

4. Chicago Blackhawks

Prospect System Ranking – 4th (Last Year - 6th)

GM: Kyle Davidson Hired: October 2021

COACH: TBD

A player of Connor Bedard's ilk can only carry so much weight on his own for an NHL organization. We learned that over the 2024-25 season, where the Chicago Blackhawks finished 31st in the league and missed the playoffs for the fifth consecutive season and seventh in eight years.

That said, a promising core is being built in the Windy City. One major catalyst for that come-up is Frank Nazar, who burst onto the scene for 53 games after a rock-solid (24 points, 21 games) run in the American League. He's likely punched his ticket on the main squad for 2025-26.

Levshunov split his draft-plus-one season between the NHL and AHL, logging 18 games with Chicago, while Rinzel, who came in hot from a potent two years at Minnesota (NCAA), notched five assists in nine NHL games in his debut. Having two young right-handed blueliners emerge simultaneously is a unique scenario that gives Kyle Davidson enviable depth on the backend for years to come.

Rockford standouts Ethan Del Mastro, Colton Dach, and goaltender Drew Commesso in the AHL are on the cusp of turning pro.

Further down the pipeline, the Blackhawks boast a couple of point-getting wizards, both of whom should transition to the AHL level after another scorching season in the OHL. Nick Lardis exploded for 117 points, more than double his previous high, to finish fourth in the league. Meanwhile, despite an injury-shortened season, Marek Vanacker posted a near point-per-game clip with 42 points in 45 games.

Davidson's draft strategy fuels this pipeline, with four first-round picks (two in 2025) and five second-rounders over the next three drafts. This stockpile ensures more talent will join Bedard, Nazar, and Levshunov. With a new coach incoming, the Blackhawks are poised to blend their prospect depth with a young core, inching toward contention. The rebuild is tough for fans, but it's gaining steam, and Chicago's stars are aligning for a breakout.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
1	Artyom Levshunov	Chi	D	19	6-2/205
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(2nd)	Chi	2024	2	28-Oct-05	Belarus
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Rockford (AHL)	52	5	17	22	59

Artyom Levshunov has had an eventful year. Fresh off being selected second overall, Levshunov turned pro and was thrust into a big role with the Rockford IceHogs, the Chicago Blackhawks' AHL affiliate. While playing with the IceHogs, Levshunov quickly turned into an all-situation defenceman, showcasing his talent on both sides of the puck. When he has the puck, Levshunov showcases his very deceptive skill. He's very good at making the simple play, whether that's moving the puck quickly to an open teammate or taking a powerful shot from afar that can be tipped in front. Away from the puck, Levshunov is a very strong defender with a mobile stride. In particular, his gap control and stick play are excellent, which allows him to defer and guide opposing forwards away from his own goal. Levshunov has even seen considerable minutes with the Chicago Blackhawks this season, even though his work in the defensive zone is still a bit of a work-in-progress at the pro level. Nevertheless, Levshunov projects as a capable all-situations number one defenceman, and should be a full-time NHLer with the Blackhawks next season. He does everything well, has that 'it' factor, and is simply just a very fun player to watch.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
2	Sam Rinzel	Chi	D	20	6-4/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 22(25th)	Chi	2022	25	25-Jun-04	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Minnesota (B1G)	40	10	22	32	12

Sam Rinzel has shown consistent growth and improvements in all areas of his game compared to his freshman season. Aggression and great stick-checking ability have continued to be excellent, demonstrating an active presence in all three zones. His skating and puck-handling at high speeds are strengths, enabling him to break up plays and contribute offensively by pinching at the blue line and joining the rush, all while having the elite creativity and puck skills. His defensive positioning has been a concern in moments, as he occasionally vacates the net front and relies on his stick over physicality, leading to mixed success in board battles. Under pressure, he has improved a lot with his puck movement and decision making. Same can be said for his reads off pinches and joining / creating offense. While his offensive instincts were already evident, he has proven this season how effective he can be on defense as well. With

further development in physical engagement, he projects as a mobile, two-way defenseman with offensive upside, capable of playing in all special teams' situations in a top four role.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
3	Nick Lardis	Chi	LW	19	5-11/165
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
`23(67th)	Chi	2023	67	8-Jul-05	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Brantford (OHL)	65	71	46	117	16

