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NHL RELEASES FINAL RANKINGS FOR 2022 UPPER DECK NHL DRAFT

Shane Wright tops list of North American skaters; Juraj Slafkovsky No. 1 International Skater

NEW YORK (May 5, 2022) – **Shane Wright** (Burlington, Ont.), a center from the Ontario Hockey League’s Kingston Frontenacs, and **Juraj Slafkovsky** (Kosice, Slovakia), a left wing for TPS in Finland, rank No. 1 among North American and International skaters, respectively, as the NHL Central Scouting Bureau today released its final rankings for the 2022 Upper Deck NHL Draft.

Wright, who can become the first Frontenacs player selected No. 1 overall in the NHL Draft and the first OHL player since **Connor McDavid** in 2015, maintains the No. 1 spot he held in the mid-season rankings. Wright ranked eighth in the OHL with 32-62—94 in 63 games during the regular season and is currently skating in the second round of the OHL Playoffs (2-6—8 in 6 GP).

“Shane Wright is the complete package as an NHL prospect. He is a strong stride skater who possesses deceptive speed and quickness to beat defenders, evade checking or lead a rush,” said **Dan Marr**, Director of NHL Central Scouting. “He has elite hockey sense with his vision, anticipation and composure to execute quickly on plays and has proven that he can carry the load and lead the way when it’s needed in game situations.”

SHANE WRIGHT
NO. 1 NORTH AMERICAN SKATER

- * Averaged 1.49 points per game with Kingston of the OHL in 2021-22
- * Captained Team Canada to gold at 2021 Under-18 World Championship
- * CHL and OHL Rookie of the Year in 2019-20
- * Can become first OHL player drafted No. 1 overall since Connor McDavid in 2015

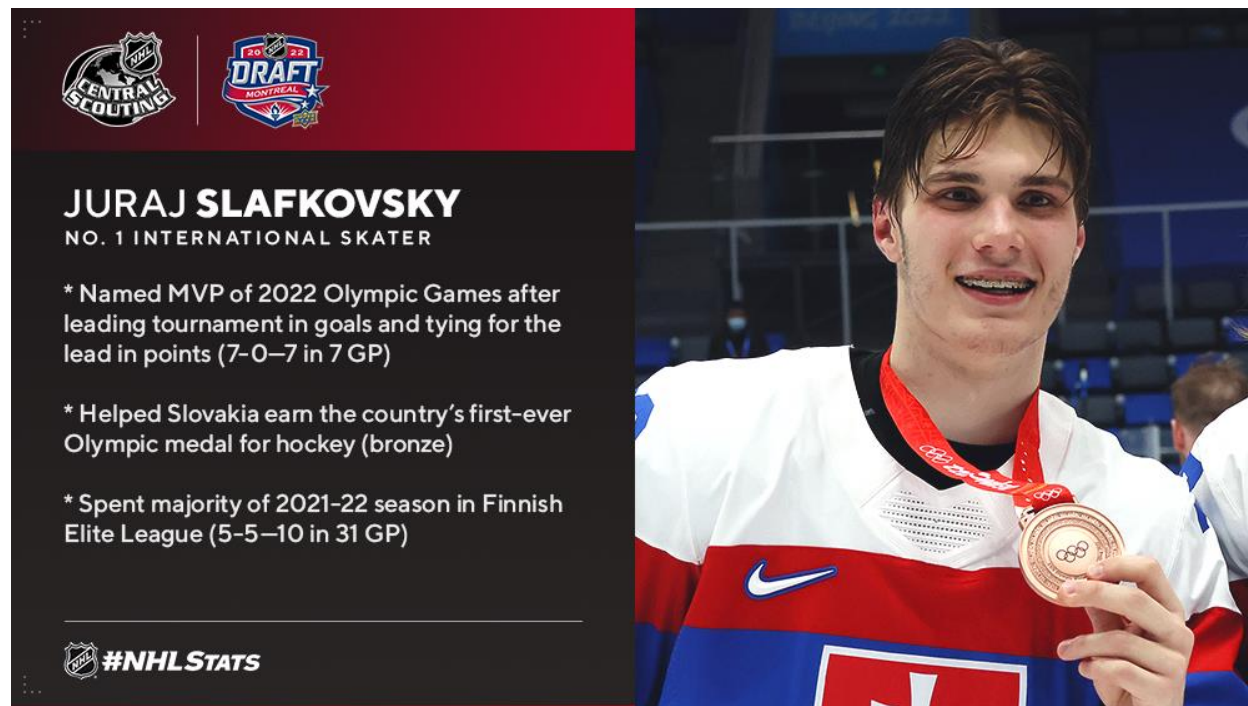
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Slafkovsky climbed from No. 2 during the mid-season rankings to No. 1 among international skaters following a second half that included MVP honors at the Winter Olympic Games where he led the tournament in goals and points (7-0—7 in 7 GP) while helping Slovakia earn bronze – the country’s first-ever Olympic medal for ice hockey. Slafkovsky can become just the second Slovakian-born player selected in the top five of the NHL Draft, in which he would join **Marian Gaborik** (No. 3 in 2000 by MIN).

