



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • August 2, 2022



## Family Ties: Slavin Continues To Follow Footsteps At Development Camp

"He's just a genuinely good kid. The whole family is A+ people and we're just lucky to have them."

By Walt Ruff

RALEIGH, NC. - If your goal is to be better at hockey than Jaccob Slavin, you're going to have to be really, really good.

But coming from the same bloodline is a strong start though and that's exactly what Jeremiah Slavin is aiming for.

The youngest of five children in the family, the 17-year-old was able to showcase his skills to Canes coaches and staff at July's Development Camp as a first-time invitee.

"I think it's really cool. It's a great experience to be able to skate where he skates and it brings me one step closer to one-upping him," Jeremiah said with a quick laugh as he fielded questions for the first time at the event. "We're a super competitive family, so growing up it was always, 'I have to do better, I have to do better.' So I've always just tried to push myself to one-up him."

Having the ability to learn from one of the best defensemen in the National Hockey League has led Jeremiah to a commitment to play his collegiate hockey at Colorado College - just like brothers Jaccob and Josiah. Josiah, 23, appeared in 15 games with the Chicago Blackhawks during his first full professional campaign last year.

"They set a path for me and I looked up to them growing up, so it was just the path that I wanted to go down too," Jeremiah remarked of the next step in his hockey career.

Despite the success that his older brothers have had at both Colorado College and in the NHL, Jeremiah says it's clear who the best player in the family is.

"I grew up watching all of my brothers and my sister play. She was the best hockey player out of all of us," the defenseman stated with a clear confidence. "She taught me and Jaccob a lot, almost everything we know."

Jordan, 30, played four seasons for North Dakota's women's Division I NCAA team from 2009-2013.

So, what was it like being the youngest in a family of such strong talent?

"I got picked on a lot, I can tell you that for free," Jeremiah said with another chuckle. "But it was awesome, we'd always be down in the puck-shooting room, shooting, playing 500 or something like that. We had a good time. Played mini hockey a lot, too."

While attempting to surpass the career that Jaccob has put together through his first seven seasons in Carolina will be a tall task, team Defensemen Development Coach Peter Harrold was pleased with what he saw out of the latest Slavin product over the course of the week.

"That's big shoes to fill there, but he was great. He skates a little similar to his brother, and like his brother, he's a really good person," the former NHLer offered. "He's just a genuinely good kid. The whole family is A+ people and we're just lucky to have them."

### TODAY'S LINKS

<https://www.nhl.com/hurricanes/news/family-ties-slavin-continues-to-follow-footsteps-at-development-camp/c-335149274>



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## SportScan

Articles from outlets covering the Hurricanes' upcoming opponents and league-wide news

1250686 Websites

Hockey Canada announces 2022 World Junior Championship roster

The Athletic Staff2-2 minutes 02/08/2022

Hockey Canada has announced the 25-man roster for the upcoming 2022 IIHF World Junior Championship set for Aug. 9-20 in Edmonton.

Headlining Team Canada are top NHL prospects in Mason McTavish (Anaheim Ducks) and Kent Johnson (Columbus Blue Jackets) as well as top 2023 NHL Draft prospect Connor Bedard.

The tournament was originally scheduled for to take place from Dec. 26, 2021- Jan. 5, 2022 in Edmonton and Red Deer, Alberta but was canceled after four days of play due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Give me:

Johnson – McTavish – Stankoven

Othmann – Bedard – Foerster

Roy – Greig – Dufour

Cuyllé – Desnoyers – Gaucher

Ex: Ostapchuk, Kidney

Cormier – Zellweger

Lambos – O'Rourke

Seeley – Thompson

Ex: Sebrango, Hunt

Garand

Cossa

Brochu <https://t.co/NO2Pj3zq4o>

— Scott Wheeler (@scottcwheeler) August 1, 2022

Below are the 25 players selected:

Forwards

Joshua Roy

Logan Stankoven

Tyson Foerster

Riley Kidney

Kent Johnson

Nathan Gaucher

Brennan Othmann

Connor Bedard

Ridly Greig

William Dufour

Elliot Desnoyers

Zack Ostapchuk

Mason McTavish

Will Cuyllé

Defense

Daemon Hunt

Olen Zellweger

Carson Lambos

Lukas Cormier

Donovan Sebrango

Ronan Seeley

Jack Thompson

Ryan O'Rourke

Goaltenders

Sebastian Cossa

Brett Brochu

Dylan Garand

Canada last won gold at the IIHF World Junior Championship in 2020 following a 4-3 victory over Russia. The Canadians will kick off their tournament Aug. 10 versus Latvia.

The Athletic LOADED: 08.02.2022

1250687 Websites

Who goes No. 1 in a 2019 NHL Draft redo? How do their pre-draft rankings hold up today?

Scott Wheeler

It has never been lost on me how much easier my job is than an NHL scout's.

Theirs is an unenviable one. They do their work under a constant internal and external microscope, where review and criticism of their choices determines their livelihood. When they stick their neck out for a prospect,



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it comes with real consequences if that player doesn't pan out. It's a cutthroat business where every kid's odds of not making it are greater than their odds of NHL success.

While my job comes with its own form of public criticism and my livelihood is determined by the quality of my work in its own way, the stakes just aren't as high. I get into the same rinks, watch the same tape, and talk to the same people about these kids before building my own list, sure. I don't actually have to step up to the podium and make the picks, though. It's not as final.

But I do still have to earn your trust. That's especially true at The Athletic, where you're paying to subscribe no different than you would to watch on cable TV or purchase tickets to attend in person. And if you're going to spend your money to read our work, you deserve to know that you can count on it to be not only well sourced and researched, but also transparent. That's why, over the last several years, I've tried to open up my process alongside the actual finished products. The rankings and evaluations you read are only as good as the time, energy and purported expertise that fuels them.

In that pursuit, I produce a series of annual articles that are intended to keep me honest, force me to own past mistakes, and learn. One of those pieces is my scouting guide, which I update yearly to give you, the reader, more insight into how it all comes together, the things I look for, and my potential blind spots or biases. Another is my players I got wrong column.

Each summer, I also do a re-draft of a past draft class which includes a review of my ranking at the time.

My guide to scouting:

- Context, data, the parity myth, and considerations
- My viewing process and limitations
- My approach
- Rules to live by
- Language, jargon, and ambiguity versus description
- The things I look for

This is my manual: <https://t.co/g9mC7sh59L>

— Scott Wheeler (@scottcwheeler) June 5, 2022

The goal is to not only provide you with my updated evaluations of the top players in the draft class of three years earlier, but measure where I was at on each of those kids relative to how the NHL draft actually played out to determine what I got right and wrong.

While three years out isn't the finish line for these kids and I will continue to re-evaluate the draft and myself in the years ahead, I believe this to be the most reasonable — and earliest possible — point in their careers to begin to draw real conclusions about these players. They are almost all now 21 years old and either established as NHL players or approaching the end of their prospect lifecycle. At this point, I also have enough viewings and data on these players to feel confident in my understanding of where they're at and where they're trending.

Without further ado.

### 1. New Jersey Devils: C Jack Hughes

Actual draft pick: No. 1 (change: none) to New Jersey

My final ranking: No. 1 (change: none)

I had to think longer and harder about my choices in this re-draft than any of the four prior ones I've done at The Athletic, largely because 2019 isn't shaping up as a great draft and these players haven't distinguished themselves to date like the top players in most classes have by now. Really, outside of the excellent 2001 U.S. NTDP age group, and Moritz Seider, this exercise revealed that 2019 was a bit of a wasteland. But I

didn't have to think much about this one. As great as the next two players on this list are in particular, Hughes' skating and handling have already turned him into one of the best transition players in the NHL, he looks like a bonafide star whenever the puck's on his stick, I fully expect him to be a perennial 80-point guy and maybe more, and he hasn't even played a full season yet due to injuries and the pandemic.

