STATS PREVIEWS PREDICTIONS

2018-19

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TOP 20 PROSPECTS BY TEAM
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LATE, LATE ROUND STEALS

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OVER 1000 PLAYER PROFILES

BACK TO TOC

MY SWEDE LORD

REVIEW / STATE OF PLAY — Review/State of Play - The Buffalo Sabres finished last in the NHL, last in their division four out of the last five years and were a dispirited group by seasons end. Ryan O'Reilly professed his frustration with a culture of "being OK with losing". Jack Eichel also expressed his frustration after three seasons "When I got drafted, if you would've said we'd be in this position, I probably would've told you to give your head a shake." This was following a season in which they had overturned their front office firing GM Tim Murray and Head Coach Dan Bylsma after a short time in the saddle and replaced them with GM Jason Botterill and Coach Phil Housley, a Sabres alumni great. This offseason Botterill decided to blow up the support group around his young stars and franchise centerman, Eichel.

TRADE WINDS BLOW – It started at the trade deadline by trading disgruntled O'Reilly for a package of solid NHL veterans in Patrik Berglund, Vladimir Sobotka and former first round pick and promising prospect Tage Thompson along with a first round pick in 2019. Berglund and Sobotka make a solid foundation for the third line. Both are responsible defensively and Sobotka is a face off master. Thompson bring size at 6'5" 200 pounds and a good compete level with good hands.

He made two other trades to add impact roster players acquiring Conor Sheary from Pittsburgh for a conditional fourth round draft pick and then add Jeff Skinner for prospect Cliff Pu and three draft picks (second, third and sixth round picks). Both wingers are 26-years-old, Skinner has scored 30 goals three times and Sheary netted 23 in 2016-17. Both had poor seasons and could be rejuvenated in a revamped Sabres top six. Skinner is a free agent after this season and Sheary is signed at a reasonable $3.0 million AAV for the next two seasons. Botterill added four experienced roster players for O'Reilly along with a first-round draft pick came as a bonus.

Sheary and Skinner should man the left wing on lines one and two. Sheary has experience playing with superstars after being teamed with Sidney Crosby much of the last two seasons and Skinner is a sniper. The Sabres are hoping that another new addition in 19-year-old Casey Mittelstadt, who signed an entry level contract in March and appeared in six games, can be the answer in the middle on the second line. He has very high-end offensive skills and impressed with five points in six NHL games in his debut. He will be supported by an experienced winger, in addition to either Sheary or Skinner on the left side, he will line up with Kyle Okposo or Jason Pominville, who are both on the wrong side of 30, but can snipe when called upon. Okposo faced some serious health concerns and could bounce back to the player he was, but not a given considering age and health, even with the infusion of talent around him.

DAHLIN IMPACT – The painful 2017-18 turned to enthusiasm when the ping pong ball fell their way this time and they claimed Rasmus Dahlin. He is a dynamic talent at 6'2", 185 pounds and is ready to make an impact in the NHL immediately. He projects as a franchise defenseman and this past season was named top defenseman at the World Junior Tournament, played against men in a regular role for Frolunda, leading all SHL defensemen in scoring aged 22-years and under. He has elite level skating, passing and reading the game. He is a natural left defense but can play either side. Buffalo is deep in left defenseman, but he will line up nicely with Rasmus Ristolainen who shoots right on the power play.

Ristolainen has had tremendous pressure placed on him and has been mercilessly overworked on poor Sabre teams. He has played over 25 minutes each of the last season and has been labelled a disappointment after being the eighth over all pick. Dahlin may steal some power play ice time from him, but more importantly removes the pressure. Ristoulainen may flourish on a more talented team and in a lesser role.

Marco Scandella lined up primarily with Ristolainen last year playing over 23 minutes a game, killing penalties but if they make Dahlin and Ristolainen the top pairing, he slides in on a solid second unit with Zach Bogosian. Scandella is 28-years-old and provided a solid season. Bogosian is also 28 and missed all but 18 games last season. Once a highly regarded prospect, he also gets a reset, but there are some concerns about health. They acquired 33-year-old Matt Hunwick for added depth.

In net, they bailed on the Robin Lehner experiment and signed 32-year-old Carter Hutton in the off-season for three years at $2.75 million AAV. It will be his first season as a number one goalie and sustaining a level of play over 60 games can prove a challenge. Linus Ullmark, a highly regarded prospect will back him up and could steal the crease. He has a 0.917 save percentage in 26 NHL games and has been a standout in the AHL.

OUTLOOK – The Sabres will be improved this season and will be an exciting team to watch. They are still rebuilding and have a serious cache of draft picks and prospects in the system. They might surprise as Jack Eichel and Sam Reinhart look ready to break out as superstars. Dahlin's addition to the back end makes them better already. Watch for growing pains but the playoffs will be a reach.

NEW ARRIVALS

Brandon Hickey-D (Ari) .. Matt Hunwick-D (Pit) .. Carter Hutton-G (StL) .. Andrew Oglevie-F .. Lawrence Pilut-D .. Conor Sheary-F (Pit) .. Jeff Skinner-F (Car) .. Vladimir Sobotka-F (StL) .. Tage Thompson-F (StL) .. Scott Wedgewood-G (LA)

DEPARTURES

Viktor Antipin-D .. Justin Falk-D .. Hudson Fasching-F (Ari) .. Josh Gorges-D .. Seth Griffith-F (Wpg) .. Chad Johnson-G (StL) .. Jacob Josefson-F .. Jason Kasdorf-G .. Robin Lehner-G (NYI) .. Jordan Nolan-F (StL) .. Ryan O'Reilly-F (StL) .. Benoit Pouliot-F .. Cliff Pu-F (Car) .. Zach Redmond-D .. Mike Sislo-F (NYI) .. Adam Wilcox-G

2018-19 PREDICTIONS

RK	ATLANTIC	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS
1	Tampa Bay	51	24	7	273	237	109
2	Toronto	48	24	10	267	226	106
3	Boston	46	24	12	250	223	104
4	Florida	47	28	7	256	239	101
5	Buffalo	37	35	10	231	257	84
6	Montréal	32	41	9	225	248	73
7	Ottawa	29	41	12	231	271	70
8	Detroit	28	44	10	221	267	66

RANK	PLAYER	GP	G	A	PTS	PPG
1	Jack EICHEL	79	38	48	86	1.09
2	Sam REINHART	82	24	36	60	0.73
3	Jeff SKINNER	82	29	27	56	0.68
4	Rasmus RISTOLAINEN	82	11	44	55	0.67
5	Casey MITTELSTADT	72	15	34	49	0.68
6	Kyle OKPOSO	72	16	28	44	0.61
7	Evan RODRIGUES	75	12	32	44	0.59
8	Jason POMINVILLE	77	13	22	35	0.45
9	Rasmus DAHLIN	77	9	26	35	0.45
10	Conor SHEARY	75	14	14	28	0.37
11	Patrik BERGLUND	65	12	15	27	0.42
12	Vladimir SOBOTKA	80	8	18	26	0.33
13	Marco SCANDELLA	82	4	16	20	0.24
14	Scott WILSON	63	6	10	16	0.25
15	Zach BOGOSIAN	72	4	12	16	0.22
16	Zemgus GIRGENSONS	68	8	7	15	0.22
17	Johan LARSSON	67	5	8	13	0.19
18	Brendan GUHLE	58	3	10	13	0.22
19	Jake MCCABE	78	3	9	12	0.15
20	Tage THOMPSON	35	4	7	11	0.31

TEAM STATS REPORT

CATEGORY	STAT	RANK	CATEGORY	STAT	RANK
RECORD	25-45-12	31	GF	198	31
HOME	11-25-5	31	GA	278	29
ROAD	14-20-7	25	PP	19.1	20
SHOOTOUT	1-2	24T	PK	77.9	22

BACK TO TOC

FORWARDS

9 Jack EICHEL — C

AGE: 21 | H/W: 6-2/195 | NHL: 3 | SALARY: $10,000,000 | CONTRACT: 2026

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	MIN	PPG
15-16	Buffalo (NHL)	81	24	32	56	22	19.1	0.69
16-17	Buffalo (NHL)	61	24	33	57	22	20.0	0.93
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	67	25	39	64	32	20.1	0.96
	Career	209	73	104	177	76		0.85
	Prediction	**79**	**38**	**48**	**86**			**1.09**

Scouting: Intelligent and skilled, supported by a spacious, powerful frame .. quick hands bolster puck rushing ability and stickhandling in tight, close spaces .. exceptional skater with multiple acceleration gears - utilizes formidable lower body strength to bull his way to open ice/scoring areas .. eats up ice with effortless, smooth strides uniquely hyper-extending to optimize elite top-end speed .. explosive acceleration creates separation, and agility props up elusiveness, with sharp lateral cuts and directional shifts – a transition specialist .. poised and instinctive playmaker, highlighted by intelligence and calculated decision-making – featured while controlling the power play off the side boards .. strikes with a laser snap shot that morphs a lethal one-timer .. protects the puck and exploits notable wingspan to maintain possession when driving one-on one .. capable of finishing using skilled puck handling in close .. not overly aggressive but enthusiastically interjects into traffic .. applying more vigorous backside pressure and flowing back into the system after freestyling would improve defensive game .. part of NHL elite skilled, and a driving force whenever on the ice.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	969.53	6.21	10.6	1.82	7.62	84.62	41.03	43.59	69.23
5v4	237.22	-2.29	4.48	1.98	12.55	56.25	9.38	46.88	28.13

Analysis: In another lost season for the Sabres, Eichel rather quietly put up new career highs in goals, assists, points and points per game .. after an 81-game rookie campaign, this was his second season missing time due to injury (first one due to an awkward training camp fall and then a sprained ankle this past season), which is a slight concern to keep in mind .. had the 10th most total shots on goal of any center in the league and among the top 50 scoring centers, had the third highest shots per game… buffalo took steps to surround him with more talent this summer adding Skinner, Sheary, Sobotka and Berglund and this is fourth season where many players tend to breakout offensively; if Eichel can put together a healthy season playing 80+ games, he stands to have a slight jump in production where he was already a near point per game player, and be an elite scoring center in the league.

