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TABLE OF CONTENTS

OLIVER MOORE: THE U.S. NTDP'S UNDERRATED STAR BY TONY FERRARI	3
LEO CARLSSON: Q & A WITH SWEDEN'S HIGHLY RANKED FORWARD BY CHAPIN LANDVOGT	6
TOP SLEEPERS: THE MCKEEN'S TEAM FAVOURITES	9
SECOND CHANCES: 10 TOP RE-ENTRY CANDIDATES BY BROCK OTTEN	13
BEST OF SKILLS THE MCKEEN'S TEAM	18
TWO ROUND MOCK DRAFT BY BROCK OTTEN	20
2023 NHL DRAFT RANKING PLUS HONOURABLE MENTIONS	28
2024 DRAFT EARLY RANKING THE MCKEEN'S TEAM	36
2023 NHL DRAFT PLAYER PROFILES BY BROCK OTTEN, DEREK NEUMEIER, JOSH BELL AND CHAPIN LANDVOGT	38

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Oliver Moore:

The U.S. NTDP's Most Underrated Star

BY TONY FERRARI

With the U.S. National Under-18 Development Program's success in recent years, scouts and draft analysts alike have become highly focused on the program to find the next big thing. This year, they had two players break the scoring U-18 scoring record set by Auston Matthews and another finish in the top ten all-time, ahead of the likes of Jack Eichel and Trevor Zegras among others.

While Will Smith, Gabe Perreault, and Ryan Leonard stole most of the headlines for this year's iteration of the NTDP squad, it could be another player who ends up being the most impactful NHLer of the bunch. Oliver Moore is really that good.

With a game built on game-breaking speed, process-driven habits, and a sound 200-foot game, Moore is the most complete player on the NTDP squad. He understands how to play off of his teammates and adapt to their strengths. Moore may not possess the mystifying puck skill that Smith displays at times, but he certainly doesn't lack the ability to carry the puck and beat defenders in the offensive zone.

The Minnesota native has been the NTDP's second-line center for the vast majority of the season with the top unit sticking together. Moore had a rotating cast on his wing. The list of linemates was long and included Ryan Fine, Charlie Cerrato, Will Vote, and Danny Nelson as well as U-17 call-ups Cole Eiserman and James Hagens.



Q & A

with

**Sweden's Highly
Ranked Forward**

Leo Carlsson

BY CHAPIN LANDVOGT

In a draft full of offensive talents expected to be game-changers for the franchises that select them, Leo Carlsson has spent all winter solidifying himself as one of the absolute top options out there. It's one thing to skate like the wind and dish off pucks left and right as though you were born to do nothing else, but when you're also 6'3" and pushing 200 pounds, NHL teams tend to start dreaming about what you'd look like in their jersey. For one of the teams lined up at the top of this year's pecking order, that dream is going to come true fairly early in the ongoings at the 2023 NHL Draft. However, being such a hot topic at the draft isn't an honor bestowed upon many. We hooked up with the strapping Swede for a short Q&A in prelude to what may be the biggest night of Leo's life thus far.

TOP SLEEPERS

FOR THE 2023 NHL DRAFT

BY: THE MCKEEN'S HOCKEY TEAM

One of the questions consistently asked of us on social media is “who are your favourite sleepers this year?” The concept of a draft “sleeper,” or a player currently flying under the radar is something that fascinates many draft followers. Everyone has their favourite, so we asked our scouting team to supply theirs!

DIRECTOR OF SCOUTING – BROCK OTTEN
JOEY WILLIS – CENTER – SAGINAW SPIRIT



The stat line won't wow you. The physical tools won't wow you. Yet, this is a player who consistently passes the eye test. On a deep Saginaw team, he consistently found a way to be noticeable. He has strong two-way instincts, is creative, and is a really strong playmaker. This was Willis' first year playing above the AAA level, so no wonder the physical tools are lagging behind. Lots of room for this player to grow with increased confidence.

DIRECTOR OF SCOUTING – BROCK OTTEN
LARRY KEENAN – DEFENSE – CULVER ACADEMY

Keenan is a very raw defensive prospect from the prep scene. He's going to require a ton of patience as his game adapts to playing at the higher levels. However, he may be one of the most electric skating defenders available this year and he's 6'3. His athleticism is off the charts good, and he is headed to a program (UMass) with a great track record for developing defenders.

