

By: Chris Currie

Finalized: 06/06/25

Statistics, Height, Weight Taken Via eliteprospects.com

## **NHL Draft Rankings 2025 (Top 32)**

### **1) Michael Misa Position: C – Shoots: Left – Height: 6’1 – Weight 185 lbs**

**Nationality: Canada – Team: Saginaw Spirit**

**Current year stats: 65 GP, 62 G, 72 A**

**Strengths:** Skating, agility, deceptive shot, one timer, playmaking, defensive stick, takeaway ability, forechecking

**Weaknesses:** defensive awareness, decision making, lacks physicality

**Bio:** His skating ability helps him drive possession for his team and enter the offensive with control of the puck. In the offensive zone he is great at drawing defenders in because of his dangerous shot before using his playmaking to find teammates in dangerous scoring areas. Misa’s stickhandling and skating ability helps him protect the puck in the offensive zone, and he’s patient enough to wait for the right opportunity to attack the dangerous areas either himself or by finding a teammate with a pass. Though he can overcomplicate plays at time and turn the puck over trying to do too much, but this is more of a nitpick than anything. Without the puck he’s very good at spotting gaps in coverage and has a great one timer that is especially dangerous on the powerplay. He isn’t overly physical, but he doesn’t shy away from contact either. One area that really shines is his defensive stick, which he uses to strip opponents of the puck and quickly transition into a high danger offensive chance, this ability is evident especially on the penalty kill. Overall Misa has no real weaknesses outside of a lack of physicality and projects as an elite two-way center in the NHL.

### **2) Matthew Schaefer Position: D – Shoots: Left – Height: 6’2 – Weight 183 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Erie Otters**

**Current year stats: 17 GP, 7 G, 15 A**

**Strengths:** Skating, playmaking, hockey IQ, agility

**Weaknesses:** can get caught on occasion when joining the rush, has an edge but not overly physical

**Bio:** One of the best skaters in this entire class, Schaefer’s game is built on this facet of his game. Whether he’s closing off gaps or joining the rush his elite skating ability is evident throughout his game. Defensively he has smart positioning and

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uses his great stick work to cut off passing lanes and strip players of the puck. On turnovers he quickly skates into center ice making himself a dangerous passing option off the rush. He shines as a puck carrier where his effortless stride allows him to quickly get up ice. While his hands and overall agility makes him deceptive and hard to defend one on one. He combines this with his playmaking ability to open up passing lanes where he can find his teammates with speed. When Schaefer is on the ice his team instantly becomes more dangerous in transition. In the offensive zone he's patient but constantly presenting himself as a passing option. He isn't scared to activate off the blueline to either win a race for the puck on the half wall or attack the high slot to make himself a scoring option. His natural agility and playmaking makes him dangerous on the blue line, constantly throwing out fakes and opening up passing lanes for his teammates. Overall, has very few weaknesses in his game and projects as a top pairing two-way defenseman in the NHL.

**3) James Hagens Position: C – Shoots: Left – Height: 5'11 – Weight 176 lbs**

**Nationality: USA – Team: Boston College**

**Current year stats: 37 GP, 11 G, 26 A**

**Strengths:** Skating, playmaking, stickhandling, agility, compete

**Weaknesses:** Physicality, strength, passive on defence

**Bio:** Hagens is the most dynamic offensive forward in this draft class. He uses his elite skating ability and stickhandling to gain the zone with possession and create space for his teammates. His playmaking stands out with great passing ability on both his forehand and backhand as well as knack for seeing open small gaps in coverage to exploit. His head is constantly up, and he is consistently aware of where everyone is on the ice. He's cerebral in the offensive zone, often lurking just outside of gaps in coverage before sneaking into scoring areas. His shooting ability is evident when he makes use of it, but he has a tendency to overpass and give up grade A scoring chances. When used though he has a quick and accurate wrister that can beat goalies clean and also is a legitimate one timer threat in the zone. Strength is a key area of improvement as he tended to struggle against bigger and stronger teams in the NCAA this year, where he specifically tended to avoid getting into the net front areas and opted to stay on the perimeter as a play maker. He's also a little too passive in the defensive zone which can lead to missed assignments and goals against for his team. Overall, he is still the most dynamic player in the draft

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and most of his weaknesses are easy fixes. He projects as a top line center in the NHL and will likely be an elite transition player the moment he enters the league.

**4) Caleb Desnoyers Position: C – Shoots: Left – Height: 6’2 – Weight 172 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Moncton Wildcats**

**Current year stats: 56 GP, 35 G, 49 A**

**Strengths:** Offensive awareness, playmaking, forechecking, high compete level

**Weaknesses:** foot speed, strength

**Bio:** Desnoyers is a high-end play driving center with strong playmaking ability and high compete level. He’s a cerebral player that is very good at creating and exploiting gaps in coverage through give and go plays and quick changes in speed on the rush. He’s a play connector who doesn’t necessarily carry the puck at an elite rate but can receive passes and make quick decisions to get pucks into dangerous areas for his teammates. He’s physical and works hard on the forecheck using his body and active stick to force turnovers in the offensive zone. In terms of goalscoring he is capable of beating goalies with his shot and goes hard to the net, but his lack of strength and footspeed may limit this area of his game in the NHL. The same applies to his defensive play, in faster pace games he can find himself a step behind which gives opponents more chances to capitalize. Desnoyers needs to get stronger and faster to continue to play his game in the NHL. Provided he cleans up these few weaknesses, Desnoyers will be an elite play driving top 6 two-way center in the NHL but the lack of any dynamic offensive elements to his game will likely limit his overall production.