### 2. New York Rangers: C/LW Trevor Zegras

Actual draft pick: No. 9 (change: +7) to Anaheim

My final ranking: No. 12 (change: +10)

I see you typing that angry comment, Red Wings fans. But hear me out. I debated Seider here. I really did. There's an excellent case for him second and he may well end up here when their careers are all said and done. I'm sure there are some who'd place a premium on defence and take him first, though I'd suggest that that argument would stand on a weaker foundation. But Zegras is also (already) one of the faces of this sport, with a creative, playmaking game that will quite likely make him one of this generation's best facilitators (like Nicklas Backstrom, Henrik Sedin and Joe Thornton before him, but with more flair), and he's not going anywhere. Do you take the first-line wizard or the first-pairing anchor? I lean the former today with these two, even though the latter is compelling.

### 3. Chicago Blackhawks: RHD Moritz Seider

Actual draft pick: No. 6 (change: +3) to Detroit

My final ranking: No. 35 (change: +32)

This is one of my all-time misses. My final ranking here is deceiving, because it was released before the combine in Buffalo, and before Seider's standout performance at men's worlds, and I wrote in the aftermath that I'd rank him close to 20/the late teens if I could edit my list. But even that kind of slotting would have made this a huge miss, too, because I wouldn't have taken Seider inside the top 10. In last year's players I was wrong about column, I wrote about Seider and to a similar but lesser extent Jake Sanderson a year later, as indicative of a problem I've had not playing catch-up on late-season surges fast enough. That's something I've worked to correct by trying to leave each prior viewing at the door and open myself up to the kind of rapid progression that can happen for some players and did happen for Seider. He's got it all, now. And while he has made important progress in key areas (especially his assertiveness in the offensive half), he had a lot then, too.

### 4. Colorado Avalanche: LW Matt Boldy

Actual draft pick: No. 12 (change: +8) to Minnesota

My final ranking: No. 7 (change: +3)

There has developed a pretty clear trio at the top in a do-over, but there's also a second trio from No. 4-6 that I think has since defined itself in its own way. Boldy, though, with the way he played in his sophomore season at BC, and the immediate impact he had in the AHL and then quickly the NHL after that, belongs in this slot for now. This is one of those ones where I'd bet the Avs, with what Bowen Byram looked like for them in the playoffs a couple of months ago, would almost surely just take their guy again. And I thought about doing that as well. But Boldy looks like he might become one of the league's better wingers. I'm proud of where I was — and where I remained — at on Boldy, too. Even when he struggled out of the gate as a freshman at BC and had to switch from centre to the wing before he took off, even when many in public and private sphere evaluation began casting doubt about his game, I was firm in my belief that he was going to come out of it, and resistant to concerns about his skating.

### 5. Los Angeles Kings: RW Cole Caufield

Actual draft pick: No. 15 (change: +10) to Montreal

My final ranking: No. 10 (change: +5)



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This is another one I feel good about. Caufield has run into his fair share of naysayers over the years. They were there in his draft year. They were there last season, as he tried to find his footing in the NHL. But all he has ever done is not just figure it out, but thrive. He became one of the most prolific scorers in the history of USA Hockey's national development program. He put together the most prolific goal-scoring season by a teenager in the last two decades of college hockey and became just the third during that stretch to score 30 goals, joining Kyle Connor and Thomas Vanek before him (his 30 in 31 bested Connor's 35 in 38 and Vanek's 31 in 45). And then he scored 22 goals and 35 points in his last 37 games to finish his rookie season as the Habs' second-leading scorer. And every step of the way, his game looked like it would work too. The shiny production was never a mirage. He always had singular skill as a shooter, a stocky build, a sixth sense for timing and spacing, some of the quickest hands in his age group, and the speed required to get in and out of the spots he needed to. He's going to score 40 and I'm not sure there's another player in the 2019 draft that I'd confidently say that about (though Hughes and Boldy might get there, they're not going to score like him).

6. Detroit Red Wings: LHD Bowen Byram

Actual draft pick: No. 4 (change: -2) to Colorado

My final ranking: No. 5 (change: -1)

If Byram's play in May and June was any indication, he may well end up a couple of spots higher than this when all is said and done. Given the injury history and the smaller sample of NHL success than the players ahead of him here, though, I felt this was the most reasonable ranking for him (for now). Still, he's pretty clearly the second-best defenceman from the 2019 class and it feels like he's just scratching the surface. His two-way game has developed towards becoming as commanding as his offensive ability. This has proven to be a game changer. He's got it all. He has an NHL frame, skill, skating, physicality, and smarts. And he has never been lacking in the confidence needed to put everything together.

7. Buffalo Sabres: G Spencer Knight

Actual draft pick: No. 13 (change: +6) to Florida

My final ranking: No. 45 (change: +38)

Knight, as with Seider, is a miss of mine. He was my top-ranked goalie in the draft and I wrote that I'd consider taking him in the 20s and early 30s depending on the team, but I didn't see him in the same light that I saw Yaroslav Askarov and Jesper Wallstedt in 2020 and 2021 (which is to say that while I felt he might become a starter, I wasn't as bullish on the odds of that outcome). When the Panthers drafted him 13th, I would have sooner taken still-available players like Peyton Krebs, Cole Caufield, and Alex Newhook. His smarts, and control, and calm were never in question for me, but I worried he didn't have a dynamic quality (like Askarov's quickness). He has proven, ever since, that I was a smidge too low on his athleticism, and that you can be one of the top young goalies in the game without an A-plus tool if enough of them are A-minus. I thought about taking each of the four names behind him here at No. 7, and I'm sure the Sabres are happy with Cozens in particular, but Knight looks like the most likely of the bunch to reach the upper echelon of his position.

8. Edmonton Oilers: C Dylan Cozens

Actual draft pick: No. 7 (change: -1) to Buffalo

My final ranking: No. 4 (change: -4)

I was really high on Cozens in his draft year (maybe a smidge too high in retrospect) and still am today. He was the most productive NHL player last season who was not yet re-drafted here, but he belongs here for more than that too. Cozens is a fabulous skater and transition player who has begun to refine his game inside the offensive zone to become more consistently dangerous there. When he really finds himself and his confidence, I expect him to become a 50-60 point guy on an annual basis. There are others on this list who will in all likelihood become that

as well, but I think they've each got slightly longer odds. There are signs of another level and I'd like to see him in a second-line role with the Sabres next year instead of a third-line one.

9. Anaheim Ducks: C Alex Newhook

Actual draft pick: No. 16 (change: +7) to Colorado

My final ranking: No. 11 (change: +2)

If you've followed my work, you'll know that Newhook is a kid that I have fought hard for for years. That began in his draft year and he has done nothing in the three years since to dismay my belief in him as an impactful top-six player whose floor probably lands him as one of the league's best third-liners if Colorado were to hang onto Nazem Kadri. He was a star in college almost right away (as with Boldy, it took him some time to get running at BC, though his transition happened a little smoother). He looked like a first-line AHLer as soon as he turned pro (nine goals and 20 points in just 18 games). He was an everyday player on the best team in the league in his first full season. With the way he skates, and how athletic he is, and the way he plays within that speed and tempo in control (or off of it), it's only a matter of time until he's a damn good NHL player.

10. Vancouver Canucks: LW/RW Kaapo Kakko

Actual draft pick: No. 2 (change: -8) to the Rangers

My final ranking: No. 2 (change: -8)

Kakko was the toughest player on this list to rank because there may not be another player on this list whose 2022-23 campaign could make or break quite like him. He needs to stay healthy, he needs to find his niche on the second power play, and he needs to grab the one top-six job in Manhattan that appears open after Chris Kreider, Mika Zibanejad, Alex Lafreniere, Artemi Panarin and Vincent Trochek take their likely spots inside it. If one of those things doesn't happen for him, his trajectory feels more fragile than the ones that the next two players in this exercise appear to be on with their own clubs. I'd listen to arguments for him 12th here, but I'm not quite ready to write him off. I also thought about him ahead of Newhook.

