

2012 Stanley Cup Playoffs - Minnesota Players and Minnesota Connections

The 2012 Stanley Cup Playoffs have begun and they should be interesting as always. Since the Minnesota Wild missed the playoffs (for the 4th straight season), I thought I'd put together a list of Minnesota hockey players and players with Minnesota connections to let everyone know there's still a reason to watch the games and cheer for some former Wild players and players from Minnesota.

I also included players that played hockey in Minnesota for at least a whole season meaning their home games were in Minnesota.

I included some interesting facts in there as well.

These are by seed and opponent:

Eastern Conference

#1 Seed New York Rangers vs #8 Seed Ottawa Senators

New York Rangers

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
#41 Stu Bickel	D	51	0 9 9	Chanhausen, MN	2007-8 Univ. of MN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> undrafted; one season with the Gophers in 2007-8 and he signed with Anaheim 					
#10 Marian Gaborik	RW	82	41 35 76	Trencin, SVK	2000-9 MN Wild
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafted by Minnesota in 2000 1st round (3rd overall); Minnesota Wild's All-time Goal Leader with 219, All-time Points leader with 437, Single-season goal leader with 42 (& #2 w/38), Single-season points leader with 83 and All-time Injury leader with 35 (Does that seem high?) 					
#27 Ryan McDonagh	D	82	7 25 32	St. Paul, MN	HS(Cretin-Derham Hall)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafted in 2007 1st round (12th overall) by Montreal, Acquired by NYR as part of the Scott Gomez trade; won 2007 Minnesota Mr. Hockey Award; played college hockey at Univ. of Wisconsin 					
#38 Michael Sauer	D	19	1 2 3	St. Cloud, MN	HS (St. Cloud Tech)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafted by Rangers in 2005 40th overall, draft pick was acquired by Ranger in the Brian Leetch trade; younger brother of Kurt Sauer (Phoenix Coyotes) and former MN Vikings Linebacker Craig Sauer; made NHL Debut at Madison Square Garden on March 24th, 2009 against....the Minnesota Wild 					
#28 John Scott	D	35	0 1 1	Edmonton, AB, CAN	2008-10 MN Wild
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> undrafted, 6' 8", 270 lbs., played 4 years at Michigan Tech, does this to Canucks 					
#21 Derek Stepan	C	82	17 34 51	Hastings, MN	HS (Hastings)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafted in 2008 2nd round (51st overall) by New York Rangers; Dad, Brad, was also drafted by Rangers, in 1985; captain and led 2010 USA World JR Championship team to the Gold with 4 G & 10 A which also led the tourney; 4th player to have a hat trick in his first career game in the NHL 					

Ottawa Senators

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
#17 Filip Kuba	D	73	6 26 32	Ostrava, CZE	2000-06 MN Wild
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafted in 1995 8th round (192nd overall) by Florida; 2-time Captain of the MN Wild (11/2001, 11/2005); scored the 1st playoff goal in Minnesota Wild Franchise History on April 10, 2003 at the Pepsi Center in Colorado at 5:33 of the 1st period on the power play with assists to Andrew Brunette and Sergei Zholtok 					
#42 Jim O'Brien	C	28	3 3 6	Maplewood, MN	2006-7 Univ. of MN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafted in 2007 1st round (29th overall) by Ottawa; scored 1st NHL goal on February 15, 2012 					

