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NHL Draft Guide

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MEET THE TEAM



David St-Louis | Lead Scout

@DavidSt_Louis

David St-Louis is a writer and the Lead Scout for Elite Prospects, based out of Trois-Rivières, Quebec, in Canada, where he regularly attends Remparts games. His work can also be found on TheCoachesSite and SBNation's 'Eyes on the Prize' blog, where he covers the Montréal Canadiens. He's watched more hockey than probably everyone in your life combined, and that just accounts for this season's work.



Mitch Brown | Dir. of North American Scouting

@MitchLBrown

Mitch Brown is the Elite Prospects Director of North American Scouting. Based out of Canmore, Alberta, in Canada, Brown regularly scouts the WHL along with the BCHL and AJHL, too. His passion for hockey takes him all over the hockey world, though, including brief stops in Sweden, Ontario, and anywhere else where one might find a rink. Mitch never sleeps, because sleep is the cousin of death, and it allows him to manually track obscene amounts of data through developmental leagues where it's otherwise not available.



Lassi Alanen | Dir. of European Scouting

@lassialanen

Lassi Alanen is a rising star in the realm of player evaluation, particularly on the amateur side, carried him to Elite Prospects this year, where he scouts Finland's professional and junior hockey leagues. This year alone, Alanen attended 70 games in person and supplemented that number with many more on tape. Not willing to leave any stone unturned, Alanen manually tracks data from the top draft-eligible prospects in the Liiga, Mestis, and Finnish U20 circuits.



Russ Cohen | American Scout

@sportsology

Russ Cohen is an American scout for Elite Prospects, covering the professional and NCAA ranks, as well as being an accomplished writer for Sportsology and radio host for the Sportsology Radio Network. He covers the New York Rangers and Philadelphia Flyers on the NHL side, too. His work has appeared on NHL.com, CSNPhilly.com, FoxSports, The Hockey News, and countless other venues. He also co-hosted Hockey Prospect Radio on NHL Network Radio as part of the SiriusXM network.

**Joey Padmanabhan | USHL Scout****@joeypad2**

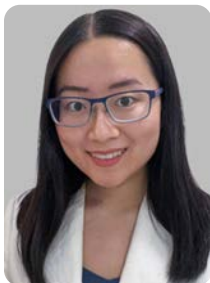
Joey Padmanabhan traded in his skates and stick for a pen and notepad this year, joining the Elite Prospects Rinkside team as a USHL scout and Data Analyst. He played AAA hockey in Chicago, going toe-to-toe with many of the players he now scouts in the USHL. When he's not taking notes or watching film, he enjoys playing pick-up hockey at his community rink and walking his dog, Jay-Jay. Joey attends Cornell University, where he majors in statistics and economics.

**Cam Robinson | Dir. of Film Scouting****@Hockey_Robinson**

Cam Robinson is the Director of Film Scouting for EP Rinkside analyzing and assessing prospects from around the globe. He is also a contributor for Daily Hive Vancouver, and Sportsnet 650. Cam is also a middle school generalist teacher, a father of two, a husband of one, and an avid reader.

**Greg Balloch | Goaltending Scout****@GregBalloch**

Greg Balloch is the goaltending scout for Elite Prospects, providing scouting reports, video analysis, and player grades for goaltenders across the hockey world. He is also a radio producer and broadcaster for Sportsnet 650 Vancouver, and Digital Media Manager for the BC Hockey League.

**Lauren Kelly | OHL Scout****@laurkelly24**

Lauren Kelly joined Elite Prospects as an OHL scout after recreationally scouting online for years. She is based just north of Toronto and an alumna of Ryerson's RTA: Sport Media program. When she's not accidentally injuring herself in some bizarre fashion, Lauren spends a ridiculous amount of time watching hockey, between junior games and the NHL. She has also dabbled in OHL colour commentary. You can find her other written work at SB Nation and FC Hockey.

**Dylan Griffing | Russian Regional Scout****@GriffingDylan**

Dylan Griffing is a writer and the Russian regional scout for EliteProspects while being based out of Wisconsin, USA. He spends his time tracking data, playing Football Manager, doing puzzles, and then staying up until four in the morning watching Russian junior hockey. He is very grateful for his three cats, Lulu, Lola, and Pandy, who constantly distract him while he tries to get work done.

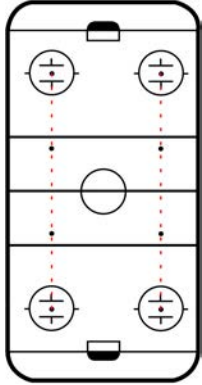
**Jimmy Hamrin | Swedish Regional Scout****@jimmyhamrin**

Jimmy Hamrin is the Swedish regional scout for EliteProspects. His work has appeared previously in McKeen's, and he also contributes to HockeySverige. He's a rink rat with a passion for scouting, looking to find the best Swedish draft-eligible players for the NHL Entry Draft.

**Marek Novotný | Czechia and Slovakia Regional Scout****@MarekNovotny96**

Marek Novotný is the Elite Prospects Czechia and Slovakia regional scout, as well as a contributor to EP Rinkside. Novotný has been passionate about hockey since he was a child, and he turned that passion into a professional pursuit in 2019 when he worked for a year with his hometown hockey team, HC Slovan Ústí nad Labem, as a business manager. He's continued to work in hockey, completing an internship at the Czech Hockey Association earlier this year and working in the sales department for Bílí Tygři Liberec of the Czech Extraliga.

