

2022 NHL Draft

Thursday, July 7, 2022
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Simon Nemec

Press Conference



Q. Simon, how does it feel to be drafted by New Jersey? What's going through your mind right now?

SIMON NEMEC: Really, really exciting. I still don't believe it. Amazing.

Q. Were you surprised that you got --

SIMON NEMEC: Yeah, big surprise because everybody say that I will be four, five, maybe six. But second overall is amazing.

Q. How many family do you have here? What's this like, this whole event, this whole weekend been like for you?

SIMON NEMEC: How many?

Q. How many family?

SIMON NEMEC: I have only brother and my dad here and my agent because my mom cares about my little brother.

Q. What kind of game do you play?

SIMON NEMEC: I think I'm a two-way defenseman, a little bit better in offensive zone with good hockey, hockey IQ and hockey sense, and I can be a good player to the power play.

Q. Is that what you feel your biggest strength is, in power play?

SIMON NEMEC: Yeah, I feel very great when I play in the power play.

Q. When you talked to the Devils in the combine, did you get a sense that they really liked you as a player?

SIMON NEMEC: Yeah, when I was in the Devils organization, I felt very great. I talked with Tomas Tatar, and they say me a couple things about their organization and everything. But now it's great.

Q. What has Tomas told you?

SIMON NEMEC: Devils is a great organization, and he said them about me I think good things, and now they draft me.

Q. Are you going to go back to Slovakia for next year?

SIMON NEMEC: No, I want to go to North America.

Q. Are you going to next week's development camp, too?

SIMON NEMEC: I think so. I think so.

Q. Looking forward to meeting some of the other prospects of the some of the other players?

SIMON NEMEC: Yeah. Now I don't know what happens.

Q. What does it feel like to go No. 2?

SIMON NEMEC: Amazing moment for my family, for me, for everybody in Slovakia. Amazing night because we are first overall and second overall. I think -- I lost my words for it.

Q. What does it say about Slovak hockey that you guys are the two highest picks?

SIMON NEMEC: Finally we draft first overall and second. Amazing year. Last year was really good for Slovakia. We won bronze medal. We were second in Hlinka and now first and second overall. Amazing year.

Q. (Indiscernible), especially after the Olympics?

SIMON NEMEC: Yeah, we know each other when we were kids, and we were in more tournaments like pee wee or more national tournaments, and now he's first overall and me second. I'm very happy.

Q. What do you think it's like back home now? I know it's different time zone, or when people wake up and realize you've gone one and two?



SIMON NEMEC: Yeah, we are very popular right now, but I don't know what will happen when we came home.

Q. What does this mean for hockey in Slovakia, to have this accomplishment? It's a very proud hockey country but a small one. I'm wondering what this means --

SIMON NEMEC: Yeah, small, but we have really good players, and now more and more players will be better like we are. Everybody is proud, and we're proud, too.

Q. You won a bronze medal with Slafkovsky. Can you talk about him as a player and how good he is?

SIMON NEMEC: He's a very good player. He's the best player in this draft, and Montreal select him.

Q. Were you surprised when you heard your name?

SIMON NEMEC: Yeah, I was a little bit surprised, but when they said Juraj's name, I was a little bit nervous because New Jersey have more centers and they need defensemen.

Q. I know that your mom is not here but you were able to call her right after you were drafted. Can you tell me a little bit about what that conversation was like?

SIMON NEMEC: Yeah, she cried, and she's really happy because now we're living our dream. When I was a kid I always dreaming about NHL, and now it's step up.

Q. So it's like a dream for both of you to be at this moment?

SIMON NEMEC: Yeah.

Q. How would you describe yourself as a hockey player?

SIMON NEMEC: As a hockey player, I think I am two-way defenseman with a good hockey sense, and I feel really comfortable in power plays.

Q. (No microphone.)

SIMON NEMEC: I think I will be playing next year in North America. Maybe American Hockey League will be the best option for me. I want to play a couple games in NHL.

Q. What excites you about that opportunity to move over to North America and start adapting your game to this type of game?

SIMON NEMEC: I think it will be hard because life here is different, and hockey is too different because rinks are smaller, smaller like in Europe, but we will see.

Q. When you're going through the draft process, were you looking at -- you mentioned like the centers and knowing that the Devils had a lot of good centers there. Were you looking at teams like okay, who needs a defenseman kind of thing, of my caliber?

SIMON NEMEC: Oh, I looking for New Jersey, Arizona, maybe Seattle. But now I'm really happy I'm New Jersey player.

Q. What did your mom say about being No. 2?

SIMON NEMEC: Ooh, nothing. She lost the words, like me.

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