



New Year's Eve had a different ring to it this year as the League marked a first, with 2024 becoming the first calendar year to both begin and end with an outdoor game. The excitement started Jan. 1 with an outdoor game in one of the NHL's newest cities ([Seattle](#)) – the first of 1,428 total contests in 2024 (regular season and playoffs) – and fittingly ended with an outdoor showdown between rivals in one of its oldest as Chicago hosted the [Discover NHL Winter Classic on Dec. 31](#).

The final edition of the 2024 Year in Review by #NHLStats recaps some of the most memorable events and milestones from a year in which high-scoring and comeback trends continued. Highlights include a look back at the thrilling championship series that culminated with the Panthers becoming the [25th NHL franchise](#) to [win the Stanley Cup](#); a generational shift with the emergence of new young stars; the League welcoming a new franchise for the third time in eight seasons; and veterans breaking or pursuing records that have stood for generations – including [The Gr8 Chase](#) – all as the League celebrates the past 25 years with Quarter-Century Team selections.



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2024 LET'S TAKE THIS OUTSIDE, FROM START TO FINISH

The 2024 calendar year began in front of a sold-out crowd of 47,313 outdoors in Seattle, where the Kraken became the [second team in NHL history](#) to defeat a reigning Stanley Cup champion in an outdoor game, and concluded with a jam-packed New Year's Eve schedule highlighted by Blackhawks sophomore **Connor Bedard** making his outdoor debut in the first-ever Winter Classic rematch – a contest won by the visiting Blues. Playing at a sold-out Wrigley Field (40,933 fans) on New Year's Eve, recently acquired Blues defenseman **Cam Fowler** celebrated his 1,000th NHL game by spurring his new club to victory with the first two-goal outdoor game by a defenseman.



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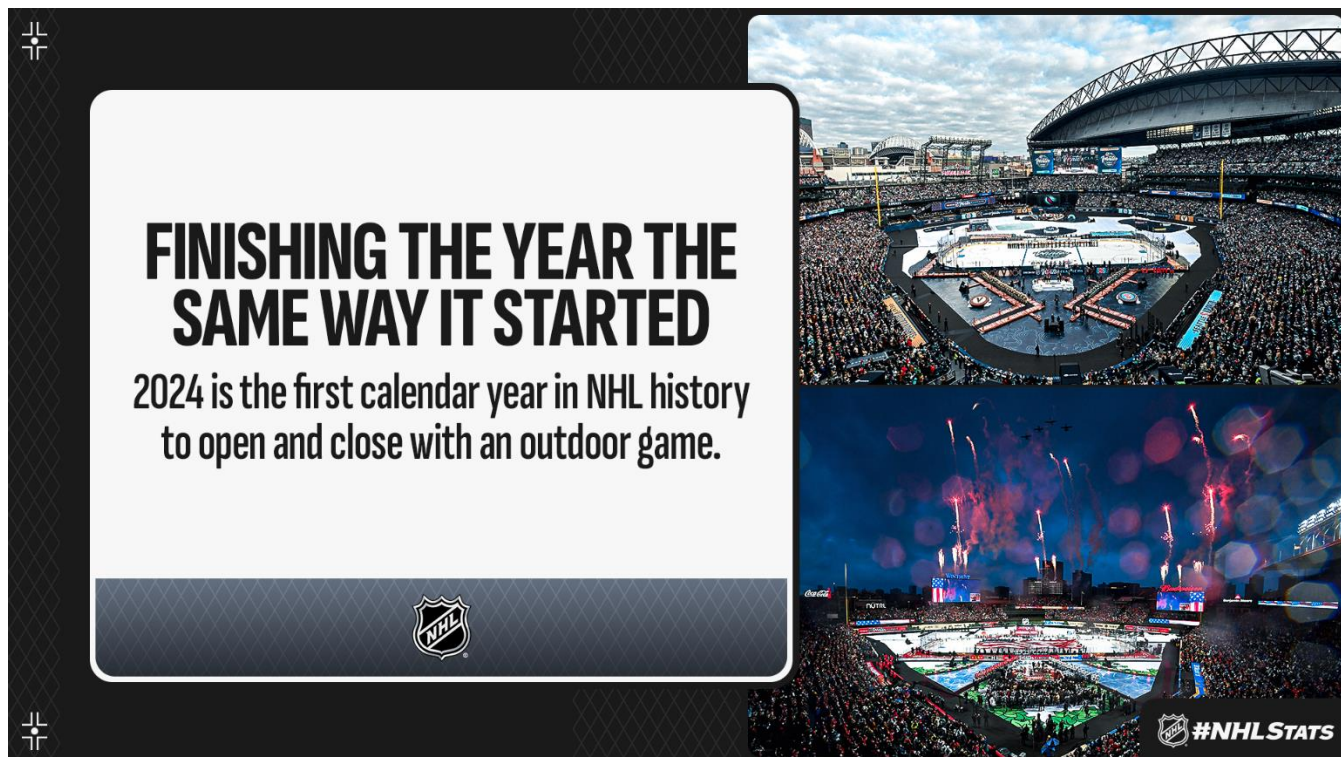


