

# Future NHL Drafts Preview

## 2014 Mock Draft – Potential Surprisers

### **Nikita Liamkin – Defenseman – Chicoutimi (QMJHL)**

Defenseman had a fairly good year in the QMJHL, but improved considerably at the U18's, scoring five points in five games. The big defenseman moves well for his size, has puck skills and vision, plus decent hands. Likely to be a mid-round selection.

### **Markus Pettersson, Defenseman – Skellefteå – SuperElit**

Pettersson is a big defenseman who has yet to hit the gym, though. Has good vision and makes smart passes in the offensive zone. Defensive game needs improvement, mainly due to lack of physique. This doesn't help him in battles. Has some great upside as a puck moving defenseman, however. Likely a second or third round pick.

### **Oskar Lindblom - Left Wing – Linköping – SuperElit**

Lindblom played some decent hockey at the U18 World Championships. Big and strong, Lindblom is tough to knock off the puck and has a good shot with strong velocity. He's a strong skater, but probably doesn't have the best offensive skills. However, he could become a solid NHLer with his hard working style.

## 2014 Mock Draft - TOP 10

1. Florida Panthers - Aaron Ekblad (D, Barrie Colts, OHL)
2. Buffalo Sabres – Sam Reinhart (C, Kootenay Ice, WHL)
3. Edmonton Oilers – Leon Draisaitl (LW, Prince Albert Raiders, WHL)
4. Calgary Flames – Sam Bennett (C/LW, Kingston Frontenacs, OHL)
5. NY Islanders – Michael Dal Colle (LW, Oshawa Generals, OHL)
6. Vancouver Canucks – Jake Virtanen (RW, Calgary Hitmen, WHL)
7. Carolina Hurricanes – Nikolaj Ehlers (W, Halifax Mooseh., QMJHL)
8. Toronto Maple Leafs – Nicholas Richie (W, Peterborough Petes, OHL)
9. Winnipeg Jets – William Nylander (C/RW, MODO, SHL)
10. Anaheim Ducks – Jared McCann (C, Sault, Ste. Marie, OHL)

# 2015 NHL Entry Draft - TOP 10

1. Connor McDavid (Center, Erie Otters, OHL)
2. Jack Eichel (Center, USNTDP, USHL)
3. Noah Hanifin (Defenseman, USNTDP, USHL)
4. Colin White (Defenseman, USNTDP, USHL)
5. Oliver Kylington (Defenseman, Färjestad, SHL)
6. Evgeni Svechnikov (Left Wing, Bars Kazan, MHL)
7. Mitchell Marner (Center, London Knights, OHL)
8. Pavel Zacha (Left Wing, Bili Tygli Liberec, Extraleague)
9. Dylan Strome (Center, Erie Otters, OHL)
10. Jeremy Roy (Defenseman, Sherbrooke Phoenix, QMJHL)

# 2016 NHL Entry Draft Scouting Reports

## **Konstantin Chernyuk**

Defenseman – Wilkes/Barre Scran Knights U16 (AYHL)

Height 6'3" – Weight 172 lbs

DOB: February 13, 1998

Chernyuk is a big defenseman with great puck moving abilities and skating. He played for Silver Lions at World Selects in 2013 and stood out as one of the best defensemen. Excellent agility, speed and keeps his head up so he has a lot of options with the puck. Chernyuk also has a really hard shot with a strong release. Passing accuracy is very good. A very solid two-way defenseman who has made a college commitment to Maine for the 2017-18 season. He's not the most physical player, though, but he can hit hard once in a while. Once he hits the gym, he will be even stronger in all three zones.

## **Max Jones**

Left Wing/Center – Honeybaked U18 (HPhL U18)

Height 6'2" – Weight 190 lbs

DOB: February 17, 1998

Jones has pro size and plays a physical style of hockey, but he also has lots of skill and skates well. He makes short, accurate passes and he understands the game very well at both ends of the ice. A quick decision maker and also an excellent faceoff man. Jones will play in the USHL next season as a member of the United States program. He was also drafted in the first round of the 2014 OHL Draft by London Knights.

