

#NHLSTATS PACK: LOOKING AHEAD TO THE 2023 UPPER DECK NHL DRAFT



The 2023 Upper Deck NHL Draft will be held at Bridgestone Arena in Nashville over two days. Round 1 will begin at 7 p.m. ET on Wednesday, June 28 (ESPN, Sportsnet, TVA Sports), followed by Rounds 2-7 starting at 11 a.m. ET on Thursday, June 29 (NHL Network, Sportsnet, TVA Sports).

- * The [Order of Selection](#) was announced Thursday, June 15.
- * NHL Central Scouting's Final Rankings: [N.A. Skaters](#), [Goalies](#) & [International Skaters](#), [Goalies](#).
- * [2023 NHL Draft Prospect Bios](#): 70+ Profiles and Scouting Reports.
- * [NHL Ties & Bloodlines](#): A list of ranked prospects with family ties to the NHL.

NASHVILLE SET TO HOST 60TH EDITION OF THE NHL DRAFT

The 2023 Upper Deck NHL Draft will mark the 60th in NHL history. Montreal hosted the first 22 years of the NHL Draft at various venues and to date 24 different cities have held the event. This will be Nashville's second time hosting the NHL Draft (also 2003), with top prospects including **Connor Bedard**, **Adam Fantilli**, **Leo Carlsson** and **William Smith** descending on Music City to achieve a lifelong dream of being selected by an NHL team.

* The first-ever NHL Amateur Draft took place in a single day at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal on June 6, 1963. There were [21 players selected](#), including five that went on to play in the NHL. The first No. 1 overall pick was forward [Garry Monahan](#) by the Canadiens. Monahan appeared in 748 career games across 12 seasons with stops in Montreal, Detroit, Los Angeles, Toronto and Vancouver.

* Coincidentally, while the Red Wings selected [Peter Mahovlich](#) with the second overall pick in 1963, he spent the majority of his career with the team that passed on him in the No. 1 slot, winning four Stanley Cup championships with the Canadiens (1971, 1973, 1976 & 1977).

ALL-TIME FIRST ROUND PICKS BY POSITION

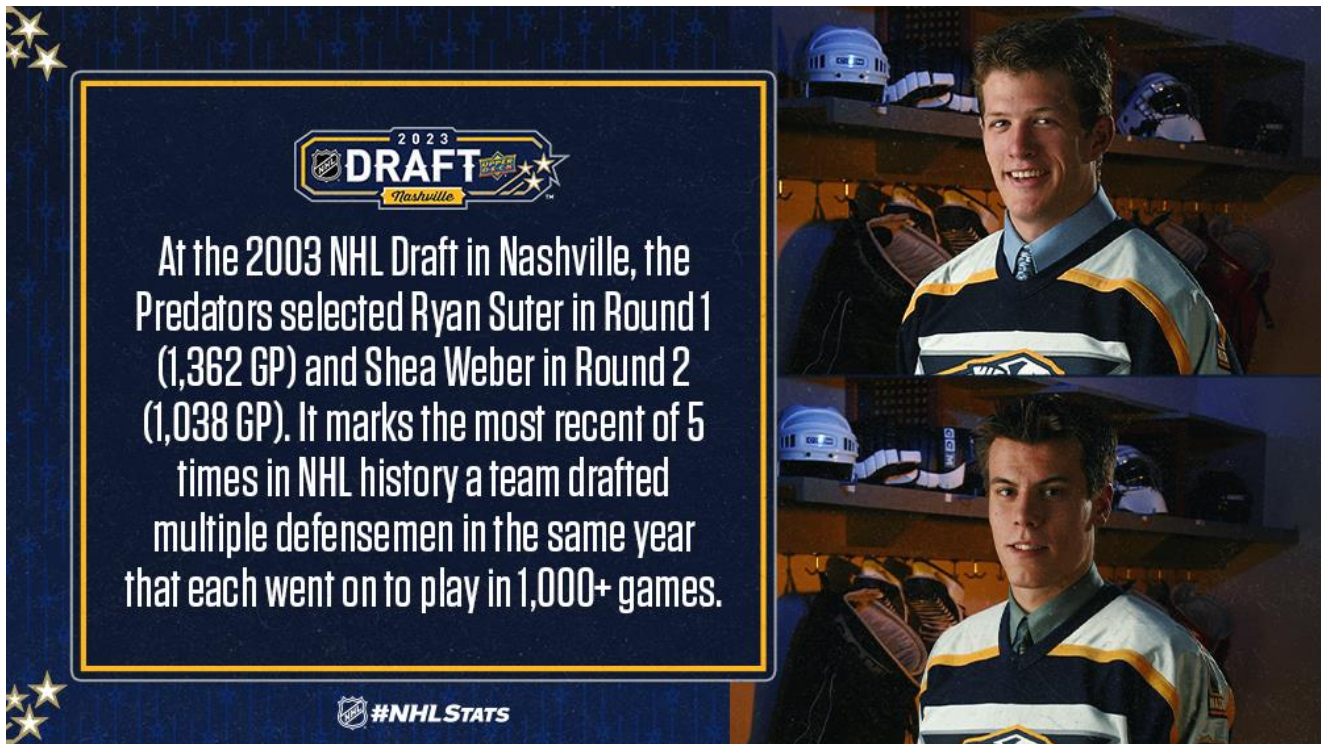
Total First Round Picks: 1,389
Forwards: 887
Defense: 433
Goalies: 68
Multi-Position (F/D): 1