23 Sam REINHART — RW

AGE: 22 | H/W: 6-1/195 | NHL: 3 | SALARY: $894,167 | CONTRACT: 2018

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	MIN	PPG
15-16	Buffalo (NHL)	79	23	19	42	8	16.5	0.53
16-17	Buffalo (NHL)	79	17	30	47	8	17.1	0.59
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	82	25	25	50	26	17.1	0.61
	Career	249	65	75	140	44		0.56
	Prediction	**82**	**24**	**36**	**60**			**0.73**

Scouting: Intelligence and subtly skilled, highlighted with elite vision and keen hockey sense – positions within structure, adjusting angles as plays evolve.. lines up as a winger or center .. efficient skating, functional, but lacking explosiveness .. clean turns and reversals – exploited in transition – with short crossover steps to enhance full stride acceleration .. quicker than appears with footwork economy .. can mature physically and adapt better to physical game along the boards .. emerged as a PP net-front presence – very effective orchestrating play below the goal line .. understated skill level – impromptu dangles out of nothing and brilliant puckhandling maneuvers exploiting quick hands .. passes look ordinary, yet conducts precision distribution across the offensive zone slotline and in dangerous areas .. smart and structured - attends to technical details in the defensive zone, .. fluid in cycle switches in support and battles in the offensive zone .. makes meticulous reads – influencing the game flow in every zone .. poised under pressure every move has rationale .. benefits greatly from spiking his intensity at certain key times .. drives play – the straw that stirs the drink.

Sit	Situation - 5v5 or 5v4
TOI	Time on Ice
IxG (XG Delta)	Individual Expected Goals Differential – Goals scored, minus expected goals for – positive = outperforming negative = underperforming. Positive highlighted.
iSh%	Individual shooting percentge
O-IxG (OI xG delta)	On-Ice Expected Goals Differential – OI goals scored minus expected OI goals for – positive = outperforming negative = underperforming. Positive highlighted.
OISh%	On-ice shooting percentage
IPP	Individual Point Percentage – % of points earned on goals scored while on the ice.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	1072.47	-1.68	7.46	-3.47	5.92	67.65	29.41	38.24	47.06
5v4	256.08	1.6	26.19	3.32	13.31	60.61	33.33	27.27	57.58

Analysis: Reinhart had a quietly decent year with a career high 25 goals and 50 points playing his first full 82 game season, though it came off a high 13.3 shooting percentage (two of his three seasons he has shot over 13 percent and a career average of 12.2) .. started out slowly but finished at over a point a game from January 18th on (38-19-22- 41), firing at over a 40-goal pace over 82 games .. is starting to make a name for himself in front of the net on the power play with his hand-eye coordination and he had 12 goals with the man advantage .. saw a slight increase in shots on goal with 188 total .. with the added talent to Buffalo, Reinhart is a strongbreakout candidate maintaining his status as a net presence on the top power play unit that could feature Skinner, Eichel and Dahlin controlling the puck up top .. his partner at center last season Ryan O'Reilly has moved on, as has Evander Kane, and he could find himself on the top line with Eichel and Skinner – he has shown chemistry with Eichel in the previous season, and showed he can produce on his own this past season .. only turns 23 this year and is going into his fourth full season, under the radar and a potentially huge season ahead.

53 Jeff SKINNER — LW

AGE: 26 | H/W: 5-11/200 | NHL: 8 | SALARY: $5,725,000 | CONTRACT:2019

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	MIN	PPG
15-16	Carolina (NHL)	82	28	23	51	38	16.2	0.62
16-17	Carolina (NHL)	79	37	26	63	28	17.4	0.80
17-18	Carolina (NHL)	82	24	25	49	34	16.4	0.60
	Career	579	204	175	379	268		0.65
	Prediction	**82**	**29**	**27**	**56**			**0.68**

Scouting: Mid-sized skating savant with a penchant for scoring goals .. melds soft hands, terrific edgework, balance and agility into a prime scoring threat .. it all begins with dogged determination – drives play and sets the on-ice pace .. strong in support, but also adept at getting the puck off opponents wih stick checks and intelligent physical contact .. startup is slushy but segues into an elusive 1-on-1 stride, throwing in directional shifts and strong edgework .. superb pivoting and turns (courtesy of figure skating training at a younger age), and effortlessly incorporates 'Mohawk' strides .. confident shooter, with quick, compact release – doesn't bull his way to prime net-front spots, rather taking up space in front of the net for rebounds/tips .. deceptive stickhandling range – drives back defenders with a mix of speed bursts and quick-handed maneuvers to open up shooting and passing lanes .. underrated playmaker, exploits the slotline .. impressive core strength and agility, spins off physical pressure due to athleticism .. high winger in the defensive zone makes him a threat in transition .. integrating skills into elite skating to operate at a higher pace – even as he hits peak scoring age.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	1140.1	-1.7	8.49	-14.17	6.37	80.95	42.86	38.10	64.29
5v4	165.08	-3.69	9.09	-10.54	8.82	60.00	26.67	33.33	46.67

Analysis: Traded to Buffalo in the offseason and lands a plum assignment lining up beside Jack Eichel on the top line .. he has three thirty-goal season on his resume and is only 26-years-old .. however his production has been all over the place in his career and 2017-18 can be marked as a down season (82-24-25-49) .. start was very promising (10-7-2-9), but he struggled to find the back of the net from Nov. 2-Dec. 1 (14-2-5-7) .. worst goal scoring slump was from Feb. 23-March 20 (13-0-4-4) .. finished campaign on an upswing (9-4-4-8) .. finished with a 8.7 shooting percentage, his lowest since 2014-15 and well below 2016-17 (13.2%) .. expected goals differential and on-ice expected goals differential were low in 5v5 and 5v4 situations, suggesting he was unlucky .. running counter to that was his extremely high 5v5 IPP, though his IPP was on the high side in 2016-17 as well .. streaky scoring and play suggests caution, but this is a much more talented forward group he is joining, and a golden opportunity heading into free agency at the end of the season.

71 EVAN RODRIGUES — LW

AGE: 25 | H/W: 5-11/180 | NHL: 2 | SALARY: $650,000 | CONTRACT: 2019

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	MIN	PPG
16-17	Buffalo (NHL)	30	4	2	6	4	13.0	0.20
16-17	Rochester (AHL)	48	9	21	30	27		0.63
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	48	7	18	25	14	14.0	0.52
17-18	Rochester (AHL)	8	5	5	10	2		1.25
	Career	80	12	21	33	18		0.41
	Prediction	**75**	**12**	**32**	**44**			**0.59**

Scouting: Undersized speedy and shifty playmaker, with quick hands and slick edges .. exploits acceleration and speed for zone entries and as a puck mover .. better playmaker than shooter – despite a quick release .. stickhandles in tight spaces, using smaller build to dart between bigger opponents .. finds passing marks with relative ease – best gaining the zone and making slotline passes .. changes direction with lateral shifts and turns at optimal velocity – although can lose speed in tight turns with limited space .. physically driven off the puck when engaged by bigger opponents .. quick bursts of acceleration from static and dynamic positions offers elusiveness and escape routes ..

POWER PLAY

FIRST UNIT

LW Jeff Skinner		RW Sam Reinhart
	C Jack Eichel	
LD Kyle Okposo		RD Rasmus Ristolainen

SECOND UNIT

LW Evan Rodrigues		RW Patrik Berglund
	C Casey Mittelstadt	
LD Rasmus Dahlin		RD Jason Pominville

DEPTH CHART

LW	C	RW
Jeff Skinner	**Jack Eichel**	**Sam Reinhart**
Evan Rodrigues	**Casey Mittelstadt**	**Kyle Okposo**
Vladimir Sobotka	**Patrik Berglund**	**Jason Pominville**
Conor Sheary	**Johan Larsson**	**Zemgus Girgensons**
Scott Wilson	Kyle Criscuolo	Tage Thompson
Alexander Nylander	Kevin Porter	Nicholas Baptiste
Matt Moulson	Rasmus Asplund	Justin Bailey

LD	G	RD
Marco Scandella	**Carter Hutton**	**Rasmus Ristolainen**
Rasmus Dahlin		**Zach Bogosian**
Brendan Guhle		**Jake McCabe**
Nathan Beaulieu	Linus Ullmark	**Casey Nelson**
Matt Hunwick	Scott Wedgewood	Matt Tennyson
Lawrence Pilut	Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	Taylor Fedun
Devante Stephens	Jonas Johansson	Will Borgen

patrols in the support layer in both offensive and defensive zones – and can position himself as a winger or pivot in the defensive zone setup – works better as a winger than pivot .. used on the power play controlling the play from the side boards .. less effective when not engaged in a high speed game .. relies on stick checks, positioning and threat of transition when engaging .. could stretch out defensemen through the neutral zone with speed .. skilled support player.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	525.4	0.3	7.04	2.96	7.78	85.71	23.81	61.90	57.14
5v4	96.73	-0.34	9.09	-1.24	10.71	55.56	11.11	44.44	11.11

Analysis: Late blooming prospect had a promising start to his NHL career with 7 goals and 25 points in 48 games on a bad Sabres team last year as well as 10 points in 8 AHL games .. have to keep in mind that he's already 25 years old so his ceiling might not be much higher than what he already is .. only shot 7.7 percent and had an all situations PDO of 97.5 suggesting his solid production was not luck driven… Production was also largely at even strength with only six points coming via the PP, which is important since he might not get much PP time after all of Buffalo's acquisitions shake out .. with the addition of Sheary and Skinner on left wing we would not bet on a huge breakout season from Rodrigues but capable of repeating his .52 points per game and is a good add in deeper leagues that track points and shots on goal (had nearly two per game last season) .. a versatile forward who can contribute.

