy makes him highly dangerous near the net, but L'Heureux also scores via the wrist from either circle. As much as he likes to hammer pucks on net, however, L'Heureux is a dandy of a set-up man whose intentions and intended targets make sense and he makes opponents pay for the slightest mistake.

Defense and Physicality

L'Heureux is a reliable checker with an active stick who blends physicality with strong off-the-puck instincts. He doesn't have the highest motor, but L'Heureux will take pride in his defensive responsibilities and provide his staff with dependability during moments when stops are required. He was on the top penalty-killing unit and appeared as determined and energetic as he would be at even strength. L'Heureux likes to play the body, to include during at inopportune times. He's usually the last guy on the backcheck and first to the bench, but that could be attributed to a lack of endurance rather than negligence or ignorance.

Hockey Sense

There aren't many prospects who reveal a sharp mind within seconds of their first shift, but L'Heureux is certainly one of them. A perfect decision-making record is an unrealistic expectation for any athlete, let alone a teenage hockey player, but a resilient L'Heureux finds a way to quickly make up for his gaffes no matter how severe. Yes, he loses his cool and takes bad penalties, which some would argue is the antithesis of smart hockey. Those moments are the exception and not the rule, however, as L'Heureux is more than reliable on the puck and able to attack an opponent's weakness without delay.

NHL Projection

Top-six power winger and goal scorer

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Moncton	55	20	33	53	144	0.96	70
2020-21	Halifax	33	19	20	39	130	1.18	47

48



Tristan Broz • Fargo (USHL)

Wing/Center • 6'0 • 178 pounds • Shoots Left • Oct. 10, 2002 • Bloomington, MN • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	88	88	88	48	48

Season Review

The leading scorer and top-line wing for Fargo, Broz is one of the draft's most dangerous American-born forwards. Committed to Minnesota, Broz is a gifted offensive forward with a high-end skill set who ranked among the league leaders in multiple categories. Not only did Broz produce during the regular season, but his 11 points in nine playoff games was second only to Chicago's Matt Coronato. He ranked 12th in regular season scoring with 51 points, of which 18 came on the power play.

Skating and Stickhandling

There's always at least one moment during his shift when Broz combines skating fluidity and sharp puck control either upon entering the opposing zone or while operating inside it. With the puck, the future Golden Gopher displays acute vision and can whip pucks around with authority and without hesitation. It's also not an exaggeration to consider him one of the draft's most dangerous 1-on-1 players for both his skating (balance, speed, and agility) and elite stickhandling. His speed is somewhere between above average and average because he can outskate back pressure after two or three strides but also move deliberately through the zone without much pop to allow checkers to smother him. Broz can stickhandle his way out of any jam, to include double coverage or when fixed into the corner. He is as dangerous from a standstill as he is when shuffling his quick feet.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Broz has a plus-plus shot that he'll use in either wrister or slapper form, especially from his usual position in the right circle. He has shown on several occasions that he can wire one upstairs from a sharp angle. And active component to Fargo's power play, Broz can orchestrate the possession from the half wall while delivering accurate passes without hesitation. Broz also limits exaggeration during puck control and rarely makes life harder on himself or his linemates, but opponents have been victimized for disregarding Broz's flash in one-on-one situations. He makes sound decisions when working the puck around and will connect with seam passes from either his forehand or backhand.

Defense and Physicality

Although he may look and deliver like a one-way forward, Broz made significant improvements this past season in both his two-way game and battle level. He killed penalties, delivered hits on the forecheck, and even got involved in scrums after the whistle. Broz is an enthusiastic winger who plays with intensity and will let opponents know when he's angered whether justified or not. He added some muscle since last season, and it appeared to have given him more confidence to not only throw his weight around but also greet opponents with some nasty woodwork.

Hockey Sense

Broz is an intelligent winger who utilizes his impressive stick skills for team success rather than showboating or making a shift about himself. His hands and eyes move quickly, and he can successfully manage multiple decisions in seconds. The added toughness needs to be monitored and possibly toned down, as Broz is far more effective when send a message with his shot or playmaking.

NHL Projection

Top-six scoring winger and power-play specialist

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Fargo	48	14	21	35	106	0.73	16
2020-21	Fargo	54	19	32	51	111	0.94	54

49



Jakub Brabeneč • Kometa Brno (Extraliga)

Center • 6'1 • 174 pounds • Shoots Left • Sep. 11, 2003 • Jihlava, CZE • Czech Rep.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
-	NR	NR	NR	49	49

Season Review

Brabeneč is a stud center with an athletic build and multi-purpose puck skills. He was selected by Charlottetown in the 2020 CHL Import Draft but spent this entire season in the Czech Republic, where he spent most of his time as the youngest forward to appear in at least 10 games in the elite Extraliga. Although he managed only one assist and 11 shots in his 23 games, Brabeneč was respected as a teammate for his efforts, coachability, and selfless play. He also appeared in eight games in the second-division Chance Liga (0 points, 6 shots), but it was at the under-18 world championship where Brabeneč showcased what he can do against players his own age. He recorded a team-high four assists in five games for an underwhelming Czech squad that finished in seventh place.

Skating and Stickhandling

Brabeneč is an above-average skater with a long, powerful stride and impressive speed for a center of any size. His movements can look both violent and graceful in the same shift, and Brabeneč is a close-quarter threat who can find himself unabated to the goal after a simple juke or stutter step. He's more than confident carrying the puck, not only when motoring through the neutral zone and center ice, but also upon entering the opposing end before kickstarting the possession.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Brabeneč can serve as a central figure on the power play, where he was used as a point man before dropping down into the right circle to either split the seam with accurate passes or hammer a one-timer himself. His shot is both heavy and quickly released, and it can knock a goalie off balance. He's probably better suited as a pass-first center, however, as Brabeneč's vision, hands, and creativity combine to deliver devastating results to the opposition.

Defense and Physicality

Outside of the penalty kill with Brno, Brabeneč was used in nearly all situations at the club and international level. He handled being a 17-year-old on a men's team as well as one should expect, and he was rewarded throughout the season with occasional regular shifts in the third period. He knows how to use his size and strength to lean opponents off the puck and he can be aggressive and physical on the forecheck. Brabeneč spent most of his season in the Extraliga as a center, where he was more successful in defensive-zone faceoffs (46 percent) than anywhere else. He won 46.9 percent (30-for-64) of his draws at the U18 world championship.

Hockey Sense

It's easy to get excited over a 6-foot-2 center with agility and smarts, as Brabeneč delivers impact shifts both on and off the puck and in all three zones. His passing and vision are both excellent, but he also shoulder-checks before retrieving pucks to help increase his options. Although being quick-witted helps Brabeneč handle pressure and create breathing room for himself, he wouldn't be as effective (and fun to watch) if he didn't have the hands, skating, and shot to compliment it. His teammates and staff have leaned on him for critical plays at multiple levels.

NHL Projection

Middle-six two-way center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Brno U20	19	4	12	16	--	0.84	12
2020-21	Brno	23	0	1	1	11	0.04	4
2020-21	Czech U18	5	0	4	4	8	0.80	2

50


Samu Salminen • Jokerit U20 (SM-Sarja)

Center • 6'2 • 186 pounds • Shoots Left • April 9, 2003 • Helsinki, FIN • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	79	79	79	50	50

Season Review

One of the top point producers in Finland's U20 SM-Sarja, Salminen is an opportunistic center who scores in bunches. He manned Jokerit U20's top line and served as an alternate captain. He ranked among the league leaders in multiple categories, including a 1.53 points-per-game average. Used in all situations to include the power play, Salminen was one of only a handful of first-year eligibles in the SM-Sarja who produced at a consistent clip. His time with Jokerit U20 never went beyond the regular season due to the pandemic, but he torched the competition at the under-18 world championship, where he scored a team-high seven goals and added two assists in seven games. He's committed to Denver.

Skating and Stickhandling

Salminen is an average skater for his size and build but he has excellent balance. He moves around in an upright manner and lacks quickness in his first step, but he incorporates gear shifts and rapid inside-out moves once he gets close to the goal. The bulk of Salminen's scoring came during deliberate possessions in the offensive end, with him spearheading the possessions off clean faceoff wins or strong puck protection along the wall. He looks quicker quicker and more elusive in tight areas than he does in open ice.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Salminen is neither a pure playmaker nor a dual threat, but his shot should be respected for several reasons. He releases the puck quickly and doesn't need perfect puck-on-blade condition to blister the puck with authority. Salminen generates significant velocity with wrist-shot attempts, and his ability to go from pass receipt to shot execution without technically shooting "off the pass" is one of the deadlier weapons in his arsenal. His playmaking isn't as creative closer to the goal as it is when entering the zone or working the high slot, but Salminen's keen vision is highlighted by all the look-offs he delivers either across the seam or to the backdoor. He will spend a chunk of a shift establishing a net-front presence and usually acquiesces playmaking duties from the half-wall to one of his wingers.

Defense and Physicality

Salminen is a competent checker, but he doesn't play with a high motor and loses steam earlier into his shifts than expected from a teenager. He does put forth a solid effort in tracking the puck, but he doesn't seem to do so as the prelude to a timely read or in-your-face pressure on an opponent. Rather, Salminen will go to lengthy periods in the defensive zone where poke checks or the occasional shove is the extent of his efforts in changing possession. He does, however, make it point to cover the low slot or other dangers areas, and he's also strong on faceoffs – Salminen won a tournament-best 70.2 percent of his draws (99-for-141) at the U18 world championship.

Hockey Sense

Salminen is both versatile and very intelligent, and he can run a top line and lead power-play unit. He combines strong puck protection and passing with anticipation and communication, as it's common to see Salminen issue instructions to his unit either before or after a faceoff. He has leadership qualities and shows selflessness by not puck hogging or bunching up near the puck, and for going hard to the net when necessary.

NHL Projection

Middle-six goal-scoring center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Jokerit U20	23	7	13	20	--	0.87	10
2020-21	Jokerit U20	17	10	16	26	--	1.53	10
2020-21	Finland U18	7	7	2	9	20	1.29	2

51



Corson Ceulemans • Brooks (AJHL)

Right defense • 6'2 • 198 pounds • Shoots Right • May 5, 2003 • Beaumont, AB • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
20	65	65	51	51	51

Season Review

A playmaking defenseman committed to the University of Wisconsin, Ceulemans is this year's top draft prospect from Canadian Junior "A". Starring for the Brooks Bandits in the Alberta Junior Hockey League, Ceulemans has been a high-profile prospect for several years. He delivered an impressive rookie season of 2019-20 in which he posted 35 points (5 goals, 30 assists) in 44 games and played for Canada-West at the World Junior "A" Challenge and Canada-Black at the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge. Ceulemans was limited to only eight games (4 goals, 7 assists) during a pandemic-shortened 2020-21 campaign, although he did lead all AJHL defenseman with a 1.40 points-per-game average. He later joined Team Canada for their gold-medal run at the 2021 under-18 world championship, where he tied for the most points by a defenseman (1 goal, 7 assists, 9 shots in 6 games)

Skating and Stickhandling

One of the best puck handlers among draft-eligible defensemen, Ceulemans is a one-man breakout who mixes strong skating ability with expert stickhandling. He can beat back pressure in a variety of ways and is confident when navigating through or around traffic. Although his team was a steamroller in a condensed schedule against weak opposition, Ceulemans showed high-level poise with the puck in all three zones and can serve as the central figure in a possession from start to finish. Ceulemans has above-average speed but displays impressive acceleration to the puck once his mind is made up, and he will chip-and-chase and win his foot races to the corners. From there, Ceulemans will engage in puck battles and display sound decisions making with the puck as he sets up the possession. Always active and mobile in the offensive end, Ceulemans is strong on his edges and is difficult to knock off the puck and he curls, weaves, or reverses direction.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Ceulemans is a triple-threat on the puck because he is dangerous whether he shoots it, passes it, or keeps it. He is a high-volume shooter who does not hesitate unless he senses an opportunity to improve his angle. Ceulemans is the quintessential power-play quarterback, one who can single-handedly transition from the breakout to the offensive-zone set in under 10 seconds. This will be far less frequent as the quality of opposition increases, however, as Brooks had an easy schedule without facing equal or worthy adversaries. Nonetheless, Ceulemans owns a plus shot that consistently targets the corners and long sides, albeit with mixed results in accuracy. Most of his goals were scored from between the medium and high-danger areas, and goalies during odd-man rushes need to mark him as the intended target for a drop or hook pass as he's cruising into the high slot.

Defense and Physicality

Ceulemans is a pure offensive defenseman who spends his shifts either attacking, hovering inside the slot, or fishing for pucks in the opposing corner. His penchant for either rushing the puck or jumping into the attack has a significant downside, as he is trapped behind the play several times a game and can be guilty of presenting the enemy with a juicy opportunity for a breakaway or 2-on-1. He does, however, take strong interdiction routes, and his sturdy frame and long reach are effective at neutralizing a puck carrier before he gets to the danger areas. Although he holds his line firmly, Ceulemans' zone-entry defense is more matador-like, as he lunges for the opponent while puck gazing rather than brace for contact or step up with a solid hit. In fact, one can argue that Ceulemans is far more physical in puck battles deep in the offensive zone than he is at protecting his net front or at his line. On occasion, Ceulemans will deliver a crunching check, so his physicality can be considered above average for an offensive defenseman. He killed penalties but is more successful with his reads and hard shoves than stick activity or shot blocking.

Hockey Sense

Ceulemans can be a maddening prospect to assess because he always thinks one step ahead of everybody on the offensive side of the puck but sometimes two steps behind when it comes to protecting his own end. Although his vision is keen and he can make nifty no-look feeds in addition to sensing the whereabouts of his closest teammates beyond his periphery, Ceulemans is a major risk taker whose decisions vary from brilliant to negligent. He played a more controlled, team-centric game for Canada on the middle pairing at the under-18 world championship.

NHL Projection

Top-four offensive defenseman and power-play quarterback

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Brooks	44	5	30	35	--	0.80	80
2020-21	Brooks	8	4	7	11	--	1.40	8

52



Wyatt Johnston • Windsor (OHL)

Center • 6'1 • 178 pounds • Shoots Right • May 14, 2003 • Toronto, ON • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	99	99	99	52	52

Season Review

An aggressive center who plays a smart two-way game, Johnston opted to sit out the entire 2020-21 season after the OHL announced its shutdown. His only action in meaningful games was with Team Canada at the 2021 under-18 world championship in late April, appearing in seven games (2 goals, 2 assists, 11 shots) in helping his squad win the gold medal. Johnston was a high OHL draft pick (sixth overall in 2019) who was expected to be a prominent figure for Windsor before the shutdown. He appeared in 53 games for the Spitfires in 2019-20, notching 30 points (12 goals, 18 assists) and 87 shots in 53 games, and skated for Canada-Red in five matches at the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge (2 goals, 3 assists).

Skating and Stickhandling

Johnston is a quick, high-motor player whose skating style is almost textbook. He boasts a long, powerful stride and consistently keeps his feet moving as he hounds the puck in the neutral and defensive zones. Although he can hang with the fastest players on the ice, Johnston is far quicker off the puck than he is controlling it. He also doesn't tire out after going full throttle in the beginning of shifts and can be counted on to give maximum effort from start to finish. Johnston is a north-south skater with average straight-line speed, but he makes up for it with his acceleration and motor that can catch opposing defenders by surprise. He wins most of his foot races and is strong on the boards, but Johnston usually acquiesces puck control duties once possession in the opposing end is established.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Although Johnston's 2021 season was limited to only a handful of international games as a depth player on a loaded team, he has shown enough at previous levels to consider him a potential scoring leader for Windsor when OHL play resumes. Most his points are generated off hard work and smart positioning than pure skill or finesse, but Johnston has had success using his hard wrister from both the slot and circles. His passes are generally safe and basic, but he has soft hands and can feather, saucer, or bank passes on either his forehand or backhand with pinpoint accuracy. It will be interesting to see if his offensive game takes flight now that he's two years older since his last OHL season.

Defense and Physicality

Johnston is an excellent defensive forward who blends aggressiveness and physicality with quickness and tenacity. He is an energy forward, and his in-your-face style was evident during both league and international play. Johnston is a strong penalty killer who won 49.8 percent of his draws (123-for-247) in the OHL two seasons ago and 54 percent (61-for-113) at the U18 worlds. He is a quick and two-way center who uses speed and hustle on the forecheck to neutralize opposing breakouts. Although Windsor was far too deep to consistently summon him for critical draws or late/close scenarios, Johnston was Team Canada's most consistent problem solver when critical stops were required.

Hockey Sense

Thinking and playing simultaneously appears to come naturally for Johnston, who will smother opposing puck carriers the second they initiate their attack but do so in a disciplined manner. He is a sound decision maker once he gathers the puck but usually keeps things simple by chipping pucks deep and bringing his speed and high battle level to bear. He hasn't shown much flair or creativity beyond his plus wrister and release at the OHL or international levels, which may be a harbinger of his point-producing potential as an NHL center.

NHL Projection

Middle-six two-way center and penalty killer

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Windsor	53	12	18	30	87	0.57	8
2020-21	Canada U18	7	2	2	4	11	0.57	4

53



Tyler Boucher • U.S. U18 (NTDP)

Right wing • 6'1 • 205 pounds • Shoots Right • Jan. 16, 2003 • Haddonfield, NJ • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	44	44	44	53	53

Season Review

A hard-nosed winger who delivers crunching hits, Boucher's draft year was limited to only a handful of games because of injury. Had he played a full season, Boucher likely would have slotted as one of the NTDP's top-six wingers and power-play options, thereby helping him produce impressive numbers in both goals, assists, and shots. Limited to only 12 games in 2020-21, Boucher still registered 11 points (6 goals, 5 assists, 20 shots), and his 0.94 points-per-game average was sixth among NTDP'ers who appeared in 10 games or more. His production, however, was mostly against inferior NAHL and NCAA Division-II opposition, as Boucher was held to one goal and two assists in his six USHL matches. A Haddonfield, N.J. native who played prep hockey in Connecticut at Avon Old Farms, Boucher is expected to play for the Boston University Terriers in 2020-21.

Skating and Stickhandling

Boucher is a rarity because he is one of the better stickhandlers and skaters among draft-eligible power forwards. He certainly doesn't lack in the confidence department and having above-average speed and outstanding balance makes him tougher to defend once he drops that shoulder and takes a direct route to the net. Boucher occupies the dirty areas while staying within himself, but he is more than capable of driving possession with impressive stickhandling and pass deliveries. He plays a north-south game in open ice but is quite shifty and elusive during tight-quarter play in the offensive zone. Boucher can dictate possessions with his puck control and proved to be a tough out for defenders of all sizes.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Boucher is a shoot-first winger with soft hands who boasts a deadly wrist shot. Although capable of cycling the puck for extended periods, Boucher spends most of his time dominating the low slot and net front before releasing into soft space for a clean look at the net. He is a viable option to play the bumper, net-front, and half-wall positions on the power play. His creativity with the puck is better than most bigger wingers, albeit revealed in spurts. There is reason to believe that Boucher, if given the opportunity, can drive his own line and be an effective setup man without necessarily taking his foot of the gas with physicality.

Defense and Physicality

Boucher has all the makings of an effective two-way winger at the NHL level. He can be aggressive and physical on the forecheck but also limit his puck hounding in favor of singular decisive moments to pounce on opponents and make them regret collecting the puck. He is one of the hardest hitters available in this draft and will finish his checks with authority in open ice and along the boards. Boucher's strong upper body allows him to shove players off the puck with ease.

Hockey Sense

Boucher is a team-first forward who is willing to pay the price on or off the puck. Playing disciplined hockey, however, is something Boucher needs to work on, as his physical and rambunctious style lands him in hot water with the officials. On the puck is a different story, as Boucher limits overhandling and times his chips with precision. He isn't the flashiest player and expectations for high-volume shooting or scoring should be tempered, but don't be surprised if Boucher is one of Hockey East's better freshman forwards next season.

NHL Projection

Middle-six power winger

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U17 NTDP	43	9	17	26	45	0.61	98
2020-21	U18 NTDP	12	6	5	11	20	0.94	22

54



Topias Vilen • Pelicans (SM-Liiga)

Left defense • 6'1 • 194 pounds • Shoots Left • April 1, 2003 • Lahti, FIN • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	87	87	87	54	54

Season Review

A poised and clean defender with good skating mechanics who spent the entire season in the SM-Liiga, Vilen is a reliable blueliner who has played well at both the club and international levels. He appeared in 35 games this season for a competitive Pelicans squad which was one of the better offenses in the SM-Liiga. Limited to a support role, Vilen proved to be an effective stopper who saw his ice time increase in the second half as the games became more meaningful – there was a stretch of games in February when Vilen was averaging nearly 18 minutes a game (including a 23-minute effort against Jukurit on Feb. 23 in which he notched a goal and an assist) despite being one of the youngest defensemen in the league. Vilen did not participate in the SM-Liiga playoffs as he was summoned by Finland for the under-18 world championships, where he was on the top pairing with Aleksi Heimosalmi and delivered four assists in seven games. The most important detail of Vilen's tournament was that he was on the ice for only one power-play goal of the 16 total tallies Finland surrendered in their three medal-round games.

Skating and Stickhandling

A smooth skater in all directions, Vilen has a long, quick stride and above-average speed for his size. He can take the puck for a skate and enter the zone on his own but does so to relieve pressure rather than attempt to create a lengthy possession. Strong on his skates and powerful in his lateral and backwards movements, Vilen is quick to the puck and can absorb contact without losing control. Vilen is a capable puck handler who keeps his cool under pressure and will utilize multiple directional changes in one sequence to convince forecheck pressure to retrograde. Vilen's strengths are his awareness and breakout pass, which is critical in his team's ability to quickly transition to offense.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Although his point-producing ceiling appears to be limited, and he keeps his shot attempts to a minimum, Vilen has scored with the slapper and wrister at both the U20 and SM-Liiga levels. He owns a heavy slapper that is kept low and on net, but he will also use deception and lateral quickness to maneuver along the blue line to open a shooting lane. Vilen is one of the better first-passers among draft-eligible defensemen. He plays with his head up and consistently shoulder checks upon retrievals, thereby allowing him to fire accurate long-distance strikes beyond his own end but in a decisive and timely manner.

Defense and Physicality

Vilen blankets the grey zone with confidence and effective stick-on-puck technique. He is one of the better positional defenders from the European class and his path to the NHL should be shortened because of his size and maturity. He is fairly poised under pressure but can be near perfect when given time and space while keeping unforced errors to an absolute minimum. Vilen can play either the left or right side and stays within himself when his partner activates. He seems to grasp the importance of spacing and doesn't seem to gun for the bench at the end of long shifts. He was a penalty-killing fixture at the U20 and international levels but also saw occasion time against adult competition. Vilen is neither a masher nor an intimidating presence, but he has a mature build and strong upper body that combine to make him effective at pinning and holding or eliminating a puck carrier high near his line.

Hockey Sense

Vilen is an intelligent rearguard who was entrusted with significant responsibility as a teenager for a contending adult team. He handled the pressure of elite league play as good as one should expect from a mid-level prospect and it's reasonable to assume that Vilen would have been one of the best defensive defensemen had he played against peers in the under-20 SM-Sarja. He epitomizes the "safety first" mindset but not in the sense that he is incapable of creating something on his own. It will be up to the staffs at higher levels to either coax or force Vilen into creative tendencies but that also increases the risk of reducing Vilen's effectiveness as a stay-at-home type.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing shutdown defender

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Pelicans U20	40	4	7	11	--	0.28	16
2020-21	Pelicans	35	3	5	8	35	0.23	6
2020-21	Finland U18	7	0	4	4	11	0.57	4

55



Oliver Moberg • AIK J20 (Nationell)

Left wing • 6'3 • 190 pounds • Shoots Left • Feb. 23, 2003 • Stockholm, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	66	66	66	55	55

Season Review

After recording 20 points (8 goals, 12 assists) in 28 games for AIK J20 in 2019-20, Moberg was yet again considered one of their go-to forwards. Unfortunately, he found himself muddling with a struggling AIK J20 squad in Sweden but closed his 2020-21 season on a high note with an impressive showing at the under-18 world championship. In league play, Moberg tallied two goals and added five assists in 10 games this season for AIK J20 and earned a brief Allsvenskan promotion for the second straight season (0 points in 3 combined games). Moberg was an effective player for Sweden's under-17 squad and under-18 squads at the 2019 World U17 Hockey Challenge and 2021 U18 world championship, respectively, combining for three goals and seven assists in 11 games.

Skating and Stickhandling

A deceptive skater with quickness that has caught defenders by surprise at both the J20 and international levels, Moberg moves quite well for a 6-foot-3 forward and shows agility and rapid directional changes when pressured. He won't win many foot races outright, but Moberg's anticipation, energy, and long reach keep him involved in the play. His wide frame, strong balance, and shifty feet make him one of the more reliable puck possessors along the boards, and Moberg can take a beating without skipping a beat.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Moberg is a pass-first wing who is capable of luring checkers towards him before exploiting gaps created. He may not use it enough, but Moberg owns a nasty wrister that opponents must respect, and he'll take the puck strong to the net from either wing before snapping an accurate shot that forces the goalie into a tough save. He's not a selfish player and will pass up open looks in favor of handing off to a linemate and setting up in front of the net. Moberg's hands are soft, and he puts the right touch on his deliveries. Examples of creativity and finesse are prevalent on the power play but not as much at even strength.

Defense and Physicality

Moberg is a sound two-way forward who kills penalties and provides his coaches with flexibility regarding his roles and usage. He acts like a center by consistently covering the slot while shoulder-checking for imminent threats. He offers a strong compete level off the puck but also plays composed and structured without randomly chasing opponents. On defensive-zone faceoffs, Moberg smartly battles through his screen to pressure the defenseman while simultaneously keeping his stick in the cross-point passing lane. He constantly interferes with opposing plans during the cycle by using his long reach, quick feet, and strong arms to harass puck carriers into turnovers. Moberg is not as physical as he should be, however, and there are times when he opts for stick checks when a solid hit would have been more effective.

Hockey Sense

Moberg is a versatile winger who was used at center in international play but spent most of his time as a wing in the J20 Nationell. He can wear many hats in all three zones. He can be a horse on the boards in the offensive zone, a net-front presence on the power play, and blanket the neutral zone with proper assumptions and success in read-and-react situations. One of the telling signs of Moberg's intelligence is how he consistently issues orders and direction to those in his five-man unit. He has leadership qualities in addition to setting the right example with his clean, poised play.

NHL Projection

Middle-six two-way forward

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	AIK J20	28	8	12	20	39	0.71	0
2020-21	AIK J20	10	2	5	7	9	0.70	8
2020-21	Sweden U18	7	2	2	4	10	0.57	0

56



Sean Behrens • U.S. U18 (NTDP)

Left defense • 5'10 • 177 pounds • Shoots Left • March 31, 2003 • Barrington, IL • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	40	40	40	56	56

Season Review

A Chicago-area native who was a critical piece to the NTDP's attack, Behrens is one of the more physical "skilled" defensemen available in this draft. Committed to Denver University, Behrens manned the U18's middle pairing with righty Roman Schmidt, but the duo played and was used like a top unit. He was second among NTDP defensemen with 35 points (7 goals, 28 assists), six power-play goals, and a 0.76 points-per-game average, and he finished tied for fourth in defense scoring at the under-18 world championship (1 goal, 3 assists, 4 shots in 5 games).

Skating and Stickhandling

Behrens is a playmaking two-way defender with elite escapability who breaks out on his own. He doesn't have a long stride and his overall quickness leans more towards above average than elite or game-breaking, but Behrens can successfully navigate his way up the ice at any speed and in any direction. Even at top speed, Behrens exudes confidence, control, and decisiveness, and he can glide with authority in any direction. Always a threat to go end to end, Behrens can control the puck as if it was on a string, and he can change direction and speed multiple times in one sequence. He has a strong lower body and leg drive that helps him absorb hits from bigger opponents.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Behrens is a flashy yet calculated playmaker with near-elite puck skills. Although he wasn't the NTDP U18's nominal power-play quarterback when Luke Hughes was healthy, Behrens proved to be beyond capable at attacking with speed, tapping into the strengths of his forwards, and causing fits to opposing checkers. His first pass can be a dart that splits zone coverage in half and traps opponents deep in the wrong end of the ice, but they also must be cognizant of Behrens' ability to use bank passes and high flips as well. He is the perfect option for the power play and the seam is always a viable option regardless of the level of congestion. Behrens doesn't shoot nearly as much as you'd want (under a shot per game for his NTDP career).

Defense and Physicality

Behrens at 5-foot-9 plays an attack-first style but he is far more physical and diligent in his defensive responsibilities as one would expect. He has a high panic threshold and will delay or sharply reverse direction to buy time and send forecheckers into retreat mode. It becomes evident early into your standard Behrens shift that he takes defense seriously and doesn't let the limitation in size prevent him from sending a loud and clear message to any opponent who tries to intimidate or overpower him. He plays tight at his line and gaps up quickly, and he doesn't let his size dictate who he should and shouldn't get physical with— he's an equal-opportunity hitter. Being a puck rusher has its drawbacks, however, and Behrens occasionally relied on partner Roman Schmidt (and the NTDP forwards in his unit) to cover up for his risky behavior. He was used extensively on the penalty kill and reads and reacts appropriately.

Hockey Sense

Behrens is an intelligent defenseman whose intent and execution usually go hand in hand. For example, if he wants to drill a puck carrier into the boards, it's usually to separate him from the puck and help change possession rather than send a message or win a personal battle. Behrens is a risk taker but he's far from careless or negligent, and the fact that he's always been entrusted with penalty killing and late/close duties speaks more about his effectiveness as a defender and renders his size as a nonissue.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing, power-play specialist

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U17 NTDP	45	6	31	37	35	0.82	24
2020-21	U18 NTDP	46	7	28	35	52	0.76	18

57



Ryder Korczak • Moose Jaw (WHL)

Center • 5'11 • 174 pounds • Shoots Right • Sep. 23, 2002 • Yorkton, SK • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	38	38	31	57	57

Season Review

The WHL's leading scorer among 2021 first-year eligibles during the 2019-20 season, Korczak is one of the better three-zone pivots available and provides the intangibles necessary to impact shifts when he isn't generating points. Two seasons ago, his 67 points (18 goals, 49 assists in 62 games) topped the Warriors' next-best scorer by 24, which partly explains why the team struggled in the standings. Korczak, who was the 29th overall pick in the 2017 WHL bantam draft, received more offensive support this season as Moose Jaw was able to ice a formidable top-six, but the results in the standings didn't change, as the Warriors owned one of the worst records in the league. The younger brother of Vegas Golden Knights' prospect Kaden Korczak, Ryder finished with 16 points (3 goals, 13 assists) in 17 games.

Skating and Stickhandling

Korczak is an average skater who usually plays an east-west game at a deliberate speed. Moving with caution had its advantages, however, as Korczak can drop a wicked gear shift inside or out. Although most his zone-entry attempts seem calculated with the intent to allow puck support to join him, Korczak can make impressive one-on-moves to explode into a better shooting angle or beat the defender in a straight-line race to the inside post. He may not be listed as a tougher forward, but the crafty and elusive Korczak can take a beating and still maintain possession of the puck.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Korczak isn't a pure pass-first setup man, but he has more success denting the scoresheet with assists than goals. He is the prototypical power-play specialist who uses his hands, vision, and stickhandling to keep defenders nervous as he operates from the half-wall. Although Korczak's shot generation increased from 2.45 shots per game in 2019-20 to 2.91 last season, he scored only three goals, and one came on the power play. Still, his shot needs to be respected, as most of his goals the last two seasons have come via the wrister or one-timer. Korczak is consistent in his pass accuracy and is confident to feed pucks into the traffic if his linemate has his blade ready to receive the delivery.

Defense and Physicality

For all the scoring he did a season ago, Korczak in the shortened campaign of 2020-21 appeared to play a more effective game off the puck and in his own end. Critical to this fact was how thin and underwhelming the Rebels were, as they ranked near the bottom in goals allowed (3.96 per game). Although he isn't an intimidating or overly physical presence on the ice, Korczak competes hard and finishes his checks when necessary. He plays with an active stick that stay in the passing lane, even when on the backcheck, and he consistently supports his defensemen below the faceoff circles. Korczak plays with grit and will sacrifice individual opportunities for team success. He's also one of the better faceoff men among draft eligibles, winning 57.3 percent of his draws last season and 52.0 over his three-year WHL career.

Hockey Sense

Korczak's poise, vision, discipline, and two-way play should imply that he's a smart player, which he most certainly is. He was used in every situation regardless of score, time on the clock, or strength on the ice. Another impressive feat is that he plays with a lot of energy over 20 minutes a game yet has been whistled for only 20 penalty minutes over his last 79 games. He's a cerebral and coachable center who can put out fires for his staff while making those around him better players.

NHL Projection

Middle-six two-way center; power-play and faceoff specialist

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Moose Jaw	62	18	49	67	152	1.08	16
2020-21	Moose Jaw	17	3	13	16	50	0.94	4

58



Daniil Chayka • CSKA (KHL)

Left defense • 6'3 • 187 pounds • Shoots Left • Oct. 22, 2002 • Moscow, RUS • Russia

The Draft Analyst Rankings

Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	34	34	34	58	58

Season Review

A well-travelled blueliner who has played in four different leagues in the last 16 months, Chayka is one of the more intriguing defense prospects available in that he has been highly regarded for several years. The rare Russia-born prospect who was drafted into the OHL via the Priority Selection (7th overall in 2018) rather than the CHL Import Draft, Chayka is a native Muscovite who started playing in Canada since he was 15, including two full seasons as a regular for the contending Guelph Storm. After he appeared in 112 games for Guelph and helped them win the OHL crown in 2018-19, Chayka went back to Russia for the 2020-21 season, appearing in 11 games (1 goal, 1 assist, 9 shots in 10:37 of ice time) for CSKA in the KHL. He also played for Zvezda Moscow in the adult-age VHL, where played in 10 regular season games (1 assist, 8 shots, 8:23 TOI) but was used more in three playoff games (0 points, 9 shots, 23:15 TOI). After effective postseason play in Zvezda Moscow's opening-round loss to Metallurg, Chayka was summoned to the MHL to join Krasnaya Armiya for their tough second-round series with No. 1 Dynamo MSK. Chayka was one of the best players on the ice for either team during losses in the first two games, prompting a call-up to the KHL for CSKA's critical Game 5 against rival Lokomotiv. Although Chayka did not appear in the match, the fact that he was summoned as a contingency for such an important game speaks volumes of his reputation. Chayka has been a frequent addition to Russia's junior teams at international events, including winning gold at the 2019 under-18 Ivan Hlinka and the 2021 under-20 world junior hockey championship. The latter wasn't Chayka's best performance of his career, as he was used infrequently, struggled with puck management, and was a healthy scratch.

Skating and Stickhandling

An upright skater with above-average mobility for his size, Chayka has the quickness and footwork required to be an effective defender at higher levels. He can breakout on his own at varying speeds but shows poise under pressure and will make several directional changes or split-second delays to allow forecheckers to retreat in the opposite direction. Chayka has excellent agility and lateral quickness for his size, and his feet work in concert with his hands as he pump-fakes or walks the line to get into a better shooting position. Chayka is a confident puck carrier and will make inside or outside moves as he accelerates towards neutral-zone traffic. He's shown to enter the zone on his own, but having the wherewithal to delay and make the smart play

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

A frequent power-play option, Chayka owns a howitzer that was incorporated into set-plays at every level. He may not look like your classic power-play quarterback, but Chayka has buttery-soft hands and can receive and dish the puck on a pro level. He uses slap fakes, behind-the-back feeds, and accurate touch passes in one motion which weren't consistently on display at the adult levels but far more prevalent when he suited up for Guelph or Team Russia on the international stage. Chayka's shot generation has varied from league to league, as he averaged 2.03 shots per game with Guelph in 2019-20 but 2.8 shots per game with Krasnaya Armiya during the MHL playoffs.

Defense and Physicality

Chayka is the epitome of a raw defense prospect; one whose upside is sky high but battled with consistency on a nightly basis. Never satisfied with gluing himself to the low slot, Chayka loves to chase after the puck and use his massive reach to break up plays as high as the point positions, albeit with far less frequency at the KHL or VHL levels against adults. He is used extensively on the penalty kill, but success comes and goes as he lets his man slip behind him and gets fixated on the puck being moved from point to point rather than occasionally shoulder check for backdoor threats or make the opposing net-front presence pay for his real estate. The advantages to Chayka's hunger for the puck are that he is quick, extremely decisive, and knows his reach and stick checking can be a decisive factor. It can be argued that Chayka's minute-eating play in the VHL and MHL playoffs was the best of his young career, as he proved to be a difference maker in the defensive zone and was smothering in his gap coverage. Playing over 23 minutes a night in the VHL and close to the same in the MHL, Chayka was summoned for critical assignment after critical assignment, and he was a big reason why Dynamo MSK's vaunted four-line attack was quieter with him on the ice than off it.

Hockey Sense

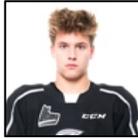
Chayka doesn't lack in the confidence department, which can cause irregularities in puck management. His ability to reinvent himself in the three Russian leagues as an efficient puck mover and shutdown defender likely played a significant role in Central Scouting bullishly ranking him as Europe's fifth-best prospect for this draft, but it also showed the maturity in his game. He stayed within himself more often than in his OHL days, and egregious errors in decision making were reserved mostly for international play. Chayka also avoids unnecessary penalties.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing shutdown defender and power-play option

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Guelph	56	11	23	34	114	0.61	18
2020-21	CSKA	11	1	1	2	9	0.18	0
2020-21	Zvezda Moscow	10	0	1	1	8	0.10	0

59



Zach Dean • Gatineau (QMJHL)

Center/Wing • 6'0 • 176 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 4, 2003 • Grand Prairie, AB • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	94	94	94	59	59

Season Review

Dean was injured to start the season then missed more time when the league hit a pause. Selected fourth overall in the 2019 QMJHL draft, the Grand Prairie, Alberta native has all the tools to be a top NHL prospect and appeared to be trending towards becoming a high-round NHL pick after consecutive seasons of productive play for a mediocre Gatineau squad. His numbers in 2020-21 (20 points in 23 games) were rather pedestrian for someone expected to be one of the league's top players, especially after he notched 46 points (18 goals, 28 assists) in 57 games as a QMJHL rookie in 2019-20. He was one of five Olympiques to record at least 20 points and was fifth in scoring but was second in shots tied for third in goals.

Skating and Stickhandling

Slippery, quick, and skilled are just three of the many traits inherent in Dean's overall game, and he can be a reliable option to not only enter the zone but drive the possession moving forward. He was a key contributor for a young yet talented Olympiques squad, and Dean showed his versatility by playing all three forward positions. There's a lot to like about this player, specifically his ability to win puck battles in one end, skate the puck the length of the ice, and use impressive escapability and stickhandling to keep the puck in the opposing end for extended periods. Dean has fantastic puck skills and skating. His effortless stride enables him to speed by opponents through the neutral zone while his edgework and agility allow him to maneuver in tight areas to gain space. Although his season was marred with periods of inconsistency, Dean has the potential to become one of the QMJHL's top scorers in each of the next two seasons.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Dean is solid on the power play where he plays from the half wall or down low. He has fantastic vision, finding open teammates with precision passing. He also is dangerous in tight areas and wins a high number of puck battles along the wall. Dean does most of his damage below the goal line from overpowering opponents to finding open teammates in scoring position off bang-bang plays. Although his production plateaued in his sophomore season, Dean increased his shot generation from 1.79 in 2019-20 to 3.04 in the shortened 2020-21 campaign but was limited to only five goals and six assists at even strength in 23 games.

Defense and Physicality

Dean is a tough competitor who plays with an edge, which is impressive considering he is a smaller player capable of creating and finishing. A left-handed pivot who can play center or wing, Dean is reliable in all three zones. He is constantly around the puck, hounding opponents on the forecheck, and Dean's nastiness sets him apart from most draft-eligibles from the QMJHL. He does not shy away from contact and will play on the edge, delivering a suspect hit or chop with the stick. Dean's combination of power and finesse should remain hallmarks of his game as his continues to add muscle and is given bigger roles with more responsibility. He was used on the penalty kill but mostly as a winger, as his faceoff percentage was only 45.4 percent in 2019-20 and 30.3 percent last season.

Hockey Sense

Dean is one of the more cerebral forwards available in this draft. Although he goes through periods of ineffectiveness in the offensive end, Dean can still contribute with smart positional play and inspired efforts on the forecheck or in the neutral zone. Getting the puck past him can be laborious for opponents looking for an easy breakout, and Dean's anticipation and step-ups provide his coach with critical yet undervalued moments that don't appear in the box score.

NHL Projection

Middle-six energy forward

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Gatineau	57	18	28	46	102	0.81	22
2020-21	Gatineau	23	10	10	20	70	0.87	20

60



Justin Robidas • Val-D'Or (QMJHL)

Center • 5'8 • 173 pounds • Shoots Right • March 13, 2003 • Plano, TX • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	58	58	58	60	60

Season Review

A tough and aggressive two-way pivot, Justin is the talented and creative son of former Stars' defenseman Stephane Robidas. Selected second overall in the 2019 QMJHL draft, Robidas as a draft prospect has delivered in the production and shot-generation departments in each of his last two seasons while serving in either prominent or support roles on one of the QMJHL's better teams. Not only did Robidas lead the deep Foreurs in goals (19) and "dangerous" shots (71), but he recorded 28 of his 36 points at even strength or short-handed. He was critical in helping Val-d'Or advance to the QMJHL final, posting 10 points (3 goals, 7 assists) in 14 games, although most of his postseason production came in the early rounds against lesser competition.

Skating and Stickhandling

Robidas skates extremely well, and he is quick and fast but understands when and how to use those mobility assets. Rather than constantly move at a feverish pace in a north-south direction, Robidas can change his pace to control the play and allow teammates to find open spaces. His ability to attack either with speed or patience when combined with his elite vision and awareness creates matchup problems for opponents.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Robidas is a smart playmaker with great hands, but he possesses a lethal release on his heavy, accurate wrist shot. His shooting percentage increased from 13.2 percent in 2019-20 to 16.2 percent and he was used a team-best five times in the shootout (2-for-5). Used in all situations and on both special teams, Robidas usually works the side wall on the power play, where he uses his high IQ and patience to create chances for his teammates regardless of where they are stationed. Robidas uses poise, deception, and puck savvy to set up his own shot. Stylistically, Robidas plays more like Mats Zuccarello, albeit from the center-ice position.

Defense and Physicality

He may be listed at only 5-foot-7, but Robidas is a durable and competitive center who is an effective penalty killer with a quick stick. He's also incredibly versatile provides all the intangibles for easy coachability. His ability to perform at a high level in multiple areas both on and off the puck is what helps offset his lack of size. Off the puck, Robidas is both sound and smart; rarely is he caught on the wrong side of the puck or allow an opponent to slip behind him into a dangerous area and remain unchecked. He battles and competes hard, but Robidas also shows a willingness to get his nose dirty. He led all QMJHL rookies with four short-handed goals in 2019-20, and this season improved his faceoffs success rate from 43.2 percent two seasons ago to 56.0 percent in 2020-21.

Hockey Sense

The right-handed pivot has a mature presence about his game. He carries himself with confidence but not in a cocky manner, and he plays as if he knows he belongs. The fact that the veteran laden Foreurs relied on Robidas in big spots in addition to naming him assistant captain is a testament to the intangibles he brings beyond the skating and scoring.

NHL Projection

Middle-six, two-way energy center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Val-d'Or	57	21	22	43	159	0.75	8
2020-21	Val-d'Or	35	19	17	36	117	1.03	4

61



Roman Schmidt • U.S. U18 (NTDP)

Right defense • 6'5 • 210 pounds • Shoots Right • Feb. 27, 2003 • Midland, MI • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	82	82	82	61	61

Season Review

The biggest defenseman size-wise on this year's under-18 NTDP, Schmidt is a Michigan native who served mostly on the middle pairing alongside undersized puck mover Sean Behrens. His role and usage increased as the duo were bumped into a top-pairing role following Luke Hughes' season-ending injury, and Schmidt found himself face to face with opposing top lines at the 2021 under-18 world championship. Originally committed to Boston University but now property of the OHL's Kitchener Rangers (36th overall in 2019 OHL Priority Selection) for the upcoming 2021-22 campaign, Schmidt ranked near the bottom of NTDP scoring in both his under-17 and under-18 seasons, but his production in both seasons was nearly identical in both points and shots.

Skating and Stickhandling

Schmidt's footwork for a teenage defenseman listed at 6-foot-5 is as close to elite as you can get, but that doesn't mean he's average or above average in all areas of skating. He is quick to the puck and covers ground with impressive closing speed, especially when closing the gap on puck carriers high near his line, but the mechanics of his skating make Schmidt in open ice appear clunkier than graceful. Still, he's incredibly well balanced and strong on his edges, and there were times when Schmidt would take the puck strong to the net after making a nifty move or two to avoid pressure. He's capable of handling the puck in the face of pressure and his poise is evident multiple times in one sequence, but Schmidt seemed programmed to allow Behrens to handle most of the puck-carrying duties.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Schmidt didn't provide much on offense this year in terms of shot generation and point production, but his ability to blanket the grey and neutral zones were critical in allowing the NTDP's aggressive forwards or his playmaking partner the freedom to own the puck and dictate pace and tempo. On occasion, Schmidt will join the rush and even take it deep himself, but those moments were more opportunistic than created on his own under difficult neutral-zone conditions. Hit shot is heavy and passes are crisp, but neither are delivered with consistent accuracy. The best asset Schmidt possesses are his soft hands, as he rarely fumbles the tough passes and has a quick skate-to-stick transition. His use on the power play was more coincidental on the second unit than as a mainstay with the first group, but Schmidt's skill set is not devoid of finesse. He also was used as a shootout option. But creativity is an area that Schmidt could work on, especially after activating off a draw or being presented with multiple targets to pass to.

Defense and Physicality

Schmidt is a physical, in-your-face presence who can deliver crunching hits. His massive reach plays a prominent role in breaking up one-on-one attempts or seam passes while on the penalty kill, and he can be next to impossible to dance around inside or out. His slot coverage is consistently strong, as both he and Behrens seemed to work in concert when releasing and returning. Schmidt also has a mean streak and will not back down from any challenge. He delivers hard cross checks and makes his presence felt in the net-front area.

Hockey Sense

Schmidt is one of the few big-bodied defensemen in this draft class who clearly understands his role but has a high completion percentage of good pinches versus bad pinches. His ability to compliment Behrens' attack-first mentality with reliability and act as the safety net in a prevent-defense role provided his coaching staff with peace of mind. He processes situations quickly, especially when dealing with layered forecheck pressure. There are occasional moments when Schmidt gets overzealous with the puck and tries to go beyond his limitations, but those instances usually occur at random times rather than critical late/close moments.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing shutdown defender

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U17 NTDP	48	7	10	17	50	0.29	22
2020-21	U18 NTDP	45	3	11	14	43	0.31	49

62



Matthew Knies • Tri-City (USHL)

Left wing • 6'3 • 210 pounds • Shoots Left • Oct. 17, 2002 • Phoenix, AZ • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
22	41	41	41	62	62

Season Review

A flashy University of Minnesota recruit who was a top liner for the USHL's Tri-City Storm and has played in international tournaments, Knies has the potential to become one of the better point-producing wingers to come out of this draft. He was one of the Storm's top point-getters in each of his two USHL seasons, although his totals in his draft year as an 18-year-old were nearly identical to what he did when he was 17 in 2019-20. A native of the Phoenix area, Knies played for Team USA at the 2019 under-20 World Junior "A" Challenge (3 assists in 6 games) and was invited to try out for the 2021 under-20 world junior team.

