

Siren song of NHL beckons junior stars

Three Georgetown hockey players who have advanced to the ranks of the Ontario Hockey League are all looking to the coming season as the time to receive their big break for advancement in professional hockey.

Adam Bennett, drafted second overall by Sudbury Wolves in 1988 and sixth overall by Chicago Blackhawks of the NHL in June 1989, said he is now too old to play in the OHL and is optimistic of getting into a Blackhawks jersey this year.

"After being eliminated in the first round of the playoffs by Minnesota, I've been told the Blackhawks are trying to make some changes since they aren't too happy with a few people."

Helping his chances is a visit to Chicago to take part in a mini-camp in May. Also, Bennett hopes his contributions with Indianapolis (Chicago's farm team) at the end of the season drew some attention.

"After the Wolves were eliminated in five games by Oshawa, I got to play three regular season games and two playoff games and I thought I did pretty well."

Bennett said he believes he had a good year in Sudbury, getting 21 goals and 29 assists, though he won't be able to return unless it's



Adam Bennett

as one of two overage players the team is allowed. As a result, he's been planning on training even harder in the off-season with another Georgetown junior hockey hopeful, Rod Pasma, in the hopes of improving his chances.

Pasma was originally drafted by Cornwall Royals of the OHL in 1989 and was then picked up in the second round of the 1990 draft by Washington Capitals. In January of this year, he was traded to Kingston Frontenacs, a move which put him off his stride for a while.

"I was shocked and disappointed at first, but after it wore off, I think it helped make me a better player. I learned a lot from the trade and in the long run, I wouldn't ever go back (to Cornwall)."

Pasma said he has set some concrete goals this year. The first is getting signed to a contract with Washington and the other is playing tougher in order to improve his chances. To do this he said he needs to play the game the way he knows how and to the best of his ability.

"I think I've been doing well. I just talked to the team on Monday (April 22) and we couldn't quite come to terms on a contract. I've got to focus more on



Rod Pasma

the game and become mentally tougher."

With four goals and 18 assists last season, Pasma said he has another year in the OHL to further improve his statistics. In the off-season he will be working at a couple of hockey camps, helping younger players to become better players.

Trent Cull, at 17, is the youngest of the three to be drafted into the OHL, picked seventh overall by Owen Sound Platers in 1989. Like Pasma, he has experienced being traded.

"I was traded to Windsor at my own request in December. It wasn't a matter of not getting playing time, but I didn't think I was receiving the coaching I needed to become a better player."

Another goal he has set is to help his team advance further in the playoffs. This year Windsor beat London in the first round, but lost out to Niagara Falls in the second.

Cull, a defenceman, scored two goals and assisted on 10 others this year and will be concentrating on increasing those numbers in his first full year with Windsor in the 1991-92 season. This summer, he will be helping out at two hockey camps, one in Mississauga and the other in Windsor.

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