#2 Seed Boston Bruins vs #7 Seed Washington Capitals

Boston Bruins

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
#67 Benoit Pouliot	LW	74	16 16 32	Alfred, ONT, CAN	2006-9 MN Wild
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafted by Minnesota in 2005 (4th overall); traded on November 23, 2009 to Montreal for Guillaume Latendresse; signed as a free agent by Boston on July 1, 2011 					
#12 Brian Rolston	RW	70	7 17 24	Flint, MI	2005-8 MN Wild
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafted in 1991 1st round (11th overall) by New Jersey; captain for the Wild (2/06, 10/06, 11/06, 1/07); 1 of 2 players to score 30 or more goals in a single season for the Minnesota Wild: holds single season record for most power play goals in a single season for the Wild (15 in 2005-6); All-Star in 2006-7 representing the Wild; traded days before free agency in 2008 for a 4th rnd pick - that pick was then part of the trade that Kyle Brodziak; was part of trade that sent Claude Lemieux to NJ in 1999 and part of the trade that brought Ray Bourque to COL in 2000; traded to Boston on February 27, 2012 - since trade has scored 3 G & 12 A in 21 games with Boston.; gotta love the slapper from Rolston! 					
#6 Greg Zanon	D	56	3 5 8	Burnaby, BC, CAN	2009-12 MN Wild
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafted in 2000 5th round (156th overall) by Ottawa; The Zanonater! Will sacrifice any part of his body to block a shot; I joke that he goes to shooting camps to practice blocking shots; traded on February 27, 2012 to Boston for Defenseman Steven Kampfer 					
Record GAA Sv%					
#35 Anton Khudobin	G	1	1-0, 1.00, .978	UST-Kamenogorsk, KAZ	2009-10 MN Wild
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafted by Minnesota in 2004 (206th Overall); traded to BOS on 2/28/2011 for Jeff Penner & Mikko Lehtonen 					

Washington Capitals

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
#26 Matt Hendricks	C	78	4 5 9	Blaine, MN	2000-4 St. Cloud State
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafted in 2000 5th round (131st overall) by Nashville; played High School Hockey at Blaine High School winning the State Championship in 2000; toughed it out in the minors from 2004 to 2009 before getting a chance with Colorado in the NHL 					
#42 Joel Ward	RW	73	6 12 18	North York, ONT, CAN	2006-7 MN Wild
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> undrafted; signed as free agent by Wild in 2006; signed as free agent by Nashville in 2008; had 7 G, 6 A in 12 playoff games in 2011 Stanley Cup Playoffs; signed as free agent by Washington on 					

July 1, 2011

#3 Seed Florida Panthers vs #6 Seed New Jersey Devils

Florida Panthers

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
#52 Jason Garrison	D	77	16 17 33	White Rock, BC, CAN	2005-8 Univ. of MN-Duluth

- undrafted; played 3 seasons at UMD (9 G, 20 A in 87 Games Played); scored his 16th goal of the season on March 23, 2012 breaking Jay Bouwmeester's [record for most goals by a defenseman in a single season](#) for the Florida Panthers franchise history

#10 John Madden	C	31	3 0 3	Toronto, ONT, CAN	2010-11 MN Wild
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- undrafted in 1993 despite having 49 G and 75 A in 43 games for the Barrie Colts of the COJHL; had 180 points (80 G, 100 A) in 160 games in his college hockey career at the Univ. of Michigan winning a National Championship in 1996; tied for NCAA record for [most short-handed goals in a single season](#) with 10; won the Frank J. Selke Award as best defensive forward in the NHL in 2001; won Stanley Cups in 2000 and 2003; signed as free agent by Wild on August 6, 2010; signed as free agent by Florida on January 4, 2012

Record GAA Sv%

#60 Jose Theodore	G	53	22-16-22 2.46 .917	Laval, QC, CAN	2010-11 MN Wild
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- drafted in 1994 2nd round (44th overall) by Montreal; won the Vezina (Best Goaltender) and the Hart (MVP) Trophy in 2002 (30-24-10, 2.11 GAA, .931 Sv%); signed as free agent by Wild on October 2, 2010; signed as free agent by Florida on July 1, 2011

New Jersey Devils

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
#20 Ryan Carter	C	72	4 4 8	White Bear Lake, MN	2004-6 MN State

