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During the pandemic-shortened 2019-20 NHL season, Caps captain Alex Ovechkin scored 48 goals in the 69 games Washington ended up playing. Had the Caps played their final 13 scheduled games last season, Ovechkin likely would have attained the 50-goal level for the ninth time in his illustrious NHL career. Ovechkin celebrated his 35th birthday this past September, but he still appears to be at or near the peak of his offensive powers.

Exactly a year before the Caps’ 2020-21 season opener in Buffalo on Jan. 14, Washington center Nicklas Backstrom signed a five-year contract extension. Ovechkin is likely to sign a similar deal in the next several months. For as long as both players are still maintaining most of their peak skills and powers, and as long as a good chunk of the core of the Caps’ 2018 Stanley Cup championship team is still intact, every new season represents the Caps’ best chance to get back to the mountaintop.

Caps general manager Brian MacLellan’s offseason moves – both in his coaching hires and in his player personnel additions – reflect that urgency.

Three days after being ousted from last summer’s Stanley Cup playoffs, the Caps announced a coaching change, relieving Todd Reirden of his duties. In September, Washington hired veteran NHL bench boss Peter Laviolette as Reirden’s replacement, and it later added longtime assistant coach and former NHL blueliner Kevin McCarthy to work with the team’s defensemen.

Laviolette has been an NHL head coach almost continuously for the last two decades, working with the Islanders, Carolina, Philadelphia and Nashville. McCarthy has worked in the game his entire working life, and he has labored alongside Laviolette at each of his last three stops. The duo won the Stanley Cup together in Carolina in 2005-06, Laviolette’s first full season on the job with the Hurricanes.

First-season success has been a hallmark of Laviolette’s coaching career at every stop, so he seems like an ideal hire for a team whose core players are now in their thirties and itching for another opportunity to hoist the Cup.
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Washington’s blueline corps will also feature a raft of new faces; MacLellan reeled in free agent rearguards Justin Schultz, Trevor van Riemsdyk, Paul LaDue, and – just days before the start of camp – future Hockey Hall of Famer Zdeno Chara. Additionally, the Caps signed defenseman Brenden Dillon to a contract extension, months after obtaining him in a deal with San Jose. That’s five defensemen who were in a Caps training camp for the first time this month.

Norris Trophy finalist John Carlson, two-way defender Dmitry Orlov are returning along with Nick Jensen and Jonas Siegenthaler, but Michal Kempny is virtually certain to miss the entire season because of an injury suffered during offseason training in his native Czech Republic.

The result of all the change on the blueline is a deep, experienced and balanced group, and Laviolette and McCarthy will need to determine the most optimal pairings of their top six defensemen, and they’ll need to do so in a short training camp and without the benefit of any preseason contests.

“Obviously it’s an anxious time for everybody – a new coach, new players,” says Laviolette. “New for them, new for me. And it’s just a starting point for a new group that’s coming together and so it was exciting to get out on the ice and go to work. That’s really the start of trying to put something together and get your team on the same page with regard to how you want to play.”

Asked to define the identity he would like his team to have, Laviolette is clear and firm.

“As far as an identity goes, I’m not going to go too far from what I know and from what’s worked for me in the past,” he says. “There is a lot of straight line, there’s a lot of doing things fast and getting it out of our end, through their end, and then into the offensive zone. I’d like to stay in the offensive zone longer if we can, generate more offense if we can, but not at the expense of defense.

“I feel like one of the biggest things is just putting things on the ice and getting it in front of the players and letting them do it correctly or do it incorrectly or to ask questions or to take video of it and go back and show it at a different point.

“I’d like to try to emulate that identity that I have had in the past, which I feel like is a [team that’s] hard to play against, hard forechecking, and attacking the offensive zone without sacrificing defense.”

Beyond Ovechkin and Backstrom, the Caps still boast a formidable and familiar group of forwards. Including third-line center Lars Eller, each of the team’s top seven forwards from its 2018 Cup run is still on the roster. Evgeny Kuznetsov, T.J. Oshie, Jakub Vrana and Tom Wilson round out the remainder of the Caps’ top six – a dangerous, mix-and-match group with demonstrated scoring ability.

Among the 13 forwards on Washington’s opening night roster, there are only two new faces, both wingers. Conor Sheary was signed as a free agent just before the turn of the calendar, and Daniel Sprong was acquired in a deadline day deal with Anaheim last February.

The Caps’ bottom six features holdover forwards Nic Dowd, Carl Hagelin, Garnet Hathaway and Richard Panik, a group that provides speed, forechecking and penalty-killing ability, and is also able to chip in with some offense from time to time.

Laviolette’s attacking system is designed to involve the team’s defensemen, and it should be a good fit with Washington’s forward group as well.

“I like it,” says Caps winger Jakub Vrana. “It’s a high-tempo system. A lot of
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skating; I don’t mind that. So far, the practices have pretty good tempo. Everything goes fast, and that’s how we want to play. We want to play fast.”

“There are lots of new faces around the facility,” says Wilson. “Obviously a fresh feeling, which is good. I think there has been a bit of a reset, and the first little bit has been really good. Guys are working hard. [Laviolette] is demanding that accountability, and it’s been solid. I think we have an understanding of how we have to play, and we’re just working on the new system and stuff, getting ready to execute and hopefully play his style the best we can.”

The offseason departure of longtime goaltending stalwart Braden Holtby signifies a passing of the netminding baton to the youthful tandem of sophomore Ilya Samsonov and untested rookie Vitek Vanecek. The 23-year-old Samsonov showed well as a freshman in the league last season, posting a 16-6-2 record with a 2.55 GAA and a .913 save pct.

As a second-round draft choice in 2014, the 25-year-old Vanecek joined the Caps’ organization a year ahead of Samsonov. Vanecek is a two-time AHL All-Star with nothing left to prove at that level, but his only NHL experience is in the preseason.

Neither of the Caps young netminders has shown the ability to shoulder a heavy goaltending load thus far in their brief careers, so the Caps’ hedged their bet on the young duo slightly, signing 17-year veteran Craig Anderson as a low-cost insurance policy.

