

2022-23 Season Review – Colorado Avalanche

Standings

Colorado Avalanche							League	
Season	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA	Rank	PlyOff
2021-22	56	19	7	119	308	232	2	Yes
2022-23	51	24	7	109	274	223	6	Yes
Change	-5	+5	+0	-10	-34	+9	-4	

Team Record by Game Type

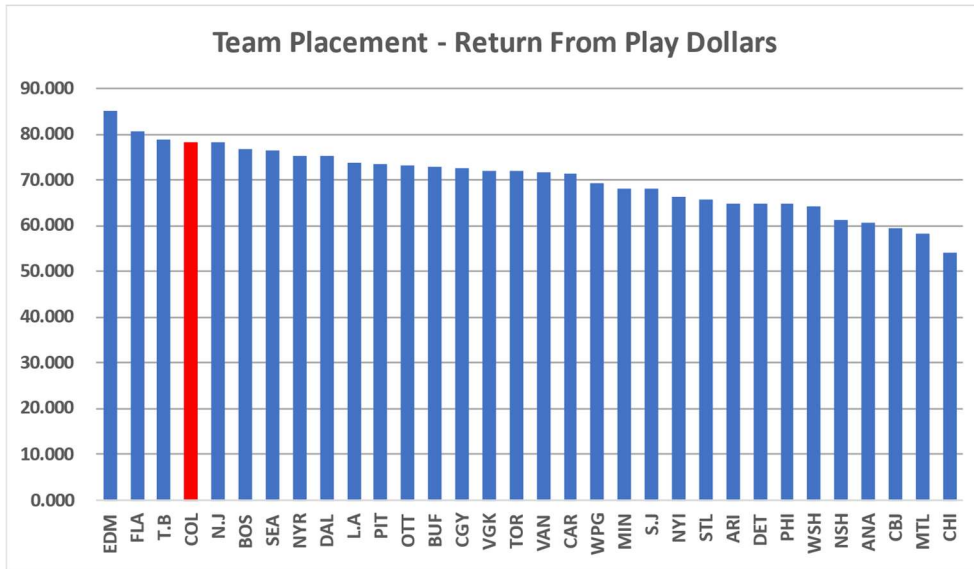
Game Type	GP	Record	Point %
Best 10-Game Streak	10	9 - 1 - 0	0.900
OT/SO	22	15 - 0 - 7	0.841
Vs. Non-Playoff Team	43	32 - 10 - 1	0.756
Defensive Battles (fewer than 4 goals in a game)	9	5 - 1 - 3	0.722
Away Games	41	29 - 11 - 1	0.720
Scoring Exactly 3 Goals	22	14 - 6 - 2	0.682
Conceding Exactly 3 Goals	14	9 - 4 - 1	0.679
All Games	82	51 - 24 - 7	0.665
Home Games	41	22 - 13 - 6	0.610
Fire-wagon Hockey (More than 8 goals in a game)	14	8 - 5 - 1	0.607
Blowouts (More than 4-goal margin)	5	3 - 2 - 0	0.600
Vs. Playoff Team	39	19 - 14 - 6	0.564
2-Goal Margin	14	7 - 7 - 0	0.500
1-Goal Margin (Excluding overtime games)	15	7 - 8 - 0	0.467
Worst 10-Game Streak	10	3 - 6 - 1	0.350

Talent Distribution

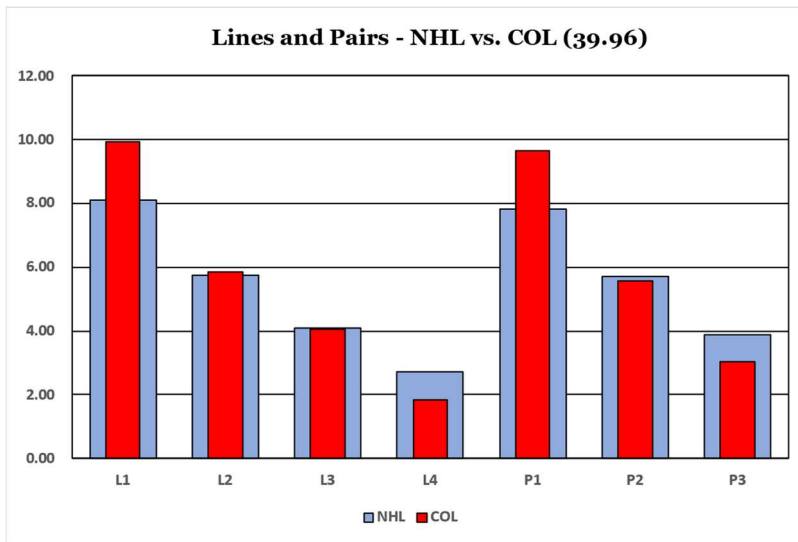
Count by Category			PR% by Age Group			PR% by Draft Status		
PR Category	Fwd	Def	Age Group	NHL PR%	Team PR%	Draft Status	NHL PR%	Team PR%
PR-Elite	2	1	18 to 23	18%	10%	Drafted by Current Team	48%	35%
PR-Star	0	1	24 to 28	45%	70%	Drafted by Other Team	41%	50%
PR-First5	2	1	29 to 33	29%	11%	Undrafted	10%	15%
PR-Regular	4	1	34+	8%	10%			
PR-Fringe	2	3						
PR-CallUp	17	4						