DIRECTOR OF SCOUTING – BROCK OTTEN
ERIC POHLKAMP
– DEFENSE – CEDAR RAPIDS ROUGHRIDERS



For my money, one of... if not the best re-entry player available this year. The USHL's defenseman of the year is just a really fun player to watch. He'll need to alter a few things to adapt his game to the next level, but he has a really intriguing upside. His point shot is one of the best available this year. He skates well. He defends aggressively. The rapid progression he showed this year in his second USHL season was remarkable. He also looked great at the World Junior A Challenge playing against some pretty good other players.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF SCOUTING –
DEREK NEUMEIER
JOSH VAN MULLIGEN
– DEFENSE – MEDICINE HAT TIGERS

A person might see Van Mulligen's minuscule point totals from this season and assume that he's not a good prospect, but that would be unwise. His value is at the other end of the ice, disrupting the offensive efforts of the opposing teams. He combines his long reach with clean footwork in all directions to close gaps and get his stick in shooting lanes. His capacity as a puck transporter is improving too, and it could make a lot more progress down the road as he adds strength and power into his lower body. He has the tools to become a true defensive specialist in the NHL one day.

SECOND CHANCES

Top Draft Re-Entry Candidates CONT'D

3. JUHA JATKOLA – GOALTENDER – KALPA (LIIGA)



In his final year of draft eligibility, the last calendar year has been a whirlwind for Jatkola. It started this summer at the make-up WJC's, where he stole the Finnish starter's role from Ottawa prospect Leevi Merilainen. It then carried over to Liiga, where Jatkola became a dependable starter at the age of 20 (he turns 21 later this September). Jatkola relies on his quickness and athleticism because he doesn't have a massive frame (listed at 6'1). His improvement over the last few years has been phenomenal and as long as he continues to be aggressive in the crease, he could have a bright future. (Brock Otten)

4. AUSTIN ROEST – CENTER – EVERETT SILVERTIPS (WHL)



A top ten scorer in the WHL for half the year, Roest ended up finishing just outside the Top 20. Everett started the season without many of their top

forwards from last year and eventually decided to become sellers before the trade deadline, creating an opening for others on the team to step up, and the son of former NHLer Stacy Roest thrived with the newfound opportunity. He's a well-rounded center who is making notable progress in a number of areas, including skating, finishing, playmaking, off-puck play and faceoffs. His offensive game doesn't quite pop as much as his scoring totals might suggest, but he plays a very mature, fleshed-out game that makes a positive difference in a variety of ways. If he can continue going down this path he'll keep increasing his odds of eventually carving out an NHL job as a plug-and-play forward, which are always useful to have on a roster. (Derek Neumeier)

5. YEGOR VINOGRADOV – CENTER – TORPEDO NIZHNY NOVGOROD (KHL)



Last season was the debut season in the MHL for center Yegor Vinogradov and he played well, but considering his age, it was not especially impressive, so it wasn't exactly a surprise that he went undrafted. This season, much due to his versatility, he made the Torpedo KHL roster right

from the start, which is unusual for a young player, considering that he was trusted with a full-time role. Vinogradov did well in that role due to his combination of size, motor and skill. He's a hard worker who plays a 200-foot game and he understands how to use his size to his advantage by driving the net to look for scoring opportunities. Upon being sent down to the MHL later in the year, Vinogradov showed that he can be an offensive leader too, as his contribution was a major reason for his team's MHL championship victory. If he can translate that to the pro level too, the end result might be really interesting. (Viktor Fomich)

BEST OF

BEST OVERALL SKATER

1. OLIVER MOORE
2. MIKHAIL GULYAYEV
3. DMITRI SIMASHEV
4. TANNER MOLENDYK
5. GAVIN BRINDLEY
6. ADAM FANTILLI
7. NICK LARDIS
8. BEAU AKEY
9. JEREMY HANZEL
10. LARRY KEENAN

BEST SHOT

1. CONNOR BEDARD
2. MATVEI MICHKOV
3. RYAN LEONARD
4. ADAM FANTILLI
5. COLBY BARLOW
6. BRAYDEN YAGER
7. KASPER HALTTUNEN
8. ETHAN GAUTHIER
9. WILLIAM WHITELAW
10. BRADLY NADEAU

