



NEWS RELEASE

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FLORIDA WINS DRAFT DRAWING, OBTAINS FIRST PICK FOR 2002 ENTRY DRAFT

NEW YORK (April 16, 2002) -- The Florida Panthers won the National Hockey League Draft Drawing today at the NHL New York office and will pick first overall at the 2002 NHL Entry Draft on Saturday, June 22, in Toronto. By virtue of a trade with the New York Rangers, the Panthers also hold the No. 10 drafting position, and thus will choose first and 10th in the first round.

The 2002 Entry Draft will take place at Air Canada Centre in Toronto, on Saturday, June 22 (rounds 1-3) and Sunday, June 23 (rounds 4-9). The order of selection for the first 14 drafting positions in the first round, only, of the 2002 Entry Draft is as follows:

1. Florida
2. Atlanta
3. Columbus
4. Tampa Bay
5. Pittsburgh
6. Nashville
7. Anaheim
8. Minnesota
9. Calgary
10. Florida (from NY Rangers)
11. Buffalo
12. Washington
13. Dallas
14. Edmonton

The remaining first-round drafting positions will be determined at the conclusion of the Stanley Cup Playoffs.

The Panthers, who would have picked third based on inverse order of regular-season finish, had the third-greatest likelihood, 14.2%, that one of the number sequences assigned to them would be the winning combination. The Atlanta Thrashers and Columbus Blue Jackets, who would have picked first and second, now will pick second and third, respectively, in the first round.

Under the system, only the five teams with the fewest points had the chance to select first overall and no team could move up more than four spots in the draft order.

Fourteen balls, numbered 1 to 14, were placed in a lottery machine and four were expelled, forming a series of numbers. The four-digit series resulting from the expulsion of the balls (10, 3, 8, 11) was matched against a probability chart, which divided the possible combinations among the participating clubs. The chart showed the Panthers had been assigned the numbers that were chosen.

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The Draft Drawing is a weighted system to give the teams that finished with the fewest points during the regular season the greatest chance of being selected. The Thrashers, who finished the regular season with the fewest points (54), were assigned the greatest number of potential combinations (25%). Columbus, with the second-lowest point total, was assigned 18.8% of the combinations, followed by Florida. The fourth through 14th teams had the following chances (by percentage): 10.7, 8.1, 6.2, 4.7, 3.6, 2.7, 2.1, 1.5, 1.1, 0.8 and 0.5, respectively.

Results of Previous Draft Drawings

Year	Selected	Effect on Draft Order	Player Selected
1995	Los Angeles	Moved from 7th to 3rd	Aki Berg
1996	Ottawa	Retained 1st selection	Chris Phillips
1997	Boston	Retained 1st selection	Joe Thornton
1998	Tampa Bay	Moved from 3rd to 1st via trades	Vincent Lecavalier
1999	Chicago	Moved from 8th to 4th	Traded pick
2000	NY Islanders	Moved from 5th to 1st	Rick DiPietro
2001	Atlanta	Moved from 3rd to 1st	Ilya Kovalchuk

#####(4/16/2002)