**5) Porter Martone Position: RW – Shoots: Right – Height: 6’3 – Weight 207 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Brampton Steelheads**

**Current year stats: 57 GP, 37 G, 61 A**

**Strengths:** Stickhandling, playmaking, puck protection, size/strength, soft first touch, creativity, hard accurate shot

**Weaknesses:** skating, pace of play, defensive play

**Bio:** Martone is the best power forward available in this draft class. A big player who uses his size and strength to attack the front of the net and create scoring chances. He has soft hands in tight and can easily beat defenders and goalies one on one

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with a quick move. His playmaking is another strength, specifically when he sets up behind the net where he can draw defenders in and find his teammates in the slot with a quick pass-through traffic. He is a dual threat with a hard and accurate wrist shot and also has a dangerous one timer, forcing goalies and defenders to respect him at all times. He battles hard in the corner and uses his skill to strip players of the puck, he also protects the puck well in the corner which helps him buy time to get a pass out to teammates in scoring areas. His biggest weakness is his skating, he lacks that top speed many other elite offensive players have at this level and isn't particularly agile either. Resulting in an overreliance on his size and stickhandling to beat defenders one on one, which may be more challenging at the next level. Similarly, he tends to struggle when the pace of play picks up and his decision making can be a step behind if the game turns into a bit of a "track meet". The lack of skating ability may force him to simplify at the next level, limiting his offensive ceiling. At minimum though his ability to win puck battles, playmaking ability, shot, and soft hands in front project him as a top line winger in the NHL.

**6) Victor Eklund Position: LW – Shoots: Right – Height: 5'11 – Weight 170 lbs**

**Nationality: Sweden – Team: Djurgardens IF**

**Current year stats: 42 GP, 19 G, 12 A**

**Strengths:** skating, compete, playmaking, hockey IQ, awareness, stickhandling, quick/deceptive shot, good first touch

**Weaknesses:** could use shot more, on the small side

**Bio:** Victor Eklund is an intriguing prospect in this year's class. He's a smaller forward that plays a fearless game. Eklund battles hard, whether its in the corners or in front of the net and is often rewarded for it. Its not just effort though, Eklund is very quick to read plays and gets a jump on puck races because of it. Eklund is also constantly shoulder checking and scanning the ice and often knows where everyone is at all times. This makes him a dangerous playmaker, who often doesn't need to much time to decide what to do with the puck. He has a deceptive shot that's off his stick very quick. But his relentless work ethic and fearless playstyle is what will score help him score at the next level. On the rush Eklund can beat you with his speed or his hands and has no problem driving into the dangerous areas. Overall, Eklund has very few weaknesses to his game and has the drive to succeed at the next level. Though he will likely need to bulk up for his playstyle to carry over

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effectively. He projects as a top 6 play driving winger in the NHL that can play anywhere in the lineup if required.

**7) Cullen Potter Position: LW – Shoots: Left – Height: 5’10 – Weight 172 lbs**

**Nationality: USA – Team: ASU**

**Current year stats: 35 GP, 13 G, 9 A**

**Strengths:** Quick/agile skater, soft hands, high IQ, compete, quick release wrist shot, playmaking

**Weaknesses:** size, strength, physicality

**Bio:** Potter has one of the highest offensive ceilings in the entire draft. He’s an elite skater and is dangerous carrying the puck due to his mobility and stickhandling ability. His wrist shot is elite, he can quickly change the angle and get it off before the goalies can react. His playmaking is similarly strong as he consistently finds open lanes for his teammates. But goalscoring is his strength and he can do it in a variety of ways. While he’s on the small side he isn’t scared to go to the net and his soft hands and patience to outwait defenders and goalies make scoring goals from the net front look effortless. He thrives off the puck as well using his skating to stay one step ahead of defenders. He has a knack for finding soft areas in coverage and outside of his opponent’s vision and is great at arriving to these areas at just the right time leading to dangerous chances. While he is a strong offensive player, he seldom neglects the defensive zone patiently staying below the puck and waiting until his team has possession before leaving the zone and finding open ice on the rush. Could benefit from taking a few more risks and leaving the zone early in order to get a few more puck touches in transition. While he competes hard and isn’t scared of the net front he does struggle against bigger and stronger defenders and isn’t really able to power through them, which may limit his offensive game in the NHL. He isn’t overly physical either which will hurt his ability to win puck battles in the corner. Overall, potter is an elite offensive player that will be a top 6 winger and powerplay weapon in the NHL.

**8) Jake O’Brien Position: C – Shoots: Right – Height: 6’2 – Weight 170 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Brantford Bulldogs**

**Current year stats: 66 GP, 32 G, 66 A**

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**Strengths:** playmaking, skating, compete level, offensive awareness, defensive stickwork, stickhandling

**Weaknesses:** decision making, lacks physicality, passive d-zone coverage, shot

**Bio:** One of the highest skilled players in the draft, O'Brien combines skating ability, playmaking, and stickhandling to be one of most dangerous transition players in this year's class. He has a high compete level that is extremely noticeable on the forecheck where he is a bit of a puck hound, constantly harassing defenders with his stick and forcing turnovers in the offensive zone. His passing ability is elite both in transition where he is very good at finding open ice and leading streaking teammates on with a simple pass. Passing is also evident in the offensive zone where he constantly uses his skill to open up lanes and finds his teammates in high danger areas. His ability to complete high end passes on both his forehand and backhand is a special trait that very few in this draft class have. He is one the best stickhandlers in the draft, especially in transition but he sometimes struggles to pick the right moments which can lead to a high number of turnovers one zone exits and entries. He also shows flashes of being a good defensive player, but he can get caught floating and leaving guys wide open from time to time. While his forechecking is a strong part of his game it lacks a physical element that may hinder his game somewhat at the NHL level. He also doesn't have much for goalscoring ability and tends to avoid using his shot altogether, which may limit his offence in the NHL. O'Brien will likely slide into a second line scoring role, with legitimate 1<sup>st</sup> line upside if he can develop his game in a few key areas.

