

NHL MORNING SKATE – APRIL 19, 2024



The graphic features a background image of hockey players on the ice. In the center, a player's jersey is visible with the name "KOPITAR" and the number "11". To the left, another player's jersey has "L.A." on it. The NHL logo is in the top right corner with the hashtag "#NHLSTATS".

Morning Skate

Friday, April 19, 2024

- 2024 Stanley Cup Playoffs bracket features several rematches from 2023 and beyond
- NHL announces dates, starting times and national TV coverage for First Round
- Kucherov, Matthews and Hellebuyck win 2023-24 regular season trophies

* The final two First Round matchups were confirmed thanks to a tying goal with 81 seconds remaining in regulation during the 1,312th and final game of the regular season, with the 2024 Stanley Cup Playoffs bracket highlighted by several rematches from 2023 and beyond.

* The NHL announced the dates, starting times and national television coverage for the First Round, which begins Saturday, April 20. [Click here](#) to read more.

* **Nikita Kucherov** and **Auston Matthews** won the Art Ross and Maurice "Rocket" Richard Trophy, respectively, while **Connor Hellebuyck** took home the William M. Jennings Trophy after the Jets allowed one fewer goal than the Panthers.

* The NHL's Board of Governors approved the establishment of a franchise beginning with the 2024-25 season in Utah, that will be owned and controlled by Smith Entertainment Group, which is led by **Ryan** and **Ashley Smith**.

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RESULTS

THURSDAY

 **4** ‹ FINAL **3** 

 **2** FINAL ‹ **4** 

 **1** FINAL ‹ **5** 

 **1** FINAL ‹ **5** 

 **4** ‹ FINAL **1** 

 **4** FINAL ‹ **5** 



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THE BRACKET IS SET, 2024 STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS START SATURDAY

Viktor Arvidsson (2-1—3) pulled the Kings even with 1:21 remaining in regulation and **Adrian Kempe** (1-1—2) tied the [NHL record for fastest goal from the start of an overtime period](#) as the Kings clinched third place in the Pacific Division and locked in the 2024 Stanley Cup Playoffs bracket, with the final two First Round matchups pitting Los Angeles against Edmonton and Vegas versus Dallas.

THE STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS BEGIN APRIL 20

Watch on ESPN, TNT, Sportsnet and TVA Sports



STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS



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* The Kings and Oilers will [meet in the First Round for a third straight season](#), following [2023](#) (4-2 EDM W) and [2022](#) (4-3 EDM W). They will be the 13th set of teams in NHL history to square off in the opening round of the playoffs in three or more consecutive seasons and first since Edmonton and Dallas did so from [1999](#) to [2001](#) (DAL: 3-0; EDM: 0-3).



* The Golden Knights and Stars will also [contest a rematch from last year](#) after Vegas vanquished Dallas in the [2023 Western Conference Final](#). The Stars can become the first team to get eliminated by the eventual Cup champions *and then oust that club during the following playoffs* since the 2018 Capitals, who defeated the Penguins in the [Second Round](#) after falling to them the [previous year](#).



* Fans worldwide can share their predictions for the playoffs and face off against friends, family, colleagues, hockey experts and fellow hockey fans in the *2024 Stanley Cup Playoffs Bracket Challenge presented by Betway*, available in six languages. The eligible entrant that finishes atop the leaderboard will win the chance to attend a 2024-25 NHL event. Visit [NHL.com/Bracket](#) to register.



MacKINNON, BEDARD CONCLUDE MEMORABLE SEASONS

* **Nathan MacKinnon** potted two assists to conclude the 2023-24 season with 51-89—140 (82 GP) and



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establish an [Avalanche/Nordiques record for the most points in a single season](#), eclipsing franchise icon **Peter Stastny** (46-93—139 in 1981-82) who held the distinction for 42 years. MacKinnon also joined **Nikita Kucherov** (44-100—144 in 81 GP) as the second player to record 140 points in 2023-24, marking the [seventh season in NHL history to feature multiple players reach the mark](#) and first since 1995-96 (**Mario Lemieux & Jaromir Jagr**).

* **Connor Bedard** helped the Blackhawks rally from a multi-goal third-period deficit in their finale and capped the season with a team leading 22-39—61 (68 GP). Bedard joined a [rare list of No. 1 picks to lead a team in scoring during the campaign following their NHL Draft](#) and had the 11th highest single-season point total in League history by a player age 18 or younger.