Skating and Stickhandling

Knies is one of the more agile and elusive bigger wingers available. He's shown varying levels of his straight-line quickness, which can look impressive one game and below average the next. But he cuts back on a dime and keeps his legs churning as he deals with harassing back pressure, all while alternating from backhand to forehand with his head up. Knies can be a flashy stickhandler who uses jukes and head fakes before leaving an opponent with broken ankles, and his soft hands allow him to corral passes of any speed and settle the puck flat in an instant.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Knies is a dual threat on the puck who can wow you with impressive one-on-one skills. Not only can he blister the shot off the pass, but Knies has a bag of tricks that he dips into several times a game when attempting moves from in close. He also is an excellent passer who puts the perfect touch on his deliveries, and he isn't intimidated or discouraged by the density of traffic in the neutral zone or inside the opposing end. He's usually positioned at the half wall on the power play but can be just as effective at jamming the net and setting up screens.

Knies is an effective player during cycle and board play, and he uses his wide, sturdy frame and long reach to play keep-away while cutting back or reversing direction for extended periods. He's an unselfish player who worked well with his linemates and he also incorporates the defense into his playmaking. Another noticeable facet of his game is the decisions he makes with the puck in the neutral zone; specifically, the subtle plays he makes to trap opponents high and allow his unit to enter the zone with speed and numbers.

Defense and Physicality

Knies is a bit of floater who seems to pick and choose when he decides to give a complete off-the-puck effort, and that includes when he's used on the penalty kill. Although he's a short-handed threat (3 goals, 1 assist while down a man) and Tri-City led the USHL with an 88.3 percent kill rate, Knies isn't as structured when positioned within the four-man box and his stick work is far more active when he decides to pressure the point than when he's obstructing passing lanes from the static position. Still, it's hard to nitpick Knies in the defensive zone when his staff relies on him in big moments, and he shows chemistry with his linemates.

Hockey Sense

Knies is a wild card in this draft because he needs to work on his maturity and consistency in his decision making. Although his numbers can be construed as impressive and he was a vital member on his line in each of the last two seasons, in addition to performing above his pay grade as a youngster at notable international events like the WJAC and Hlinka, the overall takeaway is that Knies has top-10 potential that only appeared in spurts this season.

NHL Projection

Middle-six scoring winger

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Tri-City	44	14	31	45	104	1.02	12
2020-21	Tri-City	44	17	25	42	101	0.95	24

63**Kirill Kirsanov • SKA (KHL)**

Left defense • 6'1 • 198 pounds • Shoots Left • Sep. 19, 2002 • Tver, RUS • Russia

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	68	68	68	63	63

Season Review

A steady defensive defenseman who is rarely caught out of position, Kirsanov has been a regular for Russian junior programs since he was an early teenager but has now graduated to full-time KHL duty with the vaunted SKA organization. He appeared in 29 games as a bottom-pairing defender for SKA during the regular season (3 assists and 22 shots) and six more in the playoffs (1 assist, 6 shots), averaging over 12 minutes a game each time. The big blueliner was a calming influence not only for his MHL club in 2019-20 but also as a minute eater for two gold-medal-winning under-18 teams. Kirsanov has skated for Russia in at least 12 international tournaments at both the junior and national team level, including the 2021 under-20 world junior hockey championship, where he started as a depth defenseman but soon became one of the team leaders in minutes played (20:35 per game).

Skating and Stickhandling

Kirsanov is not impressive in the skating realm, but he continues to find a way to maintain puck control and slip into openings to complete a high-percentage play. Although his lack of creativity and average footspeed were apparent all season, Kirsanov still has a sturdy frame and can stickhandle his way out of a hole, although most of his contributions on the puck revolve around quick outlet passes or delaying slightly to beat back a pesky forward. Kirsanov usually limits his rush and entry attempts as he's progressed into a more defensive role, but he can still take the puck for a skate while revealing nifty moves in open ice. For now, count on him to drop down on occasion once his team begins their cycle game and make timely reads to keep plays alive. He's deceptively nimble and possesses a variety of fakes and dekes to get himself into shooting position,

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Although Kirsanov isn't much of a playmaker, his soft hands and quick thinking helps him handle pressure quite easily, and he uses his backhand to deliver accurate feeds to the point if harassed along the wall. He avoids fiddling around with the puck and doesn't overskate it or try anything with a high degree of difficulty. He's highly selective when he decides to activate but he will still fish around the low slot and corner boards to support in puck battles. He's been used on the power play at every level but more for his clean passes and sure-handedness than anything resembling classic power-play quarterbacking or howitzer blasts from the point.

Defense and Physicality

It's quite common to see Kirsanov go through long stretches of mistake-free hockey; specifically in coverage and when dealing with a forecheck. Kirsanov usually is the last man up the ice when his team is in attack mode, but it seems to be by design and quite effective — Kirsanov is one of the better teenage blueliners at defending against an odd-man rush. He is an excellent penalty killed and consistently covers gaps while shoulder checking for weak-side threats.

Hockey Sense

Kirsanov shows consistency in his decision making and is a reliable problem solver. He has keen instincts for activation off face offs and step-ups are usually made at the decisive point of an opposing entry. Kirsanov is a highly confident and poised defender who by the end of a given game can be considered the cleanest puck manager from either side.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing shutdown defender

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	SKA-1946	40	4	9	13	35	0.33	12
2020-21	SKA-Neva	4	1	1	2	3	0.10	2
2020-21	SKA	29	0	3	3	22	0.10	0
2020-21	Russia U20	7	1	1	2	8	0.20	4

64



Jack Bar • Chicago (USHL)

Right defense • 6'3 • 193 pounds • Shoots Right • Oct. 24, 2002 • Newmarket, ON • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	84	84	84	64	64

Season Review

A Canadian-born blueliner who was one of the USHL's bigger hitters, Bar is a Harvard recruit who played well in a support role on Chicago's high-powered attack. After starring for St. Andrew's in the Ontario prep circuit, Bar transitioned to the USHL rather seamlessly, scoring 15 points (5 goals, 10 assists) in 34 games and adding an assist and four shots in seven playoff games to help the Steel win the Clark Cup championship.

Skating and Stickhandling

Bar is a mobile two-way defenseman who activates a ton and will spend time battling or hovering near the faceoff dots. He has excellent agility and balance in tight spaces, but Bar also boasts a long, clean stride and helps him accelerate well past back pressure. He can be counted on to break out on his own, but the nature of Chicago's up-tempo attack when combined with the puck-hungry demeanor of most of their lineup usually kept Bar's limit of advance within his side of the red line. Once the chip-and-chase or cycle game was established, Bar became more active and showcased his stick skills under pressure, albeit in brief moments.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Bar has all the makings of a no-nonsense high-volume shooter who can unload a devastating shot. But Chicago rolled three deadly scoring lines and rarely used him on the power play, and his defense partners usually liked to get involved in the offense as much as he did. Therefore, his pedestrian shot totals (27 in 34 games) should increase significantly if he's afforded the opportunity to serve as a No.1 or power-play specialist. Passing the puck is a strength of his, as Bar can deliver crisp home-run passes or turn and fire a perfect stretch feed during retrievals as the opposition is changing. He's shown flashes of skill with the puck, but Bar simply played alongside too many scorers and playmakers to get an accurate read on how creative and decisive he'd be if his support network consisted of muckers and grinders.

Defense and Physicality

Bar is a masher who loves to hit. He plays angry and violent, and he does not appear to discriminate when it comes to target selection. Although he wasn't the kind of player you would consider to be the eyes and ears of Chicago's defense corps, Bar usually maintained his defensive responsibilities and used varying methods to neutralize or destroy puck carriers anywhere in his own end or in the neutral zone. On occasion, Bar will skate long distances to deliver hard open-ice hits, often at the expense of his positioning and the flexibility of his partner. Still, he's undeniably visible and active most shifts and his efforts must be recognized, even if the execution isn't always clean.

Hockey Sense

Although Bar can be considered rough around the edges, he's shown instances where his instincts on or off the puck led to decisive moments. The number of times he activates off draws or drops down to keep a possession alive is fairly high during a standard game, and Bar even has instances when he looks as creative and dangerous as a forward. His penchant for physicality, however, has to be tempered, as he vacates areas where he's needed most to deliver a massive hit without considering the location of his partner nor the potential for an opposing numbers advantage.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing physical defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	St. Andrew's	22	7	12	19	--	0.86	32
2020-21	Chicago Steel	34	5	10	15	27	0.44	52

65



Victor Stjernborg • Vaxjo (SHL)

Center • 5'11 • 202 pounds • Shoots Left • May 22, 2003 • Malmo, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	61	61	61	65	65

Season Review

A powerful two-way center and throwback who plays with a lot of intensity, Stjernborg (surprisingly pronounced *Kranborg*) parlayed a leading scoring role for Vaxjo J20 into 30 SHL games plus 10 more in the playoffs, as his team won the league championship. In his 19 games in the J20 Nationell's Sodra Division (his third J20 campaign), Stjernborg ranked first on his team with 17 points (9 goals, 8 assists) and 54.7 faceoff percentage (180-for-329). His promotion to the SHL didn't seem to slow him down, as Stjernborg played with intensity right from the start to win the staff over and keep himself in the lineup, albeit as a fourth-line checker. He's played for Sweden at multiple international events, including the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge (2 goals, 2 assists, in 5 games).

Skating and Stickhandling

Stjernborg is an average skater in terms of straight-line speed but begins every shift in a turbo-charged manner and displays a long powerful stride and outstanding balance. His first step is rapid, and he keeps his legs moving from the start of his shift to the very end. Although his SHL usage was limited to fourth-line minutes and penalty killing, Stjernborg showed enough jump and anticipation to make his average shift seem both exciting and impactful. Stjernborg is an excellent puck protector who can wear down opponents of any size or age, but it became apparent early into his J20 season that he was overmatching the opposition with his stickhandling and puck protection.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Although Stjernborg served as team captain at the J20 level and was Vaxjo's leading scorer, he wasn't necessarily creating chances at will or serving as his line's primary setup man. Much like his time in the SHL, Stjernborg likes to position himself in the low slot or net-front area and ready himself for deflections, rebounds, or one-timers. He isn't a high-volume shooter by Stjernborg owns an excellent shot-release combination, and he has scored with the wrist while targeting the upper half more times than not. On the power play, Stjernborg was more of a target from the slot or bumper position than an orchestrator, but to his credit he kept his feet always moving while his blade was firmly on the ice.

Defense and Physicality

Stjernborg probably didn't make a lot of friends in the SHL this year as he was an intense competitor who didn't allow his age or inexperience get in the way of his hunger to win battles. He'll do whatever it takes to either poke a puck loose or tip a shot from the slot, and Stjernborg is willing to use unconventional methods to get the desired result. He applies significant pressure on the forecheck and seemed to catch defenders off guard with the rate of speed he was travelling. Vaxjo's quest for the SHL title got nastier as they bit deeper into the playoffs, but Stjernborg did not seem the least bit intimidated or overwhelmed by the increased physicality. He delivers hard hits but has improved his discipline over the years.

Hockey Sense

Stjernborg is an intelligent and versatile forward who can multitask in any zone. After serving as a top-line center in junior hockey, Stjernborg wasted no time adapting to his role as a checking wing and provided a championship team with energetic and inspired play. He takes smart and efficient routes to the puck and seemed to either beat opponents to a key spot or collided with them before they could enter the zone.

NHL Projection

Middle-six energy forward

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Vaxjo J20	40	11	9	20	67	0.50	16
2020-21	Vaxjo J20	19	9	8	17	44	0.90	12
2020-21	Vaxjo	30	2	2	4	11	0.13	4

66



James Malatesta • Quebec (QMJHL)

Left wing • 5'9 • 179 pounds • Shoots Left • May 31, 2003 • Montreal, QC • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	42	42	42	66	66

Season Review

An aggressive pest who causes all sorts of problems for the opposition whether he's on or off the puck, Malatesta continues to silence the critics who claim he's not big enough to be a difference maker. Selected by the Remparts in the seventh round of the 2019 QMJHL draft, the Kirkland, Quebec City native is small in stature, but big in heart and determination. He forged a tremendous rookie season in 2019-20, posting 23 goals and 22 assists in 59 games while playing as a 16-year-old rookie. Malatesta also played for Canada-Black at the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge and would have been a strong candidate to make the under-18 Ivan Hlinka squad had the tournament not been cancelled. Malatesta was more of a support player for the improved Remparts in 2020-21 but he still ranked among the team leaders in shots and goals.

Skating and Stickhandling

Malatesta is an above-average skater in terms of straight-line speed and acceleration, and he plays with a high motor and hustles all over the ice. He's quite athletic and very elusive in tight space, and Malatesta makes a habit of not only coming away with the puck during board battles, but he then takes direct routes to the net without any concern for his safety. He wasn't a dominant figure in the possession game once the puck was collected, however, but he understood spacing and timing during the cycle before eventually slipping into an uncovered area with the hammer cocked. Far from stone-handed, Malatesta comes across as the type of player who could drive his own line if the situation required it, but for now he seems destined for similar waterbug roles where he uses the chip-and-chase more than controlled and calculated entries or elite-level puck control from the half wall.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Malatesta is a table setter who can be found causing havoc anywhere in the offensive zone, to include in front of the net. He is fearless in attacking the slot area but also knows when to dish the puck and hunts or jam away at a rebound. He also boasts a lethal one timer and snapshot — it is not only hard, but also accurate. His consistent effort in the offensive end usually leads to multiple chances per game, and his shot generation (3.91 shots per game in 2019-20 and 3.59 in 2021) was among the highest in the QMJHL in each of his first two seasons. Spending a significant time with Finnish import Viljami Marjala helped Malatesta develop a more pass-friendly game, which coincided with the adjustments made towards playmaking by the shoot-first Marjala.

Defense and Physicality

Malatesta impacts shifts with his hustle and energy, and he's shown no fear in competing against bigger opponents. He appears to thrive off challenges and the harder they become, the harder he'll work. Malatesta has a strong overall skillset, but his hardhat mentality and work ethic is what makes him stand out from shift to shift. Relentless and tireless on the forecheck, Malatesta is a menace to opposing defensemen. He is a pepper pot who has no problem hitting, hacking, or doing whatever it takes to make his adversary uncomfortable. He brings an abrasive style to the rink every night.

Hockey Sense

Malatesta is a worker bee who isn't a flashy playmaker and rarely attempts anything beyond his capabilities, but he plays smart, disciplined hockey. He uses his teammates without forcing passes into coverage and shows the ability to be responsible in all three zones. Malatesta is a lunch-pail guy with average creativity in terms of playmaking, but he makes up for it with strong individual efforts in open ice and in tight areas to get to the inside for a cleaner look at the net. Most wingers who shoot the puck with consistency require assistance from their linemates, but Malatesta is a self starter who can do things on his own without looking or acting selfish. Malatesta may be a thorn in his opponent's side, but he's flashed skill and offensive upside more than just intermittently. He was a critical piece to Quebec's improvement in the standings.

NHL Projection

Middle-six energy forward

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Quebec	59	23	22	45	231	0.76	29
2020-21	Quebec	32	10	13	23	115	0.72	12

67



Evan Nause • Quebec (QMJHL)

Left defense • 6'2 • 186 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 20, 2003 • White Rock, BC • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	51	51	51	67	67

Season Review

A native of White, Rock, B.C., Nause was a rare two-time QMJHL first round pick who played the 2019-20 campaign in the USHL with the Sioux Falls Stampede. He was chosen sixth overall in the 2019 draft by Val-d'or and later became the fifth pick by Quebec in the 2020 draft. Last season, Nause led all Remparts defenders with 22 points (4 goals, 18 assists) in 32 games, but 21 of his 22 points came in his last 24 matches. Although he tied for 17th in QMJHL defense scoring, his 42 shots barely cracked the top 50 and was third among defenders on his own team.

Skating and Stickhandling

Nause is a smooth, effortless skater with above-average speed and strong balance and agility. He can break out on his own, but he generally keeps things simple, albeit in a manner that frustrates or neutralizes opposing forecheckers. Nause displays elite footwork while moving in any direction, and he can escape harrowing situations from the boards or behind his net with a combination of delay tactics, body positioning, and quick bursts once an opening is created. He is a master at beating back pressure, and Nause is confident in his puck control to wait for the critical extra second to fake a checker towards the opposite direction.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Nause is a versatile defender who seems to focus more on quick puck deliveries and keeping things tidy in his own end, but there have been several examples of quality NHL defensemen with similar pre-draft tendencies whose offensive game took off once they became established at the highest level. Nause isn't a classic playmaker or one-way defenseman, and his moments of finesse or creativity are few and far between. Nonetheless, he owns an excellent shot and was important to Quebec's power play (1 goals, 9 assists). Although he was nearly a point-per-game player for most of his season, Nause did not register a single primary assist at 5v5 and all his helpers were from rebounds, handoffs on the power play, or short-distance secondaries delivered from his own end.

Defense and Physicality

Nause uses his solid frame and size to prevent opponents from gaining a positional edge in front of the net. He uses a quick stick to swat pucks off blades or to harmlessly deflect them aside. He battles for pucks along the boards and corners. Nause does not look to blow up his opponent. Rather, he will lean on him, find the puck, possess it, and make a play to a teammate or skate it out of harm's way. Nause does not seem to panic when under pressure and is confident in using a deke, reverse or a quick outlet pass to a streaking forward. He is also effective in the neutral zone and patrols the grey zone with confidence, controlled backward or lateral movements, and a visible dedication to stick-on-puck. This helps him thwart an opponent rush prior to it starting. Nause is a plug-and-play defender. He can and does play in all situations and is effective on the PK.

Hockey Sense

Nause is incredibly poised and one of the smartest puck distributors around. He exudes a pro style and constantly thinks one and two plays ahead of everyone else. Nause's game is not defined by points and flash but more via awareness, decision making and general hockey sense. He understands the game, the position, and all game situations. The sum of all his parts is what makes Nause an effective player. Nause has the knack to know when to slide back to support his partner or move to an open area to provide an outlet for a teammate. These types of plays allow him time and space to execute his next play, be it a pass or rush up the ice.

NHL Projection

No. 2 or No. 3 two-way defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Quebec	32	4	18	22	42	0.69	32

68



Jack Peart • Fargo (USHL)

Left defense • 5'11 • 186 pounds • Shoots Left • May 15, 2003 • Grand Rapids, MN • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	83	83	83	68	68

Season Review

A highly intelligent minute eater from the blue line who seamlessly transitioned from Grand Rapids High School to the USHL's Fargo Force, where he led the latter to the Clark Cup Final as their No. 1 defenseman. Peart won Minnesota's Mr. Hockey Award and was the first defenseman to receive the honor since New York Islanders' rearguard Nick Leddy in 2009. Peart, who is committed to St. Cloud State, is a mature and likable prospect who anchored Fargo's top pairing alongside former NTDP'er Ryan Siedem. The tandem was instrumental both on and off the puck in helping the Force win the first two rounds of the USHL playoffs before bowing out to Chicago in the final. Although the USHL postseason was abbreviated, Peart tied Chicago's Ryan Ufko in defense scoring with seven points (2 goals, 5 assists) and tied for the most shots (21). Peart during the regular season appeared in 24 games (1 goal, 14 assists), and his 0.63 points-per-game average tied for 11th among USHL rearguards.

Skating and Stickhandling

Peart's strengths are driven by his outstanding agility and footwork. He has above average straight-line speed but boasts a deceptively quick first step and will explode into an opening to either join a rush or create one himself. Having confidence in his skating and puck handling result in rapid decisions with a high completion percentage, although there can be unfavorable result when he attempts passes into heavy traffic. Still, Peart's intentions seem calculated rather than forced, and his high panic threshold when being pressured proves that he isn't simply trying to get rid of the puck to spare himself from a tough situation. Once inside the offensive end, Peart will stay active and rotate from either side while keeping his head up for any backdoor targets. He is capable of highlight-reel moves such as toe drags but can be justified as high IQ plays rather than something intentionally flashy or low percentage.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Peart is a playmaker with excellent passing abilities who has the confidence to attempt and complete passes with a high degree of difficulty. He has soft hands to handle tough passes while on the move and will quickly scan the entire ice to acquire potential targets. He enters the zone with poise and confidence before executing set plays, and Peart can unload heavy, accurate shots from the point when they are least expected. He rarely fires the puck without purpose and Peart puts the perfect touch on his long-distance wristers when the intent is for a deflection. He was the primary puck manager during Fargo's power play while manning the left point.

Defense and Physicality

Peart was a top-pairing stopper at both the high school and USHL levels. With Fargo, Peart and his partner Siedem were given the toughest assignments, including slowing down the Chicago Steel's explosive attack. Although the Force ultimately buckled under the sheer weight of Chicago's depth and skill, Peart wasted little time showing his effectiveness in one-on-one situations and slot coverage. He was given the toughest assignments and not only passed them with distinction but was able to counter with attacks of his own. Peart isn't physically intimidating or imposing, and he relies on his stick more than solid body checks or a violent shove into the boards.

Hockey Sense

Peart already thinks the game at a pro level, but the reality is that he's probably smarter while controlling the puck than a chunk of today's NHL defensemen. He has leadership qualities and versatility, and his durability and endurance make him a candidate to play well over 25 minutes a game in college and beyond. One of the many telling features of Peart's high IQ is his patience with the puck, which is displayed multiple times a shift and is an effective tool at buying time and space. He can be used in any situation no matter the conditions.

NHL Projection

No. 2 or No. 3 two-way defenseman and power-play quarterback

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Grand Rapids	18	11	24	35	--	1.94	4
2020-21	Fargo	24	1	14	15	44	0.63	14

69



Ryan Ufko • Chicago (USHL)

Right defense • 5'11 • 181 pounds • Shoots Right • May 7, 2003 • Smithtown, NY • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	53	53	53	69	69

Season Review

A Long Island native committed to UMass-Amherst, Ufko was the No. 1 defender for the USHL's Chicago Steel, which took home the Clark Cup with Ufko tying for the postseason scoring lead among defensemen. He finished third in defense scoring during the regular season with 39 points (10 goals, 29 assists) in 53 games, and was second with 20 power-play points (3 goals, 17 assists).

Skating and Stickhandling

Ufko is an agile and elusive skater who displays impressive footwork in all three zones when either on or off the puck. Although he's not a roadrunner or your classic end-to-end rusher, Ufko should be in the upper half of confident puck handlers among draft-eligible defenseman, which explains why the Steel chose him to run their power that usually involved four forwards. Whether under forecheck pressure or presented with open ice, Ufko will take the puck for a skate and enter the offensive zone on his own. It doesn't seem like Ufko's intimidated by the size or physicality of an opponent and he will keep the puck under control while reversing direction behind his net or retreating via the backskate while keeping his head up.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Ufko fits into the mold of a Torey Krug type who can dance his way into an open shooting lane before unloading a well-placed blast from the point. He saw extensive time during Chicago's deadly power play that led the league in both goals scored (63) and success rate (28.3 percent), and Ufko's 80 shots in 53 regular-season games should be viewed within the context that three of his teammates finished among the league's top in shots. His passes are hard, accurate, and well-intentioned, and you rarely see Ufko willfully cede possession to save himself from contact.

Defense and Physicality

Ufko has obvious size limitations but that never stopped him from delivering hard hits in either open ice or along the boards. He holds his line with courage and confidence, although sometimes he goes for the big hit outside his line and ends up getting trapped. Ufko was one of several Steel defenders who activated a ton, especially off draws, which put the onus on partners like Luca Fantilli to cover for him. He was used on the penalty kill, where Ufko can be guilty of floating far from the slot, and he relied heavily on his stick and delivered occasional hard shoves that knocked opponents off balance. Ufko's physicality should limit the challenges that most smaller defensemen meet when faced with college-age competition and he has the footspeed to maintain a tight gap and closes on puck carriers in a hurry.

Hockey Sense

Ufko is a cerebral puck mover who did an excellent job serving as the No. 1 defenseman for a team with a large target on its back. The Steel played as if it was expected to win every game, and Ufko's confidence as a breakout option and power-play quarterback seemed noticeable whenever he was on the ice. It's not easy to distribute pucks equally when there are multiple premier forwards on almost every line, but Ufko learned quickly to maximize their strengths while showing off his own agility, quickness, and playmaking in the process. Although one would expect a run-and-shoot offense like Chicago's to win every game by a lopsided score, there were plenty of instances when the Steel was in dire need of a momentum-changing play that was delivered by Ufko rather than one of their notable forwards.

NHL Projection

Middle-six defenseman and power-play quarterback

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Chicago	43	2	7	9	31	0.21	21
2020-21	Chicago	53	10	29	39	80	0.74	14

70



Ty Gallagher • U.S. U18 (NTDP)

Right defense • 6'0 • 190 pounds • Shoots Right • March 6, 2003 • Clarkston, MI • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	52	52	52	70	70

Season Review

One of the better goal-scoring defensemen in the 2003-year group, Gallagher for the under-18 NTDP fired home 14 goals on only 86 shots for a gaudy 16.3 shooting percentage. Committed to Boston University after switching from Notre Dame, Gallagher spent most last season on the NTDP's second of two "middle" pairings with lefty Ty Murchison, and the duo proved to be both physical and opportunistic. Although he's a righty, Gallagher's ice time and role increased after No. 1 defenseman Luke Hughes went down with a season-ending injury, and he saw more time on the power play compared to earlier in the season. His 25 combined goals over his two seasons set the career mark for NTDP blueliners.

Skating and Stickhandling

Gallagher is an average skater in most areas, but his mechanics in terms of stride, backskating, and footwork appear clean. Always on the hunt for the chance to involve himself in the play, Gallagher loves to join the rush as a trailer, moreso than taking the puck for a solo end-to-end attempt. He will rarely turn down the chance to create a numbers advantage and he anticipates these opportunities from as far back as his own goal. Strong on his edges and tough to knock off the puck, Gallagher can maintain control while being hounded from any direction and he will reverse or peel away sharply into open space. He won't puck hog and usually limits the amount of time it's on his stick.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Gallagher is a no-nonsense shooter with a plus-plus shot via the wrister or slapper. He looked more like dual-threat offensive defenseman in his under-17 season, but Gallagher ramped up the shot attempts in 2020-21, firing more than double the shots he took the season prior, and that was without the benefit of a consistent role on the NTDP's top power-play unit. Gallagher as a right shot will either cruise down the middle with the hammer cocked or slip into the left circle for a one-timer. Having such a hard and accurate shot puts opponents on notice, but Gallagher could improve his creativity and playmaking by slap-faking more and connecting on seam passes with better accuracy.

Defense and Physicality

Gallagher is a hard hitter who plays with intensity and excels during close-quarter contact. He has been a mainstay on the penalty kill and uses his upper-body strength and active stick thrusts to break up plays near the goal. Although he isn't consistently reliable in one-on-one or slot-coverage scenarios, Gallagher improved his overall defensive play from the previous season and the results were added responsibilities while down a man and in late and close scenarios. He's an impressive open-ice hitter and he seems to have nailed down the timing of his hip checks.

Hockey Sense

Gallagher's offensive instincts are keen, and he can pose a major matchup problem for the opposition. Although he certainly deserved an expanded role based on his production and physicality, Gallagher is another example of a talented defenseman who made sacrifices for the sake of the NTDP's forward-centric attack. His puck management improved over the year, and he seemed to understand the importance of simple d-to-d passes rather than attempting long feeds up ice and into traffic. He'll probably require three or four years of college to develop his defensive game into a weapon, but for now he should be acknowledged for his impressive goal-scoring ability, mobility, and physicality.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing two-way defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U17 NTDP	49	11	11	22	39	0.45	48
2020-21	U18 NTDP	52	14	13	27	88	0.52	37

71



Colton Dach • Saskatoon (WHL)

Wing/Center • 6'4 • 196 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 4, 2003 • Fort Saskatchewan, AB • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	71	71

Season Review

The sixth-overall pick in the 2018 WHL bantam draft, Dach is the younger brother of Chicago Blackhawks' center Kirby Dach, who was the No. 3 in the 2019 NHL draft. Colton is a similar player in terms of his size and dual-threat capabilities, although he is considered a prospect with a lower ceiling and one who plays wing instead of center. After a successful rookie campaign of 2019-20 in which he recorded 29 points (11 goals, 18 assists) in 62 games, Dach assumed a bigger role this past season and rewarded the Blades with a team-high 11 goals and 64 shots than ranked second. He was used mostly on Saskatoon's first or second line and was a regular on the power play, where he tallied a team-best five power-play goals. Although he was surrounded by a powerful supporting cast and was never considered a potential first-round candidate for the 2021 NHL draft, Dach was the second-ranked WHL forward on Central Scouting's final prospect list for North American skaters.

Skating and Stickhandling

Dach is a below-average skater in practically all areas except for balance, although he has shown deceptive quickness when attempting to escape from the corner or beat a defender to the inside. He relies mostly on his wide frame and long reach to protect the puck, which is critical considering his sound playmaking skills and finishing ability from in close. He was quite unselfish with the puck, however, and although his puck skills are more than impressive, Dach seemed to understand that linemates such as Tristen Robbins or Kyle Crnkovic was not only more experienced but also slightly more proficient at handling the puck in the face of significant pressure.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Dach is a big-bodied forward who can play center or wing, although he spent most of his draft year on Saskatoon's top line with playmakers Robbins and Kyle Crnkovic. His consistent contributions beyond scoring were establishing a net-front presence and winning puck battles in the corners and behind the net. That doesn't mean Dach is devoid of puck skills, however, as he showed off a plus shot and release combination, impressive vision and pass accuracy off board battles, and slick hands from in tight. Dach has impressive hands to not only deaden passes to continue onward but also fire accurate shots in one motion. The points he earned were mostly the result of skill plays and he delivered perfect passes on both his forehand and backhand.

Defense and Physicality

Dach is a sound two-way forward who competes hard without needing to be dirty or overly physical. His reach when combined with his effort can be decisive when pressuring the opposing point or when killing penalties, and Dach operates a quick stick in the neutral zone to either pick off passes or loot puck carriers attempting to sidestep him. He can run out of gas early in shifts, however, and Dach labors when he has to retreat back to his own end from his usual position near the opposing net.

Hockey Sense

Dach is cerebral winger who had chemistry with varying linemates and understood his role as the biggest forward on Saskatoon's roster. He usually keeps things simple and rarely tried to make the average shift about himself, although his vision and passing were significantly improved from the season prior. Dach also grasps the importance of jamming the net-front area and maintaining his discipline as opponents attempted to intimidate him away from the low slot.

NHL Projection

Middle-six two-way winger and power-play option

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Saskatoon	62	11	18	29	108	0.47	45
2020-21	Saskatoon	20	11	9	20	64	1.00	16

72



Chase Stillman • Sudbury (OHL)

Right wing • 6'1 • 180 pounds • Shoots Right • March 19, 2003 • Sudbury, ON • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	46	46	46	72	72

Season Review

A high-energy winger who was selected 25th overall by the Sudbury Wolves in the 2019 OHL draft, Stillman is the son of former NHL forward Cory Stillman, and his older brother Riley is a defenseman with the Chicago Blackhawks. He was one of several impressive OHL rookies in 2019-20, when he amassed 34 points (13 goals, 21 assists) in 58 games while serving in a middle six role. He also skated for Canada-White that season at the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge (1 goal, 3 assists in 6 games). Stillman went overseas during the OHL's pandemic-driven shutdown to play for Esbjerg U20 in Denmark's primary junior league, where in his eight games was one of the league's top scorers with nine goals and nine assists. Stillman returned to North America in the spring to help Team Canada win the gold medal at the 2021 under-18 world championship (2 goals, 2 assists in 7 games).

Skating and Stickhandling

Stillman is an impressive skater whose above-average speed is enhanced by a competitive fire that keeps his motor running high from the start of his shift until the end. He has strong edges, and he peels back or changes direction on a dime, and opponents are usually unsuccessful at knocking him off balance or shoving him hard to the ice. Stillman has shown to be a dangerous one-on-one player because of his hunger and will to take the puck strong to the net, although he is more effective at deliberate zone entries with rapid directional changes than attempting to blow past a defender to the outside. He's not consistent with his puck handling in traffic and is prone to turning pucks over when a simple chip-and-chase or soft dump-in would have been more effective.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Stillman is a useful winger in the offensive zone in that he can wire the puck with authority after slipping into a danger area undetected but also dominate the boards with strong puck protection and the aforementioned effort. His play in Denmark was beyond dominant and the opposition clearly was overmatched, but the switch back to North America for the under-18 world championship revealed far less creativity at 5v5 and more of a north-south approach with visible tunnel vision. Stillman can be an asset on the power play, however, as either a shoot-first option from one of the circles or a net-front presence who will take a beating without yielding his positioning.

Defense and Physicality

A team-centric player who will battle hard, Stillman does solid work on and off the puck. He's always been a physical forward but the addition of muscle and a few more inches has made him more intimidating to face. Stillman wins puck battles against bigger opponents on his own and usually is the most noticeable forward on the ice for either team. Expect him to be featured on Sudbury's top penalty-killing unit when the OHL resumes play in 2021-22.

Hockey Sense

Stillman is a smart and versatile forward who understands all facets of the game. He is effective both on and off the puck and displays a consistent effort that any teammate should emulate. Although he had the unenviable task of being coached by his father in Sudbury, Stillman does not sit back, or play entitled. The bigger test came when he played away from his father in Denmark during the OHL shutdown, and Stillman was just as tenacious and energetic as he was for Sudbury the season prior. The only concern moving forward is his discipline, as he is prone to take unnecessary penalties in the offensive zone.

NHL Projection

Middle-six energy forward

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Sudbury	58	13	21	34	86	0.59	63
2020-21	Esbjerg U20	8	9	7	16	--	2.00	43
2020-21	Canada U18	7	2	2	4	11	0.57	4

73



Alekski Malinen • JyP (SM-Liiga)

Left defense • 6'0 • 176 pounds • Shoots Left • May 26, 2003 • Tuusula, FIN • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	80	80	80	73	73

Season Review

A swift defenseman who spent his entire draft season with a rebuilding JyP in Finland's elite SM-Liiga, Malinen played himself into "potential steal" territory after his impressive skating and breakout ability helped make him a reliable option for a young team. Malinen's stats (2 goals, 1 assist, 42 shots, 13:43 TOI in 30 games) say he's your run-of-the-mill defense prospect, but a quick review of his play, especially in the first half as his confidence grew, revealed promising results. He certainly lived up to his reputation as a speedster against older competition and earned an ice-time increase from 5:50 a game in October to over 18 minutes a game in early February. Although it's reasonable to believe Malinen would have been one of the best defenders had he played in the U20 SM-Sarja, he was solid for JyP's junior team as a late-season addition for their three playoff games against SaiPa. Malinen has played for Finland's international teams at three teenage levels, including the 2021 under-18 world championship (1 goal, 7 shots in 7 games), where he served in a middle-pairing role and saw little time on the power play.

Skating and Stickhandling

Malinen is an excellent skater and a lot of fun to watch, especially when he's in "fourth forward" mode. He attacks openings with confidence and will accelerate well past any checker who makes the mistake of napping for a split second. Malinen is a good straight-line stickhandler and potential end-to-end threat who usually stops short of the blue line unless the outside lane is presented by a backed-in defender. Challenge him at the line, and you're getting a dump-in 99 times out of 100.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Malinen can do fancy things with the puck and skate like the wind but calling him a playmaker or an offensive defenseman would be a stretch. Rushed decisions are the norm over a full 15 to 20-minute effort, although Malinen isn't lazy or negligent. He acts and plays like a defenseman who will do whatever it takes to get the puck out of his zone but seems to run out of ideas once he hits the opposing blue line. There are usually one or two instances a game when Malinen will spot a teammate through the maze of players and float or bank a sweet feed to them, and he knows how to lure checkers away from coverage before he exploits the opening with a neat pass. He owns a hard shot, but it wouldn't hurt Malinen to add more fakes or slap-passes rather than attempting low-danger chances with a man in his face.

Defense and Physicality

Malinen is both active and attentive in the defensive zone. He plays as if he wants the puck immediately and will pressure opponents well beyond the slot. If he must cover the front of the net, Malinen will sneak peaks towards the weak side while displaying an extended stick. You rarely catch him standing around, but any puck that squirts towards his direction eventually gets a quick exit out of the zone. His aggressive nature has drawbacks, however, and Malinen can be guilty of chasing covered puck carriers skating as high as the blue line.

Hockey Sense

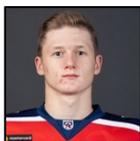
Malinen's hockey mind is advanced for his age and position, and his growth as a thinker was on full display in several full-game efforts. Youthful exuberance can be a double-edged sword, however, as he isn't consistently poised and can be guilty of pinching when it isn't always necessary. Malinen's situational awareness keeps him involved in the play and he was one of JyP's more trustworthy defensemen considering how young most of the forwards were.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	JyP U20	49	1	9	10	--	0.20	6
2020-21	JyP	30	2	1	3	42	0.10	10
2020-21	Finland U18	7	1	0	1	7	0.14	0

74



Artyom Grushnikov • Krasnaya Armiya (MHL)

Left defense • 6'2 • 198 pounds • Shoots Left • March 20, 2003 • Voskresensk, RUS • Russia

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
29	29	29	29	74	74

Season Review

A super-steady two-way defenseman whose commitment to the OHL's Hamilton Bulldogs last September effectively killed his chances of playing hockey in his draft year, Grushnikov was earmarked as a potential first-round pick before the pandemic drove the league to cancel their entire schedule. He is one of the more prominent European draft prospects who hasn't played a meaningful game since March of 2020, although his experience in over a half-dozen international tournaments at the under-17 and under-18 levels prior to this season helped add meat to what is still an incomplete draft resume.

Skating and Stickhandling

Grushnikov is a strong, powerful skater whose fluid moves in any direction allow him to impact opposing possessions in the neutral zone and retreat in good order to prepare of any rush or shot attempts. He is far more active and involved in possessions without the puck than with it, and Grushnikov is known to join the rush or cruise into the high slot. He's an effortless skater who is willing to stickhandle into traffic and make multiple fakes and cutbacks in the process.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Grushnikov isn't much of a shooter although he has a hard shot that should be respected. In his last season with Krasnaya Armiya, Grushnikov showed an aversion to firing the puck, and his 1.1 shots per game was the lowest among his fellow blueliners with 25 or more. He was used sparingly on the power play at the club level but seemed to receive more opportunities for offensive-zone starts while playing internationally for Russia. Grushnikov's soft hands and sharp vision allow him to connect with targets over long distances in one motion and he is a threat for a long stretch pass that hits a teammate in stride.

Defense and Physicality

Grushnikov is a vacuum cleaner from anywhere within his side of the red line; one who also combines hard shoves and stick thrusts in board battles. His stick is always positioned properly, and he can identify the direction of puck travel while maintaining overwatch on the low slot or nearby danger areas. Grushnikov is the epitome of read and react, and he steps up to pick off passes above the hash marks and will occasionally take the puck for a quick skate to safety. He patrols the gray zone with awareness while understanding where his teammates are positioned, and which one is the best option for a stretch pass.

Hockey Sense

Grushnikov typifies the throwback stay-at-home defenseman in that he understands and accepts his role as a stopper while playing a disciplined game. He makes good use of his forwards but also reveals proper spacing between his partner and smart use of his goalie. You could probably count on one hand the number of times this season where Grushnikov did something incredibly selfish or lazy even though he's had plenty of opportunities to do so. He affords his coaching staff peace of mind and dependability, and they reward him with a regular shift and momentum-changing assignments over the course of his 18 to 20 minutes a game.

NHL Projection

Top-pairing shutdown defender

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Krasnaya Armiya	29	1	4	5	33	0.17	4
2020-21	Did Not Play							

75



Liam Gilmartin • U.S. U18 (NTDP)

Left wing • 6'2 • 192 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 7, 2003 • Falls Church, VA • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	60	60	60	75	75

Season Review

The intimidation factor is very real with this two-way power winger, who was a middle-six winger in both of his NTDP seasons but was one of their best penalty killers. Gilmartin, who hails from Virginia, originally committed to Providence College before switching over to the OHL's London Knights and saving Hockey East opposition from dealing with his hard-hitting style. He set career highs in goals (13), assists (22), points (35), and shots (53), and his 24.5 shooting percentage ranked fourth among NTDP'ers who appeared in more than 20 games. He was quiet from a production standpoint at the under-18 world championship, where he mustered only one assist and two shots in five games.

Skating and Stickhandling

Gilmartin is an average skater but one who delivers a consistent effort every shift and skates well enough to win most of his 50/50 foot races. He is a competent stickhandler capable of making inside moves and hanging onto the puck as he gets harassed from behind. Gilmartin's directional changes are pronounced, and he keeps his head up while skirting the boards to find a cutter in the slot or a winger across the seam. He's shown flashes of deft stickhandling under pressure and will make nifty moves to dart inside and take the puck strong to the net.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Gilmartin is a dual threat capable of making bang-bang plays off hustle or physical board battles. He isn't a consistent playmaker or shooter, and sometimes Gilmartin focuses on physical play in the offensive zone when a simple poke check or stick lift would have been just as effective. Off the cycle, Gilmartin likes to slip away for a one-timer, and he can bury the puck upstairs, but he's also confident in his stickhandling to make plays from in tight. Gilmartin's vision and passing abilities improved this season, as his assists per game more than doubled from his under-17 season.

Defense and Physicality

Gilmartin is one of the toughest wingers available in this draft. He is a power forward through and through; one who treats most shifts as an opportunity to introduce the intimidation dynamic to the opposition. Gilmartin's aggressiveness on the forecheck and tenacity off the puck disrupts breakouts but he finishes his checks with authority for good measure. It takes a strong and confident defenseman to minimize the effects of your standard Gilmartin hit, yet most teenage blueliners were visibly concerned with his whereabouts only four of five shifts into the game. He often teamed up with smothering two-way center Red Savage on the NTDP's top penalty-killing tandem.

Hockey Sense

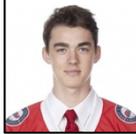
Gilmartin is a north-south masher whose game is built on power and surprise. He appears out of nowhere to pressure an opponent into a hasty decision, but the reality is that Gilmartin acquired his target and had his mind made up well before. He reacts quickly to puck travel but also anticipates passes ripe for intercept. You don't get charged with top penalty-killing duties unless you know more than just blocking shots, and Gilmartin rewarded his staff with reliable positioning, and active stick, and blanket coverage. He's a far riskier player on the puck, however, and he will make dangerous passes that force him into tasting his own medicine.

NHL Projection

Middle-six two-way power forward

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	U17 NTDP	48	10	5	15	41	0.31	34
2020-21	U18 NTDP	50	13	22	35	53	0.70	64

76



Brett Harrison • Oshawa (OHL)

Center • 6'2 • 188 pounds • Shoots Left • June 7, 2003 • Dorchester, ON • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	57	57	57	76	76

Season Review

A smart multi-purpose center who earned his way into a bigger role with a deep Oshawa squad in 2019-20, Harrison joined several of his notable OHL brethren in Europe for his draft year. He suited up for KooVee U20 in Finland's SM-Sarja, albeit later in the season during the league's group play to determine playoff seeding. Although KooVee was cannon fodder for a strong Group 2 that featured eventual-champion Lukko, Harrison tied for the team lead in scoring (4 goals, 5 assists in 7 games) and ranked in the top 20 overall with a 1.29 points-per-game-average. He left Finland to join Canada for the under-18 world championship, where he scored two goals in seven games as a depth player for the eventual champions. Harrison, who was taken 16th overall by the Generals in the 2019 OHL Priority Selection.

Skating and Stickhandling

Harrison's skating in terms of his size and overall speed and quickness is average for a center with his build. He has a wide stance but still drives his legs forward for a long stride. He is neither cement-footed nor immobile, and winning foot races off the chip and chase can yield surprising results. Harrison is a competent stick handler but is not the classic top-six center who has the puck on his string and makes his linemates better. He impacts shifts by working hard and supporting his unit on and off the puck, but Harrison has yet to receive a role in either of the last two seasons where he was charged with the lion's share of puck handling for his line.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Harrison is a goal-scoring center who finishes in a variety of ways. His nose for the net and ability to bang in loose pucks on the doorstep is already at a high level and he always keeps his blade on ice if a pass or shot is on its way towards the net. He's a big body so it's hard for his linemates to miss him when he's open, and Harrison will camp out in the low slot or circle looking for a centering feed to hammer on net. His shot is accurate and release quickly, and Harrison will hit the top corners from anywhere. Whether finishing a game as a shoot-first type from the slot or junk collector around the net, Harrison causes significant matchup problems below the hashes. He can become even more dangerous if he fine-tunes his vision and playmaking, which at this point are average at best.

Defense and Physicality

Playing sound two-way hockey is one of Harrison's strengths. He is highly attentive in the neutral zone and his game off the puck for both Canada at the U18 worlds and in the Finnish junior league was textbook from a positioning standpoint. Always willing to challenge puck carriers, Harrison uses a long, active stick in the neutral zone and can be counted on for maximum effort towards neutralizing opposing rushes before his own blue line. He isn't nearly as physical as you'd want from a two-way center with his frame, but Harrison is no pushover and can use his size to his advantage in the defensive zone. He won 43.3 percent of his faceoffs (137-for-316) with Oshawa in 2019-20.

Hockey Sense

It's no coincidence that the puck always seems to either follow Harrison or end up on his stick at the decisive moment. He is an intelligent center who picks off a lot of passes and collects a good number of takeaways. Although he doesn't have a particular skill that jumps out at you and his skating is average, Harrison is an effective two-way forward who can play center or wing and provide a consistent shift from start to finish.

NHL Projection

Middle-six goal-scoring center and penalty killer

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Oshawa	58	21	16	37	114	0.64	8
2020-21	KooVee U20	7	4	5	9	--	1.29	0
2020-21	Canada U18	7	2	0	2	8	0.29	2

77



Eric Alarie • Moose Jaw (WHL)

Left wing • 6'1 • 197 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 27, 2003 • Winnipeg, MB • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	77	77

Season Review

A soft-mitted winger who serves as a dual threat on Moose Jaw's most consistent scoring line, Alarie knows how to use his thick frame to protect the puck and dominate play along the boards. He was the 22nd pick in the 2018 WHL bantam draft so it isn't like he's not on anyone's radar, but the fact that it was he who led the Warriors in scoring and not noteworthy teammate Ryder Korczak says plenty about his worthiness as a draft prospect. After a nondescript rookie season in 2019-20, Alarie shot out of the gate to establish himself as one of the Warriors' top players. He led the squad with 10 goals and 20 points in 19 games.

Skating and Stickhandling

Alarie seems to get knocked for his lack of quickness or explosiveness, but those assessments may be a bit outdated. A tireless worker both on and off the ice, Alarie improved his straight-line speed significantly and although he isn't quick in the breakaway-threat sense, he moves with a purpose both on and off the puck. His footwork in tight areas also improved, and he was quick enough to allow him to escape with the puck and maintain enough separation. The bigger takeaway, however, is that Alarie is a self-starter who can win battles on his own and even handle a double team. One could argue that he doesn't need that much time and space anyway since he processes things so quickly.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

A dual threat with quick hands and the ability to drive possession and man the half-wall on the power play, Alarie creates significant matchup problems for teams who may rely on smaller defensemen to eat minutes. He certainly holds his own against the big boys, but Alarie can make quick work of an undersized rearguard by wearing them down physically before outmuscling them to cleanly come away with the puck. He is a beast along the boards; one with excellent vision and quick-strike passes into the low slot that are fit through the tiniest of windows. Alarie also boasts a plus-plus shot that he releases quickly (probably quicker than most) but can also knock a goalie off balance because of its impressive velocity.

Defense and Physicality

Alarie isn't a defensive stopper, but his effort off the puck is commendable, especially in the offensive zone. He applies pressure and chases defenders behind their own net and will not give in when battling for the puck. He's more of a gentle giant in the physicality department and he plays a clean and disciplined game. It's scary to think how Alarie could become an even bigger matchup nightmare if he adds more hitting and bite to his repertoire, but the results from his play on the puck were impressive regardless.

