

Thank You Patrice Bergeron
By Jesse Almeida 8/18/23

In the second round of the 2003 NHL Draft, the Boston Bruins selected Patrice Bergeron with the 45th pick. The Bruins took a chance on the center from Canada, and to keep it short it worked out. On the ice and off the ice, Bergeron turned into one of the faces of the Bruins franchise. He was a fan favorite to many fans here in Boston. Bergeron has quite the resume that will be remembered in Boston sports history. Countless amounts of memories from fans at the TD Garden along with heartfelt memories from people in the community.

Patrice Bergeron on the ice was a warrior. There are only a handful of players where you can say that they have played for only 1 team their entire career. The Bruins knew that Patrice would be a good hockey player, however Bergy turned out to be the biggest steal in the 2003 draft. In his rookie season Bergeron scored 16 goals on 23 assists which gave him 39 points and a plus minus of 5. The following season he exploded with 31 goals with 42 assists totaling 73 points with a plus minus of 3. Things on the ice were looking exceptional, but sometimes things happen that do not go to plan. In the beginning of the 2007-2008 season, Bergeron took a hard hit against the boards from Flyers defenseman Randy Jones. Bergeron was down and had to be taken out by a stretcher. He was diagnosed with a broken nose and a concussion. This would sideline Bergeron for the remainder of the season and his future in the NHL was in question.

Bergeron looked off in his first year back on the ice after his huge injury. But as time went on in his career, he got back to his old self. In the 2010-2011 season, Bergeron scored over 20 goals for the first time since the 2006-2007 season. He also recorded 35 assists which adds up to 57 points, and Patrice had a plus/minus of +20. That means he was a huge factor on the ice.

Along with his great season, the Bruins were in the playoffs and Bergeron helped the Bruins hoist up their first Stanley Cup in 39 years. 2011 was not Bergeron's only playoff moment. In 2013 the Boston Bruins were playing the Toronto Maple Leafs in the first round and in game 7, Patrice Bergeron was the hero of the year for the Bruins. The Bruins were down 4-1 with 14:31 seconds left in the game, and the Bruins would make a remarkable comeback. Bergeron would get an assist on Lucic's goal to make it a 1 goal game. Next in the final minute, Bergeron would rip a wrister from a little inside the blue line to the back of the net to force the game into OT. With 6 minutes into the overtime, the Bruins created chaos around the Toronto net and Bergeron would swoop towards the puck and tap it in the net to win the Bruins the game and advance them

to the second round. Any Bruins fan will remember where they were when Bergeron put the game winner in the back of the net in a win or go home game.

Bergeron still got better over the years. The following year in 2013-2014, Patrice had his first 30 goal season, and would go on to have five 30 goal seasons after that. His best year on the ice was in 2018-2019. Patrice scored 32 goals with 47 assists which adds up to 79 points. Bergeron in that season was a plus/minus of +23. That year also the Bruins went to the Stanley Cup Final vs St Louis and ended up losing that series in 7. In the 2019-2020 season, Bergeron was on pace to set a career high in goals in a season. We all know the reason as to why he did not reach that mark. Fast forward to the 2022-2023 season, Bruins fans were worried about the captain's future. During the offseason, Bergeron was thinking about hanging up the skates before making the decision to run it back at least one last time. The 2022-2023 season looked like it was going to be a storybook ending for Patrice and the Bruins. Boston broke the record for the most wins and most points in a single season ever in the NHL. It turned to championship or bust, and with his future unknown Bergy decided to play the last game of the season in his hometown Montreal. This decision ended up getting him hurt and he did not look the same that postseason. After that season Bergeron decided to call it a career in the NHL. He finishes his career with 427 goals, 613 assists which equals to 1040 points, a plus/minus of +289 in a total of 1,294 games. Bergeron is a 6 time Selke winner, 2012-2013 King Clancy winner, 2020-2021 Mark Messier Leadership winner, and a Stanley Cup Champion in 2010-2011.

Patrice Bergeron aged like fine wine. Normally in a player's career you would see them lose a step to their game, and not produce like they used to. Bergeron is leaving the game of hockey at the top of his game. However, with Patrice leaving this also creates a hole in Bruins fans hearts. Bergeron was known to always take time for the fans who he so desperately loves. One way he did this was through his Patrice's Pals program. This program brought patients or children from many organizations to a Bruins game to get a VIP experience. The children or patients would get a message on the video board, Bruins memorabilia, and to personally meet Patrice where he would sign autographs and take pictures. Bergeron was a part of many charity events and wanted to leave a mark in the community. Patrice will not only be missed on the ice, but off the ice as well. Personally, Patrice Bergeron is the reason why I got into hockey. He is my favorite hockey player ever, and it is definitely going to feel weird not being able to see him on the ice again. I have had the privilege to meet Patrice a few times, and he is one of the most

down to Earth humans you could ever meet. Bruins fans including myself will miss Patrice Bergeron. Congratulations on an amazing career and we all hope you enjoy your retirement with your family.