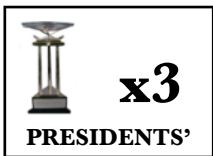




WASHINGTON CAPITALS

Metropolitan Division

Preseason Power Ranking **17**



1819
FRANCHISE WINS

40-31-11
91 Points
2023-24 SEASON

4th
DIVISION

Washington, D.C. - Capital One Arena (18,573)
Head Coach: Spencer Carbery (40-31-11, 2nd Season)

2023-24: Lost in First Round

Young Additions to Keep Caps Relevant

The Washington Capitals snuck into the playoffs last year despite scoring the fifth-fewest goals in the league and a -37 goal differential, the worst for a playoff team since 1991. The team's stay in the postseason was predictably short as they were swept out in the first round. Since the Caps' Stanley Cup win in 2018, they haven't won a playoff series in large part due to an aging roster that was second oldest in the league last year. The team made an effort to retool and improve this offseason by bringing in a host of new players.

Forwards

Alex Ovechkin is the greatest goal scorer of his generation and it looks likely that he'll end up as the NHL's all-time leader in goals by the end of his career. He needs just 42 more to break Wayne Gretzky's record of 894 career goals. **Dylan Strome** set career highs with 67 points and 27 goals and proved himself capable of playing top-line minutes. **Tom Wilson** is infamous for his occasionally dirty hits and is one of the most frequently suspended players in the game. But Wilson is a rare "goon" who is also good offensively, capable of 35-40 points and scoring 18 goals last year. 23-year-old **Connor McMichael's** play was much improved last year in his second season with 18 goals and 33 points. He will likely get more playing time this year and will have an opportunity to prove himself. **Pierre-Luc Dubois** arrived in a trade from Los Angeles and while the 26-year-old is extremely talented, he's come under criticism for a lack of effort in the past and has essentially forced his way off of 3 different teams since 2021. The Kings traded him just one season into an 8-year extension. Dubois' 40 points last year were a big drop off from the prior two years and it's hard to know what to expect from him. **Andrew Mangiapane** was obtained from Calgary and has topped 40 points each of the last three seasons. He is capable of more, as shown by his 35-goal season in '21-22. **Sonny Milano** scored 15 goals in 49 games and seems to have solidified a spot in the NHL after years of bouncing between the minors and the big leagues.



Tom Wilson

Photo via AP News

Hendrix Lapierre was the Caps' 1st round pick in 2020 and is a promising young player. He saw 51 games of NHL action last year and appeared in all four of Washington's postseason games. After the Capitals were eliminated, he was sent to their AHL team, the Hershey Bears, where he led the Bears to their 2nd straight AHL championship and won Playoff MVP. **Aliaksei Protas** scored a career high 29 points last season and could be given more opportunities this year. **Brandon Duhaime** is fast, physical, and able to generate offensive opportunities while his team is on the penalty kill. He also brings some playoff experience from his years with Minnesota and Colorado. **Taylor Raddysh** scored 20 goals for Chicago in '22-23, but his scoring output took a big dive last year.

Defense/Goaltending

Elite hockey teams are able to get offense from their defensemen, and the Capitals didn't have that at all last year. Only San Jose and Chicago, the two worst teams in the NHL, had fewer points or goals contributed by D-men. Washington was determined to fix that this year and they got some help by trading for **Jakob Chychrun**, who tied his career high with 41 points last year, including 7 power play goals. He has struggled to stay healthy throughout his career, but he did play all 82 games last season. Washington also signed **Matt Roy**, who isn't as offensively accomplished as Chychrun, but is coming off a superb defensive season as part of a Los Angeles team that allowed the third-fewest goals. **John Carlson** enters his 16th season with the Caps and he's still a productive player, especially on the power play. He returned to form last year after an injury-plagued '22-23 and scored 52 points. **Martin Fehervary** led the team's D-men in hits last year.

One of the biggest reasons Washington was able to get to the postseason last year was the play of **Charlie Lindgren** in net. He tied for the league lead in shutouts and had a GAA of 2.39 in his last 20 games of the year. It's possible that last season was an outlier for the 30-year-old, who had the best season of his career by far. As insurance in case Lindgren comes crashing back to earth, the Caps brought in **Logan Thompson** from Vegas to serve as the backup. Thompson has struggled with injuries throughout his career, but put up three good seasons for the Golden Knights.

The Bottom Line

The Capitals decided to change things up this year after years of hanging onto the core that won the Stanley Cup in 2018, even as they aged and their skills diminished. Part of that decision came out of necessity, as key components Nicklas Backstrom and T.J. Oshie have suffered likely career-ending injuries and won't play this year, though they haven't officially retired. Washington quietly had themselves a nice offseason, adding some skill to their forwards and giving their defense a necessary makeover. The forward depth looks a bit suspect after the top six, but it's a better group than last year's playoff team. It's doubtful that the Caps will be title contenders, but they'll remain in the mix for the postseason.