GLOSSARY



DOT(TED) LINE:

An invisible line that runs parallel to the boards from the defensive zone faceoff dot to the offensive zone faceoff dot, dividing the "interior" of the ice and "exterior" of the ice.



STRIDE EXTENSION:

The generation of power in a stride, characterized by a push and extension finishing behind the player, ideally with a toe push and ankle twist.



STRIDE RECOVERY:

The forward movement of the extended leg, ideally under the shoulders finished with a 90-degree knee bend.



GAP CONTROL:

The management of distance between the defender and attacker; an ideal gap is often stick-on-stick to limit options, and increase the odds of a break up and recovery of possession.



RISK-MITIGATING FOOTWORK:

A rush defence strategy that emphasizes middle-and-out backpedal routes, backward momentum, and avoiding weight-committing crossovers until the attacker has as few options as possible.



PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS/ADAPTABILITY:

The ability to locate a secondary or tertiary play after an unexpected variable alters or eliminates the primary option.

SMALL-AREA GAME:

The puck control, handling, and skating that allow a player to maneuver through traffic, and often times, escape traffic.



SLIP PASS:

An alternative to the saucer pass where the player pulls the puck in towards their skates then passes, changing the angle of release.

HOOK PASS:

An alternative to the saucer pass where the player lengths their grip to change of angle of the pass.

RUSH PATTERNS: The combination of routes, stickhandling, and skating habits (especially crossover usage) that a player uses in transition.

DECEPTION: The ability to mask intentions by indicating another play, ranging from fakes shots to more complex combinations of look-offs and subtle body fakes.

PACE: The speeds at which a player can execute; often characterized by active feet through pressure, passes, and puckhandling.

OFF-PUCK OFFENCE: The movement a player makes into pockets of space for supporting the offence or becoming a scoring threat, often timed with passes or shots to decrease odds of getting tied up by the defending team.

OFF-PUCK DEFENCE: How a player defends players without the puck, including but not limited to: net-front defence and closing gaps to deter passes.

AWARENESS: How often, when, and where a player scans the ice.

PROCESSING: The speed at which a player picks up on the details of the play, including the speed, direction, weight-shift, flexion, stick and feet angle of teammates and opponents (and the space between them).

ANTICIPATION: Ability to fill the blanks of perception based on the knowledge and experience of the game, his team's system, and the opposition's.

TIMING: A player's ability to organize his movements to be in a position to make a play at the right time.

SELF-AWARENESS: A player's ability to know what plays are accessible based on his skill-level.

MANIPULATION: The use of movement, puck positioning, passing, or deception to move defenders away from the player's desired space or lane.

ADVANTAGE CREATION: Plays made with the intention of maximizing the recipient's time, space, and options with the puck.

BODY POSITIONING: A player's ability to put himself between the puck and opponent, by cutting in front of that opponent.

PUCK PROTECTION: A player's ability to use his body (knee, free-arm, and back), skating and handling moves to shield the puck and escape pressure.



01 Connor Bedard

AGE 17.164 DATE OF BIRTH Jul 17, 2005 DRAFT ELIGIBILITY DY

SHADES OF David Pastrnak, Auston Matthews



Lethal Shooter



Ankle Breaker



Hockey IQ

Player Info

C

Position

Right

Shoots

5'10"

Height

185 lbs

Weight

Player Grades

7

Skating

9

Shooting

8

Passing

8.5

Puckhandling

8.5

Hockey Sense

6

Physical

Team	League	GP	G	A	P	P/GP
Regina Pats "C"	WHL	57	71	72	143	2.51
Canada U20	WJC-20	7	9	14	23	3.29

SCOUTING REPORT

What does one do atop the throne? Leave no doubt. Instead of settling for simply being one of the best prospects the sport has seen recently, Connor Bedard improved – dramatically.

As his game expanded, so too did his list of accomplishments. His production rivalled Connor McDavid's, essentially going point-for-point on a weaker squad. Then, there was his all-time World Juniors, punctuated with that goal against Slovakia, cementing his place in hockey lore before even setting foot in the NHL. He won just about every award he was eligible for.

He left no doubt.

Shooting, handling, dynamic rushes – these are a few of Bedard's standout skills. His curl-and-drag shot – pull the puck in, elevate the top arm, and narrow the stance to put the full body behind the shot – will be mimicked for years to come.

Every step of the way, Bedard masks his intentions to multiple levels of deception, attacks defenders at angles and with changes of pace, and completes every play at blinding speed – a functional pace unmatched by all but a select few NHLers.

Alone, those skills would carry Bedard to a top-line scoring role. But as

Connor Bedard

F | Regina Pats | WHL | 2023 Eligible
Games Tracked: 11 | Minutes Tracked: 198.1



the WHL learned this season, those aren't his only skills – not even close.

Bedard's the ultimate adapter. When the shot from range didn't work, he played the off-puck game like a top-end NHLer. He consistently worked to get open in space, detached from defenders just as lanes opened, and even feigned drives only to stop in space, all before teleporting the pass into the top corner.

Teams that swarmed Bedard in transition quickly learned that he's just as dangerous of a playmaker. He played the give-and-go game and showed high-level playmaking ability – borrowing the deception and pace from his handling game to create passing lanes. Where he used to rush plays forward, he found success faking the drive before cutting back and hitting the trailer, one of the big developments in his game this season.

Down the stretch, Bedard was unflappable, even as opponents ramped up the physicality. He already shot, passed, and pulled off insane dekes with a defender hanging off his back, but he also became one of the league's best forecheckers. He stepped into opponents, fought for body positioning, and ripped pucks off sticks like an NHLer.