9) **Anton Frondell** Position: C/LW – Shoots: Left – Height: 6'1 – Weight: 205 lbs

**Nationality:** Sweden – Team: Djurgardens IF

**Current year stats:** 29 GP, 11 G, 14 A

**Strengths:** one timer, quick release wrist-shot, puck protection, offensive timing/IQ, defensive awareness

**Weaknesses:** Pace of play, acceleration

**Bio:** Frondell is one of the most pro ready prospects in this year's draft. He has a ton of NHL level tools with a great defensive stick, puck protection ability, and playmaking all making him a great complementary player on a teams forecheck and zone possession. Playmaking and IQ are a large part of his rush play as well, where he typically pushes up ice forcing defenders back then makes a quick give and go

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play to a teammate coming up ice with speed. He's great at finding soft areas in the ice and has a knack for drawing in defenders which helps open up space for himself and teammates in the offensive zone. Defensively he is great at recognizing the open man and uses his stick work to harass and strip opposing players of the puck. His greatest strength is his shot which would already be high end at the NHL level. He has a heavy and accurate wrist shot that he can get off quick and with very little space and his one timer is hard, accurate and can come off passes multiple angles. Combined with his ability to find open space his goal scoring potential is high in the NHL, though he will need a good playmaker to really unlock this side of his game. Frondell doesn't have many weaknesses with his biggest knock being that most of his tool's project to be good but not elite, and he likely will need a more skilled linemate to drive play for him. Pace of play may also be an issue and while he has some speed when he gets going his ability to accelerate is below average at best. Altogether though Frondell has so many good traits that he is a sure thing to play NHL games and will have a long career as either a second line center or top line winger.

**10) Brady Martin Position: Center – Shoots: Right – Height: 6' – Weight 187 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Soo Greyhounds**

**Current year stats: 57 GP, 33 G, 39 A**

**Strengths:** Compete, physicality, defensive awareness, offensive awareness, edgework, puck protection, playmaking

**Weaknesses:** decision making (turns puck over on occasion), shot selection, foot speed

**Bio:** One of the highest compete levels out of anyone in this draft. Martin is a physical, defense first, center that has shown flashes of more dynamic skill throughout his draft year. He's a high IQ player who's positioning defensively combined with his stick work and relentless work ethic makes him a nightmare for opposing offensive forwards. This serves him well on the forecheck as well, where he can force turnovers with a quick stick check or through a high impact hit. With the puck he is constantly scanning and looking for open lanes in transition and in the offensive zone. This makes him a simple but effective playmaker, he isn't "threading the needle" between multiple defenders, but he consistently finds dangerous open lanes to scoring areas. In the offensive zone he is great at protecting the puck in the corner and up the half wall, using cutbacks and his

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edgework to extend his teams possession. Skating is a slight issue mostly in terms of footspeed as faster players can sometimes leave him a step behind the play. While he shows flashes of dynamic skill, being able to beat defenders one on one but his execution rate is lower than some of the other high-end players in this draft. Ultimately Martin projects as a physical, defense first, middle 6 forward that has enough offence to his game to provide some secondary scoring at the NHL level.

**11) Radim Mrtaka Position: D – Shoots: Right – Height: 6’6 – Weight 198 lbs**

**Nationality: – Team: Seattle Thunderbirds**

**Current year stats: 43 GP, 3 G, 32 A**

**Strengths:** Skating, defensive stick, d-zone positioning, physical, passing, puck battles

**Weaknesses:** lacks high end offensive instincts, doesn’t take many risks,

**Bio:** Mrtaka may be the safest pick in the entire draft. He uses his size and stick work to easily shut down rush opportunities for the other team. He similarly wins defensive zone puck battles with ease. He’s a strong skater that can quickly get the puck up ice and is a great passer in transition. He holds the line well and can extend possessions in the offensive zone for his team. He game is easily projectible to the NHL where he could easily be an effective top 4 two-way defenseman. The main concerns are his ceiling, he lacks high end offensive instincts and seldom joins the rush when he isn’t leading it himself. He similarly refrains from any risks in the offensive zone limiting himself and his team’s offensive potential. Mrtaka has one of the highest floors of any of the prospects in this class but lacks the dynamic ability currently to be anything more dangerous. Nevertheless, he is a safe pick and borderline top 10 talent in this draft.

