

Christmas 2008 has come and gone. As usual there were sounds of “Fucking snipe of the draft right there” and “Haaoooooooooolll” and of course Dave Lee making a fool of himself (this time on camera). I figured now that the dust has settled and the season about to get under way, I’ll recap each team’s best and worst moves at the draft. Keep in mind, some teams didn’t do a whole lot so some of these might be a reach.

79ers

The 79ers did not do a whole lot this draft. By the end of it, they had 3 picks all in the 70s (which is 3x as much as they had last year). They added 2 prospects and a back-up goalie, so, I suppose they are hoping that Sid and Joe T can bring the team to glory once again.

Guru Tick: Moving from 64th overall to 71st overall and upgrading the 4th rounder in ’09 to a 3rd rounder in ’09. Now, this move may seem simple enough, but, knowing Ashley, he had no idea who was good and dropping down a few spots to upgrade next year was a solid move. With the Kilts and the 79ers both being top 8 teams in the league, and the reverse snake in round 3, that is quite a bit of draft position to obtain for such a small drop. Plus, Brian Boyle was still an excellent pick

Moron Tick: Drafting Steve Valiquette. Now, maybe I’m being harsh, but, if Lundqvist goes down the 79ers are done. Valiquette is not going to be able to get the Rangers too many wins in the case of injury and therefore I felt this pick was wasted. With a 79ers squad that’s good, but, has lots of holes, a Kesler, Raymond or some other point producing player would have been a better pick and would yield more points for the 79ers.

Assassins

The Assassins were quite busy on draft day with 2 top 7 picks and 3 1st rounders in total not to mention trading away the only NHLer. Trying to rebuild is clearly in the cards for the Assassins as shown by selecting 2 rookie dmen early in the draft.

Guru Tick: Drafting Mathieu Garon. 52nd overall was a very good time to select the Oiler goalie, who, should be seeing some action in front of an improving Oiler squad. Goalie is a weak spot for the Assassins so this pick was certainly full value.

Moron Tick: Hmm...toughie. It’s either trading away Kariya for a few 2nd rounders, or, drafting Blake Comeau with one of those picks. I guess I’ll just combine it all into one giant clusterfuck. All Sean has to do is stand-up and say “Kariya is about to be dealt involving this pick” and Lorne, while not necessarily beating the offer, would have at least given Sean a happy ending. Seriously though, inexcusable to give away a player of Kariya’s ability without attracting more attention. Plus, Blake Comeau was simply not a good pick at all.

Barracudas

Hmm, one pick and took the back-up goalie. It was the best and worst move I suppose. Props for being a good host and not chasing after a pick for 45 mins trying to draft Jeff Jillson

Brahmas

The Brahmas wound up with 5 picks and truly believe they are contenders based upon the veteran support they picked up. Whether or not this was a good strategy is up for debate, but, one thing that's for sure is that Daryl has plenty of options for starting rosters (which can be good or bad).

Guru Tick: Drafting Dan Ellis 32nd. With Martin Gerber being highly inconsistent, drafting another goalie that should start a good chunk of games was a good idea. Ellis is a pretty good goalie on an oft-underrated Nashville team. If any of the elite teams have a goalie injury, Daryl will be able to pounce.

Moron Tick: Drafting Tom Preissing 25th. Really, I don't think he's an awful player. However, with so many young guns up and coming on that team I question how much longer Preissing has to go. 25th should be a nugget, and Daryl simply drafted a drop. Coulda taken Preissing a lot later and gone with a high potential prospect at 25th.

Bullets

Defending SC champs did not have a particularly eventful draft, but really, who cares with guys like Iginla, Toews and Kane.

Guru Tick: Not fucking up anything too seriously. None of his picks are particularly wowing, but, with such a solid team he didn't wreck it in any way so I guess that's good.

Moron Tick: Trading away a 3rd rounder in '09 for the 90th overall to draft Bulin. Granted, I have the luxury of hindsight, but still, Khabibulin wasn't going to play a whole lot for Chicago. During the year, picks for players can be had all day long, so burning a full pick in 2009 to draft a guy who wouldn't have even been started unless injury struck was an overall moron move.

