

# PRO HOCKEY DRAFTOLOGY 2025

A collective presentation of:  
SPORTSOLOGY, NHL DRAFT BUZZ,  
FANTASYDRAFTHELP.COM, THE FDH  
LOUNGE & AFTER FURTHER REVIEW  
WITH JONES under the banner of THE  
21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY MEDIA ALLIANCE

June 24, 2025

RUSS COHEN/RICK MORRIS/  
JASON JONES

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## PRO HOCKEY DRAFTOLOGY 2025 Overview

Here we go! Some of the most creative new media sports entities in existence today have joined forces to bring you the ultimate guide to the 2024 NHL Entry Draft and offseason. In these pages, you'll read in-depth assessments of top young stars, gain an insight into the thought process of some of them and gain a look at draft aspects within the sport's developmental arena. Additionally, we look at the state of the NHL – including the upcoming free agent class.

As an added bonus, you can get an early jump on next year's hockey pool with a look at how players fared according to the "Ultimate Quantitative Baseline" statistic in 2024-25. Enjoy your reading and remember the forces who came together for this publication: Sportsology, The FDH Lounge and FantasyDrafthelp.com.

## FantasyDrafthelp.com/hockey

### THE TOP 75 PLAYERS IN PRO BASKETBALL HISTORY

The NBA's 75th Anniversary has prompted a wave of Best-Of lists, but few with the substance to reinforce the selections. Authors Rick Morris, Ben Chew and Russ Cohen came together to create a list of the top 75 pro basketball players ever, with evidence to justify the placement of each -- as well as biographical details, comparisons of various legends, little-known-but-interesting tidbits, what-if scenarios and much more. Additionally, the book includes our year-by-year ranking of the top players in pro basketball and rosters for hypothetical "Olympic Dream Teams" had they existed prior to 1992. This is a book that is crafted for sports fans who are interested in learning more about the rich history of pro basketball.

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## Top 32 Overall Player Rankings

By Russ Cohen/Sporstology

- 1 James Hagens – C – Boston College
- 2 Matthew Schaefer – D – Erie Otters
- 3 Porter Martone – RW – Brampton Steelheads
- 4 Michael Misa – C/LW – Saginaw Spirit
- 5 Anton Frondell – C – Djurgårdens J20
- 6 Caleb Desnoyers – C – Moncton Wildcats
- 7 Victor Eklund – LW – Djurgårdens J20
- 8 Logan Hensler – D – Wisconsin
- 9 Jake O'Brien – C – Brantford Bulldogs
- 10 Jackson Smith – D – Tri-City Americans
- 11 Lynden Lakovic – LW – Moose Jaw
- 12 Brady Martin – C – Sault Ste. Marie
- 13 Malcolm Spence – LW – Erie Otters
- 14 Roger McQueen – C – Brandon Wheat Kings
- 15 Kashawn Aitcheson – D – Barrie Colts
- 16 Radim Mrtka – D – Seattle Thunderbirds
- 17 Justin Carboneau – RW – Blainville-Broisbriand
- 18 Carter Bear – C/W – Everett Silvertips
- 19 William Moore – C – NTDP
- 20 Sascha Boumedienne – D – Boston University
- 21 Braeden Cootes – C – Seattle Thunder
- 22 Ben Kevan – RW – Des Moines/NTDP
- 23 Jakob Ihs-Wozniak – LW – J20 Nationell
- 24 Jack Murtagh – C/LW – NTDP
- 25 Joshua Ravensbergen – G – Prince George
- 26 Cole Reschny – C – Victoria Royals
- 27 Cameron Schmidt – RW – Vancouver Giants
- 28 Henry Brzustewicz – D – London Knights
- 29 Blake Fiddler – D – Edmonton Oil Kings
- 30 Cameron Reid – D – Kitchener Rangers
- 31 Cullen Potter – LW/C – Arizona State University
- 32 Cole McKinney – C – NTDP

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SAVIOR** – available through Amazon