Mankato

- undrafted; scored 58 points (34 G, 24 A) in 2 seasons (76 games) at MN State Mankato; signed as a free agent by Anaheim after sophomore season in 2006; won Stanley Cup in 2007 with Anaheim Ducks; claimed off waivers from Florida Panthers on October 26th, 2011

#9 Zach Parise	LW	82	31 38 69	Minneapolis, MN	1998-2002 Shattuck-St. Mary's
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- drafted in 2003 1st round (17th overall) by New Jersey, New Jersey traded up to get him and the Wild picked 20th that year (Brent Burns); His father, J. P. Parise, played and coached for the North Stars, he was born while his father was an assistant coach for the North Stars so he was probably wearing "the N" since birth, if that doesn't say Minnesotan, I don't know what does; last two seasons at Shattuck, he had 146 G & 194 A in 125 games!; 1st Univ. of North Dakota freshman to be named a Hobey Baker award finalist ((26 G, 35 A in 39 games); led the 2004 USA World JR team to their first Gold Medal with 5 G & 6 A in 6 games and awarded Tournament MVP & Best Forward; scored tying goal in 2010 Olympic Gold Medal game that sent it into OT; free agent on July 1st, expect the Wild to make a HUGE push to sign him!

#15 Petr Sykora	RW	82	21 23 44	Plzen, CZE	2009-10 MN Wild
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- drafted in 1995 1st round (18th overall) by New Jersey; 2-time Stanley Cup winner (2000 (NJ) & 2009 (PIT)); In 2008 Stanley Cup Finals Game 5, scored game-winning goal in triple OT, after telling Pierre McGuire (reporter between benches) he was going to score the game-winning goal; only played 14 games with the Wild in 2009-10 season (concussion) and was released on waivers; attended 2011 training camp with New Jersey on a tryout & signed on October 5, 2011

#2 Marek Zidlicky	D	63	2 20 22	Most, CZE	2008-11 MN Wild
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- drafted in 2001 6th round (176th overall) by New York Rangers; traded to Nashville with Rem

Murray and Tomas Kloucek in Mike Dunham trade in 2002; in 4 years with NSH, had 35 G (25 on the PP) & 140 A in 307 games; traded to Minnesota for Ryan Jones (& 2nd rnd draft pick) on 7/1/2008; in almost 4 years with MN, scored 25 G (17 on the PP) & 84 A in 200 games; traded to NJ for D Kurtis Foster, F Nick Palmieri, F Stephane Veilleux, 2012 2nd rnd draft pick & conditional 2013 3rd rnd draft pick (if NJ gets to the Eastern Conf. Finals) on 2/24/2012

- Before the 2010 season, he came into the hockey store I worked at and purchased a jock. I asked him, "Is that for you?" which sounds like a weird question but I thought he would've been able to get one from the Wild equipment manager. I wanted to tell him he was traded just for fun but couldn't do it.