“We want to see Vanecek play,” says MacLellan. “We’re happy with his progress, we’re happy with his experience. The only thing for us is he hasn’t played much in the NHL. He had a good showing in the bubble in the [exhibition] chance he got in. All along, we’ve been hopefully trying to get him some games, and he hasn’t gotten them. This should be a good opportunity to get some games and see where he is at.”

For now, Samsonov and Vanecek appear to be the future of the Caps’ crease, continuing a remarkable run of home-drafted and developed goaltenders that extends back more than three decades to 1989, when Washington drafted Olie Kolzig and Byron Dafoe. Starting with the 1994-95 season, Caps-drafted and developed goaltenders have played more than half of the total minutes in 22 of the last 25 seasons. A two-season run from Jose Theodore and a one-season stint from Tomas Vokoun are the only exceptions during that span.

With a 56-game season against only seven different opponents, it’s important to avoid long losing spells and to remain Covid-free as this one-of-a-kind NHL campaign unfolds. It’s also important to remember that familiarity breeds contempt.

“I think when you’re playing teams a lot in a small period of time,” says Wilson, “guys have shorter memories and can remember what happened the game before, and definitely that tension can definitely build up. That being said, maybe you play them eight times and you’re like, ‘Oh, these guys again.’

“It’s going to be very interesting. I think there is definitely going to be a competitive level when you’re playing a team consistently and a higher number of times, and often a rivalry that already exists. We’re playing a lot of the teams that we already have a rivalry with, and I expect that’s going to continue for sure.”

Established Metropolitan Division rivals New Jersey, the New York Rangers, the New York Islanders, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh join the Caps in the newly and temporarily formed East Division in 2020-21, as do Boston and Buffalo, a pair of Eastern Conference clubs the Caps have never shared a division with previously.
“It’s going to be competitive,” says MacLellan. “Our division is tough; it’s got a lot of good teams. It’s going to be interesting, how it pans out at the end. I think you need to get off to a good start, I think every game is going to be intense. All the teams are pretty close talent-wise. Some teams are improving a little. I expect high intensity games throughout the whole schedule.”

The format of the season is altered as well, in the interest of keeping travel to a minimum. Teams will typically play the same opponent twice consecutively – whether at home or on the road – and will then move on to facing its next foe in another pair of contests.

“The back-to-back situation where you’re playing a team twice in a row is more like baseball, that’s going to be different,” acknowledges MacLellan. “You’re going to do a lot of prep, and then you’re going to have a very good knowledge of where a team is at after you play that first game [against them]. I would think an experienced coaching staff could benefit from that in most situations, with the ability to adjust and the ability to tweak game plans. I think that would be beneficial for us there.

“I think the back-to-backs with no travel is probably going to be a little bit better. The fatigue shouldn’t be as much with some of the travel we do [normally]. And then just the routines are going to change here. It’s going to be somewhat like the bubble where you’re secluded and not active when you’re not around the rink. So it’s going to be a challenge mentally for players to get through that, to go to the games mentally prepared.”

The sprint starts on Jan. 14 with back-to-backs in Buffalo and extends through the first week of May with a season-ending back-to-back set of home tilts against Philadelphia at Capital One Arena. For the Capitals, it’s 56 games in 115 nights, and they need to finish among the top four teams in the East Division in order to continue pursuing the only goal that matters to them, another Stanley Cup championship.

“It’s fresh for me, it’ll be fresh for them,” says Laviolette. “From my standpoint and where I sit right now, there hasn’t been anything with any of the players good or bad, there hasn’t been inconsistencies or consistency problems. I’m the new coach going in there, and it’s my job to get these guys up to speed, to get them on an identity, to get them to play hard for each other, to play hard for the team, for the city. And and for me, that’s exciting.” ★ ★ ★
Ted Leonis is chairman, principal owner and chief executive officer of Monumental Sports & Entertainment (MSE), one of the largest integrated sports and entertainment companies in the country with one of the most diverse partner groups in all of sports. MSE owns and operates the 2020 NBA 2K League Champion Wizards District Gaming, the 2019 WNBA Champion Washington Mystics, the NHL's 2018 Stanley Cup Champion Washington Capitals, the NBA's Washington Wizards, the NBA G League's Capital City Go-Go, and Capital One Arena in downtown Washington, DC. The partnership operates MedStar Capitals Iceplex, the Washington Capitals' training facility and front office headquarters, and George Mason University's EagleBank Arena. MSE is also co-owner of aXiomatic, which has controlling interest in global esports franchise Team Liquid. Mr. Leonis is also co-executive chairman of aXiomatic.

MSE and NBC Sports Washington, part of the NBC Sports Group, have developed an advanced media partnership that includes NBCSW's exclusive media rights to the Capitals and Wizards, and saw MSE become an equity partner in NBCSW. NBC Sports Group has also invested in Monumental Sports Network, creating a cross-equity leadership structure.

As part of a joint venture with the DC Mayor's Office and Events DC, MSE owns and operates Capital One Arena, a brand-new sports and entertainment facility in Southeast D.C. on the St. Elizabeths East campus, which opened in the Fall of 2018. This cutting-edge 4,200-seat venue and basketball facility includes a top-of-the-line practice facility for the Wizards and serves as the Mystics and Co-Go home court. The arena is part of the St. Elizabeths East Campus redevelopment and is expected to generate significant expansion of arts, cultural, entertainment and civic programming. This project is designed to be a catalyst for new opportunities in Ward 8 and citywide and create a destination for residents and visitors.

Mr. Leonis serves on the Board of Governors for the NBA and NHL as well as on the Executive Committee of the NHL. He is also chairman of the NBA Media Committee.

Revolution and Venture Capital Investor

Mr. Leonis is a co-founder and partner at Revolution Growth, which invests speed-up capital in businesses outside of Silicon Valley that are leveraging technology and new models to disrupt existing, multi-billion dollar industries. The firm makes a select group of investments each year, typically investing $25-50 million per deal, and invests in some of the economy's largest sectors including sports, media, entertainment and education technologies, transportation, energy, financial services, food and government services. Investments include companies such as Spottradar USA, DraftKings, Bedrock Manufacturing (parent company of Shinola and Filson), Resonate, Optoro, CustomInk, Cava and Sweetgreen. He also serves on the boards of several public companies, American Express and Coupoun.