Hockey Sense

Alarie is both intelligent and creative. He can make something out of nothing, and he made a habit, albeit in a short sample size of a season, of making bang-bang plays from the wall or corners that resulted in quality chances. It's not often you see a pure winger of his size spearheading a possession while keeping the puck on a string, but Alarie's decision making thereafter is a critical factor in his improvement from two seasons ago.

NHL Projection

Top-line power winger and goal scorer

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Moose Jaw	61	7	14	21	94	0.34	4
2020-21	Moose Jaw	19	10	10	20	66	1.05	4

78



Shai Buium • Sioux City (USHL)

Left defense • 6'3 • 209 pounds • Shoots Left • March 26, 2003 • San Diego, CA • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	78	78

Season Review

A San Diego native with Israeli roots, Buium is a Denver recruit who is one of the USHL's top defense prospects for the 2021 NHL draft. Big, mobile, and insanely confident with the puck, the Shattuck product logged big minutes for Sioux Falls and was used in all situations. He led the Stampede in two assist categories with 22 overall and 10 on the power play, and his 26 points ranked sixth on the team. Although Sioux Falls were eliminated early in the USHL playoffs, Buium led the Stampede in postseason scoring with 3 points (1 goal, 2 assists) in 4 games. He was named to Team USHL for the 2021 All-American Prospects Game.

Skating and Stickhandling

Buium is a gangly skater with a wide stride. He mobility is neither graceful nor fluid, but he's got above-average speed and can peel back or reverse direction on a dime. The technical aspects of Buium's skating appear to be a point of contention within the scouting community, but he more than makes up for his lack of style points with a commendable effort from start to finish and the kind of energy that proves to be decisive. He's an excellent puck handler who can weave his way around traffic, then peel back and attack a new position occupied by the opposition.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Buium is a pure playmaker who can run a power play, although Sioux Falls were among the bottom dwellers in that department thanks to a 16.5 success rate. Not all can be pinned on Buium, who distributed the puck with finesse and accuracy but didn't generate as many shots for himself despite having the ability to blister the puck. In fact, Buium tied for 15th on the team with a paltry 1.08 shots per game (54 in 50 games). Nonetheless, Buium has phenomenal hands and can be trusted to take the puck up ice and enter the zone cleanly. Flashy setups are delivered on occasion, but Buium usually dishes the puck cleanly. He's a far better short-distance passer than when attempting the stretch variety, but most of his passes are clean and well intentioned. Buium is quite intelligent with the puck, and he will find teammates nobody expected to be open. He puts the right touch on his leads and can even feather a saucer pass over sticks and land it right onto the blade of his forward in the low slot.

Defense and Physicality

Although his energy level is high both on and off the puck, Buium is one of the more overzealous defense prospects in this draft. He never stops moving and that includes when the puck is in his own end. Sometimes this can be beneficial and lead to instant counterattacks, but Buium vacates the slot as if it was set on fire. He wields a heavy stick and will make opponents pay for attempting net-front positioning, and Buium constantly sneaks peeks for backdoor threats. He was used extensively on the penalty kill, but even there he was darting freely from the crease area to pressure a forward along the half wall while a 2-on-1 developed behind him. There were plenty of examples, however, where Buium's hunger for the puck benefitted his team and alleviated pressure, which on game night was the general rule. He isn't as mean or physical as you'd want him to be, but Buium is versatile enough to play either the left or right side and log big minutes while distributing the puck with an aggressive mindset.

Hockey Sense

Buium's decision making is inconsistent in the defensive zone but near-elite in the opposing end. He makes fantastic reads to keep plays alive and will put the right touch on passes into traffic. He is creative with the puck and can be an asset on the power play for his hands and passing above anything else. Buium's gambles with or without the puck at all levels seemed more like a timing issue than anything else and differentiating between waiting the extra second or being quicker than expected waiting that that extra second is something he'll fine-tune in college and beyond. Improvements in the defensive zone must be made, however, with becoming an intimidating and reliable slot presence being one of only a few areas where immediate development it required.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing power-play quarterback.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Sioux City	3	0	1	1	2	0.33	2
2020-21	Sioux City	50	4	22	26	54	0.52	27

79



Tristan Lennox • Saginaw (OHL)

Goalie • 6'4 • 190 pounds • Catches Left • Oct. 21, 2002 • Cambridge, ON • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	89	89	89	79	79

Season Review

A notable goalie prospect who was drafted 26th overall by Saginaw in the 2018 OHL Priority Selection but sat out the entire 2020-21 season, Lennox has been selected by Hockey Canada to play at several international events. He performed at the 2018 World under-17 Hockey Challenge (.915 save percentage in 3 games) and the 2019 under-18 Ivan Hlinka (.951 save percentage in 3 games). Saginaw was one of the OHL's top teams in 2019-20 and finished second only to the Ottawa 67's in goals scored, but Lennox was not their No. 1 goalie, as he split duties with 2000-born Marshall Frappier. Both goalies posted nearly identical records, with Lennox going 20-8-3 and Frappier recording a 21-8-2 mark. Neither were consistent, however, as Lennox's .876 save percentage and Frappier's .879 mark ranked near the bottom of qualified OHL netminders. Also of note is that although Lennox averaged a manageable 27.9 shots per game, he didn't have a single start where he allowed less than two goals. He did, however, perform his best during the last five games of the season, posting a 5-0-0 record, a .909 save percentage, and yielding three goals or less in each of those starts.

Style and Post Integration

Lennox is an inside-out goalie who doesn't venture far from the crease. He stays upright as the puck is being worked around before exploding into a low crouch with his stick blade consistently flush with the ice. He's more of a wait-and-see goalie than one who flinches first, but his athleticism and quickness allow him to make last-second adjustments to react accordingly. On breakaways, Lennox will limit his advance to just outside the crease and his retreat towards his net is slow and short. Like most inside-out goalies, Lennox can dominate the lower half and rarely overpushes when moving post to post. Lennox stays upright more than then average junior and will seal the near post with his upper body while exposing more of the lower half. Pucks below the goal line don't always trigger a drop into the RVH, and Lennox will track the puck as it circles the net without ever dropping to the ice.

Rebound Control; Glove and Blocker

Lennox puts low and medium-dangers shots back into the slot but makes good use of his stick and can limit the damage done. This area of the game is one that needs significant improvement, especially if the defense before him isn't consistent in assisting him in denying second-chance opportunities. Lennox can make life harder for himself, but he usually recovers in good order and is set for the follow-on attempt. Lennox plays deep in the net so his age when combined with his style made him susceptible to high-glove and high-blocker snipes. Improvements over time should be expected, as his glove-hand positioning in conjunction with his low crouch is sound and he rarely gets beat mid-glove.

Hockey Sense

Lennox is always locked in and doesn't seem to have any lackadaisical moments. He tracks pucks with visible determination from the second a faceoff is lost and his post-to-post movements against seam passes are in concert with the puck's speed and direction of travel. He is like any young goalie who needs to tweak his angles and not lose the net as often, and it didn't help that the OHL in 2019-20 was a run-and-gun league where goals per game were the highest in over 20 years. Still, his anticipation and reads were timely, and he can reel off three and four-save sequences while limiting the time he spends on the ice to the bare minimum.

Puck Handling

Lennox is an active puck handler with strong wrists who uses his stick beyond handling rims or dump-ins. He is comfortable vacated his crease and handling the puck for handoffs or passes within his own end, and he will attempt stretch passes while trying to save time on the power play or catching the opposition in a line change. Lennox also seems to favor the poke check and will attempt last-second thrusts as the shooter creeps closer to the top of the crease. He also doesn't appear to cover up the puck with frequency during soft dump-ins.

NHL Projection

No. 1 goalie or capable backup

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	W-L	SV %	GAA	SH	SV	SO
2018-19	Saginaw	15	7-2-2	.907	2.79	365	331	1
2019-20	Saginaw	33	20-8-3	.876	3.63	921	807	0

80



William Trudeau • Charlottetown (QMJHL)

Left defense • 6'0 • 189 pounds • Shoots Left • Oct. 11, 2002 • Varennes, QC • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	161	161	161	80	80

Season Review

One of the QMJHL's top scoring defensemen this past season, Trudeau was a critical piece to strong Charlottetown squad that reached the QMJHL final. The Varennes, QC rearguard was selected late by Drummondville in the 11th round of the 2018 QMJHL Draft, yet he never suited up for Drummondville. In December of 2018, Trudeau was part of the package sent to Charlottetown in exchange for Arizona Coyotes first-rounder Pierre-Olivier Joseph. Trudeau was thrust into the Islanders' lineup last season, playing 58 games, and recording a modest 15 points. This season yielded better results, however, as Trudeau tied for eighth in QMJHL defense scoring with 31 points (8 goals, 23 assists in 40 games), but third overall with 22 points at even strength. He wasn't as effective in the postseason (2 assists in 8 games), but Charlottetown had the luxury of leaning on veterans Lukas Cormier and Noah Laouan for most of the critical situations.

Skating and Stickhandling

Trudeau is an average skater for a defenseman listed under 6-foot-1, but he was consistent in his ability to handle pressure and exploit open ice. Not being the greatest skater from a speed or explosiveness standpoint seems to consistently keep Trudeau within the grasp of one or more opponents, but his hands, vision, and poise combine for an effective breakout that nets positive results. His partner or forwards have no problem deferring to him and Trudeau controls the puck and the pace of the shift with the confidence of a seasoned NHL veteran who's playing with a bunch of kids. He is well balanced and can be both elusive and slippery while changing direction, but the reality is that Trudeau's quickness is the lone drawback in what is an otherwise impressive package.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Trudeau is a pure playmaker with soft hands and advanced passing ability. He is both calm and confident when carrying the puck and will deliver accurate feeds from either his forehand or backhand regardless of the intensity of the pressure he's under. Although Cormier was Charlottetown's primary power-play quarterback, Trudeau more than handled himself while running the second unit and it's reasonable to believe that he would have spearheaded the lead group for any team that didn't already have a blue-chip prospect on defense. Trudeau has a hard wrist shot that seems to be his weapon of choice and he will sneak into the high slot looking for a quick chance at the net. Sometimes he acts like a fourth forward by activating off of faceoffs and involving himself in board battles, which creates a significant odd-man risk the other way since he's not fast enough to negate a numbers advantage.

Defense and Physicality

Trudeau is a sturdy defender who is willing to take a hit to complete a play, but his high IQ is what drove most of his success in his own end. His reads and step-ups often lead to opposing turnovers or end up bogging down an opponent's rush. He remains calm when the play does break down or when facing a hard forecheck. In-game moments during critical times do not seem to overwhelm him and he uses his plethora of skills to make positive plays from nothing. He is not overly physical but will throw a check on occasion and use his frame to protect the front of the net. Trudeau was used consistently on the penalty kill and was used on either the left or right side.

Hockey Sense

Trudeau is a steady, smooth defenseman, and has a tremendous grasp of playing the position, and it's obvious that he and partner Oscar Plandowski compliment each other perfectly. Trudeau plays in all situations — penalty kill, power play, and in late-close scenarios. Cerebral and calculated, Trudeau is a habitual shoulder-checker during any scenario and uses his smarts to take advantage of opposing miscues and strikes at opportune moments. Trudeau usually avoids taking unnecessary risks such as pinching or activating excessively. Rather, he reads the play and pinches when warranted while adhering to his defensive responsibilities as well.

NHL Projection

Bottom-pairing two-way defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Charlottetown	58	4	11	15	63	0.26	50
2020-21	Charlottetown	40	8	23	31	80	0.78	29

81



Olen Zellweger • Everett (WHL)

Left defense • 5'9 • 175 pounds • Shoots Left • Sep. 10, 2003 • Fort Saskatchewan, AB • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	81	81

Season Review

With all due respect to Winnipeg's Carson Lambos, you can make a strong argument that Zellweger was the WHL's top first-year eligible defenseman during the shortened season. Playing for Everett automatically makes any rearguard more than capable in their own end, which therefore allows the focus to shift on Zellweger's superior playmaking and power-play quarterbacking. He was one of the leading point producers (2 goals, 11 assists in 11 games) among WHL defensemen and was pacing to become Everett's first draft-eligible rearguard to average over a point a game over a full season. Zellweger, was selected 42nd overall in the 2018 WHL draft, later joined Team Canada at the under-18 worlds, where Zellweger was both productive and clean as a minute-eater and tied with two others for the most points in the tournament by a defenseman (1 goal, 7 assists, 8 shots).

Skating and Stickhandling

Zellweger is a nimble, elusive, and well-balanced skater who blends outstanding footwork with sharp anticipation and a high motor. His straight-line speed is average but he's so quick and decisive that it allows him to outskate pressure of explode into an opening. Zellweger is more than capable of skating the puck end to end because of his decisiveness, agility, and stickhandling. He maintains a low center of gravity and can power through checks, albeit dependent upon the size and strength of the opponent doing the hitting. Blessed with strong balance and fantastic edges, Zellweger can reverse or change direction on a dime and will tire out forecheckers by spinning and peeling back multiple times in one sequence.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Zellweger has one of the best shots of any draft-eligible defenseman and it has more to do with confidence, shot selection, accuracy, and release. He is a no-nonsense shooter who is a threat to let one fly from anywhere inside the offensive zone and he generates significant power with minimal backswing. Zellweger is the quintessential power-play quarterback for additional reasons, however, as he can break out on his own but also remain active in the offensive end while alternating sides to help expand the ice for his unit. His passing tendencies are of the quick-strike variety and his partner and forwards must prepare for a crisp pass no matter the distance.

Defense and Physicality

Everett is known for icing a shutdown defense with elite goaltending but Zellweger's impact in the defensive end has more to do with smarts and anticipation that overpowering an opponent or grinding it out along the boards. A lefty who can play the left or right side, Zellweger relies on his stick with varying levels of success but is always in the area to make his presence felt, even if the opposition knew he wasn't going to impact shifts from a physical standpoint. He does keep an excellent gap and will stand up at his line and absorb contact

Hockey Sense

Zellweger plays a smart three-zone game and usually stays within himself as a puck carrier and offensive defenseman. Although he's still trying to grasp the importance of slot positioning and can be guilty of chasing, Zellweger appeared to improve his structure during what was looking like a dominant sophomore season. There are several moments a game when he looks hyperactive and jittery before choosing an option that probably required more thought, but egregious mistakes with suboptimal consequences are quite rare. Zellweger plays the game at a feverish pace which may come in handy on the good side of the red line, but he is one of the few prospects who may benefit from dialing down the intensity instead of the other way around.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing offensive defenseman and power-play quarterback

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Everett	58	2	10	12	50	0.21	8
2020-21	Everett	11	2	11	13	28	1.18	2
2020-21	Canada U18	7	1	7	8	8	1.14	2

82



Nolan Allan • Prince Albert (WHL)

Left defense • 6'1 • 189 pounds • Shoots Left • April 28, 2003 • Davidson, SK • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	82	82

Season Review

A hard-hitting blueliner who was the third overall pick in the 2018 WHL draft, Allan was a critical piece to Prince Albert's blue line before joining Team Canada for the gold-medal run at the under-18 world championships. Allan's sophomore season with the Raiders did not yield impressive statistical numbers (1 goal, 1 assist, 18 shots in 16 games), but he was a minute eater for Canada on their top pairing at the U18's alongside draft phenom Brandt Clarke.

Skating and Stickhandling

Allan is an impressive skater for a physical defenseman, and he boasts a quick first step, long, clean stride, and above-average speed. He can hang with quicker puck rushers and seal the gap instantly, but his stick positioning plus the threat of mashing an opponent into next week leads to visible apprehension when attempting an inside move. Allan also has the confidence to cut back or reverse when faced with forecheck pressure, although handling the puck is not one of his stronger areas. Most of the decisions Allan makes with the puck are rapid and he gladly acquires breakout duties to his forwards.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Allan has a hard shot but doesn't offer much in the playmaking and creativity departments, and non-existent point production in junior hockey usually carries over into the NHL. He's not completely devoid of puck skills, however, as his shot can look impressive the few instances he decides to use it. What's odd about Allan is that he occasionally looks active and aggressive in the offensive zone but then wants nothing to do with the puck once he gets it. Whether it's indecision or by design is for NHL scouts to figure out, but it's probably best that Allan limits his touches in the offensive zone to one-time shots, quick d-to-d passes, and pinches. He generated only 55 shots in 74 career WHL games.

Defense and Physicality

Allan is a minute-eating rock in the defensive end and is one of the most feared hitters in the draft. His massive wallop that sent sturdy Nikita Chibrikov into the Canadian bench at the U18 worlds was just one of multiple examples over the last two seasons where Allan timed his hit perfectly with decisive results. Allan wields an active stick that works in concert with his movements, and he patrols the neutral zone with diligence and awareness. He's difficult to dance around and will eliminate puck carriers high at the line. Allan also is dependable in slot coverage and is the type of defenseman you want on the ice for the penalty kill or late/close situations. He'll also drop the gloves if necessary.

Hockey Sense

Allan is a limited player offensive who is neither creative or consistent with the puck, which is why he deserves credit for staying within himself consistently and having a firm grasp of his role as a physical shutdown defender. He rarely takes major risks and if he does it's to leave his post to deliver a crunching hit. His reads and anticipation in the neutral zone are mostly solid and although the stats look disappointing, Allan indirectly impacts shifts and allows his teammates as much freedom of movement at possible. He also plays a highly disciplined game for a defenseman who loves to hit.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing physical defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Prince Albert	58	2	6	8	37	0.14	25
2020-21	Prince Albert	16	1	1	2	18	0.13	21

83**Brent Johnson • Sioux Falls (USHL)**

Left defense • 5'11 • 165 pounds • Shoots Left • March 20, 2003 • Dallas, TX • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	83	83

Season Review

An offensive defenseman who burst onto the USHL scene as a rookie, Johnson finished tied for fifth among USHL draft-eligible blueliners with 32 points (11 goals, 21 assists) in 47 games for Sioux Falls. Although the Stampede were one of the worst teams in the league and failed to make the playoffs, Johnson and notable draft prospect Cole Sillinger quickly became one of the league's most prolific forward-defenseman combinations. The Texas native ran the power power, played on the penalty kill, and was summoned for most late/close situations. He's committed to the University of North Dakota.

Skating and Stickhandling

Johnson is an agile offensive defenseman with impressive stick skills who can quarterback the power play and breakout without issue. His skating is a noticeable strength and not only in straight-line speed or agility. Johnson is a fluid backskater who changes speeds accordingly while wielding a very active stick. Slippery and elusive are two more ways to describe Johnson with the puck, and he can outmaneuver the most dogged of forechecks with multiple cutbacks or spin moves in one sequence.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Johnson has an average shot and seems more inclined to set plays up than fire pucks indiscriminately. He has soft hands that allow him to make quick transitional plays and he can execute passes in one motion, to include slap and touch passes. Johnson appears to understand the importance of spacing and usually avoids bunching up or crowding the puck when he's not needed. This allows him to find space and unload accurate shots at the net, especially on the power play. He can be creative with the puck by multitasking his lateral or backwards movements with crisp puck deliveries or sneaky snap shots that fit through clogged lanes. Johnson also loves to activate off draws and will hover near the slot for one-timer attempts.

Defense and Physicality

Defensively, Johnson can be hit or miss depending on the situation. He is rail thin and at this stage is incapable of winning battles on strength alone. Much like several of today's top NHL defensemen who are on the smaller side, however, Johnson relies on his stick and footwork far more than his upper-body strength, but his high compete level is what really helps fix the opposition away from danger areas. He is good at angling his body correctly and closing in quickly to shut down initial chances or follow-up opportunities. Johnson also does a great job creating turnovers and creating mishaps before quickly turning them into chances for his own side.

Hockey Sense

Possessing both a high IQ and great poise, Johnson succeeds at controlling play in both zones. Offensively, Johnson processes the game at a quick pace and can make quick decisions. His mobility allows him to travel along the blueline, allowing a play to develop. With a solid foundation of skills at both ends of the ice but significant promise in the offensive end, Johnson has a high ceiling if he continues to improve his one-on-one play and doesn't let a size disadvantage make him a juicy target for the opposition to exploit. Johnson shares stylistic traits with current New York Ranger prospect Zac Jones.

NHL Projection

Bottom-pairing offensive defenseman and power-play quarterback

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Sioux Falls	47	11	21	32	54	0.68	42

84



Peter Reynolds • Saint John (QMJHL)

Center/Wing • 5'10 • 167 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 20, 2003 • Fredericton, NB • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	84	84

Season Review

A skilled offensive forward with soft hands and impressive vision, Reynolds did more than his share to earn a spot on Saint John's top line alongside Ryan Francis and Vladislav Kotkov, and the trio quickly became one of the league's most dangerous. The Sea Dogs as a team were feast or famine for the season, as they scored 4.18 goals a game but surrendered 4.12. Their power play, which Reynolds contributed to, ranked third in the QMJHL with 26.8 percent success rate, only to finish near the bottom with a 74.1 penalty-kill percentage. It's within this context that Reynolds' season must be viewed, in addition to the fact that as a rookie he ranked third in scoring on a deadly attack had eight skaters average over or close to a point per game. Reynolds, who two seasons ago played for the BCHL's Chilliwack Chiefs tied for second among QMJHL rookies in both goals (15) and points (31), and 24 of his 31 points came at even strength. He also won 53.7 percent of his faceoffs (223-for-415)

Skating and Stickhandling

Reynolds is one of the quicker QMJHL forward prospects in the draft and he is consistent in using his speed to exploit puck-gazing defenseman. He is dangerous in one-on-one situations and will take the puck strong to the inside. He is slight of frame and gets shoved off the puck with ease by bigger defenders, but Reynolds' competitive fire helps keep him involved in plays even after he's lost possession. He's an excellent stickhandler whether moving at top speed in a straight line into the teeth of traffic or while eluding pressure in a deliberate east-west manner.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Reynolds is a dual threat who can play any of the three forward positions. He has a hard slapper that he likes to use off the pass from the right circle, but opponents have to plan for his near-elite passing ability, especially across the season. Reynolds is a bit of a puck magician who can make high-end plays, and he is able to connect with targets located anywhere in the offensive zone regardless of traffic. He puts the perfect touch on his chips and lead passes and is a threat to hook up with a trailer or cutter. He played on a stacked team that is losing big names next season, so it's reasonable to assume that Reynolds would be not only a top scorer in the league but average more than under two shots per game.

Defense and Physicality

Reynolds is a well-rounded forward prospect who contributes both on and off the puck. Saint John was deep at every position and had defined roles for their forwards, so one can say that Reynolds' usage favored the offensive side. He plays with energy and hounds the puck within his coverage radius, but it appears that Reynolds knows when he's needed in a puck battle and when he's better off blocking a lane or covering a gap close to his goal. He hustles on the backcheck and makes self-sacrificing plays, but Reynolds isn't strong or physical enough to separate opponents from the puck unless he's doing so with his stick. He was summoned for critical draws and won more than he lost.

Hockey Sense

Reynolds is both crafty and creative, and he finds ways to generate opportunities for himself or anyone on his five-man unit. He can be trusted with driving a well-executed odd-man rush or run a possession from the half wall with delay tactics, controlled puck handling, precision passes, or surprise shots through screens. Reynolds is a tough out for the opposition, not only for his calm and poised zone entries but also once his team settles into the zone and runs their cycle.

NHL Projection

Middle-six playmaking center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Saint John	33	15	16	31	63	0.94	2

85



Vladislav Lukashevich • Loko Yaroslavl (MHL)

Left defense • 6'2 • 167 pounds • Shoots Left • May 23, 2003 • Magadan, RUS • Russia

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	76	76	76	85	85

Season Review

Defensemen in the MHL regardless of age rarely put up the kind of point-per-game numbers you would see in Sweden's J20 Nationell or Canadian major junior, which adds perspective to the fact that this reliable puck mover led an MHL finalist in defense scoring (19 points in 36 games), assists (16), and ice time (17:30 per game). Lukashevich has always been considered a borderline blue-chip prospect with first-round potential for a draft as wide open as 2021, but much his American peers in the NTDP, MHL defenders usually play a team-centric game that cedes possession and creativity to their brethren in the forward ranks. Therefore, his potential as a point producer at higher levels remains clouded in ambiguity, especially since he missed an injury denied him the chance to strut his stuff in a run-and-gun environment like the under-18 world championship.

Skating and Stickhandling

Lukashevich is an excellent skater for his size, and he compounds issues for opponents by changing from poised play in his own end to decisive north-south puckhandling into the offensive zone. He is fluid in his movements in any directions and owns a long, powerful stride. Lukashevich is a confident puck carrier who can go for a skate well past center ice and enter the opposing end under control. It probably didn't happen often, but Lukashevich could bail out his forwards who were stuck in the neutral zone by collecting the puck himself and skating it to safety.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Lukashevich was neither Loko Yaroslavl's No. 1 defenseman nor a primary power-play quarterback, but that should change for next season following the graduations of several big names. He is a dual threat from the point although he seems to favor passes to the backdoor or circles than firing away without any tactical or strategic aim. Lukashevich has a hard shot that he keeps low, and he was the intended target for set plays off offensive-zone draws nor strong playmaking and shooting abilities. It is his keen vision and shot power that makes it reasonable to consider Lukashevich's upside to be more than just a "Steady Eddie" with good size and speed. He has soft hands and rarely fumbles the puck when playing catch with his partner. Lukashevich also is a threat to deliver crisp home-run passes.

Defense and Physicality

Lukashevich is a prototypical two-way defenseman in that he is as effective in his own end without the puck as he is while controlling it up the ice. Although he seems partial towards his stick over hard shoves or hitting altogether, Lukashevich is a legitimate safety net for his entire five-man unit, and he uses his impressive backskating to react to any sudden reversals in possession. He was used on the penalty kill and entrusted with late/close situations during the regular season and in the playoffs before an apparent injury sidelined him for critical series in the semifinals and final. The main blemish on Lukashevich's pre-draft resume is that he isn't very physical. Normally this wouldn't be considered a deal breaker, but he's yet to face adult competition (a rarity for the top teenagers in Russia) and was never challenged physically by an angry or violent opponent.

Hockey Sense

Lukashevich is smarter than most teenage defensemen, which puts him in the running for one of the brightest from this year's European class. He makes up for a quiet-like approach with sound decisions on and off the puck, and he can be trusted with putting out major fires in any scenario or in-game setting. Seeing him connect on long-distance passes with regularity is one example that validates his mature hockey mind.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing two-way defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Loko Yaroslavl	36	2	4	6	42	0.17	14
2020-21	Loko Yaroslavl	36	3	16	19	52	0.53	8

86



Linus Sjodin • Rogle (SHL)

Center/Wing • 5'9 • 163 pounds • Shoots Left • Oct. 2, 2002 • Angelholm, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	128	128	128	86	86

Season Review

A reliable two-way center who makes calculated decisions while showing a high panic threshold in neutral zone traffic, Sjodin's maturity and surehandedness likely played a role in his promotion to a loaded Rogle roster in the SHL, where he played as a left wing in all his 22 regular-season games (1 goal, 3 shots) but did not participate in their lengthy playoff run. His role in the J20 Nationell was far more prominent, however, as Sjodin registered 5 goals and 13 assists as a top-six, all-situations center, albeit behind the older Hampus Karlsson on the depth chart. He finished second on that team in assists (13) and third in points (18), and although he has yet to play for Sweden at the international level, Sjodin took part in a two-game set with Sweden's under-19 squad in matches against the U18's.

Skating and Stickhandling

An upright skater with average speed, Sjodin was more dangerous and creative in one-on-one situations in junior than he was with the big club. His feet are quick, and he can drop a gear shift on his backhand to make a power move to the net, but he seems both confident and comfortable operating laterally without fear of getting clocked or stripped of the puck. Sjodin will weave and twirl in multiple directions, and he's especially dangerous in 2-on-2 situations because his rapid directional changes can cross up a defense pairing into a missed assignment. He's a strong puck handler who doesn't flinch with the walls caving in on him, especially in the defensive zone when a clear is required to alleviate pressure.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Sjodin at the J20 level was used extensively as a second-line center but was a mainstay on the first power-play unit. He's an excellent passer and can fit the puck through any window, but he's also slippery and creative to weave his way into the middle of the ice and dial up a nasty wrister on net. Although he is more of a pass-first type, Sjodin's shot must be respected, and he also is comfortable using his backhand from in tight.

Defense and Physicality

Sjodin is a strong two-way forward who was used on the penalty kill with Rogle J20 but understandably saw a decreased role as a fourth liner on Rogle's powerful SHL squad. He won 45.8 percent of his faceoffs (120-for-262) against junior competition and was used against opposing top lines. One of his better performances of the season was a complete 200-foot effort on Oct. 3 to help shut down a deadly Frolunda squad that came into the match averaging nearly six goals a game. Rogle came away with a convincing 5-2 win in which Sjodin pick up two power-play assists, but it was his poised play in traffic while being harassed that stood out the most. Sjodin can be counted on to break out on his own and isn't always eager to relinquish possession just for a line change. He's also an aggressive forechecker and he will retreat in good order with an active stick before holding his line to thwart an opposing entry attempt with his body or stick.

Hockey Sense

Sjodin is a polished gamer who takes his job seriously. He is always engaged and will look gassed at the end of a shift only because of being smoked from a maximum effort on and off the puck. Rogle was a strong team at both the J20 and SHL levels and both benefitted from his play, albeit in different ways. He's highly calculated with the puck and will use a series of moves both inside and out to gain time and space, but Sjodin is a pure playmaker who does so with the intent to create offense for any teammate rather than make all his shifts about individual achievement.

NHL Projection

Middle-six two-way center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Rogle J20	20	3	9	12	41	0.60	4
2020-21	Rogle J20	19	5	13	18	40	0.95	37

87



Riley Kidney • Acadie-Bathurst (QMJHL)

Center • 5'11 • 168 pounds • Shoots Right • March 25, 2003 • Enfield, NS • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	107	107	107	87	87

Season Review

A slippery two-way center who delivered one of the best statistical seasons among any QMJHL draft eligible, Kidney is one of the major sleepers available this year. He spent most of the season as Acadie-Bathurst's No. 2 center between 2001-born wingers Bennett MacArthur and Logan Chisholm, and the Titan finished with the fourth-best record in the league. Although he wasn't his team's nominal top-line center, Kidney certainly played like one, especially in the postseason. In nine games, Kidney led the QMJHL with a 1.67 assists-per-game average (15 assists in 9 games) and tied for second with a 1.89 points-per-game average (17 points in 9 games). If you combined his regular-season numbers (13 goals, 25 assists in 33 games) with the playoffs, Kidney recorded 41 of his 55 points at even strength or short-handed. He also more than doubled his production from his rookie year, from 0.56 over 59 games in 2019-20 to 1.15 in 33 matches last season. None of this should sound too surprising, however, as he was considered a premier playmaker when the Titan drafted him 11th overall in the 2018 QMJHL draft, and he was selected to play for Canada-White at the 2019 under-17 Hockey Challenge.

Skating and Stickhandling

Kidney's skating technique and speed doesn't line up with his puck skills or smarts, but his average speed didn't stop him from crushing QMJHL competition. He'll attack down the wing with as much speed as he can generate and use smart fakes or subtle changes to his pace once pressure closes on him. What drives the average Kidney possession is his elite stickhandling, and there isn't a situation the young man can't work his way out of. Navigating through traffic while having a target on his back doesn't always yield optimal results, and Kidney can be guilty of a forced pass or risky route that leads to a turnover. Fortunately for him, however, those instances are the exception and not the rule, and the more chances Kidney gets to manipulate the neutral zone, the greater the chance to create opportunities.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

As expected, Kidney is a deadly playmaker with excellent vision who earns most of his assists by navigating through the tough areas before exploiting open ice. It's not as though he was simply feeding pucks to natural goal scorers, as he spent most of the season centering undrafted 2001-born winger Bennett MacArthur, who jumped from 8 goals in 2019-20 to 28 in 33 games last season. He is as good as a backhand passer as on the forehand, and Kidney will saucer or float perfect lead passes that catch a streaker or cutter right on the tape. Kidney increased his shot generation and by doing so he nearly tripled his production from the season prior. He can wire the puck with authority, but Kidney is such an expert stickhandler that he will rarely settle for a low-percentage shot and take his chances attacking the middle to improve his angle.

Defense and Physicality

Kidney is a fairly effective 200-foot center who can take big faceoffs, kill penalties, and combine an active stick with a pesky mindset. You probably won't ask him to shadow a top scorer or neutralize an opposing power-play by himself, as it appears that offense is at the front of his mind most of the time. Still, Kidney does not shy away from his responsibilities as a checker, and he likes to pressure the points while keeping his stick active or join in on a board battle when support is needed. But he's most useful in transition and is exactly the player you want with the puck once it squirts free from the opposition. He makes deliberate maneuvers to convince a checker that pressuring him is useless, and it's common to see Kidney attack in the direction of a retreating forward whose back is to the play.

Hockey Sense

Kidney possesses a sharp hockey mind who compensates for a lack of size, strength, and speed with phenomenal hands and vision. He thinks several plays ahead of most opponents and the list of goalies and defensemen he's faked out continues to grow. He avoids checks by design than out of fear, which in turn forces the hitter to leave his post for a failed attempt at separating him from the puck.

NHL Projection

Middle-six playmaking center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Acadie-Bathurst	59	5	28	33	112	0.56	26
2020-21	Acadie-Bathurst	33	13	25	38	87	1.15	16

88
(OA)



Vasili Machulin • Dynamo MSK (MHL)

Left defense • 6'3 • 194 pounds • Shoots Left • Aug. 7, 2002 • Moscow, RUS • Russia

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	88	88

Season Review

Machulin's numbers say he was a middle pairing or depth defender for a loaded team. But a deeper study into his usage reveals a young defenseman who was leaned on in critical moments. It's common in Russian junior hockey for a team to not only play eight defensemen instead of the standard six, but also ensure all get a decent amount of playing time. Therefore, although Machulin's ice time this season decreased slightly from 16:13 in the regular season to 15:52 in the MHL finals. Therefore, even just by statwatching, his 16:13 of ice time during the final, while competing with seven other blueliners, can be contextualized into a clear top-four role, which Machulin most certainly had. In fact, Machulin was one of the MHL's best defensemen this season when you consider how deep a blueline he played on and where he ranked among his league-wide peers. Of the 108 MHL defensemen who appeared in 60 or more games, Machulin ranked fourth in goals scored (9), sixth in shots (143), seventh in games played (62), 10th in overall scoring (25 points), but only 74th in TOI (16:13).

Skating and Stickhandling

Machulin is a strong and secure skater whose hunched style makes him look pensive and engaged rather than awkward or slow. His speed can be deceptive since he can change gears on the move but also drop the shoulder and carry the puck on his edges without losing steam, even as he's being leaned on. If a second opponent releases to block his new path, Machulin will reverse direction on a dime and begin a confident backskate as he surveys his 10 to 2.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Machulin is adept at creating his own shot and can turn an offensive-zone draw into an opportunity to showcase his agility, patience, and heavy, accurate slapper. He will activate off draws like crazy, not just in the offensive end but also deep in his own end. Even in the MHL final, Machulin was darting towards faceoff scrums to with the intent to create an odd-man rush and blasting a shot from inside the blue line. Any opponent who lines up for a draw in their own end must be aware of Machulin's penchant for activating towards the half wall, then walking the puck back towards the middle of the ice so he can hammer one on net. His passing game is strong, as he can catch the opposition in line changes with home-run feeds but also skate the puck into the teeth of traffic before sliding a pass that catches a forward in stride.

Defense and Physicality

Machulin is a highly versatile defender who can play the left or right side and be used in any situation that requires an immediate stop. Although he isn't as overtly physical as some of his fellow Dynamo MSK defenders, Machulin packs a heavy punch and can humble the thickest of opposing forwards with a stiff shoulder or open-ice check. He's a battler who knows when to release towards the net but has quick feet to alternate covering the corner or the net without losing steam or effort in the process. Machulin killed penalties during critical situation

Hockey Sense

Machulin is a very intelligent rearguard who not only breaks out on his own but does so with sound intentions and effective short-distance movements through or around traffic. Machulin exudes confidence as he deliberately moves up the ice while scanning beyond 180 degrees. Once he sees an opening, the gear shifts into a higher speed and his impressive stick work does the rest. There's risk involved in his decision making, however, as Machulin loves to step up in the neutral zone and look for that dying quail to intercept and heads the other way. Moments like these can be hairy for his teammates, but his forays into danger zones seem well intentioned, calculated, and survivable.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing two-way defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Dynamo MSK	41	3	5	8	84	0.20	43
2020-21	Dynamo MSK	62	9	16	25	143	0.40	71

89

Albert Sjoberg • Sodertalje J20 (Nationell)

Right wing • 6'0 • 183 pounds • Shoots Right • March 19, 2003 • Stockholm, SWE • Sweden

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	89	89

Season Review

A thick winger with a deadly wrister who is more than willing to battle in the trenches, Sjoberg was a top-line winger for Sodertalje J20 before he was promoted for 15 games in the Division-II Allsvenskan, where he was a worker been on the bottom six but provided energy and net crashing. He also played for Sweden at the under-18 world championship, where he tallied two goals and an assist in seven games to help the Swedes take home the bronze medal.

Skating and Stickhandling

Sjoberg is a strong skater with a powerful stride and above-average quickness. Always involved in the play one way or another, Sjoberg is an effective chip-and-chaser and his violent check that caps off a 50/50 battle seems to instill fear and doubt in defenders. In a way, Sjoberg can have complete mind control over an opponent because of the fear his hitting can instill. If the puck isn't jarred loose from his initial contact, Sjoberg will battle hard before taking it away and dominating control along the boards. He may seem like an energy type whose main contribution is hitting, but Sjoberg can control the puck under pressure and pull a fancy move or two in the process.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Sjoberg wires a heavy wrist shot and can score from distances beyond the slot. He didn't play for the deepest of teams at either the J20 or SHL levels but was able to create his own chances and blister shots off the curl or from the boards. He's more of a shooter than a playmaker, as Sjoberg will do the dirty work along the boards and assist in the cycle before releasing to his desired firing point. Sjoberg is a useful option on the power play, serving mostly in a low slot or net-front role. He isn't much of a playmaker, although he shows a nice touch on an occasional saucer or chip pass. If the puck is on his stick anywhere near the goal, he's either shooting it or handing it off to a more capable linemate.

Defense and Physicality

Sjoberg is as close to an exemplary defensive forward as you'll find in this draft class. He not only pays attention to puck activity, but he also has incredible restraint to maintain his positioning and seems to understand that the bigger threat is the middle of the ice rather than aimlessly supporting a puck battle in the corner that already has teammates engaged. Sometimes this can be construed as a lack of competitiveness but seeing Sjoberg shoulder-check for backdoor threats over a half-dozen times in one sequence while keeping his stick in the passing lane is the mark of a well-intentioned and cerebral two-way forward. He kills penalties, can be a tough net-front option, and angrily finishes his checks.

Hockey Sense

As you can already tell, Sjoberg is a think-and-play forward in nearly all situations. There is visible calculation in his decisions on and off the puck. He'll cover vacated points, alternate between the strong and weak sides, and support the puck, when necessary, rather than bunch up towards linemates. He isn't very creative for his linemates, however, and most of the work he'll do in each shift inside the offensive end is along the boards rather. If Sjoberg gets the puck at center ice, there's a stronger chance he'll dump it in than enter the zone with poise and decisiveness.

NHL Projection

Bottom-six power forward

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Sodertalje J20	18	10	3	13	40	0.72	33
2020-21	Sodertalje-2	17	1	0	1	6	0.06	2

90



Ryan Winterton • Hamilton (OHL)

Center • 6'2 • 175 pounds • Shoots Right • Sep. 4, 2003 • Whitby, ON • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	90	90

Season Review

A strong skater with excellent balance, Winterton was the eighth-overall pick in the 2019 OHL Priority Selection who has played well for Canada at two of the more prominent international tournaments. He is the perfect option to summon for a late-period penalty kill or to help throw an opposing breakout off kilter, and Winterton certainly did his part to get as much ice time as possible on a deep Hamilton squad in 2019-20, which was the last time he participated in league play. Sitting out the entire 2020-21 season helped keep Winterton fresh for Team Canada at the under-18 world championship, where he collected two goals and two assists in seven games while serving in a checking and penalty-killing role. He also skated for Canada-Black at the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge (3 assists in 5 games).

Skating and Stickhandling

Winterton is a jersey flapper with a quick first step and long, powerful stride. Although he doesn't need to look faster than he already is, Winterton also plays with energy and anticipates puck travel which allow him to play an in-your-face style. Attempts to fix him to the outside involve significant risk, as Winterton will make a sharp cut to the inside and take the puck strong to the net. He looks both confident and relaxed as he controls the puck along the boards, which is where he's most effective on the puck outside of being alone in open ice.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Wiring the puck with authority is one of Winterton's better assets, although he's yet to develop consistent open-ice tactics that allow him to use his speed and shot simultaneously. He has a quick release and knows exactly where to position himself for one-timers, and his mid-range bombs can be a handful for goalies to handle. A look into Winterton's 2019-20 assist totals as a bottom-six forward revealed that in his 53 games, only two of his 11 assists were primaries that were literally passed to the goal scorer, and neither of the two he picked up in garbage time at the under-18 worlds were primaries. Of course, box scores don't tell the whole story, but there's a good bet that Winterton and his plus-plus shot will evolve into either a shoot-first winger to compliment a playmaking center, or a checking center who provides the bonus of goal scoring.

Defense and Physicality

Winterton is an excellent two-way forward whose hustle, anticipation, speed, and routes force opposing defenders into catastrophic decisions. What you saw at the under-18 world championship was not showboating or spotlighting in a short tournament – Winterton is known for a spirited game off the puck and will keep his legs moving from start to finish. It remains to be seen if this style will continue as his role and usage with Hamilton increases, but forwards like Winterton don't forget how to play the man or cover up gaps. If anything, he'll become even smarter and decisive while learning how to conserve his energy for other important tasks. In terms of physicality, Winterton has the ideal build to pummel defensemen on the forecheck, but he seems to pick his spots and uses his frame for puck separation rather than violence or physical intimidation.

Hockey Sense

Winterton is just scratching the surface at what he can do on the good side of the red line. His speed and IQ are both in the plus category, but he combines them far more frequently off the puck than on it. Therein lies the rub, as scouts must decide if Winterton is destined for a middle-six checking role like a Carl Hagelin (which they'll gladly take) who generates most of his offense off the forecheck and cycle, or a self starter who can create his own shot as well as set up his linemates.

NHL Projection

Middle-six two-way forward

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Hamilton	53	12	11	23	75	0.43	8
2020-21	Canada U18	7	2	2	4	8	0.57	2

91



Henry Nelson • Maple Grove (HS-MN)

Left defense • 6'1 • 180 pounds • Shoots Left • March 25, 2003 • Maple Grove, MN • U.S.

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	91	91

Season Review

Nelson was just as worthy as Jack Peart to win the Mr. Hockey Award but there should be no shame in coming up short. He was outstanding as a minute-eating two-way defender for a Maple Grove squad which dominated the Class 2A slate before losing to Eden Prairie in the state semifinal. He immediately went on to play in six games for the USHL's Lincoln Stars, albeit in a significantly reduced role but with fair results (1 goal, 1 assist, 6 shots) and flashes of the confident puck rushing he did in high school. He's committed to Notre Dame.

Skating and Stickhandling

Nelson is a one-man breakout who his teammates constantly deferred to when they were trapped or blocked in the neutral zone. He's an above-average skater in terms of straight-line quickness, but Nelson's bigger strengths are his footwork with fluid, economical movements in every direction. Playing against high schoolers allowed him to manipulate their over-aggressiveness with ease, and it was common to see Nelson control the puck up high before faking an oncoming checker to the outside and dart to the middle to wind up for a wrister or slapper. These moments never occurred in the USHL, although his sample size was much smaller, but Nelson's commitment towards improving his game affords him the benefit of the doubt to adapt to his new surroundings and eventually exploit USHL and NCAA checkers in the same manner.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Nelson is a shoot-first defender who will not hesitate to let one fly. He generates significant velocity on his wrister, which he's used to generate rebounds from as far as immediately inside his blue line. Of course, goalies in high school are nowhere near as competent with rebound control as in college. But Nelson's shot should remain a weapon as his own collegiate career develops. He can be a brilliant playmaker with sharp vision and soft hands, but he also has quick feet to maneuver his way into an open lane and use the threat of his shot to draw opponents away from his forwards near the goal.

Defense and Physicality

Nelson made quick work of prep-circuit forwards and he never seemed to run out of gas despite playing at least 25 to 30 minutes a night. Although his priorities of work probably began with puck movement and shooting, Nelson served as Maple Grove's one-ice general in all situations and was effective at shutting down an attack and quickly countering within a three to five-second span. He held his line with textbook stick-on-puck technique and would gap up quickly while letting his quick stick to do the talking as opposed to a violent check or hard shove. Like most quick-strike defensemen, Nelson reads plays at an elite level and that includes when in coverage in his own end. Although he can drift from the slot and can get caught up ice, Nelson is not a liability in his own end and supports the idea that the best defense is an up-tempo offense.

Hockey Sense

As easy as Maple Grove's schedule was within the tough Minnesota high school circuit, Nelson's quick-strike mentality and poise under intense pressure should not be marginalized. Yes, it is reasonable to compare him to Jack Peart, whose transition from a similar Minnesota high school powerhouse to the USHL was seamless rather than purely instructional. But as the saying goes, player development is not linear, and Nelson showed enough high-level smarts during the pressure-packed state tournament to consider him a legitimate two-way defender with NHL upside.

NHL Projection

Middle-pairing two-way defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Maple Grove	23	11	35	46	20*	2.00	10

*Unofficial

92



Verner Miettinen • Espoo U20 (SM-Sarja)

Center • 5'11 • 166 pounds • Shoots Left • April 7, 2003 • Espoo, FIN • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	116	116	116	92	92

Season Review

An energetic two-way center who can act like a third defenseman, Miettinen is the younger brother of Veeti Miettinen, and the duo were teammates for Espoo-U20 two seasons ago before Veeti was selected by the Maple Leafs and moved to North America to play college hockey. Both Verner and Veeti had strong reputations in the Finnish junior league during their respective draft year, but Verner dealt with a tougher draft season beyond any pandemic-related restrictions. He played for a weaker Espoo-U20 squad that won only a handful of games. Miettinen did his best to prevent that, as he placed second on the squad with seven goals in 19 games. He also played on the power play and penalty kill, and he usually was on the ice when his team needed a big stop or tying goal. His 19 games with Espoo U20 were the extent of his league play in 2020-21, however, as he too is committed to St. Cloud State and would have lost his eligibility had he played in one of Finland's higher leagues. Much like his older brother, Verner has never been a stranger to the international stage, where he's represented Finland in at least five tournaments over the last two seasons, including the 2021 under-18 world championship (1 goal, 8 shots in 6 games).

Skating and Stickhandling

Miettinen's speed makes shifts eventful and productive for his unit. He boasts impressive one-on-one moves and is slippery in an east-west fashion. Playing smart, unselfish hockey is a big part of his game, so you rarely see selfish straight-line attacks into the teeth of neutral zone traffic. Rather, Miettinen will use his lateral quickness and strong edges to change direction or shift gears to allow support to catch up. He plays like a true center, one who can drive possession, orchestrate the cycle, and control the flow and pace while maintaining control of the puck. His balance was strong enough for the SM-Sarja but it will be tested in the NCHC after he joins Veeti at St. Cloud State.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Miettinen is more of a finisher than a set-up man, but he makes clean, crisp passes on the rush or during breakouts. He plays a safe game in the offensive zone but will force passes into tight areas with mixed results. Miettinen has played the half wall on the power play but seems to favor playing catch with the defenseman rather than stickhandle and deke the opposition into opening the seam. He can hammer it off the pass with accuracy but he's probably more dangerous close to the goal, where his size doesn't limit his ability to roof pucks from in tight and pop in rebounds.