11. Arizona Coyotes: C Kirby Dach

Actual draft pick: No. 3 (change: -8) to Chicago

My final ranking: No. 8 (change: -3)

We've all seen the flash in Dach. The ability, in spurts, to make a play happen through the middle of the ice, with that big frame of his, that makes you go "huh, so that's why they picked him third." Three years later, a defence of the Dach pick would also posit that he's third in the draft class in scoring thus far behind Hughes and Zegras with 59 points (one more than Kakko in five fewer games). But there has been too much space between those moments, where he just looks ordinary. He'll get every opportunity to change that in Montreal, and maybe he'll run with it and become the 2C behind Suzuki now that they passed on Shane Wright for Juraj Slafkovsky. It's certainly not going to be Christian Dvorak or Jake Evans long term. But I'm not convinced. I don't see what that next gear looks like for him. He's big, and he moves fairly well, and he's got the touch to make those plays, but I often find myself watching him and wonder where that single, defining quality is that will carry him. I felt that way in his draft year and I feel that way now. He's going to be a good middle-six player, I'd wager. I'd be surprised if he really runs with the baton in Montreal, though.

12. Minnesota Wild: C Philip Tomasino

Actual draft pick: No. 24 (change: +10) to Nashville

My final ranking: No. 34 (change: +22)

Tomasino always had the flowing, carry-centric game that I'm typically drawn to, and yet I was lower on him in hindsight, believing he relied a little too much on the transition package. I've written about it in the past, but I expected him and Connor McMichael to push for 90 points post-



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draft, not 100. I've been in the right spot on them since, but I was certainly a little late to the party all things considered. He's probably not going to become a first-line player, but he should develop nicely into a top-six creator in time.

### 13. Florida Panthers: LW/RW Arthur Kaliyev

Actual draft pick: No. 33 (change: +20) to Los Angeles

My final ranking: No. 13 (change: none)

When kids shoot (and score/produce) like Kaliyev did in the CHL, they almost always hit. Even when they look like they're skating in quicksand. And even when they fly by too many pucks with one hand on their stick or cheat up ice too often. Those three concerns kept Kaliyev out of the first round but I'm as bullish today in him belonging there as I was then. Same goes for Edmonton's Carter Savoie (albeit Kaliyev's shot was a cut above and he didn't drop as far as a result) for some of the same reasons. Plus, Kaliyev had a summer birthday which made him one of the youngest players then and still makes him one of the youngest players on this list. Now, it hasn't all clicked quite yet, but he's always going to be able to beat goalies and eventually PP2 time is going to turn into PP1 time and they're going to lean into playing him with more talented playmakers at even strength. Given where the Kings are at on the wings, I'd love to see Kaliyev in the top six this year, moving a player like Trevor Moore or Viktor Arvidsson down to the third line to make room for him there. Those guys will still thrive in that role. Kaliyev won't. And that shouldn't be frowned upon because he does something else for you that you need. Play to his strengths and he's going to fill the net.

### 14. Philadelphia Flyers: C/LW Peyton Krebs

Actual draft pick: No. 17 (change: +3) to Vegas

My final ranking: No. 6 (change: -8)

My fondness for the way Krebs plays, and the tools he possesses, is well documented. I even thought about taking him before Tomasino and Kaliyev here. He's got the skating, effort level, creativity, passing, playmaking, smarts, and commitment off the puck that you look for in a top-of-the-lineup player. But I undervalued how limiting his lack of scoring punch might prove. He works his tail off to get to the inside, and he's got the tools to get there, but when he does he just doesn't quite finish enough. I have full faith in him becoming a 50-point guy. He's not going to become the 70-point one I believed he would turn into at the time of his draft year, though.

### 15. Montreal Canadiens: C Connor McMichael

Actual draft pick: No. 25 (change: +10) to Washington

My final ranking: No. 46 (change: +31)

McMichael didn't leap off the page in his draft year, but I should have had a better sense, because of his roundedness and the way he was deployed that season, for the success he was going to have in London (a program that plays its older players more than any other team in the OHL). And though I viewed his shot as a strength, I didn't give it a high enough grade back then. McMichael is still missing that "je ne sais quoi" that most of the players in front of him here have — and that will likely prevent him from becoming a star — but he's a really solid hockey player who knows exactly how to get the most out of his game and should develop into a really nice piece of the puzzle in Washington.

### 16. Colorado Avalanche: RW/LW Vasily Podkolzin

Actual draft pick: No. 10 (change: -6) to Vancouver

My final ranking: No. 17 (change: +1)

When the feverish excitement around Podkolzin swelled following his draft year performances at the Hlinka Gretzky Cup and World Junior A Challenge, where he just willed plays into existence and looked stronger over pucks than all of his peers, I became somewhat of a Podkolzin truther. I don't recall if anyone ranked him lower than I did, but I was certainly a vocal critic of him in the top five-to-10 conversation before and

after the draft, and there were several forwards I would have taken in front of him. That wasn't because I didn't think he'd become a good NHL player. In fact I did, and said so repeatedly (you don't rank a player 17th otherwise). But I did have questions about whether his game offensively would come as naturally up levels, or have room to progress, like some of his lower-ranked peers (my main concern was that he played a little too much on instinct and I think that's still true today). Today, he looks like a safe bet to be an excellent third-line winger. Maybe, in the prime of his career, he's more than that for a few years. But there's no question that several players (Boldy, Caufield, Newhook, etc.) appear to have higher ceilings.

### 17. Vegas Golden Knights: RW Bobby Brink

Actual draft pick: No. 34 (change: +17) to Philadelphia

My final ranking: No. 14 (change: -3)

We just learned this week that Brink, the reigning men's NCAA hockey scoring champ and a hat trick finalist for the Hobey Baker, had hip surgery and will miss five months. Knowing that, and the time he will likely spend in the AHL after it (instead of potentially spending his first full season in the NHL after playing 10 games down the stretch last year), I thought about taking the next name on this list here instead. But there's no question he's a first-rounder in a do-over. Brink's statistical profile screamed translatable, as did many of his tools (his intelligence in control, his craftiness and problem-solving, his hands his worker's mentality off the puck, his willingness to take pucks to the middle third and his equal ability to manufacture offence from the perimeter). But too many teams couldn't get over the 5-foot-8, clunky-skating package. Those concerns meant he shouldn't have been a first-tier, top-12 or so player, but I always believed that he should have gone in that next tier. And he should have. I feel good about my defence of him over the years.

### 18. Dallas Stars: LW Nils Hoglander

Actual draft pick: No. 40 (change: +22) to Vancouver

My final ranking: No. 18 (change: none)

Hoglander, like Kaliyev and Brink, is another second-rounder that I viewed as a first-round guy. He didn't take the step last year that I'm sure he or the Canucks were hoping for after a strong rookie season, but he has always played a likable, scrappy skill game and I expect him to be an up-and-down-the-lineup, PP2 guy who can be the primary creator on a third line or more of a complementary piece on a top-six one in the prime of his career.

### 19. Ottawa Senators: G Dustin Wolf

Actual draft pick: No. 214 (change: +197) to Calgary

My final ranking: No. 61 (change: +42)

This may be a little bold for a goalie who hasn't played an NHL game yet, but Wolf, who was my second-ranked goalie at the time, might be the third or fourth-best goalie prospect in the sport at the moment after Jesper Wallstedt and Yaroslav Askarov. His track record is impeccable and so are his mechanics, habits, footwork, reads, positioning, and hands. I'm of the opinion that teams are too laser-focussed on size with goalies, and it has created a market inefficiency with guys like Wolf, Juuse Saros, Devon Levi, Dylan Garand and others. It's a shame he's stuck behind Jacob Markstrom, but he's going to be an excellent backup there in short order and something more than that when the opportunity eventually presents itself later in his career.

