

**2014 HOCKEY ARBITRATION COMPETITION OF CANADA**  
**SALARY ARBITRATION OF DERICK BRASSARD (NEW YORK RANGERS)**

SUBMISSION MADE ON BEHALF OF THE CLUB

TEAM 24

## 1) BACKGROUND



### Derick Brassard #16

New York Rangers Center

NUMBER:	16	BIRTHDATE:	September 22, 1987 (AGE 27)
HEIGHT:	6' 1"	BIRTHPLACE:	Hull, QC, Canada
WEIGHT:	202	DRAFTED:	CBJ / <u>2006 NHL Entry Draft</u>
SHOOTS:	Left	ROUND:	1st (6th overall)

Derick Brassard ("Brassard") is a 26 year old 6'1", 202 pound Center from Canada. He was drafted 6<sup>th</sup> overall in the 2006 NHL Entry Draft by the Columbus Blue Jackets. After spending his first six and a half professional seasons in Columbus, Brassard was traded to the New York Rangers ("Rangers") during the 2012-2013 lockout shortened season, in a deal that sent Marian Gaborik to Columbus. Brassard has played for the Rangers since.

In accordance with articles 12.1 and 12.2 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the NHL and NHLPA (2012-2022), Derick Brassard of the New York Rangers filed notice of player-elected salary arbitration in July of 2014. The midpoint salary is \$5,000,000 per season. It is our submission, on behalf of the New York Rangers, that Brassard should be paid less than \$5,000,000.

## 2) CAREER PERSPECTIVE

Figure 1: Career Offensive Statistics for Derick Brassard<sup>1</sup>

Season	Games	Goals	Assists	Points	+/-	TOI /g	PPG	PP TOI /g
2007-2008	17	1	1	2	-4	9:03	0.12	1:41
2008-2009	31	10	15	25	+12	14:25	0.81	3:22
2009-2010	79	9	27	36	-17	14:56	0.46	2:31
2010-2011	74	17	30	47	-11	17:01	0.67	2:58
2011-2012	74	14	27	41	-20	16:20	0.55	3:03
2012-2013	47	12	17	29	+3	16:33	0.62	2:47
<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>15:47</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>2:31</b>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473544&docid=TeamPlayerBio:44700#&navid=nhl-search>

\*Photo/graphic courtesy nhl.com

Over his career, Brassard has provided offensive output at the rate expected of a forward that floats between top six and top nine minutes on a good team. While Brassard's output has been relatively consistent, and he hasn't suffered from any obviously terrible seasons, he has yet to eclipse the 20 goal and 50 point marks in any single season.

### 3) PLATFORM SEASON

There's no question that Brassard in 2013-2014, and over his career, has demonstrated an ability to contribute offensively to his team. A deeper look into his usage however demonstrates that Brassard, especially in his platform season, was directly put into a position to succeed offensively. Brassard was largely sheltered by the team.

For Brassard, a top nine forward on the Rangers this past season, he was utilized almost exclusively in offensive situations, demonstrated by heavy offensive zone starts and significant powerplay time. In 2013-2014, Brassard started 60% of his shifts in the offensive zone. Though this was second on the team among Centers, it was still significant enough that Brassard was one of the league's top 15 Centers in terms of offensive zone start time.

Figure 2: Situational Statistics for Derick Brassard<sup>2</sup>

Season	PPG	Offensive Zone Starts	Team Rank (FW, Min 50 GP)	+/- QOC <sup>3</sup>	Team Rank (FW, Min 50 GP)
2011-2012	0.55	51%	3 <sup>rd</sup>	0.019	4 <sup>th</sup>
2012-2013	0.62	48%	8 <sup>th</sup>	-0.040	7 <sup>th</sup>
<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>-0.010</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup></b>

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<sup>2</sup> See [beehindthenet.ca](http://beehindthenet.ca) for advanced statistics, including Offensive Zone Starts and +/- QOC (various reports).

<sup>3</sup> The +/- QOC statistic aggregates the +/- of a player's on-ice competition. Players with a high +/--QOC are generally facing tougher competition while on the ice. Statistics from [www.behindthenet.ca](http://www.behindthenet.ca)

Brassard's situational statistics should be cause for concern. In 2011-2012, with Columbus, Brassard put up similar numbers to those in his platform season. But he did so despite facing much tougher competition, and with far less offensive zone starts. What does this mean? If this trend continues, the Rangers will need to continue to put Brassard up against inferior opponents, and will need to continue putting Brassard into offensive oriented situations in order for his current levels of offensive production to be achieved.

