



NHL TEAM RANKINGS

Volume I - Release III - September 2011 - Copyright The Goalie Guild

The Goalie Guild is proud to publish the final "preview" release of our all-new **NHL Team Rankings**. As you know, this premium feature provides you with our thoughts on every NHL team's goaltending depth from a development standpoint. To close out the summer, we've now ranked all 30 NHL teams.

As you can see, the Top-5 teams remain intact, except for the Islanders, who drop a few spots due to the uncertainty surrounding their potential three-headed monster (Nabokov, DiPietro, Montoya). Boston takes over that fifth spot, as their combination of Tim Thomas and Tuukka Rask continues to strengthen as time goes on. They have also provided an opportunity for former Caps prospect Jared DeMichiel, as he is attending their training camp.

The only other change that took place in the Top-15 was Chicago taking the 15th spot from Florida and the Penguins taking the 13th spot from Minnesota. The Blackhawks made a very keen move by inviting Ray Emery to try out.

Please understand that this ranking is comprised of four individual rankings, along with our own personal thoughts and opinions. This is not an official ranking by any means, so your results will look different. This is a personal project to help us monitor NHL goaltending development, but we publish it for readers in order to give you a glimpse of how we work. ~Justin Goldman

UPDATED THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1, 2011

RK	TEAM	COACHES	UPDATE	LM	+/-
1	NASHVILLE	Mitch Korn Ben Vanderklok	With camp just two weeks away, the beasts known as Rinne and Lindback are ready to lurk over the Western Conference once again. Mitch Korn had a successful summer of Korn Camps and also had a chance to spend some time with Magnus Hellberg. Magnus then made headlines in late-August when he fired a puck into the stands out of frustration and hit a spectator. Hellberg went to apologize, but the fans would have none of it. Rocky start for Hellberg aside, the spotlight now falls on Jeremy Smith. Can he step up and duplicate the AHL success he had last season? The big guys in Nashville won't be around forever, so can he become an NHL-ready prospect like Mark Dekanich has done?	1	0
2	VANCOUVER	Rolie Melanson	I'm dubbing this season as the official Cory Schneider Showcase for Vancouver. With Roberto Luongo only playing 60 games last year, the Stanley Cup Finals recipe was discovered. So the odds are high that Schneider gets into at close to 30 games this season. The more I think about it, the more I consider the fact that Cory simply may not play a full season with the Canucks. He could get traded before the deadline. Lending a hand to my belief that Schneider could be moved this season is the acquisition of Matt Climie, a goalie who has plenty of AHL experience, but if needed, could back up Luongo while Eddie Lack continues to develop by playing most of the games in the AHL.	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.	3	0
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.	4	0
5	BOSTON	Bob Essensa	Because Boston has clear-cut roles for every goalie in their system, they've taken over the 5th overall spot in this month's rankings. This trait sets them apart from both the Sharks and the Islanders, who almost have too much talent to go around. I can also argue that the combination of Tim Thomas and Tuukka Rask is one of the best in the NHL. But in San Jose, Antero Niittymaki and Antti Niemi both struggled at different parts of the season, while the Islanders are just praying they can get at least half of a healthy season out of Rick DiPietro. Anton Khudobin as the true #3 and Michael Hutchinson now establishing himself as the clear-cut #4 makes them a solid veteran-rookie tandem in the AHL.	7	2



