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2015 NHL DRAFT GUIDE

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THE STARTING LINEUP

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The player rankings are broken down loosely into talent tiers.• With each changing colour, a new tier of players starts.	
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Player Rankings 1-30



There's no debate who will be selected 1st overall but both McDavid and Eichel stand to be franchise changing players for Edmonton and Buffalo, respectively.

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1. Connor McDavid, LC (Erie, OHL)
2. Jack Eichel, RC (Boston University, Hockey East)
3. Mitch Marner, RW (London, OHL)
4. Noah Hanifin, D (Boston College, Hockey East)
5. Dylan Strome, LC (Erie, OHL)
6. Pavel Zacha, LC (Sarnia, OHL)
7. Lawson Crouse, LW (Kingston, OHL)
8. Ivan Provorov, LD (Brandon, WHL)
9. Mathew Barzal, RC (Seattle, WHL)
10. Zach Werenski, D (University of Michigan, Big Ten)
11. Mikko Rantanen, RW (TPS, Liiga)
12. Kyle Connor, LW (Youngstown, USHL)
13. Timo Meier, RW (Halifax, QMJHL)
14. Denis Guryanov, RW, Togliatti 2 (MHL)
15. Travis Konecny, RW (Ottawa, OHL)
16. Nicholas Merkley, C (Kelowna, WHL)
17. Jeremy Bracco, RW (US NTDP, USHL)
18. Evgeny Svechnikov, RW (Cape Breton, QMJHL)
19. Jérémy Roy, D (Sherbrooke, QMJHL)
20. Jakub Zboril, D (Saint John, QMJHL)
21. Oliver Kylington, D (Farjestad, SHL)
22. Colin White, C (US NTDP, USHL)
23. Joel Eriksson Ek, C, (Farjestad, SHL)
24. Daniel Sprong, RW (Charlottetown, QMJHLh)
25. Paul Bittner, LW (Portland, WHL)
26. Jansens Harkins, C (Prince George, WHL)
27. Jake DeBrusk, LW (Swift Current, WHL)
28. Noah Juulsen, D (Everett, WHL)
29. Brandon Carlo, D (Tri-City, WHL)
30. Ilya Samsonov, G (Magnitogorsk 2, RUS-Jr)

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Pavel Zacha has tons of growth left to his game and all the pro tools to become an impact top line player.



Projected as a second round prospect, Jeremy Bracco owns the skill to land inside the opening round.

Player Rankings

31-60

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One of the most exciting defensemen in the draft, Niagara's Vince Dunn has shades of Mike Green and can elevate fans from their seats.

31. Brock Boeser, RW (Waterloo, USHL)
32. Gabriel Carlsson, D (Linköping Jr., SWE-Jr)
33. Vince Dunn, D (Niagara, OHL)
34. Thomas Chabot, D (Saint John, QMJHL)
35. Filip Chlapik, C (Charlottetown, QMJHL)
36. Jacob Larsson, D (Frolunda, SHL)
37. Jack Roslovic, C (US NTDP, USHL)
38. Anthony Beauvillier, C (Shawinigan, QMJHL)
39. Denis Malgin, C (ZSC, NLA)
40. Travis Dermott, D (Erie, OHL)
41. Christian Fischer, RW (US NTDP, USHL)
42. Zachary Senyshyn, RW (Sault Ste. Marie, OHL)
43. Alexander Dergachev, C (SKA-1946 St.Petersburg, MHL)
44. Erik Cernak, D, Kosice (Slovak Extraliga)
45. Nicolas Roy, C (Chicoutimi, QMJHL)
46. Nicolas Meloche, D (Baie Comeau, QMJHL)
47. Jonas Siegenthaler, D (ZSC, NLA)
48. Mitchell Vande Sompel, D (Oshawa, OHL)
49. Thomas Novak, C (Waterloo, USHL)
50. Jacob Forsbacka-Karlsson, C (Omaha, USHL)
51. Dennis Yan, LW (Shawinigan, QMJHL)
52. Julius Nättinen, C (JYP-2, Mestis)
53. Mitchell Stephens, C (Saginaw, OHL)
54. Kirill Kaprizov, LW (Metallurg Novokuznetsk, KHL)
55. Roope Hintz, C/LW (Ilves, SM Liiga)
56. Sebastian Aho, LW (Kärpät, Liiga)
57. Blake Speers, RW (Sault Ste. Marie, OHL)
58. A.J. Greer, LW (Boston University, Hockey East)
59. Felix Sandström, G (Brynäs Jr., SWE-Jr)
60. Parker Wotherspoon, D (Tri-City Americans, WHL)



Dubbed the top goaltender by most experts, Ilya Samsonov is one of four Russians who could (key word) be chosen in the first round.

Player Rankings 61-90

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Nikita Korostelev may need to work on his footwork but he's arguably one of the purest goal scorers in the draft.

61. Mackenzie Blackwood, G (Barrie, OHL)
62. Filip Ahl, LW (HV71, SuperElit)
63. Michael Spacek, C (HC Pardubice, CZE)
64. Jens Lööke, RW (Brynäs, SHL)
65. Austin Wagner, RW/LW (Regina, WHL)
66. Ryan Gropp, LW (Seattle, WHL)
67. Sebastian Aho, D (Skellefteå, SHL)
68. Daniel Vladar, G (HC Kladno, CZE2)
69. Erik Foley, LW (Cedar Rapids, USHL)
70. Kyle Capobianco, D (Sudbury, OHL)
71. Matt Spencer, D (Peterborough, OHL)
72. Graham Knott, LW (Niagara, OHL)
73. Matej Tomek, G (Topeka, NAHL)
74. David Kase, C/LW (KLH Chomutov, CZE2)
75. Gabriel Gagne, RW (Victoriaville, QMJHL)
76. Ryan Pilon, D (Brandon, WHL)
77. Jordan Greenway, LW (US NTDP, USHL)
78. Nikita Korostelev, RW (Sarnia, OHL)
79. Alexandre Carrier, D (Gatineau, QMJHL)
80. Robin Kovacs, RW (AIK, Allsvenskan)
81. Rasmus Andersson, D (Barrie, OHL)
82. Dmytro Timashov, LW (Quebec, QMJHL)
83. Conor Garland, RW (Moncton, QMJHL)
84. Andrew Mangiapane, RW (Barrie, OHL)
85. Guillaume Brisebois, D (Acadie-Bathurst, QMJHL)
86. Kirill Pilipenko, RW (HK MVD, MHL)
87. Vladimir Tkachev, LW (Quebec, QMJHL)
88. Caleb Jones, D (US NTDP, USHL)
89. Aleksis Saarela, C (Assat, Liiga)
90. Yakov Trenin, LW (Gatineau, QMJHL)



Workhorse competitor Cedar Rapids' forward Erik Foley has endeared himself to the scouts because he plays an versatile game with impact.

Player Rankings 91-120

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Goaltender Veini Vehviläinen is coming off a standout performance for Finland at the Under-18s vaulting himself into consideration as a top goaltender talent.