#### **4) INJURY CONCERNS**

Brassard has already suffered two significant injuries during his hockey playing career that are cause for concern. The first occurred in 2006-2007, when Brassard was with Drummondville of the QMJHL. A serious shoulder injury kept Brassard out of the lineup for almost the entire season. He participated in only 14 games that season. Brassard's injury troubles continued into the 2007-2008 season, when he suffered a broken jaw and missed two months of time with the Syracuse Crunch. In 2008-2009, and for the third straight season, Brassard missed significant time as a result of an injury. After getting off to a quick start, registering 25 points in 31 games in his sophomore season, Brassard dislocated his shoulder in a fight with James Neal, then of the Dallas Stars. The injury ended Brassard's season.<sup>4</sup>

After that string of serious injuries, Brassard had remained relatively healthy, playing in over 70 games in each of his professional seasons. Unfortunately, that streak came to an end in the 2013-2014 Stanley Cup Playoffs. Brassard suffered an upper-body injury after sustaining a hit in the Eastern Conference Final, and missed the next two games as a result of the injury. While the two games is not significant, Brassard has demonstrated over his career a susceptibility to being

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.hockeysfuture.com/prospects/derick\\_brassard/](http://www.hockeysfuture.com/prospects/derick_brassard/)

injured and missing time. He has yet to play 82 games in a season, and that should be cause for concern.

## 5) COMPARABLE PLAYERS

### A. Michael Frolik





**Michael Frolik #67**  
 Winnipeg Jets Right Wing

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NUMBER: 67	BIRTHDATE: February 17, 1988 (AGE 26)
HEIGHT: 6' 1"	BIRTHPLACE: Kladno, Czech Republic
WEIGHT: 200	DRAFTED: FLA / <u>2006 NHL Entry Draft</u>
SHOOTS: Left	ROUND: 1st (10th overall)

Frolik is a 26 year old Stanley Cup Champion forward from the Czech Republic, currently a top nine forward for the Winnipeg Jets. Like Brassard, Frolik was drafted in the first round of the 2006 NHL Entry Draft. In Frolik, who will earn \$3,300,000 this upcoming season, we have a player who is significantly more responsible defensively than Brassard, plays tougher minutes against better competition, and yet produces at a comparable rate. Frolik gets less powerplay time and less offensive zone starts than Brassard. Yet this past season, with the same amount of games played between them, Brassard produced only three more points than Frolik.

Figure 3: Career Offensive Statistics for Michael Frolik<sup>5</sup>

Season	Games	Goals	Assists	Points	+/-	TOI /g	PPG	PP TOI /g
2008-2009	79	21	24	45	+10	14:48	0.57	2:13
2009-2010	82	21	22	43	-4	17:28	0.52	2:47
2010-2011	70	11	27	38	+2	15:35	0.54	1:41
2011-2012	63	5	10	15	-10	12:51	0.24	0:10
2012-2013	45	3	7	10	+5	12:31	0.22	0:12
<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>+8</b>	<b>16:40</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0:59</b>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473564&view=stats>

\*Photo/graphic courtesy nhl.com

As demonstrated in Figure 4 (below), Frolik generally plays against better competition than Brassard, and starts his shifts far less in the offensive zone. Despite these disadvantages, Frolik managed to produce offence at virtually the same clip as Brassard. Given that Frolik has to overcome these situational barriers, the statistics suggest that he is a better player than Brassard, despite their comparable offensive outputs. Frolik is expected to play responsible defensive-focused minutes, while Brassard is expected to deliver offensively. Yet this past season, Brassard was barely able to surpass Frolik in points and points per game, despite playing significantly more on the powerplay.

Figure 4: Statistical Comparison of Platform Seasons (2013-2014)<sup>6</sup>

Player	Points	Offensive Zone Starts	+/- QOC <sup>7</sup>	PP TOI /g	SH TOI /g
<b>Frolik</b>	42	52%	0.054	0:59	1:18
<b>Brassard</b>	45	60%	-0.010	2:31	0:01

## B. Chris Stewart



### Chris Stewart #80

Buffalo Sabres Right Wing

NUMBER: 80	BIRTHDATE: October 30, 1987 (AGE 26)
HEIGHT: 6' 2"	BIRTHPLACE: Toronto, ON, Canada
WEIGHT: 231	DRAFTED: COL / <u>2006 NHL Entry Draft</u>
SHOOTS: Right	ROUND: 1st (18th overall)

Chris Stewart is also 26 years old, and has played parts of six seasons in the NHL. He was equally a former 1<sup>st</sup> round pick, going 18<sup>th</sup> overall to the Colorado Avalanche in the 2006 NHL

<sup>6</sup> See [behindthenet.ca](http://behindthenet.ca) for advanced statistics, including Offensive Zone Starts and +/- QOC (various reports).

