

18. Vancouver Canucks

Prospect System Ranking – 18th (Last Year - 22nd)

GM: Patrik Allvin Hired: January 2022

COACH: Rick Tocchet Hired: January 2023

After a 2023-24 season of highs, the Vancouver Canucks stumbled in 2024-25, plagued by off-ice drama and inconsistent play. The downfall began with J.T. Miller's exit, and has now shifted to Rick Tocchet's tenure coming to an end, and even Quinn Hughes's future, leaving this team in limbo with tons of unanswered questions.

The drama doesn't stop at the big club, either. Despite another strong year at Boston University, it appears that the Canucks are at a stalemate in contract talks with Tom Willander, our 28th ranked prospect. The former 11th overall pick enjoyed a run to the NCAA Championship game and spent another Christmas season as a prominent member of Sweden's World Junior squad. All indications pointed toward him being ready to make the official leap. Instead, the two sides are still negotiating, sparking controversy about whether he'll be dealt for much needed help up the middle.

Amid the chaos, the rest of the prospect pool has suddenly emerged as a bright spot, with several young talents making significant strides.

Jonathan Lekkerimäki, the Swedish sharpshooter and our eighth-ranked prospect, dazzled in his North American debut, scoring at a torrid pace in the AHL while earning NHL call-ups.

His fellow countryman, defenseman Elias Pettersson, secured a full-time role on Vancouver's blueline - up much sooner than most anticipated. AHL standout Aatu Rätty also made a compelling case for a 2025-26 roster spot, with his two-way game taking leaps in limited NHL action.

Vancouver retains all seven 2025 draft picks for the first time in eight years, but GM Patrik Allvin may get crafty to address the team's need for a top six center. For now, the Canucks are at a crossroads, balancing a need to keep Quinn Hughes happy, but nurture the future with a developing prospect pool.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
1	Jonathan Lekkerimaki	Van	RW	20	5-11/170
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 22(15th)	Van	2022	15	24-Jul-04	Sweden
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
X	X	X	X	X	X

Following his breakout season in the SHL with Orebro, Lekkerimaki's first year in North America has to be considered a success. He's split the year between Vancouver and Abbotsford and has shown considerable flashes of greatness at the NHL level. At the AHL level, he's been an offensive standout, scoring at a pace in line with the top goal scorers in the AHL this year (0.60 goals per game as of writing this). Obviously, his shot and shot generation ability thanks to his terrific hands and creativity are his standout traits. His ceiling as an offensive player in the NHL is extremely high. The former first rounder has the ability to be a perennial 30-goal...even 40-goal scorer in the NHL. So, what are the next steps? Lekkerimaki has to get stronger. He's been too easily separated from the puck at the NHL level this year and he's had trouble seeking out scoring opportunities through the middle of the ice. The expectation is that Lekkerimaki should crack Vancouver full time next year and be a potential impact player on their powerplay.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
2	Tom Willander	Van	D	20	6-1/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 23(11th)	Van	2023	11	9-Feb-05	Sweden
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Boston University (HE)	39	2	22	24	8

Tom Willander took a bit of time to adjust to the smaller North American ice, but his game has steadily improved throughout his two seasons at Boston University. A reliable, right-shot defenseman, Willander is a workhorse that seems to control the play when he's on the ice and is capable of playing in all situations. He's a smooth, mobile skater who closes gaps quickly and takes away time and space with good positioning and an active stick. While his offensive upside may be limited, he moves the puck efficiently and makes smart, simple plays in transition. Willander thrives in tough matchups and is leaned on heavily in key defensive situations. Down the road, Willander projects as a dependable, top four shutdown defenseman at the NHL level, with decent puck moving ability. His ceiling may end up being a Mattias Ekholm type of player, albeit slightly smaller.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
3	Elias Pettersson	Van	D	21	6-1/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 22(80th)	Van	2022	80	16-Feb-04	Sweden
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Vancouver (NHL)	28	1	2	3	17