“Juraj Slafkovsky has that power winger element that NHL Clubs covet and his game has shown continual development this season while playing in the Pro Liiga in Finland and with the bronze medal-winning Team Slovakia at the Olympics,” said Marr. “He is a smooth and agile skater for his size and has the strength, smarts and offensive tools to be productive. What has been most impressive is the ability he’s shown to learn and quickly adapt his play to get results at every level he’s competed this season.”




JURAJ SLAFKOVSKY
NO. 1 INTERNATIONAL SKATER

- * Named MVP of 2022 Olympic Games after leading tournament in goals and tying for the lead in points (7-0—7 in 7 GP)
- * Helped Slovakia earn the country’s first-ever Olympic medal for hockey (bronze)
- * Spent majority of 2021-22 season in Finnish Elite League (5-5—10 in 31 GP)


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The remainder of the top-five ranked skaters in North America include a pair of forwards from USA Hockey’s National Team Development program’s Under-18 team, No. 2 **Logan Cooley** (Pittsburgh, Pa.) and No. 3 **Cutter Gauthier** (Skelleftea, Sweden), followed by a pair of centers from Winnipeg of the Western Hockey League in No. 4 **Matthew Savoie** (St. Albert, Alta.) and No. 5 **Conor Geekie** (Strathclair, Man.).

Cooley ranked second on USA Hockey’s Under-18 team in points (27-48—75 in 51 GP). He grew up in the Pittsburgh area and [was part of the first-ever season](#) of players who took part in **Sidney Crosby’s** Little Penguins Learn to Play Program. Cooley can go from the Little Penguins program to the highest Pennsylvania-born player selected in the NHL Draft – currently **R.J. Umberger** (No. 16 in 2001 by VAN).




Logan Cooley is a young male hockey player with light brown hair, wearing a white USA Hockey jersey with blue and red accents. He is holding a hockey stick and wearing blue and red CCM hockey gloves. The background features the USA Hockey logo (USHL) repeated.

LOGAN COOLEY

NO. 2 NORTH AMERICAN SKATER

- * Ranked second on USA Hockey's NTDP Under-18 team with 27-48-75 in 51 GP
- * Topped USA Hockey Under-18 team with 1.47 points per game in 2021-22
- * Youngest player named to Team USA for the 2022 World Junior Championship
- * As a child, participated in Sidney Crosby's Little Penguins Learn to Play Program

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Gauthier ranked second on USA Hockey's Under-18 team in goals (34-31—65 in 54 GP). His father, **Sean Gauthier**, was a goaltender and ninth-round pick by the original Winnipeg Jets in 1991 (181st overall) who had a 14-season professional career that included stops in the NHL, IHL, AHL, ECHL and Sweden. Gauthier was born in Skelleftea, Sweden, grew up in Scottsdale Ariz. and played minor hockey in the Detroit Honeybaked program.



Cutter Gauthier is a young male hockey player with dark hair, wearing a white USA Hockey jersey with blue and red accents. He is holding a hockey stick and wearing blue and red CCM hockey gloves. The background features the USA Hockey logo (USHL) repeated.

CUTTER GAUTHIER

NO. 3 NORTH AMERICAN SKATER

- * Ranked second on USA Hockey's NTDP Under-18 team with 34 goals
- * Helped Team USA earn silver at the 2022 Under-18 World Championship (3-6-9 in 6 GP)
- * His father, Sean Gauthier, was a goaltender and ninth-round pick by the Jets in 1991
- * Committed to Boston College for 2022-23

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Savoie (St. Albert, Alta.), a center for the Winnipeg ICE, led all WHL rookies and ranked seventh in the league with 35-55—90 in 65 games. Geekie, who is the brother of Kraken forward **Morgan Geekie**, averaged 1.11 points per game (24-46—70 in 63 GP) while ranking tied for second on his team in game-winning goals (6).