The flaws are few. Picking his spots a bit better, sure. He must develop just a little bit more precision as a playmaker, but that's not uncommon for a player currently pushing the limits of his game at this stage. Of course, improving his pace and reads in the defensive zone will need improvement, but he also showed enough defensive value late in the season that it could become a strength one day.

Between the elite shot and hands, the overwhelming pace and deception, and top-end playmaking, there's no doubt that Bedard could challenge for Best Player in the NHL one day.

For now, his adaptability and diverse skill set makes him the most NHL-ready prospect to come out of the draft since Auston Matthews.

He's a franchise-defining player; the type of talent that constantly finds new ways to improve, makes everyone around them better, and always rises to the occasion.

≡ LINKS & MEDIA



Connor Bedard, Adam Fantilli, and the race for top spot in the 2023 NHL Draft



What we learned at the 2023 World Junior Hockey Championships



VIDEO: Let's Watch: Connor Bedard

≡ INDUSTRY CHATTER

"He's a very exciting player. He's going to generate instant offence in the NHL. Good players are going to want to play with him, and he's going to turn good players into great players, great players into all-stars. The sky is the limit for this kid. Any cliché you want to say about him, you can."

"He's absolutely a generational prospect. You've got to put this kid right now in the Sidney Crosby, Auston Matthews, Connor McDavid category."

"He's a legit scoring threat. He's got a chance to score or create a goal every shift. He's got that sort of bite to his game. The one thing about him that we noticed this year was that he was always above the puck, probably because his linemates weren't good enough or he was being too cautious about getting back. Just wait until next year when

he's able to skate a little bit more or know that someone else will be above the puck above him if he gets caught. He's going to be able to take even more risks and create more chances." – Western Conference scout, May 2023

"Special player. Elite player. The hype is real. Has a unique release that can beat NHL goalies. This kid is going to score a ton. He sees the game differently. It looks slow for Connor. He will be one of the most prolific goal scorers in the league. He will be on the highlight films. No issues. Will be first overall." NHL scout, April 2023

"I could say nothing surprises me about Bedard, but I could also say everything because how can you project him doing this? You can't. If he was 19 years old doing what he's doing, it would be incredible, but he's 17. So you don't expect or project that, but in the short time here, he's always had the rise-to-the-occasion ability. He's super dialled in. He continues to put on a bigger show every time." - John Paddock, January 2023

"He's represented us so well. Great upbringing, humble kid. He does a great job of representing us wherever he goes. He loves it when we do stuff like small-area games or scrimmage. He's proven a lot by winning and losing, competing and challenging himself, but he's not just a player in practice. He shoots the puck harder than anybody and nobody outworks him. He's on a mission in practice or games. He just wants to be where he can play." - John Paddock, January 2023

"It was great playing with him. He's a great guy. He has that ability that everybody sees when he plays the game. You guys all see it, and it's the same for us at ice level. Great guy. I had no issues with him. It was fun to be a part of it." – Adam Fantilli, September 2022

"Obviously, he's a great player. Off the ice, he's like a man. He's like one of the older guys in the room. He's really mature for his age, which was kind of surprising when we first met each other. Just his maturity and the way he carries himself is unreal. I've been asking him if can show me his specialty there. I think it might be his whippy stick. I think he uses a 65." - Ryker Evans, April 2021

≡ GAME REPORTS

Mitchell Brown: April 8th, 2023 - Saskatoon Blades vs. Regina Pats - WHL

Do I have anything new to say about Bedard? Somehow, yes. The physical game has taken another step. It's body positioning and how he keeps opponents on his back. He fakes one way with his feet before going the other, and steps into opponents before cutting away. As soon as defenders shift, he instantly claims space. This was also a violent game. He ran into opponents, shoved them to the ice. He blocked shots, pickpocketed pucks, and provided proactive off-puck defence. Oh, and about his insane assist. He took the puck inside crossovers, set up the defenders on about four different angles in quick succession, using his full body to ask intentions, went under a stick three times, cut back, and passed cross-slot for a goal. He creates space for every shot in every way imaginable. Backhand to forehand. Pump fakes into a quick drag. The defender still hasn't fallen for it? How about a reach out, before pulling it back, and then firing under the stick at full speed. Unstoppable.

Mitchell Brown: March 18th, 2023 - Regina Pats vs. Moose Jaw Warriors - WHL

Bedard's at the stage of the season where he can post a 6-point game without it being an especially eventful game. The mechanics, intelligence, skill, and pace mean that even when he's not getting high-danger opportunities, he's still putting pucks in the back of the net. He grabbed a clever assist by shooting low for the rebound from the strong side sharp angle spot where he normally goes high. Outraced opponents with ease, turning deep defensive zone positioning into unpressured offence up the rink. The defence continues to improve. He's good. He's proactive, physical, sets picks, wins battles, and eliminates off-puck threats. The playmaking and advantage creation, too. He cuts back, delays for support, cuts across the slot and drops pucks back. He skates his routes. to completion to create space. He attacks the inside. And spots and connects with teammates through layers, often multiple at a time. Always masks his intentions. Dynamic and explosive, but controlled.

