

STEELHEADS ACHIEVING UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS WITH LA KINGS PROSPECT JACOB MOVERARE

👤 Ryan Cowley 🕒 April 23, 2017



Photo credit: Ryan Cowley

Over the past few weeks, there hasn't been much to cheer about if you are a fan of the **Los Angeles Kings**.

For the second time in three seasons, the Kings had missed the playoffs — a far cry from their status as two-time **Stanley Cup** champions in three seasons just a few seasons ago. A change in head coach and general manager also came in recent weeks, which signaled a new direction for the team. However, like any organization, the most promising aspect of a club's existence is their future — and that is no different for the Kings.

Of the four players the Kings drafted last June, two are still playing as their respective clubs are in each of the **Ontario Hockey League's** semi-final series.

In the West, defenseman **Jacob Friend** — drafted 202nd overall by the Kings in 2016 — and his **Owen Sound Attack** are battling the **Erie Otters** while in the East, the **Peterborough Petes** are down 2-0 in their series with the **Mississauga Steelheads**, which includes Kings prospect **Jacob Moverare**.

Taken 112th overall by the Kings last spring, Moverare came over to North America to kick off his junior career having spent last season with **HV71 Jonkoping** in his native Sweden. However, the 18-year-old defenseman joined the Steelheads last September with a long road ahead of him.

As talented as Moverare was, he was notorious for being a weak skater and not using his 6-foot-2 frame to his advantage. However, as his rookie campaign went along, Moverare's game progressed, slowly but surely.

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Already known for his exceptional defensive play, Moverare spent countless hours this season working with Mississauga head coach **James Richmond** on skating drills. It even boded well for the young blueliner that Richmond worked with the Kings as a development coach before joining the Steelheads.

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While skating may not be his greatest asset, Jacob Moverare has come a long way since September, establishing himself as a solid, reliable blueliner along the way — a role so integral that the Steelheads are playing in their first conference final in franchise history.

Some may have been concerned that narrowly missing the cut to make his home country's squad at the World Juniors this past holiday season would have deterred Moverare. Those who were concerned had no reason to be. In 63 games this past season, Moverare scored two goals and added 30 assists to go in hand with a plus-21 rating. In addition to his sound defensive skills, the native of Ostersund, Sweden, even showcased his great sense of discipline, collecting just 20 penalty minutes all season.

In the playoffs, though, Moverare elevated his game.

For those who wonder which players either step it up or taper off when the postseason starts, no one needed to worry about Moverare. In 13 games thus far, the Kings prospect has one goal and four assists, playing a pivotal role in his team's series victories over the **Ottawa 67's** and **Oshawa Generals**, respectively, before reaching the OHL's **East Final**.

It has been a transitional season for Jacob Moverare. Playing in his first campaign on this side of the Atlantic, the lanky defenseman has adapted quite well to the North American game. There is no telling at this point, however, where Moverare's game will take him next year, although it is a safe bet to say that a return to the Steelheads is very possible.

Until then, though, Moverare is more focused on the task at the hand, which is helping his Steelheads reach their first-ever OHL Final and an eventual **J. Ross**

Robertson Cup championship, which will mean a spot in this year's **Memorial Cup**

in Windsor. Should the latter occur, it will be the second time the franchise will qualify for the tournament having already been there in 2011 as the host city when the club was still named the Majors.

After winning the first two games of their series in Peterborough, the Steelheads return home to the **Hershey Centre** looking to take a 3-0 stranglehold on their Eastern Final series versus the Petes.

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