BEST STICKHANDLER / MOST CREATIVE

1. CONNOR BEDARD
2. WILL SMITH
3. MATVEI MICHKOV
4. ANDREW CRISTALL
5. OTTO STENBERG
6. QUENTIN MUSTY
7. JAYSON SHAugABAY
8. LUKAS DRAGICEVIC
9. JAYDEN PERRON
10. ZACH BENSON

BEST DEFENSIVE FORWARD

1. ADAM FANTILLI
2. OLIVER MOORE
3. NATE DANIELSON
4. RYAN LEONARD
5. NICO MYATOVIC
6. DALIBOR DVORSKY
7. DANNY NELSON
8. MARTIN MISIAK
9. DAVID EDSTROM
10. ETHAN HAY

BEST DEFENSIVE DEFENDER

1. DMITRI SIMASHEV
2. DAVID REINBACHER
3. MAXIM STRBAK
4. OLIVER BONK
5. ANDREW GIBSON
6. DREW FORTESCUE
7. TOM WILLANDER
8. CARTER SOTHERAN
9. JAKUB DVORAK
10. ALBERT WIKMAN

BEST OFFENSIVE DEFENDER

1. MIKHAIL GULYAYEV
2. LUKAS DRAGICEVIC
3. AXEL SANDIN-PELLIKKA
4. LUCA CAGNONI
5. ETIENNE MORIN
6. DAVID REINBACHER
7. JORDAN TOURIGNY
8. JAKE LIVANIVAGE
9. LARRY KEENAN
10. MAZDEN LESLIE

TWO ROUND MOCK DRAFT 2023

BY BROCK OTTEN

1ST ROUND

1. CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS - CONNOR BEDARD (REGINA, WHL)



Regardless of whether you believe that the Hawks deserved to win the first overall selection...it did happen. And the timing for the Chicago organization couldn't have been better as they transition from the Patrick Kane/Jonathan Toews era to the Connor Bedard era. This is a game changer that should accelerate the Blackhawk's rebuild.

2. ANAHEIM DUCKS ADAM FANTILLI (MICHIGAN, NCAA)



Talk about power down the middle. By selecting the University of Michigan star, the Ducks can now boast a one/two punch at center of Mason McTavish and Adam Fantilli. That likely pushes Trevor Zegras to the wing long term, which might not be a terrible thing considering his struggles at the faceoff circle and defensively. Fantilli is one of the most polished two-way forwards in the league and his speed and strength should allow him to jump into the NHL immediately.

3. COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS - LEO CARLSSON (OREBRO, SHL)



Arizona is in need of almost everything, so This is where things get really interesting. Blue Jackets GM Jarmo Kekalainen doesn't draft a ton out of Sweden (Finnish bias?... lol), however I believe that this would be the best pick for the organization. Carlsson is the most ready to make an immediate impact in the NHL and he would give the Jackets a potential two-way rock to build their forward group around. This is a team who wants to compete soon and turn their fortunes around.

4. SAN JOSE SHARKS - WILL SMITH (USNTDP)



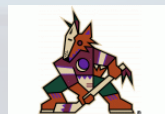
SFor the life of me, I just can't see Mike Grier going with Michkov here. Smith would give San Jose a highly skilled playmaker to continue to build around. He could help to elevate the play of some of the team's complementary players. He may take a few years in College with BC, but the end product should be a high-end offensive player. Question...would it be shocking to see the Sharks reach for a defender like David Reinbacher here?

5. MONTREAL CANADIENS - RYAN LEONARD (USNTDP)



It really seems like the Canadiens would pass on Michkov should he be available to them. It could be smoke and mirrors, but all signs do point to that fact. So, who do they select? Lots of hype around Reinbacher. I think they're happy with their defensive depth right now. IMO. I truly believe that Ryan Leonard could be their target. Here's a forward who can make an impact in a lot of different ways and who plays the power game that Montreal really seems to want to play in the future. Obviously Dalibor Dvorsky could be an option here too.

6. ARIZONA COYOTES - MATVEI MICHKOV (HK SOCHI, KHL)



I just can't see Michkov falling that far. Yes, there is inherent risk. But the reward is so great. Arizona wants to become relevant again, but they also want to have sustainability. They haven't shied away from drafting Russians in recent years, and this is a big fish. The timing of his arrival in the NHL should be perfect for Arizona's inevitable resurgence.