**12) Jackson Smith Position: D – Shoots: Left – Height: 6’3 – Weight 190 lbs**

**Nationality: Canada – Team: Tri-City Americans**

**Current year stats: 68 GP, 11 G, 43 A**

**Strengths:** smooth and agile skater, good first pass in transition, hard/accurate shot, good rush instincts, uses size to win puck battles

**Weaknesses:** can get caught flat footed on the rush, gets caught out of position defensively

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**Bio:** Smith is one of the best offensive defencemen in this draft class. His skating is elite, and he constantly uses it to create separation in transition, making him a dangerous threat off the rush both as the puck carrier or as the late man joining the attack. He has a hard, accurate shot that can cleanly beat goalies at the junior level. He uses his natural agility to walk the line and open up shooting lanes and passing lanes in the offensive zone. He's big and uses his size to win puck battles down low and quickly turns that possession into zone exits using his skating or his passing. Despite this his defensive game is lacking in some areas, he is slow to react on occasion and often gets caught out of position and flat footed which gives forwards a chance to gain the zone and create scoring chances on the rush. He needs to learn to pick his spots more appropriately when joining the rush as he struggles to get back into defensive positioning following a turnover. Smith projects as an offensive focused top 4 defensemen in the NHL and potentially a strong power play quarterback.

**13) Justin Carboneau Position: RW – Shoots: right – Height: 6'1 – Weight 192 lbs**

**Nationality: Canada – Team: Blainville-Boisbriand Armada**

**Current year stats: 62 GP, 46 G, 43 A**

**Strengths:** Stickhandling, offensive positioning, physicality, straight-line speed, playmaking, Shot

**Weaknesses:** Defensive positioning, effort in defensive zone, decision making, discipline

**Bio:** Carboneau is one of the most skilled players in this draft class. His stickhandling ability is elite and arguably the best in the class. He has great shot that can beat goalies cleanly at the junior level but also has legitimate playmaking ability. He can sometimes overpass, giving up quality scoring chances for himself. He's a strong rush threat due to his stickhandling ability and straight-line speed and often is very good at anticipating the play moving up ice, but he can leave the zone early causing defensive breakdowns, he needs to learn to manage the risks he takes better in the defensive zone. He shines in the offensive zone, especially on the cycle where his strength, stickhandling, and natural agility help him hold the puck for long periods of time. This helps him draw defenders in and open up ice for his teammates, where his natural playmaking and scoring ability can really shine. He projects as a top 9 skilled winger in the NHL.

**14) Carter Bear Position: C/LW – Shoots: Left – Height: 6'0 – Weight 179 lbs**

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**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Everett Silvertips**

**Current year stats: 56 GP, 40 G, 42 A**

**Strengths:** compete, puck skill, physicality, shot

**Weaknesses:** injury concerns

**Bio:** Bear is a high compete, offensive winger who drives a ton offence through fearlessly attacking the net. While his work ethic defines his game, he has high end skill especially in tight, making him a dangerous net front player. He's got a good shot that can beat goalies from the slot but scores most of his goals just outside the paint. His backhand is also sneakily good, providing another layer to his net front game. He goes hard into the corners and wins a large amount of puck battles making him effective on the forecheck as well. He has high end speed which contributes to his ability to drive the net and forecheck. Bear has an NHL style game, and his goal scoring will easily transition to the NHL. A late season Achilles injury provides some level of concern but provided he fully recovers he is easily projectable as a top 6 scoring winger.

**15) Lynden Lakovic Position: C/LW – Shoots: Left – Height: 6'4 – Weight 190 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Moose Jaw Warriors**

**Current year stats: 47 GP, 27 G, 31 A**

**Strengths:** offensive + defensive awareness, shot, puck protection, playmaking, length, edge work

**Weaknesses:** acceleration, compete, lacks physicality

**Bio:** Lakovic is a cerebral offensive player that is very good at finding high danger areas in the ice and creating scoring chances using shot and playmaking ability. He's strong on his skates and while he lacks the top end acceleration of some others in the draft he makes up for with elite puck protection and a willingness to play his teammates with "give and go" plays to catch defenders flat footed. This combined with his dual threat offensive profile makes him a dangerous player in transition for his team. On the forecheck he uses his length and ability to read the play to force turnovers, especially in the neutral zone where he can quickly turn the opposing team's breakout into an offensive chance for his team. While a big player he lacks the physicality some might want from him at an NHL level, but teams should be cautious to not try and get him away from his game as well. Nevertheless,

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he needs to battle harder along the boards, especially in the defensive zone where he can often be too passive despite often being in a good defensive position. Currently Lakovic looks like a potential middle six scoring winger but if he's able to add some speed and a bit of an edge to his game his ceiling is that of a strong two-way top 6 center in the NHL.

**16) Roger McQueen Position: C – Shoots: Right – Height: 6'5 – Weight 192 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Brandon Wheat Kings**

**Current year stats: 17 GP, 10 G, 10 A**

**Strengths:** Puck skill, strength, offensive awareness, shot, playmaking, puck protection, physicality

**Weaknesses:** passive defensive coverage, skating, discipline

**Bio:** A potential lottery pick skill wise that will fall in the draft mostly due to injury concern. McQueen combines a massive frame with elite puck skills to be one of the most dynamic players in this draft class. When he's on he can use his length and puck skill to beat defenders one on one and has the release and skill to beat goalies clean in tight. He has high end playmaking skills on both has forehand and backhand, again using his length to "hook" passes around defenders but is also capable of pulling the puck in tight to his feet to slip a pass underneath a defender's stick. His hands in tight make him extremely deceptive and hard to defend at the junior level. He uses his size effectively both when protecting the puck in the corner and on the forecheck where he isn't scared physical. Discipline can be an issue at times and his physical play can cross a line, but this isn't a major concern. Skating has also been a common criticism, but he has made strides to improve it and projects to be an above average skater if there's continued improvement. The major concern with McQueen is his back injury, which has plagued him for 2 years now and had a significant impact on his availability. Despite the obvious upside this serves as a major risk for his development. However, if he hits McQueen has the upside of an elite first line center with a unique combination of size and skill basically no one in the NHL currently possesses.