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* It was an event-filled year in 2024 as the NHL put on [four outdoor games overall](#), with the others being back-to-back Stadium Series contests in front of [150,000+ fans at MetLife Stadium](#). A star-studded NHL All-Star Weekend in Toronto was highlighted by the [return of the player draft](#), **Justin Bieber** serving as one of four celebrity co-captains and a [revamped skills competition](#). The year also featured [four Global Series games](#), the 2024 Upper Deck NHL Draft at the [world-famous Sphere in Las Vegas](#) and an [unforgettable Kraft Hockeyville 2024](#).

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2024 FULL "SPHERE" MOMENTS

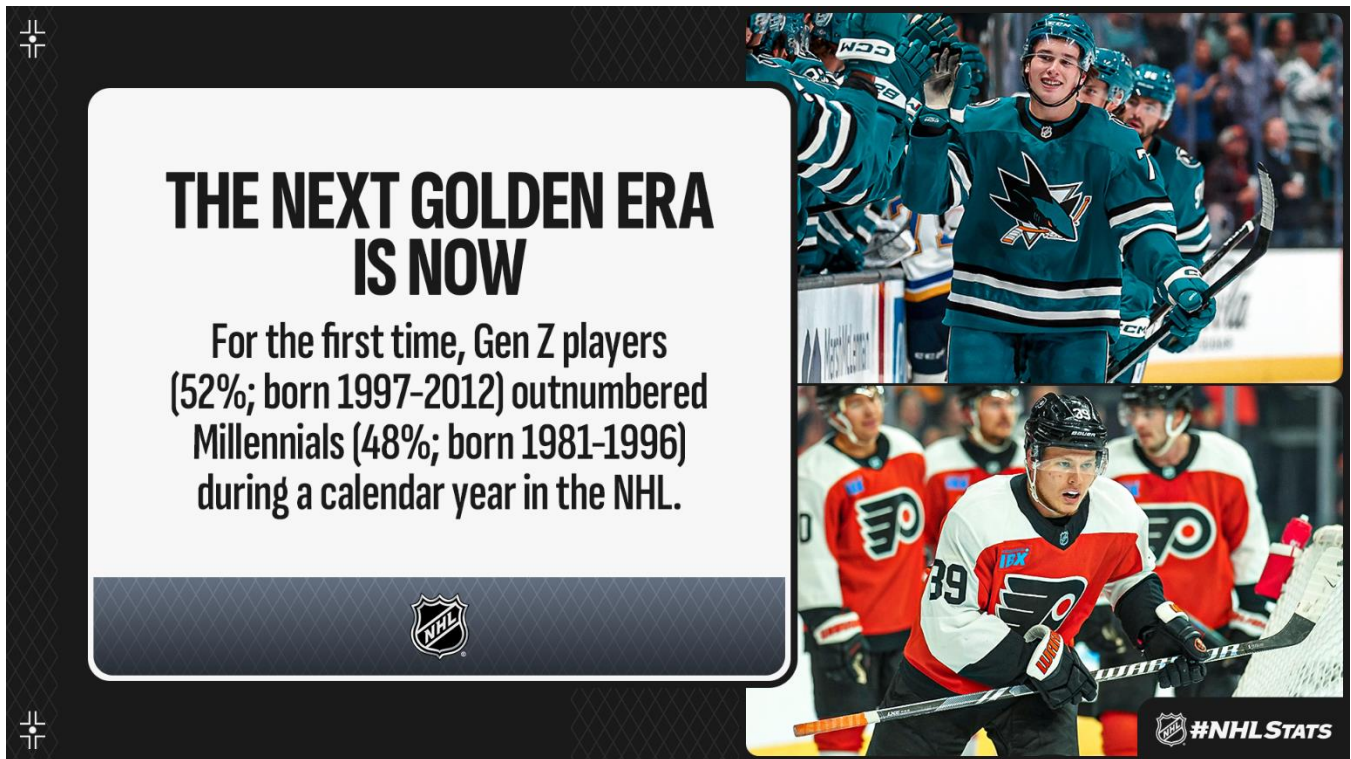
The day after **Connor Bedard**, the No. 1 pick from the 2023 NHL Draft, heard his name [called as winner of the Calder Memorial Trophy](#) in Las Vegas, fellow North Vancouver, B.C., native **Macklin Celebrini** was announced as the No. 1 pick when the hockey world converged upon Las Vegas for the [2024 Upper Deck NHL Draft at Sphere](#) – the first sports event and first live television broadcast from the venue. Fast forward a few months and Celebrini (12-15—27 in 28 GP) now leads rookies [in points-per-game](#) and sits [tied for first in goals](#) with **Matvei Michkov** (12-17—29 in 36 GP) of the Flyers after the two squared off in their second and final meeting of 2024-25 on New Year's Eve.

* Celebrini, 18, [is living with Joe Thornton](#), the Sharks franchise legend who [called his name in June](#) and [had his No. 19 retired by the club](#) in November. Thornton was one of four players to have his number retired in 2024, along with [Chris Chelios](#) (CHI), [Jaromir Jagr](#) (PIT) and [Miiikka Kiprusoff](#) (CGY).



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THE NEXT GOLDEN ERA IS NOW

For the first time, Gen Z players (52%; born 1997-2012) outnumbered Millennials (48%; born 1981-1996) during a calendar year in the NHL.

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* The focus on the future in 2024 included the "Gen Z" and "Tipping" spots as part of "[The Next Golden Era is Now](#)" ad campaign – one later [remixed in collaboration with the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario](#) – and a series of animated games ([NHL Big City Greens Classic 2](#), [Tommy Hawk's birthday party](#) and [MultiVersus NHL Face-Off](#)). At the same time, the NHL enters 2025 with a nod to the top performers of the past 25 years through the Quarter-Century Teams celebration – with the first two Club teams ([Chicago](#) and [St. Louis](#)) announced during the Winter Classic.

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2024 YEAR OF THE CATS

A little more than a year after falling to the Golden Knights in the 2023 Stanley Cup Final, the Panthers completed their [self-proclaimed "Redemption" tour](#) by defeating the Oilers to capture their first championship. Florida became the [ninth team in NHL history](#) to win a Cup after losing in the previous Final. The Panthers finished 2024 with a League-leading 69 total victories, within the top 15 for a calendar year in League history and among the highest totals [over the past 39 years](#).

