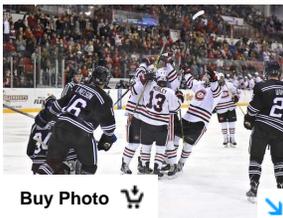




St. Cloud ranked 8th-best hockey town in country



Mick Hatten, mhatten@stcloudtimes.com 3:24 p.m. CST February 4, 2016



(Photo: Dave Schwarz, dschwarz@stcloudtimes.com)

St. Cloud has made a national list for one of the top 10 hockey towns to live in.

St. Cloud is ranked eighth on the list, which was made for the second straight year by SmartAsset, which is a personal finance and technology company based in New York.

"Hockey is definitely a pretty regional sport, so this is more of a regional question," said Nick Wallace, the

data editor for SmartAsset. "We look at where people are choosing to live and why they are choosing to live there.

"We also do it for minor league baseball."

There are a number of factors that SmartAsset looks at when making up the list, but there are a few that stand out.

"We look at the overall level of fan interest and intensity in each city with average attendance and compared that to stadium capacity," Wallace said. "We also look at Google search traffic to get a sense of how much people are thinking about hockey in the area.

"In St. Cloud, Minnesota, there's a ton of search traffic for hockey, almost as much as for food. We also look at overall quality of life in each area with average household income, crime and unemployment. How nice a place is it to live and would our readers like to live there."

To be considered, a city must have either a college hockey team or professional teams in the ECHL, AHL or NHL.

"We did not consider high school attendance, but that would be an interesting thing to

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look at," Wallace said.

St. Cloud is one of three Minnesota cities that made the list.

View the complete list at <https://smartasset.com/mortgage/americas-best-hockey-towns-2016>.

America's Best Hockey Towns

Here is the list put together by SmartAsset and the college or professional team that the city plays host for:

1. Grand Forks, North Dakota — University of North Dakota, college
2. Hershey, Pennsylvania — Hershey Bears, AHL
3. Houghton, Michigan — Michigan Tech, college
4. Burlington, Vermont — University of Vermont, college
5. Hanover, New Hampshire — Dartmouth, college
6. Mankato — Minnesota State-Mankato, college
7. Marquette, Michigan — Northern Michigan, college
8. St. Cloud — St. Cloud State University, college
9. Ann Arbor, Michigan — University of Michigan, college
10. Bemidji — Bemidji State University, college

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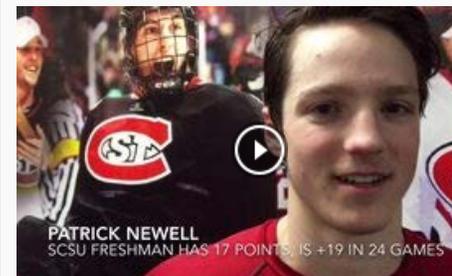
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