### 20. Winnipeg Jets: LW Nick Robertson

Actual draft pick: No. 53 (change: +33) to Toronto

My final ranking: No. 30 (change: +10)

You can add Robertson to the same pile as Brink, Kaliyev, and Hoglander among the kids I ultimately had a good handle on. He hasn't proven it at the NHL level yet, he's got to stay healthy, and this is about where the list starts to widen, so there's an argument for any of the next



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several names here (and I debated each myself). But there aren't many 18-year-olds who score 55 goals in 46 OHL games, and there aren't many 20-year-olds who score 16 goals in 25 AHL games. He's also the youngest player on this list still and I know Leafs/Marlies staff feel he really turned a corner to become a dominant player in the AHL as last year progressed, elevating himself from call-up to likely full-timer this fall. Given the way he plays (fearless, aggressive, attacking) and the tools he has (the hands, the pop off the wrist), I expect him to run with it. I see a third-line scoring floor and potentially top-six upside and it's time the Leafs give him an extended look in the constant vacancy at left wing next to John Tavares and William Nylander.

21. Pittsburgh Penguins: LHD Thomas Harley**y**

Actual draft pick: No. 18 (change: -3) to Dallas**s**

My final ranking: No. 29 (change: +8)

When I began going over my 2019 list, I was actually a little surprised to remember that I had Harley as low as I did. He's a player I spent a lot of time and energy trying to make sense of in Mississauga, and he's a player I've followed closely through Traverse City Prospect Tournaments, Team Canada camps, the world juniors, and the AHL and NHL. He's also a kid that I'm a real believer in and have often argued needs a longer leash in Dallas than the one he has been given if he's going to get back to the flowing, roving transition game that made him so much fun to watch in the OHL (even if it also came with some hair pulling). In 34 NHL games under Rick Bowness last year, he wasn't able to play that game (and didn't have the confidence to do so). Maybe that changes under Peter DeBoer in what should be Harley's first full season in the NHL this year. He was always going to take a little more time, but I expect him to be a fairly unique player in the prime of his career once he starts playing a little more loose and confident and really leans into his obvious strengths. His late-August birthday also gives him more runway to tap into that upside than most on this list.

22. Los Angeles Kings: LHD Philip Broberg**g**

Actual draft pick: No. 8 (change: -14) to Edmonton**n**

My final ranking: No. 19 (change: -3)

Broberg, like Podkolzin, is a player who progressed to the pro ranks early, had clear physical tools and advantages, and played his best on the international stage, leading to a groundswell of hype that I just couldn't wrap my head around. Most people saw a big, long, strong kid who had made some really nice plays in transition with his skating and they got excited about the upside. I saw a player who was very much rough around the edges, with a propensity to make poor decisions/reads and mishandle pucks. Some of that has smoothed out nicely since but he was never going to have the kind of dynamic offensive quality/PP1 upside you want in a top-10 pick at D. He's going to become a solid NHL defenceman, but Oilers fans don't need me to remind them that Zegras, Boldy and Caufield were each selected shortly after he was.

23. New York Islanders: C Shane Pinto

Actual draft pick: No. 32 (change: +9) to Ottawa**a**

My final ranking: No. 50 (change: +27)

Were it not for the fact that he only played five games last year due to a shoulder injury, Pinto would have likely gone in the teens somewhere here. For now, though, I think this is the necessary amount of caution given the time off. Even with that, though, there's also no question that Pinto has proven to be a sleuth pick and that I missed something. I think he also fits into that habit that I needed to break and spoke about with Seider re: not catching up quite fast enough to the kids who develop late and really come on down the stretch of their draft year. Deep down, I might have even known I should have had him higher too. This was the first sentence in his scouting report in that year's blurb, after he'd had points in 10 of his final 11 games of the season and had really surged into the playoffs following a trade from Lincoln to Tri-City: "I was slow to trust Pinto's skill set this season but he just kept looking better with each

viewing." In that scouting report, I had identified his strength tracking pucks, the efficiency of the routes he'd taken, and his ability to drive possession when he was on the ice. I also wrote about his ability to anticipate the play one or two steps ahead of his peers. So stylistically, I'd done a really good job of picking up on what came to make him the best two-way centre in college hockey (and what will make him an excellent third-line centre and maybe slightly more in his prime). So why wasn't I higher on him? Mystified with my old self on this one!

24. Nashville Predators: LHD Cam York**k**

Actual draft pick: No. 14 (change: -10) to Philadelphia**a**

My final ranking: No. 9 (change: -15)

I got a little ahead of myself on York. He was one of the best D prospects in the draft after Byram (and, as it turns out, Seider), and he has filled out his frame to add some necessary weight/strength. The statistical profile certainly backed that up. So too did the way he managed the game and directed play. But he also benefitted a little more from the talented age group (and power play) he played on and there were signs that he wasn't as dynamic as his production indicated, that I should have done a better job contextualizing. I still really like the player and I think he's going to be an important piece of this next chapter in Philadelphia, but he now looks more like a PP2 guy than a PP1 guy, for example.

25. Washington Capitals: RHD Victor Soderstrom**m**

Actual draft pick: No. 11 (change: -14) to Arizona**a**

My final ranking: No. 28 (change: +3)

I wrote, in advance of the 2019 draft, about how I wasn't as fond of the class's defencemen as I was the forwards. I felt that teams would invariably reach on defencemen believing that's what their pool needed (as often happens with D in the draft) and miss on a glut of talented forwards, who would fall and provide the best value. On that front, I think I was bang on, with Soderstrom and Broberg among the prime examples of how that played out. It was easy to be enamoured with Soderstrom's skating and efficiency. And those two things are still going to make him a top-six NHL defenceman and maybe even a second-pairing one (he has actually progressed nicely since and hasn't really hit any roadblocks, even though he has not yet made the full-time jump). But he was still picked too high in hindsight.

26. Calgary Flames: LHD Ville Heinola**a**

Actual draft pick: No. 20 (change: -6) to Winnipeg**g**

My final ranking: No. 21 (change: -5)

I'm actually a little surprised that Heinola, given how well he has performed in both the AHL and NHL over parts of the last three seasons, hasn't (yet) been given a long look with the Jets. He always played a smooth, polished, methodical game. But he has taken some important steps since being drafted to become a more attacking, ambitious player offensively too. He's one of the prospects I'm going to be tracking closest when training camps open because he is owed a top-six job with the way he played in the AHL last season (he was great for the Moose) but the Jets have five defencemen signed for \$3-million or more and they appear intent on playing Logan Stanley as the sixth.

27. Tampa Bay Lightning: RHD Jordan Spence**e**

Actual draft pick: No. 95 (change: +68) to Los Angeles**s**

My final ranking: No. 47 (change: +20)

Forget being one of the best young defencemen in the AHL last year, Spence, in his first year of pro hockey, might have been the best defenceman in the AHL. Here's what his last five seasons have looked like now:

2017-18: MJHL Rookie of the Year**r**

2018-19: QMJHL Rookie of the Year**r**



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2019-20: QMJHL Defenceman of the Year and QMJHL First All-Star Team

2020-21: QMJHL First All-Star Team (x2)

2021-22: AHL First All-Star Team

All of this as a 5-foot-10, fourth-round NHL Draft pick who only began playing in the Q in his draft year. He didn't look out of place in the NHL last year, either. Spence was the highest-ranked player on my final top-100 in 2019 who didn't appear on my midseason top-62 that year, so maybe I wasn't slow to catch on with all of the late arrivals!

28. Carolina Hurricanes: C Alex Turcotte

Actual draft pick: No. 5 (change: -23) to Los Angeles

My final ranking: No. 3 (change: -25)

Turcotte's a tough one for me. In hindsight, I should have been a little more cautious about the time he'd missed and the smaller draft year sample of games he'd played relative to his peers. There was no predicting the continued injury/illness trouble that would follow him after the draft, but there was always going to be one kid on that loaded '01 U.S. NTDP team that didn't pan out. And while I still expect Turcotte to become an everyday NHL player, he looks like the kid who was made to look better by his supporting cast (rather than the other way around). That's hard to wrap my head around now, given how he looked like the kid who was making everyone else better as a hardworking playmaker on that team. Similar to Krebs, I didn't do a good enough job contextualizing how his lack of scoring may eventually limit him up levels.