**17) Cole Reschny Position: C – Shoots: Left – Height: 5'10 – Weight 187 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Victoria Royals**

**Current year stats: 62 GP, 26 G, 66 A**

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**Strengths:** Playmaking, puck skill, offensive awareness, defensive positioning, compete, puck protection, shot

**Weaknesses:** physicality, foot speed, size

**Bio:** Reschny was a leading driver of offence for his team in the WHL this season. He's a smart playmaker whose adept at finding open spaces of ice for his teammates in transition and creates a high number of chances in the dangerous areas in the offensive zone. He's strong on his skates and uses his edgework to spin off attackers and protect the puck. He also utilizes a lot of east west movement on the rush, using his edgework and stickhandling to drive into the centre of the ice and draw attackers in before making a play to teammates driving towards the far post. His tendency to get into the middle lends itself to his goal scoring as well, where he is adept at getting the goalie moving and shooting "against the grain" in the slot. Reschny thrives in the defensive zone as well, with strong defensive positioning and the IQ to anticipate and prevent dangerous opportunities from developing early. He uses his stick to constantly tie up opposing sticks and take away passing lanes. He lacks physicality but the combination of stickwork and positioning makes him effective as both a forechecker and defensive player. Reschny looks like a legit top 6 two-way center with the only major concerns being his size and footspeed relative to the NHL. However, his IQ and relentless work ethic combined with the assets he already has as a part of his game make him a good player to bet on this draft.

**18) Braeden Cootes Position: C – Shoots: Right – Height: 6'0 – Weight 183 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Seattle Thunderbirds**

**Current year stats: 60 GP, 26 G, 37 A**

**Strengths:** defensive positioning, compete, playmaking, skating, physicality, skating

**Weaknesses:** offensive awareness, lacks dynamic skill

**Bio:** There's a lot to like in Cootes's game. He's a competitive, defensively responsible, center that produced well on a weaker Seattle team this season. His game is simple but effective, using his skating to draw in defenders so he can use his high-end passing skills to create chances for his teammates. He executes passes at a high percentage on both his forehand and backhand while under pressure and isn't scared to drive to the middle to make use of his deceptively good wrist shot. He competes hard on the forecheck and doesn't shy away from the

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physical side of the game, winning a high percentage of puck battles. He shines defensively, using an active stick and smart positioning to take away passing lanes. He appears passive but he's constantly near the puck offering support to defensemen and the moment a puck sneaks free he's on top of it, driving play up ice. Coote's is easy to see playing NHL games with the only major concern being the lack of true high-end skill outside of his playmaking, which may limit how high he plays in an NHL lineup. Regardless, Coote is sure bet to be an effective middle 6 two-way center in the NHL and is a safe bet for teams in the draft.

**19) Benjamin Kindel Position: C/RW – Shoots: Right – Height: 5'10 – Weight 181 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Calgary Hitmen**

**Current year stats: 65 GP, 35 G, 64 A**

**Strengths:** skating, offensive awareness, playmaking, shot, compete, puck skill

**Weaknesses:** size, strength, physicality, defensive awareness

**Bio:** One of the smartest offensive players in this draft class, Kindel has a high IQ and offensive awareness that makes him dangerous anywhere in the offensive zone. He isn't one dimensional though, as despite his small stature he has a high compete level and is willing to go to dangerous areas and battle in the corner for pucks. On the rush he cleverly uses changes of speed and his agility to open up lanes to attack the line. If he takes the outside, he's strong enough to protect the puck and if given space has the skill and finishing ability to score in tight to the goalie. He's a great playmaker able to find small lanes in traffic to his teammates in dangerous areas. He gets his wrist shot off quick and its accurate though he does pass away a lot of dangerous opportunities for himself. The obvious concern is his size, as he plays a competitive and physical game but may lack the strength for it to be an asset in the NHL. But he is still a good bet due to the apparent skill level and hockey IQ. At worst he will be a 3<sup>rd</sup> line scoring winger with power play utility but if he hits, he has the potential to be a dangerous first line winger.

**20) Malcolm Spence Position: LW – Shoots: Left – Height: 6'2 – Weight 201 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Erie Otters**

**Current year stats: 65 GP, 32 G, 41 A**

**Strengths:** compete, hockey IQ, defensive positioning, stickhandling, skating, physicality

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**Weaknesses:** offensive pace of play, can play too simple on offense

**Bio:** Spence is a high IQ, high compete two-way winger. He battles hard in the corners and isn't scared to throw a big hit in the corner. He's a great skater with high end speed and is smart in transition, running quick give and go plays with teammates to make space for his team on the rush. He has pretty good shooting mechanics and flashes some strong playmaking ability but most of his offence is generated by going hard to the net and cleaning up rebounds. He flashes of some high-end puck skills as well, especially when he slows his game down, making simple moves to beat defenders one on one. Spence makes the front of the net his office, but he is a little too stationary most of the time and would benefit from using his skating to slip in and out of the slot, getting the defenders moving. Defensively he backchecks hard and has is constantly scanning the ice looking for the open man. He's smart in the defensive zone picking the right moments to collapse down to the slot and tie a guy up in front and reads the play well enough to know when to fly the zone on potential turnovers, starting the teams rush the other way. Spence is going to be a fan favorite and great bottom 6 winger in the NHL. He does have more offence to his game than his numbers this year let on and if he can learn to use some of those tools a little more consistently, he could find a place as a consistent top 6 option in the NHL.

