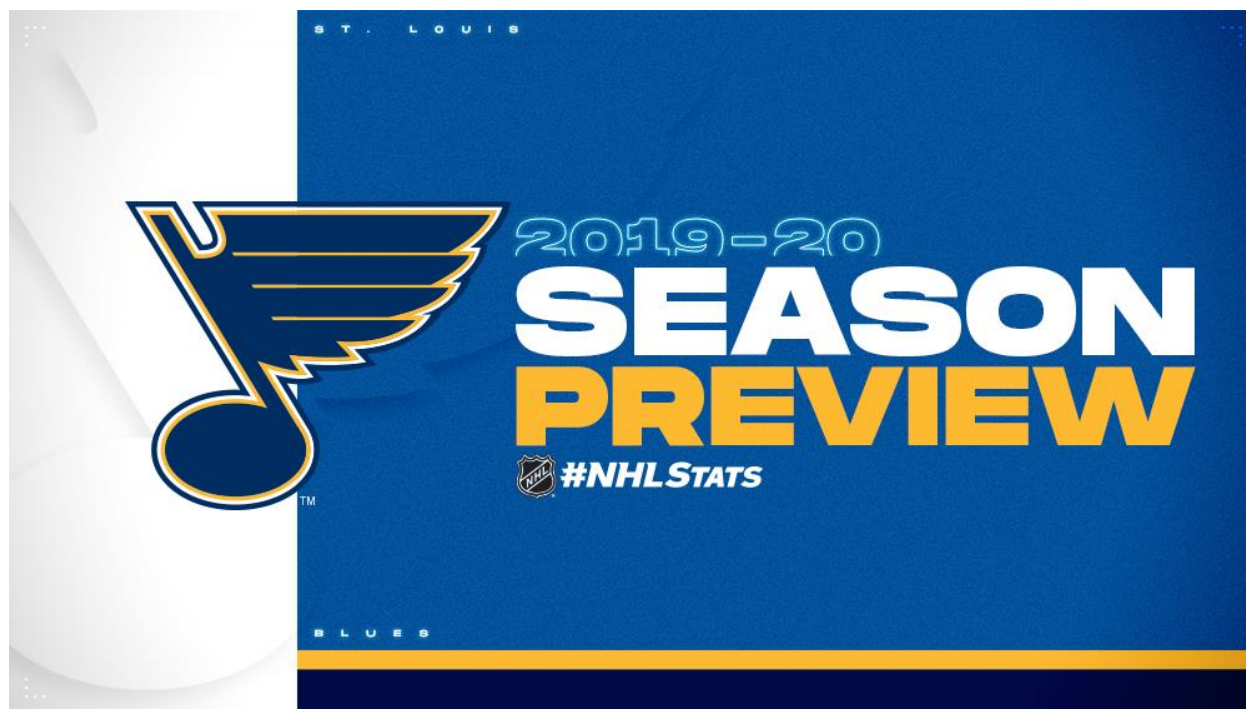


St. Louis Blues 2019-20 Season Preview



ST. LOUIS BLUES: TEAM LOOK-AHEAD

The Blues are coming off a season that saw them rally from last place overall through games of Jan. 2 and rebound to capture the franchise's first Stanley Cup. They became the first team from any of the four major North American sports leagues to win a title after occupying last place overall after one-quarter or more of the season's games (since 1967-68).

* St. Louis now sets its sights on becoming the sixth club in League history to successfully defend its first-ever championship. All eight such teams in the past 25 years have fallen short of the repeat. The only ones to do so: Red Wings (1936-37), Flyers (1974-75), Islanders (1980-83), Oilers (1987-88) and Penguins (1991-92). The original Ottawa Senators won the Cup in 1920 and 1921 but had won the championship multiple times before the NHL was formed.

OFFENSIVE OUTLOOK

* **Vladimir Tarasenko** (33-35—68 in 2018-19) has topped the 30-goal mark in each of his last five seasons – only **Alex Ovechkin** (14 seasons) has a longer active streak of 30-goal campaigns. Only two players have recorded more consecutive 30-goal seasons with the franchise than Tarasenko's five: **Gary Unger** (8) and **Brett Hull** (7).