21 Kyle OKPOSO — RW

AGE: 30 | H/W: 6-0/215 | NHL: 10 | SALARY: $6,000,000 | CONTRACT: 2023

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	MIN	PPG
15-16	NY Islanders (NHL)	79	22	42	64	51	18.1	0.81
16-17	Buffalo (NHL)	65	19	26	45	24	19.0	0.69
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	76	15	29	44	40	17.0	0.58
	Career	670	173	285	458	374		0.68
	Prediction	**72**	**16**	**28**	**44**			**0.61**

Scouting: Dynamic and supplementary winger, exhibiting a high level of individual skills at his peak .. generates top speed with ease, based on impressive core strength .. deceiving change of pace when in full stride .. sluggish in startup and crossovers lack coordination at high speed .. opens shooting lanes with lateral shifts 1-on-1 and changes in blade angle in close .. best exploits a snapshot, off the blade with minimal windup from inner perimeter – ending in a lethal one-timer .. overhandles the puck and squanders shooting opportunities, preparing to release a shot .. cycles well as an F1, benefitting from physical intensity, especially from behind the goal line, but likely better in the support layer – thematic of his play without the puck .. smothering when applying backside pressure - overwhelming when driving his feet and trying to break up plays at the blueline .. can grace other end of spectrum, however, non-committal to finishing checks or powering into puck battles along the boards - a better F2 or F3 on the forecheck than F1 .. health matters cast a shadow on aging veteran.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	974.63	-0.85	8.08	0.44	6.52	72.41	27.59	44.83	55.17
5v4	247.23	-1.5	10.53	-2.63	11.86	63.33	20.00	43.33	40.00

Analysis: Signed to a big deal (five years left at $6.0 million AAV), the now 30-year-old Okposo has been disappointing with 45 and 44 point seasons in his first two years in Buffalo .. In both seasons the player he played with most was Ryan O'Reilly who has now been traded, and it was a top matchup role; it will be important to see how Buffalo deploys him now (with Eichel? Mittelsdtadt? In another checking role?), because he's certainly still capable of producing more than he has so far .. he battled a major health scare and struggled early, but showed signs of find his game in the second half (37-9-16-25,), scoring at a 55-point pace over 82 games .. His shooting percentage has been generally strong in Buffalo, shooting 12.2 and 9.3 percent, when he is a career 10.3 percent shooter .. seems to be settling into a mid 40 point scorer capable of chipping in around 15 – 20 goals] .. he might receive a small boost from Buffalo's added depth and be closer to a 50 point guy again; but his 60 point days appear to be gone as he's on the wrong side of 30 now.

29 Jason POMINVILLE — RW

AGE: 35 | H/W: 6-0/185 | NHL: 13 | SALARY: $5,600,000 | CONTRACT: 2019

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	MIN	PPG
15-16	Minnesota (NHL)	75	11	25	36	12	16.2	0.48
16-17	Minnesota (NHL)	78	13	34	47	4	14.1	0.60
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	82	16	18	34	8	14.5	0.41
	Career	987	277	419	696	195		0.71
	Prediction	**77**	**13**	**22**	**35**			**0.45**

Scouting: Veteran winger is still crafty off the rush and opportunistic founded on positional instincts .. average first step explosiveness, victimized with age .. makes up for acceleration with agility and balance, with quick pivots and lateral shifts to improve elusiveness .. identifies, then occupies soft areas, exhibiting good decisions, to unleash a potent shooting array .. combination of positioning and shooting makes for an option in the offensive zone .. best when holding the puck, exploiting soft hands and patience .. deceptively tough – feisty and involved in spite of an average build .. flows in system structure and adjusts defensive positioning – stays in his lanes, and disrupts puckcarriers .. transitional threat, exploiting excellent one-touch skills, short bursts through the neutral zone, and proficient short passing game making him a threat at zone entries to rushing teammates .. declining skills, aging veteran, fortunate to be playing with an elite talent in Jack Eichel.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	1020.45	0.6	7.64	5.74	7.5	53.33	24.44	28.89	42.22
5v4	149.45	1.33	17.65	-5.39	5.66	66.67	50.00	16.67	66.67

Analysis: Returning fan favourite had a reasonable season at 35-years-old (turning 36 this season), putting up 16 goals and 34 points following a 47 point season on a much better Minnesota team .. can still shoot firing over two shots per game and had five power play goals, shooting 9.5 percent overall (11.3 percent shooter for his career), though his numbers declined to the 7 percent range in the three seasons prior .. A veteran, depth scoring contributor at this point in his career Pominville doesn't offer much other than goals and shots but he can still score in the double digits and put up over 30 points .. his power play time likely takes a hit with all the players the Sabres have added which would hurt his ability to hit both of those markers .. hasn't played less than 75 games over the last 5 seasons and has three 82 game seasons in that time .. a supporting role now.

43 Conor SHEARY — LW

AGE: 26 | H/W: 5-9/175 | NHL: 3 | SALARY: $3,000,000 | CONTRACT: 2020

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	MIN	PPG
15-16	Pittsburgh (NHL)	44	7	3	10	8	9.5	0.23
16-17	Pittsburgh (NHL)	61	23	30	53	22	16.0	0.87
17-18	Pittsburgh (NHL)	79	18	12	30	10	14.0	0.38
	Career	184	48	45	93	40		0.51
	Prediction	**75**	**14**	**14**	**28**			**0.37**

Scouting: Fast, undersized winger with excellent puck-handling skill .. courageous, with an energetic style .. excels driving zone entries utilizing his speed, determination and intensity .. absorbs contact to advance plays – and engages as well .. penchant for initiating counter-rushes – via strong defensive pursuits .. retrieves loose pucks and forces turnovers very well, changing the course of play .. fiercely combative, stealth in soft areas to exploit excellent distribution - area underneath the goal line is his office .. initial forechecker pressuring to retrieve the puck .. transitions well from a support to forechecking torpedo as positions shift in the offensive zone .. tracks back doggedly a very quick stick swipes pucks away .. generates speed using a running style of alternating crossover patterns - and a quick cadence .. keeps building speed - and is quite adept at throwing the puck into his feet and driving 1-on-1 around a defender to goal .. possesses very good balance and strength on his feet for his size.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	978.3	3.25	12	1.53	7.86	56.52	32.61	23.91	45.65
5v4	93.8	0.33	18.18	0.48	12.5	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00

2017-18 TEAM SCORING

PPG BY QTR																PLAYOFFS				
1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q		GP	G	A	Pts	BST	YR	+/-	PIM	S	S%	MIN	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-
0.80	0.90	1.29	0.92	Jack EICHEL	67	25	39	64	64	17-8	-25	32	246	10.2	20.08	-	-	-	-	-
0.75	0.50	0.90	0.85	Ryan O'REILLY	81	24	37	61	64	13-4	-23	2	230	10.4	20.49	-	-	-	-	-
0.40	0.24	0.90	0.90	Sam REINHART	82	25	25	50	50	17-8	-24	26	188	13.3	17.06	-	-	-	-	-
0.44	0.52	0.81	0.50	Kyle OKPOSO	76	15	29	44	69	13-4	-34	40	161	9.3	17.01	-	-	-	-	-
0.38	0.47	0.71	0.60	Rasmus RISTOLAINEN	73	6	35	41	45	16-7	-25	48	182	3.3	26.29	-	-	-	-	-
0.65	0.29	0.10	0.65	Jason POMINVILLE	82	16	18	34	80	2007-8	-17	8	168	9.5	14.54	-	-	-	-	-
-	0.38	0.40	0.80	Evan RODRIGUES	48	7	18	25	25	17-8	-10	14	91	7.7	13.55	-	-	-	-	-
0.20	0.38	0.24	0.25	Marco SCANDELLA	82	5	17	22	23	14-5	-15	37	138	3.6	23.19	-	-	-	-	-
0.40	0.15	0.22	0.25	Benoit POULIOT	74	13	6	19	36	15-6T	-8	22	83	15.7	13.40	-	-	-	-	-
0.15	0.19	0.26	0.25	Johan LARSSON	80	4	13	17	17	17-8T	-30	49	86	4.7	14.06	-	-	-	-	-
0.18	0.21	0.20	0.27	Zemgus GIRGENSONS	71	7	8	15	30	14-5	-12	26	113	6.2	13.42	-	-	-	-	-
0.00	0.14	0.40	0.20	Scott WILSON	69	6	8	14	26	16-7	-20	8	98	6.1	12.12	-	-	-	-	-
				...Pit	3	0	0	0			-2	0	3	0	10.27					
				...Det	17	0	0	0			-1	0	10	0	7.27					
				...Buf	49	6	8	14			-17	8	85	7.1	13.57					
0.15	0.38	0.08	-	Jake MCCABE	53	3	9	12	20	16-7	-11	26	53	5.7	19.30	-	-	-	-	-
0.21	0.10	0.15	0.40	*Viktor ANTIPIN	47	0	10	10	10	17-8	-9	18	40	0.0	15.16	-	-	-	-	-
0.15	0.13	0.20	0.13	Nathan BEAULIEU	59	1	8	9	28	16-7	-19	36	67	1.5	15.56	-	-	-	-	-
0.06	0.21	0.00	0.17	Jordan NOLAN	69	4	4	8	10	13-4	-13	69	50	8.0	9.47	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	0.33	0.11	Casey NELSON	37	3	5	8	8	17-8	-14	8	48	6.3	18.46	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	0.22	0.20	*Nicholas BAPTISTE	33	4	2	6	6	17-8	-4	14	45	8.9	9.58	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	*Casey MITTELSTADT	6	1	4	5	5	17-8	1	2	9	11.1	14.01	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	0.25	*Brendan GUHLE	18	0	5	5	5	17-8	-6	10	37	0.0	18.06	-	-	-	-	-
0.43	-	-	-	Justin BAILEY	12	3	1	4	4	17-8T	-2	2	19	15.8	11.16	-	-	-	-	-
-	0.36	0.00	0.00	Jacob JOSEFSON	39	2	2	4	14	15-6	-4	6	35	5.7	11.22	-	-	-	-	-
-	0.29	0.00	-	*Danny O'REGAN	21	0	4	4	4	17-8	-2	2	17	0.0	9.58	-	-	-	-	-
				...SJ	19	0	4	4			-3	2	17	0	9.58					
				...Buf	2	0	0	0			1	0	0	0	9.53					
0.19	-	-	-	Seth GRIFFITH	21	2	1	3	10	14-5	-6	6	15	13.3	10.33	-	-	-	-	-
0.00	0.00	0.15	0.00	Justin FALK	46	1	1	2	9	11-2	-16	28	36	2.8	16.05	-	-	-	-	-
0.00	0.18	0.00	-	Josh GORGES	34	0	2	2	23	2008-9	-4	17	15	0.0	14.56	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	*Alexander NYLANDER	3	1	0	1	1	17-8T	-3	0	2	50.0	12.51	-	-	-	-	-
0.14	-	-	-	Taylor FEDUN	7	0	1	1	7	16-7	-1	2	8	0.0	14.41	-	-	-	-	-
-	0.06	-	-	Zach BOGOSIAN	18	0	1	1	30	11-2	-9	20	29	0.0	19.09	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	Zach REDMOND	3	0	0	0	20	14-5	1	2	7	0.0	14.28	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	Hudson FASCHING	5	0	0	0	2	15-6	-1	2	1	0.0	9.42	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	*Kyle CRISCUOLO	9	0	0	0	0	17-8	-4	4	5	0.0	8.00	-	-	-	-	-
0.00	-	-	-	Matt MOULSON	14	0	0	0	69	11-2	-9	2	13	0.0	10.17	-	-	-	-	-
0.00	-	-	-	Matt TENNYSON	15	0	0	0	8	14-5	-8	8	25	0.0	17.58	-	-	-	-	-

