



ST. LOUIS BLUES

Central Division

Preseason Power Ranking **18**



2058
FRANCHISE WINS

43-33-6
92 Points
2023-24 SEASON

5th
DIVISION

St. Louis, MO - Enterprise Center (18,096)
Head Coach: Drew Bannister (30-19-5, 2nd Season)

2023-24: Missed Playoffs

Can Blues Avoid the Blues?

The Blues looked like a different team when Drew Bannister took over as head coach midway through the season, but unfortunately a 13-14-1 start proved to be too much to overcome. St. Louis finished the season with 92 points and while that number would have made the postseason in the Eastern Conference, it wasn't quite enough in the Western. The Blues, while strong on defense and especially stingy in net, suffered offensive woes that eventually did the team in. While there was obvious disappointment in not reaching the playoffs, especially considering the team is only a few years removed from a Stanley Cup Championship, the Blues did improve by 11 points last season.

Forwards

With just a little more offense last season, St. Louis would have been a playoff team. While the Blues didn't make a ton of moves in the offseason, they did make a couple of strategic signings that the front office believes will be enough to get over the hump and snap a two season postseason-less streak. **Dylan Holloway** is probably the biggest "splash" signing. He saw limited playing time with the Oilers the past two seasons, but the 14th pick in the 2020 draft will have every opportunity with St. Louis, perhaps even on the top line. He did net five goals in Edmonton's run to the Stanley Cup Finals. Another key signing is **Alexandre Texier** who joins the team from Columbus. He finally played a full season with the Blue Jackets after not topping 50 games in his first four seasons and he put together a 30 point season. Like Holloway, he's young, which means that the Blues still have the opportunity to mold him into the kind of player who can succeed in this system.

Those new additions will supplement the current stars like **Robert Thomas**, who has wracked up healthy assists numbers in each of the past three years including a career-high 60 last season. He played in every game and finished with 86 points. The Blues are loaded at center, with **Pavel Buchnevich** tallying 27 goals and third-liner **Brayden Schenn** chipping in 20 goals and 26 assists. **Jordan Kyrou** can play center, but will likely slot in at wing to take advantage of his sharp shooting that included a team-best 31 goals. He could certainly find himself on the top line if the coaching staff decides to play Kyrou in that spot over **Jake Neighbours**, although technically Neighbours was more productive with the ice time he was given last year. Kyrou drew the ire of the fanbase for what was perceived as a lack of effort, but he eventually quieted concerns with a strong second-half of the season.



Photo via Elite Prospects

Defense/Goaltending

Between the offense and the defense, the latter was the strength of the team and GM Doug Armstrong bolstered the blue line in the offseason by bringing in **Philip Broberg** from Edmonton. Broberg is only 23, and while the Blues only have him under contract for two years, they are hopeful that the native of Sweden can bolster an already strong defense anchored by **Nick Leddy** and **Colton Parayko**. Leddy posted a +14 rating which was tops on a team that had more goals scored against them than goals for. The play of the top line will be even more important considering **Torey Krug** will miss the entire season. **Justin Faulk** has shown the propensity for offensive production in the past and he's only a couple of years removed from a +41 season that included 47 points. Injuries have prevented him from achieving anything similar in the past two seasons, but perhaps the third time can be the charm.

The Blues boast a strong one-two punch at goaltender with **Jordan Binnington** and **Joel Hofer** who together turned in a very impressive .906% save percentage and both had GAAs of under 3.00. Binnington was the workhorse, appearing in 57 games and finishing with a record of 28-21-5, although he did suffer through a couple of untimely slumps last season. If those struggles pop up again this year, Hofer is well equipped to shoulder more of the load. In any case, if both players remain healthy, they'll put up similar numbers to last season which will give the Blues a chance in just about every game they play.

The Bottom Line

The main roadblock between the Blues and the postseason is more offense. Did the team do enough in the offseason to close the gap? If the team stays healthy, the answer might be "yes", but there are still concerns, and it remains to be seen if the third and fourth lines can contribute enough on offense. St. Louis will again rely on their defense and strong goaltending as the Blues embark upon Drew Bannister's first full season. The team will grind out their victories with physical play on the boards and being stingy in the middle of the ice, too. The strategy of the front office is to obtain players like Dylan Holloway, Alexandre Texier, and Philip Broberg who should be entering their physical prime and maximize their potential, even if those players are signed to one or two-year contracts. If the strategy works, St. Louis could surprise a lot of teams and could even flirt with competition at the top of the Central. More realistically, the team will be fighting for a wild card spot at the end of the year.