29. Anaheim Ducks: LHD Zac Jones

Actual draft pick: No. 68 (change: +39) to New York

My final ranking: No. 63 (change: +34)

There is only enough space on the Rangers blue line for two of Jones, Braden Schneider and Nils Lundkvist to play every night, assuming Adam Fox, Jacob Trouba, K'Andre Miller and Ryan Lindgren are all healthy. It appears that Schneider has locked down the fifth spot. But if I were to bet on Jones or Lundkvist to play more next season, I'd take the former today. Given he has the lesser pro experience of the two, that speaks to how well he progressed in college post-draft and also the higher level he played at in the AHL last season. Jones has become a bit of a favourite of mine. He's a fascinating case study.

30. Boston Bruins: LW Jakob Pelletier

Actual draft pick: No. 26 (change: -4) to Calgary

My final ranking: No. 25 (change: -5)

I remain a big fan of this kid and player. Pelletier's a great success story as a smaller, slower player who has made it not by being dynamic offensively (as most players who are small and slow often have to be) but by blending perfect positioning, attention to detail, and versatility with good skill across the board. He projected as a complementary top-nine winger who could play on any line, with any type of linemates, and just kind of fit it and make things happen whenever and however needed. That's still what he projects as today.

31. Buffalo Sabres: LW Matias Maccelli

Actual draft pick: No. 98 (change: +67) to Arizona

My final ranking: No. 69 (change: +38)

Maccelli doesn't have the name recognition of most of the other players on this list, but he has just quietly lit it up for his age in Liiga and the AHL following a strong 32-goal, 72-point season in the USHL in his draft year. He's going to become a playmaking middle-six winger who isn't the No. 1

player on his line but also probably won't be the third fiddle either. I like him as a secondary piece on a balanced line. It would probably surprise people to know that he was the second-most productive (1.21 points per game) under-22 player in the AHL last year (behind only Jack Quinn and ahead of Pelletier, Robertson, Krebs, etc.).

Honourable mentions (alphabetical order):

LHD Tobias Bjornfot

Actual draft pick: No. 22 to Los Angeles

My final ranking: No. 66

LW Pavel Dorofeyev

Actual draft pick: No. 79 to Vegas

My final ranking: No. 15

LW/RW Samuel Fagemo

Actual draft pick: No. 50 to Los Angeles

My final ranking: No. 42

LHD Albert Johansson

Actual draft pick: No. 60 to Detroit

My final ranking: No. 60

RHD Lassi Thomson

Actual draft pick: No. 19 to Ottawa

My final ranking: No. 39

LHD Henry Thrun

Actual draft pick: No. 101 to Anaheim

My final ranking: No. 38

Henry Thrun. (Courtesy of Anaheim Ducks)

Takeaway

All told, I'm fairly pleased with how my 2019 list looks in hindsight. It's really just the Seider miss that I can't live with or repeat. I expect to be too low on a few players in every draft. Being off by a round on the odd Connor McMichael or Philip Tomasino is the cost of doing business. It's completely missing the mark on any of the big ones that shouldn't happen. And Seider certainly qualifies. As does, to a lesser extent, Turcotte at No. 3. That's softened a little by the fact that he was taken just two slots later, but that's the kind of mistake, when it doesn't work out and the others around him do, that costs and amateur scout his job.

But if success is measured in wins and losses (this is sports, after all), and a win is being closer on a player today than the draft order was (and a loss is the opposite), then I'm confident my 2019 ranking came out ahead versus the field on the whole.

I think it's safe to say I was rightly higher on all of Boldy, Caufield, Newhook, Kaliyev, Brink, Hoglander, Robertson, Wolf, Spence, and Maccelli, and rightly lower on all of Dach, Broberg, Podkolzin and Soderstrom.

I think it's also safe to say that I was too low on Zegras, Seider, Knight, Tomasino, McMichael, and Pinto, slightly too low on Harley, too high on Turcotte, York, and Krebs, and slightly too high on Cozens.

Hughes, Kakko, Byram, Heinola, Jones (I actually had him five slots higher than where he was picked, but we'll call it a wash) and Pelletier are virtual ties.

That would leave me with a record of 14-11-6, without including a further dive into the players I listed as honourable mentions for the re-draft.



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On those six names, though I was definitely too high on Dorofeyev, the late 30s in a re-draft today would actually settle him closer to my ranking (15th) than where he was picked (79th). Though there's also no guarantee he builds on his strong AHL season last year to become the top-nine, PP2 tertiary playmaker I think he's capable of becoming.

Bjornfot's an interesting one as a kid who is sixth in the draft class in NHL games played (106) so far, but is a low-ceiling guy who will probably just be a depth defender throughout his career. I elected not to take him in the 31 picks here and I'm comfortable standing firm on where I was at on him in his draft class.

I'm really happy with where I landed on those other names, specifically, though (lower on Thomson and higher on Fagemo and Thrun). Thrun, in particular, was one of my 2019 favourites and he has progressed exactly in line with my progression thus far.

The other thing that I think is important to point out is the players from my 2019 list's top 31 and the 2019 draft's first round that didn't make this do-over at all, because that can be counted as well. On that front, we break even (seven apiece). Both my list and the first round's draft order shared Ryan Suzuki and Samuel Poulin in the top 31. My board was too high on Anttoni Honka (20th) and Patrik Puustola (21st), as well as the QMJHL's Raphael Lavoie (24th). The draft order saw Simon Holmstrom (taken 23rd and slotted more appropriately at 55 on my board) and John Beecher (taken 30th and ranked 98th on my board) as its notable whiffs.

How do you think I did? Leave your comments below.

Previous re-drafts and ranking reviews:

2018

2017

2016

2015

The Athletic LOADED: 08.02.2022

1250688 Websites

ESPN / The best NHL free agents still seeking new contracts

Greg Wyshynski 5-6 minutes

Greg Wyshynski is ESPN's senior NHL writer.

The NHL free agency frenzy has calmed in recent days, as general managers retreat to their cottages and teams calculate their remaining salary-cap space.

There are still significant names available on the unrestricted free agent market, including some who could be game-changers for the right team. Will they find the contracts they're seeking with the teams they want to join? Or are they going to have to take what they can get?

Here's glance at some of the more compelling players still on the market:

Nazem Kadri, C, Colorado Avalanche

Age: 31 | 2021-22 cap hit: \$4.5 million

Kadri is the biggest name available, coming off a career-best 87-point season and a Stanley Cup championship. He would be an ideal second-line center for a number of teams, but the contract he sought and his age -- he turns 32 in October -- were both hindrances for some teams to commit to him.

The popular theory in the NHL is that he already has a handshake deal with some team that's just waiting to clear the necessary cap space --

perhaps a club such as the New York Islanders, who have yet to make an offseason splash.

Paul Stastny, C, Winnipeg Jets

Age: 36 | 2021-22 cap hit: \$3.75 million

The veteran forward had an outstanding season for the Jets. He scored 45 points in 71 games, Stastny's highest total in four seasons. But the most impressive thing about his 2021-22 campaign was the way he excelled no matter the role, playing up and down the lineup, in the middle and on the wing. He's still chasing the Stanley Cup, and at this stage of his career one imagines that opportunity is paramount for him.

While a team like the Calgary Flames could make sense, wouldn't a reunion with the Avalanche be lovely?

P.K. Subban, D, New Jersey Devils

Age: 33 | 2021-22 cap hit: \$9,000,000

Subban might have been on the move at last season's trade deadline were it not for his sizable cap hit. With that off the books, he should garner interest from teams looking to add an effective veteran who is great in the room.

Evolving Hockey projects him at a \$3.8 million average annual value on a three-year term.

Evan Rodrigues, C, Pittsburgh Penguins

Age: 29 | 2021-22 cap hit: \$800,000

One of the more curious availabilities in free agency. He had 11.6 goals scored above replacement for the Penguins in 82 games, playing as well offensively as he did defensively.

He would be an asset to any team's middle or bottom six forwards. The question is at what cost?

Phil Kessel, RW, Arizona Coyotes

Age: 34 | 2021-22 cap hit: \$8 million

As his Twitter bio summarizes: "Nice guy, tries hard, loves the game."

Kessel is eight games from breaking Keith Yandle's NHL record for consecutive games played. He had 44 assists and eight goals last season. He can still help offensively, although his defensive game has been nonexistent for the past few seasons.