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* This will also mark the 20th anniversary of the first time the NHL Draft was held in Nashville – the city previously hosted the event once before in 2003. That year is notable on multiple fronts as it marks the most recent time a goaltender was chosen with the No. 1 overall pick (**Marc-Andre Fleury** by PIT) and the year in which the Predators selected franchise-legend **Shea Weber** in the second round (49th overall).

* The [2003 NHL Draft](#) in Nashville, one of the most fruitful in League history, has produced [four 1,000-point players](#) to date in **Eric Staal**, **Patrice Bergeron**, **Ryan Getzlaf** and **Joe Pavelski** – tied for the fifth most in a single draft class in NHL history. It also produced [16 players](#) that have appeared in 1,000-plus games, the third-highest total in NHL Draft history behind 1984 (18) and 1979 (17).



CHICAGO LOOKS FOR NEW FRANCHISE PLAYER WITH TOP PICK

For just the second time in the 60 years of the NHL Draft, the Blackhawks hold the first overall selection – Chicago is now the 18th different franchise to select in the top spot multiple times. The previous year in which they held the No. 1 pick they drafted London Knights (OHL) forward **Patrick Kane**, who went on to become one of the great players in the history of the Original Six team. After Kane was traded to the Rangers prior to this past season’s trade deadline, Chicago will look for another franchise-changing player when they select first in this year’s draft.

* Kane, who was Chicago’s first overall pick in 2007, made an immediate impact with the franchise earning the Calder Memorial Trophy in his debut season of 2007-08 after [leading all first-year skaters](#) with 21-51—72 in 82 GP. He kept producing during his entire Blackhawks tenure while racking up awards and championships. He ranks among the top-five in franchise history for regular-season [goals](#) (3rd), [assists](#) (2nd) and [points](#) (2nd) as well as postseason [goals](#) (4th), [assists](#) (3rd) and [points](#) (3rd).

* In 2015-16, Kane won the Hart Trophy, Art Ross Trophy and Ted Lindsay Award after becoming the first American-born player to win the NHL’s scoring title. He was a key member of three Stanley Cup championships with the franchise (2010, 2013 & 2015) while capturing the Conn Smythe Trophy once (2013) and scoring the Cup-clinching goal in overtime of Game 6 to close out the 2010 Stanley Cup Final.



OTHER TEAMS WITH TOP FIVE PICKS

The Ducks (No. 2), Blue Jackets (No. 3), Sharks (No. 4) and Canadiens (No. 5) own the remainder of the top-five selections heading into the 2023 Upper Deck NHL Draft.

* The Ducks have selected in the No. 2 slot twice previously, drafting defenseman **Oleg Tverdovsky** in 1994 and **Bobby Ryan** in 2005. Tverdovsky [ranks fifth](#) on the franchise's all-time points list by a defenseman, while Ryan [ranks ninth](#) among all skaters in franchise history.

* The Blue Jackets hold a top-three pick for the first time since 2016, when they selected **Pierre-Luc Dubois** in the No. 3 slot. The other two top-three picks in Columbus' history include franchise icon and all-time leading scorer **Rick Nash** (No. 1 in 2002) and defenseman **Ryan Murray** (No. 2 in 2012).

