

## 2008-2009 All Snipe Team

The NHL playoffs signify the slowest time of the year for the SCHL. After an exhilarating and exhausting season and with the trade ban still over three weeks away from being lifted, the SCHL has come to a crawl. To spice things up and bring back a little SCHL flavour into our lives before the summer trade free-for-all and draft preparation begins, I look back at the previous draft that was and present the All Snipe Team. Factors such as age, point totals, draft position and SCHL future/value were used in awarding spots on the teams, albeit arbitrarily. There will certainly be contentions as to those who may be omitted or placed on the list, but without much further ado, the 2008-2009 SCHL All Snipe Team is:

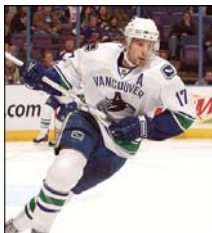
### FORWARDS:



**David Booth (Tycoons – 69<sup>th</sup> Overall):** The Tycoons added yet another stud amongst their talented gems up front with the drafting of Florida's 2nd leading scorer. Posting a solid 60 points in 72 games for the moribund Panthers, 70 points is not out of the question in the near future for this 24-year old as he should solidify his position as Florida's 1st line left winger.



**David Backes (Shrubdogs – 73<sup>rd</sup> Overall):** "The Emergence" finished the year off strong by capping a 31-goal campaign with a 4-goal performance against the formidable Detroit Red Wings in St. Louis' 5<sup>th</sup> last game. On an up-and-coming Blues team who is starting to learn how to win and what it takes to do so, Backes will continue to be leaned on by the Blues as a top six forward and by the Shrubdogs for 50+ points.



**Ryan Kesler (Spartans – 77<sup>th</sup> Overall):** After starting off the year as Vancouver's 3<sup>rd</sup> line checking center, Kesler exhibited his offensive awareness flanking Mats Sundin and Pavol Demitra on the 2<sup>nd</sup> line. A heart-and-soul player who can play in every situation, he showed he can play on the Canucks' top six. With the possible departure of the Sedins, he may become a permanent fixture in that group and could become a consistent 55+ point player because of it.



**Jason Blake (Rowdy Kilts – 74<sup>th</sup> Overall):** The cancer-stricken player bounced back in a huge way by posting 63 points on a hapless Leafs team. Considered a buyout player the summer before and was a healthy scratch early in the season, Blake came back more motivated than demoralized. Despite his age, Blake has the tenacity and speed to keep pace and continue to put up a reasonable amount of points for his new team, the Brahmas.



**Brooks Laich (Tornadoes – 63<sup>rd</sup> Overall):** On a team with offensive phenoms Ovechkin, Backstrom Semin and Green, Laich quietly finished right behind that quartet with a reasonable 53 points. With both Fedorov and Nylander both getting long in the tooth, it wouldn't be unrealistic to see Laich capturing the 2<sup>nd</sup> line and continuing to increase his point totals on the

very offensive Capitals team.



**Dave Bolland (Horses – 86<sup>th</sup> Overall):** In what seemed like at the time a “your shit for my shit” trade, the Regime may have pulled a fast one on the Horses by obtaining him for the talented yet ever enigmatic and lazy Maxim Afinogenov. It looks as though Bolland may be the 2<sup>nd</sup> line center on the upstart Blackhawks behind Jonathan Toews for years to come. Unfortunately for the Horses, he will be plying his trade in another jersey.

#### DEFENCEMEN:



**Denis Grebeshkov (Shrubdogs – 58<sup>th</sup> Overall):** With all the talk about Sheldor Souray and Lubomir Visnovsky on the Oilers defence, not to mention Tom Gilbert, Grebeshkov quietly went about things and nearly put up 40 points. Still only 25 and with the Oiler team seemingly a revolving door, it wouldn't be shocking to see Grebeshkov move up the depth chart and put up close to 50 points in a season providing the Shrubdogs with excellent support for the two Brians -- Rafalski and Campbell.



**Marc-Edourd Vlasic (Flash – 47<sup>th</sup> Overall):** After being drafted 15<sup>th</sup> overall the year before only to put up 14 points, Vlasic bounced back in a huge way and then some by more than doubling his poor offensive total. Jon did it again by drafting yet another solid contributor, providing the Flash with four startable defencemen. The drafting of Martin, Keith and now Vlasic in three of the past four drafts -- that's the foundation of a solid core for years to come. Jon continues to show why he is arguably the best drafter in the pool.



**Fedor Tyutin (Bullets – 39<sup>th</sup> Overall):** Who says you can't go home again? The Bullets had enough faith in re-drafting Tyutin and he rewarded them by putting up a very respectable 34 points, particularly considering the unfortunate Erik Johnson injury. Tyutin's drafting was timely as he helped alleviate a bit of the void left by EJ and finished off as the Bullets' 2<sup>nd</sup> highest scoring defenceman.

#### GOALIE:



**Steve Mason (Assassins – 62<sup>nd</sup> Overall):** A no-brainer here. The current Snipe of the Draft winner took the SCHL by storm. A mere 20-year old, the baby-faced rookie is almost certain to win the NHL's Calder Trophy in June. With 33 wins and a ridiculous 10 shutouts, not to mention leading the Blue Jackets to their first-ever post-season berth, Mason quickly ascended amongst the upper echelon of SCHL (and NHL) goalies. Had the SCHL draft been redone today, he would almost assuredly be a Top 5 pick.

The Assassins knocked this grand slam right out of the park and will be backstopping them for many years to come.

There you have it, your 2008-2009 SCHL All Snipe Team. Had this been an SCHL team it would have finished 12<sup>th</sup> with 560 points (actually it's 541, but rounded to 560 with proper subbing etc.)

It has felt and seems like an eternity, but trading will commence within a month and all will be well again. Who knows, we may see some of the aforementioned moved. Did they truly increase their SCHL value and become valuable members or was this just a blip on the radar? We will find the answers to those over the course of the summer and into next season. Stay tuned.

For the SCHL, I'm Peter Diamantakos.