## **Liam Murphy**

Center – Avon Old Farms (USHS)

Height 6'0" – Weight 198 lbs

DOB: January 20, 1998

Murphy is a very good prospect who could eventually develop into an efficient two-way player. He plays a very straight forward game, driving towards the net when he has that opportunity. He has a very good wrist shot with a good release. Doesn't forget his defensive duties and is solid without the puck. Murphy was drafted in the QMJHL and USHL drafts this year. He is committed to the University of Connecticut for 2016.

## **Christopher Grando**

Left Wing – Long Island Gulls (AYHL U16)

Height 5'8" – Weight 146 lbs

DOB: August 22, 1998

Grando scored 52 points in 26 games for Long Island Gulls in the AYHL U16 league. He's a very agile and strong skater who creates havoc on the forecheck with his active playing. He has fairly good puck skills, but likely projects to be an energy player at the higher levels. Still, he does have some projectable offensive skills. Grando was drafted by the Green Bay Gamblers in the USHL Futures Draft this year.

## **2016 NHL Draft TOP 15**

1. Jakob Chychrun (Defenseman, Toronto Jr. Canadiens, GTMMHL)
2. Patrik Laine (Left Wing, Tappara, U20)
3. Luke Kirwan (Left Wing, UNTDP, USHL)
4. Logan Brown (Center, Indiana Jr. Ice, Midget)
5. Tyler Benson (Left Wing, Pursuit of Excellence U18 Prep)
6. Jesse Puljujärvi (Right Wing, Kärpät, U20)
7. Luke Green (Defenseman, Newbridge, NSMMHL)
8. Adam Mascherin (Center, Vaughan Kings, GTMMHL)
9. Chad Krys (Defenseman, New Jersey Rockets U19, Midget)
10. Auston Matthews (Right Wing, USNTDP, USHL)
11. Dante Fabbro (Defenseman, Vancouver NW Giants, BCMML)
12. Victor Mete (Defenseman, Toronto Jr. Canadiens, GTMMHL)
13. Max Jones (Left Wing/Center, Honeybaked U18, HPHL U18)
14. Dmitry Sokolov (Left Wing, Avangard Omsk juniors)
15. Kale Clague (Defenseman, Lloydminster Bobcats, AMHL)

**Notes:** Finland has two elite players for this draft, Patrik Laine and Jesse Puljujärvi. USA also has some very good prospects in the TOP-15 with power forwards Luke Kirwan and Logan Brown, as well as Auston Matthews, Max Jones and Chad Krys. Canada is strong as usually, there are seven Canadians in this ranking. Dmitry Sokolov from Avangard Omsk is an elite offensive talent who has dominated within his own age-group and could play in the MHL junior league already next season. Jakob Chychrun could be a franchise defenseman in the NHL and step in right after the draft.

# 2017 NHL Entry Draft Scouting Reports

## **Kristian Vesalainen**

Right Wing - HIFK (U16)

Height 6'2" – Weight 180 lbs

DOB: June 1, 1999

Vesalainen might be the most intriguing 1999 born Finnish prospect right now. He has really made a name for himself as a hard-working, skilled wing that can finish plays with ease. An excellent skater for his size, Vesalainen isn't afraid to hit and play the game hard, driving towards the net. He has a very quick wrist shot and solid puck skills. He's a pretty responsible player defensively as well, he doesn't take shortcuts in his own defensive end. This wing has so much skill that he'll be an outstanding player in a few years. He's a pretty complete player right now and has elite offensive skills. I could see him as a TOP-15 player in the 2017 NHL Draft when all is said and done.

Some other interesting Finnish prospects for this draft include defensemen Urho Vaakanainen (Blues U18), Olli Kaskinen and Aleksi Anttalainen (both TPS U16), as well as forward Eeli Tolvanen (Blues U16) and goalie Daniel Lebedeff (HIFK U16). Vaakanainen, Kaskinen and Anttalainen are elite offensive defensemen with very good skating, so there's a lot to like. Tolvanen has an outstanding shot for his age, and has the vision to set up plays as well. Lebedeff is a goalie I had a fairly limited viewing of, but I felt that he could become a very good one. He has decent size at 6-0", very good overall mobility and a solid glove hand.