91.	Vladislav Gavrikov, D (Lokomotiv, KHL)
92.	Adam Musil, C (Red Deer, WHL)
93.	Nathan Noel, C (Saint John, QMJHL)
94.	Brendan Guhle, D (Prince Albert, WHL)
95.	Jesper Lindgren, D (Modo, SuperElit)
96.	Veini Vehviläinen, G (JYP-Akatemia, Mestis)
97.	Glenn Gawdin, C (Swift Current, WHL)
98.	Ethan Bear, D (Seattle, WHL)
99.	Jeremy Lauzon, D (Rouyn-Noranda, QMJHL)
100.	Callum Booth, G (Quebec, QMJHL)
101.	Villi Saarijarvi, D (Green Bay, USHL)
102.	Samuel Montembeault, G (Blainville-Bois., QMJHL)
103.	Gustav Bouramman, D (Sault Ste. Marie, OHL)
104.	Pius Suter, C (Guelph, OHL)
105.	Chris Martenet, D (London, OHL)
106.	Anthony Richard, C (Val-d'Or, QMJHL)
107.	Lukas Jasek, LW (Trinec, CZE)
108.	Kevin Stenlund, C (HV71 J20, SuperElit)
109.	Tyler Soy, C (Victoria, WHL)
110.	David Cotton, C (Cushing Academy, NEDI)
111.	Yegor Rykov, D (SKA St. Petersburg, MHL)
112.	Cameron Lizotte, D (Peterborough, OHL)
113.	Michael McNiven, G (Owen Sound, OHL)
114.	Dante Salituro, C (Ottawa, OHL)
115.	Kameron Kielly, C (Charlottetown, QMJHL)
116.	Veeti Vanio, D (Blues, Jr. A SM-Liiga)
117.	Alexei Platonov, D (Mytischki Atlant, RUS Jr)
118.	Sebastian Olsson, LW (Skelleftea, SHL)
119.	Lucas Carlsson, D (Brynäs, SuperElit)
120.	Deven Sideroff, RW (Kamloops, WHL)



Knights towering defenseman Chris Martenet certainly falls into the sleeper category for the draft. His size is an obvious standout quality but this raw talent moves well and makes smart decisions as well.

Player Rankings 121-150



Agitating Pats winger Jesse Gabrielle knows his strengths well and a teams will see value in the in-your-face attack game that he plays.

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121.	Jesse Gabrielle, LW (Regina, WHL)
122.	Thomas Schemitsch, D (Owen Sound, OHL)
123.	Adam Brodecki, RW (Brynas, SHL)
124.	Nick Boka, D (US NTDP, USHL)
125.	Fredrik Forsberg, C (Leksand, SWE JE)
126.	Anthony Cirelli, LW (Oshawa, OHL)
127.	Liam Herbst, G (Ottawa, OHL)
128.	Radovan Bondra, RW/LW (Kosice, SVK E)
129.	Luke Opilka, G (US NTDP, USHL)
130.	Cooper Marody, C (Sioux Falls, USHL)
131.	Christian Jaros, D (Lulea J20, SuperElit)
132.	Colton White, D (Sault Ste. Marie, OHL)
133.	Artyom Volkov, D (Balashikha, RUSJr)
134.	Chaz Reddekop, LD (Victoria, WHL)
135.	Jonne Tammela, LW (Kalpa, Liiga)
136.	Casey Fitzgerald, LD (USNTDP, USHL)
137.	Pavel Karnaukhov, LW (Calgary, WHL)
138.	Kay Schweri, RW (Sherbrooke, QMJHL)
139.	Keegan Kolesar, LW/RW (Seattle, WHL)
140.	Justin Lemcke, D (Belleville, OHL)
141.	Christian Evers, D (US NTDP, USHL)
142.	Thomas Soustal, C (Kelowna, WHL)
143.	Connor Hobbs, D (Regina, WHL)
144.	Petter Makitalo, LW (Skelleftea, SWE JE)
145.	Troy Terry, C (USNTDP, USHL)
146.	Garrett McFadden, D (Guelph, OHL)
147.	Brendan Warren, LW (US NTDP, USHL)
148.	Dmitri Zhukenov, C (Omskie Yastreby, MHL)
149.	Cameron Askew, C (Moncton, QMJHL)
150.	Denis Godla, G (HC Slovan Bratislava, KHL)

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After hoisting the Memorial Cup, versatile Generals forward Anthony Cirelli looks to ride the momentum into the NHL Draft.

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PLAYER PROFILES – TOP 60

RK	PLAYER	TEAM	LEAGUE	POS.	HT	WT	ANALYSIS	STYLE COMPARISON
1	CONNOR MCDAVID	Erie	OHL	LC	6.0.75	195	The best and most hyped (rightfully so) prospect to come along since Sidney Crosby out of cole harbour. Entered the CHL as an “exceptional” player, McDavid’s steep development curve made that term seem rather pedestrian, exceeding all lofty expectations.	<i>Speedier Sidney Crosby</i>
2	JACK EICHEL	Boston University	Hockey East	RC	6.02	196	Confident and competitive, Jack Eichel is a first overall selection in any other draft season. Great size and strength combined with high-end power skating ability, Eichel can downright dominate opposing defenses and could have a huge rookie NHL impact.	<i>Mike Modano</i>
3	MITCH MARNER	London	OHL	RW/C	5.11	160	Slick and crafty in possession, London’s Mitch Marner projects to be a potential star playmaking talent. What he lacks in size, Marner makes up for in his vision, poise and offensive instincts. He’s got the potential to be a mix of Ryan Nugent-Hopkins and Patrick Kane style of player.	<i>Ryan Nugent-Hopkins & Patrick Kane hybrid</i>
4	NOAH HANIFIN	Boston College	Hockey East	LD	6.02.75	203	A potential top three selection and top defender on this list, Noah Hanifin exhibits one of the smoothest and calculated puck moving games in recent years. He’s got the ability to lead the rush with outstanding skating ability but also chooses his spots extremely well.	<i>Ryan Suter/Scott Niedermayer</i>

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5	DYLAN STROME	Erie	OHL	LC	6.03	185	Packed in tightly with Marner and Hanifin for the potential 3 rd overall selection, Strome is an intuitive offensive attacker using timed entries and clever blind passes to create scoring chances. His feet have improved but there's room for continued improvement. He could stand to be more aggressive at times.	<i>Joe Thornton-esque</i>
6	PAVEL ZACHA	Sarnia	OHL	LC	6.03	210	One of the true wildcards, Sarnia's Pavel Zacha's rookie OHL season was a bit of a rollercoaster that was filled with suspensions, injury and periods of unproductivity. At his best, he looks like a top three talent capable of exploding into scoring lanes and unleashing a wicked snapshot. He's lined up down the middle but he tends to operate better as a trigger man and will likely end up flanking a top-six wing. His bullish style of play has the potential to be one of the league's most exciting young players.	<i>Eric Staal with some bite</i>
7	LAWSON CROUSE	Kingston	OHL	LW	6.04	215	In discussion as a potential top five selection, Lawson Crouse is one of the draft's most discussed players as some remain concerned with his offensive production. He's one of the safest prospects in terms of being able to find a role at the next level. An astute defensive player with the physical gifts to play a power game, the world hasn't seen Crouse at his best offensively and that'll be a tempting option early in the draft.	<i>Wayne Simmonds</i>

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8	IVAN PROVOROV	Brandon	WHL	LD	6.00.5	201	Another highly discussed player, Ivan Provorov has received votes as the draft's top defender. Provorov landing in the eighth slot speaks to how special and strong the top 10 because Provorov has the confidence, poise, hockey processor and all-around skills to develop into a top pairing minute-munching defenseman. He's one of the most efficient blueliners to come around in years and shows well shutting down attacking forwards or leading the rush up ice.	<i>Oliver Ekman-Larsson</i>
9	MATHEW BARZAL	Seattle	WHL	RC	5.11	175	Skilled and driven, Matt Barzal has been a highly touted prospect for years and after a draft season that witnessed him sidelined with a freak knee injury, he's proven to be worthy of a lottery selection. Barzal capped off a wild season with a dominant performance for Team Canada, showing the world that he's a player a team can build their offences around.	<i>Derek Stepan</i>
10	ZACHARY WERENSKI	Univ. of Michigan	Big Ten	RD	6.02	206	It's a shame that standout Wolverines rookie defender Zach Werenski isn't ranked higher but that's really just a formality because his talents are more than worthy. He projects as an all-situations defender but owns an intriguing offensive game – featured around high-end vision. Capable of playing with an edge or with finesse, Werenski is a moldable prospect with a bright future.	<i>Jack Johnson/Brent Seabrook</i>