**21) Cameron Reid Position: D – Shoots: Left – Height: 6'0 – Weight 174 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Kitchener Rangers**

**Current year stats: 67 GP, 14 G, 40 A**

**Strengths:** Skating, playmaking, puck skill, puck protection, rush defense

**Weaknesses:** defensive awareness, gets caught flat footed, size

**Bio:** Reid has one of the strongest offensive games of any defensemen in this draft class. He is a high-end skater that has good top speed and 4 way mobility that makes him a dangerous puck carrier. Offensively he's a great passer that can convert on both his forehand and backhand. He's a great stickhandler as well, especially on the rush where he uses his stickhandling and edgework to beat defenders and forecheckers one on one. He's strong on his skates and capable of protecting the puck long enough to let his playmaking take over in the offensive zone. Defensively his skating shines as well and when combined with his active stick makes him very hard to get around on the rush. That being said his decision making can sometimes cost him as he gets caught flat footed and too far up ice

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Statistics, Height, Weight Taken Via eliteprospects.com

from time to time, but that is the risk with premier offensive defensemen like him. Size is also a concern at barely 6 feet with question marks on if he's skilled enough to buck the trend on current defencemen. I'd be willing to bet on the skill though and think he has legitimate upside as a top four two-way defencemen and power play quarterback in the NHL.

**22) Logan Hensler Position: D – Shoots: Right – Height: 6'2 – Weight 192 lbs**

**Nationality: USA – Team: University of Wisconsin**

**Current year stats: 32 GP, 2 G, 10 A**

**Strengths:** Defensive awareness, skating, puck skill, defensive stick, passing, strength

**Weaknesses:** confidence, compete

**Bio:** Hensler is an interesting prospect in that he's almost guaranteed to be an effective defencemen due to the many tools he has but he appears to lack the confidence to take a step into being a truly dynamic defenceman at the college level. He's smooth skating defencemen that moves the puck the way and will be an effective transition player at the NHL. Likewise, his skating and stickwork make him an effective rush defender and help him retrieve pucks at a high rate at the college level. The biggest issue is there seems to be a real lack of willingness to take that extra step. At his best his skating and puck skill is enough to take over a hockey game, beating defenders one on one and generating a ton of offence on the rush. But he is too risk averse and often plays too passive to consistently take over games the way he should with his skillset. Regardless Hensler combination of skating, size, and defensive stickwork should make him an effective second pairing defenseman in the NHL. And if he can learn to apply his skill to a greater degree, he may have top pairing potential.

**23) Ryker Lee Position: RW – Shoots: Right – Height: 6'0 – Weight 181 lbs**

**Nationality: American – Team: Madison Capitals**

**Current year stats: 58 GP, 31 G, 37 A**

**Strengths:** shot, stickhandling, offensive awareness, agility

**Weaknesses:** compete, strength, defensive positioning, skating

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**Bio:** Lee is one of the most offensively gifted players in the draft class with great puck skill, passing ability and an NHL level shot. He uses his hands and agility to beat defenders one on one, especially in the offensive zone when attacking downhill. This gets him into great positions to use his elite wrist shot, which is off his stick quick and can beat goalies cleanly from range. He's shown good enough passing ability to be considered a dual threat especially on the power play, where his shot forces defenders and goalies to respect him leaving teammates wide open. Off the puck he shows good offensive awareness and can find soft areas in the slot and around the circles where his catch and release wrist shot is a dangerous weapon. His one timer is also a competent weapon and one he can get off from sharp angles if needed. The main concerns with Lee's game are his size and compete level, he's effective in transition due to his skill but smarter defensemen will make it harder for him to get inside and if Lee doesn't see an easy lane he tends to skate to the outside where he struggles to get passes into dangerous areas. His lack of footspeed is very noticeable and will limit his effectiveness in the NHL, especially at 5 on 5. Adding an extra gear and being more willing to drive the net would unlock another level to his game offensively. Defensively he is pretty passive though when he does engage, he is competent battling for pucks along the boards, his skating again is a hindrance as he is typically a step behind when forced to defend in his zone. At the NHL level there will be a role for Lee as a middle 6 skilled winger with legit power play upside, but the lack of defensive ability and speed will likely prevent him from having a larger impact.

**24) Jack Nesbitt Position: C – Shoots: Left – Height: 6'4 – Weight 183 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Windsor Spitfires**

**Current year stats: 65 GP, 25 G, 39 A**

**Strengths:** offensive awareness, defensive positioning, physicality, compete, strength, puck skill

**Weaknesses:** skating

**Bio:** Nesbitt is a big center that plays a responsible defensive game and provides enough offence the other way to have legitimate upside in the NHL. He reads plays extremely well and is great at anticipating where the puck is going to be and getting into dangerous scoring areas or initiating battles in the corner. This makes him an effective offensive player on the cycle and in front of the net where his big frame is hard to move. While skating is a clear weakness his IQ offsets it, and he often is so

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far ahead of the play that his poor foot speed often doesn't limit game all that much. Defensively he shines with an active stick that can break up plays and strip attackers of the puck and great positioning and recognition of dangerous areas of the ice. He battles hard to tie up players in front of the net and is great at recognizing when to start moving up ice and join the rush. He carries the puck at a high rate in the OHL and tends to gain the zone consistently despite his lack of speed. He protects the puck well along the board and uses his size and strength to drive the net and create scoring chances for himself. Nesbitt will easily slide into a middle 6 center role in the NHL with legitimate two way upside but the lack of foot speed will likely hold back his offensive game and prevent him from moving further up in the lineup.