RK	TEAM	COACH	UPDATE	LM	+/-
6	SAN JOSE	Wayne Thomas Corey Schwab	Unfortunate news popped up in August when the seriousness of Alex Stalock's leg injury was revealed. His return date was projected to be in February, but he may not play at all this season. It's a major blow to his development with the Sharks, as he no longer has a chance to follow up on his frustrating sophomore AHL season. But there's no denying the Sharks were dealing with excess talent at the time. Niemi. Niittymaki. Stalock. Sateri. Sexsmith. Heemskerk. Anderson. But now it could be Thomas Greiss that gets his shot at reclaiming an AHL starter's role. Also, how has Sateri improved over the summer, and how his AHL games late last season prepares him for this season?	6	0
7	CALGARY	Clint Malarchuk Jordan Sigalet	Any NHL organization that adds a second goalie coach is worthy of moving up. This rings true with the Flames, as General Manager Jay Feaster made a brilliant decision to hire Jordan Sigalet to work with the goalies in Abbotsford. Sigalet's story is an inspirational one, as he has been battling Multiple Sclerosis (MS) for a number of years, but was still able to play at a really high level. Now retired and coaching, he makes a great mentor and friend for both Leland Irving and Joni Ortio. Overall, the addition of Sigalet makes the Flames one of the nicest systems in the NHL right now. The combination of Miikka Kiprusoff and Henrik Karlsson, if consistent, is capable of sheer brilliance.	8	1
8	NY ISLANDERS	Sudsie Maharaj Mike Dunham	As much as I admire the Islanders and General Manager Garth Snow for the opportunities they provide a number of quality prospects, something has to give with their current situation. Rick DiPietro must get every chance possible to prove he can be a durable goalie, but Al Montoya has been rewarded with a new contract and a chance to be the teams' backup. And now that Evgeni Nabokov will be at training camp, the Islanders have a big decision to make, and they'll want to make it sooner rather than later. Should they keep Nabokov on board, knowing he's a bargain and that he'll compensate for the potential loss of DiPietro? Or do they try to trade him as soon as possible?	5	-3
9	TAMPA BAY	Frantz Jean	Aside from the Devils, no NHL team has a more reliable veteran tandem than Tampa Bay. Dwayne Roloson will continue to prove his critics wrong, while Mathieu Garon will continue to be one of the best fits for a steady backup. Together, these former Oilers teammates should bring much more poise, consistency and leadership to the crease and the locker room compared to last season's tandem of Dan Ellis and Mike Smith. In Norfolk, the spotlight is on Dustin Tokarski, who has to push himself to play his best all season long. This puts Jaroslav Janus in the AHL for good, while Pat Nagle could start off in the very appropriate ECHL. Either way, Tampa is sitting pretty heading into camp.	9	0
10	ANAHEIM	Pete Peeters	The more I think about it, the stronger I feel that Pete Peeters is on a mission to finish what he started with Jeff Deslauriers in Edmonton. A lanky, rangy, quick-moving goalie that catches with his right hand, JDD never had much help while playing for the Oilers. Passed over in favor of Devan Dubnyk last year, JDD went down to the AHL and struggled in the first round of the playoffs, making it easy for the Oilers to let him walk on July 1. Now JDD is soaking in the good fortunes, as his former coach may have helped him earn a new 2-year deal with the Ducks. But with Jonas Hiller finally healthy, if JDD wants to repeat what Ray Emery pulled last year, he must first outplay Iiro Tarkki in Syracuse.	11	1
11	TORONTO	Francois Allaire	If there's one hole in Toronto's goaltending armor, it would be inexperience at the NHL and AHL level. Jonas Gustavsson and James Reimer certainly have the skills to get the job done, but they are yet to prove they can put together a full season of consistent play. Reimer's rookie season was one to remember, and that certainly bodes well for his odds this year. But what happens when things start heading south? Will either of these guys have the experience, leadership and mental toughness to not only turn their own game around, but the fortunes of the entire team? Or will the Leafs be calling on the services of either Jussi Rynnäs or Ben Scrivens? Either way, they lack a veteran presence.	10	-1
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.	12	0
13	PITTSBURGH	Gilles Meloche Mike Bales	The third team to add a second goalie coach over the last month, Pittsburgh enters this ranking at the 16th spot. With an elite starter in Marc-Andre Fleury and a perfect "reliable backup" veteran in Brent Johnson, the club has a terrific tandem that can produce at any time. At the AHL level, Brad Thiessen is one of the brightest young stars in the league, and he'll be backed up by former Flyers prospect Scott Munroe. Patrick Killeen is another exciting prospect biding his time in the ECHL and the club also controls Swedish prospect Mattias Modig and Russian prospect Alex Pechurskiy. With two goalie coaches refining and improving this crew, the Penguins are totally solid top to bottom.	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.	14	0
15	BLACKHAWKS	Stephane Waite Andrew Allen	Just like Calgary, Chicago also hired a second goalie coach last month, adding Andrew Allen to the Rockford coaching staff. Because of this, I feel that Chicago has one of the better programs in the NHL. Corey Crawford may lack NHL experience, but he's still very mature and has a great work ethic. That could be matched, however, by Ray Emery. But he'll have to wrestle away the job from Alex Salak, who is one of the most skilled European goalies in North America right now. Their summer also included the adding of Johan Mattsson, a big-bodied Swedish prospect, then re-upping Alec Richards. Add Kent Simpson and Mac Carruth into the mix and you have quite the solid system.	X	X

