

2014 HOCKEY ARBITRATION COMPETITION OF CANADA

Derick Brassard v. New York Rangers

Submission on Behalf of Derick Brassard

Midpoint: \$5 million

Submission by Team 6

I. INTRODUCTION

This brief will analyze the past output and contribution of Derick Brassard (the "Player" or "Mr. Brassard"). Mr. Brassard is a left-handed forward for the New York Rangers organization (the "Club" or the "Rangers").¹ Mr. Brassard signed a three year entry level Standard Player Contract (SPC) in 2006 with the Columbus Blue Jackets ("Columbus"), however that contract was put on hold until 2007 as Mr. Brassard returned to junior hockey.² He signed a four year extension with Columbus in 2009 and was traded to the Rangers on March 4, 2013.³ Mr. Brassard was 18 years of age on September 15, 2006, and has acquired more than four years of professional playing experience. Mr Brassard is therefore eligible for salary arbitration pursuant to section 12.1 of the *National Hockey League Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)*.⁴

According to the *CBA*, the following evidence is to be considered in determining a player's salary arbitration compensation: overall performance including NHL official stats of player in previous seasons; the number of games played by the player, his injuries or illnesses during the preceding seasons; the length of the service of that player to the Club; the overall contribution of the player to the Club; any special qualities of leadership or public appeal; the overall performance of players alleged to be comparable to the Player whose salary is in dispute; and the compensation of players alleged to be comparable to the Player whose salary is in dispute.⁵

As the evidence presented below will show, Mr. Brassard is a tremendous two-way hockey player with great upside. He takes care of his own zone efficiently while still contributing

¹ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473544>

² <http://forecaster.thehockeynews.com/hockeynews/hockey/player.php?6418>.

³ <http://forecaster.thehockeynews.com/hockeynews/hockey/player.php?5025>.

⁴ Collective Bargaining Agreement Between NHL and NHLPA, 2012, Article 12.1 (a)-(c).

⁵ Collective Bargaining Agreement Between NHL and NHLPA, 2012, Article 12.9 (g) (ii).

effectively on offence. Mr. Brassard is therefore entitled to a salary that exceeds the \$5 million midpoint. The player respectfully requests that the panel find that he is entitled to an award of \$5.1 million.

II. OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE PLAYER

A. CAREER PERFORMANCE

Table 1: Career Statistics for Derick Brassard⁶

SEASON	GP	G	A	P	PIM	PPG	GWG	TOI
2007-2008	17	1	1	2	6	0	0	9:03
2008-2009	31	10	15	25	17	3	1	14:25
2009-2010	79	9	27	36	48	4	0	14:56
2010-2011	74	17	30	47	55	6	3	17:01
2011-2012	74	14	27	41	42	5	3	16:20
2012-2013	47	12	17	29	16	3	1	16:33
2013-2014	81	18	27	45	46	7	4	15:47
Career	403	81	144	225	230	28	12	

Mr. Brassard is a quick center who is relied upon to contribute on both offense and defense. He plays on the Rangers top 2 lines, where he contributes fairly evenly by scoring goals and collecting assists.⁷ Mr. Brassard has been very consistent in his point production every year since 2009-2010 (see Table 1). Along with being consistent, Mr. Brassard also skates well for a bigger body, and has the ability to play against the opposing teams top players.⁸ He has also contributed consistently on the power play throughout his career.

B. 2013-2014 REGULAR SEASON PERFORMANCE

Table 2: 2013-2014 Regular Season Statistics for Derick Brassard⁹

SEASON	GP	G (G/G)	A (A/G)	P (P/G)	PIM	PPG	GWG	TOI
2013-2014	81	18 (0.22)	27 (0.33)	45 (0.55)	46	7	4	15:47

⁶ <http://forecaster.thehockeynews.com/hockeynews/hockey/player.php?5025>.

⁷ <http://www.capegeek.com/rangers/depth-chart/>.

⁸ <http://forecaster.thehockeynews.com/hockeynews/hockey/player.php?5025>.

⁹ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473544&view=stats>.

Mr. Brassard enjoyed a productive season in 2013-2014, his platform year. He only missed 1 of the Rangers 82 games, and averaged a point every 2 games (see Table 2). He was an important asset to the Rangers, finishing 4th on the team in points.¹⁰ His 18 goals was his highest goal total in any season of his career (see Table 1). It was also his most productive season on the power play, where he tallied 7 goals, the most on his team.¹¹ This season once again displayed his consistency, as well as his potential to be an explosive offensive threat.

