



SEATTLE KRAKEN

Pacific Division

Preseason Power Ranking **19**

x0

x0
WESTERN CONF

x0
PRESIDENTS'

107
FRANCHISE WINS

34-35-13
81 Points
2023-24 SEASON

5th
DIVISION

2023-24: Missed Playoffs

Seattle, WA - Climate Pledge Arena (17,151)
Head Coach: Dan Bylsma (0-0-0, 1st Season)

Kraken Hunting Offense, Playoff Berth

In their first season as a franchise, Seattle played like most expansions teams play (Vegas has been a notable exception to that rule). The following season, the team exploded for 100 points and made it to the second round of the playoffs. Last year, the Kraken finished at .500 in terms of point percentage. In three years, we've seen three very different versions of the Kraken, what will the team look like this season? That result is heavily dependent on Seattle finding more offense after scoring the fourth-fewest goals in the league. The offensive futility came back to bite the Kraken in overtime; the 13 overtime losses nearly matched their combined overtime losses from the two prior seasons. Goaltending was a strength, but there was only so much the net minders could do without goal support.

Forwards

Can Seattle get **Matty Beniers** back to his Calder Trophy form of 2022-23? That season, he had 57 points but saw his production hit a sophomore slump and he finished the 2023-24 season with just 37 points. Despite the struggles, the Kraken showed their support by signing the 21-year-old to a handsome contract extension. Beniers will work on the top line with **Jared McCann** who led the team with 29 goals. **Jordan Eberle** had 20 or more goals in his first two season with Kraken, but the veteran of 14 years fell a bit short of that mark with 17 pucks in the net last year. **Chandler Stephenson** brings Stanley Cup experience from his time with the Golden Knights and he has a streak of three straight seasons with at least 75 games played and 50 points.

Oliver Bjorkstrand was the only player outside of McCann to reach the 20 goal mark, but he patrols the third line, so the Kraken will be intent on getting more production out of second-line players such as **Jaden Schwartz** and **Andre Burakovsky**. **Eeli Tolvanen** could eventually make the jump up to the second line following a career-best year that featured 16 goals and 25 assists. **Tye Kartye** appeared in 77 games as a rookie and could also make a push up the lineup. **Andre Burakovsky** has been hampered by injuries in his time with Seattle but would provide a needed offensive boost if he can get back to a form that included 150 points in 191 games with Colorado over three seasons. The Kraken will welcome anyone who can put the puck in the back of the net, Seattle's shooting percentage was just 9.11% last year, which ranked them 29th in the league and a precipitous fall from a 11.57% that ranked second in the NHL the year before.



Photo via Everett Herald

Defense/Goaltending

Seattle goaltenders kept their end of the bargain last season, the blue line defenders largely did not. The front office found an expensive, but hopefully successful, remedy by signing **Brandon Montour** who comes to Washington fresh off a Stanley Cup with the Florida Panthers. Montour should be an upgrade defensively but perhaps most importantly, he'll provide instant offense following a season that included 33 points in 66 regular season games. He added 3 goals and 8 assists in the Panthers' successful playoff run. Per the NHL, Montour ranked third in D-men in offensive zone time percentage and he has a snapshot so heavy that even the toughest opponents may think twice about standing in front of it. **Vince Dunn** is also capable of providing offensive production

Whether **Joey Daccord** or **Philipp Grubauer** starts in net for the Kraken, Seattle feels comfortable either way. Ignore Daccord's record, look instead at his remarkable .916% save percentage and his 2.46 goals-against average. While Grubauer's numbers didn't quite reach those impressive ranks, he is a very capable goaltender who would be the unquestioned starter on many other teams in the NHL. He appeared in 36 games with a GAA of 2.86. Despite a career save percentage of .911, he hasn't been able to turn in a season better than .900%, although he got as close to that number as possible with a save percentage of .899% and he did turn in two shutouts.

The Bottom Line

"Disco" Dan Bylsma becomes the second coach in franchise history. Can he capitalize on rabid fan support in Seattle and make the most of this roster? Based on his past pedigree, the answer will hopefully be "yes". He won the 2009 Stanley Cup with the Pittsburgh Penguins and he's actually familiar with the roster, especially the young pieces, having coached Seattle's AHL Coachella Valley the past two years. Seattle simply must get more offense this year. The top line is exciting with star potential, but there are question marks that get bigger the deeper you get into the depth chart. In fairness to the front office, they put their money where their mouth was in the offseason, spending over \$100 million on new additions. With some heavyweights in the Pacific, Seattle could find themselves on the outside of the playoff picture, but they should at least be in the mix for a wild card spot if everything goes according to plan. For those playoff hopes to be realized, Seattle will need to avoid a slow start like the one the team endured last year.

2024-25 Projection: 40-33-9 (89 points) - 5th in Pacific