NHL TEAM RANKINGS



RK	TEAM	COACH	UPDATE	LM	+/-
16	CAROLINA	Tom Barrasso	In Carolina, Cam Ward is king of the crease. He deserves and demands at least 65 starts per season, which doesn't leave a lot of opportunity for everyone else in the system. The addition of Brian Boucher as the backup brings a more reliable guy coming off the bench, but that has forced Justin Peters to return to the AHL, which a major step back for his overall development. The club has a potential stud in Mike Murphy, and they also really excelled in the NHL Entry Draft when they snagged a total sleeper in Matt Mahalak. Frederik Anderson also makes an excellent sleeper prospect, as he dominated last season in Denmark and is now playing in the Elitserien.	X	X
17	MINNESOTA	Bob Mason	Because the Wild have so much money invested in Niklas Backstrom this year, the pressure is on for him to put together one heck of a bounce-back season. He certainly wasn't "terrible" last year, but he lacked consistency and struggled to play at 100% and stay healthy when the team needed him most. But the spotlight for this season is definitely shared with Josh Harding, who still has the potential to shine if he can stay healthy. Legitimate injury concerns aside, the future is very bright with Matt Hackett and Darcy Kuemper, both of which will battle a complete wildcard this season in German native Dennis Endras. Is it possible that he could be this season's Sergei Bobrovsky?	13	-4
18	ST. LOUIS	Corey Hirsch	The Goalie Guild would like to start off by congratulating Corey Hirsch, who was promoted to a "full-time" goalie coach for the Blues in late-August. This organization clearly has a real bright future with the likes of Ben Bishop, Jake Allen and now newly-drafted Jordan Binnington, but at the NHL and AHL level, they currently lack a true veteran presence. Jaroslav Halak is coming off a frustrating first season in St. Louis, and their only hope at the backup spot is either Brian Elliott or Bishop. So although the club has plenty of depth, opportunity and skill, they lack a true veteran presence in both the NHL and AHL level, and that is simply risky business in today's NHL.	X	X
19	NY RANGERS	Benoit Allaire	Similar to the Hurricanes, the Rangers live and die by Henrik Lundqvist's sword. Fortunately for them, he's one of the world's finest and most durable goaltenders. The team will certainly improve around him with the addition of Brad Richards, but how that equates to overall success remains to be seen. Martin Biron makes a great fit as a backup, but needs to stay healthy and contribute when he gets a rare start. At the AHL level, expectations are high for Chad Johnson to do what Jacob Markstrom and Richard Bachman are out to do - prove they're NHL-ready by season's end. Although I see very little upside with Scott Stajcer, the sky is the limit for the towering Jason Missiaen.	X	X
20	DETROIT	Jim Bedard Chris Osgood	When it comes to ranking Detroit's goaltending system, there's one thing you must understand. They don't need elite talent and they don't need an overabundance of prospects, either. They simply need goalies that excel in the mental toughness department. In that regard, when compared to the other 29 NHL teams, Detroit will always be ranked lower than it seems. Jimmy Howard is not elite, nor is Ty Conklin, nor is Joey MacDonald or Jordan Pearce or Thomas McCollum. But they all make decent fits for the type of goalie Detroit needs to be successful. By understanding this, you can fully understand how valuable it is to have added recently retired Chris Osgood to the goalie coaching staff.	X	X
21	COLUMBUS	Ian Clark	At first glance, pundits will cringe when seeing Columbus has an NHL tandem comprised of Steve Mason and Mark Dekanich. But when you support it with a new full-time goalie coach in Ian Clark, and a formidable #3 in Curtis Sanford, the pressure for both NHL goalies is not as extreme as it may seem. Mason, for all intents and purposes, now has his back against the wall. He must get over his inconsistency issues and be prepared for what must be a "bounce-back" season. Posting a GAA over 3.00 two years in a row is unacceptable when considering his talent. Dekanich is going to surprise a lot of people in camp, and so will Allen York, Mathieu Corbeil-Theriault and Swede Anton Forsberg.	X	X
22	PHILADELPHIA	Jeff Reese	Trying to evaluate and rank the Flyers' goaltending system of development is like trying to create order out of chaos. It's one of the toughest reads to make because they're simply all over the place. This is where quantity becomes an issue. They had so many good prospects last season that one or two were bound to be cut loose, and that's exactly what happened with Nicola Ripoli, Brian Stewart and Joacim Eriksson. If not for the acquisition of Ilya Bryzgalov, the Flyers would be in the bottom five of this ranking. Signing Niko Hovinen is a great move as well, but what can we expect out of him long-term when you see that Bryzgalov is signed for nine seasons? This team simply lacks strategy.	X	X
23	NEW JERSEY	Chris Terreri Jacques Caron	Martin Brodeur is a legend, a future Hall of Famer, a leader and a perfect teammate. But he's also in the twilight years of his career, so the time is now for the Devils to begin preparing for the future. They have taken baby steps in this process by recently signing Maxime Clermont, then bringing Keith Kinkaid into the mix. But I feel that a few years have been wasted with the futile efforts of developing the inconsistent Jeff Frazee. Although he does have some potential as an NHL backup, I don't see him as the real answer. Can the Devils compensate for Brodeur's inevitable retirement internally? Or will they be forced to sign another legit NHL starter to a long-term deal instead?	X	X
24	FLORIDA	Robb Tallas	No NHL goalie coach is under more pressure to get results out of his two goalies than Robb Tallas. Similar to the Coyotes losing Bryzgalov and replacing him with a lesser talent, the Panthers also lost an elite starter in Tomas Vokoun and replaced him with Jose Theodore. Lacking elite talent on a young Panthers team will play a significant role in how the team competes defensively on a nightly basis, but at least they have some veteran leadership and composure with Theodore and Scott Clemmensen. Where Florida really shines, however, is with the bright future of Jacob Markstrom, who must stay healthy and play well all season if he wants to be NHL ready next year.	X	X
25	PHOENIX	Sean Burke	There's no denying the loss of skill when comparing Ilya Bryzgalov to Mike Smith. It's simply an elite level of talent you can't replace. And while we personally feel Smith is going to thrive in his new role, there's still tons of uncertainty surrounding Coyotes goaltending. In the AHL, another loss of quality talent in Matt Cimie and Al Montoya has been replaced by a lesser-skilled tandem of Curtis McElhinney and Justin Pogge. McElhinney makes a solid #3, but still lacks the ability to play consistently at the NHL level. Pogge has fallen hard from grace since leaving the Leafs organization, but the club's future is extremely bright with the tandem of Mark Visentin and Louis Domingue.	X	X