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11	MIKKO RANTANEN	TPS	Liiga	RW	6.03.5	211	Rated as the top European forward, Rantanen owns top line upside and is expected to be drafted very early – maybe as early as 6 th . Skating in an admiral 6-foot-3+ frame, Rantanen isn't your prototypical power forward but rather a sizeable skilled winger with good playmaking touch and great scoring instincts.	<i>James van Riemsdyk/Jakob Voracek</i>
12	KYLE CONNOR	Youngstown	USHL	LW	6.01	177	A gifted skater with high-end offensive instincts, Kyle Connor ripped up the USHL scoring charts and is a top 10 talent/candidate. His complete offensive package and overall competitive drive gives him the tools and tool box to develop into a dangerous top line forward. Given his natural abilities, Connor will almost assuredly become an impact player because he's constantly on the hunt to create scoring chances.	<i>Speedier Derick Brassard</i>
13	TIMO MEIER	Halifax	QMJHL	RW	6.01	209	Riding shotgun next to Winnipeg top prospect Nikolaj Ehlers, Switzerland's Timo Meier established himself as a dominant CHLer capable of playing a number of roles. Blessed with a great shot and scoring instincts, Meier projects as a top line scorer but his power game, soft touch and strength allows him to excel in high traffic and dirty areas. He's rated quite high by others and there's a lot to like about his game but his sloppy skating needs work so he lands 18 th in a comfortable spot.	<i>T.J. Oshie</i>

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14	DENIS GURYANOV	Togilatti 2	MHL	RW	6.02.5	183	Slick and powerful in flight, Russian sniper Denis Guryanov came on strong at the Under-18 Championships showcasing a bevy of pro tools that should have him considered inside the top 20. He's a dangerous attacker in flight as he flies up the off-wing and unleashes a deceptive array of shots. Combine his scoring touch with solid handling ability, a good size frame and enough bite to <i>earn</i> his own opportunities and Guryanov is one of the drafts potential stars.	Valeri Nichushkin
15	TRAVIS KONECNY	Ottawa	OHL	RW/C	5.10	175	Dating back to his pre-OHL days, Travis Konecny has always been a feared attacker as the undersized but fearless winger broke twine with his outstanding in-flight snapshot. He's continued that success at the OHL level but has also developed a creative playmaking side as well, giving him another element of threat. Konecny is a true leader with loads of character and with few players his age possessing his work ethic and drive, he's bound to be an impact player at the next level. Durability could be the only concern since he does rely on the physical game in his attacks.	Zach Parise/Bryan Little
16	NICK MERKLEY	Kelowna	WHL	RC	5.10.5	191	Gifted playmaker with a competitive and fearless drive, Memorial Cup winner Nick Merkley has the offensive instincts and pro-level anticipation to create scoring chances at will. He's not a dangler but his efficient support game, two-way awareness and blue-collared work ethic projects well as a player who can carve out a top nine role in the NHL.	Bryan Little

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17	JEREMY BRACCO	USA NTDP	USHL	RW	5.09	173	Rated 17 th overall on this list and it's probably later than I'm comfortable with. The uber-skilled playmaking winger would likely be bumped up 10 spots on this list had he grown a few more inches but he's still very much undersized and NHL scouts don't traditionally favour those types. Slick and elusive in possession and extremely creative in his passes, Bracco owns the ability to create scoring chances out of nothing. Similar to NTDP alum Patrick Kane, Bracco is a pace-setter with an elite panic-threshold, often pulling up and holding onto the puck for late-arriving options. He's the homerun option in the middle of the first round.	<i>Johnny Gaudreau meets Patrick Kane</i>
18	EVGENY SVECHNIKOV	Cape Breton	QMJHL	RW	6.02	199	Skating in a dominating 6-foot-2, 200-plus pound frame, Evgeny combines size, strength and smarts extremely well in a skilled power game. A top 10 sleeper, Svechnikov doesn't have many holes in his game and scouts love his ability to adapt from a skilled game featuring slick puck handling to a power possession game that allows him to play in the trenches.	<i>Mark Stone/Ondrej Palat</i>
19	JEREMY ROY	Sherbrooke	QMJHL	RD	6.00	188	Headlining the second tier of potential first round defenders, Jérémy Roy has established himself as one of the top puck moving blueliners in the draft. Agile and fluid in motion, Roy owns the ability to control the pace of the game. Unlike a lot of offensive defenders, he's surprisingly efficient on the defensive side of the puck and uses his physicality smartly, despite being a smaller rearguard.	<i>T.J. Brodie</i>

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20	JAKOB ZBORIL	Saint John	QMJHL	LD	6.01	184	Zboril caught the eye of scouts in his rookie QMJHL season after the Czech import defender accustomed himself quickly. He's a plus skater with good instincts, particularly in the offensive zone. He analyzes his options well and is a strong powerplay option, firing hard shots through traffic with high efficiency. Zboril missed nearly two months of action so his name doesn't get thrown around as often but he certainly could land inside the opening half of the first round.	<i>Brent Seabrook</i>
21	OLIVER KYLINGTON	Farjestad	SHL	LD	6.00	180	Knocked around the draft boards quite a bit this season, Kylington remains an extremely exciting prospect despite some of his deficiencies. The young Swede is a gifted skater who's willing to test the boundaries offensively. He's not afraid to make mistakes but that often leads to careless errors, showing questionable hockey sense in that regard. Like most offensively geared defenders, Kylington has a bit of a wildcard aspect to his game but for a team drafting in the backend of the opening round (with multiple 1sts), he'd be worth a shot.	<i>Jake Gardiner</i>
22	COLIN WHITE	USA NTDP	USHL	RC/W	6.00	183	Coming from the Noble and Greenough prep school, White established himself as one of the National Program's true leaders. He's not as flashy in terms of puck skills but his skating can certainly be categorized as plus. He's detail-oriented on both sides of the puck playing as strong as any draft eligible forward in the defensive in. White may never develop into a top 20 scorer but he his value lies in his ability to play tough minutes, chipping in good secondary production and taking on an invaluable leadership role.	<i>Brandon Dubinsky</i>

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23 **JOEL**
ERIKSSON EK

Farjestad SHL LC 6.02 180

Sweden's Joel Eriksson-Ek is another well-sized above-average skating skilled forward with promising pro potential that has him landing inside the majority of rankings. He is one of the drafts few five tool skaters and with his attention to detail in all three zones, his NHL certainly certainly increases along with his versatility. Eriksson-Ek is a projects as a top-six skilled player who'll likely draw team's interests in the second half of the opening round.

James Neal

24 **DANIEL**
SPRONG

Charlottetown QMJHL RW 6.00 180

The wildcards keep piling up near the end of the opening round and Daniel Sprong is the latest. The offensive dynamo ranks as a top 10 player in terms of pure offensive skill creating chances with imaginative one-on-one attacks, elusive skating and paralyzing puck skills. In a similar situation as Josh-Ho-Sang last year, Sprong is a good candidate to fall outside of his "talent" tier but teams could be tempted enough to move up to grab him if he falls too far.

