

Fool's Gold

By Jesse Almeida 5/31/22

There is only one way that you could describe the Bruins 21-22 season. That is "Fool's Gold". With the moves that the Bruins made in the offseason you would have thought that the B's were a top team in the Eastern Conference. It seemed like the Bruins were getting better while other teams got worse. Especially after the season that the Bruins had the year before, you would have expected them to have another deep run the following season.

The Bruins were just coming off of a very unusual season where they would play only 7 different teams in a 56 game season. They were in the toughest division with Washington, Pittsburgh, New York Islanders, Philadelphia, and even an upcoming team in the New York Rangers. The Bruins finished 3rd in this division with 73 points. All of the teams in the postseason in the East division were between 70-80 points, so it was a very close race. The B's knocked off the Capitals, however lost in the second round against the New York Islanders. However the whole season including the playoffs, they were in many games or looked dominant. It was very rare where the Bruins would get blown out.

In the offseason, David Krecji retired, and Tuukka Rask unofficially retired. The B's lost Nick Ritchie, Sean Kuraly, and Jaroslav Halak but would not have a huge effect in their next season. This opened the door for the B's to re-sign Taylor Hall and Mike Reilly, and extend Trent Frederic and give him more ice time. There was a hole in the 3rd and 4th lines as they were outplayed by the Islanders. So, the B's signed Nick Foligno, Erik Haula and Tomas Nosek to fill those needs including where Haula and Foligno could play center to replace Krecji. The biggest surprise was signing Linus Ullmark to work right next to rookie goalie Jeremy Swayman. At that point it was known that Tuukka was done. The Bruins had a very good offseason and hopes were high for them going forward.

However before the stoppage, the Bruins looked mediocre and it raised eyebrows. At a 14-10-2 record, the B's did not look like themselves as they looked sluggish, they were not playing physical, and were getting out played by their opponents many nights. The Bruins wins were mainly close contests with a few good performances. The All Star game arrived and the Bruins were 26-14-3 going 12-4-1 since New Years Day. It looked like the Bruins were back after the short stoppage.

After the All Star break, the Bruins looked better, however they had to grind out mostly every game that they played. What this means is that the players were definitely getting tired

easily. One need that the Bruins had to address before the deadline in order to light up a chance for the Stanley Cup was their defense. Don Sweeney made a splash getting Hampus Lindholm on March 19th that would boost their defense now and in the future. With Haula playing well as their second line center and the defensive boost acquiring Lindholm gave B's fans hope that they would be Stanley Cup contenders again.

After the season ended, the fans learned that the Eastern Conference was filled with talent. Even though the Bruins did not look like their normal selves, they finished with a record of 51-26-5 at 107 points. This was 6th in the Eastern Conference however not enough to avoid the wild card. This meant that the Bruins had a date in the first round with the Carolina Hurricanes who completely dominated the B's in the regular season. Carolina was one of the best teams in the NHL and many predicted them to make it to the Stanley Cup Final. The Bruins would lose the first two games horribly on the road and it looked as if there was zero chance against the Hurricanes. The next two games the Bruins brought their A game as they returned the favor and won game 3 by a final of 4-2, and game 4 by a final of 5-2. It seemed as if the Bruin found something out. But then would get blown away in game 5 in Carolina 5-1. Facing elimination the Bruins clutched up and came out with another 5-2 victory to force game 7. However in game 7, Carolina would finish the job winning game 7 in a 3-2 final. The score was 3-2, however it felt like the Hurricanes dominated the entire game as the score was 3-1 Carolina at one point. The Bruins looked slow once again and were not careful with the puck. The 2022 Bruins Postseason summed up what their entire season was.

Things that Bruins fans learned this season was that the Bruins desperately missed David Krejci's production as he was a solid playmaker and controlled the offense on that second line. Next, the Bruins never found a rhythm where they would make things a little easier on them and have to find their style of play again. The record does not show it, but the Bruins did not look as good as everyone anticipated them to be. The B's need to get more physical and need to get faster on the ice. There is still a need for a legitimate second line center and just better talent as a whole. The Bruins have many questions to answer in order to get them back in the Stanley Cup race.

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