2024-25 Projection: 42-34-6 (90 points) - 4th in Metro



Charlie Lindgren



Photo via RMNB

CAPITALS 5-YEAR POINT TREND

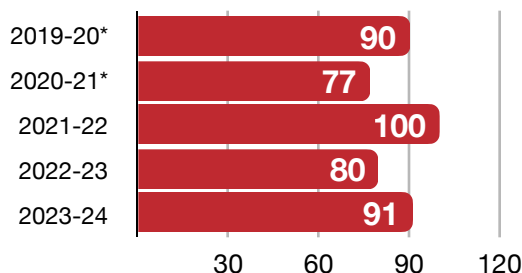


Photo via Washington DC

2024-25 Schedule

October 2024						
						NJ 12 7:00
		VGK 15 7:00		DAL 17 7:00		NJ 19 7:00
		PHI 22 6:00	PHI 23 7:30			TB 26 7:00
		NYR 29 7:30		MTL 31 7:00		

November 2024						
						CBJ 2 5:00
CAR 3 5:00			NSH 6 7:00		PIT 8 7:30	STL 9 7:00
			TOR 13 7:30		COL 15 9:00	
VGK 17 8:00	UTA 18 9:00			COL 21 7:00		NJ 23 7:00
	FLA 25 7:00		TB 27 7:30		NYI 29 3:00	NJ 30 7:00

December 2024						
		SJ 3 7:00			TOR 6 7:00	MTL 7 7:00
				CBJ 12 7:00		BUF 14 7:00
		DAL 16 8:00	CHI 17 8:30		CAR 20 7:00	
LA 22 5:00	BOS 23 7:00					TOR 28 7:00
DET 29 5:00		BOS 31 12:30				

January 2025						
				MIN 2 7:00		NYR 4 12:00
	BUF 6 7:00		VAN 8 7:30		MTL 10 7:00	NSH 11 8:00
		ANA 14 7:00		OTT 16 7:00		PIT 18 7:00
		EDM 21 9:00		SEA 23 10:00		VAN 25 10:00
		CGY 28 9:00		OTT 30 7:00		

February 2025						
						WPG 1 7:00
		FLA 4 7:00		PHI 6 7:00		
UTA 9 12:30			2025 NHL 4 Nations Face-Off			
2025 NHL 4 Nations Face-Off						PIT 22 3:00
EDM 23 1:00		CGY 25 7:00		STL 27 7:00		

March 2025						
						TB 1 12:30
		OTT 3 6:30		NYR 5 7:30		DET 7 7:00
SEA 9 3:30			ANA 11 10:00		LA 13 10:30	SJ 15 5:00
		DET 18 7:00		PHI 20 7:00		FLA 22 5:00
		WPG 25 8:00		MIN 27 8:00		

March/April 2025						
BUF 30 3:00		BOS 1 7:00	CAR 2 7:00		CHI 4 7:00	
NYI 6 12:30				CAR 10 7:30		CBJ 12 7:00
CBJ 13 6:00		NYI 15 8:00		PIT 17 7:00		

HOME

AWAY

Projected WSH Lineup

Forwards

	Left Wing	Center	Right Wing
Line 1	8 Alex Ovechkin	17 Dylan Strome	43 Tom Wilson
Line 2	24 Connor McMichael	80 Pierre-Luc Dubois	88 Andrew Mangiapane
Line 3	15 Sonny Milano	29 Hendrix Lapierre	21 Aliases Protas
Line 4	22 Brandon Duhaime	26 Nic Dowd	16 Taylor Radish

Defense

Line 1	6 Jakob Chychrun	74 John Carlson
Line 2	38 Rasmus Sandin	3 Matt Roy
Line 3	42 Martin Fehervary	57 Trevor van Riemsdyk

Goaltenders

Starter	79 Charlie Lindgren
Backup	48 Logan Thompson

2023-24 NHL Ranks

POINTS - 91 (17th)
 GF - 216 (28th)
 GA - 252 (16th)
 PP% - 20.61 (18th)
 PK% - 78.97 (18th)
 SV% - .899 (15th)

PLAYER SPOTLIGHT

ALEX OVECHKIN - LW



2023-24 Statistics

GP 79 G 31 A 34 PTS 65 +/- -22

Age looked like it began to affect the 39-year-old Ovechkin last year after a career low in goals (not counting the shortened Covid season). However, most players would love to have that production considered a "down year" and Ovechkin scored 42 goals in '22-23 at age 37. Ironically, 42 is the exact amount that he needs to break the all-time goals record. He may not be able to reach that mark this season, but it isn't out of the question. Assuming health, he should break Gretzky's record early next year, an incredibly impressive achievement.

2,172 < Number to Know

The Capitals managed just 2,172 shots on goal last season with only league-worst San Jose and Chicago having fewer. By comparison, Stanley Cup runners-up Edmonton led the league with 2,768.