

Team Number 25
Case: Derick Brassard
Player's Representative

Introduction

It is our position as representatives of Derick Brassard, that when his performance and valid comparable players are taken into account, that a fair award should be a one year contract valued at \$5,300,000. Mr. Brassard is coming off of one of his best seasons as a pro, scoring 18 goals and adding 27 assists for a total of 45 points¹. He played a crucial role on the team's power play, scoring 18 points (7 goals, 11 assists) and averaging 3 minutes 23 seconds of ice-time. Furthermore, his 6'1, 202 pound frame is typical of the power forward NHL teams are seeking. Most importantly, his performance in the Stanley Cup playoffs was integral to the New York Rangers success in reaching the finals. He demonstrated the leadership qualities that are demanded of a player of his caliber². In what has been a very successful year for Mr. Brassard, it is important to keep in mind that he is still only 26 years old, and about to enter the prime of his career. Mr. Brassard's statistics as well as valid comparable players will be further developed in the following sections and will prove that an award of X would be appropriate in the circumstances.

Mr. Brassard's History

In Mr. Brassard's platform season (2013-2014), he played 81 games scoring 18 goals and adding 27 assists for a total of 45 points³. He registered a plus/minus rating of plus 2 and averaged 15 minutes and 48 seconds of ice-time per game⁴. Mr. Brassard was used often on the power play averaging 3 minutes and 23 seconds per game and was effective, scoring 18 points (7

¹ <http://www.rotowire.com/hockey/player.htm?id=2558>

² <http://forecaster.thehockeynews.com/hockeynews/hockey/player.php?5025>

³ <http://www.rotowire.com/hockey/player.htm?id=2558>

⁴ Ibid

goals, 11 assists)⁵. He also performed very well in the playoffs scoring 6 goals and adding 6 assists for a total of 12 points in 23 games⁶.

In the previous season (2012-2103), Mr. Brassard played 47 games scoring 12 goals and adding 17 assists for a total of 29 points⁷. He registered a plus/minus of plus 1 and averaged 16 minutes and 35 seconds of ice-time per game⁸. Mr. Brassard played well on the power play scoring 11 points (3 goals, 8 assists), and averaged 4 minutes and 19 seconds of ice-time⁹. He also had a great postseason registering 2 goals and 10 assists in 12 games¹⁰.

Mr. Brassard has stayed relatively healthy over the course of his career with only two injuries causing him to miss more than two games. The first was a shoulder injury back in his rookie season in December 2008 suffered in a fight¹¹. The injury required surgery, but he spent the entire offseason that year strengthening the joint¹². The second was a hand injury in February 2011 that forced him to miss 8 games¹³. Hand injuries are relatively minor and have not forced Mr. Brassard to miss any time since returning from that injury. The other injuries suffered by Mr. Brassard over the course of his career are quite negligible and have not forced him to miss any significant time whatsoever.

When looking at Mr. Brassard's statistics overall, it is clear that he has emerged as one of the most important players in the New York Rangers Organization. He is their number one center

⁵ Ibid

⁶ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473544>

⁷ Ibid

⁸ <http://www.rotowire.com/hockey/player.htm?id=2558>

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473544>

¹¹ <http://www.rotowire.com/hockey/player.htm?id=2558>

¹² Ibid

¹³ <http://www.thehockeynews.com/articles/38455-Blue-Jackets-place-C-Derick-Brassard-on-injured-reserve-expected-to-miss-23-weeks.html>

entering the 2014-2015 season¹⁴, and one of the team's top scorers both in the regular season, and in the playoffs in his platform year. Considering point production is essential to the value of an NHL forward, we will now break down Mr. Brassard's stats over the past two seasons.

Since Mr. Brassard played in 128 out of 130 regular season games and 35 out of 37 playoff games¹⁵ over the past two seasons, we will break down his performance on a per-game basis. Beginning with the 2012-2013 season, Mr. Brassard registered 29 points (12 goals, 17 assists) in 47 games¹⁶. This amounts to 0.25 goals per game, 0.36 assists per game, and a total of 0.61 points per game. This means that Mr. Brassard totaled at least one point every two games. He maintained this pace in his platform season (2013-2014), scoring 45 points (18 goals, 27 assists) in 81 games played¹⁷. This amounts to 0.22 goals per game, 0.33 assists per game, and a total of 0.55 points per game.