Mitchell Brown: March 3rd, 2023 - Winnipeg ICE vs. Regina Pats - WHL

An all-time, otherworldly game by a prospect who continues to get better when it doesn't seem possible. Regina was down 3-0 early in the second. Connor Bedard scored two straight, set up the third, then scored two more to win it. A lot of his work started in the defensive zone. He doesn't scan enough off-puck, but he has everything else: pace, physical skills, stick work, supporting reads, timed interventions, and anticipation. He supports down low and eliminates threats. When he's not back first, he manages gaps and space – not floating, but not overskating either. Forechecking remains a strength. Angles, interceptions, hits, and creates chaos. Nasty to play against. From there, the skills appeared all game. He took 17 shots – almost none left value on the table. He skated every off-puck route, creating space for his teammates. Dropped pucks into space, found the trailer, rushed the net. Instantly attacked the inside. Set up every 1-on-1 at angle, at full speed, using his eyes, puck positioning, and feet to deceive the opponent before attacking in the opposite direction. Perfect pass receptions into the hip pocket beat defenders and instantly read to the next play. Arrived in the slot just as the lane opened, and always adjusted to make sure he was always an option. Built the offence with give-and-gos and short-range passing. The only complaints were a couple of hope passes that didn't have a clear target. Winnipeg's stars came to play in all three zones, each dominating stretches of the game – until Bedard came on the ice and reminded Benson, Savoie, Geekie, et al. there are several levels between them. A killer.

Mitchell Brown: February 22nd, 2023 - Medicine Hat Tigers vs. Regina Pats - WHL

A dynamic, electric game. Bedard's pace is unmatched. He handles the puck, changes direction, shoots, passes, and chains together different moves at full speed. No one compares at this level. Every move to beat opponents is set-up with several other quick plays and reads first. He slows down, fakes one way with his body while faking another way with his eyes, then goes in a different direction. Insanely adaptable – he instantly adjusts to defenders, always taking the best play. Keeps his feet moving through checks, as he did during an outside lane rush that ended with a shot off the crossbar. A few of the incredible plays this game. He fired a spinning shot off the rush, reloaded high, accelerated through the reception into space, weight shift deked around an opponent, faked shot so convincingly that two defencemen bit, then toe-dragged inside and passed cross-slot for the assist. Grabbed another primary by drawing a penalty on the powerplay, then shooting low for a deflection at the top of the circle. And he scored with a ridiculous back foot one-timer, elevating his top arm and curving his body to narrow his profile (to maximize power in-tight), beating the goaltender across the net. Last one: he found the trailer off the rush, instantly deked off the boards through an opponent upon the next reception, worked high before cutting back, slipped past another along the boards, then forehand-backhand for what should've been a high-danger chance had his teammate not whiffed on the shot. He delays for support, hits teammates as they arrive in lanes, works the give-and-go, and reads opponents (even deceptive ones) to grab steals on the forecheck.

Cam Robinson: February 1st, 2023 - Calgary Hitmen vs Regina Pats - WHL

Calgary played Bedard close to the vest in this one. They shaded him very well in the offensive zone and limited his rush attempts to ... a handful. He was still able to be dangerous but it was through his play creation rather than the release. Of course, he scored a ridiculous goal where he curled out from the corner, identified a shooting lane through the defender's legs and zipped it cross shelf. It was pinpoint perfect, but a pro goalie would've had the shoulders up to close that window. A feature that I've noticed creeping into Bedard's WHL tape is his decision-making with the puck. Despite double teams, he has been making a habit of cutting, waiting, then firing even if the lane isn't there. It's led to a lot of blocked shots and missed nets. But in this one, he was utilizing his mates more effectively. On a late 6v4 power play as the team tried to tie it up, he was deferring almost exclusively. Until the puck squirted to him in the high slot, then he showed the smart poise to fake, shift then fire. It was a misfire that didn't get off of the ice, but was forced in through some help. He nabbed the shootout winner too with his patented fake backhand, forehand deke. It wasn't the most electric or productive of games, but I enjoyed his smarts and his compete.

Mitchell Brown: January 21st, 2023 - Swift Current Broncos vs. Regina Pats - WHL

By the numbers, this was the best game I've ever tracked. Bedard had 13 scoring chances, 9 slot passes, 18 controlled entries on 18 tries, and even set up a few chances, for a record 5.6 game score. And somehow, I think he'll beat that at some point this season. The added patience with the puck has really paid off. He's never rushing anything. In those moments, he shows deception with his full body (layered). He creates so many different options for himself. With his back to a defender in open-ice, he's unstoppable. He twists and turns, stops and starts, and attacks space instantly. But he's not just manipulating; he's adapting. He reads the

opponent's reaction, then immediately attacks. If he cuts inside and the defender keeps backing up, he doesn't just stick to the plan – he accelerates into the extra space and fires. The shot's the shot. It's the best we've seen. Inside leg, outside leg, in motion, full speed, with pressure – doesn't matter. Oh, and he always attacks the inside. His board play continues to improve; always scans, never forces a play. But that's not necessarily always true off the rush. He forces pucks into lanes that aren't quite there yet – the manipulation that creates space his shot works for the passing, but the timing isn't quite at the same level. Still, his playmaking will be an instant strength in the NHL, especially because he shows the willingness to play a give-and-go game. I watched a lot of Connor McDavid draft year tape earlier this year. He wasn't doing the stuff that Bedard does. The era plays a factor. But it's hard not to be excited about what Bedard will do in the NHL as soon as next season.

Mitchell Brown: January 20th, 2023 - Regina Pats vs. Swift Current Broncos - WHL

Bedard had 11 scoring chances at 5-on-5 on 12 shots. It was incredible. The speed of his attacks, combining the hands, edges, crossovers, and shot is ridiculous. The shooting skill is insane. He easily shoots off the pass, adjusting to even the trickiest of positions. He adapts his shot to the pressure in front of him. He overwhelms with pace. He's physical and aggressive in contact, getting low and skating through the hands of opponents. He wins positioning around the net. He instantly attacks the middle. The playmaking wasn't really there in this game, but it wasn't for a lack of trying. The passes just didn't click and for once, his teammates were actually finding him, letting his off-puck instincts shine. A lot of the plays – the off-the-pass shooting, physicality along the boards, and dynamic rush attacks – look like the stuff he'll be doing next season in the NHL.