He also has made early stage investments and owned equity in numerous companies, including AOL, Google, Revolution Money, AddThis, Preview Travel (Travelocity), Inside.com, MobileLoqse, ObjectVideo, Vox Media, Zedge, I-Village, Proxicom, Cricket Media, Mediabank, Two Harbors, Algenis, Social Radar and Forbes Travel Guide.

Filmmaker and Digital Entrepreneur

Mr. Leonis created and produced the award-winning film “Nanking.” The film premiered at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival and was awarded the Documentary Editors Award. The film went on to win a Peabody Award and an Emmy Award. The film was distributed theatrically, appeared on HBO and is one of the most viewed documentaries of all time because of its wide distribution in theater and on television throughout China. Mr. Leonis also produced the documentary film “Kicking It,” which premiered at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival and aired on ESPN. He then produced “A Fighting Chance,” which aired on ESPN in 2010. In 2013 he produced “Lost for Life,” a documentary that explores juvenile offenders who have been sentenced to life without parole. “Lost for Life” was broadcast in 58 countries in 2014 and garnered both critical acclaim and ratings success. Most recently he produced the documentary “We the People: The Market Basket Effect,” which aired on Pivot and iTunes and was released theatrically.

Mr. Leonis is also executive producer of the documentary film, “Willie,” along with MSE partners Sheila Johnson and Earl Stafford. “Willie” is the story of Willie O’Ree, who in 1958 became the first black player in the National Hockey League.

Phanthropy

Through the Leonis Foundation, his sports teams, the Monumental Sports & Entertainment Foundation, SnagFilms and his family’s personal giving, Mr. Leonis supports hundreds of charities each year. In 2015 Mr. Leonis was named chairman of the board of DC-CAP (District of Columbia College Access Program), which is dedicated to encouraging and enabling DC public high school students to enroll in and graduate from college.

Other highlighted charities and causes include Best Buddies, DC Central Kitchen, Georgetown Entrepreneurship Initiative, The Georgetown Venture Lab and annual Bank Tank competition in partnership with the McDonough School of Business, See Forever Foundation, Venture Philanthropy Partners, Street Soccer USA, YouthAIDS, GlobalGiving, College Success Foundation – District of Columbia, Potomac School, Catholic University, Childrens Hospital, Childrens National, D.C. Voluntary Athletic Association, Salvation Army Angel Tree, Alliance for Lupus Research, Serve DC, Fort Dupont Ice Arena and Ice Hockey Club, USO of Metropolitan Washington, Capital Area Food Bank, Flashes of Hope, Inova Health System Foundation, UNICEF, obesity prevention and numerous local schools and cancer research and awareness programs.

As the former vice chairman of Washington 2024, Mr. Leonis assumed a leading role in guiding the region’s bid for the 2024 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games. In June 2014, the United States Olympic Committee identified Washington and three other cities as potential locations.

Mr. Leonis also co-founded and chairs the Greater Washington Partnership, which played a critical role in organizing the region’s bid process for Amazon’s HQ2. The bid was successful, which was built on cooperation between Washington, Maryland and Virginia, and offers a great blueprint for tackling economic challenges for everything from housing to transportation to workforce development.

Thanks to a $1.5 million gift from the Leonis family, the legacy of Georgetown entrepreneurship continues with the launch of the Georgetown Venture Lab, the lab provides a collaborative space for the university and its network of alumni entrepreneurs to catalyze start-ups and innovation in the community. The Georgetown Venture Lab expands the Leonis family’s leadership role in supporting the university’s entrepreneurial community. In 2016, they launched the Leonis Family Entrepreneurship Prize to honor and financially assist students and recent alumni who kickstart social impact ventures and initiatives.

AOL

During his 14-year career at AOL, Mr. Leonis served as president of America Online Services Company, president of AOL Studios, president of AOL, Web Properties, vice chairman and president of AOL Core Services, vice chairman and president of AOL Audience Business and vice chairman emeritus. The company recorded its greatest levels of innovation and growth under his leadership, and in May 2010 AOL named a 10-story office tower The Leonis Center in his honor.

Mr. Leonis retired from active management of AOL in 2006.

Author

Mr. Leonis has authored numerous books, including “Blue Magic: The People, Power and Politics Behind the IBM PC” and “The Business of Happiness: 6 Secrets to Extraordinary Success in Work and Life.”
Dick Patrick has been part of the Washington Capitals organization since 1982 and was one of Ted Leonsis’s original partners when Monumental Sports & Entertainment was formed in June 2010. Mr. Patrick is President of the Capitals and Vice Chairman of Monumental Sports & Entertainment. For the first five years of MSE’s existence, Mr. Patrick also assumed initial responsibility as Chief Operating Officer and was involved in all facets of operating three professional sports franchises – the Capitals, Washington Wizards and the Washington Mystics – and Capital One Arena.

For three generations the family name of Patrick has been synonymous with the sport of hockey and the National Hockey League. Mr. Patrick’s grandfather, Lester Patrick, was the longtime coach and general manager of the New York Rangers. In his honor, the Lester Patrick Trophy is awarded annually for “outstanding service to hockey in the United States.” It was Lester who instilled in his family the desire to remain active in the advancement of the sport of hockey and the National Hockey League. Mr. Patrick’s father, Muzz, and uncle, Lynn, both played on the 1940 New York Rangers team that captured the Stanley Cup. In October 2012, Dick Patrick was awarded the Lester Patrick Trophy for his contributions to hockey in the United States. Mr. Patrick and his son, Chris, who is the Capitals director of player personnel, became the sixth and seventh members of the Patrick family to win the Stanley Cup in 2018, a tradition that goes back 100 years in their legendary family.

Mr. Patrick’s cousin, Craig Patrick, played for the Capitals from 1977-79. He won two Stanley Cups as general manager of the Pittsburgh Penguins and was enshrined in the Hockey Hall of Fame in November 2001 in the “builder” category.

