

Toffoli Tearing It Up

Written by Jeffrey Renaud

Friday, 08 April 2011 23:52 - Last Updated Sunday, 10 April 2011 23:19



Tyler Toffoli not only led the OHL in scoring this season with 108 points in 68 games but he also scored more goals than any other player in the CHL with 57. Five of those came in the final week of the season (four in the season finale against the Sudbury Wolves), earning the Ottawa 67's right winger CHL Player of the Week honours.

Drafted in 2010 by Los Angeles in the second round (47th overall), Toffoli gives the Kings a future triple crown line of top forward prospects as Brayden Schenn (2009, 5th overall) and Andrei Loktionov (2008, 123rd overall) are also well on their way to becoming impact players in the NHL.

Toffoli Tearing It Up

Written by Jeffrey Renaud

Friday, 08 April 2011 23:52 - Last Updated Sunday, 10 April 2011 23:19

PROSPECT PRESCRIPTION asked Chris Byrne if he thought Toffoli could make the jump from junior to pro next season and Ottawa's head coach quipped that he thought his star forward needed another 10 years in the nation's capital to *fine tune* his game.

"That would probably be good for him," joked Byrne, who took over coaching duties prior to the 2009-10 OHL season from Brian Kilrea, the most successful coach in CHL history. "But in all seriousness, for him, like most young guys, it comes down to whether or not they can compete physically with the older guys, so I think that would be the one area where he needs to work.

"If he is able to get stronger and quicker this summer, who knows? But if he doesn't, he'll be back here, probably another year and he'll continue to get stronger and faster and give himself a chance the year after that."

Whether it's next season or 2012-13, Byrne says the six-foot-one, 181-pound Scarborough native has all the tools to succeed in the NHL and that his offensive instincts are off the charts: "The keys to his success are obviously his vision, his timing and his shot."

Toffoli's shot, which also produced a five-goal game earlier in the season, had the green light all season from the bench because that's what the 67's needed from him. But Byrne says Toffoli

Toffoli Tearing It Up

Written by Jeffrey Renaud

Friday, 08 April 2011 23:52 - Last Updated Sunday, 10 April 2011 23:19

also has the skill set to be an elite passer if that's what the Kings needs him to be.

"He can definitely do a little bit of both," explains Byrne. "On the line he is on right now with us, he is a little bit more of a shooter but he definitely makes plays and passes the puck when it's the right time. But for us, we want him shooting the puck if he gets a chance and so far this year, it's worked."

Byrne penciled Toffoli in as a right winger most nights on the score sheet but says Toffoli could easily play on the left side or even centre, again if that's what Los Angeles needs.

"I think he's probably a winger," offers Byrne. "And he'd probably prefer right wing, which is his natural side. But I think he'll play left wing too. He's also played some point on the powerplay so that would be where I see him slotted in moving forward."

A notable omission from the Team Canada roster at the 2011 World Junior Championship in Buffalo, Toffoli didn't let the snub get to him as Byrne says he's a leader not only on the ice but in the dressing room, as well.

Toffoli Tearing It Up

Written by Jeffrey Renaud

Friday, 08 April 2011 23:52 - Last Updated Sunday, 10 April 2011 23:19

“He’s good in the room. He doesn’t get too up or down and that’s one of the things that have come along since I’ve known him,” says Byrne. “His maturity has definitely come along since he was 16. He’s becoming a man.

“And I think he’s started to really figure out what it takes to be a pro. He had a great summer last year, putting himself in a position where he could come into this year, playing a full 68-game schedule for us. And he did a great job showing up for us, most nights, and working hard.”

80-GOAL SEASON? Toffoli, just 18 years old, scored an impressive 17 goals and 46 points in his rookie campaign as a 16-year old and took his game up a notch in his second season with the 67’s posting totals of 37 goals and 79 points. With increments of 20 goals between his first and second season and his second and third, Toffoli is on pace to flirt with 80 goals should he return to the 67’s next season. The all-time OHL record belongs to Ernie Godden, who potted an incredible 87 goals for the Windsor Spitfires back in 1980-81 in just 68 games.

E.P.T.A. (ESTIMATED PROSPECT TIME OF ARRIVAL): 2012-13