Devils

Attending his first ever draft, GM Steve Dedrick had the luxury of 1st overall pick. It's nothing new for the SCHL to see a rookie GM selecting 1st overall (Pete-Ward, Klann-



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Turris). I think Steve definitely has a new definition of nerdiness now after attending the SCHL draft.

Guru Tick: Drafting Steve Stamkos. Does this deserve a pat on the back? Probably not, but really, the guy is so good that ignoring all offers and taking the guy was a great move.

Moron Tick: Dealing away a 3rd rounder in 2009 to Blake to upgrade 25 spots to take Andrew Ladd. Now, I am not saying that Andrew Ladd is a bad player. However, I question the need to make such a bold move up. Picks in 2009 may seem like nothing now, but, during the year they can turn into some decent players, especially if the Devils are playoff bound. I'm all for teams moving up to get their guy, I just don't think that Ladd was worth it. Something to learn from in the future.

Express

Also attending his first ever SCHL Draft, GM Derek Day had 6 picks to work with by the end of it and helped to improve upon arguably the worst team in the pool. Going mostly with youngsters, but, no projects, the Express will be competitive sooner rather than later.

Guru Tick: Dealing away the 10th overall pick for the 14th pick and the 45th pick. With lots of holes on the team, adding picks is never a bad idea. With 2 picks in mind at 10th, dropping down was relatively risk free while the 45th pick yielded talented forward Jiri Tlustý. Another prospect can't hurt a team desperate for guys to break out.

Moron Tick: Drafting RJ Umberger 14th overall. Now, I don't believe he is a bad player, and is a good NHLer. However, I don't believe that his playoff success is indicative of how he'll do during the course of the regular season. I don't think it's a good idea for rebuilding teams to use up high picks on guys who will be consistent 60 point players but probably nothing more. Getting a core group of high end guys to me is more important than rounding out the roster first, which, is what I think Derek did here.

Flash

The Flash, a premiere drafting team, had 6 picks to play with going young but with NHLers. With the drafting record that the Flash have, hard to say which one is the best move and which is the worst, but I'll give it a shot anyways.

Guru Tick: Drafting Alex Steen 33rd overall. I don't believe he's going to get 60+ like in one mag (Forecaster I think), but, he does play on a team desperate for offense and therefore should get the minutes necessary to be a viable back-up. The Flash do not have the space to protect many prospects so, after taking Bailey, the top ranked NHLers were their best bet to go after a cup.

Moron Tick: Not drafting a replacement for Ryan Whitney. Ryan Whitney is gone for God knows how long. As a contending team, a glaring weakness at the dman spot should have been addressed over taking a prospect like Josh Bailey. Not replacing Whitney could mean finishing outside of the top 3 in the WG race and possibly lose a few weeks that otherwise would have been Ws.

Goldminers

O Frank was at his humping best as he made an early splash to nab the 6th overall pick. With only 2 picks in the draft (Thanks to the Hamrlik for 2 picks gaffe), Goldminers really had a rather quiet draft after the move to get up to 6th.

Guru Tick: Drafting Erik Karlsson 61st overall. This guy has a lot of potential and could be leading the Ottawa PP sooner rather than later with Chara, Redden and Meszaros all departing in recent years. He's not as good as Heske thinks, but, he's still a good pick a 61st and really, I do not have a lot of choice.

Moron Tick: Risking his life to take Sergei Kostitsyn. So, the trade to move up from 10th to 6th wasn't terrible. The Goldminers are not going to be a lottery team, and therefore dropping in the 1st round isn't that huge considering the upgrade that's happening from 10th to 6th. Moreover, giving up a 2nd rounder does not hurt if the guy one takes is awesome. Therein lies the problem. With a stud dman Pietrangelo available, taking Sergei Kostitsyn for the novelty factor was simply a dumb move. Kostitsyn is far from a bad player, but I don't believe he has superstar potential like Pietrangelo has. Giving up a lot in 2009 to not draft the best player available equals a draft day blunder to me.

