

Carrying On a Famous Name

Written by Ryan Van Horne

Saturday, 05 June 2010 11:32 - Last Updated Saturday, 05 June 2010 20:06



Note: Geoffrion has not been featured in three consecutive Dobber Prospect Reports and this profile is a response to a request in the prospects forum.

On bloodlines alone, Blake Geoffrion seems destined for greatness, but a name only catches people's eyes and a might give a player a longer look. No NHL team is going to hand Blake Geoffrion a roster spot just because of his ancestors.

Even when you're the great grandson of Howie (The Stratford Streak) Morenz, the grandson of Bernie (Boom Boom) Geoffrion, and the son of a former NHLer, Daniel Geoffrion, you still need to put in the work.

Good on Blake Geoffrion for not eating from the silver spoon. By all accounts, he is a hard worker and he has to be because the hockey talent in the family genes is getting diluted over

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time. Morenz and Grandpa Geoffrion are in the Hall of Fame and while his dad was a junior star with the Cornwall Royals of the OHL and once scored 20 goals for the Winnipeg Jets, he only played 111 games in the NHL.

Blake Geoffrion's offense had been considered the weak part of his game until this season. In two World Junior Tournaments with Team USA, he had a grand total of two assists in 13 games. In four years with the Wisconsin Badgers, his goal totals were 2, 10, 15 and then he exploded for 28 this year. Geoffrion's specialty is going to the front of the net and getting the dirty goals. It takes courage and skill to score from there, but the fact that he converted 15 of his goals on the power play is worth noting. That total led U.S. college hockey, but is an indicator of opportunity as much as ability -- especially for a senior.

Geoffrion won the Hobey Baker award this past year as U.S. college hockey's top player and after he won it, he provided this quote to The Canadian Press:

"My family's pretty much natural goal scorers ... I have 28 goals this year, but they're not necessarily the prettiest goals ... I'm a little different player."

Geoffrion will likely never be a big scorer in the NHL, but could produce if he's put with the right linemates. He's smart and aggressive and was a workhorse for Badgers coach Mike Eaves.

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"He's our top faceoff guy -- maybe the best in the country," Eaves told NHL.com after Geoffrion won the Hobey Baker. "Blake's the first guy to kill penalties; uses his body to block shots. On the power play, he's our post guy – the guy in front of the net. He has a real good feel for that."

Geoffrion grew up in Nashville and played for the U.S. National Team Development Program. From there, he was drafted in the second round by his hometown Predators in the second round (56th overall). In his draft year, Geoffrion scored 17 goals and 17 assists in 46 games for the U.S. under-18 team. He had a late surge and played well at the under-18 tournament and scouts took notice.

He was touted as a smart player in all zones who showed a willingness to fight for pucks in the corners and go to the net. Scouts who doubted Geoffrion were concerned with what he was capable of. They thought his offensive upside was limited and they thought he had to add strength. Geoffrion, who stands six-foot-two and weighs 190 pounds, has done the latter but there's still room for improvement. That, and his attitude toward the game, will help him to maximize the skill he does have.

In his draft year, International Scouting Services compared his playing style to Mike Fisher of the Ottawa Senators. It's still a good comparison and Fisher's a great role model for Geoffrion.

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It's worth noting that Geoffrion was not in The Hockey News Future Watch this year as one of Nashville's top 10 prospects. This is not necessarily an indicator of his NHL potential, but one hopes, for Geoffrion's sake, that's not a comment on the organization's opinion of him.

The Hobey Baker Award does not guarantee success in the NHL, but winning this award indicates you've had success playing against the oldest -- and some of the best -- amateur players in the world.

In a deep league, Geoffrion is worth owning and has the potential to be a third-line centre or possibly a second-line left winger. He plays the style of game that Nashville coach Barry Trotz likes, but will need a year of seasoning in the AHL. He'll move down the road from Madison to Wisconsin and could arrive back home in the Music City as early as 2011.

Upside: 25-25-50

Certainty (NHLer, Upside): 75% 70%