Mike Ribeiro



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25	PAUL BITTNER	Portland	WHL	LW	6.04	204	<p>Winterhawks' strong skating winger Paul Bittner owns a lot of tantalizing skills - pro size, good hands, strong skating stride and a hunger to retrieve pucks. In saying that, Bittner is a player worth being slightly cautious about. He doesn't play with the aggression or physicality that one would hope for a player of his size. Also, he can often get caught overthinking plays and making poor decisions that leave questions surrounding his hockey sense. All in all, Bittner is a player that traditional scouts will like because his certainty to play in this league because the combination of his skating, puck skills and admirable compete level will eventually find a role. There's a ton of upside if he works on those two areas above which would justify him as potential Top 15 pick.</p>	<i>Blake Wheeler</i>
26	JANSENS HARKINS	Prince George	WHL	LC	6.01	182	<p>With hockey bloodlines from his father and current WHL bench boss, Todd Harkins, Jansens already has one favourable check mark in his arsenal but he's also an extremely smart attacker and plays a clean complete game down the entire ice. It's questionable whether he'll be looked at as a go-to offensive contributor but he'll produce good secondary numbers and, more importantly, bring an enthusiastic compete level every time he hits the ice. Teams looking for a valuable all-situations pivot who the coach can count on will be eyeing up Harkins.</p>	<i>Adam Henrique</i>

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27	JAKE DEBRUSK	Swift Current	WHL	LW	5.11.5	174	Extremely dedicated competitor with flashes of dynamic attacking abilities, Jake DeBrusk certainly inherited the former more so than the latter from his father, Louie – who carved out a career as an NHL tough guy. His intelligence through osmosis from being around the game is displayed in his ability to support the play well and position himself smartly in all three zones. He’s got an innate ability to time arrivals and lead passes as if he has been playing this game for three decades. DeBrusk nearly tripled his goal totals (42) and doubled his point totals (81) as a sophomore with the Broncos.	<i>Joffrey Lupul</i>
28	NOAH JUULSEN	Everett	WHL	RD	6.01.5	174	Swift footed defender displays high-end awareness, identifying options quickly in the offensive zone and posting up with prime positioning defensively. Physically, Juulsen still has a lot of growing to do and once strength is added, his game will really take off. He’s ranked as a potential late second round selection based solely on his upside. His instincts, passing ability and flawless mobility are exactly the tool requirements to build an offensive-minded defender from. There’s an overall quiet effectiveness to his game and he plays well within his limitations. Projects as a top-four puck mover.	<i>Brian Campbell meets Kevin Bieksa</i>
29	ILYA SAMSONOV	Magnitogorsk	MHL	G	6.03	200	Samsonov is the top ranked netminder in a group that also features Mackenzie Blackwood, Daniel Vladar, Matej Tomek and Felix Sandstrom. He’s posted some of the best numbers in recent international play and downright stole games from highly touted teams like USA. He’s competitive, quick, and acrobatic but the biggest	<i>Pekka Rinne</i>

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question is when/if he will ever come to North America.

30	BRANDON CARLO	Tri-City	WHL	RD	6.05	196	The importance of having big bodied blueliners who are mobile, strong and defensively sound is extremely important on contending teams. American Brandon Carlo exemplifies that style of player. He will likely never rack up the points (although 40 points isn't out of the question) but his type of <i>presence</i> is necessary. The right-shooting Carlo moves well for his massive size and given that he's a physical defender, it's not out of the question to think he could develop into another Brayden Coburn.	<i>Mark Staal</i>
31	BROCK BOESER	Waterloo	USHL	RW	6.00.5	191	Turned in impressive USHL numbers, Brock Boeser established himself as one of the top snipers in the loop. He's capable of playing a power game below the hashmarks but prefers to act more as the trigger man than the workhorse. He looked like a Top 20 talent on some dominant nights but wasn't overly consistent, going through times of inactivity. Boeser projects as a secondary scoring winger but he'll need to ramp up his intensity and maintain it to reach become a journeyman scorer.	<i>Kyle Okposo</i>

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32	GABRIEL CARLSSON	Linkoping Jr.	SWE Jr	LD	6.04	183	Big one-dimensional shutdown blueliner who will eat up a ton of tough minutes, stifling attacks with a rangy wingspan, quick footwork and suffocating gap control. Teams know what they are getting with Gabriel Carlsson and there's few who do it as well as he does in this class.	<i>Karl Alzner</i>
33	VINCE DUNN	Niagara	OHL	LD	6.00	188	At this point in his career, Vince Dunn remains a high-risk, high-reward offensive defenseman. One has to admire his eagerness to get involved and create opportunities from the backend but he's prone to forcing plays and skating himself into trouble. Dunn is an exceptional skater featuring a smooth effortless stride. His puck skills are strong and he can certainly bring fans out of their seats. The upside is huge especially if he can restrain himself at times.	<i>Nathan Beaulieu/Mike Green</i>
34	THOMAS CHABOT	Saint John	QMJHL	LD	6.01.5	180	One of the best blueline skaters in the draft, Thomas Chabot also brings a warrior-like compete level never surrendering or quitting on loose puck battles. Despite his unrelenting battler mentality, Chabot will need to significantly improve his strength (which will come) and learn to better utilize body positioning and pivots to stake claim in puck battles. Offensively, Chabot possesses a quick processor and soft hands which should lead to role on a top powerplay unit.	<i>Keith Yandle</i>
35	FILIP CHLAPIK	Charlottetown	QMJHL	LC	6.01	196	Productive QMJHL rookie Filip Chlapik displays great awareness and playmaking abilities ranking his vision as some of the best in the draft. He's willing to play through contact at an average size but to truly take off and become a threating top-flight prospect, Chlapik will need to improve his heavy skating.	<i>David Krejci</i>

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36	JACOB LARSSON	Frolunda	SHL	LD	6.02	191	Calm under pressure with the puck or without it, Sweden's Jacob Larsson has established himself as a two-way defender with first round potential. He's not overly dynamic but his skating is above par. He's not a bruising defender but he keeps his assignments in check. Larsson may never scorch the scoring charts, he'll put up numbers with his intelligent puck-moving game.	<i>Niklas Hjalmarsson</i>
37	JACK ROSLOVIC	USA NTDP	USHL	RC	6.01	183	Due to Roslovic's hearty attacking abilities and never-quit attitude, he appears to be a meat-and-potatoes high energy player at first glance. Upon further inspection, Roslovic flashes some intriguing dynamic offensive moves at times leaving some to think he might have another level. If not, Roslovic's value as an in-your-face puck hound is a welcomed addition on any competitive NHL roster.	<i>Patrick Sharp</i>
38	ANTHONY BEAUVILLIER	Shawinigan	QMJHL	LW/C	5.10	173	Knocked out of a first round ranking by default, Anthony Beauvillier is deserving of hearing his name called on opening night but it's impossible to fit 40+ worthy candidates into 30 spots. He's a high character player who takes as much pride defending his zone as he does burying the puck (and he does that a lot). Undersized and lacking power in his stride, strength is the biggest obstacle for this high-volume shooter.	<i>Joe Pavelski-esque</i>

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39	DENIS MALGIN	ZSC	NLA	RC	5.08	163	In a similar mold as fellow Swiss forward Kevin Fiala, Denis Malgin is an short stocky offensively gifted pivot who was easily his nation's best player in international competition this season. Ranked higher than he'll likely land come draft time, Malgin's an intelligent and patient attacker with paralyzing one-on-one skills. He's far from a complete player but it's not due to ineptness. Teams should be advised not to sleep on Malgin's pro-style game.	<i>Kevin Fiala/Tyler Johnson</i>
40	TRAVIS DERMOTT	Erie	OHL	LD	5.11	197	Competing on a powerhouse Otters squad, Travis Dermott was the backbone of their blue line playing quietly difficult minutes. He's below average is size but owns a smart hockey processor – knowing when to keep things simple and when to jump into the rush. His low-maintenance style of defending that relies on sound positioning and timely reads is effective. He's a sleeper to develop into a less dynamic Duncan Keith stype of player.	<i>Justin Faulk/Shades of Duncan Keith</i>
41	CHRISTIAN FISCHER	USA NTDP	USHL	RC/W	6.02	212	Fischer enters the 2015 draft as a bit of a sleeper. He's a very smart attacking forward that teams will love to add to their lineup as soon as the second round opens. Fischer's stride owns good mechanics and with increased strength, his power game should flourish. He combines outstanding positioning with a sneaky quick shooting arsenal and he's capable of dazzling with some clever puck skills. Mark down Fischer as a true sleeper and a candidate to go much higher than he is ranked.	<i>Mikko Koivu</i>