What a momentous year for Lardis. 71 goals. First player to hit that plateau since John Tavares nearly two decades ago. Now fully healthy, the transformation in Lardis' game was huge. He went from a high-end complementary piece to a player who could take over games with the puck on his stick. He wasn't just a threat on the powerplay. He scored at will at even strength too. He consistently created his own scoring chances by using his speed to attack the middle of the ice, showcasing greater strength on the puck to fight through contact to get shots off. Of course, you don't score 70 plus without a few weapons in your shooting arsenal either. Lardis owns both a wickedly quick and deceptive wrister and a heavy one timer that he unleashes from both the slot and the flank. Moving to the pro level next year, the focus for Lardis will be on conditioning to ensure that he can withstand the rigors of the pro game and remain healthy. After a year or two in the AHL, he should be a great scoring option for the Hawks, perhaps even alongside Connor Bedard.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
4	Sacha Boisvert	Chi	C	19	6-2/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
`24(18th)	Chi	2024	18	17-Mar-06	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
North Dakota (NCHC)	37	18	14	32	20

Boisvert has shown notable offensive growth throughout the season, progressing as a skilled playmaker with good skating and great puck-handling abilities. His vision and passing creates space and scoring opportunities for teammates, particularly in offensive zone setups and off the rush. Early in the season he highlighted his reliable 200-foot game while suggesting top six potential. However, as the season progressed, concerns emerged regarding his compete level and defensive consistency. While he was deployed on both the penalty kill and power play, his lack of urgency and off-puck engagement raised doubts about his game but isn't anything to overly worry about for the 2024 drafted prospect. Strengths include his offensive awareness, puck protection, and distribution, making him a threat in the offensive zone. Weaknesses center

around his inconsistent engagement in puck battles and defensive play. Boisvert currently projects as a middle-six offensive forward with the potential to contribute on a second power play unit.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
5	Colton Dach	Chi	C	22	6-4/205
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 21(62nd)	Chi	2021	62	4-Jan-03	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Rockford (AHL)	33	12	14	26	21

Colton Dach has played very well this year as a sophomore pro with the Rockford IceHogs, and his strong play ultimately earned him considerable time with the Chicago Blackhawks. When he has the puck, Dach is a hard player to play against. He is great at using his strong frame to shield opposing players, which creates time and space for his teammates to find open ice. He's also got a very strong release that can stun opposing goalies with the blink of an eye. As far as the rest of Dach's game goes, he has made considerable progress in the defensive zone, particularly against pros. He's learned what it takes to defend against pro players and uses his big frame to engage in loose puck battles in his own zone and on the wall. Dach may never develop into that complete, prototypical first-line NHL power forward, but he has enough offensive potential to become a very effective top six power forward. Dach's time in the AHL is ultimately winding down, and he should be a full-time contributor on the rebuilding Blackhawks next season.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
6	Oliver Moore	Chi	C	20	5-11/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 23(19th)	Chi	2023	19	22-Jan-05	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Minnesota (B1G)	38	12	21	33	6

Oliver Moore is a dynamic, high-speed forward with excellent skating ability, making him a dangerous offensive threat in transition. His acceleration and edgework allow him to create separation, drive play, and pressure defenders effectively. Throughout the season, Moore has demonstrated strong two-way play, using his speed to track back defensively and contribute to the forecheck. His offensive instincts and playmaking have steadily improved, showcasing a growing ability to distribute the puck and finish scoring opportunities. Despite his elite skating, Moore can refine his puck-handling in tight spaces and continue developing his ability to play through physical pressure. While not the most imposing forward, his compete level and tenacity make up for any size disadvantage. Projecting forward, Moore has the tools to develop into a top

six NHL forward with a focus on speed-driven offense and strong defensive responsibility. Continued work on his finishing and puck protection will be key to maximizing his pro potential.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
7	Roman Kantserov	Chi	RW	20	5-9/175
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 23(44th)	Chi	2023	44	20-Sep-04	Russia
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Metallurg Magnitogorsk (KHL)	47	13	25	38	12

