

= Alexander Edler =

Ulf Niklas Alexander Edler ( born 21 April 1986 ) is a Swedish professional ice hockey defenceman currently playing for the Vancouver Canucks of the National Hockey League ( NHL ) . He was drafted out of Sweden 's third @-@ tier ice hockey league by the Canucks in the third round , 91st overall , in the 2004 NHL Entry Draft , and played junior ice hockey with Modo of the J20 SuperElit and the Kelowna Rockets of the Western Hockey League ( WHL ) .

Edler turned professional in North America with the Canucks ' American Hockey League ( AHL ) affiliate , the Manitoba Moose , in 2006 ? 07 , seeing some time in the NHL over the course of the season . He became a full @-@ time member of the Canucks the following season , and has since been named to one NHL All @-@ Star Game ( 2012 ) .

Internationally , he has competed for Sweden on four occasions ? at the 2006 World Junior Championships , the 2008 and 2013 IIHF World Championships ( winning gold ) and the 2014 Winter Olympics ( winning silver ) . Edler is an offensive defenceman noted for his calm on @-@ ice demeanor and strong slapshot .

= = Playing career = =

= = = Sweden and junior ( 2001 ? 06 ) = = =

Edler played at the under @-@ 17 level with his hometown district team of Jämtland in 2001 and 2002 , competing at TV @-@ pucken , a national Swedish tournament . In 2003 ? 04 , he joined the professional Jämtlands HF . He played with the club in Sweden 's third @-@ tier league , recording three goals and nine points in 24 games , while also appearing in six games for Jämtlands HF 's junior team .

Edler was largely unknown during his NHL Draft year , unranked by the NHL Central Scouting Bureau the entire season . He was brought to the attention of the Vancouver Canucks by the team 's head scout in Sweden , Thomas Gradin , who saw Edler playing with Jämtlands HF . Although Gradin would refer to the team 's level of play as little more than beer @-@ league @-@ calibre , he was impressed with Edler and encouraged Canucks management to draft him ( Edler 's number 23 with the Canucks would later be chosen by team trainers in honour of Gradin ) . The Canucks traded up in the 2004 NHL Entry Draft to acquire the Dallas Stars ' third @-@ round draft pick in exchange for their own third @-@ round pick in the 2005 Draft , and used the pick to select Edler 91st overall . The deal was made with the Stars in lieu of speculation that the Detroit Red Wings had a high interest in Edler and wanted to draft him in the third round as well . Detroit had discovered Edler in Sweden through their European scout Håkan Andersson , who was responsible for such previous Red Wings late @-@ round picks as Henrik Zetterberg and Pavel Datsyuk . At the time of his draft , Canucks General Manager Dave Nonis described Edler as a " smooth skater [ and a ] big guy . " Nonis added that , " He needs some time [ to develop ] , but in terms of raw skill , he 's got quite a bit of it . "

After being selected by the Canucks , Gradin brokered a move for Edler to play with Modo Hockey 's junior club of the J20 SuperElit . Edler had previously tried out for Modo 's youth program , but was cut . Future Canucks teammates Markus Näslund , Henrik Sedin and Daniel Sedin had also played in the Modo system before joining the NHL . In Edler 's lone season with Modo , he recorded eight goals and 23 points over 33 games in 2004 ? 05 . He ranked second in point @-@ scoring among league defensemen to Modo teammate Tommy Enström , who recorded 33 .

On 29 June 2005 , Edler 's major junior rights were obtained by the Kelowna Rockets of the Western Hockey League ( WHL ) ; he was chosen by Kelowna in the first round , 58th overall , of the Canadian Hockey League ( CHL ) Import Draft . The Canucks encouraged Edler to move from Sweden to play junior in North America . After reporting to training camp with the Canucks ' American Hockey League ( AHL ) affiliate , the Manitoba Moose , in September 2005 , he was assigned to junior with the Rockets . In his lone WHL season , Edler collected 13 goals and 53

points over 62 games in 2005 ? 06 , ranking fifth among WHL defencemen and fourth among total rookies in scoring . He went on to help Kelowna to the second round of the WHL playoffs , where they were eliminated by the Everett Silvertips . In 12 post @-@ season games , Edler added eight points .