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42	ZACH SENYSHYN	Sault Ste. Marie	OHL	RW	6.01	192	While the draft has a ton of intriguing high upside talents, Zach Senyshyn tops the list. As a productive rookie on a stacked Soo Greyhounds squad, Senyshyn jumped off the page as a speedy north-south aggressive attacking winger often appearing as though he was a third or fourth year vet. He struggled down the stretch with limited ice time but is expected to shoulder a big workload next year. It'll take a GM with a lot of job security (or confidence) to take him in the first or second round but that team could be patting their own backs in a few years time.	<i>Matt Duchene-ish/Brendan Perlini</i>
43	ALEXANDER DERGACHEV	SKA-1946 St.Petersburg	MHL	RW/LW	6.04	202	Dergachev broke out on the North American stage with eye-opening performances in the Super Series and World Junior Championships. For a 6-foot-4+ power forward, he showed some soft mitts in tight quarters and overall possesses quite a bit of skill. He calls on natural athleticism and a massive wingspan to dominate below the hash-marks. Dergachev hasn't rounded out his defensive game but his hand-eye coordination and competitive approach are great fundamentals to build on.	<i>Paul Gaustad</i>
44	ERIK CERNAK	Kosice	SVK	RD	6.03	202	Experienced beyond his years,Erik Cernak is a projectable defender with size, smarts and strength working to his advantage. His play has been somewhat sporadic but at his best, he's a mobile hard-to-play-against blueliner who projects to be a minute-munching stiffler of offence. His offensive upside is somewhat capped but his overall North American style will attract suitors as early as the first round.	<i>Jason Garrison</i>

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45	NICOLAS ROY	Chicoutimi	QMJHL	RC	6.04	195	The former 1 st overall selection in the QMJHL draft, Nicolas Roy is an astute two-way pivot who ranks above-average on the defensive side of the puck. Very smart and calculated, Roy uses his size and length advantage to close down on attacking units and while he lacks offensive flair there is hope that he has another gear to reach. In a lot of ways, his game is reminiscent of Leafs prospect Freddy Gauthier. Roy needs to continue to improve his skating stride which can be laboursome.	<i>Martin Hanzal</i>
46	NICOLAS MELOCHE	Baie Comeau	QMJHL	RD	6.03	204	Simplistic yet very effective defender, Nicolas Meloche has shown some feared elements including thundering physicality, a tricky pick-pocketing stick and a heavy booming shot from the point. Meloche isn't the type of defender who'll be leaned on to spearhead the rush but he's more than efficient in handling the puck. His calling will be as a second or third pairing two-way defenseman who can be thrown out in a variety of situations. Meloche plays smartly within his abilities and that's a commodity for teams looking to plug holes on their blueline.	<i>Zbynek Michalek</i>

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**47 JONAS
SIEGENTHALER**

ZSC

NLA

LD

6.03

220

Big defenseman with advanced strength, Switzerland's Jonas Siegenthaler plied his trade in his nation's top league playing against men and was leaned on heavily in international play. On the world stage, Siegenthaler has been thrown into all-situations but he projects more as a defence-first rearguard that can slide up into a secondary offensive role if needed. He's a strong skater with improving puck confidence but it's an area where he still gets overwhelmed under pressure. Siegenthaler's upside is intriguing because with some polishing, a team could reveal a real gem. It'll be interesting to see whether he makes the jump to North America following the draft – it would be a better test.

Travis Hamonic

**48 MITCHELL
VANDE SOMPEL**

Oshawa

OHL

LD

5.10

182

Mitch Vande Sompel is a high-risk/high-reward type of defenseman with a lot of upside as a puck moving, powerplay specialist defenseman. At the OHL, he's shown to be an exceptional transition guy finding seams quickly and threading needles to hit streaking teammates. Vande Sompel has had some injuries that further lead to concerns about whether he will be durable to last at the next level as a small defender. He's shown to be satisfactory defensively in the OHL but he often gets outmuscled which will only be escalated at the pro level.

Dan Boyle

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49	THOMAS NOVAK	Waterloo	USHL	LC/W	6.00	181	University of Minnesota commit Thomas Novak had no difficulties transitioning into the USHL after dominating the high school ranks a year prior. An offensively gifted player with slick puck skills, creative vision and an innate ability to anticipate the action, Novak projects as a playmaking pivot. His skills are likely first round worthy but his defensive responsibilities leave him teetering on the outside looking in.	<i>Tomas Fleischmann</i>
50	JACOB FORSBACKA-KARLSSON	Omaha	USHL	RC	6.01	185	Teams drafting Forsbacka-Karlsson will do so knowing that he may top out as a third line specialist. With mediocre production in the USHL, Forsbacka-Karlsson has displayed that it's his intelligent defensive game that will provide the most value moving forward. He's capable of chipping in offensive but won't be hanging his hat on scoring trophies. Forsbacka-Karlsson is a player that coaches will be drawn to and trust playing tough minutes.	<i>Travis Zajac</i>
51	DENNIS YAN	Shawinigan	QMJHL	LW	6.01	187	The Russian-American, Dennis Yan, is coming off an impressive rookie QMJHL season, one where he racked up more than a point-per-game and cleared the 30 goal milestone. A very intriguing prospect, Yan owns some slippery one-on-one moves, confident possession skills and a pro-stype support game. At times though, Yan falls into a perimeter game resorting to the <i>easy attacking routes</i> rather than implementing an aggressive one. Yan's a high-potential forward and with some coaching he could become a threatening scorer at the next level.	<i>Max Pacioretty-like</i>

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52	JULIUS NATTINEN	JYP Akatemia	Mestis	LC	6.02	191	Outside of Mikko Rantanen, Finland's lacking the highend talent that the country usually sends through the draft but keep an eye on Julius Nattinen because he's got the pro tools to develop into a special talent. He's a high volume shooter with a great release and if he can add more consistency in his assertiveness then he could become a noteworthy late bloomer.	<i>Patrik Berglund</i>
53	MITCHELL STEPHENS	Saginaw	OHL	RC/W	5.11	190	Blazing hard-working pivot Mitchell Stephens had a late surge up the draft rankings with an excellent second half season, showcasing his quick feet, two-way awareness and his ability to find the back of the net with a deceptively quick shot. Stephens exemplifies strong leadership traits and when combined with a smart hockey mind, he's got the makings of an impact middle six option. He's not big but owns good strength for a smaller player. Stephens was a high OHL selection and he'll get attention as soon as the second round opens up.	<i>Marko Dano/Bryan Little</i>
54	KIRILL KAPRIZOV	Metallurg Nov.	KHL	LW	5.10	181	Playing with men in the KHL, Kirill Kaprizov quickly showed that he owns the smarts and skill to compete with and against sveteran talent. Due to his Russian passport and lack of commitment to North America, Karpizov currently sits as a bit of a risk so expect his draft stock to fall further than his talent would suggest. However, that uncertainty could all chance at the draft if a team feels they can get their hooks into him. He's a smart player, flashes good creativity and definitely anticipates the offensive game well.	<i>Tomas Tatar</i>

