

11. Calgary Flames

Prospect System Ranking – 11th (Last Year - 9th)

GM: Craig Conroy Hired: May 2023

COACH: Ryan Huska Hired: June 2023

The Calgary Flames are reaping the rewards of a stellar 2024 draft, injecting 10 prospects into their system, with four landing in McKeen's top 200. Despite slipping to 11th, their prospect pool remains a cornerstone of GM Craig Conroy's rebuild, blending high-end talent with promising depth.

Leading the charge is Zayne Parekh, the first OHL defenseman to hit 100 points in a season since Ryan Ellis over a decade ago. Parekh capped off his draft-plus-one campaign with a one-game NHL call-up, scoring his first goal via a deflection in the slot. As McKeen's fifth-ranked defensive prospect, the right-handed blueliner is poised for a prolific career.

Meanwhile, the American League ranks are bustling with talent on the shortlist for NHL deployment. Rory Kerins, William Stromgren, Jeremie Poirier, Samuel Honzek, and Hunter Brzustewicz are making waves with the Calgary Wranglers, with Brzustewicz, Kerins, and Honzek already tasting NHL action.

In junior, Jacob Battaglia erupted for 90 points in 68 games with the Kingston Frontenacs (OHL), cementing his status as a rising forward on the come-up. Andrew Basha, another 2024 draftee, was on pace for a breakout WHL season before injuries limited his draft-plus-one season.

With six picks in 2025, including a first-rounder, Conroy has the tools to keep the momentum going. The Flames' prospect pool, bolstered by Parekh's star potential and a deep AHL contingent, positions them well for their rebuild.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
1	Zayne Parekh	Cgy	D	19	6-0/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(9th)	Cgy	2024	9	15-Feb-06	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Saginaw (OHL)	61	33	74	107	96

The first OHL defender to hit the 100-point mark since Ryan Ellis did over a decade ago. That's a pretty significant accomplishment, especially when you consider all the talent that has passed through Ontario during that time. It's a testament to Parekh's skill and vision. Few control the offensive blueline the way that he does. In the same way that Lane Hutson has taken the NHL by storm with Montreal as a rookie, Parekh consistently creates for Saginaw; he routinely escapes pressure to get pucks on net or to the middle of the ice thanks to the way his feet work in sync with his hands. Parekh has taken a positive step forward as a defensive player too. He'll never be excused for Chris Chelios, but he's worked hard to become tougher to play against and he only needs to be passable in the defensive end given what he can do with the puck. No offense to Mackenzie Weegar or Rasmus Andersson, but this is Calgary's powerplay quarterback sooner, rather than later.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
2	William Stromgren	Cgy	LW	21	6-3/175
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 21(45th)	Cgy	2021	45	7-Jun-03	Sweden
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Calgary (AHL)	70	14	35	49	16

Even going all the way back to his draft year in 2021, Strömrgren has been something of an enigma. Some nights he looks fantastic and like one of the best players in the game for either team, but on others he completely disappears or fades into the background. Getting more consistent high-end play out of him has been a long and frustrating process for the Flames, though it does need to be said that progress is being made and that he took a notable step forward compared to the prior year. He's a treat to watch when he really gets going, using his long reach, slick puck skills and fleet-of-foot skating ability to drive possession and play keep-away against enemy defenders. On the flip side, it's too easy for opponents to throw him off just by getting in his face and playing hard against him physically. Calgary's staff will look like geniuses if they can truly solve this puzzle.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
3	Samuel Honzek	Cgy	LW	20	6-4/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 23(16th)	Cgy	2023	16	12-Nov-04	Slovakia
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Calgary (NHL)	5	0	0	0	2

This season was the most relatively healthy that Honzek was able to stay over the last few years, and that's probably the most important 2024-25 takeaway for him. Despite what his modest point totals thus far in his career might suggest, his toolbox is overflowing: he has size, he skates well, he can shoot, he can handle the puck, and he can make plays at a high level. More willingness to engage physically would be preferred but isn't a necessity. The challenge has always been that he needed more time and experience than other top prospects to get better at blending everything together, and those long-term plans have been repeatedly disrupted by injuries. Luckily for the Flames, they have accumulated enough young depth at forward that they can afford to be patient with Honzek while hoping that everything eventually starts to click for him sooner or later.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
4	Jeremie Poirier	Cgy	D	22	6-1/196
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 20(72nd)	Cgy	2020	72	2-Jun-02	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Calgary (AHL)	71	5	37	42	64

After three seasons in the AHL Poirier is generally still in the same spot he started from, which raises serious questions about what will happen next in his career, especially as a restricted free agent in need of a new contract. Can he still quarterback a powerplay and occasionally pull off high skill plays that most other defenders can't? Yes. But has he done a lot to clean up the liabilities of his shoddy off-puck play? It's difficult to make a case that he has. It's possible for a blueliner to be a heavily slanted offensive specialist at the NHL level, but only if the offense is so elite that it outweighs other concerns, and that doesn't describe Poirier at this point. He hasn't run out of development runway quite yet, though the Flames might have reached a point where he tries his luck in another organization.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
5	Matvei Gridin	Cgy	RW	19	6-2/190
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(28th)	Cgy	2024	28	1-Mar-06	Russia
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Shawinigan (QMJHL)	56	36	43	79	27