Cam Robinson: January 20th, 2023 - Regina Pats vs. Swift Current Broncos - WHL

Bedard was creating so effectively in this one. He was a transition monster, turning what appeared to be benign rushes into high-danger scoring chances through his use of a crossover-laden approach - darting this way and that, setting it up with feints and fakes, and meshing it all with his hands. And then the shot. He receives and releases in a blink with extreme power generation. The compete along the wall was also encouraging. Teams feel they can beat him with force and grind him down outside of the danger areas. But in this one, he was pulling pucks off the wall quickly. He was fighting for inside position. He was engaging, lifting sticks, and winning battles.

David St-Louis: January 2nd, 2023 - Canada vs Slovakia - WJ20

An all-timer, all-star, historical, separating, legend-building, dream-like performance from the game-breaking, hockey artist, clear first overall pick, potentially generational talent Connor Bedard. Yeah...It should never have been a debate.

David St-Louis: December 31st, 2022 - Canada vs Sweden - WJ20

Bedard continues his domination of the tournament. He moves well off the puck, which contributes to his high volume of touches and identifies teammates quickly to build scoring chances (something he is doing more and more as the tournament advances, forgoing the individualistic rushes, a sign of adaptability, a characteristic of elite prospects). The skills are all high-end, and we've described them a lot already, except for the board play. But Bedard still finds ways to move the puck off the yellow to a teammate, even if he has to expand more energy to pull it off. He's competitive. And above all, he makes plays evident for teammates. They know where to position for him and he gives them a clear next, best play. So much to appreciate in his game.

David St-Louis: December 26th, 2022 - Canada vs Czech - WJ20

Bedard looked like the only player that showed up for Team Canada. That's partly because he got every prime opportunity to create: every powerplay rush and half-wall possessions. He made the most out of them, however, showing dangles and drag-shots and fakes and slip passes...Everything was on display. His individualistic style, partly a consequence of his environment in Regina, might reduce the overall quality of Canada's scoring chances in the tournament, however. Bedard could look to build scoring chances instead of trying to score off the rush, although I think both methods have their merits -- he did score in this game with his drag-shot.

J.D. Burke: December 4th, 2022 - Regina Pats vs. Edmonton Oil Kings - WHL

An inefficient game that ended on a low note with pitiful efforts on a pair of Oil Kings goals, and Connor Bedard left this contest with five points (one goal and four assist) nearly all of which came at evens. And you know what? I don't even care about the thrown away pucks or the complete no-shows defensively. Bedard was ridiculous. The thing about the puck management and the giveaways is that you have to place them in the appropriate context. You're watching the most singularly skilled draft prospect in nearly a decade pushing the limits of his skill set, experimenting with a part of his game (his playmaking) that was once a relative (emphasis on the word relative) weakness. The first assist really put all of this work on display. Bedard carried the puck nearly end to end, turning away from pressure in the corner of the offensive zone and then furnishing a cross-ice feed through four (!) bodies for the tap-in. The next assist saw Bedard swat the puck out of a pile of bodies at full speed with one hand on his stick, lead the 2-on-1, and pick up an assist with a cross-ice pass around a defender's stick. The third helper saw Bedard use the dotted line and a change of pace game through the neutral zone as the lead puck carrier before starting a tic-tac-toe goal with a spinning pass. Oh, and Bedard sniped a goal at full speed on another 2-on-1, just for good measure. His handling skill, creativity, adaptability, problem-solving – it's all at an elite level. The growth we're seeing from him as a distributor is absurd. I could write another two or three pages worth of reports on Bedard's performance in this game. He's unlike anyone I've ever scouted. Without equal as a draft year player.

Daniel Gee: December 2nd, 2022 - Regina Pats vs Prince George Cougars - WHL

Probably the most absurd viewing I have ever had from a prospect -- my brain is fried. Bedard showed out against Prince George, creating on practically every touch. Constantly attacking with proactive speed, he had numerous downhill shooting chances. He scored on three of them and hit the post a couple more times. One of the goals was called off, but he still beat Young easily. Bedard's shot is prolific. Always curling and dragging to the inside, the angle-changes are just debilitating for goaltenders to read. His wrist fold is so quick through his release, the downforce so violent in terms of power creation, that even with PG's Ty Young being set, couldn't handle the 10+ opportunities. One one sequence, Bedard shot through a blocking defender, using them as a screen and placed the puck just above the pad -- unstoppable manipulation at this level. His second goal was more impressive -- burning up the left wing one-on-one, Bedard stopped up, leveraged all his weight on his inside leg and roofed a puck top right-hand corner -- the defenders gap was destroyed by the stop up and the knowhow to power off the inside right leg is just unheard off, let alone the placement across the goaltenders body. Constantly double teamed, Bedard showed a tonne of problem solving and adaptability to the pressure -- triangle handles, nifty backpasses to open teammates, no-looks on tape, he just has an incredible amount of patience on-puck and in resistance. He overhanded a couple of times in open ice leading to some bad turnovers -- hardly can blame him when his puck touches were literally turning to gold.

Bedard has such a huge selection of body manipulations, jukes, and fakes that blend so well with his hands -- it makes him a monster transitionally. His delay game is extremely developed -- half pivots, drawing attention, hooking and slipping passes to trailers activating up the middle. He stripped a couple of pucks on the defensive zone blue line -- keeps his stick recoiled and surprises blueline defenders -- went 5-hole but had the opportunity saved.