NHL TEAM RANKINGS



RK	TEAM	COACH	UPDATE	LM	+/-
26	MONTREAL	Pierre Groulx	Let's give credit where credit is due. Carey Price played more games at a more consistent level and under more pressure than any other NHL goalie last year. Aside from a few nights off, he made Alex Auld a worthless commodity. New Habs backup Peter Budaj is by no means worthless, as he makes a great fit for the role and is an excellent teammate. Where I feel the club really struggles as a whole is in the AHL and beyond, where Drew MacIntyre was allowed to walk, but was replaced by an inconsistent Nathan Lawson. There's lots of potential with the hidden gem Peter Delmas, but it's unclear if he can step into a full-time AHL role. The same could also be said for Robert Mayer.	X	X
27	WINNIPEG	Wade Flaherty	What a crazy year for the Atlanta Thrashers. It's hard to believe they no longer exist. So how am I to rank a non-existent organization? I don't. I essentially consider them as starting over from scratch. It's a clean slate for everyone, top to bottom. The spotlight is on Chris Mason, who is being considered a hometown player. The former WHL netminder will be very comfortable in his surroundings, which I believe makes him one of the best sleepers of the year. Ondrej Pavelec is still regarded as an elite talent, but has serious adjustments to make. And what's with the random David Aebischer tryout? Are they really that desperate? What does it say about their trust in Peter Mannino and Ed Pasquale?	X	X
28	EDMONTON	Frederic Chabot	As long as Edmonton continues to rely on Nikolai Khabibulin to win games, I will continue to rank them lower than what they truly deserve. Devan Dubnyk is coming off a strong finish to his rookie season and could be a sleeper this year, but I'm not the biggest fan of Olivier Roy upside, especially compared to the surging Tyler Bunz. The Oilers only have Yann Danis and David LeNeveu at the AHL level, so the true promise lies at the bottom of the depth chart. That's where you'll find Samu Perhonen and Frans Tuohimaa, two Finnish goalies that mark a significant change in the culture of Oilers goalie development. They're the first goalie prospects from Finland since Jussi Markkanen.	X	X
29	OTTAWA	Rick Wamsley	I had no trouble determining where the Sens fit in comparison to other NHL teams, as their biggest weakness is glaring. They only have four goalies to work with right now; Craig Anderson, Alex Auld, Mike McKenna and prized Swedish prospect Robin Lehner. Last year, Lehner was almost over-exposed when the club had a run of injuries to Pascal Leclaire and Mike Brodeur. Fortunately, they stopped the bleeding by acquiring Anderson and McElhinney, but overall, their decision-making leaves me wondering about how their overall system works. Going back from the Ray Emery debacle to the firing of Eli Wilson (Jan. 13, 2010), the Senators have struggled with goalie development.	X	X
30	COLORADO	Kirk McLean	Due to first-hand experience, I can safely say that the Avalanche struggle more than any other NHL team at developing goalies. In the past three years, they have offered no opportunities for their top prospects like Tyler Weiman, Peter Delmas, Jason Bacashihua and Brandon Maxwell, while also letting them walk for nothing. They draft good talent, but it never evolves or progresses. There's no better proof of this than the inconsistent Avs career of the capable Peter Budaj. Most importantly, they still don't employ a full-time goalie coach, making it impossible for quality prospects like Calvin Pickard, Sami Aittokallio, Kieran Millan, Trevor Cann and Kent Patterson to evolve appropriately.	X	X