Defense and Physicality

Miettinen is a quality two-way forward who provides speed, effort, smarts, and intangibles. He was the go-to option for Espoo U20 acts like a third defenseman who trusts his wingers to cover the points and high slot and drops down to assist his blueliners in boards battles and net-front coverage. Miettinen is an excellent penalty killer, not only for speed and stick positioning, but also for his constant shoulder checking and in faceoffs – Miettinen ranked fourth at the U18 worlds with a 63.2 percent success rate (43-for-68). Although he has smallish measurements, Miettinen is willing to battle into the corners and go shoulder to shoulder with his man regardless of size. He finishes his checks authority and makes his presence felt without taking bad penalties or losing his cool.

Hockey Sense

Miettinen always plays with his head up and makes decisions that can be justified. For example, his clearing attempts from his own end rarely come in the form of the fire-and-forget icing. If he doesn't execute a high flip over the point men, Miettinen will delay an extra second without showing panic before he skates the puck out on his own. He has flair and creativity, but it is not as visible as his brother, who seemingly scored at will and was one of Finland's better dual threats. Verner is more calculated and safer, which isn't necessarily a bad thing when you consider just how good he is defensively and the fires he's able to put out for his staff. Miettinen is a respected player for his intangibles, durability, and reliability, and he's been trusted with big assignments against top lines.

NHL Projection

Bottom-six two-way center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Espoo U20	19	7	3	10	--	0.53	4
2020-21	Finland U18	6	1	0	1	8	0.17	4

93



Niko Huuhtanen • Tappara U20 (SM-Sarja)

Right Wing • 6'2 • 204 pounds • Shoots Right • June 26, 2003 • Espoo, FIN • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	63	63	63	93	93

Season Review

A hard-shooting winger with size who was one of the top goal scorers in Finland's under-20 SM-Sarja, Huuhtanen helped Tappara to a strong regular season before bowing out to eventual-champion Lukko in the abbreviated semifinals. Although Tappara lost both its games to Lukko, Huuhtanen helped them get there by being an absolute beast during the SM-Sarja's group play, as he scored nine goals in 12 games to tie for fifth among nearly 300 participants. He was Tappara's top-line wing and lead power-play option for most of the season, and he was later added to Finland's under-18 team for the world championship, where he served in a bottom-six role but tallied two goals and three assists in seven games.

Skating and Stickhandling

Huuhtanen is an average skater for his size, but he has a hidden gear that he seems to save for cutting into the middle for a cleaner look at the net or a shoulder dip to take the puck strong to the outside. Huuhtanen has a long, powerful stride that looks clean in open ice, but his rate of speed seems to vary shift to shift. In the end, all that matters for now is that he scores goals as well as any draft-eligible prospect in Finland, and Huuhtanen anticipates quickly to have a say in 50/50 races rather than lose outright most of the time. One of the ways Huuhtanen compensates for any speed-related shortcoming is his stickhandling, which is an effective tool in tight areas, and there are times when Huuhtanen can look nimble, poised, and elusive while controlling the puck along the boards. To be frank, Huuhtanen looked much quicker at the U18 worlds than with Tappara U20.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Huuhtanen is a goal scorer who beat you several ways. As deadly as his shot can be, he also attacks the net and pounces on loose pucks for roof jobs in tight. can blister the puck and has one of the best shot-release combos in the draft. He doesn't use a lot of backswing on his slapper but still generates plus-plus velocity. Staying active in the offensive zone and alternating from the circle to the slot and back to the circle allows Huuhtanen to keep a defense pairing honest, and it probably helps their cause if the goalie prepares for a snipe as well. He was used on the left point on the power play and Tappara's set up seems to center around his shot from the left circle. His passing game is developing nicely and Huuhtanen will use slap fakes and look-offs to open a lane for a tape-to-tape feed.

Defense and Physicality

Huuhtanen is a one-way forward whose energy level and attention to detail is higher in the offensive zone than in his own end, although his neutral-zone effort involves hitting and some read-and-react. He can be a floater at times, and not having ideal speed tends to result in late backchecks and missed coverage that. Huuhtanen is far more effective on the puck than off it and he didn't kill penalties with regularity at the club level. A bonus is Huuhtanen's physicality, which can be a difference maker in the neutral zone but isn't used with consistency.

Hockey Sense

Although it may sound like Huuhtanen is a one-dimensional winger with tunnel vision, the reality is that he has room for growth and showed contributions in other areas beyond goal scoring, albeit in bits and pieces and spread out over a full season. He plays with spunk and is not a lazy player, and he does compete hard in board battles, but asking him to treat goal scoring as secondary or tertiary runs the risk of demotivating him. It will be interesting to see if his game grows at higher levels or if his future coaches also cherish the simple fact that Huuhtanen can fill the net.

NHL Projection

Middle-six goal scorer and power-play option

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Tappara U20	37	20	14	34	--	0.92	73
2020-21	Finland U18	7	2	3	5	8	0.71	4

94



Ilya Ivantsov • SKA-1946 (MHL)

Center • 5'8 • 160 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 27, 2003 • Penza, RUS • Russia

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	50	50	50	94	94

Season Review

A pure playmaking center who next season should take over as SKA-1946's top-line center, Ivantsov never once looked like he was one of the younger forwards on a loaded team, and he was rewarded with an increased role and bigger minutes. Ivantsov finished second on the team in assists (26) and ranked fourth in overall scoring with 34 points, and his 1.81 assists per 60 minutes was among the highest of 18-year-old centers in the MHL. Ivantsov has been called upon to play for Russia at most major teenage tournaments, including the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge (1 goal, 4 assists in 5 games) and the 2021 under-18 world championship (5 assists in 7 games), with Russia winning gold and silver at those events, respectively. In 17 tournament games at the U17 and U18 levels, Ivantsov has racked up 22 points (8 goals, 14 assists).

Skating and Stickhandling

Ivantsov's skating package is more impressive than initially assessed and on multiple occasions he has caught reliable defenders off balance with rapid inside-out moves. His straight-line speed is average and at times he'll look even slower once he crosses center, but Ivantsov plays a highly intelligent game and appears to put a premium on identifying the whereabouts of his teammates before choosing his travelling speed. He's not an open-ice threat, and exploding towards a single point while moving in a straight line is something Ivantsov doesn't seem built for. At the same time, it hasn't hurt him in the production and playmaking department, and Ivantsov can stickhandle his way out of multiple obstacles clustered within a tight space.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Ivantsov is an excellent passer in any situation and his keen vision can make any teammate a threat, to include stay-at-home defensemen. You can never take your eyes off him in the offensive zone, and he will exploit the tiniest of openings. He usually operates the right half wall on the power play and will feather or bank passes with accuracy while looking incredibly confident in the process. Ivantsov all doesn't get rattled with pressure in his face.

Defense and Physicality

Ivantsov is a reliable checker and faceoff man (58.7 percent on 746 draws), and he was used on SKA-1946's top penalty-killing unit quite frequently. He can blanket any danger spot in the defensive zone, and he also consistently supports his defensemen below the circles, Ivantsov can be a fiery competitor with a never-say-die attitude. It's scary to think that he can be so effective in the tough areas of the ice despite weighing less than 160 pounds, and both he and occasional linemate Nikita Chibrikov used their physicality effectively during cycles. In fact, Ivantsov was one of the leading hitters among U20 MHL'ers who registered 30 or more points (42 hits in 53 games).

Hockey Sense

Ivantsov is a critical player for his coach and was summoned for all key situations. Although he played on one of the best rosters in Russian junior hockey, Ivantsov was arguably the team's purest playmaking center and only a handful of MHL'ers of all ages took and won more faceoffs. He was quiet at the under-18 world championship and saw his role and usage diminish, but that shouldn't detract from how sharp his vision and creativity was during league play. Ivantsov consistently picks off rims

NHL Projection

Middle-six two-way center and power-play specialist

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	SKA-Varyagi	32	4	6	10	39	0.31	2
2020-21	SKA-1946	53	8	26	34	52	0.64	43
2020-21	Russia U18	7	0	5	5	3	0.71	12

95



Viljami Marjala • Quebec (QMJHL)

Left wing • 6'0 • 178 pounds • Shoots Left • Jan. 29, 2003 • Oulu, FIN • Finland

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	118	118	118	95	95

Season Review

A sturdy dual-threat winger with an excellent shot and a low center of gravity, Marjala was selected 14th overall by Quebec in the 2021 CHL Import Draft after a successful season with Karpas U20 in Finland's Nuorten SM-Liiga. His numbers last season in Finnish juniors (3 goals, 5 assists, in 20 games) may seem nondescript, but Marjala played for a powerhouse program loaded with both NHL prospects and blue-chippers earmarked for early rounds in upcoming drafts. Marjala was able to distinguish himself in spurts as he split the 2019-20 season between Karpas's under-18 and under-20 programs. He also represented Finland at multiple U17 events and was one of the leading scorers. With Quebec, Marjala has been more of a set-up type than finisher, posting an impressive 27 points (5 goals, 22 assists) in 30 games to lead all QMJHL rookies in power-play points (12), rank second in assists, and third in scoring. Quebec is one of the better teams in the league this year, so Marjala's 45 shots should be analyzed within the context of him playing within a deep attack.

Skating and Stickhandling

Marjala is a solid skater with strong balance but does not possess blazing or breakaway speed. His skating is effective in tight areas; below the dots on offense and moving from point to high slot and back again up high in the defensive zone. He stays in motion on the power play, almost rover-like at times. Marjala's stickhandling is not often displayed, as he opts for an effective quick-passing game rather than overhandle the puck or attempt a flashy play that makes the highlight reel. He also displays quick hands in tight areas to gain an angle for a shot or pass.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Marjala does not shoot much with Quebec as he did with Karpas, but he has a strong, accurate shot. He shines in the playmaking and consistently plays with his head up, using deception, vision, and keen anticipation to create opportunities for his mates. Marjala has the knack for being a shooting or passing threat without tipping his hand, and he likes to attempt shots from closer to the goal rather than waste one from the low-danger areas. Marjala is crafty near the goal and from in tight, but he'll freeze both the goalie and defensemen for a split-second, thereby creating a cross ice seam for a one-timer.

Defense and Physicality

Marjala is reliable defensively. He is aware of everyone's positioning and seems to understand responsibilities as a scoring winger. He competes hard for pucks and positioning, and although he is listed at 178 pounds, Marjala appears to play much bigger. He uses his body well in establishing position and warding off opponents while possessing the puck, and Marjala's acute understanding of game situations usually places him in sound defensive position. Sometimes the viewer can be duped into thinking a player is not competing hard enough because he is not hitting everything in site, but Marjala doesn't need to smash opponents to wrestle away possession, as he is one to win puck battles and prevent scoring chances. Overall, Marjala plays the kind of winning hockey that coaches desire from their player regardless of role or skill set. The sum of his skills adds up to a smart, unselfish, team-first player, who seamlessly fits in any scheme. His stealth-like presence pounces on opponents leading to chances.

Hockey Sense

A cerebral player, Marjala thinks and executes simultaneously. He is consistent in his decision making, which usually produces smart, safe, outcomes that are a staple of his makeup. In the defensive zone, Marjala's head is on a swivel and his stick is actively alternating between passing lanes. Marjala thinks the game a few plays ahead, allowing him to make decisions that put his teammates in advantageous position. He has nuances to his game that do not translate to a stat sheet category, which won't be noticed by the casual observer unless they rewind the film to identify Marjala's subtle, effective decisions that either initiate or facilitate successful possession sequences.

NHL Projection

Middle-six winger and power-play option

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Karpas U20	20	3	5	8	--	0.40	2
2020-21	Quebec	30	5	22	27	45	0.90	10

96



Cameron Whynot • Halifax (QMJHL)

Left defense • 6'1 • 180 pounds • Shoots Left • May 5, 2003 • Kentville, NS • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	93	93	93	96	96

Season Review

Chosen ninth overall by Halifax in 2019, the left-handed Whynot is a notable prospect who along with 2020 NHL first-rounder Justin Barron spearheaded one of the thinner blue lines in the QMJHL. Whynot was expected to take over the No. 1 job if Barron graduated, but the latter wound up staying for nearly the full season and his shoot-happy tendencies limited Whynot's abilities to drive possession and act like the orchestrator he's been known to be. Nonetheless, the duo combined to form the Mooseheads' top pairing and any individual issues with puck management or lost coverage were addressed.

Skating and Stickhandling

Blessed with smooth, effortless skating, good hands, keen vision, and smarts under pressure, Whynot can be classified as an offensive defenseman. He is very good at moving around the offensive zone with and without the puck, and Whynot knew where in the offensive zone he needed to position himself. He was surrounded by talented Type-A puck handlers which reduced his responsibilities as a puck rusher and entering the zone on his own, but Whynot has shown plenty of instances where he combined beautiful mobility after heady poise when dealing with a forecheck. On aesthetics alone, Whynot must be considered one of the top skating defensemen in the draft.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Whynot is used on the power play and penalty kill. He has a decent shot, shoots for deflections, and usually avoids getting his attempts blocked. It was unfortunate for Whynot in his draft year to share the same blue-line with a shoot-first prospect like Barron, which makes it reasonable to assume that Whynot's shot totals (only 33 in 34 games) would have tripled if given the same role. Although it would have been hard for him to sustain his ridiculous 18.1 shooting percentage, Whynot hitting the 15-goal mark would not have been out of the question, and that type of production (in half a season, no less) is what gets you into the conversation as a potential first-round pick. Much like his shooting opportunities, Whynot didn't get much of chance to show how effective a passer he can be. His first pass usually is on the money and he can make plays on his backhand while on the move.

Defense and Physicality

Combining solid footwork, skating, and smarts, Whynot can defend the neutral zone with solid gap control, and he rarely is beaten in one-on-one situations. Whynot's composure, quick thinking, and high compete level helped Halifax to limit the damage that was so prevalent last season. Although he is prone to the occasional mishap, Whynot is a reliable defenseman who appears to understand his errors and avoids repeating them. His skating, smarts, and positioning allowed him to steadily improve from the season prior.

Hockey Sense

Whynot remains somewhat raw with potential that seems unlimited. Earlier in the season, the 6-foot-1, 190-pound Kentville, Nova Scotia native was given the chance to serve as the Mooseheads' No. 1 with Barron unavailable, albeit with mixed results. It appeared Whynot was trying to do too much in an increased role that increased his exposure to tougher matchups and forced bigger responsibilities on him. Whynot will not wow onlookers with flashy play. He generally keeps the game simple and anticipates the play well. Sometimes his mind is further ahead of his teammates in that he will make a pass to a vacated area unbeknownst to the intended target.

NHL Projection

Middle or bottom-pairing two-way defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Halifax	57	2	7	9	54	0.16	73
2020-21	Halifax	34	6	17	23	33	0.68	28

97



Oscar Plandowski • Charlottetown (QMJHL)

Right defense • 6'0 • 190 pounds • Shoots Right • May 18, 2003 • Halifax, NS • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	156	156	156	97	97

Season Review

A nimble puck mover with a crisp first pass, Plandowski and partner William Trudeau were arguably the QMJHL's best middle pairing and were critical in Charlottetown's successful season that ended with a berth in the QMJHL final. A Halifax, NS native who was selected 8th overall in the 2019 QMJHL Draft, Plandowski is on Charlottetown's middle pairing, with 2021 NHL draftee Lukas Cormier serving as the Eagles' No. 1. Plandowski consistently presses the accelerator, moving forward, creating havoc for his opponents and in go-go mode. He had a modest 12 points in 2019-20 but is on a better pace this season with nine (one goal, assists) in his first 19 matches.

Skating and Stickhandling

Plandowski offers strong skating in all directions and his mobility is his most noticeable asset. He moves around the ice quite well and is quick to gain an advantage on his opponent, setting them back on their heels. Plandowski often uses his skating for a clean entry by weaving and then delaying into the offensive zone while looking for open space before setting up to rip a one-timer.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Plandowski, unlike Trudeau, is a more dynamic offensive threat but has yet to marry his skill set with point production and shot generation (25 shots in first 19 games). Although the point totals seem nondescript, Plandowski finds a way to stay involved in more than just simple breakout opportunities. Once in the offensive zone, his cannon of a shot is his main weapon, as he can rip a one-timer with accuracy and velocity. Having this weapon in conjunction with his plus maneuverability helps opens space for his forwards, and Plandowski on occasion has shown the ability to deliver well-timed and accurate passes either off the cycle or from the point while static. A testament to Plandowski's reliability and key role is how he is consistently deployed alongside notable NHL prospect Lukas Cormier on Charlottetown's first power-play unit.

Defense and Physicality

Although Plandowski is an offensive-minded defender, he is not allergic to defending in his own zone. He is more than adequate defensively and is quite opportunistic and active in the neutral zone. He will use his anticipation and skating to thwart a rush before forging his attack. Off the puck, Plandowski's skating and smarts enable him to keep opponents at bay thanks to a long, active stick and tight gap control, specifically in the grey zone. He uses a quick stick and long reach to deflect passes and shots.

Hockey Sense

Plandowski has keen vision and sharp on-ice awareness. Once he controls the puck, he quickly processes his options. Plandowski either passes to an open forward, to his partner, or he breaks through the forecheck with his skating. He has a high panic threshold and being paired with an attack-centric partner like Trudeau essentially forced Plandowski into thinking two and three plays ahead to prepare for any breakdowns in the offensive end. He can be trusted with major shutdown responsibilities and will anticipate puck travel from his slot coverage and pick off rims for a quick clear or turn up the ice.

NHL Projection

Middle or bottom-pairing two-way defenseman

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Charlottetown	60	0	12	12	74	0.20	26
2020-21	Charlottetown	39	5	12	17	68	0.44	28

98
(OA)



Zakhar Bardakov • Podolsk (KHL)

Center • 6'3 • 198 pounds • Shoots Left • Feb. 25, 2001 • Berdsk, RUS • Russia

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	98	98

Season Review

An angry two-way Siberian center who spent the entire season as an effective player in the KHL, Bardakov is a Dead Puck Era throwback who served as a depth player on a mediocre Vityaz club which nearly made the playoffs. That certainly wasn't Bardakov's doing, as the rookie provided a consistent effort at even strength, was used on both special teams, and won 52.3 percent of his faceoffs. Not only did Bardakov produce better than the average KHL rookie (8 goals, 3 assists, 51 shots in 44 games), but he closed out his season with nine points in his final 12 games, including a five-game goal streak. Unsurprisingly, Bardakov was named a finalist for the KHL Rookie of the Year. He also appeared in two under-20 tournaments for Team Russia – the U20 Karjala Cup (0 points, 12 PIM in 3 games) and the U20 world juniors (1 goal, 1 assist in 7 games). Bardakov was invited to try out for Russia's national team for the men's world championship but did not make the final cut, and he traded to the SKA organization in June.

Skating and Stickhandling

Bardakov isn't the prettiest skater but he's always moving with a purpose and anticipates one or two plays ahead. You rarely see him standing still once possession changes and he goes full throttle to join a rush or support the puck. Bardakov has a short, heavy stride that probably won't win over many skating coaches, but the sight of a confident 6-foot-3, 200-pound center moving at top speed – even if it takes an extra stride or two than everyone else to get there – must seem scary for the opposition, especially when considering his penchant for rough stuff. Bardakov has hands, and he can make inside-out moves at top speed while keeping his balance and the puck nestled onto his blade.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Bardakov is a shoot-first center who uses his size and strength for most of his scoring opportunities. He takes the puck strong to the net on either his forehand or backhand and generates velocity and accuracy from either side. Bardakov likes to go to the dirty areas and muck it up but does so in a calculated manner and will release from board battles to cover the point or slip into an opening for a one-timer. He has a dangerous slap shot that he's used from anywhere in the offensive zone and shows flashes of creativity by executing give-and-go's with the purpose of releasing towards the circle for a one-timer.

Defense and Physicality

Bardakov is a menace on skates. He was one of the MHL's most physical players two seasons ago and he moved on to take his anger out on the KHL in 2020-21, albeit in a cleaner and more selective manner than his junior days. He's a tough customer who leans more towards dirty than honest but playing this style hasn't hurt him in the production or professional development areas. A detailed study into every one of his shifts would be required to find examples where Bardakov himself was intimidated or feared a taste of his own medicine,

Hockey Sense

It's common to think that big forwards hit before they think and gain the advantage by overpowering the opposition, but Bardakov is an intelligent player who can fill many roles. Although his playmaking seems to center on his ability to get a shot off, Bardakov's play off the puck (minus the penalties and violent hits) reveals a smart young man who will issue instruction before faceoffs, direct traffic on the ice, anticipate puck travel, and create his own shot. The writing on the wall says that he'll be a bottom-six checking center, but Bardakov has the potential to be one of the best in that role. The question is whether it will be in Russia or the NHL.

NHL Projection

Bottom-six two-way center

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2019-20	Russkie Vityazi	51	15	17	32	141	0.63	149
2020-21	Vityaz	44	8	3	11	51	0.25	14

99



Robert Orr • Halifax (QMJHL)

Wing/Center • 5'11 • 176 pounds • Shoots Left • Sep. 1, 2003 • Montreal, QC • Canada

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	67	67	67	99	99

Season Review

Orr is a skilled forward with noticeable speed, quickness and plays all three forward positions for Halifax. Originally drafted by the Saint John Sea Dogs in the fifth round of the 2019 QMJHL draft, Orr was acquired by the Mooseheads a year later in exchange for a couple of draft picks. Although he is listed as a center, Orr primarily plays right wing for the Mooseheads. He's spent the bulk of the season on Halifax's top line with center Elliot Desnoyers and top 2021 draft prospects Zachary L'Heureux, and the trio is considered one of the better units in the league. Orr is used in all situations and special teams, and over 80 percent of his 32 points were of the primary variety. Orr has been used on the left half wall, bumper, and net front during the power play.

Skating and Stickhandling

Orr has excellent speed and quickness. He uses a long, powerful stride to break away from defenders or rapidly pressure opponents on the forecheck. Orr's leg drive and foot work also stand out, as they help him back opponents off, walk himself into a better passing or shooting lane, and backcheck. His agility and edgework are solid in allowing him to quickly maneuver in tight areas. Orr's straight-ahead speed is excellent, and his lateral quickness allows him to dodge defenders before leaving them well behind the play. Stickhandling is something Orr does not often display, but he is poised along the wall. He uses deception at times but is suited to the give and go and dump and chase game.

Shooting, Passing, and Playmaking

Orr owns a plus-shot for its accuracy and quick release, and he does most of his damage within 15 feet of the net. Orr uses a quick snap-shot and rarely shoots off the pass, mostly because he stays in motion and likes to mix it up along the boards. The rapidity of his release in essence has the same effect as a one-timer, and Orr will still generate velocity on attempts as he cuts across the middle or fires shots off his back foot. Orr is no slouch in the playmaking department. He uses the threat of his shot to freeze defensemen and goalies to find an open teammate and has soft enough hands to saucer accurate passes while moving at top speed. There's a significant level of flash to Orr's game but not in the sense that he's intending to produce a highlight-reel play. If a teammate is open, chances are strong that Orr will find him, especially in front of the net or under pressure near the boards.

Defense and Physicality

Orr fits the bill of a player who his coaches entrust will late-close defensive responsibilities and penalty killing. He's played center several times this season and he does look comfortable playing the position, although his 38.3 percent success rate on faceoffs probably keeps him on the flank. Orr plays with noticeable intensity and will not shy from contact, especially in the corners or in front of the net. He hustles on the backcheck and pressures the points with the desire to block shots and head the other way.

Hockey Sense

Orr is both smart and poised, which help explain why he was given such a prominent role in multiple situations so early in the season. It only takes a few shifts into a game to see why it must have been easy for Halifax head coach J.J. Daigneault to trust Orr, who clearly understands when the reward either does or doesn't warrant the risk. He doesn't seem to be a fan of dangerous cross-ice passes or centering feeds during key stages in the game, but he is an opportunistic shooter who can fool goalies with deceptive attempts from anywhere in the offensive zone. More responsibility has been handed to Orr as the season progressed, which is a testament to his acute understanding of the game.

NHL Projection

Top-six, two-way scoring winger and special teams' contributor.

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Halifax	41	15	17	32	107	0.78	18

100



Dmitry Kuzmin • Molodechno (Belarus Extraliga)

Left defense • 5'9 • 178 pounds • Shoots Left • April 23, 2003 • Kholstovo, BLR • Belarus

The Draft Analyst Rankings					
Pre	Jan	Feb	March	May	Final
--	NR	NR	NR	100	100

Season Review

Kuzmin is a brilliant puck distributor and playmaker who makes up for his lack of size with a bit of an edge and strong compete level. Selected 46th overall by the OHL's Flint Firebirds in the 2020 CHL Import Draft, Kuzmin intended to play in the U.S. for the 2020-21 season but stayed in his native Belarus because of the shutdown. The decision to remain home worked out wonderfully for Kuzmin, however, as he played against adults in the Byelorussian Extraliga, scored a bunch of "Michigan Goals", and then broke Dmitry Deryabin's under-18 scoring mark for blueliners while in the top division. Kuzmin was the No. 1 blueliner for Belarus at the 2021 under-18 world championship, where he scored a lacrosse goal against the Swiss and finished with a goal and four assists (and 12 shots) in five games.

Skating and Stickhandling

Kuzmin is a fantastic stickhandler and puck wizard who makes shift-changing plays. He's a quick and decisive skater with excellent balance and multi-directional agility, so catching him should be the priority before thinking a size disadvantage makes him an target. He performs with a flashy mindset, like a playmaking point guard in basketball, where trick passes and look-offs can make advances into opposing territory look like a smooth highlight-reel play.

Shooting, Passing and Playmaking

Kuzmin is pure offense in multiple areas and the quintessential power-play quarterback. He has a hard slapper and heavy wrister – both which are fired quickly and with accuracy, but his passing ability is near elite. The puck gets whipped around the ice with precision and his hand-eye coordination allows him to deliver perfect touch passes up ice that catch his forward in stride. Kuzmin during retrievals is a threat for home-run feeds but he also goes coast to coast for a hard wrister from the top of the circle.

Defense and Physicality

Kuzmin automatically gets branded as a weak defender but couldn't be further from the truth. He spends a lot of time up ice, that part is true. But Kuzmin in the defensive zone postures himself for multiple courses of action, and his desire for an immediate counterattack doesn't mean he vacates the slot habitually or chases forwards up the boards. Kuzmin has sharp instincts and acute awareness of where the puck is travelling and where it likely ends up, which is why he picks off passes and heads the other way in a jiffy. His stick does a lot of talking for him, but boards battles against Kuzmin are no picnic. He uses the lumber with authority and will make his presence felt in the slot. How that translates to success in the NHL is the big question, but one must consider that Rangers' defenseman Adam Fox, the league's latest Norris Trophy winner, isn't necessarily Chris Pronger when it comes to slot protection. Kuzmin deserves the benefit of the doubt that he'll adapt to new surroundings quickly, although his size will always be a drawback.

Hockey Sense

One thing must be made certain – hockey sense is hockey sense no matter the level of competition or the country where the game is being played. You either have it or you don't, and Kuzmin most certainly has it. He is a brilliant player on the puck, but it's his reads and movements in the offensive zone, specifically off the puck, that also reveal his intelligence, foresight, and creativity. He will weave or slip into the tiniest soft spot, which doesn't always mean he gets a shot off, but makes the viewer think, "oh yeah, I see what he did there." Although he was a youngster on an adult team, Kuzmin was trusted by his staff and teammates, and he rarely let them down. Not having ideal size for a defenseman didn't prevent him from playing with extreme confidence, which all those lacrosse-style goals should imply. The more you watch him play, the more you realize he is not showboating, and he plays with a seriousness that adds a significant level of maturity to his game and demeanor. His decisions can be clean, rapid, and more importantly, timely and decisive.

NHL Projection

Bottom-pairing defenseman and power-play quarterback

Statistics								
Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	S	P/G	PIM
2020-21	Molodechno	46	3	9	12	--	0.26	30
2020-21	Belarus U18	5	1	4	5	12	1.00	4

Additional Ranked Prospects (101-200)

101. Janis Moser, LHD (OA) | 6-June-00 | 6'1, 175 | Shoots Left | Switzerland

A mobile two-way defender with a quick first step and impressive acceleration, Moser is an on-ice leader and was used in all situations for Biel in the Swiss elite league. Although Moser likes to join the rush and venture into the slot for a loose puck or seam pass, he can be pretty meat-and-potatoes with the puck once he crosses center ice. Nonetheless, his first pass is crisp, accurate and most are delivered without putting his forward in a winless position. He proved to be an on-ice leader and was used in all situations. Although this is his last year of draft eligibility, there's a good bet that teams will be battling for Moser's draft rights before he hits the free-agent market. He may even go sooner than anticipated.

102. Jayden Grubbe, LW | 12-Jan-03 | Red Deer, WHL | 6'2, 200 | Shoots | Canada

A bulldog of a two-way center who seems to treat every shift like a seek-and-destroy mission, Grubbe suffered an unfortunate ACL tear that ended his draft season just five games in. He's quick for his size and is an excellent penalty killer, but questions surrounding the offense he can generate won't be answered until he's fully recovered for the 2021-22 campaign. At worst, Grubbe can provide his coaches with all the necessary intangible while checking major blocks in the physicality and leadership categories.

103. Oskar Jellvik, LW | 8-Feb-03 | Djurgardens J20, Nationell | 5'11, 175 | Shoots Left | Sweden

Jellvik is a swift and attentive forward who loves to be involved in the play and was a fun player to watch for Djurgardens J20 before earning a promotion to the A-Team in the SHL. His head always is on a swivel, and he looks to cover gaps, although Jellvik can be guilty of skating in all directions without any structure. Still, Jellvik's puck skills are legitimate, and he is dangerous with or without an opponent marking him.

104. Daniil Tسانov (OA), C | 1-Aug-01 | Loko Yaroslavl, MHL | 6'3, 199 | Shoots Rights | Russia

We've been pushing for Tسانov to get drafted for several years, so it'll be a shame if his impressive season with Loko goes unrewarded by NHL scouts. Tسانov is a big, menacing 200-foot center with very good speed and overall quickness. Although it's common for forwards his size to be labeled as limited checkers or slow-footed brutes, it doesn't take long for one to realize just how nimble and skilled a player Tسانov can be. Yes, he's an expert penalty killer and strong on faceoffs (57.8 percent during regular season), but Tسانov also thinks the game while reacting and knows how to time things perfectly to make anyone in the five-man unit a scoring threat. That is partly why he has been used as a point man on the power play, where his soft pass deliveries and booming slapper certainly come in handy. Tسانov rarely hesitates with the puck and has the speed and hands to attack the net with fury but doing so while owning a 6-foot-3, 200-pound frames make him a far more intimidating threat than your average "big".

105. Danila Klimovich, RW | 9-Jan-03 | Minskie Zubry, Belarus | 6'1, 187 | Shoots Right | Belarus

One of the spotlight stealers at the under-18 world championships, Klimovich made the most of his opportunity to wow scouts from all 32 NHL teams with his dipsy-doodling and lethality on the power play. He was drafted 24th overall by the QMJHL's Rouyn-Noranda Huskies in the 2020 CHL Import Draft so it's just a matter of time until he brings his high energy, plus shot, and physicality to North America.

106. Atte Lehikoinen, LHD | 5-Jul-03 | KalPa U20, SM-Sarja | 6'2, 192, Shoots Left | Finland

Lehikoinen was a surprising omission from Finland's under-18 entry for the world championship considering how critical a role he played for KalPa as a reliable and sure-handed defender who switched between the top and middle pairing. He's also useful on the penalty kill by keeping the low slot as clear as possible and using his stick with authority. Lehikoinen was a poised on-ice leader who displayed smarts by consistently shoulder-checking on retrievals and picking his spots to deliver hard hits.

107. Benjamin Gaudreau, G | 11-Jan-03 | Sarnia, OHL | 6'2, 160 | Catches Left | Canada

Gaudreau is being mentioned as potential first-round pick but that's probably recency bias from helping Canada win gold at the under-18 world championship. Going seventh overall in the 2019 OHL Priority Selection isn't hurting his reputation either, but Gaudreau still have some technical issues to iron out before he can be placed within this draft's exclusive group of premier goalies. Size and quickness aren't a problem, however, and Gaudreau does have a big-save mentality.

108. Dmitri Kostenko, RHD | 25-Sep-02 | Ladya, MHL | 6'2, 165 | Shoots Right | Russia

The rare right-shot defenseman from Russia, Kostenko was a go-to defender for a thin Ladya squad that was led by fellow 2021 draft prospect Fyodor Svechkov before both left for nearly complete VHL seasons against adults. He's both quick and agile, and Kostenko likes to push the pace to his liking while showing confidence with the puck. Sometimes that gets him into trouble, but his overall understanding of the game is quite high. Consider him more of a project than a sure thing, as Kostenko can be a maddening player to watch -- there is a lot of offensive skill and ability there, but improvements in defensive play were minor once he played against grown men. He possesses one of the best sets of hands in this year's MHL class, his passes are crisp and accurate, and his slap shot has some power behind it.

109. Ty Voit, RW | 10-Jun-03 | Sarnia, OHL | 5'9, 155 | Shoots Left | U.S.

He may have missed his entire draft season, but Voit's penchant for playmaking and game breaking should not be dismissed. He's quick, confident, and more dangerous with time and space than your average undersized forward. Bulking up should have been a priority during this lengthy offseason and there's good reason to expect a breakout campaign in 2021-22.

110. Jonathan Myrenberg, RHD | 11-Apr-03 | Linkoping J20, Nationell | 6'2, 185 | Shoots Right | Sweden

Myrenberg is a lean but strong two-way defenseman who can play either the stay-at-home style or move the puck with both speed and confidence. He usually stays within himself when it comes to controlling the puck, but Myrenberg will attack an opening with confidence and can enter the zone on his own. He was on Linkopings J20's top pairing for most of the shortened season before heading to the third division HockeyEttan, where he had a strong showing for Sollentuna. It should be noted that his junior team was a powerhouse defensively and Myrenberg was matched up against top lines.

111. Ilya Nazarov, RW | 20-May-03 | Loko Yaroslavl, MHL | 6'3, 172 | Shoots Left | Russia

Nazarov is a versatile winger with good size who excels in tight quarters. He has quick feet and is a strong stickhandler, and he has a noticeable grasp on how he's supposed to use his long frame and reach when dealing with opposing pressure, especially along the boards. Although he wasn't a line-driver like what occasional linemate Maxim Beryozkin showed in his draft year of 2019-20, Nazarov plays the same style and can be effective in the tough areas while anticipating puck travel for intercepts along the wall. If he isn't heavily engaged in a one-on-one duel, Nazarov knows when to slip into an opening with his stick at the ready. He does appear to spend more time in the high-slot area than down low, and sometimes this can come across as being passive. But Nazarov can be a horse on the puck who requires a double team to wrestle possession away from him. Nazarov is a strong, well-balanced skater with a short stride but impressive tight-quarter quickness and agility, all assessed within the context of his size. His straight-line speed is average, but Nazarov's anticipation helps him make up for any shortcomings in explosiveness. Once inside the zone, Nazarov can dominate the outside and grind down multiple opponents who try to knock him off the puck. He also boasts a plus shot-release combination and can wire the puck with accuracy off his back foot or off-wing. Having soft hands and a wicked shot made him a set-play option in the slot, but his size and hand-eye coordination serve him well as a net-front presence, especially on the power play. His decision making and coverage in the defensive zone are inconsistent, but Nazarov does show a willingness to compete and play the body. The Locomotiv organization usually requires all its forwards to play a 200-foot game, so chalk up any of Nazarov's shortcomings off the puck to inexperience.

112. Elias Ekstrom (OA), LW | 11-Oct-02 | Orebro, SHL | 6'0, 189 | Shoots Left | Sweden

A Swiss Army Knife who ran Orebro J20's power play and lead penalty kill before earning himself a long look in the SHL, Ekstrom is too complete a prospect to let 13 or 14 months in age allow him to get overlooked for a third straight draft. He's quick and has a high motor, but the biggest reason why Ekstrom was tasked with orchestrating the power play was his soft hands and ability to accurately fit pucks through traffic without hesitation.

113. Kyle Masters, RHD | 9-Apr-03 | Red Deer, WHL | 6'0, 175 | Shoots Right | Canada

The sixteenth overall pick in the 2018 WHL draft, Masters is an offensive-minded defenseman who quarterbacked Red Deer's power play thanks to his quick feet and soft hands. He's still growing into his role, but one thing that Masters doesn't lack is confidence with the puck. He's more than capable of spinning or darting past pressure while staying in complete control with his head up.

114. Guillaume Richard, LHD | 10-Feb-03 | Tri-City, USHL | 6'2, 166 | Shoots Left | Canada | NCAA: Maine

Richard is a steady, no-nonsense defenseman who skipped the major junior route to remain eligible for the University of Maine. The QMJHL's loss was the USHL's gain, as Richard quickly established himself as one of the league's better positional defenders in addition to showcasing his reliability on breakouts. He's already played for Team Canada at major prospect events like the World under-17 Hockey Challenge and the recent U18 worlds, where Richard served as a safety net for playmaking partner Olen Zellweger.

115. Joshua Roy, RW | 6-Aug-03 | Saint John, QMJHL | 6'0, 190 | Shoots Left | Canada

The first pick in the 2019 QMJHL draft, Roy made a permanent switch from center to wing and had a resurgence in the second half after Saint John traded him to Sherbrooke. He's an average skater and has had issues with consistency, but Roy has elite puck skills and a visible knack to create offense once inside the offensive zone. At times he dominates a shift using his smarts, skill, and savviness to control the pace and set up teammates with tape-to-tape passes, only to lose on-ice prominence for consecutive shifts thereafter. Known as power-play specialist for his vision and passing accuracy, Roy didn't always play on Saint John's loaded first power-play unit but usually runs the show from the half wall or point. He has a presence about him while running the man-advantage which gives him time and space to make plays. Roy has fantastic vision to find open players and the hands to distribute the puck for great scoring chances. The tools are there; Roy simply needs to find consistency and drive to become a solid NHL player rather than someone who peaked in his teenage years.

116. Dario Sidler, RHD | 4-Jun-03 | Zug U20, Swiss U20 | 5'8, 155 | Shoots Right | Switzerland

Sidler is a flashy playmaker who can wow you with his impressive skating ability. He had already received a stint with Zug's A-Team (a roster with a bunch of ex-NHL'ers) but he spent most of the season split between junior hockey and the adult-age Swiss League, serving in an expanded, minute-eating role with the former rather than the latter.

117. Sami Paivarinta, C | 8-Jun-03 | Lukko U20, SM-Sarja | 5'9, 159 | Shoots Left | Finland

One of the key figures in Lukko Rauma U20's title run in the SM-Sarja, Paivarinta deserves credit for serving as their No. 1 center with distinction. He's a high-energy player who contributes on special teams, but he shouldn't be pigeonholed as a checker or grinder. Paivarinta has legit vision and playmaking abilities but is simply tailoring his game to the role he's been given

118. Joe Vrbetic, G | 24-Oct-02 | North Bay, OHL | 6'6, 180 | Catches Left | Canada

One of the bigger goalie prospects available, Vrbetic faced a ton of rubber as North Bay's No. 1 during the 2019-20 season but showed enough to earmark him as one of the better mid-round projects. Calling him raw would be an understatement, as he relies on his size more than anything else to stop pucks. Improvements in quickness and overall net awareness should have been priorities during his lengthy offseason, but Vrbetic should benefit from having a stronger team than the one who kept the ice tilted towards him.

119. Stiven Sardaryan, LW | 3-Feb-03 | Krasnaya Armiya, MHL | 6'1, 154 | Shoots Left | Russia | NCAA: UNH

An underrated prospect who started to gain notoriety after Central Scouting added him to their updated Watch List, Sardaryan is a strong-skating wing who plays like a pass-first center; mostly because of his clean zone entries that allow him to exploit the tiniest of gaps in opposing coverage. He's shown impressive vision and pass accuracy over long distances regardless of how much pressure he's under. Although Krasnaya Armiya was a deep, talented squad, it was Sardaryan who consistently drew attention for his creativity and puck control.

120. Justin Janicke, LW | 30-Jun-03 | U.S. U18, NTDP | 6'0, 180 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: Notre Dame

Janicke is a hard-nosed Notre Dame recruit who provides a consistent effort both on and off the puck. He's a tenacious forechecker who uses his impressive speed and overall quickness to react to puck movement. Although he seemed a lot flashier with the puck in his under-17 season, Janicke can be an effective player on the forecheck and help create chances by simply forcing the opposition into turnovers.

121. Connor Kurth, RW | 30-Jul-03 | Dubuque, USHL | 5'11, 190 | Shoots Right | U.S. | NCAA: Minnesota

Kurth is a throwback of the highest degree — he's built like a brick house and can play with controlled violence but also reveal a nice touch and heady playmaking around the net. His skating for a winger his size also is deceptive because Kurth's stride is a little wide and choppy, but he continues to beat opponents to the desired spot and can take a defender to the inside.

122. Jeremi Tammela, C | 12-Sep-03 | Lukko U20, SM-Sarja | 5'9, 185 | Shoots Right | Finland

Smaller scoring forwards who play with bite should be considered commodities in draft circles, especially when they are one of the top scorers in their league. Tammela has game-breaking ability and clutch scoring were critical in Lukko U20 winning the SM-Sarja championship and doing it against a stingy Karpat squad in the final made the accomplishment more impressive.

123. Nikita Kiryanov (OA), RW | 7-May-02 | Loko Yaroslavl, MHL | 6'5, 180 | Shoots Left | Russia

Kiryanov is a towering two-way winger who checks all the right blocks in the intangibles and coachability departments. He generates most of his points from the tough areas, but neither his speed, shot, nor his creativity should be underestimated. The toughness to his game is evident in how hard he battles as opposed to intimidating opponents with reckless hitting or dirty play. Once in flight, Kiryanov reveals soft hands to handle hard deliveries from short distances and corrals lead passes with ease. Kiryanov is a smart player who keeps his head and feet moving while pointing or shouting out coverage instructions to his teammates. He is an above-average skater for his size but will use sharp cutbacks or inside moves when entering the zone. Kiryanov has played for Russia at the international level, so it's not like he's been completely off the radar. Bank on him getting a long look for Russia's under-20 world junior squad in 2022.

124. Andre Gasseau, C | 3-July-03 | U.S. U18, NTDP | 6'4, 205 | U.S. | NCAA: Boston College

He's not a big-time scorer and isn't ranked among the better centers in this draft class, but Gasseau screams future NHL center in so many ways. He has the perfect frame for a pivot but he's also one of the better 200-foot centers available. Gasseau has been critical in the success of his support line along with grinding winger Jack Devine and smaller playmaker Ryan St. Louis. Destined for Boston College, Gasseau moves very well for a player his size and makes his money in board battles and in the corners thanks to his shiftiness.

125. Ethan Del Mastro, LHD | 15-Jan-03 | Mississauga, OHL | 6'3, 192 | Shoots Left | Canada

A physical defender who is at his best when keeping things simple, Del Mastro drew rave reviews for his play at the recent under-18 world championship. He may never be a point producer but he's exactly the type of defenseman who can be counted on to consistently keep the crease clear and win puck battles. Del Mastro has above-average mobility moving forward, backwards, or laterally, and his powerful stride is long and clean. Although he works hard in the corners and is tough to outmuscle, Del Mastro can make subtle stick checks to not only come away with the puck but also take it for a skate to safety. There's a risk-taking offensive defenseman just waiting for the chance to have a partner like Del Mastro,

126. Cam Berg, C | 29-Jan-02 | Muskegon, USHL | 6'0, 192 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: Nebraska-Omaha

Berg uses his impressive speed-power combination to force turnovers and enter the opposing zone cleanly. It may seem easy for kids with his size to create matchup problems in a junior league, but Berg's effort on or off the puck is exemplary, plus he's a highly effective forechecker. Committed to Nebraska-Omaha, Berg plays with maximum effort and energy every game.

127. Olivier Nadeau, RW | 15-Jan-03 | Shawinigan, QMJHL | 6'2, 204 | Shoots Right | Canada

Nadeau is a smart and skilled power winger who helped Shawinigan stem the tide after top-line center Mavrik Bourque left for the under-20 world junior hockey championship. He checks a ton of blocks in both the puck skills and intangibles departments to therefore put his below-average speed in perspective, especially when he's able to consistently play keep-away while the opposition is hounding him. Nadeau has good hands in tight areas along the boards and is adept at finding and banging home rebounds in front of the net. He can rip a one-timer and pick a corner, is excellent in board battles, and can provide a net-front presence. Perhaps his most underrated skill is his passing and playmaking abilities. He does not draw people out of their seats, but his smarts and vision allow him to be a solid set-up man for shooters in prime areas. Nadeau also has a knack for making short, subtle passes to a teammate while he is engaged with an opponent.

128. Vsevolod Gaidamak, C | 4-Apr-03 | Omskie Yastreby, MHL | 6'0, 187 | Shoots Left | Russia

A sturdy, well-balanced center who excels in the trenches and in open ice, Gaidamak joined Omskie Yastreby later in November after his anticipated import season with the OHL's Ottawa 67's was cut short because of Ontario's pandemic shutdown. He wasn't as much of a difference maker as expected considering Omskie Yastreby was on the younger side, but he signed a three-year deal to stay with the organization nonetheless and should be considered a favorite to center the top line next season. Gaidamak checks a lot of blocks in both puck skills and intangibles. He's a 200-foot center who is strong on faceoffs and kills penalties, but he also boasts a plus shot-release combination and can clean up near the goal. Gaidamak definitely is the guy you want controlling the puck the second possession changes hands, and he his calculated zone entries are effective whether rapid or deliberate. He also has leadership qualities and is leaned on to bail either his linemates or defensemen out of jams. Gaidamak's skating is more powerful and deceptive than it is explosive, but he can fend off harassing back pressure while keeping on a straight path to the cage.

129. Nikolai Makarov, LHD | 12-Jan-2003 | Krasnaya Armiya, MHL | 6'1, 190 | Shoots Left | Russia

Makarov is a steady, no-nonsense blueliner with a long, powerful stride who played his way onto the top pairing of Krasnaya Armiya's deep defense corps and stayed there for most of the regular season. It was surprising to see his minutes reduced in the postseason during a hard-fought series with eventual-champion Dynamo MSK, but Makarov later served as a top-four defender for Russia's silver-medal-winning entry at the 2021 under-18 world championship. A smooth backskater and accurate outlet passer, Makarov is used on the power play for his shooting prowess, and he has the accuracy and velocity to consistently generate rebounds.

130. Cole Jordan, LHD | 21-Sep-02 | Moose Jaw, WHL | 6'2, 206 | Shoots Left | Canada

Few defense prospects in this draft typify "feast or famine" more than this big-bodied roadrunner, who went undrafted into the WHL but played his way into a minute-eating role for a struggling Moose Jaw squad. Jordan plays as if he drank 10 cups of coffee an hour before puck drop, as he rarely sits still and can go an entire minute-plus shift without ever stopping, and that includes when inside the offensive zone. Although the results from this style are mixed, Jordan is in fact a beautiful skater with an explosive first step and long, powerful stride, and an opposing coach might as well give each of his neutral-zone checkers a red cape, pink socks, and one of those funny hats, because if they're going to defend Jordan's rushes like matadors, they should probably dress the part. The result isn't always pretty for either side, however, as Jordan – as fast as he is – can skate himself into a no-win situation well removed from the blue line, only to exert as much energy on the backcheck as he did during the initial entry. This roller coaster ride that Jordan takes you for is exactly that – fun and fear all rolled into one. That doesn't mean he isn't a smart player, as Jordan is a habitual shoulder checker with excellent instincts and sharp vision anywhere up the ice. But the concerns with Jordan are quite fair – how can a defenseman so big and so fast with impressive passing skills, a hard snap shot and plenty of power-play time not only go undrafted in the WHL, but only produce 17 career points in 61 career games over two seasons? The optimist would say that points aren't everything, and Jordan's frame, speed, toughness, and confidence combine to form a strong foundation for future success at the NHL level, while the pessimist would not gloss over egregious turnovers near his line that lead to odd-man breaks, nor Jordan's habit for delivering insanely hard passes over short distances that are difficult for his teammates to corral. In all honesty, all Jordan has to do is be more selective, and as Dennis Hopper would say, "*Settle down, man!*"

131. Alexei Kolosov (OA), G | 04-Jan-2002 | Dynamo Minsk, KHL | 6'1, 185 | Catches Left | Belarus

Kolosov is the top young goalie in Belarus, and he recently starred for his country at the IIHF Men's World Championship. Quick, confident, and technically superior to most teenage netminders, Kolosov was the 22nd pick by the OHL's Erie Otters in the 2020 CHL Import Draft. He's already faced adult shooters for several seasons and even became the youngest goalie in Dynamo Minsk history to record a shutout. Kosolov dominates the lower half and explodes to the near post when challenging one-timers. He's also an active puckhandler.

