

Buffalo Beefs Up

Written by Ryan Van Horne

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The Buffalo Sabres lack size – especially in their top six – and have been looking to fix that problem through the draft and waiting patiently for some draft picks to develop.

Luke Adam, a second-round pick in 2008, could be the closest to joining the Sabres in the NHL. The six-foot-two, 215-pound left winger is having an excellent pro debut with the AHL's Portland Pirates. This follows a breakout fourth year in the QMJHL in which he scored 49 goals in only 56 games and made Canada's world junior team.

This year with Portland, he's scored 11 goals and eight assists in 15 games; Adam is second in rookie scoring and ninth in the league.

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St. John's, NL native needs to improve his skating, but his other offensive skills are go good, this won't hold him back. With some hard work, he should be able to make the necessary improvements to make it to the next level.

He has good bloodlines and has grown up around the pro hockey environment, which can often give prospects that extra edge some of the need to make it to the NHL.

Adam's father Russ played eight games with the Maple Leafs and won a Calder Cup in 1982 with the New Brunswick Hawks. Adam's dad later served for four years as an assistant with Toronto's farm team in St. John's.

"He was always there for help and support," Luke told NHL.com. "Any kid who plays hockey dreams of playing in the NHL. I don't know if there was a set time where I said 'this is what I want to do,' but there's certainly a point there where I knew I wanted to start following that dream."

Adam is a finisher, sort of like Glen Murray or Dave Andreychuk. He sees the ice well, but will make his living scoring goals and earning his pay in front of the net. In addition to his large frame, he boasts great strength which he uses to his advantage.

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In the Prospects Report, I wrote that Adam might arrive sometime in 2012 because I thought it would take him longer to adjust to pro hockey. Now, it looks as though he could be ready by next season and he's already earned a two-game call-up this season to the parent club.

The Sabres have been know as a team that boasts small, skilled players. But some of them are too easy to push around and Adam, as well as 2009 draftee Zack Kassian, should provided some much-needed size that can play in the top six.

Upside: 35-30-65