TEAM GOALIE STATISTICS

2011-12 SEASON

2010-11 GAA

RK	TEAM	GAA	GA	SA
1	VAN	2.20	180	2,470
2	BOS	2.30	189	2,682
3	NSH	2.32	190	2,510
4	WSH	2.33	191	2,375
5	NYR	2.38	195	2,410
6	PIT	2.39	196	2,352
7	LAK	2.39	196	2,288
8	MTL	2.51	206	2,538
9	NJD	2.52	207	2,152
10	SJS	2.54	208	2,369
11	PHI	2.63	216	2,471
12	CHI	2.68	220	2,354
13	PHX	2.68	220	2,673
14	FLA	2.71	222	2,609
15	DAL	2.76	226	2,504
16	MIN	2.78	228	2,625
17	BUF	2.78	228	2,514
18	STL	2.78	228	2,274
19	CGY	2.80	230	2,338
20	ANH	2.84	233	2,648
21	TBL	2.85	234	2,354
22	CAR	2.85	234	2,725
23	DET	2.89	237	2,514
24	TOR	2.99	245	2,540
25	OTT	2.99	245	2,559
26	CBJ	3.05	250	2,447
27	NYI	3.15	258	2,620
28	EDM	3.17	260	2,597
29	ATL	3.20	262	2,638
30	COL	3.50	287	2,609

2010-11 PK%

RK	TEAM	SALARY
1	WPG	\$2,600,000
2	WSH	\$2,650,000
3	LAK	\$2,775,000
4	DET	\$3,000,000
5	FLA	\$3,000,000
6	CBJ	\$3,175,000
7	PHX	\$3,200,000
8	TOR	\$3,600,000
9	OTT	\$3,750,000
10	COL	\$3,750,000
11	MTL	\$4,100,000
12	STL	\$4,100,000
13	TBL	\$4,300,000
14	DAL	\$4,300,000
15	EDM	\$4,550,000
16	NSH	\$4,738,000
17	SJS	\$5,200,000
18	NYI	\$5,671,000
19	ANH	\$6,000,000
20	PIT	\$6,100,000
21	NJD	\$6,450,000
22	BOS	\$6,500,000
23	MIN	\$6,750,000
24	CGY	\$6,850,000
25	BUF	\$6,875,000
26	CAR	\$7,200,000
27	VAN	\$7,616,000
28	NYR	\$7,675,000
29	CHI	\$9,500,000
30	PHI	\$10,900,000

2010-11 PK%

RK	TEAM	PK%	GA	TS
1	PIT	86.1	45	324
2	WSH	85.6	43	299
3	VAN	85.6	45	312
4	LAK	85.5	40	276
5	NSH	84.9	41	272
6	FLA	84.6	41	267
7	MTL	84.4	51	327
8	TBL	83.8	49	302
9	OTT	83.7	48	294
10	NYR	83.7	42	257
11	NJD	83.4	40	241
12	NYI	83.2	52	310
13	BUF	83.0	51	300
14	MIN	82.8	53	308
15	PHI	82.8	54	313
16	BOS	82.6	46	265
17	DET	82.3	53	300
18	STL	81.7	51	279
19	ANH	81.3	57	305
20	CAR	81.2	51	272
21	CGY	81.2	53	282
22	CBJ	80.2	62	314
23	DAL	80.1	55	277
24	SJS	79.6	56	274
25	CHI	79.2	53	255
26	PHX	78.4	64	296
27	ATL	77.5	64	285
28	TOR	77.4	62	275
29	EDM	77.0	74	321
30	COL	76.1	75	314