## FDH Mock Draft

- |    |              |  |
|----|--------------|--|
| 1  | NY Islanders | Matthew Schaefer - D - Erie Otters               |
| 2  | San Jose     | Michael Misa - C/LW - Saginaw Spirit             |
| 3  | Chicago      | Anton Frondell - C - Djurgårdens J20             |
| 4  | Utah         | Caleb Desnoyers - C - Moncton Wildcats           |
| 5  | Nashville    | James Hagens - C - Boston College                |
| 6  | Philadelphia | Jake O'Brien - C - Brantford Bulldogs            |
| 7  | Boston       | Porter Martone - RW - Brampton Steelheads        |
| 8  | Seattle      | Radim Mrtka - D - Seattle Thunderbirds           |
| 9  | Buffalo      | Victor Eklund - LW - Djurgårdens J20             |
| 10 | Anaheim      | Brady Martin - C - Sault Ste. Marie              |
| 11 | Pittsburgh   | Roger McQueen - C - Brandon Wheat Kings          |
| 12 | NY Rangers   | Jackson Smith - D - Tri-City Americans           |
| 13 | Detroit      | Carter Bear - C/W - Everett Silvertips           |
| 14 | Columbus     | Justin Carboneau - RW - Blainville-Broisbriand   |
| 15 | Vancouver    | Braeden Cootes - C - Seattle Thunder             |
| 16 | Montreal     | Lynden Lakovic - LW - Moose Jaw                  |
| 17 | Montreal     | Cameron Reid - D - Kitchener Rangers             |
| 18 | Calgary      | Cole Reschny - C - Victoria Royals               |
| 19 | St. Louis    | Malcolm Spence - LW - Erie Otters                |
| 20 | Columbus     | Joshua Ravensbergen - G - Prince George          |
| 21 | Ottawa       | Cullen Potter - LW/C - Arizona State University  |
| 22 | Philadelphia | Logan Hensler - D - Wisconsin                    |
| 23 | Nashville    | Kashawn Aitcheson - D - Barrie Colts             |
| 24 | Los Angeles  | William Moore - C - NTDP                         |
| 25 | Chicago      | Ben Kevan - RW - Des Moines/NTDP                 |
| 26 | Nashville    | Cameron Schmidt - RW - Vancouver Giants          |
| 27 | Washington   | Daniil Prokhorov - RW - Dynamo St. Petersburg Jr |
| 28 | Winnipeg     | Bill Zonnon - RW - Rouyn-Noranda                 |
| 29 | Carolina     | Jakob Ihs-Wozniak - LW - J20 Nationell           |
| 30 | San Jose     | Henry Brzustewicz - D - London Knights           |
| 31 | Philadelphia | Jack Ivankovic - G - Brampton                    |
| 32 | Calgary      | Jack Murtagh - C/LW - NTDP                       |

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<http://thefdhounge.blogspot.com/2021/02/the-fdh-lounge-top-10-songs-by-decade.html>

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## A Center Debate: Brady Martin vs. Jake O'Brien

By Russ Cohen/Sportsology

I feel at a certain point in the draft; this will be a discussion at draft headquarters. I think Jake O'Brien will be the first player named and then someone will bring up Brady Martin, who has been rising for weeks now. Here's my take on this center battle:

Jake O'Brien – I feel like he's a high floor guy. He has a lot of NHL certainty. According to InStat, 4:56 power play time is concerning because it might have inflated his point total. 1:45 on PK great. 62% shots on goal. Is that sustainable? 46% face-offs are ok, but should improve. He draws penalties. 40% d-zone starts great. Tricky escapability. Good vision and excellent passing. Short skating stride but has ok speed. Good edges. Needs to get stronger.

Brady Martin – He's a few inches shorter than O'Brien but much tougher. That's part of the reason he's rising. He's averaging 2.8 hits per game and that's higher than most in this draft. I did notice his smooth one-timer. He can pick corners. According to InStat, he has 28% d-zone starts. He plays on the PP and PK. He's a good skater, but only slightly better than it was a year ago. He needs to work on it.

Both are two-way players. O'Brien might be better in that category. Martin's physicality is something you can't ignore. Does it come down to a team's philosophy? I think so. My ranking tells you my opinion, but Martin is two inches shorter. I think that matters if O'Brien gets much stronger. If he does, that, besides the height, will give him the ability to score the same way that he does currently.

I think that it's close, but I still think most teams would take O'Brien. However, if there is a team looking for increased physicality, they'll get that in Martin, in 3-4 years. Neither player has a fast track to the NHL – most don't.

Buium has a chance to be the best defenseman in this draft class. He will be ranked in the Top 3 and the team that gets him will be thrilled to add him to their prospect pool.