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Return From Play



Lines and Pairs



L1	Mikko Rantanen	Nathan MacKinnon	J.T. Compher
L2	Artturi Lehkonen	Valeri Nichushkin	Evan Rodrigues
L3	Logan O'Connor	Alex Newhook	Andrew Cogliano
L4	Denis Malgin	Matt Nieto	Ben Meyers
P1	Devon Toews	Cale Makar	
P2	Samuel Girard	Bowen Byram	
P3	Erik Johnson	Josh Manson	

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Team Leaders – Stapled To The Bench Categories

Category	Name	Rating
Most Productive	Mikko Rantanen	PR-Elite
Most Valuable	Cale Makar	VR-Elite
Best Center	Nathan MacKinnon	# 1-Center
Most Disruptive	Erik Johnson	DX-A
Best Power Player	Nathan MacKinnon	PX-A+
Best Penalty Killer	Logan O'Connor	KX-B

Team Leaders – On-Ice Situations

COL - Team Leaders in Various On-Ice Situations		
Most Time 5v5	Most Time Power Play	Most Time Penalty Kill
Devon Toews	Mikko Rantanen	Devon Toews
Samuel Girard	Nathan MacKinnon	J.T. Compher
Mikko Rantanen	Cale Makar	Cale Makar
Nathan MacKinnon	J.T. Compher	Andrew Cogliano
J.T. Compher	Artturi Lehkonen	Logan O'Connor
Most Time 3v3	Most Used Off. Zone FO	Most Used Def. Zone FO
Mikko Rantanen	Cale Makar	Logan O'Connor
Devon Toews	Mikko Rantanen	Andrew Cogliano
Nathan MacKinnon	Nathan MacKinnon	Erik Johnson
J.T. Compher	Devon Toews	J.T. Compher
Cale Makar	Artturi Lehkonen	Samuel Girard

Team Essay – First Five

Most of the good teams have good to great talent in their top three lines and top two defensive pairs. In 2022-23, Colorado had great first-line and first-pair talent, and they were league average or worse on every other line and pair (see Lines and Pairs chart).

Their best five players were four great players (Rantanen, MacKinnon, Toews and Makar) and the very useful J. T. Compher. Looking at the On-Ice Situation team leaders (table just above), Compher is among the leaders in five categories while the others are leaders in “only” four categories each.

While the focus of Stapled To The Bench is regular season play, we are aware that playoff games are played. We don’t do anything with playoff data, but we are aware of it. And the first-round playoff match-up between Seattle and Colorado was interesting in that it was between a team with great top-five talent against a team with great depth of talent that lacked a little in their top five. What type of talent is more important in the playoffs?

In this particular case, breadth of talent beat out peak talent.

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I'm going to borrow a table from the Seattle article, and use it to compare the top four lines of Seattle and Colorado. I always stress that the "lines" used in this analysis have been identified based on their PR-Scores, and may not have played together as a unit for a single second during the season.

Points Per Line			
	SEA	COL	Diff.
L1	156	268	-112
L2	165	137	28
L3	121	75	46
L4	94	27	67
Total	536	507	29

Colorado's first-line had a huge advantage in scoring over Seattle's first-line, but the next three lines were all in Seattle's favour, and by the end Seattle has a 29-point advantage over the season. That translates to about $\frac{1}{4}$ goal per game played.

How do they compare on defensive scoring? Glad you asked.

Points Per Pair			
	SEA	COL	Diff.
P1	97	116	-19
P2	45	61	-16
P3	50	18	32
Total	192	195	-3

Colorado's top six defensemen had a 3-point advantage over Seattle for the season. That translates to about 0 goals per game ($\frac{1}{41}$ goals per game, 2 goals per season).

You could say that Seattle's top twelve forwards and top six defensemen gave them a $\frac{1}{4}$ goal per game advantage in their series against Colorado.

How bad is a $\frac{1}{4}$ goal per game disadvantage? In an individual game, ignoring the home-team advantage, Colorado would win 45.6% of the games. In a seven-game series, again ignoring the home team advantage, Colorado should win about 40% of the time. With the home advantage Colorado had, they should win about 43% of the time.

Was Colorado's loss an upset? Well, yeah: anytime you have the best players in a matchup and lose, that should be considered an upset. Was it a surprise? Sort of: it shouldn't have been a shock.

Should we always expect a deep team to beat a shallow team that has better top five talent? Absolutely not. Colorado lost three games by one goal, and a little bit of puck luck in Colorado's direction in any one of those three games would have given Colorado the series.