132. Sean Tschigerl, LW | 11-Apr-2003 | Calgary, WHL | 6'0, 189 | Shoots Left | Canada

Tschigerl (pronounced SHI-gal) is a tough 200-foot winger whose aggressive north-south style would be a welcomed addition to any lineup at any level. He had a significant role as a top-liner for Calgary, as his 13 goals in 21 games (including two apiece on the power play and while short-handed) were the most on the squad. He's more of a complimentary winger who uses his strength effectively and causes mayhem in the tough areas near the net, but his heavy shot and close-quarter stickhandling should not be underestimated. A strong skater with a clean stride and pullaway speed, Tschigerl is a relentless forechecker and tireless penalty killer who starts and stops throughout his shifts while shoulder-checking for slot or backdoor threats. He plays with bite but does so in a disciplined manner.

133. David Gucciardi, LHD | 09-Oct-2002 | Waterloo, USHL | 6'1, 185 | Shoots Left | Canada | NCAA: Mich. St.

A one-man breakout with impressive puck skills, Gucciardi is one of the USHL's smoothest offensive defensemen thanks to his four-way mobility, shot creation, and shot power. He delivers a crisp first pass but follows that up with keen instincts to either join the rush or make himself immediately available for a return feed. A power-play specialist with quarterbacking ability, Gucciardi finished with 20 points (7 goals, 13 assists) in 33 games while bouncing between the middle and bottom pairings. He split the season between Youngstown and Waterloo and is committed to Michigan State.

134. Mikey Milne, RW | 09-Oct-2002 | Winnipeg, WHL | 6'1, 185 | Shoots Left | Canada

Milne missed the first half of Winnipeg's 2020-21 campaign to recover from an offseason upper-body injury, but the speedy winger wasted little time making his presence felt in the Ice's deep lineup. A late-round bantam pick in 2017, Milne posted 12 points (6 goals, 6 assists) in 14 games, but what is more significant is that the Ice was 6-4-0 in the games he missed and 12-1-1 in those he appeared in. He has excellent speed and is an inside player who competes hard and can make plays from in tight.

135. Jackson Blake, RW | 03-Aug-2003 | Eden Prairie, HS-MN | 5'10, 158 | Shoots Right | U.S. | NCAA: N. Dakota

Eden Prairie owes a chunk of its 2021 Minnesota Class 2A state title to this feisty yet skilled winger, who was dominant in the tournament and even scored the double-overtime winner over Lakeville South in the finale. He also spent chunks of the season with the USHL Chicago Steel, where he was a productive middle-six winger for the eventual league champions. Blake, whose father Jason once was a 40-goal scorer in the NHL, plays the game at an incredibly fast pace and can be both a playmaker and a goal scorer thanks to his ability to create time and space for himself. He can turn a defender inside-out in one-on-one situations and only needs a few strides to reach top speed. Blake will play collegiately at North Dakota.

136. Dmitry Zukan, C | 23-Nov-2002 | Krasnaya Armiya, MHL | 5'11, 176 | Shoots Left | Russia

An expert penalty killer who saw a significant increase in production from the season prior, Zukan is a late-2002-born prospect who in 2019-20 appeared for Russia at nearly every major under-18 event. His role with Krasnaya Armiya significantly expanded this past season, as he was used on the lead power-play unit and never fell below the top six on their depth chart. Zukan is basically a third defenseman in his own end, but he has the smarts, hands, and speed to quickly turn an opposing possession into a counterattack. An underrated aspect of Zukan's game is his playmaking ability, especially in open ice with an advantage in numbers.

137. Carter Mazur (OA), LW | 28-Mar-2002 | Tri-City, USHL | 6'0, 170 | Shoots Right | U.S. | NCAA: Denver

A top-liner alongside center Hunter Strand, Mazur benefitted from an increase in muscle and quickness to establish a reputation as one of the USHL's better low-slot threats. The Denver commit also ranked among the league leaders in power-play and short-handed scoring as he helped Tri-City claim the Western Conference's best record while yielding the second-fewest goals in the USHL. A native of Michigan, Mazur took a significant step forward in his development and displays multiple pro-level traits.

138. Noah Meier, LHD | 24-Sep-2002 | GCK Zurich, Swiss League | 5'11, 172 | Shoots Left | Switzerland

You may recall Meier and his Erik Karlsson-esque mannerisms on Switzerland's blue line at the under-20 world junior hockey championship, but let's not get too carried away with the comparison. Nonetheless, Meier is a power-play quarterback and puck rusher who has impressive speed and quickness, and he's has been charged with running the top Swiss unit with the man advantage at every junior-age tournament he's participated in. More notable has been his play at the club level, as Meier has held his own playing in the adult-age Swiss League and proving that a physical forecheck doesn't intimidate him.

139. Matvei Petrov, LW | 12-Mar-2003 | Krylia Sovetov, MHL | 6'2, 178 | Shoots Right | Russia

Petrov, who was taken first overall by the OHL's North Bay Battalion in the 2020 CHL Import Draft, is a soft-mitted dual threat from the flanks who this past season led Krylia Sovetov in both goals (22) and shots (212). A right shot who plays mostly at left wing, Petrov is an offense-first sniper who has a lethal shot-release combination but also keen vision and the confidence to go tape-to-tape across the seam. He is both confident and competent at handling the puck, although he spends a significant amount of time away from board battles and always looks to slip into openings for a quick shot at the net. Petrov has good size and is an average skater in multiple areas, but he does possess strong balance and can be agile in tight spaces when looking to buy an extra second or two to bring his elite shot into the mix. Petrov can serve as either playmaker or sniper, and this season improved his intensity and compete level off the puck. He was hardly noticeable at the under-18 world championship but that shouldn't detract from an otherwise strong draft campaign on a thin squad in league play.

140. Vladimir Sychyov, LW | 17-Mar-2003 | SKA-Varyagi, MHL | 5'11, 156 | Shoots Right | Russia

An unfortunate end to his season from a lower-body injury in early October hasn't hurt Sychyov's reputation as an intense competitor and tireless worker who contributes in all three zones. Everyone wants their primary wingers to score with consistency, and Sychyov is more than capable of producing at a high rate. But it's his play off the puck that really stands out, as Sychyov plays with a visible desire to be the best player on the ice but does so in a selfless manner. He had instant chemistry with center Kirill Tankov and the duo were used together on both the power play and the penalty kill. Sychyov is a bit of a hunched skater, but he has an explosive gear and long stride, which when combined with his anticipation and competitiveness allows him to provide constant pressure on either opposing puck carriers or defenders off the rush.

141. Kyle Kukkonen, C | 13-Nov-2002 | Maple Grove, HS-MN | 5'10, 172 | Shoots Right | U.S. | NCAA: Mich. Tech

A tough, two-way competitor who was the driving force behind Maple Grove's aggressive group of forwards, Kukkonen returned from a broken leg that sidelined him most of last year to lead the Crimson to within a game of Minnesota's Class 2A state title. Kukkonen, who is committed to Michigan Tech, has all the traits of a natural leader but he backs it up with his scoring proclivity. He's a quick skater who is dangerous in open ice because of his speed, soft hands, and accurate one-timer.

142. Nick Degrazia, LW | 03-Dec-2002 | Rayside-Balfour, NOJHL | 6'0, 180 | Shoots Left | Canada

Acquired by the OHL's Sudbury Wolves in the 2019 under-18 draft, Degrazia is a jersey-flapping winger who would have had a prominent role with the Wolves had the season not been cancelled. He was able to get in some games with their Rayside-Balfour affiliate in the NOJHL, serving in a top-six role and contributing on both the power play and the penalty kill. DeGrazia also played for Team Canada-East at the 2019 World Junior "A" Challenge, where he recorded a goal and in assist in six games. He's definitely a long-term project but expect him to fill the net net consistently once the OHL resumes play.

143. Ilya Fedotov, LW | 19-Mar-2003 | Chaika, MHL | 6'1, 176 | Shoots Right | Russia

A speedy and crafty dual-threat winger who solidified a top-line spot for the best team in the MHL's Eastern Conference, Fedotov is a danger to the opposition every time he steps on the ice. He plays with a nonstop motor and anticipates extremely well, which in turn presents him with multiple opportunities per game to isolate defenders and exploit weaknesses in their mobility. Quiet postseason notwithstanding, Fedotov had an excellent draft-year campaign and even showed a physical side when opponents tried to limit his speed and creativity.

144. Daniil Lazutin, C | 25-Jul-2003 | SKA-1946, MHL | 6'2, 180 | Shoots Left | Russia

Once considered a potential first-round pick, Lazutin had an up-and-down season with stretches of uninspired play that hurt his draft stock considerably. It appears to be more of a motivation/consistency issue than a lack of skill or upside, as Lazutin seemed to dial up the intensity and compete level as a depth center at the under-18 world championship, especially in his own end. He's got size, strength, and an excellent shot, plus he can kill penalties and use his frame for board battles. Every draft usually has a dozen or so players who fit into the late-round "boom or bust" category, and Lazutin easily classifies as one of them.

145. Aku Koskenvuo, G | 26-Feb-2003 | HIFK U20, SM-Sarja | 6'4, 173 | Catches Left | Finland

Koskenvuo is Finland's top goalie prospect for this draft but is a notch or two below those who were selected in recent years. He certainly did his job on a mediocre HIFK U20 squad which had its season cut in half because of the pandemic. Still, the Harvard University recruit's .893 save percentage ranked seventh among the 16 SM-Sarja goalies who faced 300 shots or more. And although his numbers were ghastly as Finland's No. 1 at the under-18 world championship (4.23 GAA, .873 save pct.), Koskenvuo showed enough during his league play to maintain his standing as a potential NHL starter.

146. Cole Huckins, C | 14-May-2003 | Acadie-Bathurst, QMJHL | 6'3, 200 | Shoots Left | Canada

A big-bodied center who took an impressive leap forward in his development as the Titan's second-line center, Huckins has several tools that reveal his potential as a jumbo-sized scoring threat. Both he and fellow Acadie-Bathurst pivot Riley Kidney were selected in the first round of the 2018 QMJHL draft and are the building blocks for the rebuilding Titan. Huckins has the size advantage but he's also quite nimble for a forward with his measurements. He can rifle a hard accurate shot but can also opt for the playmaking angle thanks to his vision and soft hands. Huckins also provides a physical element and will not back down from a challenge in front of the net or along the boards. There's still a rawness about him that centers on anticipating and decision making, but Huckins can be effective off the puck and win critical faceoffs to boot. The perfect "project forward" for the later rounds.

147. Philip Granath, RW | 05-Oct-2002 | Frolunda J20, Nationell | 5'7, 167 | Shoots Right | Norge

A diminutive Norwegian puck wizard who spent the first half of the season on Frolunda J20's top line with NHL draftees Theodor Niederbach and Daniel Torgersson, Granath plays a lot bigger than his listed measurements in the sense that he is unafraid to take the puck into traffic. He can distribute the puck as well as any first-year eligible in the J20 and can knock a defensive scheme off kilter with sharp, rapid maneuvers within tight spaces. Granath was one of dozens of Swedish prospects who after the Nationell shutdown switched over to the HockeyEttan, where he was one of the league's top junior scorers. He even received a promotion to the SHL for two games.

148. Connor Lockhart, RW | 21-Jan-2003 | Erie, OHL | 5'9, 165 | Shoots Right | Canada

Smaller forwards are getting far more love from NHL scouts in today's draft environment than ever before, but tough, in-your-face competitors like Lockhart are both relevant and important to any team no matter the era. He's one of the few notable OHL draft prospects to sit out the entire year, but bank on Lockhart to have used his lengthy time off to improve every aspect of his game, even if they weren't necessary. Speed and quickness are two areas where he's already performing at a high level.

149. Ethan Straky, RHD | 18-Apr-2003 | U.S. U18, NTDP | 5'11, 174 | Shoots Right | U.S. | NCAA: Notre Dame

It's common for the depth defensemen on a loaded program like the NTDP to get lost in the draft-season shuffle, but Straky made the most of his limited minutes on the bottom pairing. From going end-to-end or delivering a crushing check, the Notre Dame recruit made a habit of delivering notable plays each night. He's a solid penalty killer and his diligent patrolling of the neutral zone makes it easy for him to make the proper read for a possession change and counter.

150. Petr Moravec, C | 24-Feb-2003 | Litomerice, Chance Liga | 6'0, 181 | Shoots Left | Czech Republic

Moravec is a fast dual-threat center who didn't play a full season but split most of his time between the Czech junior league and the adult-age Chance Liga. The first thing you notice about Moravec is how quick he is, especially when flying off the bench during a change on the fly. Although consistency has been a problem and his decision making with the puck leans more towards risky than safe, defending Moravec while he's moving in any direction can be a chore. He was quiet at the under-18 worlds and was overshadowed by several of his teammates, but Moravec's speed and shot-release combination are already at a mature level. He'll continue to attack the middle of the ice with a ton of confidence even if things aren't going well for him or his team.

151. Vincent Iorio, RHD | 14-Nov-2002 | Brandon, WHL | 6'3, 191 | Shoots Right | Canada

The hype says that Iorio is a potential No. 2 or No. 3 defenseman at the NHL level, but a deeper study into his game reveals a somewhat limited blueliner who is far more effective when things are simplified to breakout passes on the puck and zone-entry defense without it. His shot totals (53 in 22 games) were acceptable for a third-year defender but only five of his 12 points came away from the power play. Playing on a loaded team has certainly helped Iorio gain exposure, but the young defender delivered with a good wire-to-wire season. Teams should consider a deliberate timeline for his development, but his size-strength combination is intriguing for teams needing help defending the low slot.

152. Artyom Kolganov, LHD | 10-Feb-2003 | SKA-Varyagi, MHL | 6'3, 187 | Shoots Left | Russia

Although SKA-Varyagi will always be considered the farm system for the more powerful SKA-1946 program, that doesn't mean they are incapable of icing a competitive lineup. Kolganov as their top-pairing defenseman had a lot to do with that, as he logged big minutes and was used on both the power play and penalty kill. He isn't much for point production or shot generation (2 goals, 4 assists, and 21 shots in 46 games), but Kolganov is a "warrior" type who can smother the speedy playmakers, disrupt seam passes, and keep the low slot clear of any major threats. He had a slow start to his season but really turned it on in the second half.

153. Elias Stenman, C | 23-Dec-2002 | Skelleftea J20, Nationell | 5'10, 165 | Shoots Left | Sweden

Stenman is a quick two-way playmaker who centered potential first-rounder Simon Robertsson, although he didn't seem get enough recognition for being one of Skelleftea J20's top players. His late birthday also hindered him from being showcased at a major tournament, but this kid is a hard worker who delivers a solid effort for every team he's played for, including SK-Lejon in Sweden's HockeyEttan, where he posted 12 points (5 goals, 7 assists) in 12 games. Stenman is a pure set-up man with sure hands who can receive and handle the puck cleanly before making accurately deliveries while moving at top speed. He passes up shots like mad but there seems to be a method to his madness as he makes it a point to consistently incorporate the entire unit into a possession.

154. Simon Becar, LHD | 16-Apr-2003 | Slovakia U18, 1HL | 6'0, 168 | Shoots Left | Slovakia

A promising puck mover with a strict adherence to slot coverage and one-on-one play, Becar displays quick feet and active stick to deny forwards the inside and limit them to mostly low-percentage attempts. Although his confidence with the puck was more prominent in league play than it was for Slovakia at the under-20 world juniors, Becar is more effective with a shortened leash and simple outlets before actively patrolling the neutral zone.

155. Manix Landry, C | 23-Nov-2002 | Gatineau, QMJHL | 5'11, 178 | Shoots Left | Canada

A do-it-all player who is strong in all three zones, Landry wasn't that high of a QMJHL draft pick (Round 3 in 2018) but he quickly established himself as one of Gatineau's cornerstone players and on-ice leaders. He finished his season on a high note with points in 11 of his final 14 games (6 goals, 10 assists) while playing on the same line as heralded 2021 draft prospect Zachary Dean. Landry has soft hands and is a reliable puckhandler, but he also has a high motor and an off-the-puck game that is both effective and structured.

156. Joe Palodichuk, LHD | 26-Feb-2003 | Hill-Murray, HS-MN | 5'11, 154 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: Wisc.

Palodichuk was one of the top defensemen in the state in 2020-21 after he spent the previous season as a forward on Hill-Murray's title-winning squad. Committed to Wisconsin, Palodichuk can be a physical presence on the blue line but also controls the flow of possessions with sure hands and quick feet. He led the Pioneers in scoring last season and was a Mr. Hockey finalist.

157. Nikolai Hakala, C | 11-Jul-2003 | Ilves U20, SM-Sarja | 6'6, 218 | Shoots Left | Finland

Hakala centered Ilves U20's "kid" line while being flanked by wingers Jakub Kos and Joona Korhonen, but it was the 6-foot-6 pivot who handled most of the checking duties while assisting his defensemen in the low slot and corners. He's a powerful skater whose mechanics look clean for a forward his size, and Hakala showed his versatility by killing penalties and serving as a net-front presence on the power play. Hakala was one of the top scorers on the team but most of his damage was done in the trenches.

158. Ryan St. Louis, LW | 13-Jun-2003 | U.S. U18, NTDP | 5'10, 168 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: Northeastern

This year's NTDP was hammered by injuries, but the tough and selfless St. Louis was one of only five players to appear in all 50 games. He has the creativity, vision, and playmaking ability to produce points on a consistent basis, but he served his coaching staff well by providing consistent two-way play and killing penalties while being used in a middle-six role. St. Louis is committed to Northeastern, and he'll likely stay there at least three years to bulk up and improve his balance. Much like his father Martin, Ryan is a kid who is easy to root for.

159. Joey Pierce, RHD | 02-Oct-2002 | Hermantown, HS-MN | 6'0, 196 | Shoots Right | U.S. | NCAA: Minn-Duluth

A brawny defender with a heavy shot who was critical in Hermantown's run that nearly resulted in the 2020 Class 1A title, Pierce never got the chance for redemption after the varsity squad was forced to quarantine for this year's tournament. Nevertheless, the Minnesota-Duluth recruit spent the remainder of the season with the NAHL's Minnesota Wilderness, where he was on the top pairing with playmaker Grant Docter. There's a significant intimidation factor that can be applied with Pierce is on the ice as he's known to deliver big hits, but he's also played forward and had set plays designed for him to use his hard shot.

160. Lukas Pajer, RW | 04-Jul-2003 | Litomerice, Chance Liga | 5'10, 181 | Shoots Right | Czech Rep.

Pajer is a quick and energetic winger who carried over his strong play with Litomerice of the adult-age Chance Liga into the recent under-18 world championship. He doesn't have a boat load of noticeable skill or creativity, but Pajer uses his speed and high motor to consistently apply pressure both on and off the puck. Pajer's the kind of player who will consistently provide hustle to beat out an icing; use both physicality and lateral quickness on the forecheck; and head to the net-front area to establish a screen. He does own a plus shot and likes to set up in the left circle for one-timers.

161. Avery Hayes, RW | 10-Oct-2002 | Hamilton, OHL | 5'10, 175 | Shoots Right | U.S.

A coach may never publicly admit that they play favorites, but nearly all of them likely have one or two kids in their lineup who they wish they could clone for every available position. That's the type of player Hayes is — an opportunistic dual-threat scorer with sick hands who kills penalties and throws his weight around. A native of Michigan who was drafted by Hamilton in the sixth round of the 2018 OHL Priority Selection and played for Team USA at the 2019 Ivan Hlinka, Hayes already had two full OHL seasons under his belt before the pandemic forced him (and several other OHL'ers) overseas to play for Levice in Slovakia's second division. There he posted a respectable nine points in 16 games before heading back to North America to take part in the PBHH invitational. Hayes plays a similar game to former NHL'er Ryan Callahan, who himself became one of the league's better two-way wingers after being a later-round OHL and NHL draft pick. He can be dogged on the puck and get involved physically while battling bigger opponents in the corners, but Hayes displays a heads-up or quick-strike mentality the second he collects the puck. His hands play a big role in how he receives passes and quickly wires the puck with accuracy, but Hayes also looks off a ton to keep both defenders and goalies guessing as he creeps towards the danger areas. Hayes is a good skater who makes up for a lack of explosiveness with strong balance to power through checks and rapid directional changes at the opposing line. He's usually on the ice in late/close scenarios to help prove the theory that his coach trusts him more than most of his teammates.

162. Arvid Sundin, LW | 02-Aug-2003 | Brynas J20, Nationell | 5'11, 176 | Shoots Left | Sweden

Sundin is a tough prospect to figure out because he's a notable Swede from his invite to the under-18 world championship but served as a bottom-six winger on a mediocre junior team in the J20 Nationell. But watching him perform is enough to spark your interest, as Sundin didn't act or play like a checker who is limited with the puck. He's highly intelligent and anticipates an opponent's intentions, but Sundin also displays sharp stickhandling skills and can run the cycle with confidence and precision. He also boasts a plus wrist shot with a quick release, and Brynas seemed to have set plays specifically designed for him off faceoffs. Sundin barely saw time on the power play, but he was one the better penalty killers on the team. He was used the same by Sweden at the U18 worlds, where his hustle and energy proved to be effective off the puck. Sundin is a good skater with average speed who can be effective in open ice but seems to be more of a shoot-first winger with underrated vision and passing skills.

163. Kirill Gerasimiyuk, G | 22-Aug-2003 | SKA-Varyagi, MHL | 6'2, 181 | Catches Left | Russia

The bottom line is simple — any teenage goalie who posts a winning record and .931 save percentage while facing 37 shots a game deserves to be recognized, especially if that goalie makes his country's under-18 squad for the IIHF world championship. But once again, Central Scouting completely overlooked Gerasimiyuk's herculean efforts in goal for a SKA-Varyagi team that is literally designed to serve as a farm system for a superior team in their own conference and must face them in meaningful games. Although Russia's MHL is one of the more goalie-friendly junior leagues in Europe, that shouldn't detract from a 17-year-old Gerasimiyuk recording a 67-save performance against powerhouse Dynamo MSK and posting four shutouts on the season — two of which involved 40 or more shots against. Since he's part of the SKA program, Gerasimiyuk follows the style of most of their goalies by playing mostly upright before exploding into his butterfly. He'll use the RVH but generally keeps an upright post-lean on the short-side post. Gerasimiyuk is an inside-out goalie who doesn't venture far from the crease, and you rarely see him handle the puck, but he is a competitor who stays active in the blue paint while keeping his head on a swivel.

164. Eetu Liukas, LW | 25-Sep-2002 | TPS, SM-Liiga | 6'2, 198 | Shoots Left | Finland

A rugged power winger who plays an effective 200-foot game, Liukas (pictured) has been on the draft radar for several years due to his late birthday which in 2019-20 allowed him to play at several under-18 competitions. Had it not been for the pandemic, the strapping forward should have been expected to play for Finland at prominent events such as the two U20 Four Nations and U19 Five Nations tournaments. He therefore spent the bulk of his first year of draft eligibility with TPS Turku's A-Team in the adult-age SM-Liiga, where he appeared in only 19 games as a bottom-six and didn't dress for a single playoff game. Liukas plays a tough North American style. He is both physical and abrasive, and he has a penchant for getting on an opponent's nerves. Liukas is not a limited player, however, as he is an effective penalty killer and on occasion will show some nifty stickhandling moves and agility as he attacks with the puck. His speed and quickness are average for a player his size, and an extra gear and sharper decision making are two things that are preventing him at this stage from being a consistent difference maker. Nonetheless, Liukas is a gritty "sandpaper" type of player with a decent motor who can do yeoman's work in the front of the net and in puck battles.

165. Semyon Vyazovoy, G | 26-Feb-2003 | Tolpar, MHL | 6'2, 169 | Shoots Left | Russia

This year's MHL class of 2003-born prospects lacked a clear number-one goaltender, but Vyazovoy was one of the better netminding prospects, albeit while serving as backup on the top team in the Eastern Conference. He possesses good size, and looks comfortable playing the puck, but what stands out most of all is his aggression. Vyazovoy plays farther out from his net than most goalies would feel comfortable with, and although this leaves him vulnerable to one-timers, it makes it hard for opposing teams to score on their initial shots. And when Vyazovoy is on his game, he does a good job with rebound control, which only serves to complicate things for the opposition even more. He struggled during limited action in the playoffs against Chaika but his regular season was ore indicative of his abilities. Vyazovoy faced an average of 31.3 shots a game and posted a 14-9-1 mark with a .940 save percentage.

166. Jacob Guevin, RHD | 17-Jan-2003 | Muskegon, USHL | 5'11, 181 | Shoots Right | Canada

An intelligent offensive defenseman with a high panic threshold, Guevin was a top-pairing minute eater for Muskegon and served as their powerplay quarterback. He's a Northwood Prep product and Quebec native who chose the college route over major junior, and the University of Nebraska-Omaha couldn't be happier, as Guevin ranked second behind Bruins' prospect Mason Lohrei in USHL defense scoring with 45 points (7 goals, 38 assists) in 53 games, but 34 of those points came at even strength. Guevin is an excellent passer and playmaker with has buttery-soft hands, and he was Muskegon's heavy lifter for beating back pressure. Time and again, Guevin's teammates deferred to him when they were in a pickle in the neutral or defensive zones. His skating gets pegged as average, but Guevin can spin or dance his way out of tight-quarter pressure, and he's strong enough on his skates to take the average hit but continue motoring on. The puck isn't on his blade for long, however, as Guevin's keen vision helps him connect with a teammate to trap forecheckers deep in his end.

167. Edgar Varagyan, LW | 17-Oct-2002 | Stalnye Lisy, MHL | 6'2, 202 | Shoots Right | Russia

A modern-day power forward who hustles and excels in all three zones either on or off the puck, Varagyan was a strong prospect in the MHL, but he also earned a call-up to the KHL, albeit in a role. This promotion was well deserved, however, as Varagyan instantly became one of the go-to players for his MHL club. Not only does the rambunctious winger have a leadership role, but he often can be seen communicating with teammates while play is ongoing, and Varagyan celebrates his team's goals as enthusiastically as anyone. On the puck, Varagyan often is responsible for breakouts, and he does so with deceptive speed and a powerful stride. Varagyan has a strong wrist that he likes to let loose from any range and is close to unmovable when he plants himself in front of the net. Most impressive, however, are his hands, which allow him to put the perfect touch on shots or passes; all while displaying expert puck protection.

168. Benjamin Zloty, RHD (OA) | 1-Jan-02 | Winnipeg, WHL | 6'0, 170 | Shoots Left | Canada

Zloty isn't your typical Western Canadian defenseman in that he's a little wiry and isn't overly physical. But his puck skills and agility are displayed with confidence on a nightly basis, which is why Winnipeg was lucky to have him orchestrate their deadly power play after Carson Lambos was shelved for the season with an injury just two games in. He tied for 11th in WHL defense scoring with 17 points (1 goal, 16 assists) in 24 games, but 11 of those points came on an Ice power play which clicked at an astounding 31.5 percent success rate. He's an offensive defenseman who will excel at running any power play, and his improved his defense of odd-man rushes and heady play at his line. He wasn't a high WHL draft pick (111th overall), but Zloty produced for a second year in a row, albeit on a team loaded with weapons. He is a no-nonsense shooter and is confident walking the line while adding a pump fake or two. His movements in any direction are quick and fluid, and he can shift gears or make rapid directional changes while maintaining situational awareness and puck control.

169. Jack Matier, RHD | 08-Apr-2003 | Ottawa, OHL | 6'4, 200 | Shoots Right | Canada

A quiet yet reliable defenseman who plays physical and serves as the perfect safety net for an offensive-minded partner, Matier was one of the few pre-draft defenders in the run-and-gun OHL of 2019-20 who stayed within himself and proved to be reliable in one-on-one situations. Defensive defensemen rarely make headlines during their draft year, but Matier is one of the better ones, and his ability to stay within himself while skating with a powerhouse Ottawa 67's lineup that averaged nearly five goals a game showed a high level of maturity and coachability. Although he wasn't involved in any league play during the shutdown, Matier was summoned by Hockey Canada to represent them at the 2021 under-18 world championship, where he often paired with puck rusher Olen Zellweger and displayed physicality, strong gap control, and timely step-ups that resulted in opposing turnovers. His skating gets beat up but Matier's footwork and backskating are more than adequate to handle the rush. Matier's puck skills beyond a crisp and accurate first pass are limited, and he'll probably see more time on the penalty kill than on the power play.

170. David Spacek, RHD | 18-Feb-2003 | 6'0, 170 | Plzen U20, ELJ | Shoots Right | Czech Rep.

A strong skater who likes to join the rush, Spacek spent most of his draft season in the under-20 junior league but got a taste of tougher competition with Litomerice in the adult-age Chance Liga. Mobility and quickness help drive's Spacek's decision making both on and off the puck, and he seems to understand how quickly he can eliminate an opposing rush and turn the other way for a counterattack. Although he was a depth defenseman who was used sparingly by the Czechs at the 2021 under-18 world championship, Spacek has shown enough in juniors to bolster his potential as a minute-eating puck mover at higher levels. He was drafted 67th overall by the QMJHL's Sherbrooke Phoenix in the 2021 CHL Import Draft, and his father Jaroslav played in over 900 NHL games as a defenseman. David can hammer the puck and run a power play but also is reliable for late/close situations.

171. Arvid Eljas, C | 01-Jun-2003 | Leksand J20, Nationell | 5'10, 172 | Shoots Left | Sweden

A reliable two-way center who was a key component to Leksands' suffocating team defense, Eljas is a team-first checker who can be counted on to stay within himself and do the little things required to keep his own end tidy. Leksands J20 was both deep and dominant during its abbreviated schedule but Eljas as its third-line center still finished tied for fourth in team scoring with 10 points (3 goals, 7 assists) in 14 games. He later moved to the Division III Hockey Ettan after the J20 shutdown and help Koping win the relegation round before joining Sweden for the under-18 world championship, where he registered a goal and two assists in seven games as the Swedes took home a bronze medal.

172. Josh Doan, C (OA) | 1-Feb-02 | Chicago, USHL | 6'2, 176 | Shoots Right | U.S. | NCAA: Ariz. St.

A hard-nosed power forward who was the perfect complimentary piece on a top six loaded with playmakers, Doan was a key cog in Chicago's ability to dominate possession by wearing down the opposition. He finished third in the USHL in scoring (70 points), third in assists (39), fourth in goals (31) and had the best shooting percentage (26.7 percent) among the nearly 100 USHL skaters with over 100 shots. Doan's marching orders seemed to be limited to effective chip-and-chase and net-jamming tactics, he proved to more dangerous on the puck in his draft+1 season than his rookie year of 2019-20. Doan is a hard worker who will have a place in any lineup. His speed and agility for his size is adequate and any shortcoming in skating style or explosiveness is offset by his smarts, effort, and strength. You would have to comb through weeks of footage from each of the last two seasons to find examples of Doan taking a shift off or giving up early into a board battle, and his smarts prevent him from overcrowding the puck or placing himself out of position. Doan, who is from the Phoenix area and committed to Arizona State

173. Hannes Hakkila, LHD | 22-Sep-02 | Karpat U20, SM-Sarja | 5'10, 170 | Shoots Left | Finland

A smooth-skating defender for Karpat U20 who graduated from the middle to the top pairing before being loaned to the second-division Mestis, Hakkila is a graceful skater with a powerful stride who can keep the puck on his stick for long periods. He's a confident puck handler who will uses impressive backwards and lateral movements to delay long enough for pressure to release from him. Once inside the offensive end, Hakkila wants the puck and is comfortable dictating the flow and direction of a possession. He doesn't own a booming shot but it confident enough to fire away without hesitation. Hakkila's hands are a big part of his game, as he likes to shoot the puck in one motion regardless of how or where he's positioned upon pass receipt. His play off the puck is safe and reliable, as Hakkila is not a major risk taker. Part of that is Karpat's defense-first mindset, but that doesn't limit Hakkila's desire to read plays and jump into a lazy pass for a clean and quick skate into opposing territory. Hakkila is neither big nor physical, but he plays the man and doesn't get caught puck gazing. His development is now in the hands of Jukurit, which signed him in April.

174. Ilya Safonov, C (OA) | 30-May-01 | Kazan, KHL | 6'4, 205 | Shoots Left | Russia

A hulking two-way center who was a significant possession driver for Irbis at the MHL and VHL levels before being promoted for checking duty in the KHL, Safonov became a familiar name to the mainstream for his play at the under-20 world junior hockey championship. Size and physicality are the first two things that stand out during the standard Safonov shift, but he's a puck hound who makes up for a lack of explosiveness with timely reads and anticipation. His skating gets criticized for the wrong reasons, and Safonov is neither slow nor clunky. His first step lacks pop, but his stride is long and powerful, and he's accelerated well past defenders in open ice. Granted, this happened sporadically in the KHL and his time there appeared to be humbling, but Safonov can be faulted for outgrowing junior hockey more than two years ago. Sensing plays has more to do with Safonov's success in open ice than raw speed, which makes it hard to nitpick a prospect's skating when he's constantly around the puck and making life miserable for the opposition. Safonov is a tough customer who will deliver punishing hits and crash the net. He gets busy on the forecheck and creates turnovers, plus wins more than half his faceoffs.

175. Hunter Strand, C | 11/13/02 | Tri-City, USHL | 5'11, 185 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: Notre Dame

Tri-city's top-line center between skilled wingers Matthew Knies and Carter Mazur, Strand is an NTDP graduate committed to Notre Dame who was one of the USHL's top 200-foot pivots. He led the Storm in both goals and assists and tied for 15th in the USHL in overall scoring with 49 points in 51 games. It's a fair question to ask why Strand in his first year of draft eligibility is ranked so far behind his aforementioned linemates when it was he who had the better numbers, yet the answer is simple -- Strand's production is mostly a byproduct of hard work without many flashes of natural puck skill or speed. Nevertheless, he's a decent skater with strong balance and does everything that is asked of him and then some, to include sacrificing his body. Strand also is an excellent penalty killer and strong on faceoffs

176. Nikita Guslistov, C (OA) | 30-May-02 | Cherepovets, KHL | 5'10, 178 | Shoots Left | Russia

A high-energy two-way center with a nonstop motor and strong grasp for the game, Guslistov's development timeline took a massive jump forward when he was promoted to the KHL and played significant minutes for a playoff team. After a nondescript MHL season as a bottom-six checker with Almaz in 2019-20, Guslistov went on a two-month tear to start his overage campaign and was promoted to Cherepovets in the KHL in early November and stayed with them the rest of the way and into the postseason. Guslistov rarely stays in one place, and the quickness of his transition from defensive support to counterattack is already at a mature level. He's an above-average skater with a power stride and impressive acceleration, and Guslistov turns on a dime when reacting to puck travel. He keeps his head on a swivel while properly keeping his stick in passing lanes and supports his defensemen below the goal line and in slot coverage. On the puck, Guslistov is a finisher who take the puck strong to the net. He receives passes cleanly and wires pucks accurately and in one motion.

177. Kalle Vaisanen, LW | 28-Jan-03 | TPS U20, SM-Sarja | 6'4, 178 | Shoots Right | Finland

Vaisanen is an intriguing winger prospect because he has several traits that would translate at the highest level, specifically his size, puck protection, and goal-scoring ability. He's a bit wiry but finishes his checks and does fairly well during board battles while revealing energy and close-quarter quickness on or off puck. Vaisanen played on TPS U20's first line, mostly with notable center Aarne Intonen and winger Leevi Teissala who are both 2001-born forwards, and he was used on the top power-play unit as a shooter or bumper but not as a facilitator. Although you'd consider Vaisanen a one-way forward because of his goal-scoring prowess, his long reach is quite useful off the puck as he breaks up passes in the neutral zone and on the forecheck. He's also highly effective in the chip-and-chase and shows deceptive speed during foot races.

178. Martin Rysavy, RW | 6-March-03 | Prerov, Chance Liga | 6'3, 218 | Shoots Left | Czech Rep.

Rysavy is a pure goal scorer with soft hands who excels in the tough areas. His measurements obviously categorize him as a power winger but there's a significant level of finesse to his game, especially the way he delivers timely and accurate saucer passes while spinning off checks near the wall. Rysavy's straight-line quickness is average for a player his size and a lack of pullaway speed hurts him, but he more than makes up for it with excellent balance and deceptive agility in tight spaces. Everyone loves a finisher with a deadly shot, but Rysavy's nose for the net and willingness to take a beating in front makes him just as dangerous near the goal as he is from the circles. His game off the puck needs structure but Rysavy should receive an extended look in the Extraliga next season.

179. Luke Mittelstadt, LHD | 22-Jan-03 | Eden Prairie, HS-MN | 5'11, 175 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: Minnesota

The youngest sibling and lone defender from the Mittelstadt crew, Luke has the same soft hands and playmaking skill as brothers Casey and John but also knows when to lock things down and focus on the defensive side of things. Mittelstadt has good speed but he's elusive and agile when faced with either a single or multiple forecheckers. He served as one of Eden Prairie's team captains and was instrumental as the No. 1 defender during the Eagles' march to the Class 2A state title. Mittelstadt is calm and poised during breakouts, but he can shift gears and take the puck all the way to the house. Of all his impressive skills with the puck, however, it's Mittelstadt textbook stick-on-puck and tight gap while patrolling high near his line that makes him a legitimate pro prospect and he'll even eliminate puck carriers with a solid body or hip check.

180. Jiri Tichacek, LHD | 30-Jan-03 | Kladno, Chance Liga | 5'9, 170 | Shoots Left | Czech Rep.

A small but sturdy playmaker from the back end, Tichanek can be a trusted problem solver who can help any one of his teammates out of a jam. He plays a selfless game that keeps his entire on-ice unit on notice since they always must be prepared to receive a hard, crisp pass. Tichanek was a visible presence on the Czech blue line at the under-18 world championship, where he was one of their power-play quarterbacks and one-man breakout options. He has a high panic threshold, and it usually takes an intense forecheck or double team to force him into a safer play that clears the zone but cedes possession.

181. Noah Hasa, C | 6-March-03 | Frolunda J20, Nationell | 5'11, 168 | Shoots Left | Sweden

An underrated two-way center with pace who fought his way into a bigger role on a loaded Frolunda J20 squad, Hasa is one of the better checkers available. His numbers don't seem impressive (2 goals, 3 assists in 18 games), but one must consider Hasa's role on a team with three top scoring lines and not enough room for him on the power play. Hasa did his job with distinction, winning over 50 percent of his faceoffs and serving as one of the few forwards on Frolunda who made defense a priority. Much like William Hallen a season ago, Hasa should expect an increased role next season after the program's bigger names have moved on. His compete level and physicality for a player of his size are both noticeable, and forwards with Hasa's speed, energy and adherence to positioning are destined for a bump as soon as their coach can find room for them.

182. Carter Batchelder, C | 25-Feb-03 | Eden Prairie, HS-MN | 5'10, 168 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: Colorado

The top-line center for Minnesota Class 2A champion Eden Prairie, Batchelder is a Colorado College recruit who along with Jackson Blake and Drew Holt formed one of the deadliest trios in high school hockey. He is a dual threat with a strong compete level, and his line's ability to dictate tempo while generating high-danger chances with regularity proved to be too much for some of the state's top defensive teams. A Mr. Hockey finalist who led the Eagles in several offensive categories, Batchelder has above-average speed, a loud and heavy wrist shot, and a sharp overall sense of play development. When you center a line that accounts for nearly 60 percent of total offense for a state champion, chances are you know what's you're doing.

183. Brody Lamb, RW | 30-Aug-03 | Dodge County, HS-MN | 6'1, 165 | Shoots Right | U.S. | NCAA: Minnesota

A slick puck magician and versatile goal scorer who made quick work of the Minnesota high-school circuit, Lamb is a future Golden Gopher who has been the best player on the ice throughout most of his career. He's a little wiry and will have to bulk up to intimidate the NCAA the way he did in high school, but Lamb is neither soft nor a perimeter player. Dominating the puck and slicing through defenses seemed easy for him, but Lamb also contributed off the puck and would not back down from challenges at the line or in the corner. It's easy to look at Lamb's gaudy numbers (52 goals, 87 points) and his dominant 10-goal performance in the Class 1A state tournament and label him as your typical scorer who dominates teenage competition. But Lamb is a complete player who will only get better as he adds muscle and learns the weaknesses of the opposition.

184. Jacob Martin, RHD | 18-March-03 | U.S. U18, NTDP | 6'0, 188 | Shoots Right | U.S. | NCAA: Wisconsin

One of the few drawbacks to being selected for a premier program like the U.S. NTDP is that most of the kids who make it must accept a decreased role from what they had as high-school underclassmen. This is especially prevalent within the defense corps, where a prospect who played 25-30 minutes a game for his previous team can see his usage halved and his role minimized. Such was the case with Martin, a Wisconsin recruit who has the skating and defensive acumen to excel in a top-pairing role for most junior programs but with the NTDP was relegated to the bottom pairing. Martin is a smooth customer under pressure and delivers crisp first passes. He keeps a relatively tight gap and will hold his line, albeit without as much physicality as some of his fellow NTDP blueliners. Martin barely saw time on the power play or in late/close situations but was effective on the penalty kill on the second or third unit. Statistically, Martin piled up most of his 14 points (4 goals, 10 assists) in garbage time and against inferior opponents. The pessimist marginalizes this as a byproduct of playing in laughers against demoralized doormats, while the optimist sees potential for greater production if the minutes are pushed higher. For whatever reason, Martin's staff kept him as the No. 5 to No. 7 defenseman even after potential top-five pick Luke Hughes went down with an injury. Although it won't get any easier whenever he gets to Wisconsin since the Badgers have a young blue line and several notable defense prospects on the way, Martin oozes pro potential and should be afforded every opportunity to play bigger minutes.

185. Carl Lindbom, G | 20-May-03 | Djurgarden J20, Nationell | 6'1, 165 lbs | Catches Left | Sweden

Although he's nowhere near Jesper Wallstedt in terms of resume, size, and prominence, Lindbom has the distinction of being Sweden's top 2003-born goalie for this draft. How that translates to NHL success is a bit of a mystery since his J20 play with Djurgardens was inconsistent and he was posterized more than a few times at the under-18 world championship before settling down to carry the Swedes to the bronze medal. Lindbom wasn't the clear No. 1 for his club team and his stats (.890 save percentage, 26 shots a game) was middle of the pack among his peers in the J20's stingier North Division. He plays an inside-out style that is driven by lower-half explosiveness while exposing the upper half, but Lindbom is more jittery than he needs to be and spends too much time in his RVH when weak-side cutters are posing the bigger threat. His strengths are the ability to devour pucks aimed at the lower half and explode laterally to address one-timer from seam passes.

186. Dovar Tinling, LW/C | 3-March-03 | Vermont, HE | 5'11, 185 | Shoots Left | Canada

The rare 17-year-old eligible who played college hockey in his draft year, Tinling is a pure scorer who skated for one of the weakest offenses in the nation. One can argue that a draft prospect with Tinling's strong reputation should have changed that, but that order would have been too tall for any of this year's mid to late-round prospects. If his name sounds familiar, it's probably from when he played for a Cinderella Canada-East squad that nearly stole the 2019 under-20 World Junior "A" Challenge before bowing out in overtime to Russia in the gold medal game. Tinling has hands and flash, and his effort off the puck is both effective, energetic, and physical at times. His speed is deceptive and defenders who misjudge it during breakouts must deal with his relentless and aggressive approach. Tinling's situation is tricky because he had an unproductive year on a bad team, and it wasn't like he suffered from bad puck luck (only 13 shots in 12 games). If the Tinling we saw at the WJAC is what we'll get as a Vermont upperclassman, then a late-round selection is quite reasonable for a two-way winger with jam and pace.

187. Deni Goure, C | 15-July-03 | Owen Sound, OHL | 5'10, 182 | Shoots Right | Canada

A cerebral pass-first center who was the 10th pick in the 2019 OHL Priority Selection, Goure opted not to play this season outside of the late-season invitational in Erie. He was one of the OHL's better 16-year-olds in 2019-20, recording 11 goals and 14 assists in 62 games but earning an ice time increase as the season progressed. It's hard to predict what kind of season he would have had for the Attack, which was a veteran team expected to get hit hard by graduations. It's reasonable to assume that Goure would have held a prominent role and produced accordingly, but questions about his ability to handle bigger players and excel under smashmouth conditions haven't been answered. Goure's vision, puck protection, and energy serve him well in the offensive zone, and criticisms of his skating seem overstated as he can make quick work of overzealous defenders in close-quarter play along the boards or near the goal. Goure can be an effective penalty killer and asset on the power play, but he'll need to improve upon his faceoffs, which he won at a 44 percent clip as an OHL rookie.

188. Lorenzo Canonica, C | 3-Sep-03 | Shawinigan, QMJHL | 5'11, 179 | Shoots Left | Switzerland

Canonica is a high-octane center who can dazzle you with his puck skills but also play with some bite and effort. He made 2021 draft eligibility by only a few weeks, so expect him to continue growing and filling out. Thing is, he's not weak on the puck and can tire out helpless defenders with his multi-directional quickness and starting and stopping in the middle of the ice seems to force opponents to remain static before losing him. Canonica is your atypical playmaker who "makes everyone around him better", but he also has a nasty wrister and sick hands to finish near the goal.

189. Jake Chiasson, W/C | 25-May-03 | Brandon, WHL | 6'2, 165 | Shoots Right | Canada

A crafty yet opportunistic winger, Chiasson was one of seven Wheaties who finished around the point-per-game mark and helped the team to an impressive 18-4-2 mark. Although he plays with energy and has some flair to his game, Chiasson comes across as a solid middle-six role player who uses his size and finishing abilities to compliment a line with stronger puck possessors and playmakers. He was a high WHL draft pick (15th overall in 2018) who increased his production from 15 points in 60 games as a rookie in 2019-20 to 20 points (9 goals, 11 assists) in 23 games last season. Chiasson isn't a shoot-first winger and has some creativity and a strong passing game, but he's also useful off the puck by jamming the net and getting under an opponent's skin without taking a penalty. Chiasson moves well and can accelerate to top speed in only a few strides while maintaining control of the puck. He also has sharp hand-eye coordination to handle crisp passe from in close.

190. Joel Nystrom, RHD (OA) | 14-May-02 | Farjestad, SHL | 5'11, 170 | Shoots Right | Sweden

Nystrom came out of nowhere to earn a regular shift late in his SHL season with mediocre Farjestad but watching him skate and manage the puck explain the promotion fully. After a nondescript J20 season in his draft year of 2020, Nystrom and Merrimack-bound righty Adam Arvedson emerged as one of the top defense pairings in the Nationell. He was used in all situations and averaged over three shots a game before being promoted to the A-Team, where he appeared in 27 games and six more in playoffs but notched only three assists between the two. But stats don't tell the whole story, as Nystrom postseason play against eventual-champion Vaxjo helped validate his reputation as one of this year's top overage defensemen. Nystrom was neither dominant nor productive, but he handled a tough forecheck and used his wheels to help his team if underdogs relieve pressure in the defensive end.