Unstoppable, inevitable, and downright scary -- he could have scored 6 in this game and it wouldn't have been shocking. Bedard looks like a generational talent.

Cam Robinson: December 2nd, 2022 - Regina Pats vs Prince George Cougars - WHL

What Daniel said.

Cam Robinson: November 29th, 2022 - Kelowna Rockets vs Regina Pats - WHL

Something of an off night for Bedard. He looked like he was down on energy, but still managed to create a few high-danger chances for himself and set up a couple for his mates. The Pats were smart and recognized that Kelowna was playing Bedard extremely tight and used that to lean on Howe and Suzdelev instead. That said, he could've likely been more dangerous if his mates did hit him in flight or identified that cross-seem dish with more regularity on the PP. He managed to extend his point streak to 24 games with a primary helper on the OT winner where he slid it right into the wheelhouse of Suzdelev.

Cam Robinson: November 17th, 2022 - Regina Pats vs. Winnipeg ICE - WHL

Wow, this was one hell of a performance by Bedard. I didn't realize Mitch and David had already punched in reports for this outing, so I'll just let you read theirs. But my goodness, the manipulation, the awareness, the speed, the adjustments at speed. Everything just screamed super elite. This had a real "Patrick Kane in his prime" type of feel to it.

David St-Louis: November 17th, 2022 - Regina Pats vs. Winnipeg ICE - WHL

Wow. There is so much to say here that I'm not sure 2000 words would cover the whole game. Bedard showed elite manipulation abilities over and over again to run through teams and generate chances. He beat defenders by: attacking at an angle, changing lanes, changing speeds, baiting pokechecks, leveraging other options, with his stickhandling ability, with crossovers, by absorbing hits to make plays, by using them as screen...He used movements, his own skill, and teammates to beat them, quite often combining different manipulation styles. The skating looks high-end even if the posture not, as he can fully load his legs to feint and go around the opposition. He handles with short, rolling motions that keep the puck in reach at all times for micro-adjustments as he goes around sticks. He's extremely aware (constant scanning), processes extremely fast (can pick up the slightest movement cues from defenders), anticipates well, plans, adapts...He has pretty much everything in his game. He cheats offensively and could handle retrievals better. The first weakness is pretty normal in a weak team when down a few goals and the second one, well, he's 5'9" and mostly a rusher, in-zone manipulator. He has all the technical ability to become better at them and he's already super inside-driven so it's not an issue of engagement.

Mitchell Brown: November 17th, 2022 - Regina Pats vs. Winnipeg ICE - WHL

The best single-game performance I've seen in a long time. He led the game in just about everything other than points, showing the complete skill set in the process. The shot's a 9, no doubt. It will be a generation-defining shot: how he positions his feet, hands, the drag motion, and his ability to modulate the release according to the information in front of him. He's playing slower now, which benefits his game overall. It makes his changes of pace more dynamic. His edges are much better than I've previously thought: he turned an outside edge cut into a heel-to-heel while handling the puck, then cut back across the net front under pressure for his goal 10 seconds into the contest. As he gets stronger, the stride will only improve. Handling: always attacking an angle, changing pace, hip pocket, deceiving constantly. Playmaking continues to level up, now he's manipulating defenders and throwing look-off hook passes through defenders and slipping pucks through tiny windows. Used the Makar move – step inside, draw pressure, stop, explode off the inside edge – to beat pressure from the point twice. Players take runs at him and just bounce off. Even showed some defensive ability in this game, defending 1-on-1s while skating backwards and mostly excelling. Grabbed a few stops on the backcheck. Then, there's all of his off-puck routes, getting inside positioning, well-timed movements into space, and always keeping his stick free. Even managed to redirect a pass towards the net with his stick between the defender's legs. This dude is out here doing literally anything and everything and looking unstoppable in the process. Haven't seen a CHLer like this since McDavid.

Mitchell Brown: November 13th, 2022 - Regina Pats vs. Saskatoon Blades - WHL

A tame game for Bedard's standards, but everything was still visible. How quickly he reads defenders and attacks their vulnerabilities is fascinating. He baits pivots, cuts inside on their heels, waits for them to follow his cutback before accelerating, moves pucks across his body at lightning speed to wait for reactions. So many of these rushes will be even more effective against pros as he'll have more support and defenders are more likely to react to his high-pace trickery. Some difficulty connecting with his passes in this game, but he still continues to show his playmaking development. He gains the zone, cuts back, looks for the trailer, and even tries to manipulate with his shot threat to create the passing lane. An elite prospect.

Cam Robinson: November 11th, 2022 - Swift Current Broncos vs Regina Pats - WHL

Another night of Connor Bedard doing things that no one else in this league can do. He ended up with 2+1 - including a silky cross-ice feed into the wheelhouse of Suzdalev for an A1 on the power play, and an incredibly difficult between-the-legs goal while moving away from the net and below the goalline. Bedard's shot from out high has been less effective of late but it's mostly due to teams sticking someone on him at all times. But that's just opened up his distribution game which has shown steady improvements over the last year. He manipulates defenders with his hands, changes in speed, and cutting and curling into space to open up lanes.

He needs little to no time to recognize a seam and hit it. He works the puck all around the circumference of his body in-flight and from a stationary position on the setup.