Furthermore, Mr. Brassard has proven that he can elevate his game when it matters most. In the 2012-2013 playoffs, he registered 12 points (2 goals, 10 assists) in 12 games to lead all scorers on the team¹⁸. This amounts to 0.17 goals per game, 0.83 assists per game for a total of 1 point per game in the Stanley Cup Playoffs. Mr. Brassard also played a crucial role in the New York Ranger's Stanley Cup run in his platform season scoring 12 points (6 goals, 6 assists) in 23 games¹⁹. This amounts to 0.26 goals per game, 0.26 assists per game, and a total of 0.52 points per game.

Mr. Brassard has also proven himself as an asset on the New York Rangers power play. In his platform season, he registered 18 points (7 goals, 11 assists) while averaging 3 minutes

¹⁴ <http://www.rotowire.com/hockey/player.htm?id=2558>

¹⁵ <http://rangers.nhl.com/club/stats.htm?gameType=3&season=20122013>

¹⁶ <http://www.rotowire.com/hockey/player.htm?id=2558>

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ <http://rangers.nhl.com/club/stats.htm?gameType=3&season=20122013>

¹⁹ Ibid

and 23 seconds of power play time per game²⁰. His 7 goals led the Rangers in power play goals and accounted for almost one fifth of their total goals²¹. Mr. Brassard had an equally productive role the previous season tallying 11 points (3 goals, 8 assists) while averaging 4 minutes and 19 seconds on the power play per game²². His significant role on the power play is indicative of the trust the coach has in his ability to produce offensively. Power play production is crucial to a team's overall success and Mr. Brassard has shown that he can lead the team in this category.

Overall, it is clear that Mr. Brassard is an offensive asset to the New York Rangers. He produces on a consistent basis both in the regular season and in the playoffs when it counts most. His power play production over the past two seasons has been a significant contributor to the unit as a whole. Finally, he possesses the skillset, and the leadership qualities necessary to take on the role of a first-line center in the upcoming 2014-2015 season. His performance will now be compared to valid players, who will show that an appropriate award for Mr. Brassard is a one year contract valued at \$5,300,000.

Comparable Players

Ryan O'Reilly - \$6,000,000 a year / 2 year

It is our position as Mr. Brassard's representatives that Ryan O'Reilly's 2 year, 12 million dollar contract should be taken into account in Mr. Brassard's valuation²³. This position is founded on the fact that each player had relatively similar point production statistics in their platform year. In the 2013-2014 season, Mr. O'Reilly and Mr. Brassard managed to score a

²⁰ <http://www.rotowire.com/hockey/player.htm?id=2558>

²¹ <http://rangers.nhl.com/club/stats.htm?gameType=2&season=20132014&srt=ppg>

²² <http://www.rotowire.com/hockey/player.htm?id=2558>

²³ <http://www.capgeek.com/player/1576>

point every 24:46 and 28:26 minutes of ice-time respectively²⁴. Although there is a slight discrepancy, it is our view that these statistics are similar when taking into account Mr. Brassard's average shift time of only 44 seconds²⁵. This amounts to a mere 5 more shifts per game to catch up to O'Reilly's statistics. Mr. Brassard and Mr. O'Reilly also performed similarly in their performance on power plays. Each player ranked 22nd and 19th in the league respectively²⁶. Although Mr. O'Reilly technically outperformed Mr. Brassard in terms of power play performance, Mr. O'Reilly was awarded a \$1,000,000 premium over Mr. Brassard's midpoint salary. This is an incredible discrepancy in terms of valuation and it is therefore our position that Mr. Brassard's \$5,000,000 midpoint is undervalued in comparison to Mr. O'Reilly.

Dustin Byfuglien – 5,200,000 /year for 5 years

It is our position as Mr. Brassard's representatives that when taking into account point production, +/- statistics and penalty minutes, Mr. Brassard outperformed Mr. Dustin Byfuglien despite the latter's 200 thousand dollar a year premium on his contract. We will demonstrate to the arbitrator how Mr. Brassard's performance is undervalued relative to this particular player and therefore deserves a lower bound of \$5,200,000 a year on his valuation.

Goal production is the primary area in which Mr. Brassard outperforms Mr. Byfuglien. It took Mr. Byfuglien on average, an extra 18 minutes and 56 seconds of ice time to score a goal in the 2013-2014 season²⁷. Although these statistics narrow when utilizing the same metric for assists (2.61 minutes) and points (3.71 minutes), we believe that the goal statistic reveal Mr. Brassard's accuracy when taking into account shots on goal. Mr. Byfuglien had 256 shots on net

²⁴ http://espn.go.com/nhl/player/stats/_id/5208/ryan-oreilly & http://espn.go.com/nhl/player/stats/_id/3506/derick-brassard

²⁵ http://espn.go.com/nhl/player/stats/_id/3506/derick-brassard

²⁶ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473544> & <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8475158>

²⁷ http://espn.go.com/nhl/player/stats/_id/3070/dustin-byfuglien

in which he only managed to score 7.81% of the time²⁸. This is juxtaposed sharply with Mr. Brassard, who had a success rate of 11.32%²⁹. These statistics become even more vital when looking at situations where the team needed these players most. Whereas Mr. Brassard scored the game winning goal 4 times last season, Mr. Byfuglien only came to the aid of his team in this category once³⁰. Thus, from a sheer goal production standpoint Mr. Brassard is outperforming Mr. Byfuglien despite a 200,000 premium on the latter's contract.