Gryphons

Widely regarded as the best drafter in the league, GM Ryan Paik put his reputation on the line once again with 4 picks in the 2008 draft. With 3 young players all NHL bound, time to see if another Stastny was found.

Guru Tick: Drafting Anton Stralman 41st. I have this dman fairly high on my list and was surprised to see him fall. A dman with lots of potential and NHL-ready is an excellent combination at that stage in the draft. With Paik's luck, this could be the snipe of the draft.

Moron Tick: Drafting Craig Anderson 84th overall. Seems easy...take the back-up goalie. However, if Vokoun goes down, no way does Anderson carry that Panther team anywhere. With Tim Thomas available, I think this is just a waste of a pick and could have been used to find another gem.

Heartbreakers



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Finally making another draft day appearance after a 6 year hiatus, GM Tony Roy once again had a quiet draft with only 2 picks, one of which was the back-up goalie. Not too much to say here, but, Tim Thomas would have been a better option over Hiller.

Horses

With 7 picks in the draft, the horses have gone young but no real projects. The rebuilding process is still underway but guys like Matthias will certainly help the Horses move forward.

Guru Tick: Drafting Shawn Matthias 9th. I love this guy, period. In fact, I wanted to move up to 8th to get him but it was shot down. This guy is just a big Canadian kid who should be NHL bound with PPG potential. He's the product of the Detroit scouting and farm system without actually having to deal with the glut of Detroit players that hinders the Hudlers and Filpullas of the team. Great pick.

Moron Tick: Drafting Luke Schenn...regardless of where he was drafted. The guy is Adam Foote. Adam Foote was a very good hockey player. Adam Foote has no business being in the SCHL. Now, he will get lots of minutes and has a heavy shot, but, offensive potential is very, very limited. It could be years before any sort of positive results show and they still won't be very high. At 44th, better dmen were available. Plus, he's a Leaf. Bleh.

Jawas

After a million trades this offseason the Jawas only wound up with 3 picks. With no glaring holes on this roster, back-ups were in order for this draft.

Guru Tick: Drafting Ryan Malone 54th overall. I don't think this guy is worth his contract but he should put up points on a fairly lethal Tampa team. If he can get any minutes with Lecavalier's and/or Stamkos Malone should put up some points which will be needed in case of injury.

Moron Tick: Splitting hairs but I would have traded down the 23rd pick for 2 later picks (which I think could have been had). The Jawas have some question marks on D and I think another NHLer would have been handy. On the flipside, Loui Eriksson is a player I like but I think one of similar NHL ability could have been had deeper into the draft to insure against injuries.

Millionaires

A year after the biggest Moron Tick in draft history, Rick set to right the wrong and had a solid draft adding young buck Mikkel Boedker and rising dman Matt Niskanen. Always fun to have young NHLers in the line-up and that is exactly what was dialed up on draft day by Rick.



Guru Tick: Drafting Matt Niskanen 11th. As you'll soon see, I don't like the fact the Millionaires had the 11th pick, but, with the pick, this was the best option. Niskanen is young but flourished last year on a talented Dallas team. With Zubov and Boucher both getting up there in age and getting hurt, Niskanen is the only guy who can fill in for those 2 on the PP. Trevow Daly does not give em confidence.

Moron Tick: Trading down from 6th to 11th while getting an upgrade next year plus a 2nd rounder. The drop off from Pieterangelo to Matt Niskanen is very high in my opinion. Too high for my liking to obtain what will probably be around a 10 pick upgrade in the 1st round outside of the top 10 and an extra 2nd rounder. To draft Boedker and Pietrangelo would have been a great draft, but now, the Millionaires must hope that Niskanen continues his solid play.

Regime

Tank. That's what the Regime want this year. Every year we hear about Port Manning but this year it'll be if Leclaire gets the goose. Clearly went young this draft to help the rebuilding process which should be sped along by the fact that all four picks should be NHL bound this year.