Patrice Bergeron, C, Boston Bruins

Age: 37 | 2021-22 cap hit: \$6.875 million

The best defensive forward in NHL history has yet to formally sign a contract with the Bruins to return next season, although media reports in Boston say it's a mere formality.

But if Boston wants to bring back Bergeron and David Krejci, it will have to clear space or get contractually creative, even with Matt Grzelcyk, Brad Marchand and Charlie McAvoy all expected to start the season on long-term injured reserve.

Johan Larsson, C, Washington Capitals

Age: 30 | 2021-22 cap hit: \$1.4 million

Larsson is an elite defensive center, but one who has hit 10 goals just once in a 10-season career. At one point this offseason, it looked like he might be headed to Pittsburgh, but that didn't materialize.

If he's healthy, he's going to be a lockdown center for someone's bottom six.

Tyler Motte, C, New York Rangers

Age: 27 | 2021-22 cap hit: \$1.225 million



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Motte played only 24 games for the Rangers in the regular season and playoffs, but many of his teammates have expressed hope that the depth forward could return to the fold in 2022-23.

You won't get much in the way of offense -- Motte has never hit double digits in goals or over 20 points in a season -- but he's a good defender down the lineup at the right price.

Sam Steel, C, Anaheim Ducks

Age: 24 | 2021-22 cap hit: \$874,125

Sonny Milano, LW/RW, Anaheim Ducks

Age: 26 | 2021-22 cap hit: \$1,700,000

The Ducks declined to extend qualifying offers to both of these forwards, as new GM Pat Verbeek put his stamp on the roster.

Milano was a surprise, as the forward excelled last season on both ends of the ice, with a career-high 34 points in 66 games. Steel has yet to meet the offensive promise he had in junior hockey and the AHL, but he was a good defender as a depth forward.

Sam Gagner, C, Detroit Red Wings

Age: 32 | 2021-22 cap hit: \$850,000

Gagner was a strong performer for the Red Wings last season, with 31 points in 81 games. He's not much more than a depth forward at this point, but he's a decent playmaker who won't hurt you defensively at even strength.

Could a third stint with the Edmonton Oilers be a possibility?

ESPN LOADED: 08.02.2022

1250689 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Q&A with minister of sport Pascale St-Onge: 'I feel a responsibility to change things'

Sportsnet Staff@Sportsnet August 1, 2022, 12:44 PM

In a sitdown interview in Montreal on Thursday with Sportsnet's Iain MacIntyre, minister of sport Pascale St-Onge discussed her thoughts on what Hockey Canada needs to change, what she plans on doing to make sports federations more accountable and what's next. Here is the edited transcript of that conversation.

Sportsnet: Minister of Sport Pascale St-Onge, thank you for joining us today and giving us some of your very valuable time. What have the last few months been like for you, as a new cabinet minister dealing with a crisis in sports in Canada?

St-Onge: Well, one of the reasons why I got involved in politics is to be an agent of change. So, hearing the stories about the athletes, their stories of sometimes abuse and maltreatment, and I'm an ex-athlete, I'm an ex-musician but I'm also an ex-athlete, and I had such great experiences in sports and swimming and volleyball. So, when I hear those stories of abuse and maltreatment and the Hockey Canada story about sexual abuse, I feel like it's time to make change and it's time to empower different people to affect this change, really in different organizations and in sports. So, the voices of the athletes are what motivate me every day, even though it's hard stories. It's really difficult to listen to all those stories, but we need to make it better. We really owe it to those athletes and also to their families.

SN: Before asking more about Hockey Canada and Sport Canada, the department that you run that administers all the sports organizations in Canada that receive federal funding, I want to ask you a little bit more

about your journey to this point. You have a degree in French literature, and then you went to journalism school and became president of the media union of Quebec. What made you decide to join politics?

St-Onge: The work that I had been doing in the union (came) in a moment of crisis, also in the media sector and in the cultural sector because of the arrival of the different platforms, and the economic difficulties that the sector faced, and also then the pandemic and the pressure that it put on workers. So, very soon when I started that job at the union as president, I had to do politics. I had to convey different partners around the table to find solutions because we needed the innovation and new solutions to get out of this crisis. And then we needed to explain to the governments, whether it's provincial or federal governments, that without media, and without journalists, there's a big problem with democracy and with any other institution. So, that's the work I did when I was at the federation. So, yes, it's not active politics, but it's pretty close.

SN: You had never run for political office before you were elected in last year's federal election in the riding of Brome-Missisquoi. And shortly after that, last October, you were named minister of sport and minister of economic development agency of Canada for the regions of Quebec, which I know doesn't fit on a business card, but it sounds like an awful lot of work as well. Did you know what you were getting yourself into when you took on these portfolios as a first-time elected official?

St-Onge: Well, no. (laughs) You know, especially sport, I knew that there were challenges for sure in that in any portfolio, there are challenges, and people that like challenges get involved in politics. So, I was ready to face it, but the extent of the problematic, and much-needed culture change, I was at first shocked. So, on economic development, I mean, we're getting out of a huge pandemic, and there's so many sectors that have had a hard time in the past two years. So, there's great work to be done to give a hand and make sure that we choose the right targets to make sure that our economy is going well.

'There needs to be new voices': St-Onge wants more diversity at Hockey Canada

SN: The 2018 allegations of a mass sexual assault involving junior hockey players from Team Canada in 2018: Just appalling to everybody, just horrendous. But this story about Hockey Canada, and maybe sport, in broader terms has continued to expand and develop. As for Hockey Canada, what has troubled you the most about what you've heard and what you've learned about the organization?

St-Onge: For Hockey Canada specifically, I think that the most troubling piece is how embedded in the organization's culture it is to protect the players at any cost and the culture of silence. Also, it's -- we've all heard stories about hockey, so it's not a surprise to anyone, but how it's deeply rooted in the way that the organization functions. That's deeply troubling.

SN: You testified before the Canadian Heritage Committee, which oversees sports in Canada in Ottawa on Tuesday. On Wednesday, there was further testimony by nine senior officials, past and present, from Hockey Canada and the Canadian Hockey League, all nine of them men. You had said the day before that you wanted to see some diversity that you wanted to hear other voices around the decision-making table at Hockey Canada. How important do you think that is for change and getting the organization to a better place?

St-Onge: I think it's fundamental. I don't see how an organization that has been functioning for so long with the same voices and the same type of voices and the same type of people in power positions, how they can operate and produce the change that Canadians deserve in the organization if it's the same people in place. I just don't see it happening. And one of the main issues that we're talking about these days about Hockey Canada -- but there is sexual violence -- but there are issues about racism and other issues in hockey that we've heard also about in the past few months. So, there needs to be diversity around the table, around the decision-making process. There needs to be new voices, new ideas and new leadership. And I strongly believe that if you take, for example, my government, if there weren't diverse people around the



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table, maybe there wouldn't have been a ban on conversion therapy this year. Or maybe we wouldn't have lifted the ban for gay male blood donors. So, to make change and to make sure that an organization is connected with the society that they're supposed to be part of, it needs to reflect the society that they're in.

St-Onge says Hockey Canada's board of directors must assess those in charge

SN: When you suspended funding to Hockey Canada after the story broke about the civil lawsuit stemming from 2018 and the very rapid and – until the story broke – secret settlement through Hockey Canada, you put two conditions on restoring that funding. One is that Hockey Canada sign on to the office of the sports integrity commissioner, the other was that they undergo a financial audit to make sure that taxpayer funds weren't used to settle that civil suit. There was no condition about leadership. Perhaps that's beyond your scope as minister, but how what level of confidence do you have in Hockey Canada's leadership?