* **Aleksander Barkov** became the first Finnish-born player in League history to captain a Stanley Cup champion, **Paul Maurice** claimed his first title more than 28 years after his NHL coaching debut, and **Matthew Tkachuk** shared the team lead in playoff points en route to becoming the first member of his family to win the Cup.

* The Prime Video cameras captured the [special moments](#) between the Tkachuks after Game 7 for the



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[first season of FACEOFF: Inside the NHL](#), with the family to be featured again in [Season 2 of FACEOFF](#) as younger brother **Brady** takes his turn in the spotlight.



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2024 OTHER TEAMS FIND SUCCESS SINCE JAN. 1

* Edmonton overcame a tumultuous start to the 2023-24 season to reach the 2024 Stanley Cup Final, with the tide beginning to turn after rookie head coach **Kris Knoblauch** was hired in November 2023. Part of the turnaround included a 16-game winning streak – tied for the [second longest in NHL history](#) – that began just before the 2023 holiday break and spanned until the 2024 NHL All-Star Weekend. Edmonton [shared the League lead](#) with 67 points from Jan. 1 through the end of the 2023-24 regular season and rebounded from a 10-point deficit in the Western Conference playoff bracket to become the third team in NHL history to reach the Stanley Cup Final after being that far out of the race.

* Winnipeg began 2024-25 as the [ninth team in NHL history](#) to start a season with a winning streak of eight or more games. They also finished 2023-24 with a similar streak and became the fourth team all-time with a winning streak of 16 or more contests (spanning seasons or otherwise), following Pittsburgh (17 GP in 1992-93), Edmonton (16 GP in 2023-24) and Columbus (16 GP in 2016-17). They led all teams in regular-season [wins](#) (57), [points](#) (117) and [goals-against per game](#) (2.41) during the 2024 calendar year, setting franchise records in all three categories, and enter January [atop the 2024-25 NHL standings](#).

* Currently in the thick of a Western Conference playoff race that has five teams separated by seven points, the Utah Hockey Club embarked on its inaugural season with a thrilling victory in front of a [sold-out crowd at Delta Center Oct. 8](#). Utah set an NHL record for longest road winning streak by a team in



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its inaugural season (7-0-0 from Nov. 26-Dec. 20) and had an eight-game point streak overall from Dec. 7-22 (6-0-2), tied for the third longest by a club in its first campaign.

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USUAL SUSPECTS HIT MAJOR MILESTONES

Playing their 20th year in the NHL, **Alex Ovechkin** and **Sidney Crosby** both entered 2024-25 in pursuit of major achievements, as did **Connor McDavid** (after leading a historic comeback attempt in the Stanley Cup Final).

* Ovechkin (41-30—71 in 70 GP) scored at least 40 goals in a calendar year (regular season & playoffs) for the 14th time to pass **Brett Hull** (13x) for the most such years in NHL history. His total included a League-leading 15 goals within his first 18 games of 2024-25 before being sidelined with an injury [Nov. 18](#) as the 39-year-old accelerated [The Gr8 Chase](#) by becoming the oldest player in League history to be the first to 15 goals in a season and the oldest ever to lead the NHL in goals outright at any point of a campaign. “The Great Eight” picked up right where he left off when he returned to the lineup in December, scoring in each of his first two games back to move within 25 goals of breaking **Wayne Gretzky**’s NHL record of 894. An [#NHLStats Pack](#) published after goal 870 details 25 facts about Ovechkin’s pursuit of history.

* Crosby (32-67—99 in 86 GP) continued to climb the NHL’s all-time leaderboards for [points](#) and [assists](#) in 2024, a year in which he hit [600 goals](#), [1,000 assists](#), [1,600 points](#), [1,300 games](#), passed **Mario Lemieux** for the most assists in [franchise history](#) and [matched a Gretzky record](#) with his 19th career point-per-game *regular season* in 2023-24. Including playoffs, this is the 19th time Crosby averaged at least a point-per-game during a *calendar year*, which places him ahead of **Gordie Howe** and **Joe Sakic** (both 18x) for the second most in NHL history behind Gretzky (20x).

