



NHL TEAM RANKINGS

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The Goalie Guild is proud to publish the second of three preview releases for our all-new **NHL Team Rankings**. As you know, this premium feature and monthly report provides you with our thoughts on every NHL team's goaltending depth. For this release, we have now ranked the Top-15 teams.

As you can see, the Sharks, Bruins, Wild, Lightning, Maple Leafs, Flames, Sabres, Ducks, Stars and Islanders complete the Top-15. It's also interesting to note that five of the top six teams have a "two-goalie-coach" system. Also be sure to check out some of the changes in the coaching landscape, as the Flames hired Clint Malarchuk to replace Jamie McLennan, and then the Capitals hired Olaf Kolzig to work alongside Dave Prior as an assistant.

As far as movement is concerned, the Panthers experienced a significant slide when they lost Tomas Vokoun to free agency and replaced him with Jose Theodore. Also, be sure to visit our website to get a better understanding of how we structure and compile these rankings.

Please keep in mind that this is a premium feature, so only the Top-5 teams will be available for Basic Members. Premium Members gain access to the full ranking via our Monthly Review digital journal, but through the summer, all premium features are available to the public as previews. ~Justin Goldman

RK	TEAM	COACHES	UPDATE	LM	+/-
1	NASHVILLE	Mitch Korn Ben Vanderklok	Even though the Predators lost their top-flight #3 goalie in Mark Dekanich, they had already replaced him by drafting the 6-foot-5 Magnus Hellberg. The first goalie selected in the 2011 NHL Entry Draft, Magnus' surprising second-half surge for Almtuna in the Allsvenskan clearly paid off. Now that he's set to play for Frolunda in the Elitserien, Hellberg will make the jump to the top Swedish league and most likely spend two full seasons there before heading over to North America. At his size, and with Mitch Korn acting as one of the best guides when it comes to developing lanky European prospects, the rich got richer and ultimately took a step forward in their long-term goaltending depth.	1	0
2	VANCOUVER	Rolie Melanson	Just like Nashville, the Canucks were another organization that moved some pieces in July, but still got stronger. They did this by drafting Victoriaville's David Honzik, a 6-foot-3 Czech native that had a very strong QMJHL playoff run as a rookie. Although he's raw-skilled, he was one of three sleeper picks we listed for the NHL Entry Draft. In their AHL system, Vancouver bid farewell to Tyler Weiman, but replaced him with Matt Climie, who holds a bit more value in our eyes as a long-term prospect. As such, the Canucks slightly improved their Top-4 depth by bringing in a more talented supporter for Eddie Lack and then by adding a newly-drafted prospect to their already very strong system.	2	0
3	LOS ANGELES	Bill Ranford Kim Dillabaugh	What makes the Los Angeles Kings so special in goal is their philosophy of quality over quantity. While most teams have seven or eight signed prospects and draft picks, the Kings added just their sixth goalie to the system when they drafted Christopher Gibson from Chicoutimi (QMJHL). They're also planning on adding to their pro depth by having J-F Berube play for the Ontario Reign (ECHL) this season. Martin Jones, who really stood out and impressed coach Terry Murray during their development camp, will again be paired with Jeff Zatkoff in Manchester. And you simply can't deny the strength, regardless of their experience, of the stellar Jon Quick and Jon Bernier tandem in LA.	4	1
4	WASHINGTON	Dave Prior Olaf Kolzig	George McPhee flexed his muscles in July by making a few moves to keep Washington's goalie depth in the Top-5. Although he lost a tremendous asset in Semyon Varlamov, negotiations were going nowhere, so trading him for two draft picks was a solid return. Then he found a way to acquire Tomas Vokoun for only \$1.5 million, which was a great trade-off in terms of their NHL tandem. At the AHL level, the team stays strong with Braden Holtby and Dany Sabourin. They parted ways with Jared DeMichiel and Todd Ford, but it allows Philipp Grubauer to turn pro. Olaf Kolzig was also hired to assist Dave Prior, and then the Caps also drafted the 17-year-old Norwegian Steffen Soberg.	3	-1
5	NY ISLANDERS	Sudsie Maharaj Mike Dunham	Whenever an NHL team has a former goalie at the GM position, you have to expect one of their major strengths will be between the pipes. This is exactly the case for Garth Snow and his tandem of Sudsie Maharaj and Mike Dunham, as they've been working hard to compensate for Rick DiPietro's debilitating contract. With Evgeni Nabokov's rights also still controlled by NYI, they have quite a bounty of top-flight talent. At Montoya's impressive stretch in the second half last season provides more stability as well. Then the highly-touted tandem of Kevin Poulin and Mikko Koskinen will battle each other for starts, while the solid Swedish prospect Anders Nilsson also continues to improve.	X	X

