



The Olympics are approximately three months away. Team Canada's roster will be announced on December 31st. That gives Olympic hopefuls only six or seven more weeks to show what they can bring to help Canada recapture their 2002 form after a horrendous showing at the 2006 games in Turin, Italy. This is the final version that I will put together, and the theme for this roster is "duos." Instead of the prototypical scoring line/checking line/energy line format, I have put together four duos and then included four players that can rotate between the pairings depending on things like chemistry, health, and strategy.

Here are the previous Team Canada rosters that I put together:

From June 2008 – [click here.](#)

From February 2009 – [click here](#).

Here are the four forward duos:

1. Sidney Crosby – Rick Nash
2. Ryan Getzlaf – Corey Perry
3. Joe Thornton – Dany Heatley
4. Steven Stamkos – Martin St. Louis

Crosby and Nash have clicked in the past. They are arguably Canada's two most skilled forwards. Anyone could excel on the other wing – the obvious candidates are Jarome Iginla, Marty St. Louis, and Dany Heatley.

On the second line, I'm keeping the Ducks dynamic duo of **Getzlaf and Perry** together. Both are big, incredibly skilled, and aggressive. Both are also strong on the forecheck, which would open up some space for a sniper, perhaps a Jeff Carter or a Steven Stamkos? Both are natural centers, but are more finishers than playmakers. Getzlaf and Perry can both also finish as well but could just as easily play the role(s) of playmaker for a sniper on the line.

On the next line, I am sticking with the team theme, keeping San Jose's **Thornton and Heatley** together. Like the two ahead of them, both are big, incredibly skilled, but they are not as aggressive. Thornton has proven he can play that role in past international competitions, and Heatley is arguably Canada's most accomplished forward in the world right now. I think a forechecking presence on this line would work – someone who could retrieve loose pucks and let Thornton work his magic, while also opening up space for Heatley in the slot and around the net. Some potential fits – Mike Richards, Jonathan Toews, James Neal, Brenden Morrow. Neal isn't a household name (yet), but his combination of speed, size, and skill make him a great choice for this team if he can keep his torrid pace up. Richards and Toews are both centers but could shift to the wing, or Thornton could do the same instead.

I refrained from putting together my (and many other's) dream checking line of Morrow-Richards and Shane Doan, as I think the duos will allow Canada to gain and maintain chemistry throughout the tournament. Like the playoffs, the Olympics aren't won by the best team, they are won by the team playing the best. And with the players I have included, a checking line could definitely be put together if need be.

I don't see any way **Stamkos** can be left off of Canada's roster. He and **St. Louis** are my final duo, sticking with the team/chemistry theme. Like the Thornton-Heatley line, a forechecking presence would work well here, as Marty is a talented playmaker and Stamkos has one of the most lethal releases in the entire league. Options would of course be Morrow, Toews, Doan, and Neal.

The notable glaring omission is Vincent Lecavalier. I just don't see a spot for him, especially with how well so many other Canadian players are playing right now. Jason Spezza doesn't do enough besides put up points to make the team, and Marc Savard is still hurt. He brings a ton

and would have probably been on my team had he not been sidelined with a broken foot.

On defense, I still have four locks: Scott Niedermayer, Chris Pronger, Jay Bouwmeester, and Shea Weber. After those two, there are a ton of candidates. Mike Green may not be a lockdown defender, but he is so dynamic and such a game breaker, that I can't see him being left off of the team. Worst-case scenario is that he is brought in as the seventh defenseman and sees mostly power play duty. Dion Phaneuf has had a great start but he doesn't bring enough stability to warrant a spot over Duncan Keith. Keith is an unbelievable skater, and he is able to cover so much ice both offensively and defensively. He makes smart decisions with the puck, and he can log tough minutes. Drew Doughty plays the game like a veteran, and he also brings stability on the back end. Of the six I have selected, Green and Weber would see the most power play time, with Bouwmeester and Pronger on the first defensive unit. The fact that Phaneuf is on pace for 27 goals and is off the roster shows just how well Keith and Doughty are playing.

In goal, not much has changed. The three best goalies will go. Brodeur is playing like the starter right now, but don't be surprised if Luongo starts to make a charge – he shook off the early season cobwebs and has looked stellar since returning from injury.

The final roster:

Nash-Crosby-Iginla (*alternate*)

Carter-Getzlaf-Perry

Heatley-Richards-Thornton

Morrow-Stamkos-St. Louis

Toews

Pronger (*alternate*)-Bouwmeester

Weber-Niedermayer (*captain*)

Green-Keith

Doughty

Brodeur

Team Canada in 2010 Version 3.0

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Luongo

Fleury