



NEWS RELEASE

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PANTHERS WIN DRAFT DRAWING, OBTAIN FIRST PICK FOR 2003 ENTRY DRAFT

NEW YORK (April 7, 2003) – The Florida Panthers won the National Hockey League Draft Drawing today and gained the rights to the first overall pick at the 2003 Entry Draft Saturday, June 21 at Gaylord Entertainment Center in Nashville, Tenn.

The Panthers also won the 2002 Draft Drawing, but traded that selection.

The Panthers, who would have picked fourth based on inverse order of regular-season finish, had the fourth-greatest likelihood, 10.7%, that one of the numbered sequences assigned to them would be the winning combination. Under the lottery system, only the five teams with the fewest points had the chance to win the first overall selection; no team could move up more than four spots.

Due to a draft-day trade with Columbus last year, the Panthers held the right to trade first-round picks for the 2003 NHL Entry Draft with the Blue Jackets. As a result, Florida had the second-greatest likelihood of winning today's draft lottery, 24.9%, the combined total of both teams' percentage.

The Carolina Hurricanes, Pittsburgh Penguins and Columbus Blue Jackets, who would have picked first, second and third, respectively, all moved back one spot and now own the second, third and fourth drafting positions in the first round.

The order of selection for the first 14 drafting positions in the first round, only, of the 2003 Entry Draft is as follows:

1. Florida Panthers
2. Carolina Hurricanes
3. Pittsburgh Penguins
4. Columbus Blue Jackets
5. Buffalo Sabres
6. San Jose Sharks
7. Nashville Predators
8. Atlanta Thrashers
9. Calgary Flames
10. Montreal Canadiens
11. Philadelphia Flyers (from Phoenix)
12. New York Rangers
13. Los Angeles Kings
14. Chicago Blackhawks

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

The lottery was conducted at the NHL's New York office.

Fourteen balls, numbered 1 to 14, were placed in a lottery machine. The machine expelled four balls, forming a series of numbers. The four-digit series resulting from the expulsion of the balls was matched against a probability chart that divided the possible combinations among the 14 participating clubs. The chart showed that the Panthers had been assigned the numbers (1-6-7-14) that were expelled.

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 having their combination selected. The Carolina Hurricanes, who finished the regular season with the fewest points (61) were assigned the greatest number of combinations, representing a 25% likelihood that their combination would emerge. Pittsburgh, with the second-lowest point total, was assigned 18.8% of the combinations, followed by Columbus (14.2%) and Florida. The remaining teams had the following chances: 8.1%, 6.2%, 4.7%, 3.6%, 2.7%, 2.1%, 1.5%, 1.1%, .8% and .5%

Results of Previous Draft Drawings

Year	Selected	Effect on Draft Order	Player Selected
1995	Los Angeles	Moved from 7 th to 3 rd	Aki Berg
1996	Ottawa	Retained 1 st selection	Chris Phillips
1997	Boston	Retained 1 st selection	Joe Thornton
1998	Tampa Bay	Moved from 3 rd to 1 st via trades	Vincent Lecavalier
1999	Chicago	Moved from 8 th to 4 th	Traded pick
2000	NY Islanders	Moved from 5 th to 1 st	Rick DiPietro
2001	Atlanta	Moved from 3 rd to 1 st	Ilya Kovalchuk
2002	Florida	Moved from 3 rd to 1 st	Traded pick
2003	Florida	Moved from 4 th to 1 st	

#####(4/7/03)