191. Matvei Averochkin, C | 15-May-03 | Krasnaya Armiya, MHL | 6'6, 210 | Shoots Left | Russia

A towering middle-six center with quickness for competitive Krasnaya Armiya, Averochkin has impressive length and the hands and footwork to match it. His exposure grew when he was lined up next to notable puck magician Prokhor Poltapov, and the duo performed exceptionally well on the forecheck and during tight-quarter play. Used in all situations to include the net front on the power play, Averochkin provided his staff with versatility and reliability. He's a 200-foot player through and through, and it's understandable if his upside as a point producer is considered low. Still, Averochkin is a capable worker bee, and he chipped in 16 goals (but only 8 assists) in 58 games to round out what felt like an impressive and consistent wire-to-wire draft season.

192. Nick Roukounakis, LW | 8-Sep-03 | Thayer, HS-MA | 6'2, 205 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: Boston Univ.

A physical power winger with a serious intimidation factor, Roukounakis is a Boston University recruit who was a top-line winger alongside Sasha Teleguine at Thayer Academy. Forwards his size usually need to make serious improvements in skating before joining a powerhouse program, but Roukounakis moves well and makes tight turns while showing elusiveness from the boards. He's more than built for the college game thanks to his ability to grind down opponents along the boards and cause havoc in the net-front area, but he looked out of place when taken outside the prep circuit during a stint with the under-18 NTDP. Consider Roukounakis a long-term project who teams can keep stashed at the USHL and collegiate level and watch him develop, and it isn't a reach to say he has the potential to become a top net-front presence by the time he's a junior or senior.

193. Martin Schreiber, LHD | 31-Oct-2002 | Linkoping J20, Nationell | 6'2, 183 | Shoots Left | Sweden

Schreiber has a solid wire-to-wire season that saw him perform well in both the J20 and SHL, with the former being the best defensive team in the circuit while the latter leaked goals on the regular. Although we had him ranked 177th on our January ranking, Schreiber wasn't generating a whole lot of buzz and was left off every one of Central Scouting's early and midseason watch lists then appeared as their 29th-best European skater in their lone ranking of the year. Truth be told, Linkoping had a bunch of quality blueliners at the J20 level, but none made the loud impact that Schreiber did when he arrived on the SHL scene for a 12-game stint. He's an excellent skater with one of the quickest sticks you'll find, but Schreiber also plays mean and physical. His meteoric rise can be explained mostly by his skating, which also happened with WHL'er Cole Jordan. Schreiber's decision making is clean, but he too plays the game at a feverish place when half the situations he's in calls for less skating, less hitting, and less tunnel vision. One thing cannot be argued – Schreiber was nearly unbeatable in 1-on-1 play at the J20 level, so expect him to play no lower than the SHL until it's time to cross the pond to North America.

194. Artem Kulakov, LHD | 14-Feb-2003 | Omskie Yastreby, MHL | 6'2, 202 | Shoots Left | Russia

Kulakov was middle-pairing defender for Omskie Yastreby which finished near the top of the MHL's Eastern Conference standings. He's more of a shutdown/physical type who seemed to understand his role and limited to touches to the bare minimum. Kulakov protected his crease with intensity and smarts, and his releases to challenge shooters in the circle were controlled and effective. He has average mobility for his size and his stride is short, but Kulakov clearly thinks the game one and two plays ahead of most of his opponents. Not only is Kulakov a competent shot blocker and penalty killer, but he has the confidence to take a loose puck from his own end and skate it to safety. He holds his line firm and uses a textbook stick-on-puck technique when challenged by a speedy puck carrier. He played over 17 minutes a game for a good team that used up to eight defensemen, which can translate to a VHL promotion in his draft+1 season.

195. Ty Murchison, LHD | 2-Feb-2003 | U.S. U18, NTDP | 6'2, 192 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: Ariz. State

Murchison is a vacuum cleaner on defense who adds punishing physical play to the basic board battle or zone entry. Although his role as a middle-pairing defender seemed limited to protecting his own zone against all enemies foreign and domestic, Murchison showed enough puck skills under pressure that could add another layer to his projection. He rarely saw power play time and was paired with Ty Gallagher on the NTDP's top penalty-killing tandem, so the opportunity for production was limited to even strength and the occasional offensive zone start. Staying within himself is something Murchison does consistently, and he played as if he had a firm grasp of his role as a physical presence. He was able to chip in seven goals and eight assists in 48 games, with four of his goals coming against USHL competition. Murchison is a California native committed to Arizona State.

196. Daniil Sobolev, RHD | 3-March-03 | Spartak, MHL | 6'0, 210 | Shoots Right | Russia

A thick-framed two-way defenseman who sat out the whole season after committing to the OHL's Windsor Spitfires, Sobolev in 2019-20 managed to take some of the spotlight away from high-profile masher Alexander Nikishin, who went on to get drafted by Carolina. Sobolev two seasons ago was one of the MHL's better draft-1 defensemen, and Nikishin spending most of that campaign in the KHL afforded the youngster the chance to show his abilities on the top pairing. He's got big-boy measurements, but Sobolev is more of a puck rusher and risk taker than a brute who stays local without taking many chances with the puck. He can be a fit in all situations and his first pass is usually hard and on the money.

197. Patrik Hamrla, G | 21-May-03 | Karlovy Vary, Extraliga | 6'3, 194 | Catches Left | Czech Rep

A top Czech goaltending prospect who like Jesper Wallstedt experienced the highs and lows of being a teenage goalie in a European elite league, Hamrla is one of several European netminders who showed promise under intense pressure. Switching between the adult-age Chance Liga and the elite Extraliga, Hamrla quickly learned the difference between facing teenage shooters and those with actual NHL experience. After an impressive start between both leagues in which he held a combined .932 save percentage through his first four games, Hamrla was then blitzed with impunity, giving up an average of six goals a game over his final six appearances, including a 10-goal onslaught in the Chance Liga in which he faced 59 shots and was routinely harassed in his crease. Hamrla should be better prepared for next season, and his inside-out style, quick thinking, and aggressive stick use looked plenty impressive during the good times and bad.

198. Caden Brown, C | 22-June-03 | U.S. U18, NTDP | 5'11, 175 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: Wisconsin

A pass-first playmaker who was stung by the injury bug for a chunk of his draft season, Brown is a St. Louis native who served the NTDP as a middle-six center and power-play specialist. Although Brown didn't center the top line, he was effective at creating chances and delivering momentum changing plays. He has above-average speed and can execute precision plays on the rush, but Brown also chips in with smart defensive play and physicality. He isn't listed as a center who can overpower opponents, but Brown plays with an edge and knows how and when to make his presence felt. He comes from a well-known hockey family, as his father Jeff had a lengthy NHL career as a defenseman and older brother Logan was Ottawa's first-round pick in the 2016 NHL draft.

199. Shane Lachance, LW | 30-Aug-03 | Jr. Bruins, NCDL | 6'4, 195 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: Boston Univ.

A hulking winger who dominates the low slot, Lachance is a physical yet soft-mitted power winger who proved to be too overpowering for his circuit. Although pure skill and speed are two things not visible in each Lachance shift, he understands the game and seems to revel in the problems he causes for the opposition. Whether he's hitting in open ice or mashing a defender into the boards, Lachance impacts shifts without blinding speed. For all his shortcomings in the skating department, Lachance takes smart and efficient routes to the puck and winds up exactly where he needed to be. His father Scott has a lengthy NHL career and Shane's grandfather was legendary Boston University coach Jack Parker.

200. Yaroslav Busygin, LHD | 14-Feb-03 | Russkie Vityazi, MHL | 6'3, 185 | Shoots Left | Russia

A top-pairing, all-situations defender for Russkie Vityazi, Busygin was critical to his team's success this season. Although he's known for delivering hard hits and textbook hip checks, there's more to the young defenseman's game. Playing nearly 20 minutes a game kept him involved in the key moments, and Busygin would be summoned for the tougher tasks, especially when facing a powerhouse opponent like Loko Yaroslavl or Dynamo MSK. Vityazi didn't have the best season, but they played far better against the bottom dwellers than the clubs at the top of the standings. There were several examples from this season where Busygin was matched up against the likes of Alexander Kisakov, Prokhor Poltapov, and Matvei Michkov and kept them in check over long periods. Busygin is an average skater but will show impressive lateral quickness and escapability when being pressured. He can go coast to coast if the opportunity presents itself but most of his advances are deliberate. He was used on the power play and he can unload a heavy, accurate shot with little backswing.

Additional Prospect Profiles

Daniel Agostino | 17-June-03 | Drummondville, QMJHL | 5'7, 165 | Shoots Left | Canada

A third-round pick from the 2019 QMJHL draft, Agostino is an undersized spark plug who displays impressive speed and relentlessness. Although listed as a center, Agostino but has played mostly wing. He throws his weight around with little regard for his own safety and he plays bigger than his 5-foot-7 listing. Agostino also is smart on the puck and exhibits good hands in addition to showing a willingness to do what it takes to win a game. He is relentless on the forecheck and backcheck, stands up for his teammates, and is counted on in all situations. Agostino uses his legs to change the passing angles, allowing him to hit a teammate in stride. He has no problem battling for loose pucks on the boards, so the physical aspect clearly does not deter Agostino. At times, his aggressiveness will lead to him taking himself out of position, but he is the type of player who seems to be a coach's dream. If Agostino can harness his energy and show a bit more patience, he could blossom into an even more effective player.

Jakub Altrichter, C | 26-July-03 | Mora J20, Nationell | 5'10, 150 | Shoots Left | Czech Republic

Altrichter is an interesting prospect because he was overlooked by Central Scouting on all three of their in-season watch lists and their final ranking in spite of playing for the Czechs at the World U17 Hockey Challenge and his critical role with Mora IK in the tougher Norra Division of Sweden's J20 Nationell. Unfortunately for Altrichter, the J20 season was cancelled early in January, and he had to head back to the Czech Republic, where he appeared in a handful of Chance Liga games before gearing up for the U18 world championship. In Texas, Altrichter was used in his natural center position between sniper Martin Rysavy and fellow speedster Peter Moravec, and it was in these five games where you saw Altrichter's quickness and motor help create turnovers on the forecheck. He's only listed at 148 pounds, but Altrichter plays fearless and will take the puck in a straight line to the net or cut into traffic when attempting to enter the zone. He's also a pretty good playmaker and puck distributor who puts the right touch on his passes, but that was more prevalent in league play than at the recent tournament.

Joe Arntsen, LHD | 22-May-03 | Lethbridge, WHL | 6'3, 210 | Shoots Left | Canada

The 35th overall pick in the 2018 WHL draft, Arntsen is a physical defenseman who went through ups and downs just like most of his Hurricane teammates who struggled through a down year, especially at even strength. He spent part of his draft season with the SJHL's Melville Millionaires before settling into his middle-pairing role with the Hurricanes once the WHL resumed play. Although it's a knee-jerk reaction to call Arntsen "raw", there's more to his game than just physicality and intimidation. He moves well for his size and will occasionally join the rush, and he increased his shots from only 26 in 41 games in his rookie year to 40 in 23 matches last season. Lethbridge's defense corps was led by Red Wings' prospect Alex Cotton, but it's reasonable to assume Arntsen will play an even bigger role once Cotton moves on, and the recent acquisition of righty Nolan Bentham could help the Hurricanes form one of the WHL's better defense tandems. Don't be surprised if Arntsen's a late-round pick for a team looking for a physical defenseman with the ability to skate the puck out.

Ondrej Balaz, LHD | 26-Nov-02 | Litomerice, Chance Liga | 6'0, 176 | Shoots Left | Czech Republic

A mobile two-way blueliner whose ice time increased as the season progressed, Balaz is a notable Czech defense prospect who saved some of his best performances for the postseason. He's a strong skater with impressive agility and a noticeable battle level which helps him eliminate plays in the corners and send a strong message that he's quick enough to keep up with any forward. Balaz is mature for his age, and he seems to have several technical aspects of the position locked down, specifically when gauging the space necessary between his partner and the short distances he ventures from the slot. He's a clean puck mover with a good first pass who can play either the left or right side but expect him to keep it safe and simple until he grows accustomed to playing against adults.

Anthony Bedard, RW | 28-April-2003 | Shawinigan, QMJHL | 5'8, 150 | Shoots Right | Canada

Bedard was one of several tireless, hard-working forwards on Shawinigan. He is quick to the puck, fast in open ice, and has impressive agility in the face of pressure or traffic. Bedard played primarily on the second line with Carolina draftee Vasily Ponomaryov and was used on the penalty kill. All his 13 points (5 goals, 8 assists) came at even strength, and he rarely sees power-play time. Although listed at 150 pounds, Bedard — selected 23rd overall by Blainville-Boisbriand in the 2019 QMJHL draft — looks and plays bigger than his measurements may suggest, and his point totals do not reflect his effective three-zone play. The trade to the younger Cataractes provided a better opportunity for him than if he would have had with the veteran-heavy Armada. He seized the chance and opened eyes with his solid play.

Isaac Belliveau, LHD | 26-Nov-02 | Gatineau | 6'2, 185 | Shoots Left | Canada

Belliveau like Zachary Bolduc is another Rimouski Oceanic who produced an impressive rookie season in 2019-20 but went through ups and down in his draft year. He was traded midseason to Gatineau, where his game and production improved. The 6-foot-2, 180-pound rearguard relies on a high IQ and excellent passing. He sees the play in advance, placing tape to tape passes to lead the team to easy zone breakouts. Once in the offensive zone, his teammates better have their sticks on the ice and be ready for a pass from the gifted blue-liner. He will freeze the goalie by faking a shot then throw no look passes through the seam to the offside winger. Belliveau's overall game is solid. He does not possess a wow factor with his skating and dynamic plays. He simply plays within the team-oriented concept. Belliveau is sound defensively, not a risk taker. He is one of those players who always seems to make the right play at the right time and makes up for below-average skating with proper anticipation and reads. He will log tons of ice time and be heavily counted on to lead the defensive unit.

Nate Benoit, LHD | 26-Nov-02 | Mount St. Charles, HS-RI | 6'1, 181 | Shoots Left | U.S. | NCAA: North Dakota

A mature two-way defenseman with solid multi-directional mobility and a clean first pass, Benoit is a North Dakota-bound commit who played near-perfect hockey for one of the top independent prep schools in the country. Benoit is reliability personified and he can tackle the tougher assignments against top lines or against a specific individual who his coaching staff assessed as a danger. He's the textbook definition of two-way play from the blue line and will use his size and upper-body strength to send a message during board battles. Never one to back down from a challenge or be intimidated by onrushing speed, Benoit dominated the grey zone with timely adjustments to close the cap and nail a puck carrier outside his line. He appeared as a depth defender in three games for the USHL's Tri-City Storm late last season, but it shouldn't take long for this cerebral defenseman to adjust to the speed and eventually solidify a minute-eating role for all situations.

Nolan Bentham, RHD | 12-June-03 | Lethbridge, WHL | 6'3, 190 | Shoots Right | Canada

The 13th overall pick in the 2018 WHL draft, Bentham is a high-profile defense prospect who didn't play in the WHL this season and would up getting traded from Victoria to Lethbridge. He's one of the more impressive skaters among big-bodied defenseman and he can clobber the puck with the best of them, but his shortcomings off the puck and with puck management have yet to be re-evaluated. He appeared in 52 games for the Royals in 2019-20, recording a goal and two assists (and only 13 shots) in 52 games. Although there's room for growth, Bentham remains a mystery since there's no way of knowing if he improved or not. He played for Team Canada-Black at the 2019 World under-17 Hockey Challenge, so his high bantam draft standing and experience with Hockey Canada should help Bentham maintain his relevance, but he's probably not getting drafted until after another full WHL season.

Mikhail Berezovskiy, RHD | 21-Jan-03 | SKA-Varyagi, MHL | 6'1, 175 | Shoots Right | Russia

Berezovskiy is a rare right-shot Russian defender who ended up splitting the season between SKA-Varyagi and SKA-1946, with his role far more extensive with the former than the latter. He's a very good skater and stickhandler who plays with confidence and will use his elusiveness and agility to spin off forecheck pressure multiple times in one sequence. Used in all situations and special teams, Berezovskiy is a strong one-on-one defender, and several of the MHL's top dangles had trouble getting around him. He appears to play with intensity but also looks overly demonstrative on the ice, especially when things get physical, and revenge needs to get meted out. Berezovskiy was considered a potential middle-round option at the beginning of this season and his impressive play with an undermanned SKA-Varyagi shouldn't change that.

Jérémie Biakabutuka | Rimouski, QMJHL |

A 6-foot-4, 200-pound defender who split the season between Val-d'Or and Rimouski, Biakabutuka uses his long reach and size to his advantage. He is physical but will not run out of position to make a big hit and uses his large frame to box out opponents, allowing his goaltender a clear view of shots from the point. Space is at a premium with Biakabutuka patrolling the slot and he makes his foe earn every inch. Biakabutuka is a calculated, smart player. He surveys the ice, then makes the appropriate play. He makes smart decisive reads, rarely getting caught in no man's land. Biakabutuka is the type of player one ends up watching instead of the name brand players because he is consistent in his positive plays. Right-handed defensemen are in high demand. Right-handed defensemen with size, mobility and smarts are in more demand. Biakabutuka can fit on any defensive pair in a lineup at this level and has bottom-pairing potential at higher levels.

Attlio Biasca, C/W | 18-March-03 | Halifax, QMJHL | 6'0, 183 | Shoots Left | Switzerland

One of the top 2003-born draft prospects to come out of Switzerland for this year's draft, Biasca is a versatile two-way forward who joined Halifax in January after he played for the Swiss at the under-20 world junior hockey championship. He was selected fifth overall in the 2020 CHL Import Draft after serving as Zug U20's second-line center and placing second in team scoring with 17 goals and 12 assists in 34 games. Biasca's season has been marked by inconsistent play and injury after he had a successful first half of 2020-21 playing in Switzerland. He and his Swiss teammates were routinely humbled at the world juniors and were usually on the wrong end of a lopsided score. With the Mooseheads, Biasca served in a middle-six role with time on both the power play and penalty kill, but he hurt his knee at the world juniors in early January and then was out of the Halifax lineup with a lower-body injury for over a month before he returned on March 25. Biasca is an efficient, effortless skater with average speed who quickly chews up ice. This enables him to be effective on the forecheck and backcheck where opponents are duped into believing they have more time and space than they have. Armed with a quick, accurate release for a heavy wrister, Biasca can be a force in the offensive zone. He often positions himself for the one-time shot but does not limit himself to just one area. He constantly moves around looking for space while also drawing attention and opening space for others. Smart decisions and a strong hockey IQ are hallmarks of Biasca's game. Keenly aware of the location of friend and foe, Biasca's quick wits enable him to make quick plays without delaying and eventually finding an open outlet. If the play is not there, he rarely forces it and will opt for a simple chip or dump-in.

Ben Boyd, LW | 23-Aug-03 | Charlottetown, QMJHL | 6'3, 195 | Shoots Left | Canada

A versatile forward who loves to use his massive frame to pound opponents, Boyd was selected in the fifth round of the 2019 QMJHL draft and currently serves as a role player on one of the league's top teams. He is a bit of a throwback; one who plays a no-nonsense game. Although his production — 7 goals and 3 assists in 35 games — is rather unimpressive, Boyd brings more than simply a big, bruising body who only hits and fights. Boyd is a solid skater for his size. His can keep up with the pace of the game and his large frame doesn't hinder his movements with and without the puck. Boyd displays quick feet when accelerating out of turns or the corners. There's also a level of deception to his speed, as he has shown to beat defenders to the outside. One of his tallies this year was a rush up ice, followed by a deke and finish. Boyd owns a quick-release shot but serves primarily as a net-front and low-slot presence. He spends most of his time during offensive-zone possessions in the trenches, but on occasion he will slip into a shooting area for an attempt off the pass. He processes the game quickly and generally makes smart, team-friendly decisions. The puck doesn't stay on his stick for long and you rarely see him attempt plays that are outside of his capabilities.

Dmitry Buchelnikov, RW | 6-Sep-03 | SKA-1946, MHL | 5'9, 164 | Shoots Left | Russia

A quick and enthusiastic dual threat from the wing, Buchelnikov split the season between SKA-1946 and SKA-Varyagi, but he could easily have spent the entire campaign with the deeper 1946 from either a merit or production standpoint. No matter which team he played or where he was placed in either lineup, Buchelnikov was a consistent scoring threat capable of making high-end finesse plays. Although he's listed at 5-foot-9, Buchelnikov plays a spirited, high-energy game and will even throw his weight around. There wasn't much of a gap between his production with the stronger 1946 (0.73 points per game) and Varyagi (0.81), but keep in mind he played far less with the former (13:43 TOI) than the latter (17:31). He combined for an impressive 37 points (16 goals, 21 assists) in 46 games, and Buchelnikov is a deadly power-play option who can blister the puck off the pass with accuracy, which he did against Benjamin Gaudreau and Canada in the gold-medal game at the under-18 world championship.

Nikita Buruyanov, RW | 2-Oct-02 | Dinamo SPB, MHL | 5'10, 172 | Shoots Left | Russia

Buruyanov was one of Dinamo SPB's top players who elevated his game against the tougher programs. He's been a regular for Russia at the under-17 and under-18 levels and understandably so — Buruyanov is a noticeable two-way player on the ice who streaks up and down the wing, while getting involved offensively, defensively, and physically. With the puck on his stick, Buruyanov has more of a goal-scorer's mentality, and fearlessly cuts towards the net with regularity. He reveals an impressive display of plus speed, balance, and puck protection ability, and although he scored more goals (24) than assists (17), Buruyanov is an accurate cross-ice, seam, and lead passer with excellent balance to help him complete a play under pressure. He is an aggressive puck hunter who hustles on both the forecheck and backcheck to swipe pucks from behind, then quickly turn up ice for the counterattack. Buruyanov is highly patient and shifty when in control, and he'll drop a neat fake or juke during zone entries to gain time and space.

Dominick Campione, RHD | 25-Nov-2002 | 5'11, 165 lbs | Shoots Right | U.S. | NCAA: Arizona State

The right side of Brooks' defense drew a ton of attention this season because of potential first-round pick Corson Ceulemans, but he was there for only a portion of the abbreviated AJHL schedule. That allowed the focus to shift towards Campione, a swift puck mover with a blistering shot who is committed to Arizona State. Although Campione's role and usage with the Bandits pegged him as more of a middle-pairing type, he was given a fair amount of responsibility that included occasional time on the second power-play unit (where he can be deployed as a quarterback) and either of the top two penalty-killing units. His puck management can be inconsistent, and he can seem jittery on the puck, but Campione's occasional flashy play can result in impressive end-to-end rushes. The first thing you notice about Campione is his quickness to the puck in any direction. His speed and agility are key components to his game both on and off the puck, and he's sharp enough to time his reads appropriately without grossly overcommitting himself out of position. Campione has a high compete level and keeps active in his own end, and he also switches between tracking the puck and scanning for backdoor threats. His defensive play is a lot better than you'd expect from a wiry puck rusher, which helps explain why he's entrusted with penalty-killing duties. Although he's slight of frame, Campione will engage in physical battles and do his best to make his presence felt. Adding muscle should be a priority but he'll have plenty of time to do that in college. Brooks, much like his future NCAA program, plays an up-tempo attack which suits Campione's skill set perfectly.

Elias Carmichael, LHD | 18-March-03 | Kelowna, WHL | 6'3, 191 | Shoots Left | Canada

Carmichael was a highish bantam pick of the Rockets (40th overall in 2018) who took a significant step forward in his development, albeit in only 14 bubble games (2 goals, 4 assists, 13 shots). It almost goes without saying that any defense prospect developed by Kelowna automatically gets the "upside" label attached to them, and Carmichael is one of several key pieces in the Rockets rebuild that appears to have them on the cusp of returning to title contention. He's a physical but steady defender who has dropped the gloves but also matches up against top lines, and he is a fixture on the penalty kill. But it was Carmichael's passing and shot selection that seemed more decisive and cleaner to help increase his production from 0.17 points per game in his rookie year to 0.43 a season ago. He's an average skater who usually keeps things safe and doesn't attempt to make shifts about himself. Carmichael, who is an academic standout, did not see significant time on Kelowna's power play but that should change next season when Kaedan Korczak and Sean Comrie move on.

Giancarlo Chanton, LHD | 29-Nov-02 | SC Langenthal, Swiss League | 6'1, 174 | Shoots Left | Switzerland

Chanton is a steady three-zone defender who spent the 2019-20 season on a depth pairing with the OHL's Niagara Ice Dogs. Chanton went back to Switzerland for his draft year and got a chance to play against men in the Swiss League, but it was his smooth, reliable play for his country at the 2021 under-20 world junior hockey championship that proved to be the highlight of his season. Although he wasn't their No. 1 defender in that tournament, Chanton showed a high level of puck poise and breakout ability without the benefit of above-average speed or flashy skill. He can be a fireman who can handle the tough assignments and use his cleverness and anticipation to help tilt the ice back in their favor. He has good length and uses a highly active stick while maintaining his gap, but Chanton's anticipation and timely step-ups in the grey zone keep clean opposing zone entries to a minimum during even-strength play. Chanton is a hard passer — sometimes too hard — but the timing and accuracy of his leads catch his forwards in stride. His mobility and quickness are average, and although Chanton is more of a pin-and-holder than a masher, he can use his upper-body strength to separate opponents from the puck.

Kyle Crnkovic, LW (OA) | 10-Feb-02 | Saskatoon, WHL | 5'7, 166 | Shoots Left | Canada

A slippery wing with impressive puck skills who was a top-liner for a powerful Saskatoon squad, Crnkovic tied for eighth in WHL scoring with 32 points (10 goals, 22 assists, 68 shots) in 24 games. He was an integral part of the Blades' dominance last season, and Crnkovic had visible chemistry with linemates Tristen Robbins and Colton Dach. Selected 10th overall in the 2017 WHL draft, Crnkovic has spent three seasons in league and improved his production from 0.60 in his rookie year of 2018-19 to 1.33 a season ago. Although his is an excellent pass-first playmaker with sharp vision, Crnkovic has a wicked shot and release, and playing with an equally talented setup man like Robbins presented Crnkovic with plenty of opportunities to use it. Crnkovic is pure offense, although he works hard to cover gaps and you'll find him down low supporting puck battles. Size and strength are the obvious drawbacks and improving his ability to come away from puck battles should be the priority of his off-ice training for the next several years.

Aidan De La Gorgendiere, LHD (OA) | 22-Feb-02 | Saskatoon, WHL | 6'1, 187 | Shoots Left | Canada

Playing defense for a winning team that is driven by deadly top line team has benefits and drawbacks, and in the case of De La Gorgendiere, he seems to have made the most of being surrounded by such skill but can get lost in the shuffle of Saskatoon's committee-like defense. He was the fifth pick in the 2017 WHL draft but his usage, production, and role with the Blades has been roller-coaster like. Although he is an average skater without end-to-end dynamism, De La Gorgendiere is an intelligent puck distributor who can be trusted with managing a possession and limiting mistakes. Being on the ice with puck wizards such as forwards Tristen Robbins and Kyle Crnkovic at both even strength and on the Blades' top power-play unit helped De La Gorgendiere establish a career-high 0.67 points-per-game average (12 points in 18 games), but it's reasonable to question his ability to generate points without them. Defensively, De La Gorgendiere is clean and poised while using varying delay tactics to skate or pass the puck to safety. He isn't a masher and relies on his stick more than his body, but his calmness when finding the puck under pressure usually results in a safe clear or zone exit.

Ivan Didkovskiy, RW (OA) | 20-Jan-02 | Dynamo MSK, MHL | 5'11, 185 | Shoots Left | Russia

Didkovskiy was a player who did well enough last season to deserve a 2020 draft selection but was eventually overlooked in spite of his linemates Bogdan Trineyev and Dmitry Zlodoyev being scooped up in the fourth and sixth rounds, respectively. It's hard to pinpoint any specific on-ice reasons for the lack of respect he was shown by NHL scouts because Didkovskiy is a tireless worker with a plus shot who plays a tough north-south game built on heavy hits and net crashing. His skating as a whole is average but it's hard to consistently be on the puck as often as Didkovskiy is without having high-level anticipation. Regardless, Didkovskiy saved his best play for the postseason where he finished with 12 points (7 goals, 5 assists) in 14 games, including important goals in three of Dynamo MSK's four victories. Keep in mind that all this production was during bottom-six minutes and little to no power-play time, which should explain his gaudy 3.75 points-per-60 minutes postseason average. He was a nuisance on the forecheck all series long and made Loko pay for sloppy puck management.

Nikita Dishkovsky, RW | 10-Dec-02 | SKA-1946, MHL | 5'11, 165 lbs | Shoots Left | Russia

Dishkovsky easily is one of the most physical first-year eligible forwards I watched all season, which says a lot considering his measurements push him more towards the undersized category. This kid plays the game with a ton of energy and will hit anything that moves, but Dishkovsky also has translatable puck skills, hockey smarts, and reliable two-way play. Central Scouting appeared to be on board when they kept him on each of their three in-season watch lists. But for whatever reasons, they decided not to rank him at all among their top 150 Europeans in their final list, which when you factor in the 220-plus North American skaters they ranked, plus the 45 or so goalies, means they don't consider Dishkovsky a top-400 prospect. Good luck with that. Maybe Central Scouting is overlooking the fact that Dishkovsky played for one of the deepest junior programs in the world yet still finished third on the squad with 16 goals and led them in short-handed makers (2) and hits (113). He also chipped in with four goals in seven playoffs games, including a pair of multi-goal efforts.

Cole Dubinsky, LW | 4-Dec-02 | Regina, WHL | 5'10, 168 | Shoots Left | Canada

Dubinsky, who was a fourth-round pick in the 2017 WHL draft, is a sparkplug who provided Regina with energy and momentum-changing play as a bottom-six winger. Although his numbers look average (14 points, 41 shots in 21 games) and his role and ice time decreased as the season wore on, Dubinsky rarely played with experienced linemates at even strength. Luck wasn't on his side for most of the season, but he still was able to provide physicality and aggressiveness on the forecheck regardless of whether the puck was going in or not. He has a real nose for the net, which is where he scored most of his goals over the last two seasons. Listed as a center, Dubinsky played wing the entire season and was used on the power play. One thing to consider for next season is the likelihood that he's on the Pats' top line alongside superstar Connor Bedard, whose sublime playmaking should help solve any of Dubinsky's puck luck issues.

Drew Elliot, LW | 4-April-03 | Charlottetown, QMJHL | 5'10, 181 | Shoots Left | Canada

A key depth player for a loaded Charlottetown squad, Elliot was drafted by Baie-Comeau in the second round of the 2019 QMJHL Draft but was traded to the Islanders midway through last season. He has yet to reach the production (6 goals, 8 assists in 40 games) expected of a forward prospect who was considered one of the better Maritime-born wingers from the 2003 birth year, but he contributed while in a defense-oriented role as a checker and pest with noticeable efforts on the penalty kill. Still, Elliot can go through long stretches without producing points or generated offense on his own. The Islanders owned one of the QMJHL's best record and were top five in both penalty killing and goals against. Elliott is a powerful skater with deceptive speed and a bit of a short, railroad stride. The deception is that he doesn't appear to be fast or explode within the first few steps, but Elliot quickly builds up speed and is able to blow by defenders with ease. Elliott is strong defensively and is used extensively on the penalty kill and in crunch time situations. He is adept at surveying the landscape and using his stick to disrupt passing lanes. Elliott uses his smarts to remain on the right side of the puck and the opposing defender, making him difficult to mark. Additional noticeable aspects of his off-the-puck game are his compete level and passion.

Ryker Evans, LHD (OA) | 13-Dec-01 | Regina, WHL | 5'11, 184 | Shoots Left | Canada

A smooth-skating 10th-round WHL draft pick who ranked second in the league among defenseman with 28 points (3 goals, 25 assists) in 24 games, Evans is an aggressive puck mover who was Regina's power-play quarterback and most reliable breakout option. Although he was one of several Pats who came into the 2020-21 campaign with two full WHL seasons of experience, it was Evans who made their blue line dangerous, and his 12-game point streak was the longest of any WHL defenseman last season. The knee-jerk reaction is to correlate Evans' points spike from the previous season to Regina's addition of 2023 draft phenom Connor Bedard, but Evans actually increased his points-per-game average from 1.13 to 1.22 in the nine games after Bedard left for the U18 world championship.

Hugo Gabrielson, LHD (Frolunda J20, Nationell) 24-Oct-2002 | 5'10, 160 lbs | Shoots Left | Sweden

Every year there's at least four or five prospects who put up impressive numbers in their respective leagues and are acknowledged by the blogosphere but never get as much as a nod from Central Scouting. One of this year's examples is Gabrielson, who is a power-play specialist and one of the top-scoring defensemen in the J20 Nationell's shortened season in spite of playing middle to bottom-six minutes. Granted, there's always the chance that the NHL's official scouting crew has access to off-ice information that impact how they rate a prospect's potential. But it's starting to get a little annoying that they don't even put these kids on either the watch lists or the final rankings. Gabrielson as a depth defenseman on a loaded program did everything asked of him and then some. He's got average speed but good size and a sturdy frame for a teenager, but what made him stand out as early as the first week of the J20 season was how well he kept his spacing (dependent on the situation) from occasional partner Simon Edvinsson. Although overager Theo Nordlund was Gabrielson's most common partner at even strength, there were several occasions when Edvinsson was nonchalant and far sloppier with the puck while being paired with the safer, cleaner Gabrielson. I wouldn't go as far as to call Gabrielson a stopper on defense but he's certainly tidier with puck management than most J20 defenders his age. Gabrielson is a good enough skater to breakout on his own but there was only so much puck to go around with Frolunda's deep collection of Type-A forwards. His shot and puck distribution are assets on the power play, but he didn't kill penalties and was rarely used to shut down an opposing top line. His role with Hanals in the third-division HockeyEttan, however, was expanded to multiple situations during all strengths and the team seemed to count on him a lot more than Frolunda ever did. There's something there and don't be surprised is he starts popping up on next year's lists if he goes undrafted.

Tyson Galloway, LHD | 20-Jan-03 | Calgary, WHL | 6'4, 200 | Shoots Left | Canada

A massive two-way defenseman who improved his skating and positioning to become of the Hitmen's better defenders, Galloway wasted little time carving out a strong draft-season resume during the shortened WHL season. The 25th overall pick in the 2018 WHL draft, Galloway produced eight points in his first 11 games, and although he was the beneficiary of some crazy puck luck (that includes a 200-foot goal that wasn't into an empty net), he still played up to his potential and proved that he can be a difference maker. Galloway still fits into the "raw" category as you'd like to see him take on more responsibility on a top pairing, but he can be a tough customer who consistently neutralizes opposing rushes with either his stick or his physicality.

Ryan Gillespie, RW | 31-Jan-03 | Brockville, CCHL | 6'0, 183 | Shoots Right | Canada | NCAA: Clarkson

A top-six goal scorer for the Brockville Braves, Gillespie is a native Torontonion who was a Sudbury Wolves draft pick in the 2019 OHL Priority Selection. Although his games this season were dubbed unofficial "developmental scrimmage action", Gillespie was second in the league in scoring with 20 points (7 goals, 13 assists) in 13 games. He was one of the CCHL's top rookies in 2019-20 and made the all-rookie team thanks to a 22-goal, 41-point season. Blessed with a long, explosive stride and excellent speed, Gillespie is an open-ice threat who looks confident as he accelerates towards the goal. He's a goal scorer through and through, but his passing and playmaking abilities are equally impressive, as Gillespie has soft hands to control the puck for long stretches before delivering an accurate feed at the decisive moment. He comes across as a one-way forward but his hustle and attention to detail in the defensive zone is promising, as Gillespie will keep his stick in passing and shooting lanes and peek for weak-side threats as he covers his man. Consider him a half-wall option on the power play where he brings his dual-threat capabilities to bear.

Michal Gut, C (OA) | 16-Aug-02 | Banik Sokolov, Chance Liga | 6'0, 187 | Shoots Left | Czech Republic

A former Everett Silvertip who in 2020-21 was one of the best under-20 players in the second-division Chance Liga, Gut is a physical two-way forward with above-average speed whose brief teenage career has been marked by injuries. He was one of the Chance Liga's better power-play specialists and although he didn't kill penalties often, Gut had a short-handed goal to his credit and won nearly 57 percent (29-for-51) of his defensive-zone draws. He finished third in the league among qualified shooters with an impressive 25.6 shooting percentage (10 goals on 39 shots). Gut has been a mainstay for Czech junior teams at the U16, U17, U18, and U20 levels, although an injury cut his 2021 world junior tournament short. He recently was signed to play with Litvinov in the elite Extraliga.

Jeremy Hanzel, LHD | 27-Feb-03 | Seattle, WHL | 6'1, 185 | Shoots Left | Canada

A slick left-shot playmaking defenseman who can play either side, Hanzel is one of the biggest sleepers among defensemen for the 2021 NHL draft. His numbers as a pure WHL rookie may not jump out at you (2 goals, 6 assists, and 23 shots in 23 games), but Hanzel is an outstanding puck handler; one who can make a series of moves and fakes before dropping a quick first step towards the attacking zone. Undrafted into the WHL, Hanzel's high IQ is highly visible during practically every shift, and although he's not your classic stopper on defense, he makes timely read after timely read to eliminate opposing entries well outside his blue line. Hanzel has good size and is tough to push around, but his elusiveness and directional changes are so pronounced that opponents eventually grow tired of being faked towards the opposite direction and afford him more room to operate.

Brett Hyland, LW | 18-Feb-03 | Brandon, WHL | 5'11, 174 | Shoots Left | Canada

A hard-working winger with quickness who served his coach well as a depth forward, Hyland showed enough in spurts to consider him a strong candidate to serve Brandon in a top-six role next season. He was the 24th pick in the 2018 WHL draft but had to settle for bottom-six assignments with occasional power play time, as the Wheat Kings already had established scorers. It was within his role as an energy winger where Hyland contributed off the puck by battling hard from whistle to whistle, playing physical, and crowding the net area. His 10 points (4 goals, 6 assists) in 23 games was enough to crack the top 10 in team scoring.

Tyson Hinds, LHD | 12-March-03 | Rimouski, QMJHL | 6'3, 178 | Shoots Left | Canada

Hinds is a Gatineau, QC native who began this season with Shawinigan before he was dealt to the Rimouski Oceanic; essentially replacing (and outproducing) notable defense prospect Isaac Belliveau. Although Hinds was a second-round selection by the Cataractes in the 2019 QMJHL Draft, his draft stock picked up more steam in the second half. He tallied only 11 points in 54 games for Shawinigan last season, but Hinds became more productive once he joined the Oceanic, notching 15 points in 23 games. But scoring is just part of what Hinds can offer — usage, playing time, and role within the team structure are important facets to consider when breaking down his game. Hinds portrays an impressive style and is fun to watch. He skates well with a strong burst, effortless stride, and free hip movement. Hinds uses these attributes in attacking the play with gusto in all three zones. He has been caught up ice a couple of times, however, leading to several odd-man rushes. Still, the good usually outweighs the bad because often, Hinds' decisions to be aggressive resulted in a plus play for Rimouski.

Dmitry Katelevsky, C | 17-Jan-03 | Bars, VHL | 6'1, 174 | Shoots Left | Russia |

Katelevsky was one of the better 2003-born Russian prospects who played out east, and he was rewarded with a full season in the adult-age VHL for a Bars team that also went through a rebuild. Although the two-way center was a top-liner for a strong Irbis squad during brief moments in the MHL junior league, he settled in nicely as a winger with Bars, serving in a bottom-six role but earning and maintaining a regular shift. His production in the VHL was what you'd expect from a teenager (7 goals, 9 assists in 43 games) and he was used in special-teams situations, albeit sparingly. Katalevsky won't dazzle you with any particular skill and he is as meat-and-potatoes as they come. He is a decent skater with a short stride, but what makes him stand out is his anticipation — Katalevsky can read a play as well as any of Russia's first-year eligible prospects and his positioning is as close to impeccable as you'll find for a teenage center. He simply has a knack for finding the puck and delivering it exactly where it needs to go. He may not seem like he plays physical or compete with intensity, but Katalevsky sets the right example and plays a clean, selfless 200-foot game.

Anthony Kehrer, RHD (OA) | 4-Mar-02 | Wisconsin, Big-10 | 5'11, 202 | Shoots Right | Canada

A smart two-way defenseman with plus mobility in all directions, Kehrer was the youngest skater on a strong Badgers' squad that relied on him to eat minutes in critical situations. He appeared in all 31 games (7 assists, 41 shots) and his plus-11 rating was among the team leaders. Poised and decisive, Kehrer is a calming presence in pressure situations, and he doesn't mess around with the puck. You can count on him to kill penalties, and at even strength he's smart enough to put the right touch on the puck to avoid icings. Although Wisconsin was a forward-driven attack and Kehrer generally stayed within himself, he showed flashes of his end-to-end skating ability and impressive sequences of reversing direction to tire out forecheck pressure. He plays an incredibly mature and clean game with the puck, but any offense you get from him is gravy, as Kehrer is most effective in his own end. A native of Winnipeg, Kehrer played for the USHL's Sioux City Musketeers two seasons ago but had his initial draft year cut short from a knee injury.

Ben King, C (OA) | 15-May-02 | Red Deer, WHL | 6'3, 200 | Shoots Right | Canada

A goal-scoring two-way center with size who led Red Deer in both goals and assists, King is a high WHL draft pick (13th overall) who delivered the best season of his three-year career. He boasts a nasty wrist shot and can handle the puck as well as any of the bigger centers in the league. The WHL doesn't track ice time, but King clearly plays over 20 minutes a game, as he's used in every situation to include penalty killing and the power play. King will play the point during the man-advantage, where his shot can be a difference maker, but he's also calm and heady while controlling the puck along the boards regardless of how much pressure he's under. Skating was the biggest knock on King heading into last year's draft but he's gotten quicker and his stride looks cleaner.

Gabe Klassen, C | 30-June-03 | Portland, WHL | 5'10, 183 | Shoots Left | Canada

A shoot-first center who rarely turns down an opportunity to wire one on net, Klassen was the 19th overall pick in the 2018 WHL draft who over a full 68-game season was on pace for 29 goals and 225 shots in addition to winning 58 percent of his 24 faceoffs. Although he scored goals in only five of his 19 games, Klassen did the work necessary to generate chances and recorded at least four shots 10 times, including an eight-shot performance against Spokane on April 14. He's a good skater with quickness coming out from the corner, which usually results in a sharp-angle shot, but Klassen also pays the price by going into the tough areas and jamming the front of the net. He's a little one-dimensional on the puck and isn't the atypical line-driving center, however, so creating as many shots for his linemates as he does for himself should be Klassen's focus if he continues to develop as a pivot.

Simon Knak, RW (OA) | 27-Jan-02 | Portland, WHL | 6'1, 185 | Shoots Left | Switzerland

A notable Swiss import who can play center or wing, Knak was a critical piece for Portland by playing on the top line and excelling in all situations, to include the penalty kill. After an impressive rookie season in 2019-20 in which he was used as a middle-six option, Knak blossomed into one of the WHL most prolific shooters, firing a ridiculous 91 shots in only 24 games to rank 10th in the league, while his 16 goals were good for third. Knak has been on the international stage for several years, albeit with a Swiss team that's usually cannon fodder for the opposition. Nonetheless, he played in his second under-20 world junior hockey championship last winter (1 goal in 4 games) and should be a year or two away from making the men's national team. Knak returned to his native Switzerland during the shutdown and appeared in 25 games for Davos (3 goals, 5 assists) in the elite NLA against adults. He has above-average speed for his size but excellent balance and tight-quarter agility where defenders must respect his quick turning ability. Knak loves to shoot off the pass has a deadly shot-release combination, but he also can roof pucks from in tight or make a move close to the net.

Grigori Kuzmin, RW | 21-April-03 | SKA-Varyagi, MHL | 5'8, 161 | Shoots Right | Russia

A flashy offensive winger with posterizing moves, Kuzmin was SKA-Varyagi's captain and among the top scorers. He also helped shoulder the scoring burden after fellow winger Vladimir Sychyov went down with a season-ending injury. Expected to get several promotions to the prominent SKA-1946 program, Kuzmin ended up playing the bulk of his draft season with a young SKA-Varyagi squad which dealt with tilted ice on a nightly basis. Playing on the top line with center Kirill Tankov, Kuzmin was one of his team's most dangerous forwards on the puck, and his skills are impressive enough to make you do a double take. He has excellent vision and the passing skills to match it, and Kuzmin with delay with the puck while being pressured, especially in odd-man rushes where he poses a dual threat to the opposition. Kuzmin is on the smaller side but he's tough enough to take a hit and continue with the puck, which is an improvement from mostly perimeter play in 2019-20.

Viktor Larsson, RHD (OA) | 26-Sep-2001 | Mora IK, Allsvenskan | 6'0, 168 lbs | Shoots Right | Sweden

You must take notice when a teenage defenseman is playing regular minutes in an adult-league postseason game, which is exactly the situation Larsson found himself in for Mora IK during the Allsvenskan playoffs. In fact, Larsson was impressive enough to earn a contract extension with the club and should be expected to see SHL time in 2021-22. Larsson spent most of the season on the bottom pairing for one of the better scoring attacks in the league. He was used on the power play as a second-unit option but recorded most of his points at even strength. He plays a lot thicker and stronger than his listed playing weight, and Larsson doesn't shy away from contact in the corners or along the boards. He delivers a crisp first pass and handles deliveries cleanly. The one drawback is his mobility, as Larsson is a rigid upright skater without much pop in his stride. But he has a strong upper body and will finish his checks with authority in addition to shoulder-checking upon retrievals and employing an effective stick-on-puck technique as he holds his line. Think of Larsson as a right-shot Kirill Kirsanov except a full year older.

Ivan Mekhovov, RW | 14-May-03 | Irbis, MHL | 5'11, 175 | Shoots Left | Russia

Mekhovov was one of the faster 2003-born forwards in the MHL but his draft-year production (3 goals, 5 assists in 42 games) and usage were below expectation. All things considered, is a phenomenal skater. He has excellent top speed and can get there quickly. His edges, while not quite as impressive, are still well-above average for a player his age. Unfortunately, he hasn't shown the ability to use this asset to create opportunities for his team. Showing some more offensive ability or a physical edge would make him a more projectable prospect moving forward. Nonetheless, we are talking about a very young player early into his regular season. There is plenty of time for him to cultivate his game and showcase additional facets that can make him more appealing. It's doubtful he gets drafted this year but the likelihood for a significant overage-year improvement should be high.

Thomas Milic, G | 14-April-03 | Seattle, WHL | 6'0, 170 | Catches Left | Canada

A quicker goalie on the smaller side who is being groomed to be Seattle's No. 1, Milic was the T-Birds' most reliable netminder and yielded three goals or less in six of his nine starts, including an impressive 35-save shutout at Spokane on March 26. He was the 51st overall pick in the 2018 WHL draft but has only 11 career starts since making his league debut in 2019-20. What's surprising about Milic's style is that he's a smaller goalie who seems to stay deep in his crease, even when being challenged by a breakaway. Being calm is a big part of his makeup, however, and even the most frantic moments limit the amount of time Milic spends on his pads. He finished with a 5-4-1 mark and .913 save percentage to win the U.S. Division's Rookie of the Year, and Milic also played for Canada at the under-18 world championship, where he won both his starts and posted a .975 save percentage (39-for-40).

