Try as TSN might, the 2008 NHL Entry Draft isn't anywhere near as captivating as the 2005 edition. However, there's still plenty at stake. Learn a bit more about the convoluted lottery process in today's Bugg Bytes.

It's probably the most common question come April: "How the **** does this work?" The NHL Entry Draft lottery is a silly, silly thing. A lot of it has to do with the terminology. For example: the Leafs could win the draft lottery. It's an absolutely true statement. But it doesn't mean they can get the first overall pick. Similarly, the Lightning could lose the lottery, but pick first overall. Dumb, ain't it?

The 'prize' of the lottery isn't the first overall pick- it's the ability to move up in the draft order by as many as four spots. Any non-playoff team can win the lottery. The losers of the lottery- every other team- can drop only one spot in the order.

Current standings:

17. Carolina (92 pts, 43 W, 0 GR)
18. Chicago (88 pts, 40 W, 1 GR)
19. Buffalo (88 pts, 38 W, 1 GR)
20. Vancouver (88 pts, 38 W, 1 GR)
21. Edmonton (88 pts, 41 W, 0 GR)
22. Florida (85 pts, 38 W, 1 GR)
23. Toronto (83 pts, 36 W, 1 GR)
24. Phoenix (82 pts, 38 W, 1 GR)
25. Columbus (80 pts, 34 W, 2 GR)
26. Islanders (79 pts, 35 W, 0 GR)
27. St. Louis (75 pts, 31 W, 2 GR)

28. Atlanta (74 pts, 33 W, 1 GR)
29. Los Angeles (71 pts, 32 W, 1 GR)
30. Tampa Bay (71 pts, 31 W, 1 GR)

Let's assume this is how the standings finish. Order prior to lottery:

14. Carolina
13. Chicago
12. Buffalo
11. Vancouver
10. Edmonton
09. Florida
08. Toronto
07. Phoenix
06. Columbus
05. Islanders
04. St. Louis
03. Atlanta
02. Los Angeles
01. Tampa Bay

So, Carolina can win the lottery, and jump from 14th overall to 10th overall. Burke could get the ultimate revenge and have Edmonton's pick become the sixth- a dream scenario as there are seven players he feels are above everyone else.

Of course, it's not that simple. The odds are weighted in favor of the lesser teams, with Tampa Bay having 25% of the 'balls' in the 'lottery machine'*. Carolina has 0.5%.

To make it more difficult, you'll hear other statistics. Tampa has 25% of the balls, but has a 48.2% chance of keeping the first overall pick. Why? Only four other teams can win and unseat Tampa from the first overall pick- LA, Atlanta, St. Louis and the Isles. The combined balls of the other teams are more than are owned by each of LA, Atlanta, St. Louis and NYI, and of course Tampa has more balls than anyone.

Despite owning an almost 50/50 chance of picking first overall, the last-place team has been shafted since 2000:

2000- Islanders 1st overall (5th before lottery)
2001- Atlanta 1st overall (3rd before lottery)
2002- Florida 1st overall (3rd before lottery)
2003- Florida 1st overall (4th before lottery)
2004- Washington 1st overall (3rd before lottery)
2006- St. Louis 1st overall (1st before lottery)
2007- Chicago 1st overall (5th before lottery)

Now, if that wasn't exhaustive enough, it may not even matter what happens in the lottery. 2002

and 2003 saw the Panthers trade the first overall pick, to Columbus and Pittsburgh respectively. 2002's top three featured Rick Nash, Kari Lehtonen and Jay Bouwmeester- franchise players at each position. 2003 was similar, with MA Fleury, Eric Staal and Nathan Horton considered above everyone else. It just so happened that the teams at 3 and 1 wanted the players ranked 1 and 3.

2008 doesn't initially look like a Draft in which it might happen, but the 1st overall pick may end up in play. Both St. Louis and Los Angeles boast tremendous prospect depth at forward, but lack premier names on the back end. Eller-Stamkos-Boyes would be a nice line, but so would a pairing of EJ-Schenn. Similarly, a one-two punch of Kopitar and Stamkos could be this decade's Sakic-Forsberg, but Doughty-JJ could be this decade's Bourque-Blake.

Monday at 8 PM ET will answer a lot of questions. But it'll also create a bunch. Keep an eye on DobberHockey; I'll have a mock draft ready for the results as soon as the lottery's over.

*It'll bore most everyone, but the NHL doesn't use a plain old bingo tumbler:

"Fourteen balls, numbered 1 to 14, were placed in a lottery machine. The machine expelled four balls, forming a series of numbers. The four-digit series resulting from the expulsion of the balls was matched against a probability chart that divided the possible combinations among the 14 participating clubs."- NHL.com

Snoooooooze.