Before Mr. Patrick’s arrival, the Capitals had never advanced to postseason play. In his 37 seasons with the club, Washington has qualified for the playoffs 30 times – including the team’s Stanley Cup championship in 2018, the run to the Stanley Cup Final in 1998 and three Presidents’ Trophy-winning teams (2009-10, 2015-16, 2016-17). During the 2010s, the Capitals (465-232-0-90) recorded the most wins of any team and only trailed the Montreal Canadiens of the 1970s (501-160-130-0) and the Boston Bruins of the 1970s (487-190-111-0) as the winningest franchise of any decade. Additionally, with a .648 point percentage, the Capitals only trailed the 1970 Canadiens and Bruins (Montreal: .712; Boston: .689) and the 2000s Detroit Red Wings (.682) in point percentage in a decade.

Born in 1946 in Victoria, B.C., Mr. Patrick grew up in the United States. He earned his undergraduate degree from Dartmouth College and a law degree from the Washington College of Law at American University. He has developed commercial real estate in the Washington, D.C., area for more than 20 years and, while raising children who have skated within local youth hockey programs, he has been instrumental in increasing the Capitals’ involvement in youth programs throughout the area.
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Brian MacLellan is entering his seventh season as general manager of the Capitals. MacLellan, 62, was named the sixth general manager in the franchise’s history on May 26, 2014 and is in his 19th season with Washington after previously serving as the team’s assistant general manager, player personnel.

Since appointing MacLellan as general manager, the Capitals are 294-135-50 and have led the League in points (638), road wins (140) and have recorded the second-most wins (294) in the NHL. With 90 points in 69 games before the suspension-shortened 2019-20 season, the Capitals were again on pace to reach the 100-point mark. They would have become the fourth franchise in NHL history to reach the mark six consecutive times, joining the Detroit Red Wings (12 times: 1999-00 to 2011-12), the Montreal Canadiens (eight times: 1974-75 to 1981-82) and the Edmonton Oilers (1981-82 to 1986-87).

During MacLellan’s tenure, the Capitals have won two Presidents’ Trophies and a franchise-record five consecutive Metropolitan Division titles.

With MacLellan at the helm, the Capitals won their first Stanley Cup in 2018. Of the 19 players to take the ice during the Cup-clinching win in Game 5, eight players were either signed, traded for or drafted by MacLellan, including three of the four players that scored in the game (Jakub Vrana, Devante Smith-Pelly and Lars Eller). The Capitals tied an NHL record with 10 road wins during the run and joined the 1991 Pittsburgh Penguins as the only teams to win the Stanley Cup despite trailing in all four series.

In the 2015-16 season, Washington led the NHL with a record of 56-18-8 (120 points) and captured its second Presidents’ Trophy in franchise history (2009-10). The Capitals set franchise records in wins and road wins (27) and MacLellan was named a finalist for the 2015-16 NHL General Manager of the Year Award.

In his first season, Washington posted a record of 45-26-11 (101 points), reaching the 100-point mark for the eighth time in team history and the first since the 2010-11 season.

In his previous role, MacLellan oversaw the club’s professional scouting staff and worked closely with the team’s American Hockey League affiliate, the Hershey Bears, who won the Calder Cup in 2006, 2009 and 2010. MacLellan, who served as a pro scout for the Capitals from 2000-03 prior to his promotion to director of player personnel, assisted and advised the general manager in all player-related matters.

MacLellan, who won a Stanley Cup with the Calgary Flames in 1989, recorded 413 points (172 goals, 241 assists) in 606 games during his 10-year NHL career with the Los Angeles Kings, New York Rangers, Minnesota North Stars, Calgary Flames and Detroit Red Wings. MacLellan also won a silver medal with Team Canada at the 1985 World Championship in Prague.

The Guelph, Ont., native played hockey at Bowling Green State University from 1978-82, registering 143 points (64g, 79a) in 160 games. MacLellan’s 345 career penalty minutes rank sixth in school history. The 6’3” forward earned 63 points his freshman year, marking the second most points by a freshman in school history. During his junior season, MacLellan moved to defense and was named an All-American defenseman and First-Team All-CCHA in 1982. MacLellan served as co-captain for the Falcons from 1980-82. He was elected to the Bowling Green Athletic Hall of Fame in 1987. MacLellan graduated with a bachelor of science in business administration from Bowling Green and earned his MBA with a concentration in finance from the University of St. Thomas in 1995. He went on to work for an investment consulting firm in Minneapolis before joining the Capitals as a pro scout.
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Don Fishman is entering his 16th season with the Washington Capitals and 12th as assistant general manager and director of legal affairs. In this role, he handles player contract negotiations, player contract research and analysis, the club’s day-to-day salary cap position, team salary cap strategic planning, the salary arbitration process, NHL and team salary cap analysis, and interpretation of NHL/NHLPA Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) issues. Fishman also assists the club’s general manager with the day-to-day operations of the Capitals hockey operations department such as roster issues, player movement, preseason and regular season scheduling, budgeting, and training camp planning.

Fishman, who spent two seasons as director of legal affairs and hockey administration before his appointment to assistant general manager, also helped lead the organization’s efforts on a number of other special projects, including attracting 2016 World Cup of Hockey exhibition games to Washington, bringing the United States Men’s Olympic Hockey Team Orientation Camp to the Capitals’ Arlington, Virginia training facility in 2013, and bringing American Hockey League regular season games to Washington in 2012 and 2014. Fishman was also involved with the planning for the three outdoor hockey games involving the Capitals, 2011 Winter Classic (Pittsburgh), 2015 Winter Classic (Nationals Park), and 2018 Stadium Series game (Annapolis). Finally, Fishman serves as legal counsel for the Capitals organization generally.