RK	TEAM	COACH	UPDATE	LM	+/-
6	SAN JOSE	Wayne Thomas Corey Schwab	Another club that benefits from having two goalie coaches, the Sharks keep their cupboard stocked. Just when everyone thought Thomas Greiss had fallen out of favor in SJ after a very rough season in Sweden, Doug Wilson elected to re-sign the German native to a new two-year contract. Combined with Antti Niemi and Antero Niittymaki, San Jose has three legit NHL goalies leading the way. Combine that with top-ranked prospect Alex Stalock and budding Finnish prospect Harri Sateri in Worcester, the depth continues to be impressive. They also have a legitimate future NHLer in J.P. Anderson, who was vital to Mississauga's success at the 2011 Memorial Cup Tournament.	X	X
7	BOSTON	Bob Essensa	Not only does Boston have one of the finest NHL tandems in Vezina and Conn Smythe Trophy winner Tim Thomas, and then the elite-skilled and future #1 Tuukka Rask, but they also have an NHL-ready #3 goalie in Anton Khudobin, who re-signed with the Bruins for two years. This trifecta is a formidable force in the NHL and is guided by one of the more intelligent and progressive goalie coaches in Bob Essensa. Michael Hutchinson continues to fly under the radar as Boston's #4 goalie, while Adam Courchaine and Zane Gothberg are prospects worth developing. The addition of Norway's Lars Volden is another reason to rank the Bruins in the Top-10. His style is well-suited for North America.	X	X
8	CALGARY	Clint Malarchuk	Just like the Kings, Calgary is a club that relies on quality over quantity. By re-signing Henrik Karlsson to a new two-year, one-way deal, the Flames also improved Miikka Kiprusoff's value because he'll get ample rest and have more energy when they need him most - in the final two months of the season. Karlsson's new contract does put Leland Irving in a rough situation, but with Joni Ortio ready to begin his AHL career, the Heat now have a very skilled tandem. The Flames also parted ways with Matt Keetley and J.P. Lamoureux, but replaced them by drafting Laurent Brossoit. That precluded an upgrade in the goalie coach department, as Clint Malarchuk has now replaced Jamie McLennan.	X	X
9	TAMPA BAY	Frantz Jean	Even though Tampa Bay lost an NHL-ready prospect in Cedrick Desjardins to free agency, they made an intelligent move by signing Mathieu Garon to a new two-year contract. They also re-signed the ageless wonder Dwayne Roloson, signed Pat Nagle and drafted Adam Wilcox over the summer. So behind one of the most experienced tandems in the NHL, Tampa's depth chart is a solid combination of older and younger talent. The loss of Desjardins does provide both Dustin Tokarski and Jaroslav Janus with more stability this season, as they will both look to push each other at the AHL level. Don't forget they can also call on former first-round draft pick Riku Helenius if they need more support.	X	X
10	TORONTO	Francois Allaire	Over the last year, no team has improved their goaltending depth more than Toronto. What makes the rise so significant was the addition of Francois Allaire. By bringing him in, the Leafs became the favorite destination for hundreds of his pupils all over the world. This was the case with Jonas Gustavsson, then with Jussi Rynnäs, and now with their newest Swedish prospect, Mark Owuya. Tack on the recently drafted Garret Sparks and you have a system overflowing with big blocking goalies. James Reimer and Gustavsson are not the most reliable NHL tandem, but their depth at the AHL level with Ben Scrivens and Rynnäs, plus Allaire's guidance, puts Toronto nicely in the Top-10.	X	X