NORTH AMERICAN SKATERS

▶ FINAL RANKINGS

RANK	PLAYER	NAT	POS	TEAM	LEAGUE
1	SHANE WRIGHT	CAN	C	KINGSTON	OHL
2	LOGAN COOLEY	USA	C	USA U-18	NTDP
3	CUTTER GAUTHIER	USA	LW	USA U-18	NTDP
4	MATTHEW SAVOIE	CAN	C	WINNIPEG	WHL
5	CONOR GEEKIE	CAN	C	WINNIPEG	WHL
6	PAVEL MINTYUKOV	RUS	D	SAGINAW	OHL
7	KEVIN KORCHINSKI	CAN	D	SEATTLE	WHL
8	LUCA DEL BEL BELLUZ	CAN	C	MISSISSAUGA	OHL
9	ISAAC HOWARD	USA	LW	USA U-18	NTDP
10	OWEN BECK	CAN	C	MISSISSAUGA	OHL

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Following Slafkovsky on the ranking of international skaters is No. 2 **Joakim Kemell** (Jyvaskyla, Finland), a right wing for JYP in Finland's top professional league. Kemell led all Finnish Elite League rookies with 15 goals in 2021-22 and was a key contributor to Finland's bronze medal at the 2022 Under-18 World Championship.




JOAKIM KEMELL

NO. 2 INTERNATIONAL SKATER

- * Led all rookies in Finnish Elite League with 15 goals (39 GP)
- * Helped Finland earn bronze at the 2022 Under-18 World Championship where he led his team in goals and points (6-2—8 in 5 GP)
- * Led JYP's junior team in goals and points in 2020-21 (22-14—36 in 38 GP)

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Rounding out the top-five international skaters are No. 3 **Simon Nemeč** (Liptovsky Mikulas, Slovakia), a defenseman for Nitra in Slovakia's professional league; No. 4 **David Jiricek** (Klatovy, Czechia), a defenseman for Plzen in the Czech professional league; and No. 5 **Marco Kasper** (Innsbruck, Austria), a center for Rogle of the Swedish Elite League.

RANK	PLAYER	NAT	POS	TEAM	LEAGUE
1	JURAJ SLAFKOVSKY	SVK	LW	TPS	FINLAND
2	JOAKIM KEMELL	FIN	RW	JYP	FINLAND
3	SIMON NEMEC	SVK	D	NITRA	SLOVAKIA
4	DAVID JIRICEK	CZE	D	PLZEN	CZECHIA
5	MARCO KASPER	AUT	C	ROGLE	SWEDEN
6	JONATHAN LEKKERIMAKI	SWE	RW	DJURGARDEN	SWEDEN
7	DANIIL YUROV	RUS	RW	MAGNITOGORSK	RUSSIA
8	LIAM OHGREN	SWE	LW	DJURGARDEN JR.	SWEDEN JR.
9	LIAM BICHSEL	SUI	D	LEKSAND	SWEDEN
10	BRAD LAMBERT	FIN	C	PELICANS	FINLAND

Tyler Brennan (Winnipeg, Man.) of Prince George (WHL) is the No. 1-ranked North American goaltender and **Topias Leinonen** (Jyvaskyla, Finland) of JYP's junior team tops the list of international goaltenders.

The final rankings feature the top 224 skaters and 32 goaltenders in North America as well as the top 140 skaters and 10 goaltenders internationally.

In its 47th year of operation, NHL Central Scouting provides evaluation and scouting of draft-eligible players to NHL member clubs. Headed by Director of Central Scouting **Dan Marr**, NHL Central Scouting employs eight full-time scouts throughout North America. To report on prospects playing internationally, the NHL employs the services of **Goran Stubb** and his staff at European Scouting Services based in Finland.

The 2022 Upper Deck NHL Draft is scheduled from July 7-8, 2022 and will be hosted by the Montreal Canadiens at Bell Centre in Montreal, Que.

For NHL Draft history visit <https://records.nhl.com/draft>.

Full rankings by region and additional prospect profiles, including scouting reports, are available in the attached documents.