

# 2023 NHL Draft

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

Nashville, Tennessee

## Leo Carlsson

Press Conference



**Q. When did you first realize you would go second overall?**

LEO CARLSSON: Like 50 minutes ago, I think. I don't know, I had a nice meeting with them, with the Ducks, yesterday, so I had a good feeling.

**Q. Was it worth it, the long drive that you made from Newark to get here to Nashville?**

LEO CARLSSON: Oh, for sure.

**Q. Were there times when you guys were going through like we're not going to make it or what was the thought process when you decided to make that decision?**

LEO CARLSSON: It was kind of easy for me, just to sleep. But for my dad, brother, mom, it was kind of hard, I think, to drive two hours and then pass it along to another person. But it was kind of easy, I think, for them, too.

**Q. The story got out you were making that kind of trek. Did the Ducks call you and say are you going to be here?**

LEO CARLSSON: No, they didn't. They didn't.

**Q. Leo, you're adding depth to a pretty young group of centers there. What are some things you'll want to pick their brains about?**

LEO CARLSSON: I don't know really. You mean like give them tips or giving me tips? Yeah, it's going to be a lot, I think. Smaller rink. It's going to be a deal in the first season, I think, but most of that, I think, with the rink.

**Q. How much do you know about Zegras and McTavish. What's your first thoughts of playing with them?**

LEO CARLSSON: It's going to be real. Two great players, two skillful players for sure. Yeah, I think it's going to be easy for me to play with them for sure.

**Q. Do you like California?**

LEO CARLSSON: Yeah, I do. I do. I would say I do.

**Q. There was obviously talk of Connor Bedard going No. 1 and then there was question about No. 2. Were you surprised at all?**

LEO CARLSSON: I mean, a little bit. Enough so it was kind of 50/50 feeling there. As I said before, I had a meeting with them yesterday and felt good.

I had a feeling, as well.

**Q. Who are you most looking forward to eventually joining on the ice?**

LEO CARLSSON: Yeah, Trevor Zegras and Mason McTavish, probably those two guys, young guys like me, so yeah, them for sure, yeah, exciting.

**Q. (Indiscernible).**

LEO CARLSSON: Yeah, Jakob Silfverberg, as well. I played with him at the world championship, and it was fun, so him, yeah, for sure.

**Q. Have you had a text from him yet?**

LEO CARLSSON: I don't have my phone yet, so I will see in a couple minutes here.

**Q. Jakob was the captain of the world championships. How much did you talk with him, and did you even talk with him much, just get a feel or ask him what the NHL was like?**

LEO CARLSSON: I didn't ask about Anaheim so much, to be honest. I just asked about him giving me some tips on being a professional off the ice basically. Yeah, I did.

**Q. Where do you see yourself fitting in with the Ducks?**

LEO CARLSSON: I haven't really -- I don't know their exact roster, to be honest with you, but I want to be a center, but if I can't, I'm going to be a winger, but yeah, we will see.

**Q. What can you bring to the Ducks' organization?**

LEO CARLSSON: Offensive game and defensive game. Mostly offensive game for sure. A big centerman with some great hockey IQ, and it's going to be fun in Anaheim.

**Q. What do you think of the comparisons some have made of you to Mats Sundin or Mikko Rantanen?**

LEO CARLSSON: Yeah, it's just incredible, a good couple of guys to join, so yeah, it's just incredible.

**Q. A lot to live up to?**

LEO CARLSSON: A lot to live up to, but I think I can.

**Q. Do you see yourself returning back to school for next season?**

LEO CARLSSON: I don't know. That decision hasn't been made yet, to be honest with you.

**Q. You have another year on your contract, though, right?**

LEO CARLSSON: 2026, I think, but I can leave if I want, so we'll see how it's going to be.

**Q. Do you hope to be in North America?**

LEO CARLSSON: Yeah, I don't know to be honest. It's kind of 50/50 now, to be honest with you, but yeah, maybe, maybe not, we will see.

**Q. Is there a current NHL player that you would say your game resembles?**

LEO CARLSSON: I mean, kind of I get Malkin, Barkov, Kopitar maybe, Rantanen as you said before, some of the big offensive guys, yeah.

**Q. I hate to harp on the drive, but it was such a big story when you made that long drive here. Is there going to be sometime tonight when you get together with your family where you go, we made it here and it was all worth it?**

LEO CARLSSON: Oh, yeah, I will. I don't know when I can see them, but hopefully soon, and we will talk about it for sure.

**Q. Have you ever had a drive like that?**

LEO CARLSSON: No, maximum five hours. It was a new drive.

**Q. How far was the drive?**

LEO CARLSSON: 14 hours, I think. 13, 14 hours, so it was a long time.

**Q. What kind of car was it?**

LEO CARLSSON: A minivan, some sort of minivan.

**Q. Was it just travel issues?**

LEO CARLSSON: Yeah, it was the weather in New York, I think, so the planes weren't just lifting. Something like that.

**Q. Canceled flights?**

LEO CARLSSON: Yeah, I did.

**Q. You drove all the way from New York then?**

LEO CARLSSON: Yeah, from Newark to Nashville.

**Q. What time did you get here?**

LEO CARLSSON: We got here at 7:00 a.m. yesterday morning.

**Q. The conversation that you had with them, was it with Pat Verbeek or Martin Madden? Who did you talk with with the Ducks?**

LEO CARLSSON: Yeah, it was Pat. We just talked about their plan for me and stuff like that and just asking me some basic questions again. But yeah, I had a good feeling for sure.

**Q. Did you think there was a real good chance this connection was going to be made?**

LEO CARLSSON: Oh, yeah, I mean, I didn't want to think too high, as well. I could have gone like 5, as well, so it was kind of hard to think about, but now I'm just -- it's awesome.

**Q. Were there nerves, as you said?**

LEO CARLSSON: For sure. After the Blackhawks pick, for sure.

**Q. How many stops did you make on the drive?**

LEO CARLSSON: Maybe five I'd say.

**Q. (Indiscernible).**

LEO CARLSSON: Oh, yeah, my main position is center. I think we saw at the world championship, as well, that I know I can handle, as well.

**Q. Do you think you'll be playing -- that there will be a push for you to play in the middle next year?**

LEO CARLSSON: If I stay, I'm going to be in the middle for sure.

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