<sup>7</sup> The +/- QOC statistic aggregates the +/- of a player's on-ice competition. Players with a high +/- QOC are generally matched up with better opponents while on the ice. Statistics from [www.behindthenet.ca](http://www.behindthenet.ca)

\*Photo/graphic courtesy nhl.com

Entry Draft. Stewart, much like Brassard, is put almost exclusively into offensive situations, designed to maximize point production. Both players gets a healthy infusion of powerplay minutes and both play against lesser quality of competition than their teammates. Neither player is a regular skater on the penalty kill for their respective teams. Stewart was signed to a two year deal by the Buffalo Sabres in the summer of 2014 that will pay Stewart at an AAV rate of \$4,150,000 per season.

Figure 5: Career Offensive Statistics for Chris Stewart<sup>8</sup>

Season	Games	Goals	Assists	Points	+/-	TOI /g	PPG	PP TOI /g
2008-2009	53	11	8	19	-18	12:19	0.36	1:08
2009-2010	77	28	36	64	+4	16:41	0.83	2:35
2010-2011	62	28	25	53	-10	17:29	0.85	2:52
2011-2012	79	15	15	30	+1	15:26	0.38	1:33
2012-2013	48	18	18	36	0	15:49	0.75	2:19
<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13:41</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>1:52</b>

Both players have demonstrated that for periods of time, they can produce at a high level.

Similar to Brassard, Stewart's earlier seasons in the league proved to be his most successful.

Over the past three seasons, similar to Brassard, Stewart's production has leveled off in the half-point per game range. Stewart and Brassard both find themselves in the position of a fringe top six forward.

Figure 6: Statistical Comparison of Platform Season (2013-2014)<sup>9</sup>

Player	Goals	Offensive Zone Starts	+/- QOC <sup>10</sup>	PP TOI /g	SH TOI /g
<b>Stewart</b>	0.41	59%	-0.014	1:52	0:02
<b>Brassard</b>	0.56	60%	-0.010	2:31	0:01

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473485&docid=TeamPlayerBio:46804#&navid=nhl-search>

<sup>9</sup> See [behindthenet.ca](http://behindthenet.ca) for advanced statistics, including Offensive Zone Starts and +/- QOC (various reports).

<sup>10</sup> The +/- QOC statistic aggregates the +/- of a player's on-ice competition. Players with a high +/--QOC are generally matched up with better opponents while on the ice. Statistics from [www.behindthenet.ca](http://www.behindthenet.ca)

Although Brassard slightly bested Stewart in their platform season of 2013-2014, Stewart has shown at times in his career that he can be an elite offensive producer, while Brassard has not. Stewart has eclipsed the 20 goal and 50 point marks twice in his career, while Brassard has yet to hit either mark in a single season.

Figure 7: Comparison of Career High Seasons<sup>11</sup>

Player (Season)	Goals	Assists	Points	PPG
<b>Stewart</b> (2009-2010)	28	36	64	0.83
<b>Brassard</b> (2010-2011)	17	30	47	0.67

## **6) PLAYOFF PERFORMANCE**

We concede that Brassard has been a quality producer in the playoffs in his first two trips there, both with the Rangers. In the most recent playoffs, Brassard maintained his 0.5 PPG pace, notching 12 points in 23 games as the Rangers made it to the Stanley Cup Finals. Brassard's playoff contributions, while noted, are modest in relation to comparable players that, in some instances, are making far less than the midpoint salary of \$5,000,000 per season.

Although Brassard has delivered in the playoffs, it isn't enough to separate him from, who delivered 10 points in 23 games in his last trip to the post-season (with Chicago in 2012-2013), and won a Stanley Cup.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473544&docid=TeamPlayerBio:44700#&navid=nhl-search>;  
<http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473485&docid=TeamPlayerBio:46804#&navid=nhl-search>

## **7) CLOSING REMARKS**

Brassard has demonstrated in his career that he is capable of producing consistent offensive output at a rate of just over a half-point per game. But he has equally demonstrated that in order to deliver offensively, he must be put into soft offensive positions. Unlike Frolik, Brassard hasn't shown that he can produce offensively while taking hard minutes against top flight opponents. For this reason, we are not prepared to pay Brassard a salary that is commensurate with the responsibilities of a traditional second-line center. We feel that a salary comparable to that of Chris Stewart (\$4,150,000) is a reasonable measure of Brassard's value as a second-tier offensive forward. Our submission is made on this basis for a salary of less than \$5,000,000 per season.