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## Links To Top Prospect Videos

Here are links to some of the best players of the '25 Draft in action.  
Caleb Desnoyers [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hw8-\\_i3IFy8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hw8-_i3IFy8)  
Victor Eklund <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hx41Je8mV4M>  
Anton Frondell <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4KKNT00kho>  
James Hagens [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p\\_Mq2d\\_vDlo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_Mq2d_vDlo)  
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Lynden Lakovic <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OBM6xOVjEo>  
Brady Martin <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bjb5n4Snm6M>  
Porter Martone <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlzcfKvtxMU>  
Michael Misa <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vyRRRZvK8uQ>  
Jake O'Brien <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GG8gQsXglqs>  
Matthew Schaefer [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDKpmlPpM\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDKpmlPpM_s)  
Jackson Smith <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nE5oZ5UXr-U>

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We publish a series of guides such as this through the year as a partnership between Sportsology, The FDH Lounge, FantasyDrafthelp.com and other entities under the banner of The 21st Century Media Alliance. Fantasy Racing (mid-February), Fantasy Baseball (mid-March), NFL Draft (mid-April), NHL Entry Draft (mid-June), NBA Draft (mid-June), Fantasy Football (mid-July), Fantasy Hockey (mid-September), Fantasy Hoops (mid-October).

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## Black Draft Tracking Worksheet

1 NY Islanders  
2 San Jose  
3 Chicago  
4 Utah  
5 Nashville  
6 Philadelphia  
7 Boston  
8 Seattle  
9 Buffalo  
10 Anaheim  
11 Pittsburgh  
12 NY Rangers  
13 Detroit  
14 Columbus  
15 Vancouver  
16 Montreal  
17 Montreal  
18 Calgary  
19 St. Louis  
20 Columbus  
21 Ottawa  
22 Philadelphia  
23 Nashville  
24 Los Angeles  
25 Chicago  
26 Nashville  
27 Washington  
28 Winnipeg  
29 Carolina  
30 San Jose  
31 Philadelphia  
32 Calgary

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What initially began as a small coalition of like-minded growing New Media organizations has flourished into a well-rounded creative juggernaut of more than two dozen entities that transcends the notion of traditional labeling. The 21st Century Media Alliance is an umbrella of cooperative companies and professionals that is pursuing many synergistic opportunities and projects. Possessed of varying yet often complementary skill sets, Alliance members are bound by their core principles of inventiveness, communication, pragmatism and dedication to their efforts and those of the larger group. In a great many creative areas, if you're looking to have a job performed the right way, chances are that you need look no further than The 21st Century Media Alliance.

## A Center Debate: Anton Frondell vs. Caleb Desnoyers

By Russ Cohen/Sportsology

We are having another center debate. This one is Anton Frondell vs. Caleb Desnoyers. The difference with this one, my second installment, is I asked The Prospect Don to talk about Desnoyers and I will argue for Frondell.

Frondell had to overcome injury this season. Nothing is going to linger and he proved himself fit at the NHL Combine by excelling at the Wingate test, which was also impressive. He's a physical specimen measuring in at just over 6-1 and now 204 pounds.

While playing for Djurgårdens in HockeyAllsvenskan, he had 11 goals and 14 assists in 29 games. Frondell added seven points in 16 games. Frondell did that against men but on the wing. Next year he will play in the SHL.

One number that jumps out from InStat is Frondell hit the net, 61% of the time. Desnoyers hit it at 55%, both are impressive. The big Swede hammers guys in corners. He gets to loose pucks first and he has decent defensive habits that still need work at times. His wrist shot is like a bullet and is the best in the draft.

Here is the story with Desnoyers:

Caleb Desnoyers (C, Moncton Wildcats — QMJHL)

6'2", 172 lbs | 2006 DOB

Desnoyers is a skilled, two-way center with a strong offensive awareness and raw potential that could turn him into a star producer. I also think Desnoyers is one of the best defensive forwards in the entire class. As one of the only true centers at the top of this class, I think Desnoyers is bound to be one of the first Centers of the board in June. After posting 56 points in 60 games during the 2022–23 season, he exploded this year with 35 goals, 49 assists and 84 points in just 56 games. He showcased high-end offensive instincts, quick hands and a slick toe drag release. He's a creative puck-handler who can dangle through pressure and owns a sneaky-good shot. His hips give him the ability to change direction effortlessly, and while he's already a good skater, there's still another gear to unlock. He has the frame, ability to compete and hockey sense that NHL teams love.