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55	ROOPE HINTZ	Ilves	Liiga	LC/W	6.02	185	Big Finn who can skate like the wind, Hintz is a presence in the lineup who's able to provide solid secondary production. He is a lunchpail forward who plays a very North American style of game. He attacks seams with great north-south speed and has found a niche for taking pucks hard to the cage. Not the flashiest attacker, Hintz uses his intelligence to and hockey sense to attack strategically moving the puck into soft areas then retrieving it. He operates equally as well as a playmaker as he does as a sniper – an area that has garnered attention due to his accuracy and quick release.	<i>Ryan O'Reilly</i>
56	SEBASTIAN AHO	Kärpät	Liiga	LW	5.11	172	Skilled and fearless winger Sebastian Aho is a determined and smart possession player who playing in the gritty areas of the ice despite lacking an ideal frame. Quick decisions and assertive puck movements are just two of his pro-calibre skill attributes. He was a depth player with Finland's U20 World Junior providing a good spark and jumped onto the U18 squad for the final Championship game against the Americans (lost in overtime) after scoring the Championship winning overtime goal for his club team in Kärpät. There are some concerns about his overall ability to play through physical contests.	<i>Jussi Jokinen</i>

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57	BLAKE SPEERS	Sault Ste. Marie	OHL	RW/C	5.11	181	Filling in as a secondary option on a stacked Greyhounds' roster, Speers still was able to quietly rack up above point-per-game totals. The swift footed winger with a great shot release has played both the wing and down the middle and his overall high IQ two-way approach is an easy style to plug into a top-nine roll. It still remains to be seen whether he can compete hard and emerge as a player that the offense runs <i>through</i> . At times, Speers looks as if he's content playing as a secondary support option.	<i>Jiri Hudler</i>
58	A.J. GREER	Boston University	Hockey East	LW	6.03	205	Buried on a strong Terriers squad that limited his ice time, AJ Greer was still able to showcase his potential when he did take the ice. Due to his limited opportunities, it'll be aggressive and bold for a team to use a high second round pick on him but his talents suggest that it could be worth it long term, especially if a team has several seconds at their disposal. Greer is an excellent skater and a big body who's flashed solid skill at Boston University. He should take on more responsibility as a sophomore and is a potential breakout candidate.	<i>Chris Kreider</i>

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59 FELIX SANDSTRÖM

Brynäs Jr

Super
Elit

G

6.02

192

The second of three potential first goaltenders picked, Sweden's Sandström was held to limited starts due to injury and really didn't get the chance to gain momentum in his draft season. He's applauded for his dynamic skills which include rangy flexibility, cat-like reflexes and sound mechanics. Like many athletic goaltenders fall victim to, Sandström occasionally overplays pucks looking to make the highlight stop but his overall competitiveness and ability to battle for pucks bodes well as a future NHLer. With some coaching to stabilize his technique and focus, Sandström has the potential to develop into a solid starter.

Braden Holtby

60 PARKER WOTHERSPOON

Tri-City

WHL

LD

6.00

171

Brother of Calgary Flames young defender Tyler Wotherspoon, Parker is an average-sized puck moving defenseman with smart outlets and efficient routes. In a similar mold as a Matt Carle or Vlasic, Wotherspoon has the ability to chip in offensive production but he's not dud in the defensive zone either. He's very good in a lot of area but lacks that one "dynamic" skill set, so expect a good defenseman but he may never be a star at the next level.

Matt Carle

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YOUNGBLOOD'S MOCK DRAFT

1ST ROUND

PICK	TEAM	PLAYER	ANALYSIS
1		CONNOR MCDAVID	Experienced with four 1st overall selections in the past five years, Edmonton could let a monkey make this selection. No brainer as the Oilers take exceptional pivot Connor McDavid.
2		JACK EICHEL	Sabres GM Tim Murray allows the monkey to stay at the podium to select the second no brainer in Jack Eichel. As good as McDavid would've been for Buffalo, adding an American superstar in a border city will do the city well
3		DYLAN STROME	The draft essentially starts at pick three and with Noah Hanifin, Mitch Marner and Dylan Strome heavily considered, GM Don Maloney adds the latter with Strome being the big skilled pivot the franchise has been searching for.
4		NOAH HANIFIN	As much as Dubas and Hunter might want to grab an OHLer like the familiar Mitch Marner, passing up a franchise defenseman in Noah Hanifin just wouldn't be wise. The Leafs have an opportunity to add a forward talent with their second 1st round selection.
5		MITCH MARNER	The 'Canes are in the fortunate position to draft the best player available and consensus states that Mitch Marner is that guy. Skilled and creative, Marner will provide Carolina with a potential front line star to build around when the post-Eric Staal era begins.
6		PAVEL ZACHA	Traditionally unconventional at the draft table, New Jersey could go a number of ways with this pick (Crouse, Barzal, Rantanen or Provorov) but Pavel Zacha's combination of size, skill and grit is too much to pass up.
7		IVAN PROVOROV	Much like the Devils, Philly has a number of glorious options with the 7th pick and it's the intelligent efficient two-way defender Ivan Provorov who tops their list.
8		ZACH WERENSKI	It's no secret that Columbus is looking to improve their defensive system and grabbing Wolverines Zach Werenski would be an excellent selection. A d-man who does a lot of things well, Werenski has the potential to become the best of the defensive bunch.
9		LAWSON CROUSE	Sharks sit back and collect their prize when Lawson Crouse falls into their lap. An outstanding defensive forward with size, Crouse will soon show the hockey world that his offensive talents are better than critics think.
10		MIKKO RANTANEN	Blue line help would be ideal for the Avalanche but without trading up or down, Colorado goes for a sizeable talented Finnish winger in Mikko Rantanen. He's a player with a lot of pro tools and would look good flanking MacKinnon or Duchene for the next decade.

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11		KYLE CONNOR	Set down the middle, Florida snatches up speedy USHL scoring winger Kyle Connor adding to an impressive young forward core. Skilled and smart, Connor is a potential Top 10 selection so it goes without saying that he'd be great value at 11.
12		MATT BARZAL	Dallas has shown a pattern of knocking their CHL selections out of the park in recent years and Barzal in the 12 spot would be a grand slam. Missed time with a knee injury but returned to have one of the best finishes to the season showing top line potential.
13		TRAVIS KONECNY	Ottawa has been a breeding ground for future LA Kings and Travis Konecny's competitive, hard-working skilled game is worth returning to Canada's nation's capital. The former top pick in the OHL had an "off year" statistically but will rebound next season.
14		TIMO MEIER	Meier has an ability to transform and adapt between a skilled support player and a burly power winger which is an attractive luxury to have. He's got a Bruins style of game and would look good in yellow and black.
15		NICK MERKLEY	Merkley is short by NHL standards but he plays a big game and proved to be a difference maker for the Kelowna Rockets. Landing in his hometown of Calgary would be a good feel good story.
16	 via PIT	ILYA SAMSONOV	Oilers follow their McDavid gimme pick with a selection that addresses a need in goal by selecting Russian standout Ilya Samsonov. There's a good chance the pick gets moved for a proven puck stopper. If not, Oilers brass will certainly consider Samsonov here.
17		EVGENY SVECHNIKOV	Winnipeg has quickly established themselves as one of the strongest drafting teams in the modern game and with the big skilled Evgeny Svechnikov they will just add to an already rich prospect cupboard.
18		JOEL ERIKSSON EK	Nothing has changed in MoTown as the Red Wings continue to build teams around skilled Europeans. Sticking with their recent Larkin and Mantha selections, Eriksson Ek provides Detroit with a sizeable skilled Swede who can do everything.
19		JEREMY ROY	After many short trips east to watch him in Sherbrooke, Senators select puck moving defenseman Jeremy Roy from the Phoenix. A smart calculated defender with an offensive mind, Roy would do well apprenticing under Erik Karlsson.
20		COLIN WHITE	The Wild rarely opt for the 'sexy' pick and 2015 is no different with them selecting high character player Colin White from the National Program. A well-rounded game and high-end competitiveness assure that White will almost certainly carve out an NHL career.
21	 via NYI	JAKOB ZBORIL	With Eichel in their pocket already, the Sabres snatch up high-upside Czech defender Jakob Zboril, a blueliner with quick feet, a good feel for the game and promising offensive instincts.