Prior to joining the Capitals, Fishman served as general counsel of two Washington, D.C. city government agencies. In his role with District government, he worked as part of the local host committee that successfully bid for the NCAA Men’s Hockey Frozen Four, held in Washington, D.C. in 2009. Fishman also worked as a corporate and communications lawyer in Washington and Los Angeles with Latham & Watkins and Ervin, Cohen & Jessup. Fishman, a native Washingtonian, graduated with an economics degree from Harvard College, where he also served as the radio voice of Harvard Hockey, and a law degree from UCLA School of Law. Fishman has also coached local youth hockey for nearly a decade and helped found (2018) and continues to coach D.C.’s first public middle school ice hockey team at Alice Deal Middle School (DCPS).

Ross Mahoney is entering his seventh season as assistant general manager with Washington. Mahoney served as the Capitals’ director of amateur scouting for the prior 16 seasons. As assistant general manager, Mahoney is responsible for the NHL Entry Draft, the club’s developmental programs, evaluations of opposing teams prospects and oversees the organization’s amateur scouting staff. In Game 5 of the 2018 Stanley Cup Final, 12 players, all drafted during Mahoney’s tenure, were in the lineup.

Prior to joining the Capitals, Mahoney was a scout with the Buffalo Sabres and Vancouver Canucks. He has coaching experience with the University of Regina, the Western Hockey League’s Regina Pats and at the international level. He twice coached Team Western in the World Under-17 Challenge. In 1995, he coached Team Saskatchewan to the gold medal at the Canadian Winter Games.

Mahoney earned a degree in education from the University of Regina, where he played hockey for the Cougars. After graduating, he spent 17 years as a teacher.

Mahoney played junior hockey for the Tier II Regina Pat Blues and the Regina Pats in the WHL. He also played four years at the University of Regina, helping lead his team to two national finals. Mahoney was inducted as a player in the Saskatchewan Baseball Hall of Fame in 1997 and in the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame in 1999.

Mahoney and his wife, Traci, reside in Regina, Saskatchewan. He has a son, Michael, and a daughter, Katie.
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Laviolette, 56, is entering his first season with the Capitals after becoming the 19th head coach in franchise history. Laviolette brings 18 years of NHL head coaching experience to the organization, having previously coached the New York Islanders (2001-03), the Carolina Hurricanes (2003-08), the Philadelphia Flyers (2009-13) and the Nashville Predators (2014-20). Laviolette has compiled a career coaching record of 637-425-25-123 and ranks second in wins among U.S. born coaches and 16th overall in NHL history.

Laviolette became the fourth American-born coach to win the Stanley Cup in 2006 with Carolina. In his career, Laviolette has led 11 teams to postseason appearances and has an overall record of 75-68 in the playoffs. Laviolette is the fourth coach in NHL history to lead three different teams to the Stanley Cup Final (Carolina: 2006; Philadelphia: 2010; Nashville: 2017), joining Dick Irvin, Scotty Bowman and Mike Keenan.

Laviolette-coached teams have consistently ranked well offensively and defensively. In 13 full seasons, his teams have ranked in the top 10 in goals seven times. In six seasons with Nashville, Laviolette led the Predators to 248 wins. In his first season in Nashville in 2014-15, the Predators improved by nine wins and 16 points in the standings, with Laviolette and his staff representing the team at the All-Star Game. In the spring of 2017, the Laviolette-led Predators became the third club seeded lowest in its conference to advance to the Stanley Cup Final since the League adopted the conference-based playoff format in 1994. The club followed that up with the best record in franchise history (53-18-11, 117 points), a Presidents’ Trophy and a Central Division title in 2017-18. In six seasons under Laviolette, the Predators ranked fourth (excluding Vegas) in the NHL with a 52.1 shot attempt percentage at five-on-five (19,082 shot attempts for, 17,565 against). Additionally, Nashville was tied with Los Angeles for the least amount of goals against in the NHL (1,051) in his five full seasons.

With each of his previous NHL coaching stops, the team saw an overall improvement from their season prior to his arrival. The Islanders finished with 96 points and the eighth-best record in the League in 2001-02 after finishing the previous season 30th in the NHL with 52 points. In 2005-06, Laviolette’s first full season with the Hurricanes, Carolina finished with 112 points and captured the Stanley Cup after finishing with 76 points the year prior. With Philadelphia, the Flyers improved to 106 points in 2010-11 after finishing with 88 points in 2009-10. Laviolette led the Predators to 104 points in his first season in 2014-15 from 88 points the season prior.

Internationally, Laviolette has coached Team USA at the World Championship in 2004, 2005 and 2014. He has also represented his country in four Olympic Games, first as a player in the 1988 Calgary Games and the 1994 Lillehammer Games, then as a head coach at the 2006 Torino Games, and as an assistant at February’s 2014 Sochi Games.

After recording 268 points (78g-190a) in 594 minor-league games in the American and International hockey leagues (Indianapolis, Colorado, Denver, Flint, Binghamton, Providence and San Diego) from 1986-97, and appearing in 12 games for the New York Rangers in 1988-89, Laviolette began his coaching career with the ECHL’s Wheeling Nailers in 1997. After posting a 37-24-9 record and reaching the conference finals in his rookie coaching season, he was hired as head coach of the AHL’s Providence Bruins, and led the team to an AHL-best 56-16-4-4 record and a Calder Cup in 1998-99, just one season after the team had gone 19-49-7-5 and finished last in the league. Following the 1999-2000 season, the 1999 AHL Coach of the Year was promoted to assistant coach of the parent Boston Bruins, which he held for a single campaign (2000-01) before starting his NHL head coaching career with the Islanders in 2001-02.

A native of Franklin, Mass., and graduate of Westfield State College, Laviolette and his wife, Kristen, have three children – sons Peter and Jack, and daughter Elisabeth.
Scot Arniel is entering his 15th season as an assistant coach with the Capitals after spending the prior five seasons as an associate coach with the New York Rangers. Arniel has more than 18 years of professional coaching experience, which includes serving as head coach for the Columbus Blue Jackets from 2010-12.

The Kingston, Ont., native compiled a 218-136-21-21 record in five seasons as head coach in the American Hockey League with the Chicago Wolves and the Manitoba Moose. Arniel guided the Moose to the Calder Cup Final in 2009 after posting franchise records with 50 wins and 107 points to finish atop the AHL standings. Arniel captured the Louis A.R. Pieri Memorial Award that season as the AHL Coach of the Year. Arniel also served as an assistant coach with the Buffalo Sabres (2002-2006) and with the Manitoba Moose (1999-2002).