Though the QMJHL leans offense-heavy, Desnoyers has shown a real willingness to track back and play a responsible two-way game. His transition defense needs polish — mostly due to stride mechanics — but the effort is there. He gutted out the postseason and Memorial Cup run playing with two injured wrists, something he revealed at the NHL Combine.

Desnoyers could go as high as #2 overall, and there's been a whisper about interest from the Flyers at #6 where his brother Elliot was drafted. Personally, I think he goes #3 to Chicago and becomes a perfect 1–2 punch with Connor Bedard. He's got the production, the pedigree, and the personality, winning both the Paul Dumont Trophy (Best Personality) and Guy Lafleur Trophy (Playoff MVP) in the QMJHL this season.

Both players are impressive. Both are about equal on face-offs. You can't compare the leagues because the "Q" has its issues. But that's not the players' fault. Desnoyers excelled and that's what you want. Desnoyers can operate with pressure on him — that's huge!

In the end, I think it's a coin flip. I think it's a choice of your two favorite flavors of ice cream, and you have to choose one. You know my rankings but that doesn't mean that's how it will play out on draft day or even in the future. This one is so close and the reason it's hard is that they have some similar traits and then they shine differently as well. I think Frondell will go a slot higher but I could be wrong. The Flyers, for example, covet both players. If you're a team that can draft both, you have a tough choice ahead of you.

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## Top 10 For The Next 10

The FDH Top 10 for the Next 10 is a list attempting to identify the best players in the league -- not necessarily in a pure fantasy sense -- over the course of the entire next decade. It's not a pure 25-and-under draft, but it skews heavily in that direction because most big-time stars are past their primes in their late 30s. Players who are both very young and very skilled already have the biggest edges.

- 1 Connor McDavid
- 2 Cale Makar
- 3 Jack Hughes
- 4 Conor Bedard
- 5 Macklin Celebrini
- 6 Quinn Hughes
- 7 Leon Draisaitl
- 8 Auston Matthews
- 9 Mitch Marner
- 10 Adam Fox

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**hockey,**  
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**wrestling,**  
**music, it**  
**matters**  
**not:**  
**nobody,**  
**but**  
**nobody,**  
**brings it**  
**stronger!**

Evan Bouchard  
Nathan MacKinnon  
David Pastrnak  
Mikko Rantanen  
Jason Robertson

**The FDH Lounge:**  
**Nothing is Off-topic.**  
**Nothing.**

## Myah Master

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## 2025-26 FDH All-Star Rosters By Division

### Atlantic Division

LW	Matthew Tkachuk	LW
LW	Brandon Hagel	LW
LW	Brady Tkachuk	LW
LW	Lucas Raymond	LW
C	Auston Matthews	C
C	Sam Reinhart	C
C	Brayden Point	C
C	William Nylander	C
RW	Nikita Kucherov	RW
RW	David Pastrnak	RW
RW	Mitch Marner	RW
RW	Alex DeBrincat	RW
D	Victor Hedman	D
D	Morgan Rielly	D
D	Rasmus Dahlin	D
D	Charlie McAvoy	D
G	Sergei Bobrovsky	G
G	Jeremy Swayman	G

### Metropolitan Division

LW	Artemi Panarin	LW
LW	Jake Guentzel	LW
LW	Chris Kreider	LW
LW	Alex Ovechkin	LW
C	Sidney Crosby	C
C	Sebastian Aho	C
C	Mathew Barzal	C
C	Vincent Trocheck	C
RW	Jesper Bratt	RW
RW	Bryan Rust	RW
RW	Kyle Palmieri	RW
RW	Owen Tippett	RW
D	Adam Fox	D
D	Noah Dobson	D
D	Zach Werenski	D
D	Erik Karlsson	D
G	Igor Shesterkin	G
G	Pyotr Kochetkov	G

### Central Division

Kirill Kaprizov
Jason Robertson
Matt Boldy
Roope Hintz
Nathan MacKinnon
Filip Forsberg
Robert Thomas
Clayton Keller
Mikko Rantanen
Gustav Nyquist
Valeri Nichushkin
Ryan Hartman
Cale Makar
Roman Josi
Josh Morrissey
Miro Heiskanen
Connor Hellebuyck
Jake Oettinger

### Pacific Division

Zach Hyman
Adrian Kempe
Kevin Fiala
Trevor Moore
Connor McDavid
Leon Draisaitl
J.T. Miller
Elias Pettersson
Brock Boeser
Conor Garland
Mark Stone
Anthony Mantha
Quinn Hughes
Evan Bouchard
MacKenzie Weegar
Drew Doughty
Thatcher Demko
Stuart Skinner

