One thing is for certain: the name Rielly, I mean Reilly, has been getting mixed up on the NHL prospect lists for quite some time now, and it seems the surname(s) will be making headlines in the professional ranks of hockey in the coming years.

For the Leaf Nation, fans and the hockey management brass in Toronto have high hopes for their 2012 1st round pick, **Morgan Rielly**. The big offensively-skilled defenseman out of the Moose Jaw Warriors (WHL) organization is regarded as a top player with a big shot and nice puck skills.

This column isn't about Rielly, however. I am actually talking about another blue liner who is named Reilly (i isn't always before e), that somehow slipped back to the 4th round of 2011 NHL Draft. Not Morgan, but
Mike Reilly
, and he hails from Chanhassen, MN, not West Vancouver, BC.

So yes, they both are defenseman that shoot left-handed, are similar in size, and are NHL draftees, yet the two come from different countries and their current hockey career path differs a bit too. Rielly has been honing his game in the major junior ranks for two years while Reilly just last season help lead his team, the Penticton Vees, to a BCHL Championship (Fred Page Cup) and is now off the University of Minnesota this fall.

Reilly recently participated at USA Hockey's National Junior Evaluation Camp in Lake Placid, NY last month. I had heard his game was blossoming, and he quite honestly made a case as the best player on the ice for the week. Not just from the 45-players Americans at camp, but also the mix of Swedish & Finnish participants too.

He showed tremendous offensive abilities by leading the rush, wheeling and dealing with the puck on his stick, wristing beauties in the net, and setting up teammates too. He is a slick skating blue liner who showed his speed with the puck and also without. He possesses high-end vision and playmaking talents. The bigger ice surface of the Herb Brooks Arena suited this Minnesotan just fine. The same sized ice sheet will be available in December at Ufa, Russia for the 2013 IIHF World Junior Championships.

There is no question Reilly will get serious consideration for Team USA's roster and deservingly so.

His defensive side of the game looked solid back in August and will be improved upon as well this fall under the leadership of Don Lucia in Minnesota. You could see his improvement with positioning, gap control, and he played an effective physical game as well at the NJEC.

If he can continue to dominate the NCAA as a Golden Gopher like he did at Shattuck St. Mary's prep (MN) and the BCHL ranks, there is no question the fans in Columbus are in for a real treat in the future.

The Blue Jacket organization has not had much to cheer for in recent years, but Mike Reilly could be one of the key prospect pieces to change all of that.