Mitchell Brown: November 9th, 2022 - Edmonton Oil Kings vs. Regina Pats - WHL

Five points for Bedard. His growth as a playmaker continues. He's so patient in transition, cutting back and delaying for support. Manipulates just as effective at low speeds and high speeds. Manipulates defenders to open up passing lanes, often through multiple defenders. Shows awareness of his options, turning a failed play immediately into a successful one with a different decision. There are missed opportunities, some from a lack of scanning and some from a more general lack of awareness, but play selection's different for him than other players – his shot and hands are just that good. The hands also continued to sign. So many different elements: the mechanical soundness and the adaptability it creates, the hand speed and constant hip pocket puck positioning, the creativity, and the balance, edge control, and handling skill when pressured and off-balance. He fought the puck a few times, but nothing too concerning. He looks like a soon-to-be NHL superstar. That he's made such a clear effort to improve his playmaking (at the expense of other skills that would be guaranteed points) is impressive.

Cam Robinson: October 16th, 2022 - Regina Pats vs Lethbridge Hurricanes - WHL

Bedard was strong again in this one. He was using the passing game a lot more than in previous outings, showing off the quick cuts and hands to create separation from defenders and then hitting his mates in open space. He sent one backhand saucer pass from above the circles, across the grain and through two folds onto a mates stick for a wide open net which was somehow bungled. Trying to take the puck off of him while he's making those quick moves and using his body to protect and then curl back is an exercise in fruition. The shot wasn't as lethal or threatening, but that was part of the gameplan against. Lethbridge was on him tight all night, trying to deny the pass and when he did get it, they were stacking defenders between him and the goal and rushing quickly. Everything we've come to expect was there - the speed, the hands, the mind, the vision. Kid is good.

Cam Robinson: October 8th, 2022 - Swift Current Broncos vs. Regina Pats - WHL

I can't help but feeling like Bedard still hasn't hit his stride this season. And yet, he still demands the most attention and is threatening nearly every time he's on the ice. He and Sudalev are quickly becoming a must-see-tv. The skill and creativity the duo displayed in this one was on another level. Bedard was using his hands a ton in this one, but his feet were slowing down a lot too. It's like you see from the that guy at drop-in who is better than everyone else, they can generate speed, get the puck and then stop skating and just try to dangle everyone. Bright side, he was pushing into the net front area and sniffing around loose puck. His shot was there but wasn't able to get it off as often as he'd like. A goal and two helpers in a medium outing is about par for the Bedard though. He just always finds a way.

Mitchell Brown: October 8th, 2022 - Swift Current Broncos vs. Regina Pats - WHL

Three points and probably earned a couple more. Bedard completed a give-and-go, missed the net after dangling around a defender, and was robbed in-tight. But his playmaking was the most impressive part. Delayed for his teammates to skate their routes (leading to a post), dropped a puck between his legs for a chance, won positioning as he cut across the slot before finding the middle-lane driver, and connected with a wicked cross-slot backhand saucer pass for a chance. In transition, he's more patient than last year. He cuts, scans, then finds a teammate moving up the middle. He also crushed a player who tried to hit him. Really, the only flaws were a couple of poor pass receptions (unusual for him), blind passes, and two poor shots that would've been better served as the vintage outside leg wristers with a narrow stance rather than widening and leaning over his stick. He'll be a superstar.

Cam Robinson: September 29th, 2022 - Regina Pats vs Edmonton Oil Kings - WHL

An early season look at the draft-eligible version of Bedard and it wasn't a disappointment. Two goals, three points and a bushel of chances. He was good in the faceoff dot and commanded everything offensively for the Pats. Despite quite clearly being the best player on the ice and then some, I'd say he was still ironing out some of the early season issues. His handles weren't all the clean, had several attempts blocked, and during the 5-on-3 in OT, he was mobile, but wasn't able to really find a lot of real estate. Of course, he decided to just whip the most casual one-time snapshot post and in to win it as the power-play was about to expire.

We know the drill - his abilities are supreme and I quiver at what the West is going to have to deal with when he's cooking at full speed here in a few minutes.

Mitchell Brown: December 4th, 2021 - Swift Current Broncos vs. Regina Pats - WHL

Another unreal performance from Bedard. Explosive, dynamic, and creative. He's an exceptionally manipulative player, using weight shifts, hesitations, eye deception, and puck positioning to misdirect defenders – and that's while overloading them with pace. He short-circuits even the best defenders at this level. He could play a more perimeter game and thrive but instead tries to break to the middle with every possible opportunity. Scored with a wild curl-and-drag where he pulled the puck inwards so fast that the goaltender couldn't even move before the puck left his stick. The playmaking continues to improve, showing a delay game, high-level deception, and a give-and-go mindset. Really, the issues are extremely minor – and he's not even eligible until 2023. He leans back into his crossovers while accelerating instead of forward. He plays a bit too fast, often sprinting forward into defenders instead of slowing down and looking for the kick out pass when it's available. Still too reliant on that inside-out dangle that smarter defenders predict and eliminate by going for his stick. A bit too optimistic on some of his pass attempts. He looks like a superstar.