Prior to joining the coaching ranks, Arniel won two Memorial Cup Championships with the Cornwall Royals in the QMJHL and won a gold medal in the 1982 World Junior Championship, Canada’s first-ever gold medal in the tournament. Arniel appeared in 730 NHL games with the Winnipeg Jets (1981-86; 1990-91), Buffalo Sabres (1986-90), and Boston Bruins (1991-92), registering 338 points (149g, 189a) in 11 seasons.

Arniel was originally selected by Winnipeg in the second round, 22nd overall, in the 1981 Entry Draft. Arniel and his wife, Lia, have a son, Brendan, and a daughter, Stephanie.

Blaine Forsythe is entering his 15th season as an assistant coach with the Capitals after spending the prior five seasons as an associate coach with the New York Rangers. Forsythe has more than 18 years of professional coaching experience, which includes serving as head coach for the Columbus Blue Jackets from 2010-12.

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The Winnipeg native brings more than 30 years of professional coaching experience, which includes assistant positions with the Hartford Whalers/Carolina Hurricanes, the Philadelphia Flyers and Nashville. McCarthy has coached three separate teams to the Stanley Cup Final (Carolina in 2002 and 2006, Philadelphia in 2010 and Nashville in 2017), winning in 2006 with Carolina.

In addition to his NHL coaching experience, McCarthy served as Philadelphia’s director of player development from 1990 to 1992. McCarthy also has compiled a record of 186-153-47-14 in five seasons as a head coach in the American Hockey League, which includes the Hershey Bears (1989-90), the Springfield Falcons (1995-97) and the New Haven Beast (1997-99).

Prior to joining the coaching ranks, McCarthy appeared in 527 NHL games with Philadelphia (1977-79; 1985-87), the Vancouver Canucks (1978-84), and the Pittsburgh Penguins (1983-85), registering 258 points (67g, 191a) in 10 seasons. He was the captain of Vancouver from 1979-82 and was named a starter in the 1981 NHL All-Star Game. McCarthy was originally selected by Philadelphia in the first round, 17th overall, in the 1977 Amateur Draft.

McCarthy and his wife, Rhonda, have three daughters: Melissa, Meaghan and Mallory, and three grandchildren: Cannon, Pryce and Chase.

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COACHING STAFF

SCOTT MURRAY
GOALTENDING COACH

Scott Murray is entering his fourth season as the Capitals’ goaltending coach. Murray previously spent four seasons with the Hershey Bears.

Over the last three seasons, Capitals goaltenders have combined for 138 wins, the third most wins in the NHL.

During the 2019-20 season, Murray worked with Braden Holtby and Ilya Samsonov. Holtby ranked eighth in the NHL in wins (25) and was named to the NHL All-Star Game for the fifth straight season. Murray guided rookie goaltender Samsonov to a 16-6-2 record, and he ranked second among NHL rookie goaltenders in wins. Samsonov became the first netminder in franchise history to record 10 wins within his first 12 starts (10-2-1) and the second goaltender in NHL history to win his first 10 road decisions.

During the Capitals’ 2017-18 Stanley Cup-winning season, Murray helped Holtby set a franchise record for most wins in the postseason and lead all NHL goalies in goals-against average (2.16) during the playoffs.

Murray joined the Capitals organization in 2013 after spending four seasons as the goaltending coach for the Sudbury Wolves of the Ontario Hockey League. Murray, 40, played hockey collegiately at Lake Superior State University. The St. Clements, Ontario, native also played for the San Angelo Saints (Central Hockey League) and Motor City Mechanics (United Hockey League) during his professional career.

Murray and his wife Renee have three children, a son Tylar, and two daughters, Ella and Liv.

BRETT LEONHARDT
ASSISTANT COACH - VIDEO

Brett Leonhardt is entering his ninth season as the Capitals’ video coach and third as an assistant coach.

Leonhardt spent two seasons in the NHL office in Toronto as their video manager for hockey operations beginning in 2011. In his role, he was responsible for breaking down and handling all video for rule changes, video reviews, officiating issues and more.

Prior to his time with the NHL, Leonhardt received a bachelor’s degree in communications and media arts at Neumann University and was a recipient of the John A. Phillips Scholar-Athlete Award as well as the John Facenda Award for excellence in communication arts. He played hockey collegiately at both Neumann University and Oswego State University after spending three seasons playing for the Cambridge Winterhawks and Kitchener Dutchmen of the GOJHL.

Leonhardt was born in Kitchener, Ont. He and his wife Logan, a DCPS kindergarten teacher at Janney Elementary, reside in Ashburn, Va., with their twin boys, Beckham and Lennox.

JARED ELENBERGER
VIDEO COORDINATOR

Jared Elenberger is entering his first year with the Capitals as a video coordinator. Elenberger previously worked as a video coach for the Hershey Bears during the 2019-20 season and worked as a coaching intern with the Capitals in 2017-18.

Prior to his time with the Capitals, Elenberger earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash. Elenberger also earned his master’s in sport industry management at Georgetown University.

During his time in college, Elenberger volunteered as an instructor for the Gonzaga Exceptional Bulldogs, Spokane’s Special Hockey program through the American Special Hockey Association, and as a club basketball coach. Additionally, during his time at Georgetown, Elenberger worked as a marketing intern with the Capitals during the 2016-17 season and worked as a basketball operations intern for the summer of 2017 with the Washington Wizards.

Elenberger was born and raised in Folsom, Calif. He currently resides in Arlington, Va.
State-of-The-Art Technology Brings Fans Closer To The Action

With one of North America’s largest continuous 360-degree centerhung scoreboard, we’re revolutionizing the fan experience, bringing you more live action, scores and stats. Together with our amazing new DualTV double-sided LED boards, and a first-of-its kind 360-degree HD SkyRing at the top of our Arena, you won’t miss a thing!