Analysis: First near full season (career high 79 games after previous high of 61), saw a massive drop in production for Sheary going from 53 points to 30 last season in both seasons his most common linemate was Sidney Crosby but his shooting percentage dropped from an unsustainable 14.9 percent to a still high but more repeatable 12.7 percent .. concerning that he had more shots on goal in his 61 game campaign (154) than his 79 game campaign (142) .. was a good AHL player with 81 points in his last 88 AHL regular season games so there's a history of production at lower levels .. turned 26 this season and is closer to the .39 points per game player than the .87 one, but can still be productive playing alongside top centers so watch how the Buffalo lines shake out because if he plays with Eichel he'll have a chance to be a 45+ point player, but if not he's much closer to a 35 point contributor that's more valuable in real hockey than fantasy.

21 Patrick BERGLUND — C

AGE: 30 | H/W: 6-4/225 | NHL: 10 | SALARY: $3,850,000 | CONTRACT: 2022

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	MIN	PPG
15-16	St. Louis (NHL)	42	10	5	15	16	15.3	0.36
16-17	St. Louis (NHL)	82	23	11	34	32	16.0	0.41
17-18	St. Louis (NHL)	57	17	9	26	30	16.1	0.46
	Career	694	168	154	322	242		0.46
	Prediction	**65**	**12**	**15**	**27**			**0.42**

Scouting: Tall and lanky forward creative with playmaking vision .. smooth and swooping skater .. massive frame masks deceptive quickness and agility due to casual and effortless mechanics .. solid F1 pressuring defensemen to hurry up plays .. could still upgrade stride power and fluidity in turns .. handles the puck well - jaw-dropping stickhandling moves, shifting the puck out wide with his mammoth wingspan to provide space protection .. can develop more of a shooter's mentality .. lethal when driving into lanes to fire off a heavy wristshot and sharp release .. overhandle with break down plays as a result .. committed to defense and physicality .. athletic and strong, more agile than size warrants .. active stick, and mature defensive presentation .. still developing as a hitter - and refining checking routes .. labours with the pace and intensity .. excellent hand-eye coordination for tips in front in mid-air.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	743.68	4.24	12.64	0.38	6.25	66.67	45.83	20.83	66.67
5v4	98.02	0.49	17.65	-2.69	8.86	85.71	42.86	42.86	71.43

Analysis: After remaining relatively healthy in his first seven seasons in the league, Berglund has been injured to the tune of missing 65 games combined in two of the last three seasons (with an 82 game season right in the middle of that) .. despite that he managed to have his second highest goals per game output in total scoring 17 times in 57 games; his lack of assists will always hurt his overall point totals but he has played at an above 20 goal pace in each of the last three seasons including 23 in his 82 game season that said, he has shot 15 percent or higher over the last two seasons; for his career Berglund is a 12.5 percent shooter as he scores at a solid clip but does not put a ton of pucks on net .. overall he's a 15 – 20 goal guy that might be able to chip in 15 assists as well if he stays healthy and has strong linemates, making him a depth fantasy player at best.

71 Vladimir SOBOTKA — LW

AGE: 31 | H/W: 5-10/195 | NHL: 8 | SALARY: $3,500,000 | CONTRACT: 2020

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	MIN	PPG
16-17	St. Louis (NHL)	1	1	0	1	0	16.4	1.00
16-17	Avangard Omsk (KHL)	41	9	21	30	30		0.73
17-18	St. Louis (NHL)	81	11	20	31	50	17.1	0.38
	Career	463	47	108	155	332		0.33
	Prediction	**80**	**8**	**18**	**26**			**0.33**

Scouting: Gutsy undersized pivot with understated two-way skills and hockey sense .. an effective F1 on the forecheck and keen cycle along the boards .. aggravates opponents thanks to an abrasive, 'inside' game, utilizing diminutive size to maneuver around bigger competition .. shifty stickhandler - possesses good quick hands and a surprisingly-hard slapshot .. carries puck tight to his body requiring little operating space to execute at top speed .. fearlessly worms his way into soft spots in coverage and is very adept at tips off his blade .. consistent and well-trained defensively - makes smart coverage decisions in the defensive zone stays within structure and switches seamlessly .. excellent in the support layer in offensive zone battles – and quick to turn loose pucks into scoring chances .. upright skater with solid technical abilities and a spring in his stride .. a utilitarian component, less flair.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	1110.28	1.74	8.49	-6.71	5.45	68.97	31.03	37.93	58.62
5v4	134.18	-2.33	0	-5.63	6.25	50.00	0.00	50.00	16.67

Analysis: First full season in the NHL after a three-year stint in the KHL and Sobotka responded with 11 goals (which is a carer high) and 31 points, but his points per game were way down from his previous NHL form as he went from .54 to .38 .. his season before that in the NHL he was at .40 and for his career he's at .33 so you can expect that is more the norm of his production and the .54 year is an outlier .. he can chip in on periphery categories in deeper leagues bringing a physical dimension delivering 127 hits, 50 PIMs, and 136 shots on goals .. he has always been strong at face-offs and delivered 54 percent last season .. he would be third on the Sabres in hits, (though he was third on the team and only won 191 total he replaces the role O'Reilly played, though not quite as effective .. fantasy value is limited but fills a need on the third line.

DEFENSE

55 Rasmus RISTOLAINEN — D

AGE: 23 | H/W: 6-3/210 | NHL: 5 | SALARY: $5,400,000 | CONTRACT: 2022

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	MIN	PPG
15-16	Buffalo (NHL)	82	9	32	41	33	25.2	0.50
16-17	Buffalo (NHL)	79	6	39	45	58	26.3	0.57
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	73	6	35	41	48	26.3	0.56
	Career	346	31	120	151	171		0.44
	Prediction	**82**	**11**	**44**	**55**			**0.67**

Scouting: Sizeable, rugged with a thick lower trunk and solid overall construction .. adept puck handler through the neutral zone – exemplified by being the puc rusher before the drop pass on the power play .. can also stretch the play with long passes and generally intelligent outlets .. holds the puck to stave off pressure in controlled breakouts .. integrates into the transition trailing lanes and supporting the rush .. dead-ends himself at times .. walks the line fairly well to exploit top weapon, a heavy slapshot .. strength and aggression are prime attributes .. skating stride is short yet powerful, even with some stiffness - misses some lateral agility .. feet are strong but heavy and not terribly quick or dexterous .. a better forward skater than backwards, where he labours generating momentum and defaults to forward in order to quell quick attacks .. will resort to hands and grabs due to a tendency to take aggressive angles to close gaps .. doesn't switch back to defender's position in broken up rushes - stays up front in forward positioning – and can get lost in positioning during chaotic periods in the defensive zone .. underwhelming when the energy level dips and the feet stop moving in pursuits.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	1357.15	-0.72	2.78	-5.26	5.91	30.95	7.14	23.81	14.29
5v4	252.23	-1.82	2.27	-0.06	11.76	56.67	3.33	53.33	30.00

Analysis: Followed a career high 45-point season with a 41-point campaign, once again scoring six goals and he also took only four less shots on goal than his career year (though he did miss nine games this season) .. posted over 40 points in three of his four full NHL seasons and is a safe bet to do so again this season .. produced 22 assists (and one goal) on the power play, but could stand to lose some time to Dahlin this year which warrants monitoring and might hurt his overall point totals .. he's been overworked on bad Buffalo teams so far playing over 25 minutes a night in each of the last three seasons, fourth in the league with 26:30 in 17-18 .. they might be able to scale back his minutes this year overall with the additions of Dahlin and Hunwick, all to his benefit .. a right-hand shot he pairs well with Dahlin (a natural left, but can play both) on a strong first pairing, whether they are used together on the power play will remain to be seen .. 23-years-old and entering his fifth full NHL season and still appears a good bet for over 40 points with upside on an improved Sabres squad.