St-Onge: I think that now it comes down to the board of Hockey Canada. They have a responsibility towards the Canadian public and towards the children and their parents that register those children who played hockey in Canada. They have a responsibility towards these people. And right now their job is to assess whether the people in place are the right ones, to change the organization and to really put in place the action plan that they presented to us. I don't even know if that action plan is complete, if it's the right thing to do. I'm going to have it evaluated also by experts. I'm going to have conversations about that to make sure that whatever they're doing, that we feel are the right steps to do. But the board needs to assess whether the people in place are capable of doing what they haven't done in the past two years, because they've known since 2018 that there were problems and before that, for sure. So, why now make that change? Why not before and all the money that was spent in the past 30 years covering up stories or paying for victims? Why wasn't as much money invested or even more on prevention, and making sure that the hockey players are well-surrounded, that they're well supported that they're well-educated.

SN: Sport Canada is the federal department within your ministry that disperses funds to the many organizations that receive government funds. One of the most surprising moments of testimony in Ottawa was when Sport Canada's senior director, Michel Ruest, testified that he became aware of the details of this alleged 2018 sexual assault the week after it occurred, yet did not forward those details to the then minister of sport, and so funding and business continued as usual for Hockey Canada for four more years, until this story broke. Does the question about leadership need to extend to your department? Will you look at the people that you have in charge?

St-Onge: I'm absolutely going to look at how Sport Canada is dealing with those cases. And it's something that I've already said before, because when I first testified, I did say that Sport Canada had received a statement from Hockey Canada saying that there were alleged sexual assaults that they had deferred the case to the local police and that they had hired a third-party investigation. And that was what Sport Canada had to do, was make sure that the federation was taking action. Because Sport Canada doesn't have investigative powers and it doesn't have regulatory powers either. It's a financial contribution that links us to the federations, but the process after it needs to be revised, for sure. I mean, there should have been follow-ups and there needs to be better communication with the minister's office to make enlightened decisions about funding. But everybody learned the extension of what happened in 2022. No one at Sport Canada or elsewhere knew that we were talking about rape, that we were talking about eight players involved. And so that was all new information to me and to Sport Canada.

St-Onge aims to 'revise the entire funding system' for Canadian sport federations

SN: Some of the MPs on the Heritage committee were very concerned about that testimony from Ruest. Conservative MP Kevin Waugh said we have to blow up Sport Canada, "we need a cleansing in hockey and we

need a cleansing in Sport." NDP MP Peter Julian said "Sport Canada simply has not been verifying, has not been proactive in protecting athletes and protecting the public. Sport Canada has failed miserably miserably at its role." He also said that it's been functioning as an honour system, and that honour system doesn't work. Do you agree that the honour system doesn't work and you have to find a better way to oversee and hold groups accountable for the funding they receive?

St-Onge: Absolutely, and that's part of the process that I'm engaged in. I've already announced, on June 12, we had a big conference where we conveyed all the leaders in sport. This was organized by the COC and that was part of the plan that I presented to the sport community. I'm going to revise the entire funding system, and that includes how, at Sport Canada, we have the expertise and build that expertise to be able to assess if those federations are living up to the expectations that we set for them. And we're going to set new expectations about governance, for example. And when we talk about Hockey Canada and the representation around the table, we're going to take a look at that, what are the best governance practices are for all sport federations. So, after that, when we set new expectations and new criteria to obtain federal funding, I need to make sure that Sport Canada can evaluate properly whether they have met those requirements or not, so that we can then adjust our policy with these federations.

SN: There's lots of discussion about 2018, there's now a story about the 2003 Canadian junior team, but you've only been in this role for nine months. How much responsibility do you feel for what what has happened?

St-Onge: I feel a responsibility to change things and push as far as I can to operate this change and to impose that change where there is resistance. And I feel like I'm as accountable as anybody else in the sport system in obtaining results, and that's what I'm aiming at, and that's what I'm working on. And it's the voice of the athletes that motivates me every day to do that because some of them have shown a tremendous amount of courage in speaking out against their own federation against what was happening to them. And I feel like I can push as much as I want as a minister and I can introduce new policies and new verifications and I can do a lot of things, but I can't do everything by myself. Those federations have responsibilities. The coaches, the officials, the athletes, the witnesses, the parents, we're collectively realizing the problems that exist in sport. So, we need to fix it collectively. Not one person can do that. Everybody needs to join and everybody needs to speak up and act.

SN: And, as you know, it's not one sport. We're all focused on Hockey Canada, but gymnastics, wrestling, soccer, bobsled ... you've described what's going on in the country as a crisis. Does it feel to you that we're at some kind of tipping point, we're at a historical crossroads in Canada with how sports are administered and funded and overseen?

St-Onge: I would say that we are in the middle of a big change in the sport community. But this change started since 2018, since my predecessor Kristy Duncan, who introduced the first universal code of conduct. There was nothing before that to link everybody in the Sport system in understanding and agreeing what is abuse, what is maltreatment, and have accountability on those issues. So, I'm building on the work that was started by others in my government. Steven Guilbeault, just before the election, nominated the SDRCC, the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre (of Canada) to create this new office of the sports integrity commissioner. And the job of that new person that started on June 20 is to build an independent mechanism that athletes can turn to when they are facing cases of abuse and maltreatment, so it doesn't have to go through their own federation. So, that's something new that we're building also. Now, we need to make sure that these tools that we're putting out there for the sports system, that they work, but also that people on the field, in the gym, on the ice rink, that they do their job as well.

St-Onge encourages people to share their stories to break 'culture of silence'



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SN: I know that you've spent a lot of your nine months listening to athletes. You were given a chance at the end of your testimony on Tuesday to speak to athletes, and forgive me if I mischaracterize it, you sounded a little bit emotional, your voice almost caught. Are you emotional about this issue? If so, why are you so emotionally invested?

St-Onge: It's impossible to not be emotional after everything that I'm hearing and the more that athletes come out, and the more of those stories that are covered by amazing journalists, the more people feel empowered and feel that they can talk. And some of those stories are horrific. And I swam, I played volleyball, I had great teammates, great coaches. I had an amazing experience in sports and I know how much impact it had on me as a human being and the person that I am today, and knowing that the sport destroyed some lives had negative impact on young people when sports should be positive, I feel we need to change it.

SN: Thank you for sharing your thoughts and your time today, Minister St. Onge.

St-Onge: Thank you for coming down to Montreal to do this interview.

This interview has been edited for clarity.

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TSN.CA / Grading every NHL team's left wing depth

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The National Hockey League calendar goes eerily quiet every August. For many, it's a brief respite in anticipation of another lengthy hockey season. At TSN, such a break is the perfect opportunity to spend some time dissecting rosters in finer detail.

Starting today, we will unveil a multi-piece series grading every team's lineup across the positional groups in tiered fashion. We will analyze the depth charts across all positions and create talent tiers for all 32 franchises. For the opener, we will start at left wing. A few housekeeping notes before we get into the piece:

-The tiered approach is meant to bucket teams with similar talent profiles at a given position.

-Position changes (intra-year and during off-seasons) are rather common in the NHL, and in one season, a left wing may see more minutes at centre or vice versa. We scraped the depth charts of two public databases (CBS and CapFriendly), reconciled them against positional usage in prior seasons, and in a handful of cases, made some forecast changes or educated guesses in anticipation of what coaching staffs may do in the upcoming year. Positional volatility only impacts the forward group, so we will manage through each carefully.

-Player contributions will be measured in Goals Above Replacement, which isolates player performance into the following pertinent categories: value added offensively and defensively at even-strength, value added across special teams play (if applicable), and value added by way of drawing and taking penalties. Last year's leaders, for your brief sanity check, include Johnny Gaudreau, Toronto's Auston Matthews, and Edmonton's Connor McDavid.

-We will use a weighted system for 2022-23 expectations. Top-six wingers generally play about 62 per cent of all available minutes; bottom-six wingers play the remaining 38 per cent of available minutes.

Let's get started:

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Tier 5, In Trouble: Chicago Blackhawks, Los Angeles Kings, Philadelphia Flyers, San Jose Sharks

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You could call this tier the 'we were dominant franchises a decade ago and are now in the throes of a multi-year rebuild' (San Jose and Chicago), 'pretending we aren't but are' (Philadelphia), and 'emerging' (Los Angeles). Across the sixteen expected regular left-wingers within these four teams, we have reasonably high expectations for two of them: Chicago's Andreas Athanasiou, and San Jose's Timo Meier.