The “other” Elias Pettersson has been an absolute revelation for the Canucks this year in his first professional season in North America. He started the season in Abbotsford, but after a very strong start, he’s been up with the Canucks since, playing a steady third pairing role. He has kept things simple with the puck, executing breakouts/chip outs, while limiting turnovers. But defensively, he has been a standout. His mobility and length make him very difficult to beat off the rush and he’s a beast transitionally. He’s also been very effective in tight corners, showing the confidence already to play aggressively and physically. It remains to be seen how much offensive upside Pettersson possesses, however, there is no doubt that he can be a defensive stalwart and a penalty killing anchor. Expect him to play an even larger role for the Canucks next year, especially after another off season of training.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
4	Aatu Raty	Van	C	22	6-2/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
T(NYI-1/23)	NYI	2021	52	14-Nov-02	Finland
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Abbotsford (AHL)	43	17	23	40	38

The Canucks have to be really happy with the play of Raty this year, who was originally acquired as part of the Bo Horvat trade with the Islanders. The big pivot has been consistently strong as an AHL player for Abbotsford, but with so many injuries to their bottom six, he was thrust into an NHL role of late and has closed the season on a real high note. He’s getting to the net. He’s playing both ends. He’s bringing a physical element. He’s been active in puck pursuit. Raty is never likely to be a top end offensive player at the NHL level. However, what he has shown to end this season is that he can develop into the ideal third line center for the Canucks in the near future. One would have to believe that the expectation for Raty would be for him to grab a permanent NHL role next year.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
5	Arturs Silovs	Van	G	24	6-4/205
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 19(156th)	Van	2019	156	22-Mar-01	Latvia
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Abbotsford (AHL)	21	14	5	2.41	0.908

The 2023 season was a breakout year for Silovs. He emerged as one of the most underrated young netminders on the planet thanks to a great AHL year, a strong cup of coffee with the Canucks, and a tremendous performance for Latvia at the World Championships. Since then? Outside of a strong playoff performance for the Canucks in 2024, he's been relatively mediocre. In fact, he has struggled greatly in his NHL appearances this year. The big netminder obviously shows flashes and he still has NHL upside, but at 24, how realistic is it that he achieves this? The Canucks brought in Kevin Lankinen this year and even recently re-signed him, which could possibly even close the book on Silovs in the organization. Yet, it's hard to forget how good he was in 2023 and how confident he looked in the 2024 playoffs, when he nearly bailed out the organization.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
6	Sawyer Mynio	Van	D	20	6-1/175
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 23(89th)	Van	2023	89	30-Apr-05	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Sea-Cgy (WHL)	49	14	31	45	66

A member of the 2023 WHL championship-winning Seattle Thunderbirds, Mynio was exactly the type of defenseman that the Hitmen wanted for their own big playoff push this spring: experienced, tough, smart, reliable and versatile. Fast forward a few months post-trade and it's clear that the team received exactly what they paid for, with their torrid winning pace being compelling evidence of that. You could go so far as to call him a "duct tape" kind of defender; maybe never the ideal tool for a certain job or situation, but he can almost always make it work in a pinch, and good coaches fully understand that kind of value in a player. Mynio has made a lot of progress during his tenure in the WHL, more than anyone probably expected, which is a very encouraging sign for his career moving forward. Canucks fans will appreciate what he brings to the table.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
7	Kirill Kudryavtsev	Van	D	21	5-11/200
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 22(208th)	Van	2022	208	5-Feb-04	Russia
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Abbotsford (AHL)	65	5	21	26	22