= = = Vancouver Canucks ( from 2006 ) = = =

The following off @-@ season , Edler was signed to an entry @-@ level contract by the Canucks on 24 July 2006 . Reporting to the Canucks ' training camp in September 2006 , his play had the Canucks slotting him in as the team 's seventh defenseman . However , a hip injury saw him assigned to the Manitoba Moose . Following an injury to Canucks defenseman Sami Salo , he was called up to the NHL on 3 November 2006 , two games into his AHL season . He made his NHL debut the following day against the Colorado Avalanche . Eleven days later , however , he was reassigned to the Moose , only to be recalled on 24 November . He scored his first NHL goal on 30 November , a slap shot that beat Anaheim Ducks goaltender Jean @-@ Sébastien Giguère in a 2 ? 1 loss . Edler was reassigned between Manitoba and Vancouver on several more occasions over the course of the 2006 ? 07 season . He appeared in 22 games total for the Canucks , recording a goal and two assists . With the Moose , he scored five goals and 26 points over 49 games and was named Manitoba 's Rookie of the Year .

Playing in his rookie season with the Canucks the following season , Edler was chosen to compete in the 2008 NHL YoungStars Game . Representing the Western Conference , his team was defeated by the Eastern Conference by a 7 ? 6 score . Playing amidst numerous injuries on the Canucks ' blueline , Edler appeared in the most games among team defensemen with 75 . With all the injuries to his teammates , he was given additional time on the power play and penalty kill . His eight goals ranked second among rookie defensemen in the NHL , while his 20 points was fifth overall .

At the start of the 2008 ? 09 season , Edler was re @-@ signed to a four @-@ year , \$ 13 million contract extension on 9 October 2008 . The contract , a raise from his 2008 ? 09 salary of \$ 550 @,@ 000 , took into effect the following campaign . The following month , he missed two games sidelined with the flu . Later in the season , he recorded a personal best four @-@ point game ( one goal and three assists ) in a game against the Chicago Blackhawks on 7 February 2009 . He finished with 37 points , including a career @-@ high ten goals . In the 2009 Stanley Cup playoffs , Edler led all team defensemen with seven points in ten games as the Canucks were eliminated in the second round by Chicago . In his first few seasons in the NHL , Edler was often paired with veteran blueliner and countryman Mattias Öhlund , who he considered a mentor for him ( Öhlund left the Canucks to free agency in the 2009 off @-@ season and signed with the Tampa Bay Lightning ) .

The following campaign , Edler improved to career @-@ highs of 37 assists , first among team defensemen , and 42 points , second to Christian Ehrhoff . He missed six games near the midpoint of the campaign due to a left arm injury , sustained in December 2009 . In the post @-@ season , he added six points in 12 games as the Canucks lost again in the second round to the Blackhawks . Edler was injured in the sixth and deciding game of the series after opposing forward Dustin Byfuglien stepped on his right ankle after hitting him along the boards . Requiring a walking cast for five weeks , he rehabilitated his ankle during the off @-@ season .

Recovering in time for the 2010 ? 11 season , Edler continued to improve and was on pace to record new career @-@ highs in goals , assists and points when he suffered a back injury in January 2011 . Canucks General Manager Mike Gillis told reporters that Edler had been experiencing tightness in his back at several times in the season , but an open @-@ ice hit against Dallas Stars forward Jamie Benn during a game on 24 January might have contributed to his back problems . Edler underwent microdisectomy surgery to relieve pressure on a herniated disk and was sidelined for two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half months , returning for the second @-@ last game of the regular season . Finishing the season with eight goals and 33 points over 51 games , he ranked second among team defencemen in scoring , behind Ehrhoff . His 24 minutes and 17 seconds of

average ice time per game also led the Canucks . As the Canucks won the Presidents ' Trophy for the first time in franchise history , the team entered the 2011 playoffs with the first seed in the West . Eliminating the Chicago Blackhawks , Nashville Predators and San Jose Sharks , the Canucks advanced to the Stanley Cup Finals for the first time in 17 years . Facing the Boston Bruins , the team lost the series in seven games . Following their defeat , it was revealed that several Canucks players had been playing with injuries , including Edler , who played Game 7 with two broken fingers . He ranked second among Canucks defensemen and third in the League overall with 11 points ( 2 goals and 9 assists ) in 25 games .