* McDavid (42-138—180 in 103 GP) led all players in scoring for a fourth consecutive calendar year (regular season & playoffs), posting a career-best 180 points in 2024 (ahead of the 176 he had in 2022). McDavid joined Gretzky (9x; last 184 in 1989) and Lemieux (3x; last 192 in 1992) as the third player with 180 points in a calendar year. McDavid, whose total includes a [League-leading 42 points in the 2024 postseason](#) – along with an [NHL-record 34 playoff assists](#) – captured the [Conn Smythe Trophy](#) after spearheading the Oilers’ historic [comeback attempt](#) during his first Stanley Cup Final appearance. The Oilers captain hit both the [900](#) and [1,000-point](#) milestones in 2024 – the third time he has hit multiple [point milestones](#) in one calendar year – and has made his way into the top 85 on the NHL’s [all-time points list](#).



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NHL HISTORY (REGULAR SEASON & PLAYOFF POINTS)

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NO SHORTAGE OF STAR POWER

* **Sam Reinhart** (66-45—111 in 108 GP) recorded a League-leading 66 goals in 2024 (ahead of Oilers teammates **Zach Hyman**: 62 and **Leon Draisaitl**: 61), including 10 in the playoffs capped by his Stanley Cup clincher in [Game 7 of the Final](#). Reinhart's 66 combined tallies were the most in a calendar year in Panthers history (besting **Pavel Bure**: 58 in 2000), with goals on special teams making up more than half of them (35: 28 PPG & 7 SHG).



SINCE 1990 (REGULAR SEASON AND PLAYOFFS)

* **Nikita Kucherov** earned his second career Art Ross Trophy in April after leading the League with 44-100—144 (81 GP) and becoming the fifth different player in NHL history with [100 or more assists in a single season](#). He enters 2025 seven helpers shy of passing **Victor Hedman** (596) for the most in [Lightning franchise history](#).



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20
24 YEAR IN REVIEW

2024 PLAYER STATS

REGULAR SEASON AND PLAYOFFS

TOP SKATERS

66 MOST GOALS

SAM REINHART

180 MOST POINTS

CONNOR McDAVID

390 MOST MILES SKATED

CONNOR McDAVID

8 MOST 100+ MPH SHOTS

COLIN MILLER

TOP GOALIES

52 MOST WINS

SERGEI BOBROVSKY

9 MOST SHUTOUTS

CONNOR HELLEBUYCK

.921 HIGHEST SAVE PERCENTAGE (MIN. 40 GP)

CONNOR HELLEBUYCK

510 MOST HIGH DANGER SAVES

IGOR SHESTERKIN

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KEEPING IT COOL IN THE CREASE

* **Sergei Bobrovsky** led the Panthers to their first Stanley Cup and to 52 wins overall in 2024 (regular season & playoffs) to edge **Jake Oettinger** (51) of the Stars and **Stuart Skinner** (50) of the Oilers for the most in the NHL, as 2024 became the third calendar year ever with three goaltenders with 50+ wins apiece (also 2015 and 2013). Bobrovsky secured 16 of his victories in the 2024 Stanley Cup Playoffs, capping his run by becoming the [11th goaltender in NHL history](#) to earn a championship-clinching win at age 35 or older.

* **Connor Hellebuyck** led all goaltenders in regular-season [wins](#) (44), [shutouts](#) (9; nearly double the next closest goaltenders) and [save percentage](#) (.926; min. 35 GP) in the calendar year, one that saw him capture his second [Vezina Trophy](#) and first [William M. Jennings Trophy](#). Hellebuyck closed 2024 with a perfect performance during [Prime Monday Night Hockey on Dec. 30](#) to head into January with active win and point streaks of six and 10 games, respectively, and set or tie NHL benchmarks for wins and shutouts in a calendar year among U.S.-born goaltenders.



