You can look at the losses for this team and say that they will not make any noise this season. But this team has proven time and again that a strong team effort and solid coaching is all you need to be successful in today's NHL.

Coming in

Forwards: Niclas Bergfors, Zack Stortini.

Defensemen: Jack Hillen, Tyler Sloan.

Goaltenders: None.

On the outs

Forwards: Steve Begin (VAN)*, Wade Belak (unsigned)**, J.P. Dumont (unsigned), Marcel Goc (FLA), Matthew Lombardi (TOR), Steve Sullivan (PIT), Andreas Thuresson (NYR), Joel Ward (WAS).

Defensemen: Cody Franson (TOR).

Goaltenders: Mark Dekanich (CBJ).

*- Steve Begin has accepted a tryout contract with the Vancouver Canucks.

**- Sadly, Wade Belak passed away over the off-season.

2010-11 team statistics

NHL standings: 2nd in Central Division, 5th in Western Conference, 10th in NHL.

Goals for: 21st in NHL (2.60 GF per game).

Goals against: 3rd in NHL (2.32 GA per game).

Power-play: 26th in NHL (15.2%).

Penalty-kill: 5th in NHL (84.9%).

Pekk'ing This Guy to Get it Done

I know, bad joke.

Nobody will be laughing when Pekka Rinne shuts down the rest of the division. This 28-year old net-minder is the real deal.

Rinne ranked third in the NHL with a 2.12 GAA and second with a .930 save percentage. Posting a 33-22-9 record, Rinne qualified for the Vezina Trophy, which is awarded to the best goalie in the regular season.

Rinne was the MVP for his team in 2010-11 and the Predators will continue to rely on him for the upcoming season.

Goal-scoring Not Needed

Not only does Rinne keep the puck out of his net, but the entire Predator team has such good chemistry that they don't need goals to win games.

Last season, the Predators scored just 2.60 goals-per-game, ranking them just 21st in the league. Every year, this team throws out a strong team defense that is accompanied with great chemistry, no matter who is in the lineup.

This team works as a unit better than anyone in the league. They can thank Head Coach Barry Trotz for that.

Best 1-2 Punch on the Blue Line

The Predators may have a strong system, but it also helps to have the best defensive pairing in the league.

Shea Weber, a finalist for the Norris trophy last season, is one of the best positional defensemen in the game. He had a plus-7 rating along with playing 25:19 average per-game (ranked 8th in the NHL).

Add in Ryan Suter and you have two guys that will keep guys from the middle of the ice. When watching Suter play, it is hard to believe that there is a better defenseman on the same team.

Of course, these two guys make the power-play click as well.

Weber and Suter finished the season as the top power-play point-scorers on the roster, both attributing 17 power-play points.

This team sends steady defensemen Kevin Klein, Francis Bouillon and Tyler Sloan over the boards as well. The Nashville defense could rival Detroit for the best in the Western Conference.

Loss of Ward? No Problem

In last year's playoffs, the Predators received great production from forward Joel Ward. In 12 games, Ward scored 7 goals, 6 assists and 13 points, including 2 power-play goals.
His asking price ran a little high for the Predators, so he left for Washington.

Here is why this is not something the Predators will be missing; Ward added just 10 goals, 19 assists and 29 points in the regular season. That is not exactly all-star numbers that scorched the opposing goaltenders. He was not the lone reason that the Predators made the playoffs.

Here is where Barry Trotz and the Predators' scouting staff really come into play. All they have to do is plug in Player A to Ward's spot.

Niclas Bergfors was acquired over the summer and has the potential to be a legitimate 20-goal scorer in the NHL. He has not exactly panned out in New Jersey, Atlanta or Florida, even though he was originally brought into the league as someone who could put up second-line numbers. If used properly, like every other player that has been implemented into Trotz's system, Bergfors could more than fill the void that Ward will leave this season.

Read the rest of the Central Division previews:

Chicago Blackhawks

Columbus Blue Jackets

Detroit Red Wings

St. Louis Blues

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