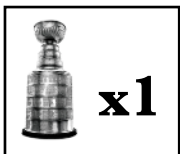




CALGARY FLAMES

Pacific Division

Preseason Power Ranking **29**



1891
FRANCHISE WINS

38-39-5
81 Points
2023-24 SEASON

5th
DIVISION

Calgary, Alberta - Scotiabank Saddledome (19,289)
Head Coach: Ryan Huska (38-39-5, 2nd Season)

2023-24: Missed Playoffs

Flames Seeking Identity

The Flames won the Pacific division just two years ago, but you wouldn't know it from watching the team last season. In recent seasons, the front office has watched star talent like Johnny Gaudreau and Matthew Tkachuk walk out the door either through free agency or through trade. To date, the pieces that Calgary received back have not panned out and there's some understandable frustration in the fanbase. Can the Flames flip the script this year in the Pacific? Or will the rebuild continue in earnest?

Forwards

Connor Zary was a rare bright spot on an offense that finished in the bottom ten in scoring. As a rookie, he netted 14 goals and a total of 34 points and he should see extended playing time on the second line which should only increase his productivity. **Nazem Kadri** was the team's leader in points and the Flames will be calling on him again for similar results. His fellow lineman **Yegor Sharangovich** turned in 59 points, a career high. **Andrei Kuzmenko** is the last piece of the puzzle on the top line and he was very productive in his short stint with the Flames last year after coming over to Calgary via trade from Vancouver.

Unfortunately for **Jonathan Huberdeau**, he finds himself in the record books... and not in a good way. Per NHL News, he set an NHL record for the biggest point drop from one season to another (from 2020-21 to 2021-22) and he hasn't been the same player since the Florida Panthers traded him here in 2022. The Flames extended Huberdeau and are hopeful that the third year in the system is the charm. He'll quickly jump to the top line if he shows an elevated level of play. If he doesn't, the Tkachuk-Huberdeau deal will go down as one of the most lopsided trades in NHL history.

While there are some young players who will see meaningful playing time at the forward position, players like **Blake Coleman** and newly acquired **Ryan Lomberg** add a veteran presence. Lomberg is actually back for his second stint with the Flames. He won't contribute a lot offensively (just 7 points in 75 games last year with Florida), but he's always willing to throw his body around and try to get under an opponent's skin (he typically succeeds). While not currently projected in the starting lineup, a player to watch on offense is young **Matt Coronato**. He struggled in his first NHL experience last year but the first-round pick filled up the stat sheet in the AHL and he'll get another look this season, it's only a matter of when.



Mackenzie Weegar

Photo via Sportsnet

Defense/Goaltending

While the Flames were a better defensive team than they were an offensive one, especially on the power play, there are some questions on what depth looks like behind players like **Mackenzie Weever**, **Daniil Miromanov**, and **Rasmus Andersson**. As a whole, the defensive group is extremely young, so observing growing pains this season is a reasonable expectation. On the bright side, this young group can grow up together while the coaching staff looks to maximize the talent they have here. 2023 first round pick **Samuel Hoznek** could make his NHL debut on the blue line at some point this season, but his preseason performance indicates that he may need another few months in the AHL before he's ready for the jump. **Hunter Brzustewicz** could be an offensively-gifted D-man, but it remains to be seen how well his skills will translate at the NHL level. While those players prepare to make the jump, look for veterans **Jake Bean** and **Yan Kuznetsov** to anchor the third defensive line.

Dustin Wolf flashed leather in the AHL ranks and made a brief stint with the Flames last season with somewhat mixed results (although it's worth noting his stats better than the overall team average). However, if there was ever a time to simply flip the page and look ahead to the upcoming season, it's now. Wolf is only 23-years-old but if all goes well, the rookie-eligible net minder will be the starter this season. If things get bumpy, look for **Daniel Vladar** to see additional playing time beyond the backup role he's held with Calgary previously.

The Bottom Line

Given the number of recent moves by the front office, Calgary may be just now entering the "valley" of their rebuild. There are question marks throughout the lineup that need to be answered if the Flames are to field a competitive team on the ice. The biggest question is if Huberdeau can return to any semblance of his Florida self. Depending on how the season goes, will the Flames be sellers again at the trade deadline? Can Calgary rejuvenate a stagnant offense All signs appear to be pointing to a rebuilding year and a third consecutive season of fewer points than the year prior. In order for that to change, Calgary will need big contributions from young, unproven players. It's not impossible for that to happen, but at this stage, it doesn't appear likely.

