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**Proceedings of the
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LINHAC 2026
Research Track and Community Notes**



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Preface

LINHAC 2026 took place June 2-4, 2026, and was organized by Linköping University. LINHAC brought together professionals and academics with an interest in hockey analytics. It featured the latest research in hockey analytics in academia and companies, discussions with analysts and coaches, industry sessions with the latest hockey analytics products, and an analytics competition for students.

In addition to the research track and community notes, the program included invited talks. There were several talks related to technical aspects. Brendan Kumagai (Teamworks) talked about new frontiers in ice hockey analytics with player tracking data. In their talk "From Capture to Decision: Building the Modern Sports Intelligence Stack", David Cook and Morgan Zeba (Spiideo) led us through the whole workflow from capturing the data all the way to data-driven decision making. Timo Seppa (Hockey Data Show on NHL Network Radio and Quinnipiac Bobcats) taught us about the importance of relevant and correct data for analytics in his talk "Garbage in, garbage out: What's in your analytics?" David Radke (Chicago Blackhawks) discussed what ice hockey analytics can learn from AI, while Ola Lidmark Eriksson (Playmaker AI) talked about how insights from football can be used in ice hockey.

Further, there were several talks on the use of analytics. Veronica Eriksson (Swedish Ice Hockey Federation) discussed questions such as "What can analytics do for my team? How do I start? How much effort is needed?" in her talk "Coach's challenge: Own your data. Control your AI". Erik Wilderoth (Färjestad BK) provided insights on how to use analytics for data-driven player development, and Felix Dahlin (Swedish Ice Hockey Federation and MODO Hockey) discussed behavior-driven development fueled by analytics. In the talk "From Goalie-Driven Wins to System Stability: A Data-Led Defensive Reset in the National League", Andreas Hänni (49ing) and Thierry Paterlini (SCL Tigers) highlighted how applied analytics can move beyond evaluation to directly inform coaching decisions and improve team robustness. Erik Lignell (HC Fribourg-Gottéron SA) argued that successful analysis is about communication, not location: "You can work remotely and still be close to the team". Oscar Nordfjell (d-fine) presented a project using analytics for the U18 Swedish national team in collaboration with Adam Almqvist Richloow from the Swedish Ice Hockey Federation. As guests representing the sport of bandy, Mattias Sjöholm and Per Gullbrand shared their experiences using data to build championship winning teams. They showed us how to take the pulse of a 23-man roster to see if they are truly pulling in the same direction.

Analytics is also used for the business side of ice hockey. Ray Lalonde (Ray Lalonde Sports+) shared insights about the use of analytics from his long experience in helping organizations in the sports industry grow in his talk "From Competitive Edge to Core Infrastructure: The Global Rise of Sports Analytics". Stefan Lavén (Data Talks) discussed how to create revenue from fans following a team.

Further, Henric Larsson and Almen Bibic (TV4 Sweden) discussed how producers and

commentators prepare for hockey game broadcasts and how they use stats and analytics during the games.

There were also talks related to the future of ice hockey analytics. Andreas Hänni (49ing) shared his vision for the use of data in ice hockey in his talk "Data use beyond analytics", while Neil Lane (Stathletes) discussed the next frontier of ice hockey analytics from his point of view. Caroline Jonsson from the Alliance of European Hockey Clubs discussed the importance of events such as LINHAC to grow the field of ice hockey analytics, to expose more teams to analytics, and thereby to grow ice hockey in general.

Further, there were panel discussions moderated by Mike Helber. In the first panel, Tim Brecht (University of Waterloo), Matt Hamann (Nashville Predators), Miranda McMillan (Montreal Canadiens), David Radke (Chicago Blackhawks), and Campbell Weaver (Boston Bruins) discussed analyzing NHL data and their workflows. In the second panel, Miika Arponen (Tampere Ilves), Jan Morkes (Rytíři Kladno and Czech Ice Hockey Federation), Jaroslav Bezdek (Sparta Prague), Erik Lignell (HC Fribourg-Gottéron SA), and Karl Malmquist (Linköping Hockey Club) discussed analytics workflows in European teams.

During the mingle event we received an NHL play-offs update from Mike Kelly (Sportlogiq and NHL Network).

Finally, there was a student competition where the task was to provide insights based on sequences of events in a hockey game. Data was provided by the SHL and Sportlogiq. A jury consisting of Brendan Kumagai (Teamworks), David Radke (Chicago Blackhawks), Mikael Vernblom (49ing) and Patrick Lambrix (Linköping University) selected the project *Predicting Shot Surface Distributions from Zone Entry Characteristics* by Kiran Roye as the winner of the competition.

LINHAC is the only conference of its kind in Europe, and to our knowledge, it is the only hockey analytics conference that covers all aspects related to hockey analytics. These proceedings include the papers from the research track as well as community notes. The research track program committee with chairs Tim Brecht (University of Waterloo) and Niklas Carlsson (Linköping University), selected the research paper *A Bayesian Approach to Estimating a National Hockey League Draft Value Pick Chart with Bounds* by Yufei Zou, Elliot Kervin, and Michael Schuckers as the winner of the best research paper award.

A companion book includes in addition to the research track and community notes, contributions from industry, the student competition papers, as well as insights from contributors to LINHAC regarding their experience with hockey analytics and thoughts about its future.

We thank our moderator Mike Helber, our conference service company Way, and the members of our local organization committee Mina Abd Nikooie Pour, Ying Li, Jenny Rydén, Lene Rosell, Veronica Gunnarsson, Anders Cronstierna, and Daniel Jemander, for their excellent support.

Last, but not least, we thank our collaborators the Alliance of European Hockey Clubs and Sportlogiq, our sponsor the Swedish Research Council for Sport Science, and our bronze industry collaborators 49ing, Data Talks, Playmaker AI, and Spiideo.

September 2026

Patrick Lambrix (chair),
Adam Almqvist Richloow (co-chair),
Tim Brecht (co-chair),
Niklas Carlsson (co-chair),
Mikael Vernblom (co-chair)

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