6 Marco SCANDELLA — D

AGE: 28 | H/W: 6-3/220 | NHL: 7 | SALARY: $4,000,000 | CONTRACT: 2020

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	MIN	PPG
15-16	Minnesota (NHL)	73	5	16	21	22	20.4	0.29
16-17	Minnesota (NHL)	71	4	9	13	25	18.2	0.18
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	82	5	17	22	37	23.2	0.27
	Career	455	32	79	111	185		0.24
	Prediction	**82**	**4**	**16**	**20**			**0.24**

Scouting: Strong, sizeable rearguard with understated skill and mobility .. steady, poised player .. evolved at the top of the offensive zone, keeping pucks onside, slipping into soft areas, or firing a heavy shot .. completes long outlet and stretch passes, while one-touch skills offer passing at a touch .. composed under pressure - dissolves forechecking heat and aggressive on 2-on-1's, throwing his body towards puck carrier to thwart passes instead of just offering a barrier in the middle .. good technical skater even though startup and acceleration strides are part-slushy, lacking some power and efficiency .. pivots and turns have improved .. still labours skating backwards affecting angles and gap control negatively .. effective when assertive and injecting a physicality .. evolving into a formidable 1-on-1 obstacle given his abnormally-long wingspan and strapping body .. quickness and tempo can improve, especially in situations that require heightened urgency.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	1479.5	-0.45	3.67	-6.01	6.08	26.67	8.89	17.78	22.22
5v4	121.05	-1.06	0	-4.09	8.51	50.00	0.00	50.00	37.50

Analysis: Scored 22 points in 2017-18 which has been a steady range for him over his career - his last four seasons point totals have been: 13, 21, 23, 17 .. Did have a career high 138 shots on goals but it was the first time he's also played in all 82 games of the season .. played a career high 23:19 per night, second on the team, having never played over 22 minutes per game before in a season, speaking to his value to the Sabres but in fantasy his totals remained relatively steady .. most likely not a PP option despite 1:34 minutes per game last season unless major injuries occur so he'll be facing top match-ups in a shutdown role, making points an added bonus for the Sabres at best .. should still hang around the 5-goal, 20-point, 120-shot on goal range provided he stays healthy .. would be an unlikely draft candidate unless you're in a deep league.

47 Zach BOGOSIAN — D

AGE: 28 | H/W: 6-3/215 | NHL: 9 | SALARY: $5,142,857 | CONTRACT: 2020

YR	TM	GP	W	L	T	GAA	SO	SV%
15-16	Buffalo (NHL)	64	7	17	24	68	22.2	0.38
16-17	Buffalo (NHL)	56	2	9	11	46	20.1	0.20
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	18	0	1	1	20	19.1	0.06
	Career	552	49	121	170	497		0.31
	Prediction	**72**	**4**	**12**	**16**			**0.22**

Scouting: A big, strapping workhorse, reaches full flight with just a few elegant strides .. integrates into the attack in transition as a support option or trailer .. spearheads rushes aided by good puckhandling skills .. strong wristshot, even from longer distances, that finds the net .. can limit puckmoving errors and still refine his distribution decisions .. exploits natural strength and a brawny frame, culminating into the odd high impact contact .. overall defensive play has matured, sticking to the basics and simplifying – angles, stick placement and aggression .. gets into trouble when overplaying the puck or passing on prime opportunities .. focuses on staying in coverage lanes and not chasing .. reactions remain raw - having been slow to learn the nuances of positioning .. injury concerns over time.

Metrics:

Sit	TOI	ixG	iSh%	O-ixG	OISh%	IPP	IGP	IAP	IPPP
5v5	303.27	-0.92	0	-4.92	3.25	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00
5v4	14.78	-0.18	0	-0.91	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Analysis: Once highly touted and productive when he first entered the league, Bogosian has seen his role and play diminish drastically over the years .. had only one point in 18 games before losing his season due to a hip injury .. noteworthy that in his first full season with the Sabres he did have seven goals

and 24 points in 64 games, which appears to be his ceiling at this point .. played more than 70 games only twice in his career and that was in his second and third full seasons in the league .. will get PIMs as evident by his 20 in 18 games and he will take shots on net with 29 last season and averaging well over two per game in his career .. Oons the tools to produce and Buffalo is an improved squad but he's just a hard player to bet on at this point and the Sabres have other preferred power play options which limits his overall production.

GOAL

40 Carter HUTTON — G

AGE: 32 H/W: 6-1/200 NHL: xx SALARY: $2,750,000 CONTRACT: 2021

YR	TM	GP	W	L	T	GAA	SO	SVPC
15-16	Nashville (NHL)	17	7	5	4	2.33	2	0.918
16-17	St. Louis (NHL)	30	13	8	2	2.39	4	0.913
17-18	St. Louis (NHL)	32	17	7	3	2.09	3	0.915
	Career	138	63	39	--	2.42	11	0.915
	Prediction	**58**	**27**	**24**	**7**	**2.85**	**4**	**0.916**

Scouting: Sustains solid net coverage by playing almost exclusively at the top of the crease .. good overall technique with smart fundamental play .. maintains attentiveness when under duress, poised as an experienced veteran .. superb long-range vision that picks up pucks through screens and traffic well .. play-reading ability is serviceable, really zeroes in on everything around him .. strong rebound control, good at either shutting play down or quickly reporposing the puck for his defensemen .. decent athlete with good lateral and vertical movement .. shot-readiness needs to improve; his glove and blocker are never straight up before shots, and he doesn't read straight-away shots off the blade too well .. very over-reactive to things at times and can get himself in trouble that way .. internal clock is all off.

Analysis: After a career season Hutton is going to get an opportunity to be the full on number one though he has underrated competition in Linus Ullmark who has a career .917 save percentage (in only 26 games), is only 25-years-old which is young for goalies and is 6'4… Hutton has a career 0.915 save percentage of his own but has never started more than 35 games in a season .. he's 32-year-old so the Sabres are counting him to carry the load but also to help along Ullmark as he grows into the starting role, so that could limit Hutton's overall ability to accumulate starts because Ullmark is definitely going to play unless his game goes completely south .. an improved Sabres squad should help him get some wins and he has been proven enough to this point that his numbers should be solid but the 0.930+ save percentage is certainly an outlier .. has a good chance to be a 20+ win goalie again but 30+ would seem like a stretch.

2018 DRAFT PICKS

RD	PK	PLAYER	POS	AGE	HT/WT	TEAM	CS RNK
1	1	Rasmus DAHLIN	D	18	6-2/185	Frolunda (Swe)	1-E
2	32	Mattias SAMUELSSON	D	18	6-3/215	USA (NTDP-18)	21-N
4	94	Matej PEKAR	C	18	6-0/170	Muskegon (USHL)	55-N
4	117	Linus LINDSTRAND CRONHOLM	D	18	6-1/175	Malmo (Swe Jr)	NR
5	125	Miska KUKKONEN	D	18	6-0/200	Ilves Tampere (Fin Jr)	NR
7	187	William WORGE KREU	D	18	6-4/165	Linkopings (Swe Jr)	NR