Mouth Watering New Concessions

We’ve continued our updates to the concourse with brand new concessions, including The Exchange, a walk-in market, Over The Top, a modern new approach to quick concessions, Devils Backbone Brewing Company craft brewhouse and new food options from chicken to pizza. We’re continuing our partnerships with some of the top chefs of the District, bringing exceptional food to the entertainment experience.

For more information, visit capitalonearena.com
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The Washington Capitals ushered in a new era for the franchise in 2006 with the opening of MedStar Capitals Iceplex, a community ice rink in Arlington, Va., that serves as the Capitals’ training facility and home to the team’s administrative offices. The project, a joint venture between the Washington Capitals and Arlington County, is located on the eighth level of the parking garage attached to Ballston Quarter.

The 137,000-square-foot facility includes two NHL-size ice rinks with seating for approximately 1,200, office space, two pro shops, a snack bar, media facilities and additional space for special events. The 20,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art training center for the Capitals features a large weight and fitness room, extensive athletic-training and medical facilities, spacious locker-room and lounge areas, a theater-style classroom and a high-tech video room.

MedStar Capitals Iceplex hosted Capitals training camp for the 14th year in 2020. It has also played host to 13 Capitals summer development camps and the unveiling of the team’s new logos and jerseys in 2007. In 2013, MedStar Capitals Iceplex hosted the United States Olympic Men’s National Team Orientation Camp, designed to assist in the preparation of the 2014 U.S. Olympic Men’s Ice Hockey Team that competed at the XXII Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. It also hosted the U.S. Under-18 Select Team and U.S. Under-17 Select Team in 2015.

The structure was built atop the existing seven-story public parking garage at the corner of North Glebe Road and North Randolph Street in the heart of Ballston. The $42.8 million project, designed by Architecture Inc. of Reston, Va., included the addition of an eighth level of parking to the garage. MedStar Capitals Iceplex is the only rink in the United States built eight or more stories above street level.

The facility is the first indoor ice rink inside the Capital Beltway in Virginia and just the second facility of its kind anywhere inside the Beltway (Ft. DuPont Ice Rink in D.C. is the other). With the Orange and Silver Line reaching the Ballston Metro Station nearby, MedStar Capitals Iceplex is the only community rink located on the Metrorail system.

The two ice sheets offer an estimated 12,000 hours of ice time per year for use by youth, high school and college hockey teams, figure skating, synchronized skating, recreational skating, learn-to-skate programs and hockey and broomball. The Washington Little Capitals, a top tier 1 program, play at the facility as well as the recently developed Capitals Hockey Academy Travel teams and Rooftop Hockey House League. At least 500 hours of ice time are donated by the Capitals to Arlington County to offer the economically disadvantaged and physically and mentally challenged members of the community an opportunity to use the facility.
### FORWARDS
- Nicklas Backstrom #19
- Daniel Carr #28
- Nic Dowd #26
- Lars Eller #20
- Carl Hagelin #62
- Garnet Hathaway #21
- Evgeny Kuznetsov #92
- Connor McMichael #24
- T.J. Oshie #77
- Alex Ovechkin #8
- Richard Panik #14
- Brian Pinho #64
- Conor Sheary #73
- Daniel Sprong #10
- Jakub Vrana #13
- Tom Wilson #43

### DEFENSE
- John Carlson #74
- Zdeno Chara #33
- Brenden Dillon #4
- Martin Fehervary #42
- Nick Jensen #3
- Michal Kempny #6
- Dmitry Orlov #9
- Justin Schultz #2
- Jonas Siegenthaler #34
- Trevor van Riemsdyk #57

### GOALIES
- Craig Anderson #31
- Pheonix Copley #1
- Zach Fucale #39
- Ilya Samsonov #30
- Vitek Vanecek #41
2020-21 WASHINGTON CAPITALS SCHEDULE
2020-21 ROSTER

31  CRAIG ANDERSON  GOALTENDER
Height: 6'3"  |  Weight: 184
Birthday: 5/21/81
Birthplace: Park Ridge, Illinois

74  JOHN CARLSON  DEFENSEMAN
Height: 6'3"  |  Weight: 215
Birthday: 1/10/90
Birthplace: Natick, Massachusetts

19  NICKLAS BACKSTROM  CENTER
Height: 6'1"  |  Weight: 206
Birthday: 11/23/87
Birthplace: Gavle, Sweden

28  DANIEL CARR  LEFT WING
Height: 6'0"  |  Weight: 186
Birthday: 11/1/91
Birthplace: Sherwood Park, Alberta
Our innovative energy solutions power homes, businesses, organizations and government agencies. We’re proud to be the official energy and greening partner for:

Hey Caps Fans... Show Us Your Energy!
Zdeno Chara
Defenseman
Height: 6'9" | Weight: 250
Birthday: 3/18/77
Birthplace: Trenčín, Slovakia

Phoenix Copley
Goaltender
Height: 6'4" | Weight: 198
Birthday: 1/18/92
Birthplace: North Pole, Alaska

Brenden Dillon
Defenseman
Height: 6'4" | Weight: 220
Birthday: 11/13/90
Birthplace: New Westminster, British Columbia

Nic Dowd
Center
Height: 6'1" | Weight: 192
Birthday: 5/27/90
Birthplace: Huntsville, Alabama
FRESH FLAVOR. FEELS GOOD.

