Sometimes, prospectors blaze a trail and go out on a limb and pan for gold in a stream where no one has been before – and, sometimes, they go back to a stream that they know produced some nuggets before.

NHL scouts are no different and a fantasy hockey GM should be aware of the importance of good bloodlines. While they are not a guarantee of success – these are hockey prospects we're talking about – they do help improve the odds of making it in the NHL. And since every little edge and advantage helps you win in this game, it is something worth paying attention to.

Don't overplay the family ties. Just look at some of hockey's lesser known brother acts, such as the Gretzkys, the Lemieuxs and the Sakics. We all know about Wayne, Mario and Joe. How about their brothers? I'm sure they're great guys, but sometimes one sibling gets the lion's share of the hockey talent. The same is true of father and son tandems, but one thing many hockey people agree on is that a kid growing up the son of a pro hockey player has some advantages that other kids don't have.

Nashville Predators prospect Colin Wilson is one such player. Wilson, who is toiling away for the Milwaukee Admirals of the American Hockey League, was recently named AHL rookie of the month for January. Wilson is the son of former NHLer Carey Wilson, who played nine seasons with Calgary, Hartford and the New York Rangers. Colin's first pro campaign was delayed by a groin injury, and he didn't suit up for his first game until November 22nd. He didn't get his first point until his fifth game and spent most of December getting acclimatized to the AHL. January was a different story though, as he scored seven goals and 13 assists in 17 games, and he's kept it going so far in February.

Wilson wowed scouts with an impressive display at the NHL combine in 2008. Going into that draft, he was already touted as a hard worker off the ice and the benefits were on full display that day.

You need to look beyond the numbers to get a full appreciation of what Wilson will bring to a team. Sure, his statistics with both the U.S. National Team Development Program and Boston University were impressive, but scouts have also raved about his excellent faceoff skills and defensive acumen. In his draft year, International Scouting Services ranked Wilson as one of the top five faceoff men and top five defensive forwards.

Wilson also has excellent hockey sense and is physically ready to compete at the NHL level. Nashville is wise to let him develop his offensive game in the AHL. He could be a third or fourth-line centre with them right now, but putting him in that role would stifle his offensive

development. He could be the perfect number two centre and is future captain material. Think a larger version of Mike Richards.

Wilson realizes – because of the influence of his father – that there are many little things a hockey player can do to help his team. Wilson has already learned many of them and is willing to learn more, which bodes well for his future.

Wilson is also well aware of the sacrifices that need to be made to be a pro player. Sometimes, that can be the most difficult lesson for young hockey players to learn. Talent only gets you an invitation to the show – but it's hard work that keeps you there.

Upside: 30-40-70 with modest to low PIMs.