Guru Tick: Drafting Nikolai Kulemin 59th overall. Maybe I am just buying too much into the hype of this kid but he's done very well in the RSL and should be a Maple Leaf on opening night. I thought he'd go a lot higher but what do I know. This guy should put up decent points now and could be a bonafide stud down the road.

Moron Tick: Drafting Pascal Leclaire 8th. Perhaps this is me being grumpy I didn't get him, but, having the 14th and 32nd pick in exchange for the pick to me was and still is a better option than taking another goalie, the only position of strength on the Regime. Assuming that Leclaire = Bryzgalov, by getting Devils 1st next year which will probably be worse than 8th, effectively, Brian has delayed making the selection until next year at probably a lower pick. Moreover, at the time, Brian assumed all the risk that he'd actually be able to move the guy for anything close to the 8th overall that he used to get the asset in the first place. In other words, seemed kind of complex and risky when Matthias was available or taking the 14th and 32nd to get 2 quality players to help the rebuild.

Rowdy Kilts

O the hype machine was rather silent on draft day about his players, but more than chipped in his \$0.02 on everyone and about everything. Whether he likes to admit it or not, Tanner's Rowdy Kilts are no longer the most feared team in the pool and a few years of subpar drafting has caught up to them with lots of teams in the hunt now.

Guru Tick: Drafting Jason Blake 74th overall. If the Kilts are going to compete they can ill afford injuries, but, Jason Blake is an excellent depth guy who can be subbed in for injuries or when Toronto goes 4 times. Nothing flashy, but, points are points and Tanner is one of the best GMs in the pool at getting the most out of this roster.

Moron Tick: Trading up a few spots by giving a potentially large 3rd-4th upgrade in '09 to the 79ers to take Johnny Oduya. Really, drafting Johnny Oduya is a stretch in itself, but to give up an upgrade to draft him warrants a moron tick. The Devils are not a high scoring team, but, Tanner's Devils boner strikes again with this pick. Oduya isn't even that young with a very limited ceiling (which could have been last year's totals). Tanner must see something in him that I don't, but, if he does turn out to be a bust, the hype machine will be working at full capacity. Teams...be aware!

Shrubdogs

With 4 very late picks, Shrubbies just tried to round out their roster. This was made easy with the acquisition of Paul Kariya for a bucket of pucks.

Guru Tick: Trading for Paul Kariya. There isn't a whole lot to say really that hasn't been said...Shrubbies get a very talented starting forward for not a whole lot at all. This was the biggest guru tick of the draft, by far. While not on the level of Iginla, this was still quite the coup for the Shrubbies who did not lose a lot in 2009 either.

Moron Tick: Drafting Denis Grebshkov 58th overall. I don't know if this was a "this year pick" or a "prospect pick" but either way it wasn't good. Behind Viso, Souray and Gilbert, I don't think Grebshkov is going to produce much to be a factor this year. I also don't think his potential is very high, so basically, the Shrubdogs selected a player who won't start this year, low ceiling...and therefore is a drop at season's end.

Spartans

The Spartans made their splash acquiring Shawn Horcoff for 2 picks earlier on the summer. Still, 3rd slot was very important to the Spartans and Nikita Filatov will be a much needed forward monster. Spartans are starting to move on up.

Guru Tick: Drafting Colin Wilson 81st in the draft. Not the flashiest guy around, and not NHL bound this year, but Colin Wilson projects to be a solid starter in the future with a high chance of getting there. I can't help but think he's similar to Mueller when he was first drafted, and, Pete must be praying that a similar situation arises with Wilson.

Moron Tick: Drafting Ryan Kesler. I don't mind Ryan Kesler, I think he'll put up his fair share of points, but, the ceiling is limited and therefore makes this pick a bit useless on a team with a million forwards. He's almost a guaranteed drop at the end of the year so why not take a flier on a youngster?

Tornadoes

Armed with 8 picks in the draft, the Tornadoes set out to go with prospects and were willing to burn picks to move up and do it. Bogosian was a bit of a surprise at 5, but, a good surprise as this guy has stud written all over him. Matt Cullen and Brooks Laich can both produce and potentially be Snipe of the Draft.