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22		DENIS GURYANOV	Known for having a good handle on Euro talent, Washington heads to Russia to select high upside forward Denis Guryanov. He's a potential star in the making and after having good luck with Kuznetsov, they swing for the fences again.
23		BRANDON CARLO	The Canucks grabbed two forwards in the first round in 2014 so their focus turns to improving their blueline and Brandon Carlo is their guy. He's fairly raw but this big defender moves well, thinks well and competes in all three zones.
24	 via NSH	DANIEL SPRONG	The Leafs new regime is all about adding skill and after adding defender Hanifin, Daniel Sprong edges out Jeremy Bracco as their new dynamic option up front. He's got some warts but under an improved hockey operations department, those can be cleaned up.
25	 via STL	THOMAS CHABOT	After stealing Svechnikov in the 17 slot, Winnipeg plucks Thomas Chabot from Saint John adding another defensive gem. He's competitive, mobile and shows good offensive zone potential. The Jets can take their time rounding out his deficiencies and inconsistencies.
26		PAUL BITTNER	Size continues to be Montreal's focus even though Paul Bittner isn't your prototypical "power forward". He's a skilled big man who moves well and appears to have a lot of growth left - meaning he's a worthy investment this late.
27		OLIVER KYLINGTON	The "Wild Card" of the opening round, Oliver Kylington is the most polarizing player of 2015 with considering his skating and puck moving abilities first round worthy while others not willing to touch his liabilities. Either way, Anaheim is up for the challenge.
28	 via NYR	JEREMY BRACCO	Lightning continue to pluck off high potential prospects that others aren't willing to take the risk on. From an offensive standpoint, Jeremy Bracco owns top 10 talents but his size is a legitimate concern. TB is more than willing to work with another Tyler Johnson.
29	 via TBL	BROCK BOESER	Arguably one of the best goal scorers in the class, Brock Boeser torched the USHL and is a strong player with an eye for the net. He's far from a complete prospect but his scoring prowess could be worth the wait. Philly uses their second 1st wisely.
30	 via CHI	GABRIEL CARLSSON	The type of player that makes life hell for opposing attackers, Sweden's big mobile defensive stalwart Gabriel Carlsson excels at stifling scoring chances. He's not the "flashiest" pick but every contending team needs a presence like his in the lineup.

2ND ROUND

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McKEN'S
HOCKEY
YOUNG BLOOD

31		JANSEN HARKINS	Eichel then Zboril and now Harkins - the haul continues for Buffalo. Look for Harkins to be the set-up man in the next wave of Sabres.
32		MACKENZIE BLACKWOOD	Big competitive goaltender impressed at the NHL Combine and tops all North American netminders.
33		JAKE DEBRUSK	McDavid and Samsonov locked up the forward and goal positions. The Oilers can't pass on Edmonton native and 40-plus scorer Jake DeBrusk
34	 via LAK	NOAH JUULSEN	Picking up Werenski and Juulsen only 34 slots in has to leave Kekalainen smiling about his blueline's future.
35		VINCE DUNN	Mitch Marner was a nice surprise early in the draft and the Canes look to hit big with offensive blueliner Vince Dunn with their second pick.
36		ANTHONY BEAUVILLIER	The Devils need all the help they can in the prospect department and nabbing 90-plus forward Anthony Beauvillier early in the second is a rare opportunity.
37	 via NYI	ERIK CERNAK	Timo Meier fit the bill nicely in the front end of the first round and Erik Cernak seems fit to wear the B as well.
38		JACK ROSLOVIC	Columbus' blue line depth already received a boost so adding a smart high paced forward in Jack Roslovic seems like the right next step.
39		TRAVIS DERMOTT	Powerful winger Lawson Crouse was an excellent pick at nine and he can step into the lineup soon but Travis Dermott is a shrewd long-term investment for their blueline that's looking for a spark.
40		JACOB LARSSON	The Avalanche have waited long enough and invite Jacob Larsson to the Mile High City to help resurrect a middling blue line.
41	 via FLA	JONAS SIEGENTHALER	Zacha and DeBrusk have the Devils off to a hot start but with Jonas Siegenthaler added to their draft haul they're injecting a physical two-way defender.
42	 via DAL	FILIP CHLAPIK	Looking to add more skill to their system, Bryan Murray's team calls on Filip Chlapik who offers up a creative visionary attack.
43		NICOLAS MELOCHE	Konecny provided the Kings with a hard-working versatile option on the wing and Nicolas Meloche gives much of the same on the backend.
44	 via BOS	CHRISTIAN FISCHER	Jeremy Bracco was a riskier selection in the latter part of the opening round so Yzerman decides to go safer with potential power forward Christian Fischer, who combines skill and size well.
45		NICOLAS ROY	Nick Merkley will excite hometown fans in Calgary for years to come but in the West it's important to play big. Nicolas Roy is one of the drafts most reliable big pivots.

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46		DENNIS YAN	The Penguins are difficult to read and they tend to shy away from Q players ever since the Angelo Esposito pick but Dennis Yan is just beginning to tap into an impressive upside.
47		RASMUS ANDERSSON	The Barrie Colts have been a pipeline for Winnipeg Jets prospects so given the chance to draft puck distributor Rasmus Andersson and they'll jump at the opportunity.
48		ZACH SENYSHYN	Looking for a high end prospect in the middle of the second round can be difficult but Ottawa native Zach Senyshyn should be familiar to the Sens. He's a speedy north-south attacker with a good shot.
49	 via DET	DANIEL VLADAR	The crease in Dallas is anything but settled and after stocking the skaters fairly well in their system, grabbing a high potential goaltender like Vladar would be a wise move.
50		ROOPE HINTZ	Big and powerful with a good motor, Roope Hintz is a player that could eventually become an impact forward through the middle of the Wild lineup.
51	 via NYI	FELIX SANDSTROM	Buffalo isn't certain how their crease looks long-term and armed with a boat load of Top 60 picks, selecting one of the draft's top tier puckstoppers makes sense. Welcome Felix Sandstrom.
52	 via WSH	PARKER WOTHERSPOON	Average-sized puck moving defenseman Parker Wotherspoon isn't a flashy player but he's effective. Wearing the Flames sweater would mean he joins older brother Tyler in Calgary.
53	 via VAN	MATEJ TOMEK	The goaltender run has starter and Calgary needs in on the action. Matej Tomek isn't the big name on campus but many scouts like him as much as the other top crease guards.
54	 compensation	THOMAS NOVAK	Doing what they do best, Chicago identifies a highly skilled American skater with big time upside hoping that they can make good on a second round pick after being void of a first round selection.
55		ALEXANDER DERGACHEV	Nashville showed no hesitation on drafting a Russian last year high and they look to Alexander Dergachev this time around - adding a big winger with solid middle-six skill.
56		JORDAN GREENWAY	Sticking to their tendencies, St. Louis targets an American out of the National Program. Jordan Greenway is a massive power forward with raw potential. St. Louis can afford to wait.
57	 via MTL	RYAN PILON	After riding shotgun with Brandon's Ivan Provorov, Ryan Pilon showed that his transitioning abilities ranks up there with the best of the draft.
58	 via ANA	J.FORSBACKA KARLSSON	Columbus has shown a trend towards targetting strong two-way players who play a 200-foot game and few players excel at that game as Forsbacka-Karlsson.
59		JENS LOOKE	With their first pick of the draft, New York selects Swedish forward Jens Looke - a player who plays at a high pace and displays good passing ability.