Mr. Byfuglien is also underperforming Mr. Brassard when we take into account +/- ratios. In the previous season, Mr. Byfuglien had an underwhelming +/- ratio of -20³¹. This is juxtaposed sharply with Mr. Brassard's neutral statistic of +2³². This indicates that Mr. Byfuglien is a weaker defensive player whose team is often scored against when he is on the ice. Although we are evaluating forward players in this analysis, his lack of versatility should have undermined his overall valuation.

Blake Wheeler – 5,600,000/year

It is our position as Mr. Brassard's representatives that when taking into account point production and shots-on-goal, Mr. Wheeler is a valid comparable player when valuing Mr. Brassard's contract. The club contends that Mr. Wheeler serves as an excellent midpoint between Mr. O'Reilly and Mr. Byfuglien's valuation.

In the 2013-2014 season, Mr. Wheeler managed to score a point for every 22 minutes and 12 seconds of ice time. Although this is considerably higher than that of Mr. Brassard, the two

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ http://espn.go.com/nhl/player/stats/_id/3506/derick-brassard

³⁰ http://espn.go.com/nhl/player/stats/_id/3070/dustin-byfuglien &

http://espn.go.com/nhl/player/stats/_id/3506/derick-brassard

³¹ http://espn.go.com/nhl/player/stats/_id/3070/dustin-byfuglien

³² http://espn.go.com/nhl/player/stats/_id/3070/dustin-byfuglien

players show similar statistics in other categories. For starters, Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Brassard share a similar +/- rating of 4 and 2 respectively³³. This speaks to each player's ability to work well with their line mates on the ice, as well as the overall versatility of their skillsets. Further, each player had roughly similar accuracy ratings, with Mr. Wheeler scoring 12.4% of the time and Mr. Brassard scoring 11.3% of the time³⁴. Thus, each player is effective at turning opportunities into goals. Finally, Mr. Wheeler's increase in goals is further mitigated by the reality that each player was equally effective at scoring when their team needed them most. Each player scored a total of 4 game winning goals in the 2013-2014 season³⁵.

Conclusion

It is our position as representatives of Derick Brassard, that when his performance and valid comparable players are taken into account, that a fair award should be a one year contract valued at \$5,500,000. This valuation was drawn up by taking into account the best qualities of each of his comparable players. At the low end of his valuation spectrum resides Mr. Byfuglien, who had similar point production as well as +/- statistics to Mr. Brassard. It is important to note that a forward's ability to produce points, while remaining versatile on the ice is the primary driver behind their valuation. As such, we ask the arbitrator to consider, at a minimum, a valuation of \$5,200,000. At the midpoint of \$5,600,000 resides Mr. Wheeler, whose playoff statistics were similar to those of Mr. Brassard. Despite the similarities between the two players however, it should be noted that Mr. Brassard played in a greater number of games. Mr. Brassard proved to be an incredibly reliable and consistent player throughout the 2013-2014 playoff season. As Mr. Brassard's representatives, we request that the arbitrator take into account this

³³ http://espn.go.com/nhl/player/stats/_/id/3961/blake-wheeler &
http://espn.go.com/nhl/player/stats/_/id/3506/derick-brassard

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Ibid

consistency owing to the fact that the club benefited immensely from ticket sales that stemmed from the longevity of the Ranger's season. There should be no contestation that Mr. Brassard contributed to the Rangers success leading up to the Stanley Cup Finals. Finally, at the upper end of the valuation resides Mr. O'Reilly, who performed similar to Mr. Brassard in both point production, as well as power play performance. As Mr. Brassard's representatives, we would like to point to the \$1,000,000 dollar premium between Mr. O'Reilly's contract and Mr. Brassard's contested midpoint salary. The massive gap in pay is evidence that other clubs are placing a premium on players that can perform on power plays as well as in the playoffs. As such, we request a \$5,300,00 dollar contract that places Mr. Brassard between Mr. O'Reilly and Mr. Byfuglien. The slight premium between these two players is on account of Mr. Brassard's power play and playoff performance.