2024-25 Projection: 41-33-8 (90 points) - 5th in Central



Jordan Kyrrou



Photo via Elite Prospects

BLUES 5-YEAR POINT TREND

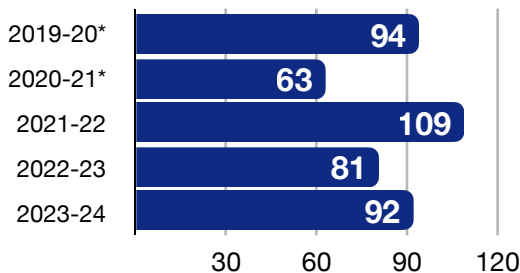


Photo via Itinerant Fan

Projected STL Lineup

Forwards

	Left Wing	Center	Right Wing
Line 1	81 Dylan Holloway	18 Robert Thomas	63 Jake Neighbours
Line 2	9 Alexandre Texier	89 Pavel Buchnevich	25 Jordan Kyrrou
Line 3	71 Mathieu Joseph	10 Brayden Schenn	42 Kasperii Kapanen
Line 4	13 Alexey Toropchenko	12 Radek Faska	26 Nathan Walker

Defense

Line 1	4 Nick Leddy	55 Colton Parayko
Line 2	6 Philip Broberg	72 Justin Faulk
Line 3	22 Ryan Suter	51 Matthew Kessel

Goaltenders

Starter	50 Jordan Binnington
Backup	30 Joel Hofer

2023-24 NHL Ranks

POINTS - 92 (16th)
 GF - 234 (24th)
 GA - 248 (13th)
 PP% - 18.00 (25th)
 PK% - 78.60 (20th)
 SV% - .906 (7th)

5 < Number to Know

The Blues were tied for the most shootout wins last season with the Maple Leafs and Senators, finishing 5-2 in games decided by a shootout with Binnington in net for all seven games.

PLAYER SPOTLIGHT NICK LEDDY - D



2023-24 Statistics

GP	G	A	PTS	+/-
82	3	25	28	+14

At 33, Leddy's most productive seasons are probably behind him, but the Blues are banking on the fact that he is still capable of playing on the top defensive line. If you care to dive into the advanced analytics, the numbers he and lineman Colton Parayko produced weren't always ideal, but there's no question the veteran leadership Leddy provides to the team. He has over 1,000 games under his belt and a Stanley Cup, and he's as competitive as they come.

2024-25 Schedule

October 2024				
	SEA 4:30		SJ 10:30	VGK 10:00
	MIN 7:30		NYI 8:00	CAR 7:00
	WPG 8:00		TOR 7:00	MTL 7:00
	OTT 7:00		PHI 7:00	

November 2024				
				TOR 7:00
	TB 8:00		UTA 7:00	WSH 7:00
	BOS 8:00		BUF 7:30	BOS 1:00
CAR 5:00	MIN 8:00		SJ 8:00	NYI 7:30
	NYR 7:00		NJ 7:00	PHI 7:00

December 2024				
	WPG 8:00		CGY 9:00	EDM 10:00
	VAN 10:00		SJ 8:00	DAL 8:00
NYR 6:00	NJ 8:00		TB 7:00	FLA 7:00
	DET 7:00			NSH 8:00
BUF 3:00			CHI 5:00	

January 2025				
			OTT 8:00	CBJ 7:00
	MIN 8:00		ANA 8:00	CBJ 7:00
	CGY 8:00		CGY 8:00	UTA 9:00
	VGK 6:00		VGK 8:00	DAL 7:00
	VAN 7:30			COL 9:00

February 2025				
UTA 7:00		EDM 8:00		FLA 8:00
				CHI 7:00
2025 NHL 4 Nations Face-Off				
				WPG 7:00
COL 6:00		SEA 8:00		WSH 7:00

March 2025				
				LA 8:00
DAL 6:00		LA 10:30		ANA 10:00
			PIT 7:00	MIN 8:00
ANA 6:00		NSH 9:00		VAN 7:30
NSH 6:00		MTL 8:00		NSH 8:00
				COL 4:30

April 2025				
		DET 8:00		PIT 8:00
				COL 7:00
	WPG 7:30		EDM 10:00	SEA 10:00
		UTA 8:00		

HOME

AWAY