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60	 via TBL	MITCHELL STEPHENS	Not unlike current Coyotes prospect Christian Dvorak, Mitchell Stephens is a groomed two-way player with a fantastic motor and he can also score. Arizona continues to pick from the OHL.
61	 via CHI	SEBASTIAN AHO	After adding a true sniper in Boeser earlier, Sebastian Aho is selected due to an impressive attacking game that features elusive moves and clever playmaking ability.

3rd ROUND

62	 via BUF	ERIK FOLEY	72	 via FLA	GRAHAM KNOTT	82		SAM MONTEMBREULT
63		AJ GREER	73	 via DAL	MITCH VANDE SOMPEL	83	 via WSH	YAKOV TRENIN
64	 via EDM	JULIUS NATTINEN	74		CONOR GARLAND	84	 via VAN	GUSTAV BOURAMMAN
65		BLAKE SPEERS	75		DENIS MALGIN	85		BRENDAN GUHLE
66		FILIP AHL	76		MICHAEL SPACEK	86	 via STL	KIRILL KAPRIZOV
67		NIKITA KOROSTELEV	77	 via PIT	GUILLAUME BRISEBOIS	87		NICK BOKA
68	 via PHI	RYAN GROPP	78		ANDREW MANGIAPANE	88	 via ANA	GABRIEL GAGNE
69		CALLUM BOOTH	79	 via OTT	CALEB JONES	89		ADAM MUSIL
70	 via SJS	ALEXANDRE CARRIER	80	 via DET	DAVID KASE	90	 via TBL	CHRIS MARTENET
71		AUSTIN WAGNER	81	 via MIN	JEREMY LAUZON	91		CHRISTIAN EVERS

CATEGORICAL RANKINGS

Note: Connor McDavid and Jack Eichel were omitted from the following rankings because they would dominate the majority of the categories

BEST GOALTENDERS

1. ILYA SAMSONOV
2. FELIX SANDSTROM
3. MACKENZIE BLACKWOOD
4. DANIEL VLADAR
5. MATEJ TOMEK
6. VEINI VEHVILAINEN
7. CALLUM BOOTH
8. SAMUEL MONTEMBREAU
9. MICHAEL MCNIVEN
10. LIAM HERBST

BEST OFFENSIVE D-MEN

1. NOAH HANIFIN
2. IVAN PROVOROV
3. ZACH WERENSKI
4. OLIVER KYLINGTON
5. JEREMY ROY
6. JAKOB ZBORIL
7. MITCHELL VANDE SOMPEL
8. VINCE DUNN
9. TRAVIS DERMOTT
10. RASMUS ANDERSSON

BEST SNIPERS

1. DYLAN STROME
2. PAVEL ZACHA
3. TIMO MEIER
4. TRAVIS KONECNY
5. BROCK BOESER
6. DANIEL SPRONG
7. NIKITA KOROSTELEV
8. JAKE DEBRUSK
9. ANTHONY BEAUVILLIER
10. ZACH SENYSHYN

TOP "MATURE" ENTRIES

1. SEBASTIAN AHO (D)
2. CONOR GARLAND
3. ANDREW MANGIAPANE
4. VLAD TKACHEV
5. VLADISLAV GAVRIKOV
6. PIUS SUTER
7. LIAM HERBST
8. CHRISTIAN JAROS
9. DENIS GODLA
10. MICHAEL JOLY

BEST SKATERS

1. NOAH HANIFIN
2. OLIVER KYLINGTON
3. ZACH SENYSHYN
4. MATT BARZAL
5. MITCH MARNER

BEST DEFENSIVE FORWARDS

1. COLIN WHITE
2. LAWSON CROUSE
3. JAKOB FORSBACKA-KARLSSON
4. JOEL ERIKSSON-EK
5. NICK MERKLEY

BEST DEFENSIVE D-MEN

1. IVAN PROVOROV
2. NOAH HANIFIN
3. GABRIEL CARLSSON
4. JONAS SIEGENTHALER
5. NICOLAS MELOCHE

BEST PUCK HANDLERS

1. MITCH MARNER
2. MATT BARZAL
3. TRAVIS KONECNY
4. JEREMY BRACCO
5. DANIEL SPRONG

BEST HOCKEY SENSE

1. MITCH MARNER
2. IVAN PROVOROV
3. NOAH HANIFIN
4. DYLAN STROME
5. LAWSON CROUSE

BEST LEADERS/CHARACTER

1. TRAVIS KONECNY
2. ANTHONY BEAUVILLIER
3. MITCH MARNER
4. COLIN WHITE
5. NICK MERKLEY

BEST HOMERUN PROSPECTS

1. JEREMY BRACCO
2. DANIEL SPRONG
3. DENIS GURYANOV
4. DENIS MALGIN
5. DAVID KASE/KIRILL KAPRIZOV

BEST PRO PACKAGE

(SIZE/SKILL/SMARTS)

1. DYLAN STROME
2. PAVEL ZACHA
3. LAWSON CROUSE
4. MIKKO RANTANEN
5. DENIS GURYANOV/J. ERIKSSON EK

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2016 NHL DRAFT RANKINGS

1	AUSTON MATTHEWS, F	18	SAM STEEL, F
2	JAKOB CHYCHRUN, D	19	VICTOR METE, D
3	MAX JONES, F	20	NICK PASTUJOV, F
4	JESSE PULJUJARVI, F	21	RYAN LINDGREN, D
5	CLAYTON KELLER, F	22	BRETT HOWDEN, F
6	TYLER BENSON, F	23	PIERRE-LUC DUBOIS, F
7	LOGAN BROWN, F	24	TARMO REUNANEN, D
8	DMITRI SOKOLOV, F	25	MICHAEL MCLEOD, F
9	ALEXANDER NYLANDER, F	26	DAVID QUENNEVILLE, D
10	MATTHEW TKACHUK, F	27	CHARLIE MCAVOY, D
11	CHAD KRYS, D	28	LUKE GREEN, D
12	SEAN DAY, D	29	JORDAN KYROU, F
13	DANTE FABBRO	30	JAKE BEAN, F
14	PATRIK LAINE	HM	TRAVIS BARRON, F
15	KIEFER BELLOWS	HM	ALEX DEBRINCAT, F
16	TYSON JOST	HM	MARKUS NIEMELAINEN, D
17	KALE CLAGUE		



It appears Auston Matthews is the front runner for 1st overall in 2016 but don't sleep on Sarnia defenseman Jakob Chychrun because he will push the young forward.

2017 NHL DRAFT – PLAYERS TO WATCH



With shades of Jonathan Toews in his game, Brandon Wheat Kings forward Nolan Patrick is leading the 2017 draft class.

NOLAN PATRICK, F
KAILER YAMAMOTO, F
SHANE BOWERS, F
DAVID FARRANCE, D
RYAN MCLEOD, F
MAX GILDON, D
ADAM THILANDER, D
KRISTIAN VESALAINEN, F
URHO VAAKANAINEN, D
NIKITA A. POPUGAYEV, F

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YOUNG BLOOD

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The 2015 NHL Draft Guide was compiled entirely by Brendan Ross.

Be sure to follow Brendan on Twitter at **@RossyYoungblood** for his prospect coverage. Questions are always welcomed!

Special Thanks to all the followers of **Youngblood Hockey** at **McKeen's Hockey**!
Your support drives the passion behind these projects.

Stick tap to the large circle of friends and colleagues in the scouting community on another year of success!
The opportunity to interact with experts in the industry only improves the knowledge base and adds to the desire to produce high quality content.

Best of luck to all of the players vying to be selected at the 2015 NHL Draft!