PLAYER	TEAM	SEASON	GP	POINTS
DALE HAWERCHUK	WIN	1981-82	79	103
SIDNEY CROSBY	PIT	2005-06	81	102
STEVE YZERMAN	DET	1983-84	80	87
JIMMY CARSON	LAK	1986-87	80	79
WAYNE GRETZKY	EDM	1979-80	45	69
BOBBY CARPENTER	WSH	1981-82	80	67
BRIAN BELLOWS	MNS	1982-83	78	65
PATRIK LAINE	WPG	2016-17	73	64
NATHAN MACKINNON	COL	2013-14	82	63
JEFF SKINNER	CAR	2010-11	82	63
CONNOR BEDARD	CHI	2023-24	68	61

KUCHEROV, MATTHEWS AND HELLEBUYCK WIN 2023-24 REGULAR SEASON TROPHIES

The 2023-24 regular season concluded with Lightning forward **Nikita Kucherov** capturing his second career [Art Ross Trophy](#) as the League’s scoring champion, Maple Leafs forward **Auston Matthews** winning his third career [Maurice “Rocket” Richard Trophy](#) as the NHL’s goal-scoring leader and Jets goaltender **Connor Hellebuyck** earning his first career [William M. Jennings Trophy](#) as the netminder who plays at least 25 games for the team allowing the fewest goals. [Click here](#) to read more.



* Kucherov posted a franchise-record 144 points (44-100—144 in 81 GP) – [the second-most by any player over the past 28 years](#) – to finish four ahead of second-place **Nathan MacKinnon** (51-89—140 in 82 GP) and earn his second Art Ross Trophy, following the 2018-19 campaign (41-87—128 in 82 GP). Kucherov became the second Lightning player to claim the award multiple times, joining **Martin St. Louis** (2012-13 and 2003-04), and the fourth active player with multiple wins, after **Connor McDavid** (5x), **Sidney Crosby** (2x) and **Evgeni Malkin** (2x).

* Matthews scored a franchise-record 69 goals (69-38—107 in 81 GP) – [the most by any player since 1995-96](#) – to close the campaign 12 ahead of second-place **Sam Reinhart** of the Panthers (57-37—94 in 82 GP) and capture his third Maurice “Rocket” Richard Trophy, after wins in 2021-22 and 2020-21. Matthews became the second player to claim the Maurice “Rocket” Richard Trophy, first presented in 1998-99, at least three times (after **Alex Ovechkin**: 9x) and the 12th player in NHL history to *outright* lead the League in goals on at least three occasions. His 12-goal gap over Reinhart marked the largest by the NHL’s top two goal-scorers since 2007-08, when Ovechkin (65) finished 13 ahead of **Ilya Kovalchuk** (52).

* The Jets, led by Hellebuyck (37-19-4, 2.39 GAA, .921 SV%, 5 SO), yielded a League-low 199 goals to finish one clear of the Panthers (200) and win their first William M. Jennings Trophy – the closest race for the award since 2015-16, when the Ducks (192) also prevailed by one goal over the Capitals (193). Winnipeg allowed three or fewer goals in 65 of their 82 contests, spurred by a streak of 34 consecutive such games from Nov. 4 – Jan. 20 – tied with the 1928-29 New York Americans for the third-longest stretch in NHL history, behind only the 1928-29 Bruins (44) and 2014-15 Wild (35).

BOARD APPROVES ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW FRANCHISE IN UTAH

The NHL’s Board of Governors approved the establishment of a franchise beginning with the 2024-25 season in Utah, that will be owned and controlled by Smith Entertainment Group, which is led by **Ryan** and **Ashley Smith**. In addition, the Board approved a plan that renders the Arizona Coyotes franchise inactive, with a right to reactivate if owner **Alex Meruelo** has fully constructed a new, state-of-the-art facility appropriate for an NHL team within five years.



* Effective at closing, the approved transactions will result in the Coyotes' franchise transferring the totality of its existing hockey assets – including its full Reserve List, roster of Players and draft picks and its Hockey Operations Department – to the Utah franchise. [Click here](#) for more information.

* The news comes one day after the Coyotes [contested their final home game](#) at Mullett Arena, earning a 5-2 victory over **Connor McDavid** and the Oilers. Franchise icon **Shane Doan** was in the building, the team paid tribute to long-time season ticket holders at puck drop and saluted the crowd at the conclusion of the game. **Lawson Crouse**, who has spent his entire eight-season career in Arizona, netted the eventual game winner. Crouse and leading-scorer **Clayton Keller** (8 seasons) were the longest-serving Coyotes on the team.



QUICK CLICKS

- * [Stanley Cup handoff offers many options for playoff captains](#)
- * [Golden Knights surprise former Make-A-Wish guest with championship ring](#)
- * [Duante Abercrombie named coach of inaugural Tennessee State hockey team](#)
- * [Sidney Crosby to talk contract extension with Penguins beyond next season](#)
- * [#NHLStats: Live Updates – April 18, 2024](#)



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