Luca Munzenberger, LHD | 23-Nov-02 | Kolner Junghaie, DEL U20 | 6'3, 190 | Shoots Left | Germany | NCAA: UVM

A big-bodied vacuum cleaner on defense, Munzenberger is a first-year draft eligible with a late-2002 birthday who is committed to the University of Vermont. He was left off Central Scouting's initial Watch List but his play for Kolner Junghaie in Germany coupled with his performance in Edmonton at the under-20 world junior significantly increased his visibility. He has ideal size (6-foot-3, 190 pounds) but has the mobility and agility to cover faster players, especially when holding his line and transitioning into a backskate. Munzenberger's stride is as wide as they come and although he's style may not look pretty, he definitely gets from Point A to Point B faster than the average teenage defenseman his size. He plays a mean, physical brand of hockey and can be considered a bit of a throwback. Munzenberger's role at the WJC and with Kolner Junghaie were similar — he anchored the top penalty-killing unit and played the point on the power play. He has soft hands and delivers clean passes to any area in the offensive zone, but what makes Munzenberger dangerous is his lethal shot — he owns a bomb of a shot, not only for its velocity but for the sheer power he generates with little backswing. His wrist is just as nasty and Munzenberger is quite accurate whether he keeps his attempts low or high.

Oleksiy Myklukha, C | 25-Nov-02 | Rouyn-Noranda, QMJHL | 5'11, 156 | Shoots Right | Slovakia

The top Slovakian draft prospect for the 2021 draft, Myklukha's upside is a notch below previous Slovak forwards such as Martin Chromiak in 2020 and Maxim Cajkovic the year prior. He's a natural center who can play the wing, which he did on occasion for the QMJHL's Rouyn-Noranda Huskies last season. Swift and skilled with a soft set of hands, Myklukha is a wiry pass-first playmaker who slips and dances around traffic before exploiting open ice but keep an eye out for his wrist shot which he can label short-side high. Myklukha, who likes to operate and create from the half wall, uses a long stick and can be elusive and dangerous when operating from the half-wall.

Ty Nash, RW | 22-May-03 | Lethbridge, WHL | 5'11, 180 | Shoots Left | U.S.

A tough two-way winger who provides a consistent effort on and off the puck, Nash overcame a slow start and by season's end was one of the Hurricanes' most consistent point producers. After recording only three assists in his first 11 games, the Scottsdale, Ariz. native posted 10 points (4 goals, 6 assists) in his final 13 contests. Nash also was one of the team's most prolific shooters, as he finished tied for fourth with 51 shots in 24 games. He was used on both the power play and penalty kill, where his blue-collar style was effective in grinding it out along the boards and winning puck battles against bigger players. Nash has quick hands and can make plays off the cycle, but he makes more money causing havoc in front of the net and allowing the playmakers and finesse types to do their thing. His overall skating package is average at best, and the lack of pullaway speed or inside-out quickness should continue to limit Nash as an effective player from mostly static positions or short distances.

Stepan Nikulin, RW (OA) | 17-March-01 | Loko Yaroslavl, MHL | 5'11, 185 | Shoots Right | Russia

Nikulin was the MHL's leading scorer in his third full season in the league. He registered an impressive 33 goals and 41 assists for 74 points in 59 games, and he clearly was the driving force behind Lokomotiv's deep run to the Kharlamov Cup Final. Nikulin is an excellent skater for both his quickness and agility. He is a deadly open ice threat who can be a nightmare to defend against in one-on-one situations for multiple reasons beyond his skating. Nikulin has an aggressive mindset and keeps himself in motion while putting on a stickhandling clinic. He doesn't require optimal situations to create chances, and Nikulin shows no hesitation when presented with an open shooting or passing lane. Nikulin was the main reason why linemates Ruslan Abrosimov and Ilya Chefanov finished third and fifth, respectively, in league scoring, as his puckhandling displays once inside the offensive zone expanded the ice significantly. Not only was Nikulin the driving force for Lokomotiv at even strength, but he also killed penalties and played the point or half-wall during the power play. He was the team MVP through and through, and in the finals against Dynamo MSK was consistently able to dictate tempo. If the ice was tilted against them, it usually was Nikulin with his foot on their throat. Although it goes without saying that junior-league production by third or fourth-year players should be viewed with a grain of salt, and Nikulin does show moments of immaturity and selfishness, it's hard to detract from just how dynamic he can be. Especially since the numbers clearly support the eye test.

Jack O'Brien, C | 14-May-03 | Lincoln, USHL | 6'0, 154 | Shoots Left | U.S.

O'Brien joined Lincoln after playing for the WHL's Portland Winterhawks a season ago, and the transition to a new league proved challenging for a wiry center who posted 30 points in 55 games as a 16-year-old in the WHL but struggled to generate offense in his draft year. With Lincoln in 2020-21, O'Brien managed just one goal and six assists in 23 games, but he remains a strong skater with a solid hockey IQ who can play a simple yet effective game. His quick feet allow him to maneuver through all three zones with speed as well as close in on puck-carrying opponents. A defensively responsible forward, O'Brien demonstrates good positioning and awareness in the defensive zone. Though O'Brien is defensively sound, his offensive game needs refinement. Possessing no actual high-end skill, he seems better served in a support role rather than driving possession for his own line. You likely won't find O'Brien on many highlight reels, but his solid defensive prowess and above-average skating ability help him maintain the potential to transform into an effective two-way forward.

Christopher Merisier-Ortiz, LHD (OA) | 17-Jan-01 | Blainville-Boisbriand, QMJHL | 5'11, 172 | Shoots Left

Merisier-Ortiz is a two-way defender for Blainville-Boisbriand but was a first-round selection for Baie-Comeau in was 2017. He played three-plus seasons for the Drakkar until he was dealt to the Armada, and he remains on the draft radar for a strong 2020-21 season. Ortiz, who was invited to the Calgary Flames' prospect camp in 2019, is dependable, smart, competitive, and versatile. He played right defense for Baie-Comeau, seamlessly handling the duties before returning to his natural left side for the Armada. His excellent skating and instincts place him in advantageous positions. He reads the play well, knowing when to step up to break up a rush or to not take the risk. Ortiz excels at anticipating openings to hit a forward with a pass. Instead of waiting for him to be open, he passes them to be open. He does everything well: great gap control in neutral zone, smart, decisive pinches, and physical in front of his own net. Ortiz excels below the dots in the offensive zone. Often digging in the corners, creating scoring chances. While manning the blue line, his head is up allowing him to exploit seams for deflections.

Danil Paramonov, LW | 25-Dec-02 | Dynamo MSK, MHL | 5'10, 185 | Shoots Left | Russia

Paramonov is a cocky, high-energy winger with quickness who loves to hit. He also provided Dynamo MSK with valuable scoring depth, netting 14 goals in 52 games for a respectable goals-per-60 average of 1.35, and his 74 hits placed him among the leaders of MHL first-year draft eligibles. He is noticeable the second he hits the ice and can go full throttle for the duration of his shift. Small in stature but big in effort and toughness, Paramonov knew exactly what his role was on a contending veteran team loaded with firepower. Playing within the bottom six didn't limit his ability to create plays and he also showcased a nasty wrister and lightning-quick one-timer. You'll usually find Paramonov fishing around the net-front area but don't underestimate his hands and long-distance passing ability. Thinking the game the right way should be his focus until it's time to move on to higher levels.

Owen Parker, G (OA) | 4-Jan-2002 | New Mexico, NAHL | 6'6, 225 | Catches Left | U.S.

Parker is a Buffalo-area netminder who was drafted late in the 2018 OHL draft by the Sault Ste Marie Greyhounds but spent last year splitting duties for New Mexico in the NAHL. Although the circuit has several notable draft-worthy netminders, Parker at 6-foot-6 offers teams a worthy long-term project who is getting better as he matures. Parker was a later bloomer to the position who looks comfortable in the net and limits the amount of time he spends on his pads. He didn't play for a sound defensive team and action around his net was usually intense, but Parker saved his best performances of the season in games where he faced 40 or more shots (3-1-0). Like most young goalies, Parker will need more time to fine tune the technical aspects, but his quickness and resilience for a netminder with his frame is more than enough for a team to work with.

Owen Pederson, LW (OA) | 27-March-02 | Winnipeg, WHL | 6'3, 205 | Shoots Left |

A critical piece to arguably the WHL's best top line, Pederson is a goal-scoring wing and power-play specialist who does a lot of damage near the goal thanks to his size and hand-eye coordination. Pederson, along with NHL draftees Peyton Krebs and Connor McClennon, combined last season to make up nearly 40 percent of Winnipeg's point production, and all three finished in the top 10 in WHL scoring, with Pederson ranking 11th with 31 points (13 goals, 18 assists in 24 games). His footspeed will always be a hindrance, and it's a bit concerning that more than half his points came on the power play. But Pederson has developed the reputation as one of the WHL's most feared net-front presences, and his work along the boards can be considered pro-level.

Josh Pillar, C (OA) | 14-Feb-02 | Kamloops, WHL | 5'11, 171 | Shoots Right | Canada

A hard-working forward who can play center or wing, Pillar helped maintain Kamloops' scoring punch after top scorer Connor Zary suffered a season-ending concussion and 2021 draft phenom Logan Stankoven left for Texas to play at the under-18 world championship. Pillar finished as the Blazers' leading scorer with 29 points (11 goals, 18 assists) in 22 games, which should come as surprising since they drafted him 14th overall in the 2017 WHL draft. Granted, it was his third "full" WHL season, but Pillar has shown enough in each of his last two seasons to warrant strong late-round consideration, and he posted several impressive performances that proved he can be a dangerous scorer during 5-on-5 play. He's a good skater with excellent balance, and Pillar's sneaky moves and fakes in open ice continue to perplex opposing defenders.

Alexei Prokopenko, C | 29-Jan-03 | Gatineau, QMJHL | 5'11, 186 | Shoots Left | Russia

A skilled Russian center with good size who last season didn't take long to earn a top-line slot alongside Devils' draft pick Arseni Gritsyuk on Omskie Yastreby, Prokopenko was selected eighth overall by Gatineau in the 2020 CHL Import Draft. He finally suited up for the Olympiques on Feb. 27 and was slotted in the bottom six, but he's also had spurts on an all-2021 draft line with notables Manix Landry and Zach Dean. Prokopenko didn't register a point in any of his first four games but scored five goals over his next eight matches; all which came during 5-on-5 play. Prokopenko was used on Gatineau's second power-play unit but did not kill penalties. Prokopenko is an average skater in several areas. He is not a burner and it's highly unlikely he'll ever become one, but he arrives to the right place at the right time. His strength lies in his agility and deceptive tight-quarter quickness, and his hunched style helps him maintain balance and puck control. Prokopenko has an impressive shot and release. He is adept at the one-timer and is fairly accurate with his attempts. He patrols the high slot and was a target on the power play for attempts off the pass. Prokopenko, however, is not much of a playmaker in terms of vision, passing, and creativity, and he consistently defers to his wingers to facilitate plays. When he is carrying the puck, Prokopenko does so at his own pace. On occasion he will push the defender back off his line, then curl to wait for a teammate to fill a lane. Perhaps the biggest asset Prokopenko owns is his hockey IQ. He is a smart, opportunistic center with a hunter's mindset; one who observes and strikes quickly as opposed to forcing the play or rushing into decisions.

Nolan Ritchie, C (OA) | 27-May-02 | Brandon, WHL | 5'8, 172 | Shoots Left | Canada

A diminutive scorer with creativity who changes direction quickly, Ritchie was one of five Wheat Kings to hit the point-per-game mark, as he posted 27 points (10 goals, 17 assists) in 24 games. Although he wasn't necessarily trending towards being drafted in his first look in 2020, Ritchie deserves a ton of credit for bouncing back from a broken femur last season to become a consistent scoring threat and appearing in all of Brandon's 24 games in 2020-21. He can wire an absolute dart from just about any position or speed and is a dangerous half-wall option on the power play, where Ritchie produced 14 of his 27 points. He was the 56th overall pick in the 2017 WHL draft.

Milo Roelens, C/W | 16-Jan-03 | Gatineau, QMJHL | 6'6, 199 | Shoots Left | Belgium

Blessed with impressive size, Roelens is an incredibly raw specimen who started out slow but picked it up in the second half. His greatest attribute beyond his listed measurement appears to be a good attitude and impressive hockey smarts. A native of Belgium, Roelens uses his size effectively by playing strong along the wall and appearing comfortable with his back to the play. Some shifts he looks to be skating well; others he can have trouble moving away from pressure. But his high IQ allows him to be in or around the puck on every shift, and he makes the long passes look as easy as the soft, short ones. Selected 40th overall by Cape Breton in the 2019 QMJHL draft, Roelens is a battler who does not quit and supports his teammates. With his strong work ethic, he should be expected to improve his skating. An easy choice to root for because of his effort.

Ethan Samson, RHD | 23-Aug-03 | Prince George, WHL | 6'1, 180 | Shoots Right | Canada

The top-scoring defenseman on mediocre Prince George, Samson is a mean two-way blueliner who was the 65th pick in the 2018 WHL draft. Although he has yet to appear in a full WHL season, Samson led all Cougars blueliners with 12 points (1 goal, 11 assists) in 22 games and was tops among all skaters with 64 shots. As impressive as his shot and point totals appear (especially within the context of the team he played for), Samson is a legitimate NHL prospect because he seems to have a deep appreciation for knocking opponents into next week. His desire to fire the opening salvo in the form of a hard hit or shove before the actual puck battle or zone entry takes place is a big reason why Samson is so successful at holding his line and denying the opposition freedom of movement. He was a huge minute eater for the Cougars and was used in every even-strength or odd-man situation.

Jakub Sedivy, LHD | 10-May-03 | Benatky, Chance Liga | 6'1, 189 | Shoots Left | Czech Republic

A physical defenseman who was used in a top-four role, Sedivy's confidence and maturity helped make him one of the more reliable Czech defense prospects available in this draft. He's an above-average skater who will join the rush on occasion, but the bulk of Sedivy's contributions in the average game came off the puck while either holding his line, defending his slot, or killing penalties. Sedivy had several games where he played over 18 minutes and he saw time on the top pairing, which is impressive considering he was a 17-year-old defenseman playing against adults in the Chance Liga. Sedivy captained the Czech under-18 squad at the world championship, where he was solid against lesser competition was had a tough time reacting to and neutralizing skill plays from the Canadians and Russians.

Yeremei Shumilin, C | 8-Dec-02 | Loko Yaroslavl, MHL | 6'0, 165 | Shoots Left | Russia

A quick and lanky forward with physicality who can play center or wing, Shumilin was expected to take a major leap forward in his development after an impressive draft-1 season with contending Loko Yaroslavl. But his play in 2020-21 never took off and his role as a bottom-six checker didn't change. Shumilin is a capable center who can drive possession with strong puck handling and elusiveness, but he's most effective off the puck and supporting his defensemen. Loko Yaroslavl had plenty of those types, however, and Shumilin spent time in the lower NMHL and didn't appear in a single postseason game. What likely is holding Shumilin back from the upper tier of MHL prospects is a relative lack of creativity in the playmaking department, and although he does a good job taking what the defense gives him and is capable of flashy moves, you'd like to see him stretch out the defense more with his passing.

Conor Shortall, RHD | 29-April-03 | Drummondville, QMJHL | 5'9, 189 | Shoots Right | Canada

Shortall is an elusive and deceptive rearguard who was a fifth-round pick of Drummondville's in the 2019 QMJHL draft. He's a St. John's, NL native with a compact build and solid center of gravity that benefits his game. Shortall is effective at escaping a forecheck, but that is just one of several attributes he can pull out of a sizable bag of tricks. He is a smooth skater with slick hands and high IQ when it comes to puck distribution, and although he is small in stature, Shortall finds a way to consistently impact the game. Shortall is poised under pressure while using his strong edgework to escape trouble. He is constantly moving and rarely flatfooted or static, thus enabling him to pounce on loose pucks and snuff out a rush with ease. On the breakout, Shortall comes across as a mobile defenseman who is adept at making quick, accurate outlet passes. He has a strong grasp of the game, processes decisions quickly, and has a competitiveness about him that seems to make him want to see plays through. Defensively, Shortall reveals fantastic gap control and strong one-on-one play, but he is undersized and has trouble handling forwards with a slight or greater size advantage.

Aapo Siivonen, LHD | 31-Oct-02 | Quebec Remparts | 6'3, 186 | Shoots Left | Finland

Siivonen was selected 74th overall pick by the Quebec Remparts in the 2020 CHL Import Draft after he spent most of the season prior with Lukko U20 in Finland's SM-Sarja. With Lukko, Siivonen was a middle-pairing defender who played either side and saw more time on the penalty kill than he did on the power play, averaging close to 16 mins a game overall. He wasn't always with the main junior squad, as Siivonen also spent time with the "B" team. It should be noted that Lukko in 2019-20 was not a playoff team and had one of the weaker offenses, but Siivonen was a critical piece on one of the better penalty-killing units in the league. Siivonen didn't join the Remparts until mid-October due to COVID protocols and finally made his QMJHL debut on Nov. 17. He's bounced around from pairing to pairing, and much like in Finland, Siivonen plays a role on a premier penalty-killing unit. He hurt his shoulder in early February and missed a full month. Siivonen is a mobile defenseman who is constantly in motion and rarely is caught flatfooted. Although he is a larger prospect, Siivonen can take the puck for a skate into the neutral zone and uses a wide, sturdy base to help fend off checkers and maintain position. Siivonen will never be labeled as a roadrunner, nor will he attempt highlight reel with end-to-end rushes. He does, however, display excellent timing and fluidity while maintaining a tight gap, and is quick with his retrievals. His straight-line speed for a defender his size is above average. Siivonen has a hard, accurate shot that he simply doesn't use enough. He stays active in the offensive zone and drops down on occasion, but he also walks the line to create an opening for a quick attempt at the net. Siivonen has yet to score a goal in the QMJHL but both his goals last season in the SM-Sarja were via the wrist. Siivonen isn't much of a playmaker and usually connects with the closest passing option. Siivonen is a steady and sound left-handed defenseman who can play either side, although he has played far more on the right than left. He uses his large frame to provide his goalie clear views of shots but is quick to the corners and willing to battle in front. Siivonen leans on opponents, wearing them down and showing a nasty side with hard shoves and stick work if necessary.

Yegor Smirnov, RHD (OA) | 25-July-02 | Dynamo MSK, MHL | 6'4, 210 | Shoots Right | Russia

Smirnov is an enthusiastic and mobile two-way defenseman with physicality who was Dynamo MSK's No. 2 or No. 3 this season, depending on how you want to look at it. Although he was second only to teammate Arman Iritsyan in defense scoring (29 points in 58 games), shots (145), and ice time (16:59), Smirnov's role decreased in the playoffs by over two full minutes (14:45) and even more so in the Kharlamov Cup Final (14:25), including less than 14 minutes in each of the last three games. He gets himself involved in the play and likes to join the rush, but Smirnov also contributes in the defensive end by killing penalties, blocking shots, and using his long reach and strong upper body to keep players to the outside. Smirnov plays with jump, which can in the way of his defensive duties. Opponents have to be aware when he's on the ice because he can step up and drill a puck carrier near his line.

Aidan Sutter, LHD | 27-Oct-02 | Everett, WHL | 5'11, 163 | Shoots Left | Canada

A depth defender on a stingy Everett squad which for the season held the opposition to under two goals a game, Sutter continued to reward the Silvertips for signing him after he wasn't picked in the WHL draft. He provided their bottom pairing with sound decisions on the puck and proper positioning off it, without attempting anything selfish or fancy. Sutter delivers a crisp first pass and is a very good skater with quick feet and string edges, and for the second straight season look comfortable taking the puck for a skate if necessary. His size for a WHL defenseman isn't optimal and not being all that skilled or creative are two more reasons why he was stuck playing minimal minutes. That should change next season, as Sutter has shown flashes of being more than just a bottom-pairing option.

Blake Swetlikoff, C | 29-May-03 | Spokane, WHL | 5'11, 185 | Shoots Right | Canada

A third-round pick in the 2018 WHL draft, Swetlikoff is a versatile multi-zone center who solves problems and makes life easier on his coaching staff. He moved all over Seattle's lineup this year, to include centering the top line with wingers Adam Beckman and Eli Zummack. Whether killing penalties or jamming the net front on the power play, Swetlikoff competed hard and showed enthusiasm while doing so. He has soft hands which help in the rebound/tip-in departments, but the more you watch him, the more you realize how intelligent he is and that he makes his own opportunities rather than expect someone else to do it. Still, the numbers aren't all that gaudy (11 points in 21 games), although Swetlikoff did finish third on the team in shots (42) behind top scorers Beckman and Zummack. Naturally, Swetlikoff played a ton of minutes and one can make the argument that he was Spokane's No. 1 center more than anyone else.

Pavel Tyutnev, C/LW (OA) | 25-July-02 | 5'10, 185 | Shoots Left | Russia |

NHL scouts should be all too familiar with this sturdy sniper, who last October went undrafted in his first year of eligibility after he played for Russian junior teams at all teenage levels. Tyutnev's game seemed to mature this season and he was a key figure for Loko during the playoffs, scoring four goals and seven points in 10 games, including a goal and two assists in Game 5 of the MHL Final. Tyutnev raced off to a hot start in 2020-21 and was quickly promoted to the adult-age VHL, where he recorded a goal and two assists in 14 games for Voronezh. Tyutnev is listed as a winger on most draft lists, but he played center during most of his time in the MHL, winning 53 percent of his 234 combined draws between the regular season and playoffs. He possesses an elite shot that has made him a fixture on the power play, but Tyutnev's thick frame and willingness to battle usually has him positioned close to or on top of the goal. His skating package is average, but he has no problem taking defenders inside or out while displaying a series of crafty fakes and stutter steps. Tyutnev is a strong stickhandler who is tough to knock off the puck and his vision extends to well beyond his immediate possession radius. He isn't a classic 200-foot forward who puts forth the same effort off the puck as he does while operating it, but Tyutnev can be a competent penalty killer and is useful in board battles.

Trevor Wong, C/W | 4-May-03 | Kelowna, WHL | 5'8, 154 | Shoots Left | Canada

The speedy leading scorer and all-situations center for Kelowna, Wong showed that a lack of size can be offset by an advanced hockey brain and elite playmaking ability. Wong, who was drafted 18th overall in the 2018 WHL draft, showed time and again that he is the last player the opposition wants to leave unchecked, and his strong overall sense of the game prevented them from keeping him quiet for a full period, let alone an entire game. He's going to create chances for either his teammates or himself regardless of the defensive scheme before him, although Wong fits more into the pass-first playmaker category. That should help explain why he mans the point on the power play, but Wong is a selfless player by nature and will use the time and space to look for the best passing option rather than fire pucks on net with the intent to score. Thinking he's going to pass the puck is risky, however, as Wong scored four goals on four shots against Prince George on April 17th, with two tallies coming via the wrist, one from a net-front deflection, and another on the backhand.

NHL Team Reports and Prospect Depth Charts

Anaheim Ducks

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Josh Mahura

Simon Benoit

Jackson Lacombe

Henry Thrun

Brendan Guhle

Mathew Hill

Left Wings

Brayden Tracey

Artyom Galimov

Blake McGlaughlin

Maxim Golod

Goalies

Lukas Dostal

Olle Eriksson-Ek

Roman Durny

Centers

Trevor Zegras

Bo Groulx

Albin Sundsvik

Alex Limoges

Ethan Bowen

Alex Dostie

Jack Badini

Right Defense

Jamie Drysdale

Axel Andersson

Ian Moore

Hunter Drew

Thimo Nickl

Right Wings

Jacob Perreault

Sam Colangelo

Bryce Kindopp

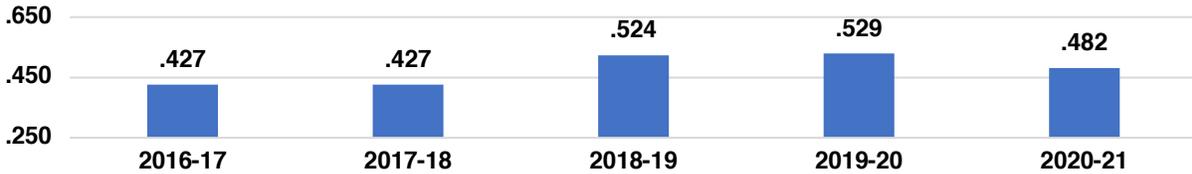
Arizona Coyotes

GM: Bill Armstrong (9/17/20)

Scouting Dir.: Darryl Plandowski

Record: 24-26-6, 51 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
	37 (CBJ), 43, 60 (COL)		107, 122 (PIT)	139	171	

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
37	14	23	2	2	30	6

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
8	11	15	2

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Traded for Taylor Hall
2019	Victor Soderstrom, RHD (11 th overall)
2018	Barrett Hayton, C (5 th overall)
2017	Pierre-Olivier Joseph, LHD (23 rd overall)
2016	Clayton Keller, C (7 th overall)
2016	Jakob Chychrun, LHD (16 th overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

The recent draft-day experience for Coyotes fans has been far from enjoyable, especially after last year's gut-punch parade that saw their first-round pick traded, their GM quitting after being caught running shady prospect workouts, and top pick Mitchell Miller's rights being renounced after news spread about an old bullying incident. Making matters worse was losing the 11th overall pick in this draft as punishment for the misdeeds of their banished GM. Nonetheless, the Coyotes under Bill Armstrong have some room to work with, as he added two extra second-round picks to the one he already had. The previous two regimes loved drafting out of the OHL, but the Coyotes avoided it last year and probably do the same in 2021.

Draft Needs

The prospect pool is loaded with bodies at every position, but only right defenseman Victor Soderstrom can be considered a true blue-chipper. The Coyotes need elite finishers with high ceilings and high floors.

Realistic Targets

Prokhor Poltapov, RW; Mackie Samoskevich, RW, Tristan Broz, LW; Alexander Kisakov, LW

Arizona Coyotes

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Kyle Capobianco

Michael Callahan

Ty Emberson

Axel Bergkvist

Cam Dineen

Michael Karow

Vladislav Provolnev

Goalies

David Tendeck

Ivan Prosvetov

Karel Vejmelka

Right Defense

Victor Soderstrom

Cameron Crotty

Jordan Gross

Dysin Mayo

Left Wings

Liam Kirk

Brayden Burke

Matias Maccelli

Valentin Nussbaumer

Ben McCartney

Carson Bantle

Elliot Ekefjord

Centers

Barrett Hayton

Jan Jenik

John Farinacci

Blake Speers

Tyler Steenbergen

Danil Savunov

Ryan McGregor

Nate Sucese

Filip Barklund

Right Wings

Alexander Daryin

Aku Raty

Anthony Romano

Boston Bruins

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Urho Vaakanainen

Mason Lohrei

Jack Ahcan

Dustyn McFaul

Cooper Zech

Roman Bychkov

Nick Wolff

Goalies

Jeremy Swayman

Dan Vladar

Kyle Keyser

Callum Booth

Right Defense

Victor Berglund

Brady Lyle

Mason Langenbrunner

Left Wings

Jakub Lauko

Trevor Kuntar

Matias Maccelli

Joona Kopponen

Quinn Olson

Matias Mantykivi

Centers

Jack Studnicka

John Beecher

Curtis Hall

Samuel Asselin

Cam Hughes

Oskar Steen

Matt Filipe

Riley Duran

Pavel Shen

Jake Schmaltz

Right Wings

Zach Senyshyn

Jesper Froden

Robert Lantosi

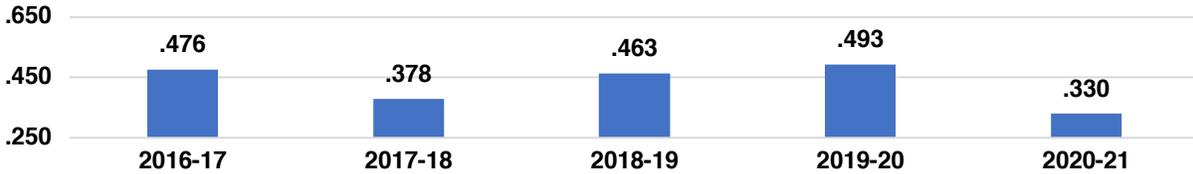
Buffalo Sabres

GM: Kevyn Adams (6/16/20)

Scouting Dir.: Jerry Forton

Record: 15-34-7, 37 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1 st Round	2 nd Round	3 rd Round	4 th Round	5 th Round	6 th Round	7 th Round
1	33, 53 (BOS)	88 (FLA), 95 (MTL)	97	159 (MTL)	161, 188 (COL)	193

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
33	15	18	5	2	24	9

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
8	10	13	2

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Jack Quinn, RW (8 th overall)
2019	Dylan Cozens, C/W (7 th overall)
2019	Ryan Johnson, LHD (31 st overall)
2018	Rasmus Dahlin, LHD (1 st overall)
2017	Casey Mittelstadt, C (8 th overall)
2016	Alex Nylander, RW (8 th overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

The Sabres since 2016 have used close to 40 percent of their picks on either college-bound prospects or those with NCAA commitments. That trend should continue now that former Sabres' NCAA scout Jerry Forton is running this draft, so expect Buffalo to grab at least one prospect from either the USHL, Canadian Jr. A, NCAA, or U.S. high schools. Here are two more interesting tidbits – the pro-European Sabres have not had a draft class with a North American majority since 2016, and of the 20 Europeans they've taken, only one – Vasily Glotov in Round 7 of 2016 – was Russian-trained.

Draft Needs

The Sabres have no excuse for drafting only two goalies in the last six years. It's been a problem at every level in the organization since Ryan Miller was traded, and it's no coincidence that he was the starter the last time the Sabres made the playoffs a full decade ago. The fanbase will go bananas if Buffalo either uses their No. 1 pick or trades down to grab a goalie, but it certainly wouldn't be the worst move this franchise has ever made.

Realistic Targets

Matt Beniers, C; Owen Power, LHD; William Eklund, LW; Brandt Clarke, RHD; Jesper Wallstedt, G; Sebastian Cossa, G

Buffalo Sabres

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Mattias Samuelsson

Ryan Johnson

Jacob Bryson

William Worge-Kreu

Linus Cronholm

Goalies

Ukka-Pekka Lukkonen

Erik Portillo

Right Defense

Oskari Laaksonen

Miska Kukkonen

Albert Lyckasen

Casey Fitzgerald

Centers

Rasmus Asplund

Arttu Ruotsalainen

Matteo Constantini

Jakub Konecny

Left Wings

J.J. Peterka

Linus Weissbach

Brett Murray

Right Wings

Jack Quinn

Tage Thomsson

Aaron Huglen

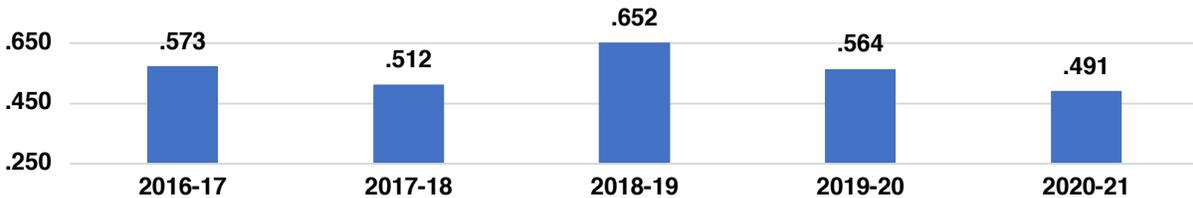
Calgary Flames

GM: Brad Treliving (4/28/14)

Scouting Dir.: Todd Button

Record: 26-27-3, 55 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
13	45	77, 84 (EDM)		141	173	205

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
32	11	21	4	2	29	3

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
12	10	7	3

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Connor Zary, C (24 th overall)
2019	Jakob Pelletier, LW (26 th overall)
2018	Traded for Travis Hamonic
2017	Juuso Valimaki, LHD (16 th overall)
2016	Matt Tkachuk, LW (7 th overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

Barring trades, the Flames are slated to have at least seven picks in consecutive drafts for the first time in nearly a decade. This probably is more relevant for general manager Brad Treliving's eventual successor than it is for him today, as Calgary is teetering on the edge of collapse now that its Cup contention window has slammed shut. Scouting director Todd Button and his staff usually spend at least half their picks on kids from Canadian major junior, but their job will be tougher this year since the pandemic killed the OHL season and the WHL played a reduced schedule with no postseason. The QMJHL is a popular circuit for Flames' scouts, as they've drafted at least one of their prospects in each of the last four drafts.

Draft Needs

The Flames have two blue chips in hard-working forwards Jakob Pelletier and Connor Zary, but the rest of their prospect pool is loaded with kids who either aren't AHL proven or need a few more years of seasoning in Stockton. The defense was looking thin until last year when they grabbed Yan Kuznetsov, Jeremie Poirier, and Jake Boltmann consecutively in Rounds 2-3, but right wing remains a question mark. They also could use a puck rusher with skill on the right side of the defense.

Realistic Targets

Fabian Lysell, RW; Simon Robertsson, RW; Xavier Bourgault, RW; Corson Ceulemans, RHD

Calgary Flames

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Yan Kuznetsov

Jeremie Poirier

Ilya Solovyov

Goalies

Dustin Wolf

Tyler Parsons

Daniil Chechelev

Right Defense

Jake Boltmann

Connor Mackey

Johannes Kinnvall

Left Wings

Jakob Pelletier

Emilio Petterson

Emil Heineman

Demetrios Koumontzis

Lukas Feuk

Centers

Connor Zary

Adam Ruzicka

Glenn Gawdin

Ryan Francis

Ilya Nikolaev

Matthew Phillips

Rory Kerins

Josh Nodler

Martin Pospisil

Right Wings

Dmitry Zavgorodniy

Eetu Tuulola

Walker Duehr

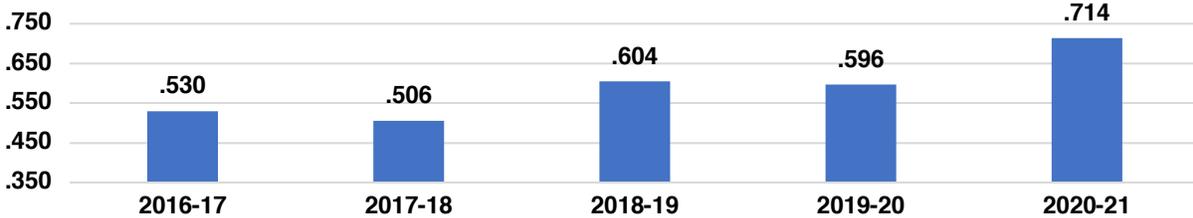
Carolina Hurricanes

GM: Don Waddell (5/8/18)

Scouting Dir.: Darren York

Record: 36-12-8, 80 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
27	59	91	123		187	200 (LA), 209 (STL), 219

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
43	23	20	4	2	36	7

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
12	15	11	5

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Seth Jarvis, C (13 th overall)
2019	Ryan Suzuki, C (28 th overall)
2018	Andrei Svechnikov, RW (2 nd overall)
2017	Martin Necas, C/W (11 th overall)
2016	Jake Bean, LHD (13 th overall)
2016	Julien Gauthier, RW (21 st overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

It may appear as though Carolina is in the ultimate sweet spot for any organization – Stanley Cup contender with an elite farm system to support it. Additionally, they are stingy with their draft picks, as 2021 would mark the eighth straight year where they own each of their first two picks. The Canes leaned towards speed and skill at every position under general managers Ron Francis and Don Waddell, but another noteworthy aspect of Carolina’s drafting process is that they’re one of only a handful of teams who draft at least one forward, one defenseman, and one goalie every year. You have to go all the way back to 2013 (when they had only four picks) to find a Canes’ draft class that wasn’t as positionally balanced. And although they’re known to go bananas with Finnish prospects, Carolina since 2018 has taken twice as many Russians (6) as Finns (3).

Draft Needs

The Canes have a ridiculous prospect pool and boatloads of talent already established in the NHL, so they don’t need to treat this draft as a watershed moment in the franchise’s history. But they tend to go a little overboard with undersized players and getting pushed around this past postseason could result in reactionary drafting. Doesn’t help that the right side of the defense is highlighted by playmakers

Realistic Targets

Samuel Helenius, C; Corson Ceulemans, RHD; Aleksii Heimosalmi, RHD; Oskar Olausson, RW

Carolina Hurricanes

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Jesper Sellgren

Ronan Seeley

Alexander Nikishin

Dominick Fensore

Cade Webber

Goalies

Jack Lafontaine

Pyotr Kochetkov

Eetu Makiniemi

Beck Warm

Jake Kucharski

Right Defense

Joey Keane

Anttoni Honka

Left Wings

Tukka Tiekola

Dominik Bokk

Zion Nybeck

Blake Murray

Yegor Korshkov

Centers

Morgan Geekie

Seth Jarvis

Steven Lorentz

David Cotton

Ryan Suzuki

Jamieson Rees

Jack Drury

Vasily Ponomaryov

Lucas Mercuri

Massimo Rizzo

Right Wings

Patrik Puustola

Noel Gunler

Kevin Wall

Alexander Pashin

Kirill Slepets

Lenni Killinen

Stelio Mattheos

Spencer Smallman

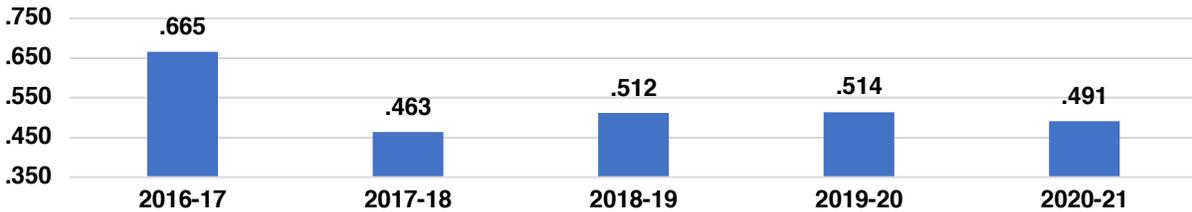
Chicago Blackhawks

GM: Stan Bowman (7/14/09)

Scouting Dir.: Mike Kelley

Record: 24-25-7, 55 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
12	44, 62 (VGK)		105 (VAN), 108		172	204, 216 (FLA)

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
40	18	22	5	1	29	11

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
7	12	17	4

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Lukas Reichel, LW (17 th overall)
2019	Kirby Dach, C (3 rd overall)
2018	Adam Boqvist, RHD (8 th overall)
2018	Nicolas Beaudin, LHD (27 th overall)
2017	Henri Jokiharju, RHD (29 th overall)
2016	Traded for Andrew Ladd

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

The Blackhawks made improving their defense an objective in every draft since 2016. One year they'll take three or four blueliners in the later rounds; the next will be highlighted by a first-round pick. In total, Chicago has selected 17 defensemen in the last five years, and that doesn't include the freebie they received when free agent Wyatt Kalnyuk chose them instead of Philadelphia. The cupboard at center ice once seemed bare until they addressed it with Kirby Dach at third overall in 2019, and they received a promising rookie year out of Pius Suter, plus Evan Barratt is ready in Rockford for middle-six duty if necessary. Lastly, the drafting of stud goalie Drew Commesso and promising winger Landon Slaggert in 2020 marked the fourth straight year where the Hawks took at least one prospect from the U.S. NTDP.

Draft Needs

The depth chart for the blue line is overcrowded on either side, and Chicago began inserting their better neophytes into the NHL lineup two seasons prior. The Hawks don't necessarily need defensemen, but they did lose two from the right side by not signing longshots Roope Laavainen and Cole Moberg. Still, to say the blue line will be competitive is an understatement, so compounding the issue with more defensemen from this draft would be a tough sell. The wing position remains thin on premier skill, although 2021 first-rounder Lukas Reichel is trending in the right direction.

Realistic Targets

Fabian Lysell, RW; Isak Rosen, LW; Simon Robertsson, RW; Matthew Coronato, C/RW

Chicago Blackhawks

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Wyatt Kalnyuk

Nicolas Beaudin

Wyatt Kaiser

Alex Vlasic

Isaak Phillips

Slava Demin

Jakub Galvas

Chad Kryz

Josh Ess

Goalies

Drew Comness

Cale Morris

Arvid Soderblom

Alexis Gravel

Dom Basse

Right Defense

Alec Regula

Ian Mitchell

Michal Krutil

Louis Crevier

Left Wings

Lukas Reichel

Ryder Rolston

Josiah Slavin

Cam Morrison

Matej Chalupa

Artur Kayumov

Parker Foo

Centers

Evan Barratt

Mackenzie Entwistle

Henrik Borgstrom

Antti Saarela

Mikael Hakkarainen

Reese Johnson

Jake Wise

Right Wings

Michal Teplý

Landon Slaggert

Andrei Altybarmakyan

Chad Yetman

Mike Hardman

Jakub Pour

Niklas Nordgren

Colorado Avalanche

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Bowen Byram

Danil Zhuravlyov

Dennis Gilbert

Nick Leivermann

Keaton Middleton

Goalies

Adam Werner

Justus Annunen

Jonas Johansson

Trent Miner

Hunter Miska

Shamil Shmakov

Peyton Jones

Right Defense

Conor Timmins

Justin Barron

Drew Helleson

Nathan Clurman

Left Wings

Sampo Raanta

Tyler Weiss

Mikhail Maltsev

Ty Lewis

Andreas Wingerli

Centers

Alex Newhook

Shane Bowers

Jean-Luc Foudy

Colby Ambrosio

Nils Aman

Matthew Steinburg

Right Wings

Martin Kaut

Nikolai Kovalenko

Alex Beaucage

Nick Henry

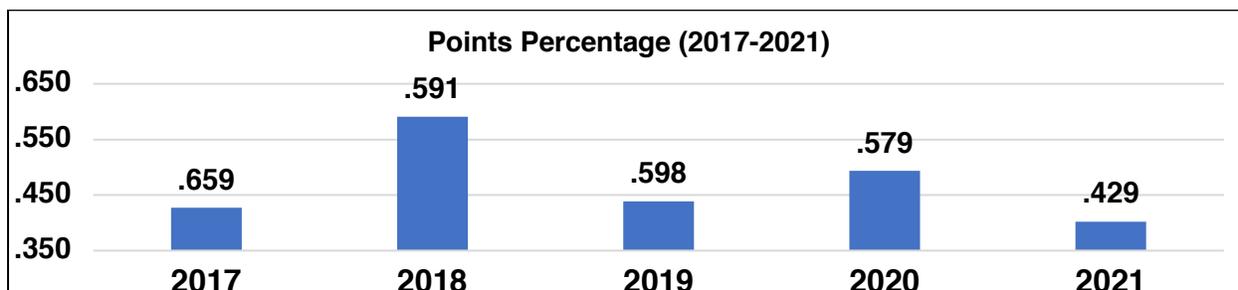
Logan O'Connor

Columbus Blue Jackets

GM: Jarmo Kekalainen (2/13/13)

Scouting Dir.: Ville Siren

Record: 18-26-12, 48 points



2021 Draft picks (post-lottery)

1 st Round	2 nd Round	3 rd Round	4 th Round	5 th Round	6 th Round	7 th Round
5, 25 (TOR), 32 (TB)		69	101	132 (NJ), 133	165	197

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
26	10	16	3	1		

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
5	11	7	3

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Yegor Chinakhov, RW (21 st)
2019	Traded for Matt Duchene
2018	Liam Foudy, C (18 th)
2017	Traded to Vegas
2016	Pierre-Luc Dubois, C (3 rd)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

The Jackets missed the playoffs and own one of the league's thinnest pools, as trades for past postseason runs have limited them to only 26 draft picks in the last five years. Changes in personnel have occurred at the player, coaching, and front office levels, and although they haven't made any official announcement, it's fair to say that a rebuild will begin with their three picks in Round 1. Columbus owns nine picks in total, which is the most they've had in one year since 2015. And with European prospects expected to draw more attention following the OHL cancellation and shortened WHL season, general manager Jarmo Kekalainen and scouting director Ville Siren should lean towards international prospects; specifically, overagers with a shorter path to the NHL.

Draft Needs

Columbus has quality forward prospects armed and ready to make a splash, which turns the spotlight on a thin defense corps. Additionally, the tragic death of goalie Matiss Kivlenieks likely made the Jackets rethink their draft strategy if they weren't already considering taking a netminder with one of their three first-round picks. They have a mid-level prospect in Daniil Tarasov but there's not much thereafter.

Realistic Targets

Jesper Wallstedt, G; Simon Edvinsson, LHD; William Eklund, LW; Luke Hughes, LHD; Brandt Clarke, RHD; Sebastian Cossa, G

Columbus Blue Jackets

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Eric Hjorth

Samuel Knazko

Ole Bjorgvik-Holm

Tim Berni

Jake Christiansen

Left Wings

Kale Howarth

Marcus Karlberg

Goalies

Daniil Tarasov

Petr Thome

Centers

Dmitry Voronkov

Mikael Pyyhtia

Tyler Angle

Ryan McInnis

Joshua Dunne

Cliff Pu

Calvin Thurkauf

Right Defense

Andrew Peeke

Robbie Stucker

Right Wings

Yegor Chinakhov

Kirill Marchenko

Carson Meyer

Trey Fix Wolansky

Kole Sherwood

Dallas Stars

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Thomas Harley

Ben Gleason

Ben Brinkman

Samuel Sjolund

Jerad Rosburg

Goalies

Jake Oettinger

Colton Point

Remi Poirier

Adam Scheel

Landon Bow

Right Defense

Jake Boltmann

Julius Honka

Joe Cecconi

Dawson Barteaux

Ryan Shea

Left Wings

Joel Kiviranta

Fredrik Karlstrom

Riley Tufte

Adam Mascherin

Antonio Stranges

Evgeniy Oksentyuk

Tye Felhaber

Centers

Ty Dellandrea

Mavrik Bourque

Jacob Petersen

Rhett Gardner

Riley Damiani

Oskar Back

Jordan Kawaguchi

Right Wings

Nick Caamano

Daniel Ljungman

Albin Eriksson

Detroit Red Wings

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Gustav Lindstrom

William Wallinder

Eemil Viro

Anton Johansson

Jared McIsaac

Donovan Sebrango

Kasper Kotkansalo

Kyle Aucoin

Cooper Moore

Goalies

Jan Bednar

Victor Brattstrom

Filip Larsson

Carter Gylander

Right Defense

Moritz Seider

Alex Cotton

Antti Tuomisto

Gustav Berglund

Wyatt Newpower

Seth Barton

Left Wings

Lucas Raymond

Jonatan Berggren

Cross Hanas

Robert Mastro Simone

Albin Grewe

Kirill Tyutyayev

Chase Bradley

Centers

Chase Pearson

Joe Veleno

Theodor Niederbach

Elmer Soderblom

Otto Kivenmaki

Ethan Phillips

Right Wings

Givani Smith

Ryan O'Reilly

Sam Stange

Kienan Draper

Edmonton Oilers

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Philip Broberg

Dmitri Samorukov

Markus Niemelainen

Goalies

Stuart Skinner

Ilya Konovalov

Olivier Rodrigue

Right Defense

Evan Bouchard

Mike Kesselring

Phil Kemp

William Lagesson

Left Wings

Tyler Benson

Maxim Beryozkin

Carter Savoie

Graham McPhee

Filip Engaras

Jeremias Lindewall

Centers

Dylan Holloway

Raphael Lavoie

Ryan McLeod

Cooper Marody

Maxim Denezhkin

Aapeli Rasanen

Tim Soderlund

Tomas Mazura

Skyler Brind'amour

Patrik Siikanen

Right Wings

Ty Tullio

Kirill Maksimov

Ostap Safin

Florida Panthers

GM: Bill Zito (9/2/20)

Scouting Dir.: Shane Churla

Record: 37-14-5, 79 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
24	56		120	152	184	

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
36	17	19	3	0	26	10

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
9	12	13	2

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Anton Lundell, C (12 th overall)
2019	Spencer Knight, G (13 th overall)
2018	Grigory Denisenko, LW (15 th overall)
2017	Owen Tippett, RW (10 th overall)
2016	Henrik Borgstrom, C (23 rd overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

The Panthers' turnaround can be attributed to a combination of things, but it starts with the maturing of former high draft picks Jonathan Huberdeau and Sasha Barkov into game-breaking superstars. Although most of the roster that helped the Panthers to a franchise-record .705 points percentage were drafted elsewhere, the emergence of late-rounder MacKenzie Weegar (206th overall in 2013), winger Owen Tippett (10th overall in 2017), and goalie Spencer Knight (13th overall in 2019) has set the Cats up for what should be sustained success. They had nine picks in each of their last two drafts, with each one being run by a different regime. Under Dale Tallon and Jason Bakula, the Panthers went CHL heavy, whereas only two prospects from last year's draft under Bill Zito's watch were taken from Canadian major junior.