#4 Seed Pittsburgh Penguins vs #5 Seed Philadelphia Flyers

Pittsburgh Penguins

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
#87 Sidney Crosby	C	22	8 29 37	Cole Harbour, NS, CAN	2002-3 Shattuck-St. Mary's
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drafted in 2005 1st round (1st overall) by Pittsburgh; In one season with Shattuck-St. Mary's and 57 games, he scored 72 G & 90 A and led them to a National Championship; scored game-winning goal in OT in the 2010 Olympic Gold Medal game for Team Canada; I remember working at a hockey store in 2003 and we carried a Sherwood hockey stick with Crosby's name on it. I still wonder how that's possible since he was only 15 years old. Does anyone else remember that?
#9 Pascal Dupuis	RW	82	25 34 59	Laval, QC, CAN	2000-6 MN Wild
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undrafted; signed as free agent on August 18, 2000 by Wild; had 1st assist on 1st game-winning playoff goal in Wild Franchise History; traded on February 9, 2007 to New York Rangers for Adam Hall; traded 18 days later on February 27, 2007 to Atlanta; traded a year later on February 26, 2008 as part of the Marain Hossa trade to Pittsburgh; won Stanley Cup in 2009
#7 Paul Martin	D	73	2 25 27	Minneapolis, MN	2000-3 Univ. of MN
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drafted in 2000 in 2nd round (62nd overall) by New Jersey; Won NCAA National Championships in 2002 & 2003 with Univ. of Minnesota Gophers; Minnesota Mr. Hockey Award winner in 2000; signed with Pittsburgh on July 1, 2010
#4 Zbynek Michalek	D	62	2 11 13	Jindrichuv Hradec, CZE	2003-4 MN Wild
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undrafted; older brother of Ottawa Senators winger Milan Michalek; won Calder Cup 2003 with Houston Aeros (AHL); traded on August 26, 2005 to Phoenix for Erik Westrum & Dustin Wood; when I saw his name, I thought it was pronounced Zib-a-nick Mick-a-lick, which I thought was fun to say, found out later the pronunciation is, I think, Zi-ba-nick Mi-call-lick; signed with Pittsburgh on July 1, 2010
#2 Matt Niskanen	D	75	4 17 21	Virginia, MN	2005-7 Univ. of MN Duluth
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drafted in 2005 (28th overall) by Dallas; played 2 seasons at the Univ. of MN-Duluth (10 G, 35 A in 75 games); signed with Iowa after sophomore season, later signed with Dallas in 2007; traded on February 21, 2011 with James Neal to Pittsburgh for Alex Goligoski
#12 Richard Park	RW	54	7 7 14	Seoul, KOR	2001-4 MN Wild
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drafted in 1994 2nd round (50th overall) by Pittsburgh; 2nd Korean-born person to play in the NHL (Jim Paek); scored game-winning goal in Game 6 of 2003 Stanley Cup Playoffs Western Conference Quarterfinals against Colorado

Philadelphia Flyers

No Players from Minnesota or connected to Minnesota

Western Conference

#1 Seed Vancouver Canucks vs #8 Seed Los Angeles Kings

Vancouver Canucks

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
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#41 Andrew Alberts	D	44	2 1 3	Minneapolis, MN	1999 Benilde-St. Margaret's
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- drafted in 2001 6th round (179th overall) by Boston; won MSHSL State Class A Championship in 1999 with Benilde-St. Margaret's; played from 2001-5 for Boston College (16 G, 50 A in 149 Games); after senior season, signed amateur tryout with Providence Bruins (AHL); traded on March 3, 2010 from Carolina to Vancouver for 3rd round draft choice in 2010 Entry Draft

#4 Keith Ballard	D	47	1 6 7	Baudette, MN	2001-4 Univ. of MN
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- drafted in 2002 1st round (11th overall) by Buffalo; helped lead Univ. of MN to back-to-back NCAA National Championships in 2002 & 2003; scored 100 points (33 G, 67 A) in his 119 games of college hockey; traded twice before going pro, July 3, 2003 to Colorado for Steve Reinprecht, March 9, 2004 to Phoenix (w/Derek Morris) to Phoenix for Ossi Vaananen, Chris Gratton & PHO 2nd rnd choice (Paul Stastny); first 5 years in NHL with PHO & FLA (33 G, 116 A in 397 games), since being traded to Vancouver on June 25, 2010 (3 G, 11 A in 112 games); he's had a couple concussions along with a ligament sprain in his right knee but he's gone from a top-2 defenseman to a bottom-2 defenseman and I'm not sure if they injuries are the reason or not; currently out with a concussion suffered on February 5, 2012

#25 Andrew Ebbett	C	18	5 1 6	Calgary, AB, CAN	2009-10 MN Wild
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- undrafted; claimed off waivers by Minnesota from Chicago on November 21, 2009; signed as free agent by Phoenix on July 2, 2010; signed as free agent by Vancouver on July 1, 2011