7. PHILADELPHIA FLYERS - DAVID REINBACHER (KLOTEN, NL)



A big, right shot defender, it seems like a sure thing that he'll be drafted in the top ten, even if he's our third ranked defender. The Flyers seem like a really good fit for him. Reinbacher is a potential two-way force from the right side who could develop into an all-situations player for Philadelphia and would complement other young defenders like Cam York and Emil Andrae exceptionally well.

8. WASHINGTON CAPITALS - OLIVER MOORE (USNTDP)



Would it be shocking to see Moore drafted ahead of Ryan Leonard? I don't think so. NHL teams put such a premium on true centers and Moore is just that. Watching the Capitals in recent years, it's obvious that they need to focus on upgrading the speed quotient of this team again and Moore is the best skating player available this year. The range of outcomes for him runs the gamut of Dylan Larkin to






5



MATVEI MICHKOV

SKA ST. PETERSBURG-HK SOCHI (KHL)



 RIGHT WING
  5-10
  170 LBS
 RUSSIA
  9-DEC-04

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2021-2022	SKA-1946 ST. PETERSBURG (MHL)	28	30	21	51	24
2022-2023	SKA ST. PETERSBURG-HK SOCHI (KHL)	30	9	11	20	16

Move over Austin Powers, Matvei Michkov, you're the new "International Man of Mystery." On talent alone, Michkov deserves to be selected inside the top five of this year's draft. He has been hyped just as long as Bedard at the top of this 2023 class and this draft was once thought to be the Bedard/Michkov draft. However, the political situation regarding Russia and the Ukraine, and the corresponding ban on Russia from the IIHF has thrown a huge wrench into that narrative. His contract situation in the KHL (another three seasons...at minimum) further complicates things. All of the above has made pinpointing his eventual landing spot the draft's biggest mystery.

Michkov's true breakthrough moment occurred at the 2021 IIHF U18's, where Michkov scored 12 goals (the third most ever behind Caufield and Ovechkin) and was named tournament MVP...all as an underage player. Since then, his production has been solid and that includes the second half of this year when he moved to HK Sochi in the KHL and proceeded to put up 20 points in 27 games; a 0.74 points per game mark would sit as the best U19 season ever in the KHL.

Truthfully, Michkov's offensive game does not have a ton of holes and he seems destined to be a high scoring player at the NHL level when he decides to cross the pond. He is so dangerous around the net because of his quick release. He is a creative and elusive puckhandler who can play with pace or slow the game down. He shows a strong understanding of how to get himself in scoring position and his anticipation in the offensive end is elite. Early on this year, there were legitimate concerns over his pace of play and decision making with the puck, but the freedom of playing on a "rebuilding" HK Sochi squad really helped to calm down his game and elevate his confidence playing against men in the KHL.

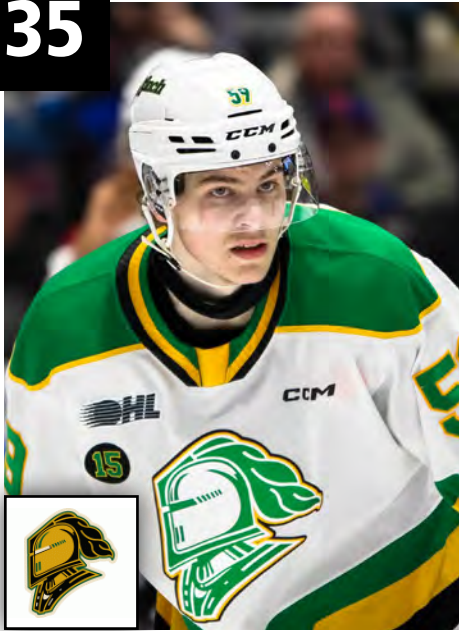
That said, there are some (including a few within our own scouting staff) who do have concerns over Michkov's projectability. Considering his slight frame and overall size, his first step quickness and overall speed would not be considered elite. Additionally, his off puck play outside of the offensive zone is currently relatively non-existent. He will likely never be the kind of player who excels away from the puck physically and will always need others on his line to do the "heavy lifting." When you combine these concerns with the new political factors at play regarding Russian players, is there a chance that Michkov falls outside of the top ten as teams look for more stability? Again, the term mystery applies here.