* The Sharks have never selected in the No. 4 slot. This will mark their first top-five selection in 25 years, with their last such pick defenseman **Brad Stuart** (No. 3 in 1998).

* After selecting **Juraj Slafkovsky** first overall in front of home fans in Montreal in 2022, the Canadiens will have a top-five pick in consecutive seasons for the first time since selecting Hall of Famers **Guy Lafleur** (No. 1 in 1971) and **Steve Shutt** (No. 4 in 1972) in consecutive years. Montreal has picked in the No. 5 slot six times, most recently selecting goaltender and all-time franchise wins leader **Carey Price** in that slot.



MOST COMBINED POINTS BY PLAYERS IN EACH DRAFT SLOT

NHL DRAFT HISTORY

OVERALL PICK	POINTS	PICK W/ MOST POINTS
1st	36,924	Mario Lemieux
2nd	31,905	Marcel Dionne
3rd	22,667	Denis Savard
4th	22,107	Ron Francis
6th	18,759	Paul Coffey
7th	18,301	Bernie Federko
5th	17,442	Jaromir Jagr
9th	14,620	Rod Brind'Amour
11th	14,078	Jarome Iginla
8th	13,706	Ray Bourque



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BEDARD RANKS NO. 1 AFTER RECORD-BREAKING SEASON

Connor Bedard, a forward with the Regina Pats of the WHL, enters as the top-ranked prospect for the 2023 Upper Deck NHL Draft after excelling on both the junior and international stage during the 2022-23 season. In a WHL campaign in which he had twice as many five-point outings (10) than games in which he was held without a point (5), Bedard (71-72—143 in 57 GP) produced at a rate not seen in the league in 20-plus seasons.



Connor Bedard's 71 goals were the most by a WHL player in 24 years (Pavel Brendl: 73 in 1998-99) and his 143 points the highest-single season total the league had seen in 27 years (3 players topped the number in 1995-96)

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* Bedard was named WHL Player of the Year and to the WHL First All-Star Team at the conclusion of the 2022-23 season while also collecting more hardware at the CHL Awards, claiming Top Prospect, Top Scorer and Player of the Year. He became [the first player to win all three](#) CHL awards in the same season since the Top Scorer award was introduced in 1994.

* Internationally, Bedard had a breakout performance at the 2023 World Junior Championship where he led all skaters in goals (9), assists (14) and points (23). Those totals allowed him to set a Team Canada record for points in a single World Junior tournament and post the highest single-tournament total by any player at age 17 or younger. He was named Most Valuable Player, Best Forward and a Tournament All-Star at the 2023 tournament.

* [CLICK HERE](#) for *#NHLStats: 10 Things to Know About Connor Bedard* – a mix of on-ice accomplishments and off-ice storylines.



MOST POINTS BY NO. 1 PICK IN SEASON LEADING INTO NHL DRAFT

NHL DRAFT HISTORY

PLAYER	DRAFT YEAR	DRAFT YEAR TEAM	POINTS
Mario Lemieux	1984	Laval (QMJHL)	282
Guy Lafleur	1971	Quebec (QMJHL)	209
Bobby Smith	1978	Ottawa (OMJHL)	192
Dale Hawerchuk	1981	Cornwall (OHL)	183
Doug Wickenheiser	1980	Regina (WHL)	170
Sidney Crosby	2005	Rimouski (QMJHL)	168
Mel Bridgman	1975	Victoria (WCHL)	157
Pierre Turgeon	1987	Granby (QMJHL)	154
Eric Lindros	1991	Oshawa (OHL)	149
Patrick Kane	2007	London (OHL)	145
Dale McCourt	1977	St. Catharines (OMJHL)	139



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FANTILLI LATEST UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN STAR TO ENTER NHL

Adam Fantilli, the No. 2-ranked North American skater, completed what NHL Central Scouting's **Dan Marr** has called a season for the ages, capturing the Hobey Baker Award as a freshman at the University of Michigan while leading the nation in points with 30-35—65 in 36 GP. He also won gold internationally at both the 2023 World Junior Championship and 2023 World Championship.