Mitchell Brown: November 27th, 2021 - Regina Pats vs. Red Deer Rebels - WHL

Watching Bedard remains an experience unlike any other in junior hockey. He's already the most skilled player in the country, and you can practically see the improvement with each passing week. After having some playmaking issues early in the season, Bedard's using the threat of his shot to set up teammates. And not just with a basic look-off. He's actively manipulating defenders by moving away from his target, waiting for them to react, and then passing through to his open teammate, often at an exceptional pace. He still blindly through pucks to the inside on occasion, but that's pretty minor at this stage. While he's not shy about shooting from the perimeter, he maximizes his odds by skating parallel to the boards instead of angling towards the net, which makes the goaltender have to adjust to him – had a couple of very close looks that could've just easily been goals from that play. The speed of his release is shocking, too. It's not just the hand speed or how quickly he prepares his upper body. It's the feet. I've never seen a player who shoots off their outside leg inside strides and crossovers like Bedard (tons of players can shoot in stride/crossovers, but it's off the inside leg). Or rather, I've never seen a player who transitions from strides and crossovers into his outside leg shot as fast. It's insane. Really, the issues are minor: he leans back into his crossovers during acceleration instead of leaning forward, he abuses the forehand-backhand deke through the triangle, and, well, that's about it. He's an immense off-puck threat, an engaged, proactive defender, and a lethal creator.

Mitchell Brown: November 23rd, 2021 - Regina Pats vs. Medicine Hat Tigers - WHL

Oh, Bedard's an elite playmaker, too? After forcing passes like crazy early in this season, Bedard's found his timing. He slows down to delay for options when possible but without losing the pace that makes him exceptional. He times his passes through sticks and skates, keenly aware of his movements cause reactions from defenders. Adjusts puck positioning to access teammates, timing said puckhandling to ensure defenders don't figure out the pass is coming. Straight-up manipulates to open lanes, too. Builds a lot of his offence around give-and-goes, but sometimes misses the opportunity to make the pass just after gaining the zone. Scored with a wild outside leg wrister essentially built into strides after knocking the puck out of mid-air on the backhand. The way that he plays off his teammates, particularly Ryker Evans, is special. Just throw a puck into his general vicinity in any direction and he'll turn into a chance. Superstar potential.

Mitchell Brown: October 30th, 2021 - Swift Current Broncos vs. Regina Pats - WHL

Statistically, this was the best game I've tracked this season from any player. Bedard led in pretty much every category. As usual, the shot was fire. It's NHL-calibre, probably among the elite already. His set ups are special: he never keeps a defender directly between him and the net. He comes in slightly off-center to ensure that he's not shooting into spin pads after changing the angle. He builds his weight shifts inside his skating movements into his desired space, allowing him to fire early than goaltenders/defenders expect. He plays with the timing of his releases, too -- he's just pulling the puck back and firing immediately. Extremely inside-driven, combining pace and deception to overwhelm defenders unlike any other prospect. For his first goal, he cut inside, deceive pressure, then loaded his weight on his outside leg for a turn -- which became the shot. He never planted the inside leg, instead only returning his toes to the ice before kicking back and powering through the shot. Combined with a handle directly into

his shooting pocket and subtle angle change. Dynamic posture and adaptability through the roof.

Bedard doesn't overhandle the puck, gets involved defensively, changes lanes constantly, wins races and escapes with possession, establishes body positioning -- has NHL details already. The skating still needs work (lacks hip engagement) but it'll improve with time. Forces passes as usual, but he passes hard and accurately to get them on his teammate's sticks -- they just can't do anything with them. Needs to slow down as a playmaking and improve his timing. Still, he's a superstar in the NHL -- I have no doubt.

Mitchell Brown: October 16th, 2021 - Regina Pats vs. Winnipeg Ice - WHL

Everything Regina does runs through Bedard or Evans, sometimes both. Bedard's adaptability really stands out; he can play any style, in any situation, and doesn't get locked into one. His pace is unrelenting and the shot's one of the best on the planet. He both has the skills surrounding his shot and the intelligence to maximize it. Loves this backhand-forehand deke, where he fakes the cut to the inside, reaches around, and then quickly taps the puck under their stick and explodes to the outside. The most translatable play, it is not. But the deceptive set up, pace, and handling skills are elite. And he's not just an individual attacker. He understands the give-and-go game, how to reposition and get open, and how to integrate his teammates into the game. Legitimately, it sometimes feels like he's deferring too much. He's a game breaker of the likes I haven't seen in years; a superstar.

Mitchell Brown: October 15th, 2021 - Winnipeg Ice vs. Regina Pats - WHL

Had never heard of Connor Bedard until this game. Eye-opening performance. Perhaps a decent prospect. In this one, Bedard was in the middle of pretty much every play. The way that he manipulates defenders and how quickly he capitalizes on it is special. Incredible pace, extreme inside drive, highly creative, and a lethal shooter. Forced a ton of passes. He tried to deceive to open the lanes, it didn't work, and then he passed anyway. But he also an outstanding one-touch/under pressure passing game. Non-stop pursuit, grabbing six steals on the forecheck and hustling back for a stop late in the game. He's faster and more explosive this year, achieving deeper skating posture than last year. He's lock to be a superstar.

Mitchell Brown: October 6th, 2021 - Regina Pats vs. Winnipeg Ice - WHL

Everything on this team either runs through Bedard or Evans. Evans was hot tonight, Bedard wasn't. He was still good. NZ play-driver who changes the point of attack and creates advantages in the OZ as a result. Took too many low-percentage shots, getting run out of space (also, his linemates can't keep up at times). Very inside-driven in the offensive zone, always in projectable ways. He's never outracing defenders to the net, instead cutting across, spinning off pressure, etc. He sees holes in defenders and space off-puck that only a handful of elite players do. Shot's an 8.5, at least. Near-perfect outside leg release with heaps of diversity, deception, and a textbook curl-and-drag wrister. Puck explodes off his stick, insane control of his placement, and he always sets up his shots to ensure they get through. Need to see a bit more playmaking sometimes, although he tried a pretty advanced through pass in transition. It didn't work. He's a generational player at this stage.