* **Ryan O'Reilly** led Blues skaters with a career-high 77 points in 2018-19 (28-49—77 in 82 GP), his first season with the club. Only one player in franchise history has led the Blues in points in each of his first two seasons with the club: **Red Berenson** (1967-68 & 1968-69).

* O'Reilly captured his first career Selke Trophy in 2018-19 and led the NHL in faceoff wins (1,086), marking the fourth time in his career he has won more than 1,000 draws in a single campaign. The only other players since 1997-98 (when faceoffs were officially tracked) to win 1,000 or more faceoffs at least four times are **Rod Brind'Amour** (6), **Patrice Bergeron** (4), **Mats Sundin** (4) and **Adam Oates** (4).



STATS AND INFORMATION

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* **Alex Pietrangelo** (93-305—398 in 688 GP) sits two points shy of becoming the second defenseman (also **Al MacInnis**: 127-325—452 in 613 GP) and 12th skater to record 400 points with the franchise. Pietrangelo also sits seven goals shy of joining MacInnis as the second blueliner to score 100 goals with the franchise.

* Pietrangelo has reached the 40-point mark on seven occasions, tied with MacInnis for the most such seasons by a defenseman in franchise history. Only six active blueliners have *more* career 40-point seasons: **Duncan Keith** (9), **Keith Yandle** (9), **Shea Weber** (9), **Zdeno Chara** (9), **Brent Burns** (8) and **Erik Karlsson** (8).

THE FUTURE IS NOW

* **Robert Thomas** had 9-24—33 in 70 games as a teenager in 2018-19 and will be 20 years old for the entire 2019-20 campaign. **Wayne Babych** had 27-36—63 at age 20 in 1978-79 (67 GP), the highest single-season goal and point totals by a Blues player before age 21.

BETWEEN THE PIPES

* **Jordan Binnington** was a catalyst of the Blues' turnaround season, putting together a 24-5-1 record as a rookie with a .927 save percentage, five shutouts and an NHL-leading 1.89 goals-against average (min. 25 GP). He can become just the second goaltender in NHL history to lead the League in goals-against average in each of his first two career seasons (min. 25 GP) – Canadiens legend **Bill Durnan** did so in each of his first four seasons from 1943-44 to 1946-47.

* Binnington also can become just the fifth goalie in NHL history to post a goals-against average under 2.00 in each of his first two seasons (min. 25 GP) – and first in the NHL's modern era. The only ones to do so: **Lorne Chabot** (1926-27—1928-29), **George Hainsworth** (1926-27—1928-29), **Hal Winkler** (1926-27—1927-28) and **Frank Brimsek** (1938-39—1939-40).

* Only one goaltender in franchise history has posted multiple seasons with a goals-against average less than 2.00 (min. 25 GP): **Brian Elliott** (1.56 in 2011-12, 1.96 in 2013-14).

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

A look at how players have fared historically in their debut game/season with the franchise:

First game with the Blues...

SKATERS

Most goals: 2 – 6 players; most recent: Vladimir Tarasenko (Jan. 19, 2013)

Most assists: 4 – Dave Pichette (Feb. 15, 1984)

Most points: 4 – Dave Pichette (Feb. 15, 1984) and Adam Creighton (Jan. 20, 1995)

DEFENSEMEN

Most goals: 1 – 10 players; most recent: Kris Russell (Nov. 12, 2011)

Most assists: 4 – Dave Pichette (Feb. 15, 1984)

Most points: 4 – Dave Pichette (Feb. 15, 1984)

GOALTENDERS

Most saves: 35 – Guy Hebert (Dec. 11, 1991) and Chris Osgood (March 15, 2003)

Shutout: Chris Osgood (March 15, 2003)



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First season with the Blues. . .

SKATERS

Most goals: 44 – Mark Hunter (1985-86)

Most assists: 79 – Adam Oates (1989-90)

Most points: 102 – Adam Oates (1989-90)

DEFENSEMEN

Most goals: 20 – Larry Sacharuk (1974-75)

Most assists: 44 – Scott Stevens (1990-91)

Most points: 51 – Rob Ramage (1982-83)

GOALTENDERS

Most wins: 42 – Roman Turek (1999-2000)

Most Shutouts: 9 – Brian Elliott (2011-12)



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