SAN JOSE SHARKS

Pacific Division

x0	**x1** WESTERN CONF	**x1** PRESIDENTS'	**1143** FRANCHISE WINS

19-54-9
47 Points
2023-24 SEASON

8th
DIVISION

San Jose, CA - SAP Center (17,435)
Head Coach: Ryan Warsofsky (0-0-0, 1st Season)

2023-24: Missed Playoffs

Nowhere to Swim But Up

It's difficult to mince words when it comes to the recent performance of the San Jose Sharks. You wouldn't know it from the past few years, but less than a decade ago, the Sharks made an appearance in the Stanley Cup finals and nearly made it to that spot again in 2019. Now with the benefit of hindsight, firing Peter DeBoer was probably a massive mistake. He guided eventually guided the Golden Knights to two division titles and he's more recently brought the Dallas Stars to the Western Conference Finals in back-to-back seasons. Bob Boughner and David Quinn didn't move the needle and now Ryan Warsofsky is tasked with helping the Sharks move on from one of the most embarrassing seasons in NHL history. How bad was last season? In the Covid-shortened 2020-21 season, San Jose finished 21-28-7 with 49 points. In a *full* 82 game season last year, the Sharks scratched across 47 points. Almost every aspect of the team was a disaster, starting with an 11-game losing streak to begin the season. Ironically, that losing streak brought full clarity of the expectations, or lack thereof, of the 2023-24 team. In short, San Jose put the "tank" in shark tank.

Forwards

The upside of all of the losing, if you can call it that, is that the Sharks now have a plethora of top draft picks who are ready to get their feet wet at the NHL level. Enter #1 overall pick **Macklin Celebrini**. There was little question of where Celebrini was going in the draft following a remarkable college career, albeit brief, with Boston University. As a freshman, he lit up the stat sheet with 64 points in 38 games and became the youngest player to win the Hobey Baker Award (college MVP) and he guided his team to the Frozen Four. His NHL debut will likely coincide with the debut of the fourth overall pick in the 2023 draft, **Will Smith**. There's a good chance they lead the first and second lines, respectively, from the center position right from the opening night. **William Eklund** was named the team MVP and will play alongside Celebrini. He finished with 45 points in his first full NHL season, complete with 16 goals and 29 assists. Celebrini and Smith highlight the "additions" this offseason, but there are plenty more including **Alex Wennberg** and **Tyler Toffoli**. His new home in San Jose marks Toffoli's seventh team in just six seasons. A veteran of well over a decade, his 33 goals last year would have led the Sharks by a healthy margin. That title went to **Fabian Zetterlund**, with his 24 goals. Zetterlund and points leader **Michael Granlund** worked well together last year and that pairing will continue this season. Wennberg is a solid depth center who may play on one of the top lines in case either Celebrini or Smith don't start the season immediately.

Mario Ferraro

Photo via Elite Prospects

Defense/Goaltending

The Sharks defense was atrocious last season, allowing 326 goals. No other NHL team allowed more than 300 goals. The top offseason priority, outside of drafting Celebrini, was finding more capable D-men, and the Sharks may have done that by bringing in **Jake Walman** from Detroit and **Cody Ceci** from Edmonton. That duo joins **Mario Ferraro** and **Jan Rutta** and should give the defense an upgrade. None of those top four options will probably provide a lot of offense, but the Sharks were so frequently pulling the puck out of their own net that offensive production from the defense is a secondary concern. **Henry Thrun** enters his second full season in the NHL and will hopefully continue to take steps forward despite the difficulties of last season.

Did the Sharks' goaltenders underperform or did the constant barrage of shots undo their best efforts? For starter **MacKenzie Blackwood**, the problem was more of the latter. He actually finished in the top half of qualifying goalies in goals saved above expected, so his play may have been much better than his 3.45 GAA and .899 save percentage would otherwise suggest. On the other hand, the statistics for **Vitek Vanecek** last season with New Jersey were bad no matter how you slice it. Blackwood played in just over half of his team's games, so Vanecek will need to play better in San Jose, otherwise the Sharks will continue to get run out of the building. The Sharks used five total netminders last season, so they'll take stability wherever they can find it.

The Bottom Line

Frankly, this season can't be as bad as it was last season. However, the growing pains will remain obvious and plentiful. The Sharks will benefit from the young core of Macklin Celebrini, William Eklund, and Will Smith seeing significant time but it does come at risk of exposing them to the best of the best in the NHL. What other options do the Sharks really have? As much as it would be nice to see the Sharks score more than 180 goals, the defensive and goaltending issues are much more pressing. The front office made plenty of offseason moves including bringing in Jake Walman and Cody Ceci and there will be numerous rookies who have the opportunity to see the ice. Will any of that make a difference? The Sharks offloaded several contracts at the trade deadline last year and there aren't as many pieces to move this year. The roster, assuming health, will have better continuity. The Sharks will have more points than last season, but they're still looking at the reality of another last place finish. Their regular season battles against Anaheim could be intriguing as both teams try to ignite their respective rebuilds.