With the departure of Christian Ehrhoff , the Canucks ' leading defensive scorer from the previous two seasons , to the Buffalo Sabres in the off @-@ season , Edler assumed a larger role on the team 's blueline in the 2011 ? 12 season . By mid @-@ January 2012 , Edler was ranked fourth among NHL defenceman in scoring with seven goals and 24 points . That month , he was selected to his first NHL All @-@ Star Game . He was selected to the competition alongside Canucks teammates Daniel and Henrik Sedin , as well as Cody Hodgson , who was named to the rookie squad . Playing for Team Alfredsson , Edler logged 21 minutes of ice time in a 12 ? 9 loss to Team Chara . Edler finished the campaign having played all 82 games for the first time in his career . He recorded personal bests and team @-@ highs among defensemen in all major statistical categories with 11 goals , 38 assists and 49 points . League @-@ wide , he ranked seventh among defensemen in point @-@ scoring . Out of eight attempts , his four shootout goals was first among NHL defensemen . His efforts helped the Canucks to a second consecutive Presidents ' Trophy . Individually , he earned four fifth @-@ place votes for the James Norris Memorial Trophy to rank 15th overall . Defending their Campbell Bowl as Western Conference champions from the previous year , the Canucks lost in the first round of the 2012 playoffs to the Los Angeles Kings . Edler recorded two goals in the five @-@ game series .

On 18 January 2013 , Edler signed a six @-@ year , \$ 30 million contract extension to remain with the Canucks . During the summer Edler was the talk of trade rumors at the trade deadline . The Red Wings were the team most interested in Edler and GM Mike Gills tried to move Edler before his NTC ( No trade clause ) went into effect on 1 July . In the end no deal was made and Edler stayed with the Canucks .

= = International play = =

Edler made his first appearance for Sweden at the under @-@ 20 level , competing in the 2006 World Junior Championships in British Columbia . He notched his lone point of the tournament , an assist , in a 10 ? 2 round @-@ robin win against Latvia . Sweden went on to finish in fifth place , having lost their quarterfinal game to Finland . Two years later , Edler debuted with Sweden 's men 's team at the 2008 IIHF World Championships in Halifax and Quebec City . He scored his first international goal on the powerplay against French goaltender Fabrice Lhenry in a 9 ? 0 round @-@ robin win . Sweden went on to the bronze medal game , where they were defeated by Canada 5 ? 4 . Edler finished with a goal and two assists in eight games . His 19 : 02 minutes of average ice time per game ranked third among team defencemen .

Edler was responsible for a knee @-@ on @-@ knee hit to Carolina Hurricanes captain Eric Staal in the quarterfinals of the 2013 IIHF World Championship , and was suspended for the final two games of the championship . Sweden went on to win the gold medal , and Edler was awarded a medal even though he did not play in the gold medal game . On 29 July 2013 , the IIHF extended the suspension to cover Sweden 's first two games of the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi . Edler later joined team Sweden during the Olympics after his two @-@ game suspension . He recored a goal and two assists in the tournament , helping Sweden earn the silver medal .

= = Playing style = =

Edler plays in the style of an offensive defenseman . One of his strongest offensive assets is his slapshot . At the Canucks ' 2008 SuperSkills event , he beat the team 's reigning hardest shooter ,

Sami Salo , with a 99 @. @ 3 mile @-@ per @-@ hour shot and has gone on to win the competition in 2009 and 2010 , as well . He is also known for his poise and confidence with the puck , allowing him to make strong first passes out of the defensive zone to forwards . Many within the Canucks organization , such as Assistant Coach Rick Bowness , have asserted this as a reflection of his calm off @-@ ice demeanor .

Despite Edler 's imposing physical characteristics , he was not known to be an aggressive defender early in his NHL career . However , he has gradually shown a capability for physicality and to hit opposing players hard . Looking back on his transition to North American hockey with the Kelowna Rockets , Edler noted the most difficult adjustment was the physical aspect of the game , which was more pronounced than in Sweden . During the Canucks ' 2011 playoff run , teammate Kevin Bieksa compared him to Edler 's former defensive partner , Mattias Öhlund , commenting , " He [ Edler ] was like Bambi when he first came into the league but now he realized how big and strong he is . When he hits guys , he hurts them . "

= = Personal life = =

Edler was born in Östersund , Sweden . He has a brother , Jens , and a sister , Katarina . He began playing hockey at the age of six .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = Regular season and playoffs = = =

= = = International = = =

= = Awards = =