2018-19 ROSTER

NO#	CENTER	AGE	S	HT/WT	ACQUIRED	`17-18 TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PM	PIM	SCH
	ASPLUND Rasmus	20	L	5-11/185	`16(33rd)	Farjestads (Swe)	50	8	20	28	4	20	0.845
21	BERGLUND Patrik	30	L	6-4/225	T(StL-7/18)	St. Louis (NHL)	57	17	9	26	-5	30	3.850
51	CRISCUOLO Kyle	26	R	5-9/175	FA(7/17)	Buffalo (NHL)	9	0	0	0	-4	4	0.650
						Rochester (AHL)	51	15	19	34	2	34	0.650
	DAVIDSSON Marcus	19	L	6-0/190	`17(37th)	Djurgardens (Swe)	39	9	12	21	16	14	
						Djurgardens (Swe Jr)	3	3	1	4	0	0	
9	EICHEL Jack	21	R	6-2/195	`15(2nd)	Buffalo (NHL)	67	25	39	64	-25	32	10.000
	GLOTOV Vasili	21	L	5-11/160	`16(190th)	Shawinigan (QMJHL)	64	29	14	43	-23	24	
						Cincinnati (ECHL)	5	1	1	2	-3	0	
	HURLEY Connor	23	L	6-2/185	`13(38th)	DNP - Redshirt Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	0	
22	LARSSON Johan	26	L	5-11/200	T(Min-4/13)	Buffalo (NHL)	80	4	13	17	-30	49	1.475
	MALONE Sean	23	L	6-0/190	`13(159th)	Rochester (AHL)	73	12	10	22	-4	29	0.788
37	MITTELSTADT Casey	19	L	6-1/200	`17(8th)	Buffalo (NHL)	6	1	4	5	1	2	0.925
						Minnesota (B1G)	34	11	19	30	4	10	0.925
	OGLEVIE Andrew	23	R	5-10/185	FA(4/18)	Notre Dame (HE)	36	15	24	39	6	18	0.925
	PEKAR Matej	18	L	6-0/170	`18(94th)	Muskegon (USHL)	56	14	40	54	6	36	
	PORTER Kevin	32	L	5-11/195	FA(7/17)	Rochester (AHL)	66	17	25	42	-10	20	0.650
NO#	**LEFT WING**	**AGE**	**S**	**HT/WT**	**ACQUIRED**	**`17-18 TEAM**	**GP**	**G**	**A**	**PTS**	**PM**	**PIM**	**SCH**
26	MOULSON Matt	34	L	6-1/205	FA(7/14)	Buffalo (NHL)	14	0	0	0	-9	2	5.000
						Ontario (AHL)	49	18	28	46	18	16	5.000
	MURRAY Brett	20	L	6-4/215	`16(99th)	Penn State (B1G)	21	1	5	6	-6	23	
92	NYLANDER Alexander	20	R	6-1/180	`16(8th)	Buffalo (NHL)	3	1	0	1	-3	0	0.863
						Rochester (AHL)	51	8	19	27	3	10	0.863
	OLOFSSON Victor	23	L	5-11/175	`14(181st)	Frolunda (Swe)	50	27	16	43	1	8	0.768
71	RODRIGUES Evan	25	R	5-11/180	FA(4/15)	Buffalo (NHL)	48	7	18	25	-10	14	0.650
						Rochester (AHL)	8	5	5	10	-1	2	0.650
43	SHEARY Conor	26	L	5-9/175	T(Pit-6/18)	Pittsburgh (NHL)	79	18	12	30	2	10	3.000
53	SKINNER Jeff	26	L	5-11/200	T(Car-8/18)	Carolina (NHL)	82	24	25	49	-27	34	5.725
	SMITH C.J.	23	L	5-11/185	FA(3/17)	Rochester (AHL)	57	17	27	44	4	16	0.874
71	SOBOTKA Vladimir	31	L	5-10/195	T(StL-7/18)	St. Louis (NHL)	81	11	20	31	-6	50	3.500
	WEISSBACH Linus	20	L	5-8/160	`17(192nd)	Wisconsin (B1G)	34	10	16	26	-2	26	
	WILLMAN Max	23	L	6-0/190	`14(121st)	Brown (ECAC)	9	1	4	5	-2	0	
20	WILSON Scott	26	L	6-0/185	T(Det-12/17)	Pit-Det-Buf (NHL)	69	6	8	14	-20	8	1.050
NO#	**RIGHT WING**	**AGE**	**S**	**HT/WT**	**ACQUIRED**	**`17-18 TEAM**	**GP**	**G**	**A**	**PTS**	**PM**	**PIM**	**SCH**
95	BAILEY Justin	23	R	6-3/215	`13(52nd)	Buffalo (NHL)	12	3	1	4	-2	2	0.715
						Rochester (AHL)	37	10	5	15	3	28	0.715
13	BAPTISTE Nicholas	23	R	6-1/205	`13(69th)	Buffalo (NHL)	33	4	2	6	-4	14	0.788
						Rochester (AHL)	36	7	11	18	3	22	0.788
	BROWN Christopher	22	R	6-0/185	`14(151st)	Boston College (HE)	37	9	10	19	-3	14	
	CORNEL Eric	22	R	6-2/195	`14(44th)	Rochester (AHL)	61	9	9	18	-4	25	0.718
28	GIRGENSONS Zemgus	24	L	6-2/205	`12(14th)	Buffalo (NHL)	71	7	8	15	-12	26	1.600
	KARABACEK Vaclav	22	R	6-0/195	`14(49th)	Cincinnati (ECHL)	28	0	5	5	-4	18	0.695
						Rochester (AHL)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.695
21	OKPOSO Kyle	30	R	6-0/215	FA(7/16)	Buffalo (NHL)	76	15	29	44	-34	40	6.000
65	O'REGAN Danny	24	R	5-10/175	T(SJ-2/18)	SJ-Buf (NHL)	21	0	4	4	-2	2	0.874
						SJ-Rch (AHL)	49	13	27	40	-2	16	0.874
	PETERSON Judd	24	R	6-0/195	`12(204th)	St. Cloud State (NCHC)	40	6	12	18	10	28	
						Rochester (AHL)	2	0	0	0	-1	0	
29	POMINVILLE Jason	35	R	6-0/185	T(Min-6/17)	Buffalo (NHL)	82	16	18	34	-17	8	5.600
23	REINHART Sam	22	R	6-1/195	`14(2nd)	Buffalo (NHL)	82	25	25	50	-24	26	0.894
32	THOMPSON Tage	20	R	6-5/200	T(StL-7/18)	St. Louis (NHL)	41	3	6	9	-12	12	0.925
						San Antonio (AHL)	30	8	10	18	-4	4	0.925
NO#	**DEFENSE**	**AGE**	**S**	**HT/WT**	**ACQUIRED**	**`17-18 TEAM**	**GP**	**G**	**A**	**PTS**	**PM**	**PIM**	**SCH**
82	BEAULIEU Nathan	25	L	6-2/205	T(Mtl-6/17)	Buffalo (NHL)	59	1	8	9	-19	36	2.400
47	BOGOSIAN Zach	28	R	6-3/215	T(Wpg-2/15)	Buffalo (NHL)	18	0	1	1	-9	20	5.143
	BORGEN Will	21	R	6-2/200	`15(92nd)	St. Cloud State (NCHC)	36	2	13	15	9	68	0.864
						Rochester (AHL)	8	0	0	0	0	0	0.864
	BRYSON Jacob	20	L	5-9/180	`17(99th)	Providence (HE)	40	4	21	25	16	18	
	CHUKAROV Ivan	23	L	6-3/200	`15(182nd)	Massachusetts (HE)	31	0	6	6	0	22	
	DAHLIN Rasmus	18	L	6-2/185	`18(1st)	Frolunda (Swe)	41	7	13	20	4	20	0.925
						Frolunda (Swe Jr)	1	1	1	2	1	0	0.925
27	FEDUN Taylor	30	R	6-1/210	FA(7/16)	Buffalo (NHL)	7	0	1	1	-1	2	0.650
						Rochester (AHL)	45	3	13	16	5	32	0.650
	FITZGERALD Casey	21	L	5-11/190	`16(86th)	Boston College (HE)	36	6	13	19	-2	45	
45	GUHLE Brendan	21	L	6-3/195	`15(51st)	Buffalo (NHL)	18	0	5	5	-6	10	0.698
						Rochester (AHL)	50	8	18	26	1	26	0.698
	HICKEY Brandon	22	L	6-2/190	T(Ari-6/18)	Boston University (HE)	35	6	8	14	-5	45	0.925
22	HUNWICK Matt	33	L	5-11/200	T(Pit-6/18)	Pittsburgh (NHL)	42	4	6	10	-4	21	2.250
	KUKKONEN Miska	18	R	6-0/200	`18(125th)	Ilves Tampere (Fin Jr)	12	2	2	4	2	33	
	LAAKSONEN Oskari	19	R	6-1/165	`17(89th)	Ilves Tampere (Fin Jr)	35	3	11	14	-14	44	
						Ilves Tampere (Fin)	21	0	4	4	-3	8	
	LINDSTRAND CRONHOLM Linus	18	L	6-1/175	`18(117th)	Malmo (Swe Jr)	37	0	6	6	-10	48	
						Malmo (Swe Jr 18 Elit)	18	6	10	16	8	45	
	MARTIN Brycen	22	L	6-2/195	`14(74th)	Cincinnati (ECHL)	61	2	9	11	-7	20	0.685
						Rochester (AHL)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.685
19	MCCABE Jake	24	L	6-1/210	`12(44th)	Buffalo (NHL)	53	3	9	12	-11	26	1.600
8	NELSON Casey	26	R	6-2/185	FA(3/16)	Buffalo (NHL)	37	3	5	8	-14	8	0.813
						Rochester (AHL)	40	2	9	11	14	16	0.813
	NYBERG Philip	21	R	6-4/205	`16(129th)	Connecticut (HE)	20	2	1	3	8	6	
	PILUT Lawrence	22	L	5-11/180	FA(5/18)	HV 71 (Swe)	52	8	30	38	13	22	0.925
55	RISTOLAINEN Rasmus	23	R	6-3/210	`13(8th)	Buffalo (NHL)	73	6	35	41	-25	48	5.400
	SAMUELSSON Mattias	18	L	6-3/215	`18(32nd)	USA (NTDP-18)	58	11	20	31	13	113	
						Team USA (USHL)	23	4	10	14	16	64	
6	SCANDELLA Marco	28	L	6-3/220	T(Min-6/17)	Buffalo (NHL)	82	5	17	22	-15	37	4.000
	STEPHENS Devante	21	L	6-2/180	`15(122nd)	Cincinnati (ECHL)	33	0	8	8	2	22	0.743
						Rochester (AHL)	6	0	0	0	-4	7	0.743
5	TENNYSON Matt	28	R	6-1/215	FA(7/17)	Buffalo (NHL)	15	0	0	0	-8	8	0.650
						Rochester (AHL)	50	3	8	11	-22	40	0.650
	WORGE KREU William	18	L	6-4/165	`18(187th)	Linkopings (Swe Jr)	38	3	11	14	6	40	
						Linkopings (Swe Jr 18)	4	1	0	1	6	10	
						Linkopings (Swe)	1	0	0	0	0	0	
NO#	**GOAL**	**AGE**	**S**	**HT/WT**	**ACQUIRED**	**17-18 TEAM**	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**GAA**	**SO**	**SV%**	**SCH**
40	HUTTON Carter	32	L	6-1/200	FA(7/18)	St. Louis (NHL)	32	17	7	2.09	3	0.931	2.750
	JOHANSSON Jonas	22	L	6-4/205	`14(61st)	Cincinnati (ECHL)	27	14	11	3.13	0	0.909	0.759
						Rochester (AHL)	7	4	3	3.89	0	0.861	0.759
	LUUKKONEN Ukko-Pekka	19	L	6-4/195	`17(54th)	LeKi (Fin 2)	24					0.909	0.793
						HPK (Fin Jr)	2			2.50		0.924	0.793
						HPK (Fin)	1	0	1	3.55	0	0.750	0.793
35	ULLMARK Linus	25	L	6-4/220	`12(163rd)	Buffalo (NHL)	5	1	2	2.00	0	0.935	0.750
						Rochester (AHL)	44	21	12	2.44	2	0.922	0.750
31	WEDGEWOOD Scott	26	L	6-2/195	FA(7/18)	Arizona (NHL)	20	5	9	3.45	1	0.893	0.700
						Bng-Ont (AHL)	7	3	1	2.82	0	0.915	0.700

BACK TO TOC

PROSPECTS

SYSTEM OVERVIEW

RYAN WAGMAN

The road has been dark and long for the Sabres. They have not seen a postseason game in seven seasons, and have only two first round losses since making the Eastern Conference finals in 2007.

Sure, the Carolina Hurricanes have gone longer without experiencing the playoffs, but the team in Raleigh was at least semi-decent. The Sabres have been awful.

Focusing on the seven year dry run, they were a near miss in the first year and then bottomed out quickly. In the lockout shortened 2012-13 season, they finished 12th in the Eastern Conference. In the five seasons since, they finished seventh in the Atlantic Division once, and eighth the other four times.