11	ANAHEIM	Pete Peeters Eli Wilson	Even though Anaheim was put in a major bind due to Jonas Hiller's bout with vertigo, the organization handled it in fine fashion. By acquiring Dan Ellis and then shedding Curtis McElhinney, they instantly injected more skill and reliability into the mix. Then they signed Ray Emery at the perfect time, which almost single-handedly put the Ducks in the playoffs. Although Emery couldn't get Anaheim out of the first round of the playoffs, it was an admirable push by a Masterton Trophy finalist. Anaheim has already signed Iiro Tarkki from the SM-liiga, Jeff Deslauriers from free-agency, and drafted the top-ranked domestic goalie, John Gibson this summer. Oh, and don't forget about Igor Bobkov, either.	X	X
12	BUFFALO	Jim Corsi	The Sabres were one of a handful of teams that made a few moves to really boosted their goaltending depth for the upcoming season. It started with the drafting of Nathan Lieuwen, continued with the signing of AHL stand-out Drew MacIntyre, then the retiring of Patrick Lalime, and then concluded on July 21 with the announcement that they had signed RFA Jhonas Enroth to a new multi-year deal. So with Ryan Miller now being pushed by a solid NHL-ready prospect, he should be way more rested when it comes time to catch fire for this season's playoff push. Furthermore, Buffalo doesn't miss a step by graduating Enroth either, as MacIntyre will create a terrific AHL tandem with David Leggio.	X	X
13	MINNESOTA	Bob Mason	If there was a philosophy to the Wild's goalie development, it would be a "slow and steady" influx of talent. Niklas Backstrom is ready to handle another heavy workload, while the re-signed Josh Harding is totally focused on staying healthy. Dennis Endras is also in the mix, although it's unclear where he will play. Looking at Minnesota's AHL setup, you have Matt Hackett preparing to follow up a phenomenal rookie season, then the chance for recently-signed Darcy Kuemper to turn pro and earn an AHL gig as well. So with plenty of options and quality prospects in Kuemper, Hackett and Johan Gustafsson, Minny also added to their depth by drafting Loomis-Chaffee's Stephen Michalek.	X	X
14	DALLAS	Mike Valley	Although the Stars are not loaded with an abundant amount of elite talent, they have terrific guidance from one of the youngest and most underrated NHL goalie coaches in Mike Valley. Behind his intimate knowledge of the mental toughness aspect of the position, he has turned Kari Lehtonen's durability around and made Andrew Raycroft a little more consistent and competitive. Furthermore, he really helped develop Richard Bachman into a top-flight AHL prospect, then guided Tyler Beskorowany from a solid ECHL goalie to a kid ready to compete in the AHL this season. He's also an influential force behind one of the most exciting young prospects out there in US-born Jack Campbell.	X	X
15	FLORIDA	Robb Tallas	With the loss of long-time elite starter Tomas Vokoun, the Panthers drop ten spots in our second release. Florida will now have to rely on the services of a true tandem with Jose Theodore and Scott Clemmensen, along with an improved defense, to make the playoffs. This situation does allow our top-ranked prospect Jacob Markstrom to get the ample AHL development he needs this season, and both Tyler Plante and Marc Cheverie have decent NHL upside as well. Further down their chart, you have a very solid prospect in Sam Brittain, but he suffered a nasty ACL tear during the Team Canada Program of Excellence goalie camp in June. He's hoping to return to DU sometime in early-2012.	5	-10

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