

## JD Martinez Was Worth Every Penny

By Jesse Almeida 2/27/23

There have been numerous times over the years where you can say that a player the Red Sox signed in free agency was not worth it. Pablo Sandoval, Carl Crawford, Rusney Castillo, Adrian Gonzalez, and others. You do not see a player who gets a big contract work out as often. When a player gets a big contract, the organization trusts that player to meet or exceed a certain expectation. There was one player that joined the Boston Red Sox in 2018 where he was expected to elevate the Sox lineup and bring them a bat that was missing since Ortiz's departure.

That player was JD Martinez.

JD Martinez was signed by the Red Sox on February 26, 2018 for 5 years worth 110 million dollars. He had 3 opt outs after the second season and ended up opting in for all 3 of the following seasons after that. The Red Sox were missing that power bat that they once had with David Ortiz and the Sox viewed JD Martinez as their guy to fill in that role. This was a very high expectation as no one could live up to David Ortiz as a hitter. However, Martinez took on the challenge and he delivered for the Red Sox. In his first season as a Red Sox, JD came in and batted .330, hit 43 home runs, drove in 130 runs, and had a ridiculous OPS of 1.031. JD had a remarkable season. He was an All Star, finished 3rd in the MVP voting, he won 2 silver sluggers in that season, and most importantly he was a huge reason as to why the Red Sox won the World Series.

After the 2018 season, JD would take a step back, however Martinez was still performing at a high level. He was an All Star for the next  $\frac{3}{4}$  season (the 1 year he missed it was the COVID season) racking up home runs, doubles and driving in runs at an efficient rate. However in his last season with the Red Sox, Martinez started fantastic, however at the end of June, Martinez was starting to get in a slump and unfortunately he could not find his rhythm back. He ended up finishing the season with a batting average of .275, 16 home runs, 62 runs batted in, and an OPS of .790. In his 5 years with the Red Sox, JD Martinez hit .292, with 130 home runs, 423 runs batted in, and an OPS of .889. JD Martinez was a 4 time All Star, a 2 time Silver Slugger, and a World Champion.

JD Martinez was a fan favorite. There have been many times where fans have had great interactions with him, and that is including myself. He would always make time for the fans as he has recognized that without them, he would not be where he is today. JD is a humble and down to Earth guy. When he would have a smile on his face, that would bring out a smile from

the fans also. He would never say no to a fan, even if security or people working a public signing says no, he would tell them yes they can. He was all about the fans. Sure being one of the best players on the team can be a reason as to why he is some fans favorite player, but being about the fans is what really makes a fan favorite player.

What made JD Martinez worth every penny was his efforts on the field, and the leadership he brought to the organization. JD Martinez made his teammates better. Even though fans could see this move coming, his presence will still be missed. JD Martinez is a winner, and the Red Sox are about winning. He had an almost impossible expectation right from the start and he embraced his role with passion. Obviously he was no David Ortiz, but he filled the void perfectly that Ortiz left when he retired. Is JD Martinez one of the greatest free agent signings in Red Sox history? You can definitely make that case. Thank you JD Martinez for an amazing 5 years in Boston.