Draft Needs

The prospect pool looks solid in every position, and one can make the argument that Florida's top three prospects – goalie Spencer Knight, center Anton Lundell, and sniper Grigori Denisenko, are as good as any young prospect trio in the league. Having that flexibility can allow the Cats to take a major home-run swing for a scoring machine, or they can strengthen the right side of the defense to compliment a strong collection of lefty rearguards.

Realistic Targets

Mackie Samoskevich, RW; Ville Koivunen, LW; Alexander Kisakov, LW; Aleksii Heimosalmi, RHD; Scott Morrow, RHD

Florida Panthers

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

John Ludvig

Max Gildon

Max Kiersted

Vladislav Kolyachonok

Zach Uens

Tyler Inamoto

Cole Krygier

Carter Berger

Goalies

Spencer Knight

Samuel Montembeault

Devon Levi

Ryan Bednard

Right Defense

Noah Juulsen

Michael Benning

Kasper Puutio

Brady Keeper

Santtu Kinnunen

Left Wings

Grigori Denisenko

Justin Schutz

Henry Bowlby

Centers

Anton Lundell

Ty Smilanic

Aleksi Heponiemi

Aleksi Saarela

Logan Hutsko

Owen Lindmark

Elliot Ekmkark

Right Wings

Serron Noel

Justin Sourdif

Greg Meirless

Cole Schwindt

Los Angeles Kings

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Tobias Bjornfot

Kale Clague

Jacob Moverare

Kim Nousiaenen

Markus Phillips

Cole Hults

Braden Doyle

Ben Meehan

Goalies

Jacob Ingham

Lukas Parik

David Hrenak

Matt Villalta

Juho Markkanen

Right Defense

Brock Faber

Sean Durzi

Jordan Spence

Helge Grans

Left Wings

Arthur Kaliyev

Vladimir Tkachyov

Andre Lee

Bulat Shafigullin

Centers

Quinton Byfield

Alex Turcotte

Rasmus Kupari

Akil Thomas

Tyler Madden

Aidan Dudas

Right Wings

Samuel Fagemo

Kasper Simontaival

Alex Laferriere

Martin Chromiak

Johan Sodergran

Aatu Jamsen

Minnesota Wild

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Ryan O'Rourke

Filip Johansson

Marshall Warren

Daemon Hunt

Fedor Gordeev

Goalies

Kaapo Kahkonen

Hunter Jones

Filip Lindberg

Dereck Baribeau

Right Defense

Calen Addison

Brennan Menell

Simon Johansson

Left Wings

Matt Boldy

Adam Beckman

Vladislav Firstov

Sam Hentges

Brandon Duhaime

Centers

Marco Rossi

Marat Khusnutdinov

Connor Dewar

Alexander Khovanov

Mason Shaw

Damien Giroux

Andrei Svetlakov

Matvei Guskov

Jack McBain

Nikita Nesterenko

Bryce Misley

Right Wings

Ivan Lodnia

Nick Swaney

Pavel Novak

Will Bitten

Dmitry Sokolov

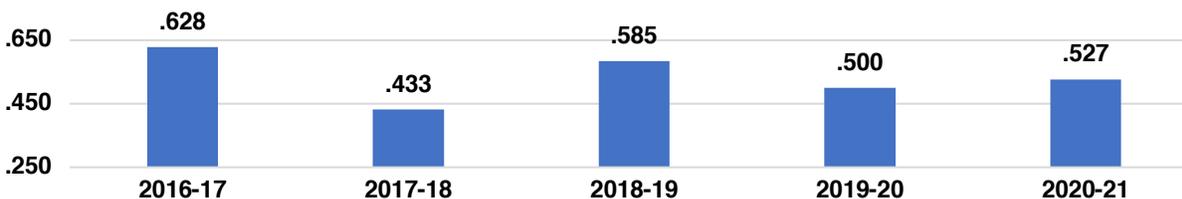
Montreal Canadiens

GM: Marc Bergevin (5/2/12)

Scouting Dir.: Trevor Timmins

Record: 24-21-11, 75 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1 st Round	2 nd Round	3 rd Round	4 th Round	5 th Round	6 th Round	7 th Round
31	63, 64 (TB)	76 (CHI) 87 (WAS)	113 (STL) 126 (VGK) 127	142	191	223

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
42	20	22	4	1	36	6

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
14	9	16	3

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Kaiden Guhle, C (16 th overall)
2019	Cole Caufield, RW (15 th overall)
2018	Jesper Kotkaniemi, C (3 rd overall)
2017	Ryan Poehling, C (25 th overall)
2016	Mikhail Sergachev, LHD (9 th overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

The Habs have gone to town with defensemen and centers in every draft since 2015 but the results have been mixed. That could explain last year's decision to take lefty defender Kaiden Guhle with their first pick despite the top of the 2020 class being loaded with skilled forwards. Nonetheless, this year will mark the fourth straight draft in which Montreal has 10 or more picks, with at least two in Rounds 2, 3, and 4. Their recent run to the Stanley Cup Final was mostly veteran-fueled, with occasional exciting moments involving recent first-rounders Jesperi Kotkaniemi and Cole Caufield. But outside of those two forwards and defenseman Alexander Romanov, most of their promising draft picks between 2015 and 2018 have been stuck behind a parent-club logjam. Still, the prospect pool will get another shot in the arm after this draft, and we might even see the Habs draft a QMJHL'er higher than Round 5 for the first time since 2013.

Draft Needs

Both the left side of the defense and left wing on Montreal's prospect depth chart are among the league's best, but every position thereafter is either top heavy or mediocre. Few teams since 2016 have had as many top-60 picks as the Canadiens, who are still waiting on 2017 first-round Ryan Poehling to hit.

Realistic Targets

Zachary Bolduc, C/W; Xavier Bourqualt, RW; Oskar Olausson, RW; Francesco Pinelli, C; Aleksii Heimosalmi, RHD; Scott Morrow, RHD

Montreal Canadiens

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Alexander Romanov

Kaiden Guhle

Mattias Norlinder

Jordan Harris

Jayden Struble

Otto Leskinen

Gianni Fairbrother

Corey Schueneman

Goalies

Cayden Primeau

Jakub Dobes

Michael McNiven

Frederik Dichow

Right Defense

Josh Brook

Cale Fleury

Left Wings

Rafael Harvey-Pinard

Luke Tuch

Sean Farrell

Joel Teasdale

Rhett Pitlick

Jack Gorniak

Michael Pezzetta

Brandon Baddock

Centers

Ryan Poehling

Jan Mysak

Jacob Olofsson

Lukas Vejdemo

Liam Hawel

Brett Stapley

Cam Hillis

Blake Biondi

Jack Smith

Laurent Dauphin

Arsen Khisamutdinov

Right Wings

Cole Caufield

Jesse Ylonen

Alexander Gordin

Nashville Predators

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

David Farrance

Adam Wilsby

Marc Del Gaizo

Jeremy Davies

Spencer Stastney

Semyon Chistyakov

Goalies

Yaroslav Askarov

Tomas Vomacka

Connor Ingram

Devin Cooley

Milan Kloucek

Ethan Haider

Right Defense

Alexandre Carrier

Frederic Allard

Vladislav Yeryomenko

Luke Reid

Luke Prokop

Left Wings

Eeli Tolvanen

Egor Afanasyev

Alexander Campbell

Grant Mismash

Gunnarwolfe Fontaine

Juuso Parssinen

Cole Smith

Centers

Rem Pitlick

Jachym Kondelik

Tommy Novak

Patrick Harper

Chase McLane

Right Wings

Phil Tomasino

Luke Evangelista

Isak Walther

New Jersey Devils

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Shakir Mukhamadullin

Kevin Bahl

Nikita Okhotyuk

Mike Vukojevic

Drew Hellickson

Ethan Edwards

Daniil Misyul

Goalies

Gilles Senn

Evan Cormier

Akira Schmid

Nico Daws

Cole Brady

Right Defense

Reilly Walsh

Case McCarthy

Centers

Dawson Mercer

Fabian Zetterlund

Nate Schnarr

Aarne Talvitie

Artem Shlaine

Jaromir Pytlik

Brandon Gignac

Left Wings

Nolan Foote

Jesper Boqvist

Nick Merkley

Janne Kuokkanen

Eetu Pakkila

Benjamin Baumgartner

Right Wings

Alexander Holtz

Marian Studenic

Arseni Gritsyuk

Graham Clarke

Tyce Thomsson

Nikola Pasic

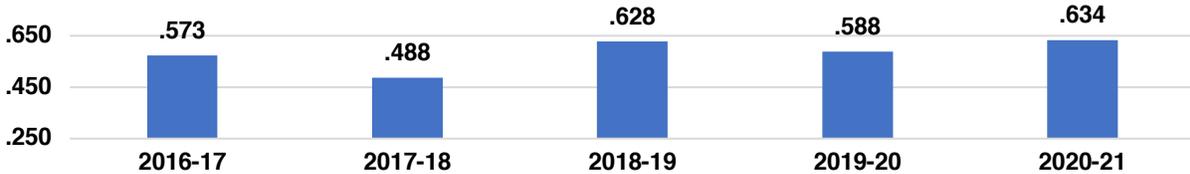
New York Islanders

GM: Lou Lamoriello (5/21/18)

Scouting Dir.: Trent Klatt

Record: 32-17-7, 71 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
	52 (EDM)	93	125	157	189	221

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
29	11	18	2	0	24	5

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
4	14	9	2

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Traded for J.G. Pageau
2019	Simon Holmstrom, RW (23 rd overall)
2018	Oliver Wahlstrom, RW (11 th overall)
2018	Noah Dobson, RHD (12 th overall)
2017	Traded for J.F. Berube (Exp. Draft)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

The Islanders have been busy contending since Lou Lamoriello took over as general manager in 2018, but that isn't an excuse for operating a bottom-dwelling farm system. Outside of defenseman Noah Dobson and power forward Oliver Wahlstrom, the Isles have one of the lowest batting averages among winning teams in getting contributions from drafted and developed prospects under 24 years old. All of New York's current standouts were drafted before 2016 under the guidance of former GM Garth Snow, including star center Mathew Barzal, exciting winger Anthony Beauvillier, stud defenseman Adam Pelech, and future No. 1 goalie Ilya Sorokin. The 2018 draft will keep the prospect pool from draining completely, but the organization needs to go back to the drawing board after nondescript draft hauls in each of the last two seasons.

Draft Needs

Owning one of the NHL's top defenses at the NHL shouldn't stop the Isles from adding contingencies to a farm system that is begging for help for the right side of the defense. The forward ranks aren't doing any better, but this will mark the second straight year where the Long Islanders don't have a first-round pick. If you're in a betting mood, expect Lamoriello and scouting director Trent Klatt to focus on center ice and the right side of the blue line.

Realistic Targets

Oliver Kapanen, C; Samu Salminen, C; William Stromgren, RW; Jakub Brabenec, C; Brent Johnson, RHD; Oscar Plandowski, RHD

New York Islanders

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Sebastian Aho

Samuel Bolduc

Robin Salo

Matias Rajaniemi

Ben Mirageas

Christian Krygier

Parker Wotherspoon

Mitchell Vande Sompel

Goalies

Jakub Skarek

Henrik Tikkanen

Ken Appleby

Right Defense

Bode Wilde

Left Wings

Otto Koivula

Kieffer Bellows

Anatoli Golyshev

Arnaud Durandau

Collin Adams

Logan Cockerill

Blade Jenkins

Centers

Reece Newkirk

Ruslan Iskhakov

Jake Pivonka

Right Wings

Simon Holmstrom

William Dufour

Alexander Ljungkrantz

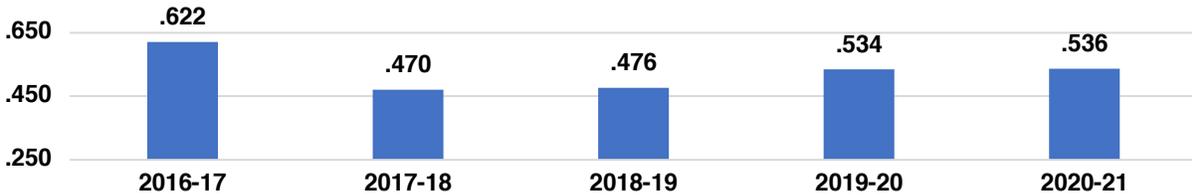
New York Rangers

GM: Chris Drury (5/5/21)

Scouting Dir.: Chris Morehouse

Record: 27-23-6, 60 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
16		65 (BUF), 80	104 (LA), 106 (OTT), 112	144	176	208

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
40	17	23	5	1	33	7

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
9	13	14	4

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Alexis Lafreniere, LW (1 st overall)
2020	Braden Schneider, RHD (23 rd overall)
2019	Kaapo Kakko, RW (2 nd overall)
2018	Vitaly Kravtsov, RW (9 th overall)
2018	K'Andre Miller, LHD (22 nd overall)
2018	Nils Lundkvist, RHD (28 th overall)
2017	Lias Andersson, C (7 th overall)
2017	Filip Chytil, C (21 st overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

Out with the old, in with the new was the mantra for Rangers' owner James Dolan and advisor Glen Sather, who in May purged the front office and hired an inexperienced Chris Drury to serve as general manager AND team president. Additional firings followed immediately thereafter, including the removal of chief European scout Nikolai Bobrov, who influenced former GM Jeff Gorton and ex-head scout Gordie Clarke to use 19 of the Rangers' 40 picks between 2016 and 2020 on international prospects. The rebuild that began in the winter of 2018 appeared to be going to plan, but that's irrelevant at this point, as Drury immediately fired head coach David Quinn and replaced him Gerard Gallant. What does matter is that Drury is inheriting a wealth of riches that includes top-five farm system, a lethal top-six, a 23-year-old Norris Trophy winner in Adam Fox, and a potential star in goal in Igor Shestyorin, plus recent lottery picks Kaapo Kakko and Alexis Lafreniere.

Draft Needs

The Blueshirts on draft day haven't completely neglected the center-ice position, but they certainly haven't made it a priority in Round 1 of the last three drafts. Although the decisions to choose high-profile wingers Kakko and Lafreniere were no-brainers, the Rangers chose not to address the organizational need for centers with any of their last six first-round picks.

Realistic Targets

Cole Sillinger, C/LW; Fyodor Svechkov, C; Chaz Lucius, C; Zachary Bolduc, C;

New York Rangers

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Zac Jones

Tarmo Reunanen

Matthew Robertson

Yegor Rykov

Jakob Ragnarsson

Simon Kjellberg

Goalies

Adam Huska

Tyler Wall

Dylan Garand

Hugo Ollas

Olof Lindbom

Right Defense

Nils Lundkvist

Braden Schneider

Hunter Skinner

Darren Raddysch

Left Wings

Morgan Barron

Will Cuyllé

Adam Edstrom

Tim Gettinger

Brett Berard

Leevi Aaltonen

Patrick Newell

Centers

Karl Henriksson

Evan Vierling

Justin Richards

Gabriel Fontaine

Patrick Khodorenko

Oliver Tarnstrom

Matt Rempe

Right Wings

Vitali Kravtsov

Lauri Pajuniemi

Eric Ciccolini

Ty Ronning

Austin Rueschoff

Riley Hughes

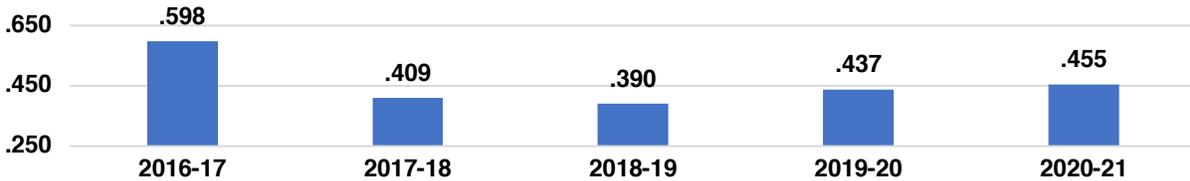
Ottawa Senators

GM: Pierre Dorion (4/10/16)

Scouting Dir.: Trent Mann

Record: 23-25-8, 51 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks (post-lottery)

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
10	39 (SJ), 42	74		138	170	202

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
33	17	16	4	2	25	8

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
10	12	7	4

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Tim Stutzle, C (3 rd overall)
2020	Jake Sanderson, LHD (5 th overall)
2020	Ridly Greig, C (28 th overall)
2019	Lassi Thomson, RHD (19 th overall)
2018	Brady Tkachuk, LW (4 th overall)
2018	Jacob Bernard-Docker, RHD (26 th overall)
2017	Shane Bowers, C (28 th overall)
2016	Logan Brown, C (11 th overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

You would think the Ontario-based Senators would make the most of the OHL's traditionally deep prospect pool, but they've only drafted two OHL'ers since 2014, although both were high picks – Windsor's Logan Brown (11th overall in 2016) and London's Alex Formenton (47th in 2017). Of course, Ottawa's not too far from Quebec, which could explain why they've selected at least one QMJHL prospect in 11 of the last 12 drafts. One thing to watch is if the Sens finally break what appears to be a boycott of Russia leaguers, as they haven't selected a non-import Russian since 2005.

Draft Needs

The Sens have firepower throughout the farm system, especially on the blue line. But it's highly doubtful they use pick No. 10 on a blueliner, with the lone exception being righty Brandt Clarke (a Nepean native) if he drops. Ottawa already owns three prominent defensemen from recent drafts in righties Jacob Bernard-Docker and Lassi Thomson, and lefty Jake Sanderson, and all were drafted since 2018. Since the Senators have one of the league's finest groups of defense prospects, expect Ottawa to go for one of the two stud goalies or a smashmouth sniper for the right wing.

Realistic Targets

Jesper Wallstedt, G; Sebastian Cossa, G; Mason McTavish, C/W; Cole Sillinger, C/W; Fabian Lysell, RW

Ottawa Senators

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Jake Sanderson

Tyler Kleven

Olle Alsing

Goalies

Filip Gustavsson

Mads Sogaard

Joel Daccord

Leevi Merilainen

Kevin Mandolese

Right Defense

Lassi Thomson

Jacob-Bernard Docker

Maxence Guenette

Left Wings

Alex Formenton

Angus Crookshank

Cole Reinhardt

Roby Jarventie

Eric Engstrand

Centers

Shane Pinto

Ridly Greig

Marc Kastelic

Parker Kelly

Philippe Daoust

Yakov Novak

Right Wings

Viktor Lodin

Egor Sokolov

Vitalii Abramov

Jonathan Davidsson

Luke Loheit

Todd Burgess

Philadelphia Flyers

Prospect Depth Chart

Philadelphia Flyers Prospect Depth Chart		
	Goalies	
	Samuel Ersson	
	Felix Sandstrom	
	Kirill Ustimenko	
	Roddy Ross	
Left Defense		Right Defense
Cam York		Ronnie Attard
Egor Zamula		Wyatte Wylie
Mason Millman		John St. Ivany
Linus Hogberg		
Adam Ginning		
Emil Andrae		
	Centers	
	Morgan Frost	
	German Rubtsov	
	Tanner Laczynski	
	Jay O'Brien	
	Elliot Desnoyers	
	Pascal Laberge	
	Gavin Hain	
Left Wings		Right Wings
Isaac Ratcliffe		Wade Allison
Carsen Twarynski		Ty Foerster
Olle Lycksell		Bobby Brink
Marcus Westfalt		Zayde Wisdom
Noah Cates		Linus Sandin
Matthew Strome		Connor McClennon
		Egor Serdyuk
		Maksim Sushko
		Bryce Brodzinski

Pittsburgh Penguins

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Pierre-Olivier Joseph

Niclas Almari

Cam Lee

Clayton Phillips

Antti Palojarvi

Goalies

Joel Blomqvist

Calle Clang

Alex D'Orio

Right Defense

Josh Maniscalco

Santeri Airola

Will Reilly

Centers

Anthony Angello

Felix Robert

Jonathan Gruden

Jordy Bellerive

Chase Yoder

Liam Gorman

Left Wings

Samuel Poulin

Filip Hallander

Drew O'Connor

Sam Miletic

Justin Almeida

Radim Zohorna

Right Wings

Nathan Legare

Valtteri Puustinen

Kasper Bjorkqvist

Jan Drozg

Judd Caufield

Lukas Svejkovsky

Raivis Ansons

San Jose Sharks

Prospect Depth Chart

Goalies

Alexei Melnichuk

Zach Emond

Zach Sawchenko

Right Defense

Ryan Merkley

Nic Meloche

Left Defense

Artemi Knyazov

Santeri Hatakka

Brinson Pasichuk

Centers

Thomas Bordeleau

Alexander True

Sasha Chmlevski

Tristan Robbins

Scott Reedy

Yegor Spiridonov

Lean Bergmann

Alex Young

Jasper Weatherbee

Zach Gallant

Right Wings

Ozzy Wiesblatt

Linus Oberg

Adam Raska

Vladislav Kotkov

Brandon Coe

Jake McGrew

Left Wings

John Leonard

Joachim Blichfeld

Daniil Gushchin

Dillon Hamaliuk

Jayden Halbgewachs

Ivan Chekhovich

Timur Ibragimov

Jonathan Dahlen

St. Louis Blues

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Scott Perunovich

Jake Walman

Niko Mikkola

Tyler Tucker

Leo Loof

Noah Beck

Goalies

Vadim Zherenko

Joel Hofer

Evan Fitzpatrick

Colten Ellis

Right Defense

Steve Santini

Mitch Reinke

Matt Kessel

Left Wings

Jake Neighbours

Jeremy Michel

Hugh McGing

Centers

Nikita Alexandrov

Tanner Kaspick

Kean Washkurak

Dakota Joshua

Nolan Stevens

Tanner Dickinson

Right Wings

Klim Kostin

Dylan Peterson

Mathias Laferriere

Alexie Toropchenko

Seattle

GM: Ron Francis (7/18/19)

Scouting Dir.: Robert Kron

2021 Draft picks

1 st Round	2 nd Round	3 rd Round	4 th Round	5 th Round	6 th Round	7 th Round
2	35	67	99	131	163	195

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

Seattle as an NHL organization may be fresh out the box, but their front-office trio of general manager Ron Francis, scouting director Robert Kron, and scout/advisor Tony MacDonald were previously with Carolina and have their fingerprints all over the Hurricanes' ascension to the top of the standings. Kron was instrumental in the drafting of rising star Martin Necas, among several others, while two of Carolina's best players from this season – Finnish center Sebastian Aho and goalie Alex Nedeljkovic – were drafted when Francis and MacDonald served as Canes' GM and scouting director, respectively. In their four drafts with Carolina between 2014 and 2017, Francis, Kron, and MacDonald drafted 33 prospects, with a balanced spread by position – 10 centers, nine wings, 10 defensemen, and five goalies. Seventeen of the 33 were selected out of Canadian major junior with each of the three CHL leagues being well represented. But the biggest takeaway is the huge disparity between European and North American draftees. Only seven of the 33 Hurricanes' draft picks between 2014 and 2017 were from overseas, while five were from Finland but only one from Sweden and none from Russia. That trend probably won't carry over to Seattle with their inaugural draft class, as the 2021 crop is loaded with quality from both countries, especially at all three forward positions. It's also expected to be a down year for the CHL since the OHL didn't have a season and the WHL played only a third of its schedule.

Draft Needs

Seattle as an expansion team has the No. 2 pick and is going to come away with a difference maker and cornerstone piece regardless of position. When Francis was hired by Carolina in 2014, the team was in the middle of a lengthy playoff drought and were always ranked near the bottom in goals allowed. He took a defenseman with each of his first picks in 2014 (Haydn Fleury), 2015 (Noah Hanifin), and 2016 (Jake Bean), and grabbed Nedeljkovic at 37th overall (also in 2014). None developed fast enough to fix the leaky defense that plagued the franchise in all four of Francis' years as GM, so Francis may have learned his lesson and decide to try building around a forward like Matt Beniers, William Eklund, or Kent Johnson, among others.

Realistic Targets

Matt Beniers, C; Owen Power, LHD, William Eklund, LW; Luke Hughes, LHD; Jesper Wallstedt, G

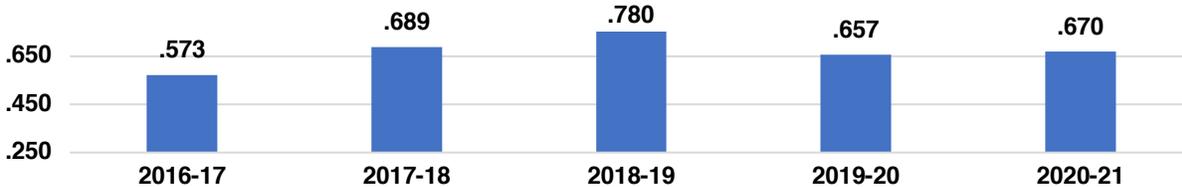
Tampa Bay Lightning

GM: Julien BrisBois (9/11/18)

Scouting Dir.: Al Murray

Record: 36-17-3, 75 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
		96	128	160	192	196 (NJ) 211 (NAS) 224

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
39	17	22	2	0	26	13

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
8	15	11	5

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Traded for Barclay Goodrow
2019	Nolan Foote, LW (27 th overall)
2018	Traded for Ryan McDonagh
2017	Cal Foote, RHD (14 th overall)
2016	Brett Howden, C (27 th overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

Seems like everyone is quick to give former Bolts' general manager Steve Yzerman all the credit for building Tampa into the back-to-back Stanley Cup winners they are today. And although Yzerman's vision and strategy drove the construction of a roster that sits as the envy of the entire league, the Lightning's reputation as the gold standard in drafting and player development begins with head scout Al Murray and his team of creative talent evaluators. But their jobs are getting harder, as this draft marks the third time in four years where the Bolts traded their first-round pick at the trade deadline, and they also shipped 2019 first-rounder Nolan Foote to New Jersey for Blake Coleman. If the Lightning sticks with the current draft order, it will mark the first time in the franchise's 29-year history that they won't be drafting in any of the first two rounds. The good news is that current GM Julien BrisBois continued the Bolts' trend of stockpiling picks outside of Round 1, and since 2016, Tampa drafted 17 prospects within first three rounds.

Draft Needs

The left side of Tampa's defense below the NHL level is beyond thin. Although they were able to make something out of 25-year-old Daniel Walcott and Czech rearguard Radim Salda appears ready for North America, the Bolts should be expected to use at least two of their picks to take lefty blueliners. The expected graduation of Boris Katchouk leaves a hole on left wing as well.

Realistic Targets

Alexi Malinen; LHD; Cole Jordan, LHD, Peter Reynolds, C/W; Nolan Allen, LHD; Vasily Machulin, LHD; Artyom Grushnikov, LHD

Tampa Bay Lightning

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Radim Salda

Daniel Walcott

Quinn Schmiemann

Goalies

Hugo Alnefelt

Amir Miftakhov

Magnus Chrona

Spencer Martin

Ty Taylor

Right Defense

Cal Foote

Nick Perbix

Eamon Powell

Max Crozier

Alex Green

Dmitri Semykin

Jack Williams

Left Wings

Boris Katchouk

Cole Koepke

Simon Ryfors

McKade Webster

Mikhail Shalagin

Jaydon Dureau

Centers

Alex Barre-Boulet

Otto Somppi

Gabriel Fortier

Antoine Morand

Jack Finley

Cole Guttman

Gage Goncalves

Odeen Tufto

Jimmy Huntington

Alexei Lipanov

Right Wings

Taylor Raddysh

Sammy Walker

Maxim Cajkovic

Maxim Groshev

Declan McDonnell

Nick Capone

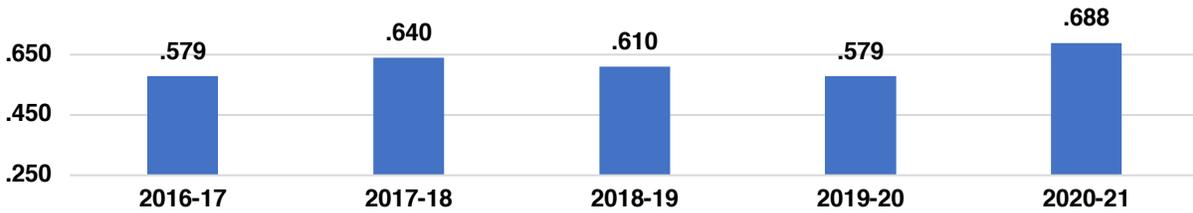
Toronto Maple Leafs

GM: Kyle Dubas (5/11/18)

Scouting Dir.: John Lilley

Record: 35-14-7, 77 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
	57			153	185	

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
45	16	29	2	1	34	11

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
12	11	18	4

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Rodion Amirov, C/W (15 th overall)
2019	Traded for Jake Muzzin
2018	Rasmus Sandin, LHD (29 th overall)
2017	Tim Liljegren, LHD (17 th overall)
2016	Auston Matthews, C (1 st overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

Although a fifth consecutive playoff ouster in Round 1 usually triggers profound changes at the operations and coaching levels, it looks like general manager Kyle Dubas and head coach Sheldon Keefe will stay put for another year. How that impacts this particular draft should be irrelevant, as the Leafs have only three picks with only one selection in the top 150. No team since 2016 has drafted more prospects from the middle and late rounds than the Maple Leafs but none have developed into NHL regulars. Having an impressive core of previous top-10 picks such as Auston Matthews, Mitch Marner, William Nylander, and Morgan Rielly has kept the team competitive during the regular season, but Toronto's draft performance beyond the lottery sweet spot is between marginal and poor. Last year's haul that was highlighted by slick Russian forward Rodion Amirov looks impressive on paper but has been criticized for lacking size and strength.

Draft Needs

The Leafs have plenty of bodies at every position on their prospect depth chart but there is an imbalance in quality and upside. Additionally, the AHL affiliate has been mediocre the last two seasons after dominating the circuit for nearly a decade. Issues with toughness or size can't be addressed with only three picks, so it's probably best that Dubas swings for the fences and waits until next year.

Realistic Targets

Cole Jordan, LHD, Artyom Grushnikov, LHD; Tyler Boucher, RW; Matthew Knies, LW; Liam Gilmartin, RW; Jack Bar, RHD

Toronto Maple Leafs

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Rasmus Sandin

Teemu Kivihalme

Mikko Kokkonen

Filip Kral

Ryan O'Connell

Kristian Rubins

J.D. Greenway

William Villeneuve

Goalies

Ian Scott

Joseph Woll

Artur Akhtyamov

Erik Kallgren

Right Defense

Tim Liljegren

Mac Hollowell

Topi Niemela

Axel Rindell

Mike Koster

Kalle Loponen

Eemeli Rasanen

John Fusco

Left Wings

Nick Robertson

Pontus Holmberg

Vladislav Kara

Vladimir Bobylev

Nikolai Chebykin

Centers

Adam Brooks

Nick Abruzzese

Roni Hirvonen

Mikhail Abramov

Dmitry Ovchinnikov

Semtyon Der-Arguchintsev

Alex Steeves

Wyatt Schingoethe

Ryan Tverberg

Joe Miller

Kirill Semyonov

Right Wings

Rodion Amirov

Joey Anderson

Veeti Miittinen

Semyon Kizimov

Fabrice Herzog

Vancouver Canucks

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Jack Rathbone

Guillaume Brisbois

Joni Jurmo

Jacob Prescott

Toni Utunen

Josh Teves

Goalies

Mike DiPietro

Arturs Silovs

Jake Kielly

Matthew Thiessen

Right Defense

Brogan Rafferty

Viktor Persson

Jett Woo

Jalen Chatfield

Mitch Eliot

Left Wings

Jonah Gadjovich

Ethan Keppen

Pietrus Palmu

Aidan McDonough

Centers

Linus Karlsson

Arvid Costmar

Carson Focht

Dmitry Zlodeyev

Jackson Kunz

Right Wings

Vasily Podkolzin

Kole Lind

Lukas Jasek

Will Lockwood

Jack Malone

Artyom Manukyan

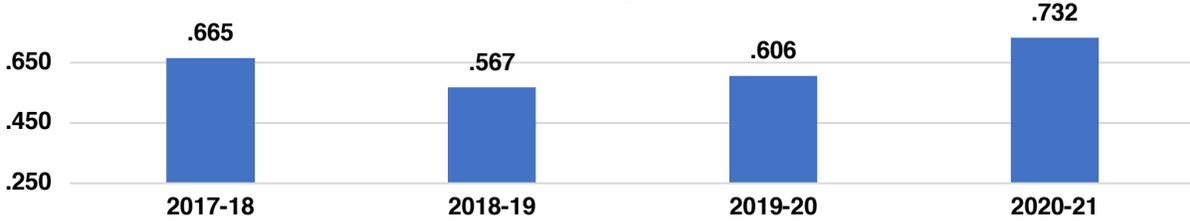
Vegas Golden Knights

GM: Kelly McCrimmon (5/2/19)

Scouting Dir.: Scott Luce

Record: 40-14-2, 42 points

Points Percentage (2018-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
30	36 (NJ)		114 (WIN)	155 (CAR)	190	222

Draft picks (2017-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
34	14	20	4	1	31	3

Draft picks by position (2017-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
16	3	10	5

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Brendan Brisson, C (29 th overall)
2019	Peyton Krebs, C (17 th overall)
2018	Traded for Tomas Tatar
2017	Cody Glass, C (6 th overall)
2017	Nick Suzuki, C (13 th overall)
2017	Erik Brannstrom, LHD (15 th overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

The Golden Knights are only four years old, but they've already drafted and developed four NHL regulars from their inaugural class of 2017, although only one -- defenseman Nic Hague -- remains with the organization. Still, they've quietly assembled a strong farm system thanks to shrewd draft-day decisions, and all while icing a powerhouse Stanley Cup contender. Grabbing quality picks helped make the likes of former first-round picks Erik Brannstrom and Nick Suzuki expendable, and it's hard to complain when their respective returns were top scorers Mark Stone and Max Pacioretty. Vegas in this draft essentially has two late first-round picks, with one being their own at No. 30 plus an early second-rounder from New Jersey in the Nikita Gusev deal. But it'll be surprising if they use either selection on a center, which they drafted with four of their five first-round picks.

Draft Needs

Saying the Golden Knights are set at center and on defense is an understatement, as over 75 percent of all their picks since 2017 were used on pivots and blueliners. Since this draft isn't particularly deep at center and Vegas' pool is top heavy at wing, there's a strong chance they decide to load up on snipers and finishers, especially since the parent club had issues solving goalies for a third straight postseason.

Realistic Targets

Mackie Samoskevich, RW; Matthew Coronato, RW/C; Tristan Broz, LW; Samu Tuomaala, RW; Sasha Pastujov, RW; Alexander Kisakov, LW

Vegas Golden Knights

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Jimmy Schuldt

Lukas Cormier

Dylan Coghlan

Peter Deliberatore

Leyton Ahac

Zack Hayes

Carl Dahlstrom

Goalies

Logan Thompson

Isaiah Saville

Jesper Vikman

Jiri Patera

Dylan Ferguson

Right Defense

Kaeden Korczak

Connor Corcoran

Brayden Pachal

Noah Ellis

Left Wings

Jake Dugan

Pavel Dorofeyev

Marcus Kallionkieli

Gage Quinney

Centers

Peyton Krebs

Ivan Morozov

Brendan Brisson

Jake Leschyshyn

Ben Jones

Paul Cotter

Jackson Hallum

Reid Duke

Maxim Marushev

Mason Primeau

Nick Campoli

Right Wings

Keegan Kolesar

Lukas Elvenes

Jonas Rondbjerg

Ryder Donovan

Daniil Miromanov

Washington Capitals

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Alexander Alexeyev

Martin Fehervary

Tobias Geisser

Bobby Nardella

Lucas Johansen

Goalies

Vitek Vanecek

Mitchell Gibson

Garin Bjorklund

Zachary Fucale

Right Defense

Martin Has

Benton Maass

Left Wings

Beck Malenstyn

Shane Gersich

Oskar Magnusson

Damien Riat

Maximilian Kammerer

Centers

Connor McMichael

Hendrix Lapierre

Aliaksei Protas

Garrett Pilon

Bear Hughes

Joe Snively

Brian Pinho

Right Wings

Bogdan Trineyev

Axel Jonsson-Fjallby

Brett Leason

Riley Sutter

Kody Clark

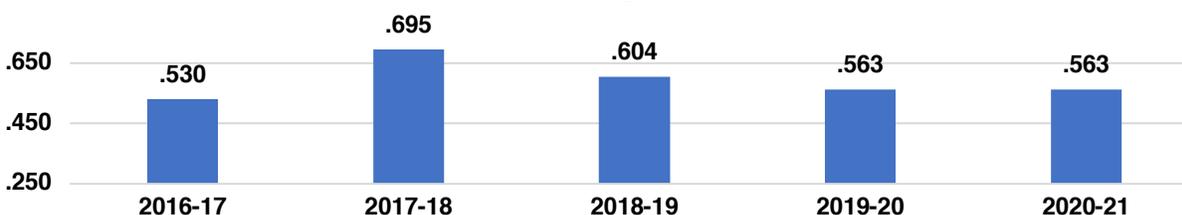
Winnipeg Jets

GM: Kevin Cheveldayoff (6/8/11)

Scouting Dir.: Mark Hillier

Record: 30-23-3, 63 points

Points Percentage (2017-2021)



2021 Draft picks

1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round	5th Round	6th Round	7th Round
18	50	82		146		210

Draft picks (2016-2020)

Total	Rounds 1-3	Rounds 4-7	50+ NHL GP	50+ NHL Pts	First-Year	Overagers
29	12	17	1	1	23	6

Draft picks by position (2016-2020)

Centers	Wings	Defensemen	Goalies
8	4	13	4

1st Round Picks (2016-2020)

2020	Cole Perfetti, C/W (10 th overall)
2019	Ville Heinola, LHD (20 th overall)
2018	Traded for Paul Stastny
2017	Kristian Vesalainen, LW (24 th overall)
2016	Patrik Laine, RW (2 nd overall)
2016	Logan Stanley, LHD (18 th overall)

2021 DRAFT PICKS

Round	Pick	Player
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Draft Trends

Winnipeg's drafts under general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff and Mark Hillier usually lean towards defensemen. In fact, the Jets are one of only a few teams who in the last five years grabbed more blueliners than forwards; a strategy that can be justified when you consider the age and quality of their deadly top two forward lines. As good as goalie Connor Hellebuyck is, however, the defense is leaky, to the point where they finally promoted 2016 first-rounder Logan Stanley to try to adjust the team's tilted ice problem. Each of their last two first-round picks – defenseman Ville Heinola in 2019 and goal-scoring machine Cole Perfetti in 2020 – are highly skilled with the puck but neither is developed enough to be tasked with slowing down a Connor McDavid or posterizing a Carey Price.

Draft Needs

Winnipeg owns picks in each of the first three rounds for the first time since 2017 and it's doubtful the Jets deal them away. They had only four picks in 2020 and are without a fourth and sixth in 2021. Their farm system's center depth is acceptable but it lacks pure playmakers, while the right wing position is incredibly thin with or without Daniel Torgersson being moved to that side.

Realistic Targets

Fabian Lysell, RW; Simon Robertsson, RW; Isak Rosen, C/W; Oskar Olausson, RW

Winnipeg Jets

Prospect Depth Chart

Left Defense

Logan Stanley

Ville Heinola

Sami Niku

Dylan Samberg

Declan Chisholm

Anton Johannesson

Goalies

Mikhail Berdin

Arvid Holm

Jared Moe

Logan Neaton

Cole Kehler

Right Defense

Leon Gawanke

Simon Lundmark

Jonathan Kovacevic

Tyrel Bauer

Luke Green

Nelson Nogier

Left Wings

Cole Perfetti

Kristian Vesalainen

Skyler McKenzie

Joona Luoto

Jeff Malott

Centers

David Gustafsson

Henri Nikkanen

Kristian Reichel

Nathan Smith

Santeri Virtanen

Austin Wong

Harrison Blaisdell

Right Wings

Daniel Torgersson

Pavel Kraskovsky

2021 Mock Draft

Rounds 1 & 2

ROUND 1		
PICK	TEAM	PICK
1	Buffalo	Owen Power, LHD (Michigan, Big-10)
2	Seattle	Matt Beniers, C (Michigan, Big-10)
3	Anaheim	William Eklund, LW (Djugardens, SHL)
4	New Jersey	Luke Hughes, LHD (U.S. U18, NTDP)
5	Columbus	Simon Edvinsson, LHD (Vasteras, Allsvenskan)
6	Detroit	Jesper Wallstedt, G (Lulea, SHL)
7	San Jose	Brandt Clarke, RHD (Barrie, OHL)
8	Los Angeles	Kent Johnson, LW (Michigan, Big-10)
9	Vancouver	Mason McTavish, C/W (Peterborough, OHL)
10	Ottawa	Sebastian Cossa, G (Edmonton, WHL)
11		**Forfeited**
12	Chicago	Dylan Guenther, RW (Edmonton, WHL)
13	Calgary	Fyodor Svechkov, C (SKA-Neva, VHL)
14	Philadelphia	Corson Ceulemans, RHD (Brooks, AJHL)
15	Dallas	Cole Sillinger, C/W (Sioux City, USHL)
16	NY Rangers	Matthew Coronato, C/RW (Chicago, USHL)
17	St. Louis	Nikita Chibrikov, RW (SKA-Neva, VHL)
18	Winnipeg	Oskar Olausson, RW (HV71, SHL)
19	Nashville	Isak Rosen, LW/C (Leksand, SHL)
20	Edmonton	Fabian Lysell, RW (Lulea, SHL)
21	Boston	Simon Robertsson, LW (Skelleftea, SHL)
22	Minnesota	Carson Lambos, LHD (Winnipeg, WHL)
23	Detroit	Francesco Pinelli, C (Kitchener, OHL)
24	Florida	Brennan Othmann, LW (Flint, OHL)
25	Columbus	Prokhor Poltapov, RW (Krasnaya Armiya, MHL)
26	Minnesota	Alexi Heimosalmi, RHD (Assat, SM-Liiga)
27	Carolina	Aatu Raty, C/W (Karpas, SM-Liiga)
28	Colorado	Samu Tuomaala, RW (Karpas U20, SM-Sarja)
29	New Jersey	Alexander Kisakov, LW (Dynamo MSK, MHL)
30	Vegas	Ayrton Martino, LW (Omaha, USHL)
31	Montreal	Scott Morrow, RHD (Fargo, USHL)
32	Columbus	Samuel Helenius, C (JyP, SM-Liiga)

ROUND 2		
PICK	TEAM	PICK
33	Buffalo	William Stromgren, LW (MODO J20, Nationell)
34	Anaheim	Chaz Lucius, C (U.S. U18, NTDP)
35	Seattle	Ville Koivunen, LW (Karpas U20, SM-Sarja)
36	Vegas	Sasha Pastujov, RW (U.S. U18, NTDP)
37	Arizona	Anton Olsson, LHD (Malmo, SHL)
38	Detroit	Zachary Bolduc, C/LW (Rimouski, QMJHL)
39	Ottawa	Zachary Dean, C/W (Gatineau, QMJHL)
40	Nashville	Samu Salminen, C (Jokerit U20, SM-Sarja)
41	Vancouver	Cole Jordan, LHD (Moose Jaw, WHL)
42	Ottawa	Xavier Bourgault, C/W (Shawinigan, QMJHL)
43	Arizona	Benjamin Gaudreau, G (Sarnia, OHL)
44	Chicago	Zachary L'Heureux, LW (Halifax, QMJHL)
45	Calgary	Wyatt Johnston, C/W (Windsor, OHL)
46	Philadelphia	Aidan Hreschuk, LHD (U.S. U18, NTDP)
47	Dallas	Mackie Samoskevich, RW (Chicago, USHL)
48	Detroit	Olen Zellweger, LHD (Everett, WHL)
49	Los Angeles	Evan Nause, LHD (Quebec, QMJHL)
50	Winnipeg	Daniil Chayka, LHD (Guelph, OHL)
51	Nashville	Sean Behrens, LHD (U.S. U18, NTDP)
52	NY Islanders	Tyler Boucher, RW (U.S. U18, NTDP)
53	Buffalo	Alexi Kosolov, G (Dinamo Minsk, KHL)
54	Minnesota	Tristan Broz, LW (Fargo, USHL)
55	Washington	Logan Stankoven, C (Kamloops, WHL)
56	Florida	Stanislav Svozil, LHD (Brno, Extraliga)
57	Toronto	Colton Dach, C/LW (Saskatoon, WHL)
58	Pittsburgh	Jack Peart, LHD (Fargo, USHL)
59	Carolina	Ryder Korczak, C (Moose Jaw, WHL)
60	Arizona	Artyom Grushnikov, LHD (Hamilton, OHL)
61	Colorado	Roman Schmidt, RHD (U.S. U18, NTDP)
62	Chicago	Red Savage, C (U.S. U18, NTDP)
63	Montreal	Connor Roulette, LW (Seattle, WHL)
64	Montreal	Ryan Ufko, RHD (Chicago, USHL)

Preliminary 2022 NHL Draft Top-32

1	Shane Wright, C (Kingston, OHL)
2	Danila Yurov, C/W (Stalnye Lisy, MHL)
3	Juraj Slafkovsky, LW (TPS U20, SM-Sarja)
4	Matt Savoie, C (Winnipeg, WHL)
5	Brad Lambert, RW (JyP, SM-Liiga)
6	Logan Cooley, C (U.S. U18, NTDP)
7	Joakim Kemell, RW (JyP U20, SM-Sarja)
8	Simon Nemec, RHD (Nitra, Tipos Extraliga)
9	Jack Hughes, C (U.S. U18, NTDP)
10	Tristan Luneau, RHD (Gatineau, QMJHL)
11	Ivan Mirsoshnichenko, LW (Omskie Yastreby, MHL)
12	David Jiricek, RHD (Plzen, Extraliga)
13	Daniil Ivanov, LHD (Krylia Sovetov)
14	Keaton Dowhaniuk, LHD (Prince George, WHL)
15	Gabriel Kangas, LW (Vasteras, Allsvenskan)
16	Connor Geekie, C (Winnipeg, WHL)
17	Viktor Neuchev, LW (Avto, MHL)
18	Rutger McGroarty, LW (U.S. U18, NTDP)
19	Noah Ostlund, C (Djugardens J20, Nationell)
20	Vladimir Grundinin, LHD (Krasnaya Armiya, MHL)
21	Frank Nazar, RW (U.S. U18, NTDP)
22	Ludvig Persson, RW (Frolunda J20, Nationell)
23	Otto Salin, RHD (HIFK U20, SM-Sarja)
24	Ilya Kvochko, C (Stalnye Lisy, MHL)
25	Elias Salomonsson, RHD (Skelleftea J20, Nationell)
26	Antonin Verrault, LW (Gatineau, QMJHL)
27	David Moravec, RHD (Mlada Boleslav U20, ELJ)
28	Danny Zhilkin, C (Guelph, OHL)
29	Vladimir Grundinin, LHD (Krasnaya Armiya, MHL)
30	Seamus Casey, RHD (U.S. U18, NTDP)
31	Liam Arnsby, C (North Bay, OHL)
32	Leon Matthiasson, LHD (Malmo J20, Nationell)

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Special thanks to the following for contributing to this report:
Danny McGillicuddy, Jon Litterine, Eddy Jones, Ross Martin, John Gove

Photo Credits: AJHL, OHL, QMJHL, WHL, USA Hockey, USHL, SHL, Allsvenskan, Nationell, SM-Liiga, SM-Sarja, Mestis, KHL, VHL, MHL, Extraliga, Chance Liga, U. of Michigan, Belarus Extraliga, Shattuck-St. Mary's, Grand Rapids High School