What has all this losing brought to Buffalo? While Edmonton had the drop on the lottery, the Sabres were generally relegated to sloppy seconds, or worse. Looking only at their first picks, Buffalo drafted blueliner Rasmus Ristolainen eighth overall in 2013, forward Sam Reinhart was the second pick in 2014, recent face of the franchise Jack Eichel was the second pick after Connor McDavid in 2015 and back-to-back eighth overall picks in 2016 and 2017 yielded Alexander Nylander and Casey Mittelstadt.

Finally, their years of decrepitude won Buffalo the first overall pick this year, with one of the best defensemen to hit a draft class in ages heading up the draft. The Sabres did not hesitate to draft another Rasmus, with Dahlin joining Ristolainen on the Buffalo blueline of the present and future.

There were some pretty talented players named in the previous two paragraphs. Player who, surrounded by the right supporting cast, could feasibly be the core of a playoff team. Unfortunately for the locals, former GM Tim Murray was unable to round out the roster. Eichel is a star and Reinhart has finally shown signs of being a legitimate top six winger, if not quite yet living up to expectations.

As it so often is, the problem with Buffalo was that they failed to draft well after their first pick.

From the 2013 draft class, Ristolainen has been a workhorse, but overextended in a shut down role. They drafted 10 other players in that draft. Nikita Zadorov was taken later in the first round and was traded to Colorado after his rookie season in the Ryan O'Reilly deal. Second rounder J.T. Compher also was moved out in that deal. Of the other eight selected, they received a total of 100 NHL games played, mostly by up and down forwards Justin Bailey and Nicholas Baptiste.

In 2014, Buffalo drafted eight others after Reinhart. Only second rounder Brendan Lemieux has played in the NHL and that was with Winnipeg, as he was moved as part of the Tyler Myers trade.

The Sabres only had six total picks in 2015. Other than Eichel, second rounder Brendan Guhle has appeared in 21 games already and is in line for much more. Fourth rounder Will Borgen could join him as a third pairing defender within a few years.

The above-mentioned Alex Nylander is the only class of 2017 player to reach the show, but he has struggled thus far in his professional career. The Sabres have already neglected to sign three of their final four picks and have traded away their third pick as part of the exchange for Jeff Skinner. If not Nylander, Rasmus Asplund and Casey Fitzgerald are the only potential impact players from that class.

It is far too early to judge Buffalo's 2017 or 2018 draft classes, but with Mittlestadt and Dahlin ready for immediate insertion into the NHL lineup, Buffalo is finally seeing some light at the end of their long road.

1. RASMUS DAHLIN — D

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Frolunda (Swe)	26	1	2	3	6	0.12
16-17	Frolunda (Swe Jr)	24	9	13	22	74	0.92
17-18	Frolunda (Swe)	41	7	13	20	20	0.49
17-18	Frolunda (Swe Jr)	1	1	1	2	0	2.00

AGE: 18 H/W: 6-2/185 (1st overall, 2018. Last Year: IE) There was never any real question but that Rasmus Dahlin would be the first player selected in the 2018 NHL Draft. Both his skating and his puck skills grade out at the elite level. His overall game is incredibly mature and he famously represented Sweden at the WJC (while also playing as a regular in the SHL) as a 16 year old. He has average size for the NHL even considering that he has not yet fully accessed his man strength. Many have compared his game to previous top end Swedish defenders in the NHL, from Nicklas Lidstrom to Victor Hedman, but his game is most reminiscent to that that of Drew Doughty. Dahlin is the rare blueliner that can take over a shift in all zones, shutting things down in his own end and controlling the possession in the offensive end. He has been ready for the NHL for at least 12 months, and is maybe 12 months away from being an All Star.

2. CASEY MITTELSTADT — C/LW

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Eden Prairie (USHS-MN)	25	21	43	64	8	2.56
16-17	Green Bay (USHL)	24	13	17	30	2	1.25
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	6	1	4	5	2	0.83
17-18	Minnesota (B1G)	34	11	19	30	10	0.88

AGE: 19 H/W: 6-1/200 (8th overall, 2018. Last Year: 1st) If all you saw of Mittelstadt was his performance for Team USA in the most recent WJC (in Buffalo), you would think that you were looking at a future super star. His late season cameo with Buffalo did not disabuse that notion. But in the past two seasons, first split between Green Bay of the USHL and Eden Prairie HS, and the latter with the University of Minnesota, his production was good, but never great. At his best, he is breathtaking. He is so patient with the puck, defenders look hypnotized. At his worst, he tries to force plays. Perhaps playing with NHL caliber players more often will allow him to feel that he is not the only one who can produce, while the presence of Jack Eichel will ensure that he is not the focal point of the offense. Either way, he is ready to show what he can do in the NHL.

3. ALEXANDER NYLANDER — LW

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Buffalo (NHL)	4	0	1	1	0	0.25
16-17	Rochester (AHL)	65	10	18	28	6	0.43
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	3	1	0	1	0	0.33
17-18	Rochester (AHL)	51	8	19	27	10	0.53

AGE: 20 H/W: 6-1/180 (8th overall, 2016. Last Year: 2nd) Two years into his professional career, and Alex Nylander's lack of offensive output is jarring. He still dominates against his age peers, with a third productive WJC, but he barely surpassed the point every other game rate and has all too often been a non-factor for Rochester. When seen at his best, he still looks like a future star, with his shot, puck skills and hockey IQ all grading out as high end facets in his game. He also skates well, although his feet are not dynamic. Sources have confirmed that he played through injuries last year, and he did perk up somewhat in the second half, but time has come for Nylander to step up. He still has to earn a full time NHL job.

4. MATTIAS SAMUELSSON — D

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	USA (NTDP-17)	37	6	8	14	38	0.38
16-17	USA (NTDP-18)	10	0	2	2	6	0.20
17-18	USA (NTDP-18)	58	11	20	31	113	0.53
17-18	Team USA (USHL)	23	4	10	14	64	0.61

AGE: 18 H/W: 6-3/215 (32nd overall, 2018. Last Year: IE) When you are as big as Mattias Samuelsson, it is OK to note that a player skates well for his size. Were he three inches shorter, or 20 pounds lighter, we would note that he has to overcome his relative lack of mobility, but at 6-4", 218 and likely still growing, we can watch him play and nod in appreciation of his mobility for his size. Regardless of his size, we can appreciate his destructive presence in back. Overpowering in the USHL, he was masterful at shutting down opposition attacks and was a pure bull in the corners. His offensive tools are not as impressive, but his point shot can generate rebounds, and he can orchestrate a few zone entries. As long as he doesn't get so bulky that his skating suffers, he could be a true shut-down defender at the highest level.

5. MARCUS DAVIDSSON — C/LW

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Djurgardens (Swe)	45	5	4	9	6	0.20
16-17	Djurgardens (Swe Jr)	9	6	4	10	2	1.11
17-18	Djurgardens (Swe)	39	9	12	21	14	0.54
17-18	Djurgardens (Swe Jr)	3	3	1	4	0	1.33

AGE: 19 H/W: 6-0/190 (37th overall, 2017. Last Year: 8th) Only average as a skater and he will never be known as a high end finisher, but Marcus Davidsson's playmaking ability will always make him a desirable prospect. He more than doubled his point totals in his second season in the SHL and played a complimentary role for Sweden in the WJC. He plays a mature game, capable of fitting into various special teams' roles and versatile enough to play either center or on the wing. Although his top speed is nothing special, he does show impressive agility on the ice. He is signed for one more season with Djurgarden, after which we expect the Sabres to try to bring him over.

6. UKKO-PEKKA LUUKKONEN — G

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
17-18	LeKi (Fin 2)	26	0	0	0	0	0.00
17-18	HPK (Fin Jr)	2	0	0	0	0	0.00

AGE: 19 H/W: 6-4/195 (54th overall, 2017. Last Year: 5th) The Sabres may not have a goalie of the present, but Luukkonen is doing what he can to be the goalie of the future. The first European goalie selected in the CHL Import Draft since the moratorium on overseas goalies was lifted, he will spend next season with the OHL's Sudbury Wolves, another team trying to end a lengthy rebuild. He has above average athleticism, advanced technical ability and high end ability to read the play. Unfortunately, the results have not always been there. For example, in his first taste of men's hockey in Finland, his save percentage was fourth out of the four netminders who played for LeKi. He also struggled in the WJC, playing a bit out of control. He has time, but he is another that needs to turn ability into production.

7. VICTOR OLOFSSON — LW

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Frolunda (Swe)	51	9	18	27	2	0.53
17-18	Frolunda (Swe)	50	27	16	43	8	0.86

AGE: 23 H/W: 5-11/175 (181st overall, 2014. Last Year: 18th) The 2014 seventh rounder was almost an afterthought in the Buffalo system before he exploded in his fourth season in the SHL, his second with Frolunda. By exploded, we of course mean that he led the SHL in both goals and power play goals. Previously viewed with a ceiling as a tweener the uptick in his finishing ability gives the Sabres that he may be a bit more. You want to see better skating ability in a player of his size, but to his credit, he battles hard for loose pucks and has above average puck skills in addition to his propensity for putting the puck in the net. We will all know a lot more after he completes his first season with Rochester.

8. BRENDAN GUHLE — D

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Buffalo (NHL)	3	0	0	0	0	0.00
16-17	PA-PG (WHL)	47	15	18	33	32	0.70
16-17	Rochester (AHL)	6	1	1	2	2	0.33
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	18	0	5	5	10	0.28
17-18	Rochester (AHL)	50	8	18	26	26	0.52

AGE: 21 H/W: 6-3/195 (51st overall, 2015. Last Year: 3rd) A fantastic skater whose offensive game has grown year over year, Guhle now finds himself on the doorstep of breaking

through full time into the NHL. His ascent up the ranks has been fairly crisp, as he acclimated to the AHL immediately, and earned his 18 game NHL trial. He is not a terribly physical defender, but has filled out his previously lanky frame nicely, and is very aggressive with is stick when defending. He has enough of a point shot to be usable on the power play and defends well enough to not be sheltered and even contribute on the PK. With Dahlin expected to feature right away, the Sabres may hesitate to roll with two rookies on their blueline, but there is no reason why Guhle shouldn't entrench himself on the third time in short order, and slowly work his way up the depth chart.

