

Down the Rabbit Hole

Written by Justin Goldman

Monday, 06 June 2011 14:41 - Last Updated Tuesday, 07 June 2011 23:02



Another day, another prospect discovered. This is the trend heading into the summer again, as the market for the \$4 or \$5 million-a-year superstar begins with Tomas Vokoun and ends with Ilya Bryzgalov. So as general managers continue to try getting the most bang for their buck in goal, now more than ever before, tracking prospects is vital to successfully managing your fantasy keeper team.

[FANTASY MAILBAG – JUNE 6](#)

You know by now that my [NHL Depth Charts](#), which I just updated today, will track all the well-known prospects that have their rights assigned to an NHL team. It's a great way to keep track of hundreds of goalies that could end up being on your keeper team.

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To be informed about a prospect's skill or perceived value is one thing, but to journey deeper down the rabbit hole and find goalies that could potentially become a hyped prospect that ends up on everyone's radar is quite another.

Goalies playing junior-level hockey throughout Europe and North America are certainly as "long-term" as it gets when projecting their potential, but many hidden weapons exist to help you discover the ones worth tracking. Over the next few weeks, I'll reveal some of the weapons I personally use to scout and track goalies.

One of my favorite weapons is Hockey Canada's Program of Excellence Goaltending Camp. Sixteen goaltenders in total, 10 in the Under-20 category and six more in the Under-18 category, get the opportunity to work with a number of high-level goalie instructors during a four-day camp.

All 16 goaltenders were selected by Hockey Canada based on evaluations done by head scout Kevin Prendergast during the 2010-11 season. He consults with other coaches, general managers and team officials throughout the CHL and makes his decisions and sends out official invitations to the goaltenders.

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The Under-20 goalies are very recognizable prospects, most of which are ranked on my [Top-100 Prospects Rankings](#)

. They are candidates for the National Junior Team and have their rights reserved by NHL teams.

Right away, you should recognize all 10 of the under-20 goalies. They include J.P. Anderson, Jordan Binnington, Sam Brittain, Tyler Bunz, Louis Domingue, Calvin Pickard, Kent Simpson, Mark Visentin, Scott Wedgewood and Malcom Subban.

Of those 10 goalies, the only two were absent from my rankings, Subban and Brittain. Expect both to be in the expanded Top-125 Prospects Rankings, which will be released in a few more days. Subban is not draft-eligible until next summer, but you can expect him to be one of the higher-ranked eligible goalies by NHL Central Scouting.

It is also important to note Brittain's inclusion in the camp. Of the 16 goalies attending, Brittain is the only NCAA product. After a terrific rookie season with the University of Denver Pioneers, Brittain proved he's a durable, hard-working prospect with good skills. Coming out of the BCHL, Brittain was drafted last summer by the Panthers, who also own the rights to former Pioneer Marc Cheverie.

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Now comes the juicy part – the Under-18 goalies. The list includes Daniel Altshuller, Chris Dreidger, Alex Dubeau, Domenic Graham, Matt Murray and Francois Tremblay.

Even though I have personally not seen video or live action of any of these young goalies, just knowing they were ranked by Hockey Canada as the top-six in their field is proof you should be tracking them. Even if half of them turn out to be attending this camp as Under-20 goalies, their rights will probably be owned by NHL teams at that time.

Altshuller played this season for the Nepean Raiders in the Central Canada Hockey League (CCHL). He posted a 3.22 goals-against average and .906 save percentage in 43 games. He was a member of Team Ontario for the World U-17 Hockey Challenge.

Drafted by the Belleville Bulls in 2010 and protected by Nepean, Altshuller already stands 6-foot-3 and 195 pounds. With that kind of frame and 43 games played this year, combined with his appearance in this camp, adds more fuel to the fire in regards to tracking him.

Dreidger played 22 games as a rookie for the Tri-City Americans this year and went 6-6-0-1 with a 3.50 goals-against average and .881 save percentage. He stands 6-foot-2 and 175 pounds and gained some valuable international experience this year as the starter for Team West at the 2011 World U-17 Hockey Challenge.

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In four tournament games, Dreidger compiled a 3.26 goals against average and .880 save percentage. As a 15-year-old, Dreidger also led Team Manitoba to the silver medal at the 2009 Western Canada U-16 Challenge Cup.

Dubeau, a rookie with Shawinigan in the QMJHL, stands just 5-foot-9, but he still posted a 12-6-0 record in 21 games with a 3.00 goals-against average and .897 save percentage. Graham is another small-framed QMJHL prospect that had a terrific rookie season. He went 18-7-0 with a 2.54 goals-against average for Drummondville and has some quality attributes such as his quick read-and-react skills, his competitiveness and mental toughness.

For both Murray and Tremblay, your School of Block homework for the week is to learn more about both of these goalies. You'll find that, just like the other four Under-18 goalies attending the Program of Excellence goalie camp, they are prospects worth tracking.

This Program of Excellence camp is just one of many hidden weapons you can use to determine legitimate but very long-term keeper prospects. As time goes on, just having their names in the back of your mind will help you assess and understand their potential as they get closer to being drafted and signed by NHL clubs.

Check back next Monday as I continue to reveal some more weapons and asses the fantasy

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value for some draft-eligible goaltenders.