#21 Mason Raymond	LW	55	10 10 20	Cochrane, AB, CAN	2005-7 Univ. of MN Duluth
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- drafted by Vancouver in 2005 2nd round (51st overall); scored 25 G & 49 A in 79 games at the Univ. of MN-Duluth; suffered fractured vertebrae in Game 6 of the 2011 Stanley Cup Finals

Los Angeles Kings

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
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#33 Willie Mitchell	D	76	5 18 23	Port McNeill, BC, CAN	2001-6 MN Wild
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- drafted in 1996 8th round (199th overall) by New Jersey; traded from New Jersey on March 4, 2001 for Sean O'Donnell; traded on March 6, 2006 to Dallas for Martin Skoula and Shawn Belle; I saw his 1st career goal in person on March 25, 2001 going to a game as part of the waiting list for season tickets

#2 Seed St. Louis Blues vs #7 Seed San Jose Sharks

St. Louis Blues

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
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#42 David Backes	C	82	24 30 54	Minneapolis, MN	2003-6 MN State Mankato
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- drafted in 2003 2nd round (62nd overall) by St. Louis; played high school at Spring Lake Park, MN scoring 77 G and 102 A in 73 games; his high school team also included future Wild player Jarod Palmer; scored 46 G and 73 A in 115 games and 3 seasons at Minnesota State Mankato; On September 9, 2011 he was named the 20th captain in St. Louis Blues franchise history

#15 Jamie Langenbrunner	RW	70	6 18 24	Cloquet, MN	HS (Cloquet)
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- drafted in 1993 2nd round (35th overall) by Dallas; scored 150 points (49 G, 101 A) in 70 games

and 3 seasons (1990-3) at Cloquet High School; won Stanley Cups in 1999 (Dallas) & 2003 (NJ); named captain of 2010 USA Olympic team that won silver medal; [2nd in games played](#) of all Minnesotans to play in the NHL

#74 T.J. Oshie RW 80 19 35 54 Mt. Vernon, WA HS (Warroad)

- drafted in 2005 1st round (24th overall) by St. Louis; [scored 104 G and 137 A in 93 games](#) at Warroad High School from 2003-5 winning state titles in 2003 & 2005; scored 142 points (59 G and 83 A) in 3 seasons at the Univ. of North Dakota from 2005-8; signed with St. Louis on May 13, 2008; scored first career goal on October 22, 2008 against Detroit

San Jose Sharks

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
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#61 Justin Braun	D	66	2 9 11	Minneapolis, MN	HS (White Bear Lake)
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- drafted in 2007 7th round (201st overall) by San Jose; following senior season at White Bear Lake H.S., played 2 seasons in USHL (2005-6) scoring 13 points (2 G, 11 A) for the Green Bay Gamblers; scored 88 points (23 G, 65 A) in his 4 seasons of college hockey playing at UMass (2006-10); made NHL debut on November 26, 2010 scoring 1st goal in his 4th game against Vancouver on December 2, 2010

#88 Brent Burns	D	81	11 26 37	Barrie, ON, CAN	2003-11 MN Wild
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- drafted by Minnesota in 2003 1st round (20th overall); started NHL career at forward but shifted to defense by coach Jacques Lemaire; due to lockout was able to [play defense all season in the AHL for the Houston Aeros](#) (11 G, 16 A in 73 games); named best defenseman at 2008 World Championships helping Canada win a Silver medal; 2011 NHL All-Star game representing Minnesota; traded to San Jose (w/2012 2nd round pick) during 2011 NHL Draft for Devin Setoguchi, Charlie Coyle & San Jose's 1st round pick (Zack Phillips)

#9 Martin Havlat	RW	39	7 20 27	Mlada Boleslav, CZE	2009-11 MN Wild
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- drafted in 1999 1st round (26th overall) by Ottawa; signed as free agent by Minnesota - 6-year \$30 million deal on July 1, 2009; represented Wild at the 2011 NHL All-Star game; traded on July 3, 2011 to San Jose for Dany Heatley