Sabra SNACKERS

CLASSIC HUMMUS with PRETZELS

OF FIBER  |  TRANS FAT
5g       |  0g

NET WT. 4.56 OZ (129g)

OFFICIAL HUMMUS of the CAPITAL ONE ARENA
LARS ELLER
CENTER
Height: 6’2” | Weight: 208
Birthday: 5/8/89
Birthplace: Rodovre, Denmark

MARTIN FEHERVARY
DEFENSEMAN
Height: 6’2” | Weight: 202
Birthday: 10/6/99
Birthplace: Bratislava, Slovakia

ZACH FUCALE
GOALTENDER
Height: 6’2” | Weight: 187
Birthday: 5/28/95
Birthplace: Laval, Quebec

CARL HAGELIN
LEFT WING
Height: 5’11” | Weight: 185
Birthday: 8/23/88
Birthplace: Sodertalje, Sweden
GAME ON!
ALL OF DC SPORTS IN ONE APP!
2020-21 ROSTER

21

GARNET HATHAWAY
RIGHT WING

Height: 6'2"
Weight: 212
Birthday: 11/23/91
Birthplace: Kennebunkport, Maine

3

NICK JENSEN
DEFENSEMAN

Height: 6'1"
Weight: 205
Birthday: 9/21/90
Birthplace: Rogers, Minnesota

6

MICHAL KEMPNY
DEFENSEMAN

Height: 6'1"
Weight: 195
Birthday: 9/8/90
Birthplace: Hodonin, Czech Republic

92

EVGENY KUZNETSOV
CENTRE

Height: 6'1"
Weight: 205
Birthday: 5/19/92
Birthplace: Chelyabinsk, Russia
**2020-21 ROSTER**

**CONNOR MCMICHAEL**
**CENTER**
- Height: 6'0"
- Weight: 183
- Birthday: 1/15/01
- Birthplace: Ajax, Ontario

**DMITRY ORLOV**
**DEFENSEMAN**
- Height: 5'11"
- Weight: 211
- Birthday: 7/23/91
- Birthplace: Novokuznetsk, Russia

**TJ OSHIE**
**RIGHT WING**
- Height: 5'11"
- Weight: 196
- Birthday: 12/23/86
- Birthplace: Everett, Washington

**ALEX OVECHKIN**
**LEFT WING**
- Height: 6'3"
- Weight: 238
- Birthday: 9/17/85
- Birthplace: Moscow, Russia
14

RICHARD PANIK
LEFT WING

Height: 6'2" | Weight: 203
Birthday: 2/7/91
Birthplace: Martin, Slovakia

64

BRIAN PINHO
CENTER

Height: 6'1" | Weight: 190
Birthday: 5/11/95
Birthplace: Beverly, Massachusetts

30

ILYA SAMSONOV
GOALTENDER

Height: 6'3" | Weight: 200
Birthday: 2/22/97
Birthplace: Magnitogorsk, Russia

2

JUSTIN SCHULTZ
DEFENSEMAN

Height: 6'2" | Weight: 186
Birthday: 7/6/90
Birthplace: Kelowna, British Columbia
73
CONOR SHEARY
RIGHT WING
Height: 5’9” | Weight: 178
Birthday: 6/8/92
Birthplace: Winchester, Massachusetts

34
JONAS SIEGENTHALER
DEFENSEMAN
Height: 6’3” | Weight: 211
Birthday: 5/6/97
Birthplace: Zurich, Switzerland

10
DANIEL SPRONG
RIGHT WING
Height: 6’0” | Weight: 200
Birthday: 3/17/97
Birthplace: Amsterdam, Netherlands

57
TREVOR VAN RIEMSDYK
DEFENSEMAN
Height: 6’3” | Weight: 188
Birthday: 7/24/91
Birthplace: Middletown, New Jersey
2020-21 ROSTER

**TOM WILSON**
- **Height:** 6'4"  
- **Weight:** 220  
- **Birthday:** 3/29/94  
- **Birthplace:** Toronto, Ontario

**VITEK VANECEK**  
**Goalie**
- **Height:** 6'2"  
- **Weight:** 187  
- **Birthday:** 1/9/96  
- **Birthplace:** Havlickuv Brod, Czech Republic

**JAKUB VRNA**  
**Left Wing**
- **Height:** 6'0"  
- **Weight:** 197  
- **Birthday:** 2/28/96  
- **Birthplace:** Prague, Czech Republic

**TOM WILSON**  
**Right Wing**
- **Height:** 6'4"  
- **Weight:** 220  
- **Birthday:** 3/29/94  
- **Birthplace:** Toronto, Ontario
With the global pandemic increasing the amount of time spent at home, the Washington Capitals recently introduced a new program to continue to support the growth of youth hockey.

The team partnered with Dc Mamba, a black-owned nonprofit whose mission is to make hockey more accessible to children across the District, to pilot the new Breaking the Ice program.

Conducted in association with the NHL, NHLPA, and Franklin Sports, Breaking the Ice introduces first-time hockey players to the game with virtual coaching sessions and sends low-cost street hockey equipment to all participants.

“The Washington Capitals are excited to launch this new program as part of our commitment to provide access to the sport of hockey to everyone in our market,” says Peter Robinson, the Director of Youth Hockey Development for the Capitals. “The partnership with Dc Mamba is instrumental to our mission, and the instructional videos bring a new element to learning hockey at home in this new virtual world.”
Breaking the Ice, designed for children ages 14 and younger, helps nourish and stoke a growing interest in the sport: youth hockey participation in the Greater Washington region, according to USA Hockey, now includes more than 19,000 players.

The upswing of youth players in the region is tied to Alex Ovechkin's community presence; since Ovechkin’s draft year, youth hockey participation has grown by 221%. But the reach of Breaking the Ice extends beyond the Washington region. The program includes registrants from 12 states across the U.S., the majority of whom have never played hockey before.

The participants — equipped with straight-blade sticks, a ball, and hockey net — learn the game through instructional videos led by Dc Mamba’s coaches, who will focus on teaching players the foundational skills of hockey.

“The Dc Mamba dream is to change the face of hockey, to encompass all colors, and our partnership alongside the Capitals shows that dream is
Together, we’re excited to see our mission come to life while breaking barriers in the game we love."

It’s a mission that occurs often within the Washington Capitals organization, when an opportunity for community participation pops up and the Capitals create an event to cater to that need.

The Capitals Youth Hockey Development Department works year-round to grow the game and strives to provide access to both street and ice hockey for all age groups. Since the 2016-17 season, the Capitals have donated equipment to 1,085 schools and engaged 691,000 students with the game. To date, the team has also built or refurbished 11 rinks, with additional rink projects slated. Through the NHL’s Industry Growth Fund funding, the Capitals will continue to focus on introducing area children to the game during the 2021 season. ★ ★ ★
# 2020-21 Washington Capitals Score Card

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