Much like Elias Pettersson, Kudryavtsev has been a pleasant surprise for the Canucks in his first professional season. He's stepped into an immediate top four role with Abbotsford and has firmly put himself on the Canucks' radar for a roster spot moving forward. He's been highly effective at both ends and has worked really hard to refine his game in the last few years. Most impressive might be the transformation of his decision making with the puck, which was a weakness as a draft eligible player, but has now become a strength of his at the pro level. His four-way mobility also makes him an excellent transitional defender, and he's aggressive with his gaps to make up for a lack of length. Kudryavtsev's NHL upside may not be extremely significant, but there's definitely a chance that he could be a long time #4-5 defender for the Canucks; someone who can provide a steady two-way influence in a depth role.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
8	Arshdeep Bains	Van	LW	24	6-0/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
FA(3/22)				9-Jan-01	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Abbotsford (AHL)	50	11	32	43	26

Originally a free agent signing by the Canucks out of Red Deer after Bains captured a WHL scoring crown, he's been a standout at the AHL level the last two seasons. As such, he's also seen a few cups of coffee with Vancouver. At the AHL level, he's excelled as a playmaker who can create coming off the wall and bring a physical element. At the NHL level, the physical element has been there, but he's struggled with the pace and making skilled plays against bigger defenders. This will be a big offseason for him, as he will no longer be exempt from waivers next year. It could be one final chance for him to crack Vancouver's roster full time, likely in a bottom six role.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
9	Max Sasson	Van	C	24	6-1/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
FA(3/23)				5-Sep-00	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Abbotsford (AHL)	41	13	19	32	18

The Canucks appear to have found a quality depth player in Sasson, a free agent signing out of Western Michigan two years ago. He had a very solid first professional season last year and continued that into this season, leading to his call up to Vancouver where he has stood out positively in a fourth line role. The big pivot is a detail oriented two-way forward who can forecheck, play the body, and create time and space for his linemates. He has struggled at the faceoff circle this year, so that will be an area of focus for him if he wants to be a part of the Canucks' penalty killing unit in the future. Don't expect Sasson to be a high scoring NHL player, but he should stick as a high energy, bottom six player. These types of additions through free agency are key to rounding out the depth in your organization.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
10	Linus Karlsson	Van	C	25	6-1/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
T(SJ-2/19)	SJ	2018	87	16-Nov-99	Sweden
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Abbotsford (AHL)	32	23	16	39	24

It was another good year in North America for Karlsson, as he finally broke through to play about a third of the year with the Canucks. When he wasn't with Vancouver, he was operating at well over a point per game in the AHL, proving to be ready for that next challenge. Karlsson excels playing through the middle of the ice and near the net. He really embraced that net front presence role this year in his limited time with Vancouver; head coach Rick Tocchet even compared him to former Red Wings great Tomas Holmstrom. However, at the AHL level Karlsson has shown a few more levels to his game, as a lethal scoring option on the powerplay and as a strong, detail oriented two-way player. Next year will be a big one for Karlsson. He already earned a new contract, but he'll try to establish himself as an everyday NHL player in the Canucks' bottom six. Otherwise, he'll require waivers to be sent down to the AHL and may find himself on the outside looking in long term in the organization.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
11	Danila Klimovich	Van	RW	22	6-1/200
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 21(41st)	Van	2021	41	9-Jan-03	Belarus
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Abbotsford (AHL)	65	25	13	38	59

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
12	Ty Mueller	Van	C	22	5-11/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 23(105th)	Van	2023	105	26-Feb-03	Canada
` 23(105th)	Van	2023	105	26-Feb-03	Canada
Abbotsford (AHL)	64	12	27	39	24

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
13	Anthony Romani	Van	D	19	6-0/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(162nd)	Van	2024	162	12-Jul-05	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
NB-Bar (OHL)	35	21	14	35	6

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
14	Cole McWard	Van	D	23	6-1/205
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
FA(4/23)				9-Jun-01	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Abbotsford (AHL)	67	6	20	26	16

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RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
15	Riley Patterson	Van	C	19	6-0/190
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(125th)	Van	2024	125	22-Mar-06	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Barrie (OHL)	64	25	34	59	19