<https://www.espn.com/nhl/story/_/id/36158620/stanley-cup-playoffs-picture-preview-2023-all-16-teams>

<https://www.nhl.com/stanley-cup-playoffs>

<https://csmbracket.pythonanywhere.com/bracket/>

First Round Series Preview:

Avalanche vs Kraken:

The reigning Stanley Cup champions will take on a new expansion team in the first-round matchup of the Central Division. The Avs will be missing their captain Landeskog due to knee injury for the entirety of the playoffs. This sums up the Avs year as they haven’t had a fully healthy team all year. The Kraken, based out of Seattle, are the NHL’s latest expansion team added in 2021. This will be the team’s first playoff experience ever. The Kraken will rely on veterans with Cup experience such as Grubauer, a goaltender with the Avs last year.

Stars vs Wild:

Both the Stars and Wild made an appearance last year in the playoffs and both had an early exit to their Cup dreams. The Stars have a goaltender in Jake Oettinger who has shown to be very stubborn in net. The Wild have been clicking at the right time and will be getting their top goal scorer Kaprizov back just in time for playoffs.

Golden Knights vs Jets:

The Jets leapt out in-front early in the regular season but have slipped late in the season, hanging on just enough to find themselves in position for a playoff run. The Golden Knights, another recent expansion team, has had an impressive playoff history, going to the finals in just their first year as a team back in 2017. The Knights missed the playoffs last year, but look to make a run again this year. The Jets look to end the Knights run early and make their own run to the Cup.

Oilers vs Kings:

Familiar foes, these two teams faced each other in the first round last year, taking it the full 7 games for the Oilers to top the Kings. This year may be a different story. Will the Kings young players excel with another year of experience under their belt? Will the Oilers’ McDavid, Draisaitl, and Hopkins, all 3 with 100 points, continue their success throughout the playoffs?

Bruins vs Panthers:

The first matchup in the Eastern Conference will showcase a team who has been clawing their way into a playoff position and a team who has broken numerous NHL records this year. The Panthers, finishing #1 last year in regular season left in the second round after being swept by the Lightning. This year, the Bruins take home the #1 honor in style, setting a new record for most regular season wins. Will the Panthers redeem themselves from their less than ideal playoff run last year? Will the Bruins continue their dominate performance and send the Panthers packing?

Maple Leafs vs Lightning:

Another repeating first-round matchup, the Lightning were able to defeat the Maple Leafs last year in Tampa after 7 games. Lightning have been a strong playoff team for most of recent history, winning almost 3 straight Stanley Cups in 2020, 2021, and 2022 seasons. The Maple Leafs have had suffered many disappointing early playoff exits, leaving some to wonder if the team is cursed after losing to a Zamboni driver. The Leafs Marner, Nylander, and Matthews need to demonstrate their offensive ability if the Leafs will want to beat their curse and show they have what it takes to take home the Cup. Lightnings’ Vasilevskiy will do his best to put an end to Leafs playoff push as he is consistently a premier goaltender in the NHL.

Hurricanes vs Islanders:

These two teams are no strangers to seeing each other in the playoffs. A few years ago, the Canes swept the Islanders in the second round to continue on to the Conference finals. This year, the Canes have been consistently the #1 team in their division. Even with their success, the Canes power play unit have struggle to score goals. The Canes have also suffered a huge blow to their Cup potential, losing All-Star Andrei Svechnikov to a season-ending knee injury. The Islanders have had spotty offensive production throughout the year. If they want to defeat the Canes, they will need to solve this issue.

Devils vs Rangers:

Last but certainly not least, the Devils and Rangers boast 2 of the most high-powered offenses in the league. Lead by Jack Hughes, setting franchise points records, the Devils look to find a way past the Rangers’ wall of a goaltender Igor Shesterkin. It would not be surprising if these two teams have a hard-fought first round series that goes to a Game 7.

How to use the site:

First and foremost, I would like to thank Corey Randall for the incredible work he has done to create this website. I would be doing a lot of this manually if he would not have taken it upon himself to learn how to do the online submission. Speaking of, lets take a tour of the site.

Home Page:

On the home page you’ll find notes and updates as the tourney goes on.

Master:

On this tab you’ll find the most up-to date bracket and the scores for each matchup

Standings:

Standings will show how well your bracket matches up against everyone else.

Submission:

Whether you have watched every game this season or don’t know what the NHL is, join us and guess who you think will become the best of the best.

Last year, Sarah started strong with a perfect first round bracket but it was Gus who proved he could predict the future. What will happen this year?