## Team Needs

Anaheim: LW, D, C, G, RW  
Boston: LW, C, RW, G  
Buffalo: G, LW  
Calgary: RW, LW, C, D  
Carolina: LW, RW, G  
Chicago: G, RW, D, LW  
Colorado: RW  
Columbus: G, LW, C, RW  
Dallas: RW  
Detroit: C, G, LW, RW, D  
Edmonton: LW, RW, G  
Florida: RW, LW, G  
Los Angeles: RW, D  
Minnesota: D, RW, C  
Montreal: D, LW, C, G  
Nashville: RW, LW, D, G  
New Jersey: RW, LW  
New York Islanders: RW, LW, C  
New York Rangers: RW  
Ottawa: C, RW  
Philadelphia: G, LW, D, RW, C  
Pittsburgh: G, LW, RW  
San Jose: G, D, RW, LW  
Seattle: RW, LW, G  
St. Louis: RW, LW  
Tampa Bay: LW, RW, D  
Toronto: LW, D  
Utah: LW, RW, D, G  
Vancouver: C, LW  
Vegas: LW, RW  
Washington: RW  
Winnipeg: RW

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## The FDH Lounge Top 32 Players In The NHL

NOTE: These players are ranked based not merely on how they have produced this year, but also the past year or two. These are not fantasy rankings, but are based on overall play. Numbers in parentheses indicate where the players ranked on our 2021 rankings, with the ones who fell out of those rankings listed at the bottom. We normally separate players into separate tiers, but this year, they are all on the same tier.

### TOP TIER

- 1 Connor McDavid (1)
- 2 Nikita Kucherov (3)
- 3 Leon Draisaitl (5)
- 4 Nathan MacKinnon (2)
- 5 Cole Makar (9)
- 6 David Pastrnak (4)
- 7 Mikko Rantanen (8)
- 8 Auston Matthews (6)
- 9 Quinn Hughes (10)

### SECOND TIER

- 10 Jack Eichel (13)
- 11 Artemi Panarin (7)
- 12 Kirill Kaprizov (16)
- 13 Matthew Tkachuk (15)
- 14 Sam Reinhart (12)
- 15 Jack Hughes (23)
- 16 Adam Fox (19)
- 17 William Nylander (22)
- 18 Mitch Marner (26)
- 19 Jason Robertson (17)
- 20 Zach Werenski (NA)
- 21 Brandon Hagel (NA)
- 22 Rasmus Dahlin (NA)
- 23 Evan Bouchard (25)
- 24 Kyle Connor (NA)
- 25 Brayden Point (18)
- 26 Jake Guentzel (NA)
- 27 Aleksander Barkov (24)
- 28 Tage Thompson (NA)
- 29 Andrei Vasilevskiy (NA)
- 30 Brad Marchant (NA)
- 31 Victor Hedman (31)
- 32 Alex Ovechkin (NA)

- JT Miller (11)  
Elias Pettersson (14)  
Sebastian Aho (20)  
Filip Forsberg (21)  
Igor Shesterkin (27)  
Sergei Bobrovsky (28)  
Roman Josi (29)  
Connor Bedard (30)  
Sidney Crosby (32)

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# 2025-26 NHL Predictions

## EASTERN CONFERENCE

### ATLANTIC DIVISION

- X-Florida 105  
Y-Tampa Bay 101  
Y-Toronto 100  
y-Detroit 95  
Ottawa 93  
Montreal 87  
Buffalo 86  
Boston 66

### METRO DIVISION

- X-New Jersey 103  
Y-Carolina 102  
Y-Washington 99  
y-New York Rangers 98  
Columbus 82

### NY Islanders 78

- Philadelphia 69  
Pittsburgh 68

## WESTERN CONFERENCE

### CENTRAL DIVISION

- X-Dallas 111  
Y-Colorado 108  
Y-Winnipeg 106  
y-Minnesota 96  
Nashville 90  
St. Louis 86  
Utah 80  
Chicago 64  
PACIFIC DIVISION  
X-Vegas 107  
Y-Edmonton 104  
Y-Calgary 98  
y-Los Angeles 97  
Vancouver 85  
Seattle 83  
Anaheim 64  
San Jose 56