With how much talent exists league-wide at the position, these depth charts are relatively very weak on offensive firepower, and there are a bunch of penalty magnets within the bottom-six that force their teams into penalty killing situations more than their head coach would like. The saving grace for a team like the Kings is they have plenty of strength around the rest of their lineup, which offsets an obvious positional weakness. For the other three teams, it's a primary reason why they'll struggle all season long. Oh, and I did I mention Meier is a restricted free agent at the end of the year?

Tier 4, Underperform: Anaheim Ducks, Arizona Coyotes, Buffalo Sabres, Montreal Canadiens, Pittsburgh Penguins

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There is certainly less fat within this group relative to your tier five teams, but noticeable missing is still the top-end firepower. We have seen electric seasons from Anaheim's Adam Henrique (always productive, but with availability concerns), Arizona's Clayton Keller (fresh off a point-per-game season), and Pittsburgh's Jake Guentzel (40 goals last year!) in prior seasons, but it feels like this small group of players are carrying the lion's share of production at the position for their respective teams.

I think one of the interesting depth charts to follow in this group heading into next season is Montreal. The Canadiens continue to rave over Cole Caufield and his shooting ability, and Evgenii Dadonov – who never developed much favour down in Vegas – is still a very capable playmaking middle-six forward, even at the age of 33. For a truly rebuilding team like the Canadiens, there is a decent amount of talent here, but I think it does hinge on a player like Caufield being a more productive two-way winger in his second season. He's certainly going to get the minutes to prove it.

Speaking of make-or-break type of seasons: Buffalo's Peyton Krebs, he of the famous Jack Eichel trade return package. Alex Tuch has fit in like a glove with Buffalo, and was a key reason why the Sabres were so competitive down the stretch last year. Krebs didn't have the same sort of fortune, struggling and routinely out-scored on lines featuring Dylan Cozens and Vinnie Hinostroza. Krebs is still just 21-years of age, but expectations for the former first-round pick remain high, and he's going to get a big shot on a Sabres team that aims to be more competitive in a top-heavy Atlantic division.

Tier 3, Average: Tampa Bay Lightning, Detroit Red Wings, Washington Capitals, Ottawa Senators, Winnipeg Jets, Vegas Golden Knights, Boston Bruins, New York Islanders, New York Rangers, Edmonton Oilers

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I want to start with a team that shouldn't be in this group, and that's the Winnipeg Jets. The Kyle Connor and Nikolaj Ehlers tandem at the wing position is effectively as good as it gets – you are talking about two players who combined for 75 goals last season, and Ehlers only played 62 games. They are remarkable playmakers and scorers, and the key reason why Winnipeg's top-six can still be ferocious, even as the rest of the group's future remains ambiguous as ever.

Jets fans know this all too well, but they are a great example of how poor depth can undermine broader team outcomes. Whether it's Morgan Barron, Jansen Harkins, or a number of other options in the pipeline, expectations for production from this bottom-six group is muted. Harkins had just 40 per cent of the goal share a season ago. Barron? 38 per cent.



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Kristian Vesalainen? 37 per cent. The departed Zach Sanford? 44 per cent. You get the point.

They aren't alone in this category either – lines anchored by Artemi Panarin routinely out-scored (+22) the competition, with the rest of the team treading near break-even (+3). In a hard cap league you can't spend everywhere, but the Rangers, like the Jets, need a lot more punching power from their bottom-six forwards, particularly at the wing position.

On a brighter note: two Atlantic division teams in Ottawa and Detroit have made huge investments at this position. The Senators bringing in 41-goal scorer Alex DeBrincat gives them a ferocious top-six, whereas Detroit has four reliable left-wing options, including Tyler Bertuzzi, Jakub Vrana, Dominik Kubalik, and Adam Erne that head coach Derek Lalonde will surely play with. I think this is a very intriguing group and, with some improvement at the centre position, could surprise to the upside next year.

Tier 2, Outperform: Calgary Flames, Carolina Hurricanes, Colorado Avalanche, Columbus Blue Jackets, Dallas Stars, Minnesota Wild, Nashville Predators, New Jersey Devils, Toronto Maple Leafs, Vancouver Canucks

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The outperformance tier is loaded with top-end talent and competency at the depth positions, but I think more than anything I am blown away with how many skilled players changed teams in this group. Calgary's Jonathan Huberdeau, Carolina's Max Pacioretty, Columbus' Johnny Gaudreau, Dallas' Mason Marchment, New Jersey's Ondrej Palat, and Vancouver's Ilya Mikheyev are all top-six attackers in this league right now.

And, more to the point of this exercise, remember how tier five had just two players across four teams we expected to have impact seasons? Across these ten teams, we expect at least 13 of these players to grade very well, and that ignores another obvious point: there are an abundance of forwards on these lists who aren't going to lose in their respective minutes, and in a hard-cap league, playing to break-even performance on cheap contracts is nothing to sneeze at.

The most intriguing team in this group, in large part because they are an offensive enigma on most nights, is Dallas. The Stars finished just 21st in scoring last season, and was out-scored over the course of the season despite qualifying for the playoffs. And, let's be honest, the hockey was structurally painful to watch from time to time.

However, 23-year old Jason Robertson exploded onto the scene last year. Robertson's 41 goals and 38 assists felt effortless, and he established himself quickly as one of the league's most impressive attackers. Moreover, it was clear that Robertson was the player stirring the drink, so to speak, on his line: as went Robertson's play, linemates Joe Pavelski and Roope Hintz followed. Not common you see left-wingers drive the performance of lines unless they are exceptional, and Robertson was last year.

Adding the 27-year old Marchment in free agency after his breakout second season gives the Stars two dangerous attackers inside of their top-six, though the Stars are hinging their hopes that neither Robertson nor Marchment had fluky breakout years. If Robertson and Marchment can replicate what they did last season this season, this Stars group is actually knocking on the door of elite status. Big if, but this is a positional group to watch come October.

One other team I'm keeping an eye on in this group is Carolina with Pacioretty in the fold. The Hurricanes took advantage of Vegas' cap situation and added the sniper for free (also known as "future considerations"); it gives them redundancy and optionality around Andrei Svechnikov that the team may have not had in prior seasons.

Tier 1, Elite: Florida Panthers, Seattle Kraken, St. Louis Blues

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Three teams, with deep offensive firepower, and very few – if any – holes at the position. Not a single winger on this list figures to be replacement-level calibre or below. And for top-end performance, we have five players who we are keeping an eye on for breakout seasons or continuance of breakout seasons: Florida's Matthew Tkachuk and Carter Verhaeghe, Seattle's Jared McCann, and St. Louis' Brandon Saad and Pavel Buchnevich.

I think the most debatable group of the three is Florida. I don't think you can discount how dominant a player Tkachuk is – whether you're watching video, looking up counting stats (I remind you, Tkachuk had a whopping 104-points last season, 8th highest in the NHL), or underlying numbers that give him even added credit for his ability to draw penalties. He's a superstar in this league. And it's not a surprise the Panthers didn't blink trading a franchise name like Huberdeau for Tkachuk's services, and his whopper of a new contract.

Behind him is Verhaeghe, who on a regular line with Aleksander Barkov and Anthony Duclair, outscored opponents to the tune of 26 goals a season ago. Florida, despite the changes across the lineup, won't have any difficulty scoring this year. But for this group to entrench itself in elite status, they'll need strong seasons from the likes of Ryan Lomberg and Nick Cousins behind them.

One last note, this one on the Kraken: adding Oliver Bjorkstrand for such a minimal cost was highway robbery, and I'd argue the Kraken have the deepest left-wing position in terms of skill across all 32 teams. Seattle was a tough watch in their inaugural season, but you look at a depth chart like this and have real reason for excitement – I think it's the best four-player group of all 32 teams. The notion a player of Bjorkstrand's capabilities could see third-line minutes speaks to how good the likes of Schwartz and McCann are. And, maybe, to a better second year in Seattle.

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