#18 Dominic Moore	C	79	4 21 25	Thornhill, ON, CAN	2007-8 MN Wild
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- drafted in 2000 3rd round (95th overall) by New York Rangers; traded on February 27, 2007 for a 2007 3rd round pick; claimed off waivers by Toronto on January 11, 2008; traded on February 16, 2011 to San Jose for a 2nd round pick; has been with 9 teams and traded 7 times; younger brother of Steve Moore who is known for "The Bertuzzi Incident" - wow! I never knew that! Would've thought to of heard that at some point

#3 Seed Phoenix Coyotes vs #6 Seed Chicago Blackhawks

Phoenix Coyotes

No Players from Minnesota or connected to Minnesota

Patrick O'Sullivan played for them this season but is in the minors and apparently not on the playoff roster

Chicago Blackhawks

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
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#15 Andrew Brunette	LW	78	12 15 27	Sudbury, ON, CAN	2 stints with MN Wild
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- drafted in 1993 7th round (174th overall) by Washington; 1st big free agent acquisition by Minnesota; played with Wild from 2001-4 & 2008-11; had a consecutive game streak of 509;

scored greatest goal in Wild Franchise history in 2003 Western Conference Quarterfinals that also ended Patrick Roy's career as he would retire after that season; Minnesota Franchise History stats: 2nd in Goals, 4th in Assists, Points and Games Played; signed as free agent by Chicago on July 1, 2011

#8 Nick Leddy D 82 3 34 37 Eden Prairie, MN 2009-10 Univ. of MN

- drafted by Minnesota in 2009 1st round (16th overall); traded on February 12, 2010 with Kim Johnsson to Chicago for Cam Barker - might go down as the worst trade in Wild history as Cam Barker didn't amount to anything for the Wild and since trade at all;

#6 Sean O'Donnell D 51 0 7 7 Ottawa, ON, CAN 2000-1 MN Wild

- drafted in 1991 6th round (123rd overall) by Buffalo; claimed by Minnesota in 2000 Expansion Draft; traded on March 4, 2001 to New Jersey for Willie Mitchell; won Stanley Cup in 2007 (Anaheim); signed as free agent by Chicago on July 1, 2011

#19 Jonathan Toews C 59 29 28 57 Winnipeg, MB, CAN 2004-5 Shattuck-St. Mary's

- drafted in 2006 1st round (3rd overall) by Chicago behind Erik Johnson (STL) & Jordan Staal (PIT) and ahead of Nicklas Backstrom (WSH) & Phil Kessel (BOS); played one season at Shattuck-St. Mary's in Faribault, MN in 2004-5 scoring 110 points (48 G, 62 A) in 64 games; played 2 seasons at the Univ. of North Dakota scoring 85 points (40 G, 45 A) in 76 games; won Stanley Cup in 2010 winning the Conn Smyth Trophy (Playoff MVP) in the process; been out with a concussion since February 19, 2012 but expected to play in the playoffs

#4 Seed Nashville Predators vs #5 Seed Detroit Red Wings

Nashville Predators

#/Name	Pos.	GP	2011-12 Stats G A Pts	Birthplace	Connection to MN
#38 Jack Hillen	D	55	2 4 6	Minnetonka, MN	HS (Acad. of Holy Angels)

- undrafted; scored 130 point in 4 seasons at the Academy of Holy Angels; scored 76 points (19 G, 57 A) in 151 games and 4 years at Colorado College (2004-8); signed by New York Islanders after completing his college hockey career on April 1, 2008; signed as free agent by Nashville on August 8, 2011

Detroit Red Wings

No Players from Minnesota or connected to Minnesota

Wow! That's a lot more than I thought there was going to be. Minnesota is well represented in the NHL and the 2012 Stanley Cup Playoffs so fans still have someone to cheer for while they watch the Road to the Stanley Cup! Enjoy the playoffs everybody! There's [nothing better!](#)

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