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## CONFERENCE QUARTERFINALS

- Florida over Detroit in 5  
Tampa Bay over Toronto in 6  
New Jersey over New York Rangers in 7  
Carolina over Washington in 7  
Dallas over Minnesota in 6  
Colorado over Winnipeg in 7  
Vegas over Calgary in 6  
Los Angeles over Edmonton in 6

## CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS

- Tampa Bay over Florida in 7  
New Jersey over Calgary in 6  
Dallas over Colorado in 6  
Vegas over Los Angeles in 6

## CONFERENCE FINALS

- Tampa Bay over New Jersey in 6  
Dallas over Vegas in 7

## STANLEY CUP FINAL

- Dallas over Tampa Bay in 7

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## Joshua Ravensbergen Was Courted by A Lot of Teams

By Russ Cohen/Sportsology

Joshua Ravensbergen is a toolsy 6'5" backstop who is the top goalie on most people's lists. There are few who aren't interested in him, but he only spoke to 26 teams at the NHL Combine because they know he's not getting out of the first round of the 2025 NHL Draft. He should be the one first-round goaltender this year. If you look at his stats, he had an up-and-down season that he acknowledged. "A little bit, like, I felt like a record helps having a good team in front of you, but I feel like I was learning things, because I have to grow and some aspects of my game. But overall, I did feel like I moved out a lot better, so I can't be too upset with that," said Ravensbergen.

Ravensbergen then reflected upon what he improved this season. "The biggest thing I improved on was just slowly figuring out my not being as aggressive and kind of trusting to use my size and skating a little more."

Good goalies talk about their weaknesses, and I asked him about his: when guys are trying to go far-side high on the far-side corner. His response was, "That wasn't so good. We have areas to improve, but I think for me, that's going to be a big focus this summer."

He spoke with the San Jose Sharks and the Philadelphia Flyers. I bring those teams up because they have multiple first-round picks and that's why he's probably going in the first round. It's a no-brainer for either organization.

His biggest improvement this season was notable.

Skating is important for goalies and they rarely get credit for it. He works on it before every practice. "Yeah, just before practice, I do a little bit of edge work. Getting to spots. Working on explosiveness and being square."

He sees through traffic like a pro and does protect the post on both sides. He will make an aggressive glove save and that's fine with me.

He'll be back in Prince George next season. He's 19 in November so there's plenty of runway with him. I would let him go to the AHL for 1-2 seasons when he's eligible. That's always the best way to do it.

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The NBA's 75th Anniversary has prompted a wave of Best-Of lists, but few with the substance to reinforce the selections. Authors Rick Morris, Ben Chew and Russ Cohen came together to create a list of the top 75 pro basketball players ever, with evidence to justify the placement of each -- as well as biographical details, comparisons of various legends, little-known-but-interesting tidbits, what-if scenarios and much more. Additionally, the book includes our year-by-year ranking of the top players in pro basketball and rosters for hypothetical "Olympic Dream Teams" had they existed prior to 1992. This is a book that is crafted for sports fans who are interested in learning more about the rich history of pro basketball. Available on Amazon.com

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## The Championship Gap Among Players In Their Prime Is Ridiculous

By Rick Morris/The FDH Lounge

Marcel Dionne is commonly regarded as the greatest player in hockey history never to have listed the Stanley Cup. That's in part because the list of his true peers is short. In the NHL, unlike other sports, all-time greatness almost always goes hand-in-hand with championships. There aren't a host of Elgin Baylor/Barry Bonds/Dan Marino players floating around. On the ice, if you're among the best players of all time, there's an overwhelming chance that your name is etched on the Stanley Cup.

But the generation of players now in their prime threatens to upend the foundational plank of hockey history. With their second straight near-miss on the game's biggest stage, Connor McDavid (probably now Top 10 all-time) and Leon Draisaitl (probably now Top 25 all-time) are the most obvious examples. However, they're not the only ones.

In taking a conservative sweep of who is likely to be remembered as at least a Top 50 player of all time, Auston Matthews, Mitch Marner and Kirill Kaprizov are all on pace for that. That's five players who could end up as good or better than Dionne by the time their careers are done – as well as a few others that we didn't include yet such as Adam Fox – and may match his championship futility in the end.

From an objective hockey historian standpoint, McDavid missing out would be tragic and with few precedents in major North American sports in terms of his overall greatness. And given that his teammate Draisaitl probably has the best chance of running down the newly crowned King of All Goals Alex Ovechkin – albeit with less than 50% of Ovechkin's tallies to date – it would be a similar shame if he didn't get his moment atop the hockey world as well.