2024-25 Projection: 31-40-11 (72 points) - 7th in Pacific



CALGARY FLAMES

Dustin Wolf



Photo via Flames Nation

FLAMES 5-YEAR POINT TREND

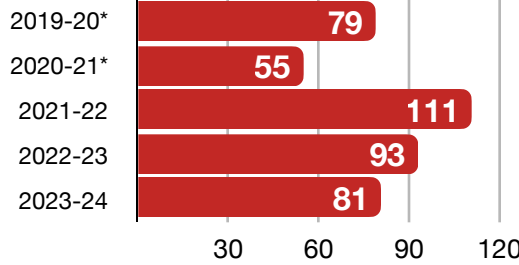


Photo via Scotiabank Saddledome

2024-25 Schedule

October 2024

			VAN 9:00		PHI 10:00
EDM 8:00		CHI 9:00			SEA 10:00
		PIT 9:30		CAR 9:00	WPG 7:00
	VGK 10:00		UTA 9:30		

November 2024

					NJ 9:00
EDM 8:00		MTL 7:00		BOS 7:00	BUF 1:00
	LA 8:30	VAN 10:00			NSH 9:00
		NYI 9:00		NYR 9:00	MIN 4:00
	OTT 7:30		DET 7:30		CBJ 3:00

December 2024

		CBJ 9:00		STL 9:00	
DAL 8:00		NSH 8:00		TB 9:00	FLA 10:00
		BOS 9:00		OTT 9:00	CHI 4:00
					SJ 10:00
VGK 8:00				VAN 9:00	

January 2025

				UTA 9:00	NSH 7:00
		ANA 10:00	LA 10:30		LA 10:00
	CHI 7:30	STL 8:00		STL 8:00	WPG 7:00
				BUF 9:00	MIN 7:00
WPG 6:00			WSH 9:00		ANA 9:00

February 2025

					DET 10:00
SEA 9:00		TOR 9:00		COL 9:00	SEA 10:00
2025 NHL 4 Nations Face-Off					
2025 NHL 4 Nations Face-Off					
SJ 8:00		WSH 7:00		TB 7:00	

March 2025

					FLA 3:00
CAR 5:00		PHI 7:00		DAL 8:00	MTL 7:00
				VAN 9:00	COL 9:00
	TOR 7:30	NYR 7:00		NJ 7:00	NYI 4:00
		SEA 9:00		DAL 9:00	EDM 10:00

March/April 2025

		UTA 9:00		ANA 9:30	VGK 10:00
	SJ 10:30		ANA 10:00		MIN 10:00
SJ 8:00		VGK 9:00			

HOME

AWAY

Projected CGY Lineup

Forwards

	Left Wing	Center	Right Wing
Line 1	96 Andrei Kuzmenko	91 Nazem Kadri	17 Yegor Sharangovich
Line 2	47 Connor Zary	11 Mikael Backlund	20 Blake Coleman
Line 3	10 Jonathan Huberdeau	76 Martin Pospisil	39 Anthony Mantha
Line 4	70 Ryan Lomberg	21 Kevin Rooney	43 Adam Klapka

Defense

Line 1	52 MacKenzie Weegar	62 Daniil Miromanov
Line 2	7 Kevin Bahl	4 Rasmus Andersson
Line 3	24 Jake Bean	37 Yan Kuznetsov

Goaltenders

Starter	32 Dustin Wolf
Backup	80 Daniel Vladar

2023-24 NHL Ranks

POINTS - 81 (24th)
 GF - 253 (25th)
 GA - 267 (22nd)
 PP% - 17.86 (26th)
 PK% - 80.82 (9th)
 SV% - .890 (27th)

23 < Number to Know

The age of goaltender Dustin Wolf. As the projected starter, he's likely to see the most time in goal of any rookie-eligible net minder, could that give him a shot at the Calder?

PLAYER SPOTLIGHT

NAZEM KADRI - C



2023-24 Statistics

GP	G	A	PTS	+/-
82	29	46	75	0

Kadri has been in the league well over a decade, but he's managed to save his best two seasons for Calgary. He hasn't missed a game in those two years for the Flames and last year he led the team with 75 points, topping the 40 assist mark for the second time in his career. He's turned into a bit of a weapon on the power play which is important, since the Flames ranked 26th of 32 teams in that category last season. Does the 34-year-old have another 70+ point season in him?