

It's hard to find dynamic skill players; it's even harder to find ones who have the size that teams are constantly chasing.

Enter [Nathan Behm](#), one of the draft's most skilled players. A mid-range sniper, inventive playmaker, and highlight reel handler all in one, he looked like a future top-six forward on his best nights.

His game shares many similarities with other late-first and early-second-round picks who have become dominant creators at their levels, such as [Tyson Foerster](#), [Cameron Lund](#), [Michael Hage](#), [Matvei Gridin](#), or even [Quentin Musty](#).

But Behm stands out among his peers for his uniqueness. He has the dynamic patterns, combined with a knack for instantly turning a failed play into a goal. Just look at his highlight reel below – it's one of the very best in the entire draft class:

*Highlight Reel

So, how does Behm do it? Let's find out.

Game-breaking skill with the dynamic details to match

Toe-drags, between-the-legs moves, backhand drags, taps into space – there isn't a move that Behm can't pull off. He uses his full reach to handle the puck, whether he's moving it all the way across his body or pulling it back deep in his hip pocket. Combined with skating – heel-to-heel moves, punch turns, weight shifts, changes of pace, and more – he's a very deceptive player.

One of Behm's go-to plays sees him pull the puck deep into his hip pocket and wait for the defender to engage. If they lunge out, he instantly pulls the puck around or through them, dangling to the other side and getting inside. That same puck-pulled-back position allows him to wind up shots, or more commonly, set up teammates without giving away his intentions.

Though Behm pulls off plenty of clean plays, that highlight reel above is dominated by plays that most prospects couldn't pull off – they'd lose control over and over. Not Behm, who has an unusual ability to stick with pucks, handle while off-balance or falling, and instantly make the next play. Some of that's superior reaction time and reach, but a lot of that ability comes from habits.

*Second effort plays

First, Behm's always looking to get to the middle of the rink, even before touching the puck. He chooses routes off the rush that allow him to catch a puck as he slashes from the boards to the inside in front of the defence. And if not, he creates the space to get inside with possession.

With those full-reach handling skills, Behm cuts inside, evading pokes and dancing around traffic. He pulls pucks deep into his hip pocket as he curls inside, fakes the wide drive before cutting across the sprawling defender, and cuts back to wait for support. No matter the play selection, he's setting up his moves at angles, forcing the defender to react to him, rather than the other way around.

So, even when pucks get tipped off Behm's stick or he mishandles, he's already created a favourable position by getting to the middle, giving himself or a teammate better odds of recovering the puck and creating something.

Also a highly poised player, Behm never looks rushed. It's particularly visible when he catches a puck inside space off the rush, usually as the F2 in a rush. From that position, he's lethal. Defenders are forced to make up ground, giving him opportunities to cut inside. If they're well-gapped, he cuts back, spots the next layer, slips around it, and finds an open teammate.

This is also where Behm's vision and passing skills really shine. As he skates toward the defensive line, he holds the pocket in deceptive positioning, looks off his target, and passes just as space runs out, giving his teammate as much room as possible. He regularly finds teammates across the slot and the net-front, occasionally beating nearly the entire team first.

*F2 Skills and Playmaking

Off the cycle, Behm is capable of similarly dominant sequences. He spins off checks, waits for lanes to open, and then slips the puck to an open teammate. As the level of competition increases, his ability to create chances from behind the net and off the cycle will only become a greater part of his game.

Arguably even more dangerous as a goalscorer right now, Behm is a true dual-threat. 31 goals in 59 is nothing to scoff at. And after adjusting for ice-time, he was one of the league's top scoring threats, equally or beating out potential first-rounders [Lynden Lakovic](#), [Cole Reschny](#), and [Ben Kindel](#), as well as top drafted prospects like [Brayden Yager](#), [Terik Parascak](#), [Andrew Basha](#), and [Tomas Mrcic](#), via InStat Hockey.

Behm's handling skills and details create space for his shot, but it's really his ability to shoot off the catch that drives his finishing potential. A powerful one-timer and an even better catch-and-release wrister are his best scoring tools. He catches pucks across his body straight into his shooting pocket and fires immediately with power and no wind-up, even at high speeds. He hides his blade whenever possible, never giving away his eventual placement.

Scoring sense complements Behm's release, as he times movements into the slot, slipping in front of defenders and cutting across the net just as pucks arrive. He does a great job spacing the offensive zone, whether he's flaring wide or reloading high to catch pucks and fire them toward the net.

*Scoring and Shooting

As the environment around Behm improves, so too will his scoring ability. His one-timer and high cycle skills only appeared in flashes, both of which will likely be big pieces of his offensive generation in the professional ranks. As his team improves, more opportunities to use those skills will arise.

The next steps

Already creating in many NHL translatable ways – inside drives, quick-possession playmaking, and off-the-catch scoring –, it's not challenging to see him in the NHL. Especially as NHL roles for a 6-foot-2 dual-threat scorer are numerous – provided Behm adds more pace and physicality.

Behm could become a dynamite middle-six, perhaps second-line, scorer. However, to achieve that lofty upside, attacking defenders with his feet, cutting off back pressure with possession, attacking the net more often, and initiating contact going into the walls will be required.

Adding those skills will also give Behm more offensive touches and generate more offence with him, turning him into one of the WHL's elite scorers and further elevating his stock.

The chance for such a lofty outcome makes Behm one of the most exciting upside swings in the late-first to mid-second range in the draft. And there will be plenty of highlights along the way.