Guru Tick: Moving up to get Alex Edler. With so many picks, ultimately, the Tornadoes could not keep them all by the end of the year. By packaging up 2 picks to get the highest rated dman still on the board was an excellent move. Edler will be solid this year and has room to grow and can be a mainstay for 10-15 years on the Tornadoes blueline.

Moron Tick: Drafting Mikael Backlund 15th. I don't think this is a bad pick (or else I wouldn't have drafted him) but he's a guy that could have gone later in the draft. Not getting Boedkker or Matthias rattled me a bit and perhaps a bit of a panic pick was made. Still, the guy has loads of potential and that's the reason he went 15th...but the risk should have made him a 2nd rounder.

Triads

On the cusp of the playoffs, a Bronze division title or a wild card spot is possibly the Triads to lose this season. With D as a weakness, Dave simply drafted 3 dmen in the hopes that one pans out.

Guru Tick: Drafting Chris Osgood 31st overall. For a team that wants to make the playoffs, a Maple Leaf goalie would not cut it. Osgood, when he starts, is going to get loads of wins and probably loads of shutouts. Wings goalies are always underrated because they are not talented in themselves, but with Lidstrom and co. in front of you any goalie will put up the numbers necessary to succeed.

Moron Tick: Drafting Patric Hornqvist 36th overall. I heard lots of people say they like this guy but I simply do not see it. "He's taking over Radulov's spot..." is a phrase I often hear. However, I do not see this as an overly positive thing. Radulov put up less than 60 points last year and is way ahead of Hornqvist in terms of talent. If points is what Dave was looking for, I think it could have been found elsewhere. Playing WITH Radulov can be good, playing in his spot...meh.

Tycoons

With no holes to fill, the Tycoons set out to fill up some back-up roles which were so vital to their WG run a year ago. Lucic, Booth and Thomas was a quiet draft, but, a successful one.



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Guru Tick: Drafting Tim Thomas 88th overall. Uhh, this guy was an all star last year. Also, I have zero faith that Manny Fernandez will be able to steal the Bruins starting goaltender role. If Kipper goes down, Thomas will be an adequate replacement and can keep the team afloat. The same cannot be said for a lot of other contenders if their goalies go down.

Moron Tick: Drafting Milan Lucic 37th overall. Blake LOVES this pick and will burn me for sure for not liking him. But really...while not a bad pick per se I had to pick one move I didn't like and this is it. I don't see a Cam Neely here...I see a big player with decent hands. As lots of big players require time to really produce I question if he's going to be a Tycoon long enough for him to develop. Moreover, if Blake does decide to be patient and he doesn't turn into the offensive force Blake expects him to be, it's going to burn a protect spot for a year or two. I don't for see usable points this year from Lucic and I don't see a high ceiling which makes this the worst of the 3 picks for the Tycoons.

Vanguard

Vanguard had no glaring holes going into the draft and it showed by going quite young with Gerbe, Girardi and Boyd. Overall, a pretty uneventful draft for the Vanguard and will have limited impact on the team this year and into the future.

Guru Tick: Drafting Dustin Boyd 83rd overall. Boyd will be an NHLer and has impressed in preseason and camp. Getting him so low means he's a low risk proposition but still has upside. If nothing else, he can be solid trade bait in case the injury bug strikes hard.

Moron Tick: Drafting Nathan Gerbe 34th overall. Gerbe has a lot of potential and is not a bad pick, however, finding a spot to protect him at year's end may prove challenging. If I were to guess, this waterbug will be dealt for D help if Carle cannot get back to form and Girardi can't step up. For a contending team, the 3rd dman slot is quite weak and an area that I would have tried to shore up, but, perhaps the trade route will be the best way to do so.

So there you have it, some post-draft analysis for ya. The puck is about to drop in 6 hours on the 2008-2009 season. I'd love to hear some thoughts as I am sure everyone will hate me for bashing one of their moves. Don't get too offended though...my team stinks right now so what do I know?

For the SCHL, I'm Kevin Ma.