9. RASMUS ASPLUND — C

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Farjestads (Swe)	39	6	13	19	10	0.49
17-18	Farjestads (Swe)	50	8	20	28	20	0.56

AGE: 20 H/W: 5-11/185 (33rd overall, 2016. Last Year: 4th)
In four seasons spent largely with Farjestad of the SHL, Asplund's point totals have steadily increased from three, to 12, to 19, and finally, to 28. Small, but very quick, he brings above average puck skills and mature hockey sense to the ice. While the improvement too his output is certainly impressive, he has not taken off to the extent that his original high end projections would have suggested as a possibility. He could still find a home on an NHL third line, but top six is looking less likely. He is also one of several Buffalo prospects who should be receiving their AHL debuts this year, giving us a better understanding of their future projections.

10. LAWRENCE PILUT — D

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	HV 71 (Swe)	48	3	9	12	20	0.25
17-18	HV 71 (Swe)	52	8	30	38	22	0.73

AGE: 22 H/W: 5-11/180 (UDFA: May 15, 2018. Last Year: IE)
Fleet of foot and silky smooth with his hands, Lawrence Pilut, the most recent winner of the Salming Trophy, given to the defenseman of the year in the SHL, signed an entry level deal with the Sabres in May. He is on the smaller side and last season's offensive outburst was an anomaly as far as his historical record is concerned, more than tripling his previous career high in points in a season. On the other hand, he turned 22 during the season, and the fact that he did not produce much in the SHL from ages 18-21 is not that crazy. The fact that he chose Buffalo is a sign that the Sabres can find ways to acquire true talent outside of the draft.

11. DANNY O'REGAN — RW/C

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	San Jose (NHL)	3	1	0	1	0	0.33
16-17	San Jose (AHL)	63	23	35	58	10	0.92
17-18	SJ-Buf (NHL)	21	0	4	4	2	0.19
17-18	SJ-Rch (AHL)	49	13	27	40	16	0.82

AGE: 24 H/W: 5-10/175 (Trade: Feb. 26, 2018 [San Jose]. Last Year: 3rd [San Jose])
A top scorer over four years with Boston University, O'Regan had a hard time breaking into the San Jose roster, a team that has skewed largely towards veteran players, since he has turned pro. As a way out of that log-jam, he was traded to Buffalo last season at the trade deadline as part of the return for front line scoring winger Evander Kane. He is undersized and can play a bit too much on the perimeter, but O'Regan has a fine collection of tools that suggests that the top end scoring he displayed from day one in the AHL can translate to the NHL to an extent as well. Nothing dynamic, per se, but his offensive instincts can play.

12. WILL BORGEN — D

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	St. Cloud State (NCHC)	33	2	10	12	60	0.36
17-18	St. Cloud State (NCHC)	36	2	13	15	68	0.42
17-18	Rochester (AHL)	8	0	0	0	0	0.00

AGE: 21 H/W: 6-2/200 (92nd overall, 2015. Last Year: 7th)
After three seasons as a steady defensive defenseman for St. Cloud State, Borgen is turning pro. Not dynamic in any way, Borgen is simply steady. He skates well. He is very reliable off the puck. While not especially offensively inclined, he has a solid sense for when to make his presence felt in the offensive zone, whether that is engaging deep to unbalance the defense, or walking the line to get a clear sight of goal. He also has a burgeoning physical game, and will occasionally line up an opponent for a big open ice hit. All of the above aside, when he is at his best, you barely notice that he played.

13. NICHOLAS BAPTISTE — RW

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Buffalo (NHL)	14	3	1	4	6	0.29
16-17	Rochester (AHL)	59	25	16	41	34	0.69
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	33	4	2	6	14	0.18
17-18	Rochester (AHL)	36	7	11	18	22	0.50

AGE: 23 H/W: 6-1/205 (69th overall, 2013. Last Year: 10th)
A strong skater who came two games short of losing prospect eligibility last year, Baptiste plays a solid two way game that gives him a small leg up on the player ranked immediately below. He has good size and while not shy, does not typically go out of his way to physically engage with opponents. Despite his recent record of scoring more than he sets up others, his shot is only so-so, but his puck skills can be fairly fancy. Given a consistent opportunity in the NHL, he can emerge as a solid bottom six energy winger who can pick up some depth minutes on special teams as well.

14. JUSTIN BAILEY — RW

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Buffalo (NHL)	32	2	2	4	4	0.13
16-17	Rochester (AHL)	52	23	13	36	35	0.69
17-18	Buffalo (NHL)	12	3	1	4	2	0.33
17-18	Rochester (AHL)	37	10	5	15	28	0.41

AGE: 23 H/W: 6-3/215 (52nd overall, 2013. Last Year: 12th)
Were it not for an unfortunately timed lower body injury, Bailey would probably have played in the eight additional NHL games that he needed to graduate from prospectdom. One might say that he is build like a football player, and it would be appropriate as his father Carlton was a longtime member of the Buffalo Bills. The younger Bailey is a strong skater, who plays a physical brand of hockey. Add in a good shot and he starts to look a lot like a bottom six power forward. He still has to get the new Buffalo regime to believe in him as an asset going forward and he was not able to engender that belief last year.

15. BRANDON HICKEY — D

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Boston University (HE)	35	4	11	15	41	0.43
17-18	Boston University (HE)	35	6	8	14	45	0.40

AGE: 22 H/W: 6-2/190 (Trade: Jun. 14, 2018 [Arizona]. Last Year: 7th [Arizona])
In a league where most teams hesitate mightily to trade their prospects, Hickey is the rare one that has been traded twice before even signing his ELC. Drafted by Calgary in 2014, he was shipped to Arizona as part of the return for Mike Smith. With all signs pointing to Hickey not signing with the Coyotes after completing four years at BU, he was dealt to Buffalo for Hudson Fasching. A calm and composed blueliner, he is stronger in his own zone than he is when his team has the puck. In the offensive zone, he is more of a supporting character.

16. CASEY FITZGERALD — D

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Boston College (HE)	37	5	17	22	46	0.59
17-18	Boston College (HE)	36	6	13	19	45	0.53

AGE: 21 H/W: 5-11/190 (86th overall, 2016. Last Year: not ranked)
The other Casey in the Buffalo pipeline, Fitzgerald, whose brother Ryan is in the Boston system, is an energetic, yet undersized, offensive defenseman who is entering his senior season with Boston University with a "C" on his chest. A good puck mover who shows the type of hockey IQ one expects from a player whose father played over 1,000 NHL games, he plays a game that seems suited for the modern NHL. Presuming that Buffalo can sign him to a contract after his final collegiate season, his right hand shot could help him get a leg up on similarly skilled second/third pairing types in the system.

17. MATEJ PEKAR — C/RW

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
17-18	Muskegon (USHL)	56	14	40	54	36	0.96

AGE: 18 H/W: 6-0/170 (94th overall, 2018. Last Year: IE)
Matej Pekar left his native Czech Republic as a 15 year-old, spending two years playing in U16 hockey in Michigan before making a splash with Muskegon in his draft year. He is very quick, with some creativity to his game. He also plays a responsible defensive game, providing tight man coverage in his own zone and picking up regular short-handed minutes for the Lumberjacks. He has soft hands and demonstrates plus vision when looking to pass. He is heading to play for Miami University where the Sabres will want to see physical maturity and less of a propensity to cheat out of the zone. He has a good chance to leap up this ranking in the coming years.

18. C.J. SMITH — LW

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Buffalo (NHL)	2	0	1	1	0	0.50
16-17	Mass-Lowell (HE)	41	23	28	51	46	1.24
17-18	Rochester (AHL)	57	17	27	44	16	0.77

AGE: 23 H/W: 5-11/185 (UDFA: Mar. 30, 2017. Last Year: not ranked)
By the time Smith got the UMass-Lowell, he had been passed over at the draft twice, first as a member of the Austin Bruins of the NAHL and second with the Chicago Steel in the USHL. The Iowa native came into his own with the River Hawks, honing his wrist shot and puck skills into above average tools, and working on his edges to help hi overcome his middling top speed. In his first year in the AHL, he proved that his game could translate to the pros, but the fact that he lacks any truly dynamic skills leaves some doubt about how well he could perform given an NHL opportunity.

19. ANDREW OGLEVIE — C

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Notre Dame (HE)	40	21	20	41	10	1.03
17-18	Notre Dame (HE)	36	15	24	39	18	1.08

AGE: 23 H/W: 5-10/185 (UDFA: Apr. 11, 2018. Last Year: IE)
In a down season for undrafted NCAA free agents, Oglevie was one of the best forwards to sign an NHL deal. The undersized California native is a good skater who thinks the game quickly and can finish, but prefers to create for his teammates, which he seems like a natural when doing. He knows how to find space in the offensive zone and is responsible in his own end. If he can convert his fast paced game to the AHL, Oglevie should find a way to gain NHL experience. Like Smith above, he lacks the dynamic qualities to be an impact player, but does enough well that he should be able to find a role at some point.

20. ERIC CORNEL — RW/C

YR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	PPG
16-17	Rochester (AHL)	67	5	9	14	29	0.21
17-18	Rochester (AHL)	61	9	9	18	25	0.30

AGE: 22 H/W: 6-2/195 (44th overall, 2014. Last Year: 20th)
When Cornel was first drafted as a mid-second rounder, the thought that he would rank 20th on the Sabres' prospect list four years later would have been a grave disappointment. Today, Cornel taking the bottom spot on this list is more of an indictment on the Sabres and their struggles drafting in the later rounds, which is highlighted above. He is a good skater, and can flash a good wrist shot, especially when he times his release right, but on the whole, his game is hesitant and he has shown little to no growth in two years at Rochester. Without taking a big step forward this year, producing in line with his skills, he might find a contract hard to come by.