



It has been over four months since the debut of the Minnesota Wild's shining star Kirill Kaprizov and during that time he has come into his own as a force to be reckoned with. He has long been touted before his debut as the game-changer that Minnesota has long been wishing to see. Four months into his career, and thus far, he has proven to be all that and more for Minnesota, reshaping the franchise from the mediocre and stale team into one of the most exciting teams in the NHL. How did he do it, and what is the case for Kirill Kaprizov to win the Calder?

Our first look at what has made Kirill Kaprizov the new face of the franchise and why he is deserving of the Calder Cup (the NHL's Rookie of the Year Award), is simply based on his pace with other rookies this year. Kirill Kaprizov currently tops all NHL rookies in points (51) and goals (27) at the time of this writing, and he's second in assists (24) and plus/minus (11). Additionally, he's second in power-play goals (8), tied for 4th in game-winning goals (3), and tied for 1st in overtime goals (2) among rookies. All this was done in 53 games at the time of this writing. Conflating that into an 82 game schedule, Kaprizov would have 40 goals (two shy from the Minnesota Wild single-season record), 75 points for the season, 35 assists, 12 power-play goals, 4 game-winning goals, and 3 overtime goals. For a rookie season, this would be more than enough to win the Calder Cup. What does it mean for Minnesota though?

What it does mean is that Minnesota has an outstanding young performer that they could sign to a multi-year contract immediately and maintain results. Kaprizov just recently turned 24. His current contract is set to expire by the end of the season, and if Minnesota wants to keep their new hot star, you give him a load of money and keep him happy. Due to the major

upkeep of Zach Parise, Ryan Suter, and Jared Spurgeon's contracts, it might be tough to give the young star what he wants. I firmly believe in Bill Guerin's ability to lock in Kaprizov to the Wild for the foreseeable future though.

Another thing to look out for is recent draft pick Marco Rossi. If he and Kirill Kaprizov are paired up, look to these two to dominate the league as a fearsome duo for years to come if Rossi is as every bit as advertised like Kaprizov. Think Jagr and Lemeiux, Pronger and Neidermayer, Lindros and Leclair. That is all dependent on Marco Rossi being as good as his potential is, however. For now, Minnesota has a tough job ahead of them in the 2021 NHL Playoffs, and here's to hoping Kirill Kaprizov leads the team to victory!