The lessons of hockey history tell us that most, if not all, of these five will get their moments together. With McDavid and Draisaitl both on the Oilers and Matthews and Marner both on the Leafs (at this point in time, anyway), four of these five names would get wiped off the list with only two Stanley Cups being awarded if these players remain with their teams long enough. But if this doesn't happen, then we're living in an unprecedented time of a gap between individual achievement and championship glory.

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## Whither The Yzerplan?

By Rick Morris/The FDH Lounge

Admittedly, the Detroit Red Wings are a pet topic of mine. They are my favorite hockey team, so I'm always immersed in whatever their present status is. Additionally, Steve Yzerman is my all-time favorite athlete in any sport, so I'm even extra-invested in the "Yzerplan."

So how's it going? Well, any fair read is that the results have been mixed, at best, so far.

Now, Stevie Y inherited an absolutely rotten situation in 2019, a failed rebuild from Ken Holland. It was exacerbated by Holland having previously placed such inane and insane emphasis on a then-record 25-year playoff streak that saw the aging core get bounced in the first round repeatedly and pointlessly until it ended in 2016.

Having built up much of what would go on to become a dynasty in Tampa Bay, it seemed that most observers – including yours truly – simply assumed that Yzerman would go on to match his on-ice success in Hockeytown in his front office perch. He may yet, but it seems fair to say that most of us who expected that level of success certainly thought they'd be a bit closer six full years in.

It doesn't help that the NHL seems to run its draft lotteries in a more legitimate fashion than the NBA, where the Dallas Mavericks can gift the league's most prized franchise, the LA Lakers, with their next great superstar in Luka Doncic and "miraculously" cash in their 1.8% chance for the top lottery pick with, well, the top lottery pick. Surely the NHL would have an interest in seeing one of its marquee franchises get back on its feet, but the Wings have actually had poor draft luck relative to their poor records over the past six seasons. Nonetheless, Lucas Raymond, Simon Edvinsson and Mo Seider have franchise-player upside, but that's just a starting point.

Regrettably, Yzerman continued Holland's pattern of overpaying merely functional players, such as Andrew Copp and JT Compher. And blue line depth has remained every bit as elusive as it was in Holland's largely-asleep final few years.

Some help is on the way at Grand Rapids, but the team seems to have goalie prospect Sebastian Cossa on a track to be promoted by about 2030, so who's to say if he's the answer to what has been a revolving door in net?

It's worth remembering that if then-Philadelphia coach John Tortorella hadn't kicked the integrity of the game squarely in the nuts in the 82nd game of the 2023-24 season, Detroit would have ended their playoff drought instead of having that spot gifted to Washington. Albeit, the Wings surely would have been sitting ducks in the first round. Nevertheless, the team regressed in the initial part of this past season before Yzerman appeared to have made the third time the charm with his latest coaching choice Todd McLellan. The feisty new boss lit a fire under his team and it will be interesting to see if that carries over into the 2025-26 season.

It seems unlikely that it won't carry over. However, if it doesn't, and this team regresses again, then the talk that has seemed foolish and premature to this point – that Steve Yzerman could be on the hot seat in Detroit – may yet come to pass. But we're not there yet and continued improvement would bring renewed hope that Yzerman could replicate his Tampa magic in time. Given the immense pain that would be felt from seeing the failure of one of the franchise's greatest icons, every true fan of the Winged Wheel is rooting as hard as possible for this outcome. The Elias Pettersson rumors would go a long way towards getting the job done!

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## 2025 NHL Free Agency Preview

By Rick Morris/The FDH Lounge

There are a lot of big names in NHL free agency this year, but many of them have their best days behind them and will struggle to maintain their present fat salaries. A few such examples: John Tavares, Jamie Benn, Nicklas Backstrom, Brent Burns and Claude Giroux. Patrick Kane would have been on that list, but his salary is no longer fat. Brad Marchant would have been on that list before the Stanley Cup Playoffs, which probably thrust him near the top of the free agency class, notwithstanding his 37 years of age.

Marchant joins Tavares's teammate in the Toronto Core Four, Mitch Marner, at the forefront of this summer – with Marner, at age 28, clearly the Prize of Prizes among those available notwithstanding his shaky playoff resume. Other forwards of note include Brock Boeser, Nikolaj Ehlers, Andrei Kuzmenko, Reilly Smith, Mikael Granlund, Sam Bennett and Jeff Skinner.