**25) Jakob Ihz-Wozniak Position: RW – Shoots: Right – Height: 6'2 – Weight 190 lbs**

**Nationality: Swedish – Team: Lulea HF J20**

**Current year stats: 40 GP, 23 G, 34 A**

**Strengths:** Shot, skating, offensive awareness, hockey IQ, stickhandling

**Weaknesses:** compete, consistency, defensive positioning

**Bio:** Ihz-Wozniak is a talented 6'2 scoring forward that when he is on looks like one of the most dominant players in this draft class. His shot is high end, with a great quick release wrister, snapshot and one timer that are all capable of beating goalies from distance. He's smart and constantly moving his feet, slipping in and out of scoring areas to create space for himself. When carrying the puck his heads up and he has the stickhandling ability to beat defenders one on one and protect the puck to the outside. While not stand out, he is a good enough passer to keep defenders and goalies honest. The biggest issues are consistency, when he's on he is a capable forechecker with that battles hard and can force turnovers using his size, strength and stickwork. But he often gets caught floating and skating by defenders as opposed to stopping and starting. This is especially evident in the defensive zone where he is very passive and lacks the engagement needed to be effective in the NHL in his own zone. Ihz-Wozniak is a risk for teams mainly due to the lack of consistency in his game. If he hits, he'll be a great top 6 scoring winger, if he doesn't its unlikely, he'll last in the NHL for long.

**26) Cameron Schmidt Position: RW – Shoots: Right – Height: 5'7 – Weight 157 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Vancouver Giants**

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**Current year stats: 61 GP, 40 G, 38 A**

**Strengths:** Skating, stickhandling, playmaking, compete, offensive awareness, shot

**Weaknesses:** size, decision making, defensive positioning

**Bio:** Schmidt is a skilled goal scoring winger that combines elite skating ability with high end puck skill and a heavy curl and drag wrister to be one of the premier offensive talents in this draft. He's got a good sense of timing and the vision to see soft areas of the ice and defenders blind spots to get into premier goal scoring areas. His catch and release wrister is very good and he likes to use defenders as screens if the opportunity arises though this sometimes backfires and results in a blocked shot going the other way. His skating is elite, with a quick first couple steps and a top speed that would be high end even in the NHL. He combines this with hands and agility to beat junior defenders one on one though his decision making is a mixed bag, and he does turn the puck over a lot when there is a simpler play available. Though I do like seeing the creativity, he just needs to pick his spots better. In the offensive zone I like his compete level, he isn't scared to battle in a corner despite his small frame and is deceptively strong though he will likely need to bulk up a bit to win battles at the NHL level. Defensively he is too passive, often opting to stay in the middle of the ice and even flying the zone early anticipating a turnover and breakout pass, often to mixed results though and it can leave the rest of his teammates hanging out to dry in the offensive zone. Schmidts combination of speed, skill, and shot will make him a very productive junior player and he will earn NHL ice time because of it and could carve out a decent career as a middle 6 powerplay specialist. His upside is high end for sure but he would need to make some significant improvements in certain areas to make the jump into a first line role.

**27) L.J. Mooney Position: C – Shoots: Right – Height: 5'7 – Weight 162 lbs**

**Nationality: USA – Team: NTDP**

**Current year stats: 26 GP, 5 G, 23 A**

**Strengths:** Skating, stickhandling, playmaking, compete, offensive awareness

**Weaknesses:** size, strength, shot,

**Bio:** L.J. Mooney is a high risk-high reward prospect. One of the most gifted offensive players in this draft. An elite skater and stickhandler with high end speed and elite

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edgework that makes him a dangerous player on the rush. He's a great playmaker too, able to find small seams and make plays at the high speed he plays at. He protects the puck well with hands and edgework, using quick cutbacks to spin off checks and get defenders chasing. Despite his size he plays with a high compete level, not scared to go into the corners or battle in front of the net for position though he does struggle to hold his own against bigger players, even if he has some surprising strength. His shot is off his stick quick but lacks power compared to some of the other goal scorers in the draft and he often prefers to pass up chances as opposed to shooting them. He's a very smart offensive player and can break down defenses well with his skill but he rarely tries to take the puck to scoring areas himself, instead electing to open up lanes and make plays from the perimeter. He also struggles with decision making on occasion and can turn the puck over trying to do too much with it. Mooney is a risky pick as he is unlikely to have much effect in the NHL without top 6 playing time and power play minutes. I also wonder if he can play center at the next level or would be better off on the wing. If he hits, he could end up and elite skilled player in the NHL but if he doesn't he likely doesn't spend much time in the league.

**28) Kashawn Aitcheson Position: D – Shoots: Left – Height: 6'1 – Weight 198 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Barrie Colts**

**Current year stats: 64 GP, 26 G, 33 A**

**Strengths:** Physicality, compete, playmaking, shot, offensive awareness, defensive stick

**Weaknesses:** rush defence, skating, discipline

**Bio:** A throwback, physical defenseman with a mean streak. Aitcheson will be well liked by whatever team picks him up in this draft. He's the hardest open ice hitter in this class and loves to make his presence felt physically. He has legit skill as well, especially in his playmaking where he's a good first pass on the rush and has the offensive awareness to join as a late open and attack downhill for scoring chances. He has hard shot, especially noticeable on his one timer but isn't scared to dish the puck if he doesn't see a lane. Defensively he shines along the boards, using his strength to bully weaker opponents and win puck battles consistently. The major concern is skating, his footspeed leaves him a step behind and forces him to be more passive defending the rush than he'd like (though his active stick can make up for it in some cases). The skating may also limit his offensive game at the NHL level,

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as he likely won't be able to keep up enough to get the dangerous chances he got in junior. Discipline is also a slight concern as he plays pretty close to the line most of the time, it wouldn't take much to cross it. Aitcheson still is a safe pick and will fit in well in an NHL top 4, where the right partner will be able to cover for his weaknesses so he can impose himself offensively and physically.