2024-25 Projection: 28-48-8 (64 points) - 8th in Pacific

William Eklund
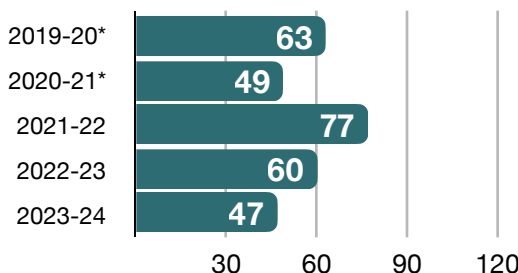

Photo via Fear the Fin

SHARKS 5-YEAR POINT TREND

Season	Points
2019-20*	63
2020-21*	49
2021-22	77
2022-23	60
2023-24	47

Photo via SAP Center

Projected SJ Lineup

Forwards

		Left Wing		Center		Right Wing
Line 1	72	William Eklund	71	Macklin Celebrini	73	Tyler Toffoli
Line 2	64	Mikael Granlund	2	Will Smith	20	Fabian Zetterlund
Line 3	23	Barclay Goodrow	21	Alex Wennberg	11	Luke Kunin
Line 4	75	Daniel Gushchin	7	Nico Sturm	53	Ty Dellandrea

Defense

		Left		Right
Line 1	38	Mario Ferraro	84	Jan Rutta
Line 2	96	Jake Walman	4	Cody Ceci
Line 3	3	Henry Thrun	5	Matt Benning

Goaltenders

Starter	29	MacKenzie Blackwood
Backup	41	Vitek Vanecek

2023-24 NHL Ranks

POINTS - 47 (32nd)
GF - 180 (31st)
GA - 326 (32nd)
PP% - 20.19 (21st)
PK% - 75.40 (28th)
SV% - .887 (29th)

33   < Number to Know

The Sharks allowed five or more goals in 33 of their games, and they had a whopping 18 games in which they allowed six goals or greater.

PLAYER SPOTLIGHT
FABIAN ZETTERLUND - LW

2023-24 Statistics

GP	G	A	PTS	+/-
82	24	20	44	-34

Unfortunately, the only consistency coming out of San Jose last season is that the Sharks were consistently bad. However, Zetterlund still gave his all, becoming the only player on the team to appear in all 82 games. He led the team with 24 goals in what was a breakout season for the Swede. He should have a bit more support on his line (whether that ends up being the first or second line) with either Celebrini or Smith manning the center position. San Jose would take a repeat performance from Zetterlund in a heartbeat.

2024-25 Schedule

October 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				STL 10:30 (10)		ANA 10:00 (12)
		DAL 8:00 (15)		CHI 8:30 (17)	WPG 8:00 (18)	
COL 8:00 (20)		ANA 10:15 (22)		LA 10:30 (24)		VGK 10:00 (26)
	UTA 9:00 (28)	LA 10:00 (29)		CHI 10:30 (31)		

November 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					VAN 10:00 (2)	
		CBJ 10:30 (5)		MIN 10:30 (7)		
NJ 7:00 (10)	PHI 7:00 (11)		NYR 7:00 (14)		PIT 7:00 (16)	
	DET 10:30 (18)	DAL 8:00 (20)	STL 8:00 (21)		BUF 8:00 (23)	
LA 10:30 (25)		OTT 10:30 (27)		SEA 3:30 (29)	SEA 10:00 (30)	

December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		WSH 7:00 (3)		TB 7:00 (5)		FLA 6:00 (7)
		CAR 7:00 (10)		STL 8:00 (12)		UTA 10:00 (14)
		WPG 10:30 (17)		COL 10:30 (19)		EDM 4:00 (21)
VAN 9:00 (23)					VGK 10:30 (27)	CGY 10:00 (28)
		PHI 8:00 (31)				

January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		TB 10:30 (2)		NJ 4:00 (4)		
	VGK 10:30 (7)			UTA 9:00 (10)	MIN 10:00 (11)	
		DET 7:00 (14)		CBJ 7:00 (16)		NYI 7:30 (18)
	BOS 1:00 (20)	NSH 8:00 (21)		NSH 10:30 (23)		FLA 10:00 (25)
	PIT 10:30 (27)			SEA 10:00 (30)		

February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		MTL 10:30		VAN 10:30		DAL 10:00
		2025 NHL 4 Nations Face-Off				
2025 NHL 4 Nations Face-Off						
CGY 8:00	WPG 7:30			MTL 7:00		

March 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						OTT 7:00 (1)
	TOR 7:30 (3)	BUF 7:00 (4)		COL 9:00 (6)		NYI 10:00 (8)
	NSH 10:30 (11)		CHI 10:30 (13)		WSH 5:00 (15)	
		CAR 10:30 (20)		BOS 10:30 (22)		
	TOR 10:30 (27)		NYR 10:30 (29)			

March/April 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
LA 10:00 (30)	ANA 10:00 (1)		EDM 10:30 (3)		SEA 10:00 (5)	
	CGY 10:30 (7)		MIN 8:00 (9)		EDM 9:30 (11)	
CGY 8:00 (13)	VAN 10:00 (14)		EDM 10:30 (16)			

HOME   **AWAY**