

X Gave It All To Boston
By Jesse Almeida 1/25/23

When Red Sox fans think about Red Sox legends, the first thing that comes to mind is the winning mindset those players brought out every game. Showing that winning culture on the field and making an impact day in and day out. Most importantly, the leadership they brought to the clubhouse. This means putting the team ahead of themselves. Obviously stats do matter, but Boston fans just give those kinds of players a special place in their hearts. One player that did win over the city of Boston and will be beloved in Boston forever is Xander Bogaerts. Early on in December, Bogaerts agreed to sign an 11 year, 280 million dollar offer to be the San Diego Padres new shortstop.

Xander Bogaerts was signed by the Red Sox in 2009 as an international free agent. He showed promising potential right off the gate in the minors. Bogaerts showed that he could hit for both average and some power at the plate in the minors. In August of 2013, Xander got the call up to the big leagues, but to be at 3rd base as Stephen Drew was the Red Sox shortstop at the time. He recorded his first MLB hit against the Dodgers on August 25th, and recorded his first home run against the Yankees off Jim Miller on September 7th. The moment when Red Sox fans knew that Bogaerts was going to be a star was in that very same postseason in 2013. Bogaerts had 2 huge hits during that postseason. One was a double in game 6 of the ALCS off of Max Scherzer which set the tone for the Red Sox offense that game. The other one was a triple in game 3 of the world series to ignite the Red Sox offense again. His efforts in 2013 made an impact on the Red Sox winning the 2013 World Series.

After a rocky rookie season, Bogaerts then blossomed into the player people thought he would be. Xander would play a huge role in another World Series title during the historic 2018 season. It was clear as day that Xander loved the city of Boston. Before the 2019 season began, the Red Sox were approaching the final year of arbitration for Bogaerts until he became a free agent. Xander expressed how it was more important to remain with Boston than it was to get paid, and the Sox front office at the time also agreed that they want X to remain a Red Sox for as long as possible. So Bogey and the Red Sox agreed to a 6 year 132 million dollar contract with an opt out after 2022 to keep him here for the very minimum 3 more seasons. During those 3 seasons, ownership, and a new front office staff failed to show to Bogey that they are committed to him and the team for 2 out of the 3 seasons.

First the 2020 season, the Sox traded Mookie Betts and David Price for Alex Verdugo and prospects. The plan was to hit the reset button so the team could build around Bogaerts and Devers. You can argue at the time whether it made sense or not but that was how they viewed it.

However in 2021, the Red Sox added solid talent in Hunter Renfroe, Kyle Schwarber, Kike Hernandez, because of this the Sox were a competing team again and were 2 wins away from the World Series.

But then in 2022, the only two real additions that the Red Sox made were Michael Wacha and Trevor Story. Signing Story raised eyebrows because not only was he a shortstop, but Bogaerts could opt out at the end of the season. They lost Schwarber, they traded Renfroe, and they lost Eduardo, one of Bogaerts' friends. The Red Sox subtracted more than added. The team has to keep Bogaerts because he was the face of the franchise. He was around the winning culture with Ortiz and even at this time he is the greatest shortstop in Red Sox history. Xander once again expressed how important it was for him to stay, but this time he wants a decent payday and you could not blame him especially for taking a pay cut the first time. What made this time different however was that the new front office did not feel the same way. After countless terrible offers to Bogaerts, and once again making moves that showed that they were going a different direction, Bogaerts decided he had to do what is best for him and left Boston for San Diego.

Xander Bogaerts is the greatest shortstop in Red Sox history. He played 10 years in Boston with 308 doubles, 156 home runs, 683 runs batted in, and a career .292 hitter in Boston with an On Base Plus Slugging of .814. Bogaerts was a 4x All Star and a 5x Silver Slugger and importantly a 2x World Series champion. Xander was never a Gold Glove but his defense was not as bad as people claimed it to be. Bogaerts is a guy who will always put a smile on your face.

He is one of the kindest, humbled, genuine, and respected players you could meet. If there is someone who you should look up to, Xander Bogaerts is one of those players. He always would make time for fans. He never let his ego get ahead of him. Boston fans will truly miss Bogaerts' presence and will miss his talents on the field. Xander Bogaerts has earned a spot in Boston's heart forever and will go down as a Boston Red Sox legend forever. Thank you for everything

Xander and we wish you nothing but the best in San Diego.