



# UTAH HOCKEY CLUB

Central Division

Preseason Power Ranking **26**

**x0**

**x0**  
WESTERN CONF

**x0**  
PRESIDENTS'

**0**  
FRANCHISE WINS

**36-41-5**  
77 Points (ARI)  
2023-24 SEASON

**7th**  
DIVISION

Salt Lake City, UT - Delta Center (16,200)  
Head Coach: Andre Tourigny (0-0-0, 1st Season - 3 Seasons with Arizona)

## “Newest” Franchise Ready for Fresh Start

After 27 seasons in Arizona with limited success on the ice and constant turmoil off the ice, the Arizona Coyotes left Phoenix and relocated to Salt Lake City, Utah this offseason. The former Coyotes spent the last three seasons playing in a 5,000 seat arena on the campus of Arizona State. With no deal for a new NHL-quality arena in sight, the league stepped in and the team was sold to Ryan Smith, owner of the NBA's Utah Jazz. The new team will be known as the Utah Hockey Club for their inaugural season and then (hopefully) will reveal a permanent name next year. An intriguing collection of young talent that was beginning to show signs of progress in Arizona will look to continue that trend in Salt Lake City.

### Forwards

**Clayton Keller** was a bright spot for the franchise in its final years in Arizona and helped the team to the playoffs in 2020, its only appearance between 2012 and 2024. Keller led the team in both goals and points and at age 26, he is just entering his prime and becomes the first captain for the Utah franchise. **Nick Schmaltz** had a career high 61 points last year and his 39 assists were second on the team behind Keller. Injuries hampered **Barrett Hayton** last year, who played just 33 games. The former 5<sup>th</sup> overall pick will look to stay healthy this season and improve on his 43 point season from '22-23. **Lawson Crouse** has exceeded 40 points each of the last two seasons. **Logan Cooley** made his NHL debut last year and finished 4<sup>th</sup> among rookies with 44 points. **Dylan Guenther** is coming off a successful sophomore season with 18 goals and 35 points in 45 games.

Veteran **Nick Bjugstad** put up 22 goals last season and was solid defensively with a +11 plus/minus. Repeating that performance will be a tall order, as it was his highest total in nine years. Shane Doan was the best player in the history of the Coyotes and his son, **Josh Doan**, made his NHL debut late last year. While it will be tough to match his dad's stellar career, Josh made a great first impression with 9 points in his first 11 career games. **Matias Maccelli** had a career high 57 points last year and has shown excellent passing skills throughout his young career. **Kevin Stenlund** was a key part of the Florida Panthers' grinding and physical fourth line that helped them to the 2024 Stanley Cup and his play and leadership will help this young team. **Alex Kerfoot** is capable of 40+ points if healthy. Enforcer **Liam O'Brien** (aka "Spicy Tuna") led the entire NHL in penalty minutes and clearly isn't afraid of a fight.



Photo via Daily Faceoff

### Defense/Goaltending

Utah re-made their defense this offseason, but made no bigger move than going out on the trade market and landing themselves an elite defenseman with the acquisition of **Mikhail Sergachev** from Tampa Bay. Sergachev missed most of the season last year, but scored 64 points in '22-23 and is a superb defender. Locked up to a long-term deal and still just 26 even after 7 seasons in Tampa, he figures to be a crucial piece for Utah for many years. **Sean Durzi** set a career high with 41 points last year and will look to form a partnership on the top pair with Sergachev. Veteran and two-time champion **Ian Cole** and the experienced **John Marino** both bring leadership and steady play. **Juuso Valimaki** is a skilled passer, though his offensive output dropped last year.

It took **Connor Ingram** 8 years after being drafted, but last year he finally earned a spot in the NHL as a starting goaltender and had a good, but not great season. His 2.91 GAA was exactly league average, but he did tie for the league lead with 6 shutouts. His '23-24 season might be his ceiling, but he can keep Utah in games. **Karel Vejmelka** has had a GAA above 3.00 and a save percentage of .900 or worse in each of his three career seasons. He holds an unfortunate NHL record for the quickest a goalie has been benched mid-game (just 59 seconds). Utah hopes that Vejmelka won't have to spend much time in the net this season.

### The Bottom Line

While the move from Phoenix to Salt Lake City was quite sudden following the end of the '23-24 season, it was not unexpected. Throughout its history, the franchise churned through several owners, struggled with attendance, and even had to file for bankruptcy at one point, causing the NHL to take over ownership of the team for several years. Between having to play in a college arena, scandals involving a former general manager, deals for a new arena repeatedly falling through, not to mention having hardly any on-ice success, much of the franchise's history in Arizona was chaotic. With the move to Utah and the sale of the team to an owner in Ryan Smith who has already shown a commitment to investing in the team, the players and coaches can leave all that turbulence behind. It's a new day for the franchise and fans in Utah are thrilled to have them, with thousands packing out the Delta Center to welcome the team. Coyotes' ownership may have been incompetent, but GM Bill Armstrong has built an impressive collection of up-and-coming young talent. It will be another building year for Utah, but they will be a scrappy team that will win some games and could cause trouble for some contenders.