Regardless, you simply cannot ignore Michkov's innate offensive tools and his production thus far. His offensive ceiling is higher than any player in this class not named Bedard and letting the opportunity to select him pass by would be a mistake that many teams would likely regret. Most players in this class won't be ready to be impact players in the NHL for three years anyway, so is his KHL contract really that big of a deal? - BO

20-80 SCALE

55 SKATING	65 SHOT
65 SKILLS	60 SMARTS
50 PHYSICALITY	59.25 OFP

35



20-80 SCALE

50
SKATING50
SHOT50
SKILLS65
SMARTS52.5
PHYSICALITY54.25
OFF

OLIVER BONK

LONDON (OHL)

DEFENSE 6-2 175 LBS CANADA 9-JAN-05

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2021-2022	(ST. THOMAS (GOJHL))	32	5	27	32	14
2021-2022	LONDON (OHL)	10	0	3	3	6
2022-2023	LONDON (OHL)	67	10	30	40	38

Bonk, the son of former Ottawa Senator standout Radek, has a game predicated on his strong positioning, anticipation, and awareness. One would probably expect nothing less from someone who grew up "around the game." One of the smartest defenders available this year, Bonk is a disruptive force in the defensive end. His stick placement is excellent as he defends the slot, and his physical intensity level has increased considerably over the course of the season to make him a hard player to battle with along the boards or near the crease. In the OHL playoffs, as he helped London make a deep run, he routinely matched up against the opposition's best and shut them down.

Additionally, what makes Bonk such a defensive asset is his ability to kickstart the transition game. As mentioned, his IQ is the strongest component of his game, and this is evident when he has the puck on his stick in the defensive zone. He routinely takes great routes to retrievals and routinely incorporates shoulder checks into his approach allowing him to make quick decisions once he gains possession. He rarely turns the puck over in the face of pressure and has, in our estimation, one of the best first passes of any defender in this class.

From an offensive perspective, there may be some limitations to Bonk's game. He is not a dynamic skater, both in terms of his linear quickness or his agility. He will jump up in the play and he does a great job of getting pucks through to the net; again, two skills based off of his high intelligence level. However, he is not incredibly creative, and that lack of quickness hurts him as a carrier. That said, there is a fairly safe road to Bonk becoming a dependable and longtime second pairing defender at the NHL level. Given London's track record at developing blueliners, you have to trust the Dale Hunter development model too. - BO

36



20-80 SCALE

45
SKATING55
SHOT65
SKILLS60
SMARTS45
PHYSICALITY54
OFF

QUENTIN MUSTY

SUDBURY (OHL)

LEFT WING 6-2 200 LBS USA 6-JUL-05

YEAR	TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
2021-2022	SUDBURY (OHL)	50	12	19	31	70
2022-2023	SUDBURY (OHL)	53	26	52	78	71

It was really a tale of two seasons for Musty. He and the Sudbury Wolves started the year very poorly, however an early coaching change to former NHL'er Derek MacKenzie made all the difference for Musty and his teammates. To start the year, Musty was really struggling with his off puck play and with his decision making, making him a pretty frustrating player to scout and evaluate. However, under MacKenzie, Musty's game settled down considerably and he ended up finishing the season as the highest scoring draft eligible player from the OHL.

What makes Musty so intriguing is that he's extremely skilled for a 6-foot-2, 200 pound winger. His creativity and ability to break defenders down one on one are strong suits and as his decision making improved over the year, we saw him utilize that to be a consistent play driver and the type of player who elevates the play of those around him. At the OHL level, it doesn't even matter that he's not a strong skater because his hands afford him so much extra time to operate. This is a player that has a very high ceiling offensively.

So why do we have Musty ranked outside of the first round? The bottom line is that his skating concerns us. The off-puck play is wildly inconsistent, and he needs to do a better job of getting himself to the middle to better use his size, however he showed enough growth in that regard to suggest that those areas can and will improve. However, his lack of explosiveness and lack of agility make him a pretty rigid player. As he climbs the ladder, his hands won't be enough to save him without significant improvement in this area. This is especially true when you consider his off-puck inconsistency; he is the ultimate boom or bust player available this year. We expect him to go earlier than this, but we have other safer preferences inside of the first. - BO