**29) Jack Murtagh Position: LW – Shoots: Left – Height: 6'0 – Weight 198 lbs**

**Nationality: USA – Team: NTDP**

**Current year stats: 56 GP, 22 G, 31 A**

**Strengths:** Shot, skating, stickhandling, playmaking

**Weaknesses:** compete, hockey IQ

**Bio:** Murtagh was a key driver on a weaker NTDP team this year. He's a great skater that can carry the puck into the zone and has one of the best shots in the class, capable of beating goalies from range. He's got decent hands and combined with his skating can use them to beat defenders one on one and finish plays at the net. His playmaking doesn't stand out but it's good enough to keep goalies and defenders honest. The main concern is consistency, sometimes he will go hard in the corners and backcheck to break up an offensive chance. But other times he's caught floating and not contributing much to the defensive zone or on the forecheck. His hockey sense also leaves something to be desired, and he is really reliant on a good playmaker to get the puck to him to get his shot off. He isn't generating much offense himself and is more of a trigger man than a real offensive driver. If he can find some consistent compete level his skating and shot should make him an effective middle 6 winger with some powerplay upside at the NHL level.

**30) Sascha Boumedienne Position: D – Shoots: Left – Height: 6'2 – Weight 183 lbs**

**Nationality: Swedish – Team: Boston University**

**Current year stats: 40 GP, 3 G, 10 A**

**Strengths:** Skating, defensive positioning, defensive stick, compete, passing

**Weaknesses:** decision making, hockey IQ, strength

**Bio:** Boumedienne is an NHL level skater that had mixed results in the NCAA but played well down the stretch and had a great u18 tournament. Skating is his major strength with a smooth effortless stride and great agility that makes him deceptive

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on the rush. It also helps him close off attackers early at the line and combined with his very good defensive stick makes him an effective rush defender. He makes a good first pass and has shown the potential to be able to join the rush and provide some more offense in flashes this season. Decision making is a concern though, and one may question his hockey IQ as he sometimes tries to do too much and can get into stretches where he's turning the puck over quite a bit. The potential is there though, and the legit skating ability gives him a shot at being an effective top 4 two-way defenseman.

**31) Haoxi "Simon" Wang Position: D – Shoots: Left – Height: 6'6 – Weight 209 lbs**

**Nationality: Chinese – Team: King Rebellion, Oshawa Generals**

**Current year stats: 38 GP, 4 G, 18 A (OJHL) – 32 GP, 0 G, 2 A (OHL)**

**Strengths:** Skating, size/reach, stickhandling, shot

**Weaknesses:** offensive awareness, strength, consistency

**Bio:** Haoxi Wang is a relatively inexperienced defenseman (he spent time in junior A this season) that got limited minutes on a very good Generals team. He is a great skater especially for a defencemen of his size and has shown some real skill with the puck this season. He also defends the rush well, using his skating, size, and length to shut down rush opportunities early. There's a lot of upside here but he's very early in his development and whoever drafts him will need to be patient with him. His decision making is spotty, and he lacks any high-end offensive awareness. While big he needs to fill out his frame to be a more effective defender as well. The big thing is consistency, Wang shows flashes of brilliance, but it'll take time for him to put all the tools together to be an effective NHL defencemen. If a team is patient and works with the player the sky is the limit however, and there is a chance for him to have a long career in the NHL.

**32) Alex Huang Position: D – Shoots: Right – Height: 6'0 – Weight 170 lbs**

**Nationality: Canadian – Team: Chicoutimi Saguenéens**

**Current year stats: 64 GP, 7 G, 33 A**

**Strengths:** Skating, stickhandling, shot, offensive awareness, passing, defensive stick

**Weaknesses:** compete, strength, defensive positioning

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Statistics, Height, Weight Taken Via [eliteprospects.com](http://eliteprospects.com)

**Bio:** Huang is smooth skating offensive defenseman that underwhelmed production wise this season but still showed off enough tools that make him as a good bet in this year's draft. He's an elite skater, with good foot speed and great mobility that makes him a deceptive puck carrier and dangerous on the rush. He's got great hands and playmaking ability and can lead transition opportunities the other way for his team. He also has a good release and can beat goalies clean when given the opportunity. I would like to see him engage more in the offensive zone as he tends to hang back and not attack downhill at a high enough rate. He has the skillset to really do some damage offensively if he would just engage a little more. Defensively his skating and stick work are pretty sound and on the rush he's pretty effective at closing out attacking players and forcing turnovers. He struggles in puck battles though and typically gets outmuscled due to his lack of strength. He also is inconsistent when it comes to compete, often times coasting into the corners when he could engage in a puck battle and make it harder on opposing forwards. He really struggles on sustained pressure in the defensive zone and can get caught puck watching, often times leaving open players in dangerous areas. Despite the issues though I do think these are areas he can improve on. Provided he does improve he has some dynamic skill that could make an effective top 4 defenseman with the offensive ability to quarterback a powerplay.