The Oilers have signed the extremely heavily sought after free agent defenseman Justin Schultz. Schultz has spent the past few seasons honing his craft on the back end for the University of Wisconson Badgers.

Is he another Jonas Gustavsson, Matt Gilroy, or Fabian Brunnstrom? Not a chance. Read on to find out why.

**The Oilers get:**

One of the best young defensemen in hockey. Schultz has received a lot of attention for two reasons – one, he is a free asset to acquire (the cost of an entry level contract), and two, he's a high end prospect with elite upside.

Gilroy was hyped because he was a free asset, but he was 25 when he came out of college. Schultz is 22 (as of July 6th). The hype may be overblown a bit, especially because markets like Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton, and New York were in contention. More fans, more media, more attention. Schultz will be in tough to live up to it right away, but he isn't a late bloomer, or a diamond in the rough. He is a very, very good prospect with elite upside who has used a CBA loophole to choose his first NHL destination.

He shoots right, he moves the puck well, and he is extremely competitive. Don't be surprised to see him running an NHL power play at a high level within the next two seasons. He was college teammates with Jake Gardiner, Ryan McDonagh, and Brendan Smith, and he may end up being the best of all of them.

For more information about Schultz (what kind of player he is, upside, and so on), read this piece I wrote on him a few months ago.

*"While Gardiner, McDonagh, Smith, and Schultz are all excellent defensemen, they all have different traits. Schultz is most like Gardiner, in that they are excellent puck movers with elite skating ability. Both Gardiner and Schultz can jump up in the play, and are both outstanding with the puck on their sticks. Smith and Schultz both posses outstanding skills with the puck, but Smith has a harder shot from the point, where as Schultz has more of a quick, accurate shot. Smith is more likely to shoot off the pass, where as Schultz is likely to quarterback a power play, and set things up."*

**Fantasy players impacted:**

Schultz will get every opportunity to play top four minutes. There may be a period of transition, and the best route may be to shelter his even strength minutes while he adjusts from the college game to the pace of the professional level. In Edmonton, he leapfrogs Corey Potter for the top right-shooting spot on the power play.

Schultz has the potential to be a point-per-game defenseman with the forwards he will be playing with over the next few years.

Edmonton is a great fit for Schultz. The team has a lot of fantastic young forwards, but not much in the way of puck movers on the back end. Even with the Schultz signing, the Oilers need to add some skill to their starting six.

One question - will Edmonton be able to keep all of their young guns when their entry level contracts expire?

Potential PP look (maybe not right away):

Hall – Nugent-Hopkins – Eberle

Whitney – Schultz

As for this season… potential defensive pairings as of right now (definitely subject to change):

Whitney – Petry

Schultz – Smid

Sutton – Schultz

Potter

**Players helped by the signing:**

1. Schultz

2. Whitney

3. Every other Edmonton player, save for…

**Players hurt by the signing:**

1. Petry (more long term, should see PP1 time for now)

2. Corey Potter (I'm still not sure about this one. As it stands right now he'd be the top PP guy, but had they missed out on Schultz the Oilers probably would have filled that hole).