



Canadiens 2007 draft review

Written by [Jason Menard](#) on 07/02/2007 [RSS](#)

There's no truth to the rumor that the [Montreal Canadiens'](#) scout for the state of Minnesota is paid by the pick. For the second consecutive year, the club selected a Minnesota high school defenseman with its first overall selection – and then followed that up with two more selections later in the round.

“That’s just an area that’s had a good crop of players over the past couple of years and I don’t see that changing for the next couple of years at least,” explained Trevor Timmins, the Canadiens’ director of player recruitment and development. **“They’ve got a great minor system and their high school program is absolutely phenomenal in terms of talent and the players they’re developing.”**

And an added advantage? When players opt for the collegiate route it gives a team a longer window of opportunity to assess and evaluate.

“If there’s a player going to the [USHL](#) then to college, that gives you five developmental years as opposed to two for junior and European players,” Timmins said. “In the past, you would see teams stocking up on Europeans in the later rounds of the draft, now you’re seeing more teams go to U.S. colleges during those rounds.”

“One of the obstacles we’re faced with now is the 50-contract limit. And with entry-level deals at three years, you better be damn sure about a player – you can’t afford to have contracts wasted.”

And while six of the club’s nine selections were on the blueline, Timmins explained that they didn’t go into the draft with positional blinders on. “I wouldn’t say [defense] was the focus of the draft for us,” he said. “We put defensemen on our list when we thought we needed to. We may have put a little more emphasis on them, but not at the expense of skill and talent.”

In addition to getting the best player available, the Habs’ draft philosophy is pretty basic.

“We weren’t taking any chances – we followed our list, that’s why you do the work all year,” Timmins added. “There’s no risk or gamble – all you’re trying to do is get players to play on your top two lines, or play in the top four defensemen. As you move along in the draft, that becomes harder so you start looking for players who can fill a role.”