**2024-25 Projection: 37-40-5 (79 points) - 7th in Central**



# UTAH

## Mikhail Sergachev



Photo via KSL Sports



Photo via FOX 13 News

## 2024-25 Schedule

October 2024				
		CHI 8 10:00	NYI 10 7:30	NYR 12 7:00
	NJ 14 1:00		ANA 16 10:00	BOS 19 9:00
		OTT 22 9:15		COL 24 9:00
	SJ 28 9:00		CGY 30 9:30	

November 2024				
				VGK 2 10:00
		WPG 5 8:00	STL 7 8:00	NSH 9 8:00
			CAR 13 9:00	VGK 15 9:00
	WSH 18 9:00		BOS 21 7:00	PIT 23 7:00
TOR 24 7:00		MTL 26 7:00		EDM 29 9:00
				VGK 30 10:00

December 2024				
		DAL 2 9:00		BUF 7 1:00
PHI 8 7:00		MIN 10 9:30	COL 12 9:00	SJ 14 10:00
			VAN 18 10:00	MIN 20 8:00
ANA 22 5:00	DAL 23 9:00			COL 27 9:30
	SEA 30 8:00	EDM 31 9:00		

January 2025				
			CGY 2 9:00	DAL 4 8:00
		FLA 8 10:00		SJ 10 9:00
			NYR 16 9:00	NYI 11 9:00
		MTL 14 9:00		STL 18 9:00
	WPG 20 9:30		MIN 23 8:00	WPG 24 8:00
OTT 26 5:00		PIT 29 9:30		CBJ 31 9:00

February 2025				
STL 2 7:00		PHI 4 9:00	CBJ 6 7:00	CAR 8 1:00
WSH 9 12:30				
2025 NHL 4 Nations Face-Off				LA 22 9:00
VAN 23 8:00		CHI 25 9:00	MIN 27 9:00	

March 2025				
				NJ 1 9:00
			DET 6 7:00	CHI 7 8:30
		TOR 10 10:00	ANA 12 10:00	SEA 14 10:00
VAN 16 8:00		EDM 18 9:00		BUF 20 9:00
		DET 24 9:00		TB 22 5:00
			TB 27 7:00	FLA 28 7:00

March/April 2025				
CHI 30 4:00		CGY 1 9:00	LA 3 9:00	WPG 5 7:00
		SEA 8 9:00	NSH 10 9:00	DAL 12 8:00
	NSH 14 8:00	STL 15 8:00		

## Projected UTA Lineup

### Forwards

	Left Wing	Center	Right Wing
Line 1	9 Clayton Keller	27 Barreett Hayton	8 Nick Schmaltz
Line 2	67 Lawson Crouse	92 Logan Cooley	11 Dylan Guenther
Line 3	63 Matias Maccelli	17 Nick Bjugstad	91 Josh Doan
Line 4	15 Alex Kerfoot	22 Jack McBain	82 Kevin Stenlund

### Defense

Line 1	98 Mikhail Sergachev	50 Sean Durzi
Line 2	4 Juuso Valimaki	6 John Marino
Line 3	28 Ian Cole	7 Michael Kesselring

### Goaltenders

Starter	39 Connor Ingram
Backup	70 Karel Vejmelka

## 2023-24 NHL Ranks (ARI)

POINTS - 77 (27th)  
 GF - 254 (17th)  
 GA - 274 (25th)  
 PP% - 21.99 (15th)  
 PK% - 76.32 (25th)  
 SV% - .895 (21st)

## 944 < Number to Know

Last year, the team had 944 penalty minutes, 3rd fewest in the NHL, despite having the league's most penalized player, a good thing considering the team's penalty kill was 25th in the league.

## PLAYER SPOTLIGHT LOGAN COOLEY - C



### 2023-24 Statistics

GP	G	A	PTS	+/-
82	20	24	44	-13

Cooley made his NHL debut last year at age 19 after a fantastic '22-'23 college season for Minnesota, where he led the Golden Gophers to national runners-up with 60 points in 39 games. His 44 points last year (including 20 goals) were the 4th most among rookies and earned him several votes for the Calder Trophy. That kind of production at age 19 is impressive and typically indicates a player on his way to stardom. Another season like that one, and Cooley will be a household name in Utah in no time.

HOME

AWAY