The blue line crop contains a number of players who will be coveted to a decent degree, including Dmitry Orlov, Aaron Ekblad, John Klingberg, Ivan Provorov and Ryan Lindgren. Evan Bouchard would be as coveted a free agent as Marner, but he is restricted and almost certainly will be retained by Edmonton. The goalie class has players who are functional at best: Robin Lehner, Ville Husso and Ilya Samsonov.

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## FantasyDrafthelp.com Ultimate Hockey Stat For 2025-26

This is the FantasyDrafthelp.com statistic, the Ultimate Quantitative Baseline, based on the statistical principle of standard deviation from the mean. For defensemen and forwards, the relevant statistics are points, goals, assists, penalty minutes and plus-minus. For goalies, the relevant statistics are wins, shutouts, goals against average and save percentage (with the categories being weighted extra since there is one less). In each category, a spectrum is calculated from the best performance to the worst (on a per-game basis for forwards and defensemen). The numbers in each category are added together to create our statistic. An additional equalizer is injected to apply more points to each player at the positions of scarcer depth. What this stat truly does is to quantify beyond doubt how the stronger and weaker performances in each category add up to the absolute fantasy value for each player. As such, it establishes a baseline for performance that is more comprehensive than anything ever developed. A number over 350 is considered elite and 750 constitutes a perfect score. We have listed below the top rankings at each position for last season as well as the Top 35 overall.

Goalies	UQB	Defensemen	UQB	Forwards	Top 35 Overall	UQB
1T Connor Hellebuyck	750	1 Cale Makar	480	1T Nathan MacKinnon	1T Nathan MacKinnon	750
1T Andrei Vasilevskiy	750	2 Quinn Hughes	418	1T Leon Draisaitl	1T Leon Draisaitl	750
1T Darcy Kuemper	750	3 Zach Werenski	282	1T Connor McDavid	1T Connor McDavid	750
1T Alexandar Georgiev	750	4 Rasmus Dahlin	221	1T Kirill Kaprizov	1T Kirill Kaprizov	750
1T Anthony Stolarz	750	5 Shea Theodore	197	1T Nikita Kucherov	1T Nikita Kucherov	750
6 Filip Gustavsson	387	6T Adam Fox	130	6T Alex Ovechkin	1T Connor Hellebuyck	750
7 Sergei Bobrovsky	311	6T Lane Hutson	130	6T David Pastrňák	1T Andrei Vasilevskiy	750
8 Jake Oettinger	269	6T Victor Hedman	130	8 Mitch Marner	1T Darcy Kuemper	750
9 Mackenzie Blackwood	245	9 Evan Bouchard	114	9 Jack Eichel	1T Alexandar Georgiev	750
10 Logan Thompson	231	10 Michael Kesselring	93	10 Robert Thomas	1T Anthony Stolarz	750
11 Igor Shesterkin	222	11 Jakob Chychrun	91	11 Brady Tkachuk	11T Alex Ovechkin	496
12 Adin Hill	200	12 Josh Morrissey	86	12 Sean Monahan	11T David Pastrňák	496
13 Eric Comrie	187	13 Aaron Ekblad	83	13 Kyle Connor	13 Mitch Marner	489
14 Casey DeSmith	174	14 Thomas Harley	72	14 Mathieu Olivier	14 Cale Makar	480
15 Dustin Wolf	157	15 Darnell Nurse	61	15 Auston Matthews	15 Jack Eichel	463

## 2024-25 Team UQB Rankings

FantasyDrafthelp.com and The FDH Lounge are expanding the UQB concept to team sports. Our rankings are a mashup of the following measures: FDH power rankings, power play percentage, penalty kill percentage, Fenwick For, Fenwick Against, shooting percentage, save percentage, ESG percentage and ESGA percentage.

1 Winnipeg	17 Vancouver
2 Tampa Bay	18T Columbus
3 Washington	18T Montreal
4 Dallas	20 Minnesota
5 Vegas	21 Calgary
6 Colorado	22 Detroit
7 Los Angeles	23 Buffalo
8 Toronto	24 Pittsburgh
9 New Jersey	25 Seattle
10 Florida	26 Chicago
11 Carolina	27 NY Islanders
12 Edmonton	28 Philadelphia
13 St. Louis	29 Nashville
14T Ottawa	30 Anaheim
14T Utah	31 Boston
16 NY Rangers	32 San Jose

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