After being drafted 28th overall by the Calgary Flames last summer in the 2024 NHL draft, Matvei Gridin opted to leave the USHL to join the Shawinigan Cataractes in the QMJHL. Gridin was able to score 79 points in 56 games as a rookie. This point per game pace was good for fifth in the league, and first on his team. The Russian winger has simply been dominating the QMJHL over the course of the season. Gridin is a tremendously talented player who flashes a high level of skill and potential, especially when carrying the puck at speed. He has a tools-heavy profile: he is a 6-foot-1 winger with a ridiculous top speed, puck abilities and a solid dual threat talent with his shot and playmaking skills. That being said, Gridin could definitely be a more involved player off the puck. He would benefit from a better defensive presence and a higher intensity of play without the puck. When the level of play becomes harder and things do not go his way, he needs to find other ways to be an efficient player. Improving the off-puck side of his game while maintaining his special talent with the puck could potentially turn him into a solid middle six winger in the NHL.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
6	Henry Mews	Cgy	D	19	6-0/190
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(74th)	Cgy	2024	74	9-Mar-06	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Ott-Sby (OHL)	68	14	68	82	88

Perhaps lost in the Zayne Parekh hype was the outstanding draft plus one year that Henry Mews had in the OHL, split between Ottawa and Sudbury. Mews finished the year third in defenseman scoring and second in powerplay assists. He's dynamic and talented in his own right and has the potential to be a great option behind Parekh in the future, as a puck mover and power play quarterback. In a perfect world, both defenders can slot into Calgary's top four, paired with more stable defensive players. Like Parekh, Mews plays a higher risk offensive game that can come with turnovers; it's a tradeoff you have to live with. However, like Parekh, he has worked hard to be more assertive physically this year and his play in his own end has been more stable because of it. Refining his decision making further is a need, but Calgary has to be happy with his progress thus far. There are many rumours that he will be NCAA bound next season, taking advantage of the new eligibility rules.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
7	Hunter Brzustewicz	Cgy	D	20	5-11/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
T(Van-1/24)	Van	2023	75	29-Nov-04	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Calgary (AHL)	70	5	27	32	14

The Flames were flush with promising young left-shot defensemen in the AHL this season, which made it easier for the right-shooting Brzustewicz to play important minutes. And it's not like he didn't earn that ice time, either. Much like when he was playing with Kitchener in the OHL, he did a great job for the Wranglers as a confident, heads-up defender who could safely protect the puck while also opening things up offensively from the attack blueline. While he's not nearly as effective without the puck, stemming from his average size and average mobility, he has made a lot of progress throughout his first year as a pro and things are clearly trending in the right direction on that front. Expect Brzustewicz to play a bigger role in the organization next season, which could also include more call-up duty to the NHL.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
8	Andrew Basha	Cgy	LW	19	5-11/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(41st)	Cgy	2024	41	8-Nov-05	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Medicine Hat (WHL)	23	9	20	29	30

It's a real shame that Basha got hurt when he did, because he's missing a lot of time out on the ice with one of the best teams in all of junior hockey. Basha returned in time for the WHL final and appearing in the Memorial Cup tournament. To some degree, bangs and bruises come with the territory of his game. He plays fast and hard, with a fiery focus and intense competitiveness that few others can match. The real appeal with him, though, is how well he can still handle the puck and make plays when he's zooming around the ice with pace and purpose. Despite the health setback, Basha will likely force his way up to the NHL eventually in some capacity, and the homegrown Calgarian has what it takes to become a local fan favorite.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
9	Aydar Suniev	Cgy	LW	20	6-2/200
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 23(80th)	Cgy	2023	80	16-Nov-04	Russia
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Massachusetts (HE)	35	20	18	38	41

After two good years at UMass, Suniev has signed with Calgary and is turning pro next year. The Flames were extremely impressed with Suniev's improvement over his two years at the collegiate level after playing with Penticton of the BCHL previously. Entering college, Suniev's game needed a lot of refinement. His pace, his decision making, his skating, and his off puck play all needed a lot of work. But all four have drastically improved, altering Suniev's projection and giving him a great chance of becoming an offensive contributor for the Flames in the near future. He's an ultra-skilled and creative playmaker and someone who could be a big part of Calgary's powerplay. Even though he has burned a year of his ELC to play with Calgary to close out the year, he will likely need at least a season in the AHL before he's NHL ready. There will be an adjustment period for him as a professional, especially in terms of pace of play.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
10	Jacob Battaglia	Cgy	RW	19	6-1/200
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(62nd)	Cgy	2024	62	17-Mar-06	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Kingston (OHL)	68	40	50	90	34

Calgary's 2024 selections out of Ontario look terrific thus far, with Battaglia being another player who took a huge step forward this season. The big winger is such an intelligent player. Few players are as good as he is at working the wall in the OHL and he has the playmaking chops to take advantage of the extra time he creates through his protection skill. His pace of play really improved this year too, although his power and speed will need to continue to improve in order for him to be as dynamic at the higher levels. It's important to note that Battaglia should not be miscast as a power forward, despite his size. Physicality isn't likely to ever be a huge part of his game; he's more of a high IQ, finesse player who just happens to have the size to be an asset down low and in the cycle. At this point, Battaglia's improvement as an offensive player suggests that he could be capable of being a top six support winger for Calgary in the future.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
11	Etienne Morin	Cgy	D	20	6-0/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 23(48th)	Cgy	2023	48	9-Mar-05	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Moncton (QMJHL)	62	14	44	58	36

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
12	Rory Kerins	Cgy	C	23	5-10/175
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 20(174th)	Cgy	2020	174	23-Apr-02	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Calgary (AHL)	63	33	28	61	18

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
13	Luke Misa	Cgy	C	19	5-10/170
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(150th)	Cgy	2024	150	25-Nov-05	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Brampton (OHL)	67	34	51	85	6

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
14	Adam Klapka	Cgy	RW	24	6-8/235
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
FA(5/22)				14-Sep-00	Czech
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Calgary (AHL)	33	14	12	26	50

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RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
15	Trevor Hoskin	Cgy	RW	20	6-1/175
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(106th)	Cgy	2024	106	18-May-04	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Niagara (Atlantic)	36	12	27	39	12