* Fantilli is the latest in a growing group of University of Michigan stars to enter the NHL. Since 2015, five top-10 selections have come out of the school: **Zach Werenski** (No. 8 in 2015), **Quinn Hughes** (No. 7 in 2018) and the trio of top-five picks in 2021: **Owen Power** (No. 1), **Matty Beniers** (No. 2) and **Kent Johnson** (No. 5) – the first time in NHL Draft history three teammates were selected among the top five picks.

* Only two first-round draft picks in NHL history have won gold at both the World Junior Championship and World Championship prior to being selected: **Kaapo Kakko** (No. 2 in 2019) and **Jamie Storr** (No. 7 in 1994).

U.S. COLLEGES WITH MOST FIRST-ROUND PICKS, NHL HISTORY

- 15 – University of Michigan
- 9 – Boston University
- 8 – University of Minnesota
- 7 – Boston College
- 7 – Michigan State University

2023 DRAFT Nashville

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SMITH, WOOD, LEONARD ALSO AMONG TOP NORTH AMERICAN SKATERS

Rounding out the rest of the top-five ranked North American Skaters are a pair of forwards from the USA Hockey National Team Development Program’s Under-18 Team: No. 3-ranked **Will Smith** and No. 5-ranked **Ryan Leonard**, as well as **Matthew Wood** (No. 4-ranked N.A. skater), a forward from the University of Connecticut.

* Smith (51-76—127 in 60 GP) and Leonard (51-43—94 in 57 GP) both scored over 50 goals in the 2022-23 season while [ranking second and third on the team in points](#) behind No. 10-ranked North American skater **Gabriel Perreault** (53-79—132 in 63 GP). It marked the first time in the history of the program that three players on the Under-18 team scored 50-plus goals in the same season.

* USA Hockey’s National Team Development Program’s Under-18 team has produced at least one top-five pick in each of the last four years, already the longest streak by one team in NHL history.



Top-5 Picks from USA Hockey's Under-18 Team (NTDP) since 2019

2019: Jack Hughes (1st), Alex Turcotte (5th)
2020: Jake Sanderson (5th)
2021: Luke Hughes (4th)
2022: Logan Cooley (3rd), Cutter Gauthier (5th)

* Will Smith (top), Ryan Leonard (bottom) ranked No. 3 & No. 5 among N.A. skaters



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* Smith and Leonard were also key members of Team USA's gold medal-winning team at the 2023 Under-18 World Championship, with Smith named tournament MVP after leading all skaters in points and Leonard netting the golden goal in overtime.

* Wood was the youngest player in NCAA Division 1 Hockey in 2022-23 and led a University of Connecticut team with four NHL-drafted forwards in points with 11-23—34 in 35 GP. Wood grew up in British Columbia and is a friend and former minor hockey teammate of fellow 2023 top prospect Bedard (photo from [NHL.com article](#)).



CARLSSON, MICHKOV TOP INTERNATIONAL PROSPECTS

A pair of international prospects who spent the 2022-23 season competing in the top men's league of their respective country headline the list of international skaters: **Leo Carlsson** (Karlstad, Sweden), who was named Swedish Junior Hockey Player of the Year after recording 10-15—25 in 44 games with Orebro of the Swedish Hockey League, and **Matvei Michkov** (Perm, Russia), who played in the Kontinental Hockey League posting 9-11—20 in 30 contests.

* Carlsson also represented Sweden twice on the international stage in 2022-23, participating in the World Junior Championship (3-3—6 in 7 GP) and with the men's national team at the World Championship (3-2—5 in 8 GP), where he tied for the team lead in goals.

* Carlsson has become a spokesperson for those with a stutter, something he has had since he was young but talks openly about with the hope of inspiring people young and old dealing with the same thing. [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more.



HIGHEST SELECTED SWEDISH-BORN PLAYERS

NHL DRAFT HISTORY

PLAYER	DRAFT YEAR	DRAFTED BY	OVERALL SELECTION
Mats Sundin	1989	QUE	1st
Rasmus Dahlin	2018	BUF	1st
Daniel Sedin	1999	VAN	2nd
Victor Hedman	2009	TBL	2nd
Gabriel Landeskog	2011	COL	2nd
Henrik Sedin	1999	VAN	3rd
Nicklas Backstrom	2006	WSH	4th
Adam Larsson	2011	NJD	4th
Jesse Puljujarvi	2016	EDM	4th
Lucas Raymond	2020	DET	4th



*Leo Carlsson (pictured) could join this list

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