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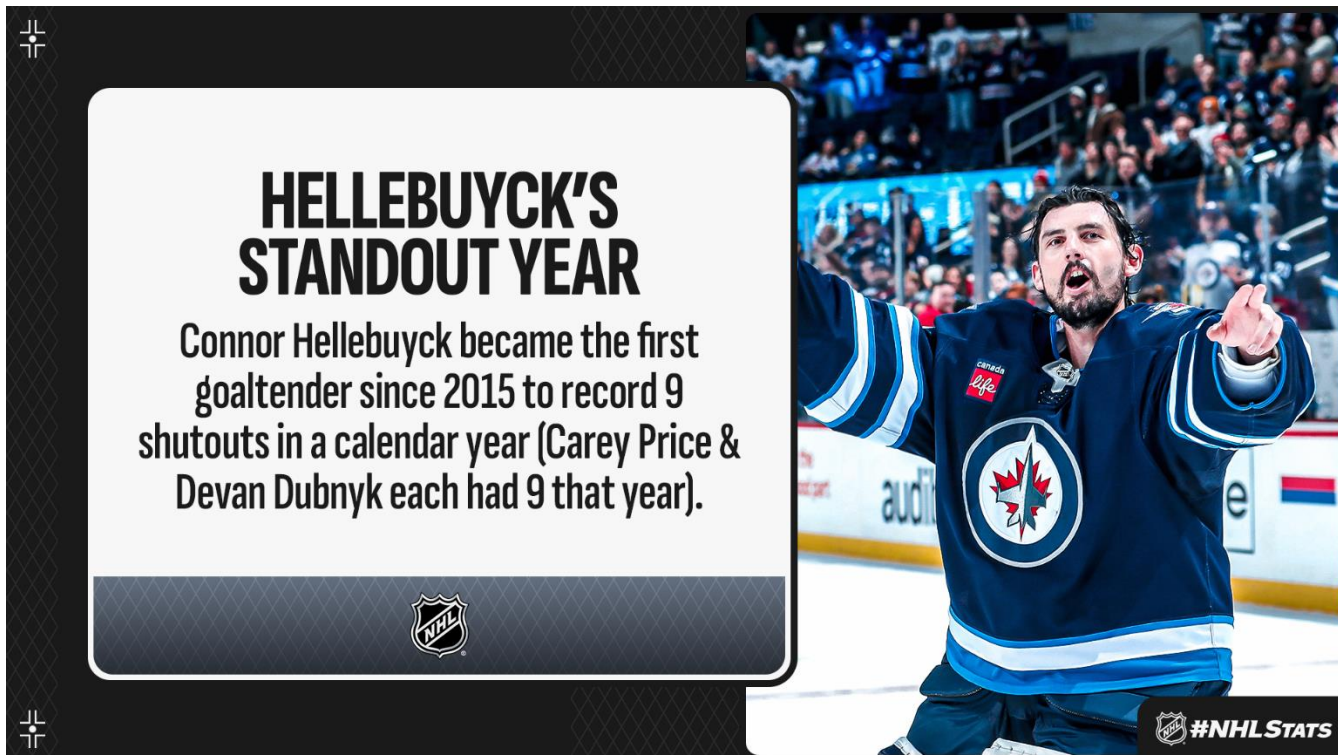


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Connor Hellebuyck became the first goaltender since 2015 to record 9 shutouts in a calendar year (Carey Price & Devan Dubnyk each had 9 that year).



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YEAR OF THE BLUELINER

* **Quinn Hughes** concluded the 2023-24 season by winning his first [James Norris Memorial Trophy](#) and finished the calendar year with 15-84—99 (93 GP, regular season & playoffs), which was enough to set a Canucks record for points in a year by a defenseman but not enough to crack the top two among NHL blueliners. Those spots were secured by fellow Western Conference foes **Cale Makar** (29-81—110 in 94 GP) of the Avalanche and **Evan Bouchard** (22-84—106 in 109 GP) of the Oilers who each hit triple digits. The trio made 2024 the first calendar year in NHL history to have three defenseman each with 99-plus points, while Makar and Bouchard combined for the sixth instance of two 100-point blueliners (also 2022: Makar & **Adam Fox**; 1990: **Paul Coffey** & **Al MacInnis**; 1989: Coffey & MacInnis; 1984: Coffey & **Ray Bourque**; and 1983: Coffey & Bourque).

