NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **APRIL 6, 2004**

CAPITALS WIN DRAFT DRAWING, OBTAIN FIRST PICK FOR 2004 ENTRY DRAFT

NEW YORK (April 6, 2004) -- The Washington Capitals won the National Hockey League Draft Drawing today and gained the first overall drafting position for the 2004 NHL Entry Draft, Saturday, June 26 at RBC Center in Raleigh, N.C.

The Capitals, who would have picked third based on inverse order of regular-season finish, had the third-greatest likelihood, 14.2%, 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 and no team could move backward more than one.

The Pittsburgh Penguins and Chicago Blackhawks, who would have picked first and second, respectively, now own the second and third drafting positions in the first round.

The Capitals have selected first overall twice in their 30-year history, picking defenseman Greg Joly in 1974, prior to their inaugural season, and defenseman Rick Green in 1976.

The order of selection for the first 14 drafting positions in the first round, only, of the 2004 Entry Draft is as follows:

1. Washington Capitals
2. Pittsburgh Penguins
3. Chicago Blackhawks
4. Columbus Blue Jackets
5. Phoenix Coyotes
6. NY Rangers
7. Florida Panthers
8. Carolina Hurricanes
9. Mighty Ducks of Anaheim
10. Atlanta Thrashers
11. Los Angeles Kings
12. Minnesota Wild
13. Buffalo Sabres
14. Edmonton Oilers

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

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The Drawing 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 Capitals had been assigned the numbers (1-4-8-12) 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 Penguins, who finished the regular season with the fewest points (58) were assigned the greatest number of combinations, representing a 25% likelihood that their combination would emerge. The Blackhawks, tied with the Capitals with the second-lowest point total (59) but placed lower in the standings by the tie-breaking criteria, were assigned 18.8% of the combinations, followed by the Capitals (14.2%) and the Columbus Blue Jackets (10.7%). The remaining teams had the following chances: 8.1%, 6.2%, 4.7%, 3.6%, 2.7%, 2.1%, 1.5%, 1.1%, 0.8% and 0.5%.

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
2002	Florida	Moved from 3rd to 1st	Traded pick
2003	Florida	Moved from 4th to 1st	Traded pick
2004	Washington	Moved from 3rd to 1st	

4/6/2004