Despite missing the start of the season due to injury, Roman Kantserov had an impressive second KHL season. After a bottom-six checking role last year, he was given much more offensive freedom this season. Known for his quick hands and shifty play in his draft year, he started to showcase that skill again while maintaining the hard-working style he developed in his checking role. His high pace of play often catches opponents off guard, and his ability to shield the puck helps him create numerous scoring chances. However, he still struggles with overhandling the puck, leading to turnovers, and sometimes forces flashy plays that put him in bad spots. Kantserov likely needs another KHL season before joining Chicago's system but projects as a high-energy, third-line grinder with the potential to contribute offensively. There are areas that need refinement, but his development has been very promising.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
8	Drew Commesso	Chi	G	22	6-2/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 20(47th)	Chi	2020	46	19-Jul-02	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Rockford (AHL)	39	18	15	2.54	0.911

Commesso is a solid goalie who specializes in skating. Not only does he have good footwork, but his feet are very quick as well. Back it up with solid positioning, and you have someone who can always be in the right place at the right time. Outside of those aspects, he doesn't excel elsewhere. He doesn't seem overly athletic and can sometimes lose his structure in various areas, often looking to struggle along the ice. This area of weakness has led to being scored on the five-hole a few too many times when faced with chaotic situations. He also has been shown to get beat pretty easily on clean rush shots where his hands weren't active enough. He's always been pretty solid but has never really dominated ever since he first entered the NCAA, which is probably how he will turn out in the NHL as well. His skating is good enough to take him to the NHL, but he will likely end up as a decent backup.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
9	Marek Vanacker	Chi	LW	19	6-0/175
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(27th)	Chi	2024	27	12-Apr-06	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Brantford (OHL)	45	24	18	42	36

It was a bit of a strange year for Vanacker, as his production dipped significantly on a strong Brantford team. The explanation for that is twofold. First, he got a late start to the year following offseason shoulder surgery last season and never really seemed to find his stride. Second, with the explosion of Lardis and Patrick Thomas duo, Vanacker found himself off the top powerplay unit. Should Hawks fans worry? We would say no. Next year, he'll be fully healthy, and he and Jake O'Brien can continue to build off their chemistry as the top duo on what should be another strong Brantford team. He still has the work rate and the scoring chops to be a quality middle six NHL player in the future. Next year will be more telling as to the likelihood of that upside occurring.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
10	Ethan Del Mastro	Chi	D	22	6-4/210
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 21(105th)	Chi	2021	105	15-Jan-03	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Rockford (AHL)	47	0	9	9	39

The hallmark of Ethan Del Mastro's game is his consistency. On a night-to-night basis, you always know what you are going to get: a player that is sound positionally, one that moves well for his size, and one that physically competes to the highest level he can. For these and many other reasons, it's not hard to envision Del Mastro having a 15-year career at the NHL level, and this developmental trajectory may happen as soon as next season. As far as this season goes, Del Mastro played very well under heavy minutes at the start of the season for the Rockford IceHogs. Even though his offensive production hasn't reached the level it was at last season, Del Mastro was reliable for the IceHogs on all areas of the ice. His play even earned him considerable time with the Chicago Blackhawks, and he looks to have passed other defensive prospects as a future NHL option within the Blackhawks' system. Del Mastro has the tools to become a top four NHL defenceman, and he should be a mainstay on the Blackhawks' blue line next season.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
11	Ryan Greene	Chi	C	21	6-1/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 22(57th)	Chi	2022	57	21-Oct-03	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Boston University (HE)	40	13	25	38	18

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
12	Aidan Thompson	Chi	LW	23	5-11/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 22(90th)	Chi	2022	90	18-Feb-02	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Denver (NCHC)	44	21	34	55	26

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
13	Landon Slaggert	Chi	LW	22	6-0/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 20(79th)	Chi	2020	79	25-Jun-02	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Rockford (AHL)	39	10	15	25	14

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
14	Adam Gajan	Chi	G	20	6-3/170
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 23(35th)	Chi	2023	35	6-May-04	Slovakia
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Minnesota Duluth (NCHC)	21	7	12	3.33	0.885

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
15	John Mustard	Chi	C	18	6-1/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(67th)	Chi	2024	67	16-Aug-06	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Providence (HE)	37	7	13	20	14