2024 WAS AN EMOTIONAL YEAR FOR THE HOCKEY COMMUNITY

* 2024 was an emotional year for the hockey community as it was hit hard when **Johnny Gaudreau**, a three-time 30-goal scorer and one of the most popular players in the NHL, and his younger brother, **Matthew**, were killed. Their deaths evoked an [outpouring of emotion and tributes](#) from the entire sports world, accentuating the everlasting impact they had on the people who knew them and whose lives

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they touched. [Visit NHL.com](https://www.nhl.com) for more on the Gaudreau brothers and others from around the hockey world who died in 2024.

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2024 DATA POINTS STACKING UP COURTESY OF NHL EDGE

The League is capturing more information on each play than ever before as the fourth calendar year with [NHL EDGE](#) data closed with a New Year's Eve slated that included the hardest shot ever recorded by EDGE, a [106.00 mph blast](#) by Sabres forward **Tage Thompson** during the third period in Dallas. That slap shot bested the mark of 104.69 mph set by Thompson himself [on Oct. 26 against the Red Wings](#). The fastest skating speed recorded in 2024 was by Hurricanes forward **Martin Necas** (24.49 mph) [on Dec. 5 against the Avalanche](#). Oilers forward **Zach Hyman** led players with 45 goals scored in the high-danger zone, accounting for 73% of his total tallies (45 of 62).

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2024 PLAYS YOU'LL WANT TO PLAY AGAIN

The [2024 Year in Review video via NHL.com](#) includes moments that range from jaw-dropping to awe-inspiring. A selection of the best eye-catching goals, "Save of the Year" candidates in the early goings of 2024-25 and the third goalie goal in a span of two calendar years:

- * [Aleksander Barkov juggles puck mid-air for assist against Rangers](#)
- * [Barkov fakes between-the-legs to score in shootout against Kraken](#)
- * [Andrei Svechnikov scores another lacrosse goal against Bruins](#)
- * [Quinton Byfield scores highlight-reel goal against Blue Jackets](#)
- * [Jacob Markstrom makes incredible save in Global Series](#)
- * [Jordan Binnington robs Sean Couturier of the Flyers](#)
- * [Connor McDavid splits Panthers' defense to set up goal in the Cup Final](#)
- * [McDavid stick handles around Stars defenders for goal to help send Oilers to the Final](#)
- * [Sergei Bobrovsky diving save with his back to the play in Round 1 of playoffs](#)
- * [Filip Gustavsson scores a goalie goal](#)



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2024 YEAR IN REVIEW: BUSINESS OF THE NHL

The business of the NHL was its strongest ever in calendar year 2024, and revenues for the 2024-25 season are projected to exceed \$6.6 billion. Total attendance for the 2023-24 regular season was nearly 22.9 million, the highest ever, and teams are playing to 96.3% capacity so far in 2024-25.

* [Click here](#) to read more about the business of the NHL in 2024, a year in which the League had the most-watch regular season since 2015-16 and the most-watched regular season on cable in 30 years in the U.S. – with other highlights including nine new partners, more than \$4 million raised for Hockey Fights Cancer and the debut of NHL in ASL during the 2024 Stanley Cup Playoffs as the NHL broke barriers in the world of accessibility by becoming the first major professional sports league to produce a broadcast dedicated completely to the Deaf community in American Sign Language (ASL). The year also closed with an [NHL in ASL broadcast of the Discover NHL Winter Classic](#), a first for the event.

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