III. NUMBER OF GAMES PLAYED AND HISTORY OF INJURIES

Mr. Brassard has played in a total of 403 NHL games as a member of both the Columbus Blue Jackets and the New York Rangers.¹² He has also played in 35 playoff games for the New York Rangers in just 2 seasons.¹³

In what was to be Mr. Brassard's first full season with Columbus, 2008-2009, Mr. Brassard suffered a shoulder injury which required surgery.¹⁴ This forced him to miss 50 regular season games and 4 playoff games.¹⁵ He played 31 games that season prior to injury.

In 2009-2010, Mr. Brassard played 79 games.¹⁶ He missed three games that season due to a hand injury.¹⁷

During the 2010-2011 season, Mr. Brassard played in 74 games.¹⁸ The 8 games he missed were again due to a hand injury.

He did not miss any games in the 2011-2012 season due to injury, playing in 74 games. In 2012-2013, he started the season playing 34 games for Columbus, missing 2 due to an upper

¹⁰ <http://rangers.nhl.com/club/stats.htm?season=20132014>.

¹¹ <http://rangers.nhl.com/club/stats.htm?season=20132014>.

¹² <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473544&view=stats>.

¹³ <http://forecaster.thehockeynews.com/hockeynews/hockey/player.php?5025>.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

body injury.¹⁹ He was then traded to the Rangers, where he played in the final 13 games of the year.²⁰

In 2013-2014, Mr Brassard only missed one regular season game due to an upper body injury, playing in 81 games that year.²¹ He missed 2 of the Rangers 25 playoff games due to an upper body injury.²²

While Mr. Brassard missed significant time early in his career due to surgery, he has since not missed a great number of games due to injury. He has missed games during these seasons, but none of which relate back to the surgery he had in 2008-2009. In the last 2 seasons, he has only missed 3 regular season games, and played in all but one in his platform year.

IV. LENGTH OF SERVICE

Mr. Brassard was drafted 6th overall in the 2006 NHL Entry Draft. He signed a three year entry level SPC that year, but he was sent back to his junior hockey club.²³ The contract did not begin to take effect until 2007-2008, where he played his first professional season. Since then, Mr. Brassard has played 6 seasons in the NHL between the Columbus Blue Jackets and the New York Rangers.

V. OVERALL CONTRIBUTION TO COMPETITIVE SUCCESS OF THE CLUB

In 2013-2014, the Rangers finished 5th in the Eastern Conference.²⁴ This was the second year in a row that the Rangers made the playoffs with Brassard on the roster. The Rangers made a deep run in the playoffs in Brassards first full season, losing in the Stanley Cup Final to the Los Angeles Kings.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/standings.htm?season=20132014&type=CON>.

In 2012-2013, the Rangers finished 6th in the Eastern Conference.²⁵ Mr. Brassard played in the final 13 games of the Rangers season that year after being traded, where he scored 11 points in those games.²⁶ Mr. Brassard helped the Rangers finish the final 10 games of that season 7-3-0 in order to clinch one of the final three playoff spots in the Conference.²⁷ He also scored 12 points in 12 playoff games that year. This brought his point total with his first run with the Rangers to 23 points in 25 games.²⁸

VI. SPECIAL QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP OR PUBLIC APPEAL

In Mr. Brassard's first two seasons with the Rangers, the Club has made the playoffs both times. The Rangers made it to the Stanley Cup Final in his first full season with the club, where Mr. Brassard scored 4 game winning goals during the regular season, and 2 during the playoffs.²⁹ He also scored 10 points in the last month of the 2013-2014 season leading up to the Rangers run in the playoffs.³⁰ In his first 2 playoff experiences of his career, Mr. Brassard has performed exceptionally well. He has accumulated 24 points in the 35 playoff games he has played.³¹

Mr. Brassard's time with the Rangers has allowed him to better show his full potential. As a first round draft pick, the expectations surrounding Mr. Brassard were high. Through his two seasons with the Rangers he has consistently shown that he can perform at a very high offensive and defensive level. He has been relied upon in big situations over the last two seasons, and has shown that he can handle the pressure that comes with those situations.

²⁵ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/standings.htm?season=20122013&type=CON>.

²⁶ <http://forecaster.thehockeynews.com/hockeynews/hockey/player.php?5025>.

²⁷ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/standings.htm?season=20122013&type=CON>.

²⁸ <http://forecaster.thehockeynews.com/hockeynews/hockey/player.php?5025>.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473544&view=stats>.

³¹ <http://forecaster.thehockeynews.com/hockeynews/hockey/player.php?5025>.

VII. COMPARABLE PLAYERS

In order to determine an arbitration award, it is essential to determine comparable players to examine salary benchmarks for players with a similar skill set. The following players that are going to be comparable to Mr. Brassard were arbitration-eligible at the end of either the 2013-2014 or 2012-2013 seasons. The most noteworthy benchmarks used to determine where a player stands amongst his colleagues are his career statistics, length of service, age, position and platform year statistics.³² Appropriately, Blake Wheeler and Ryan O'Reilly are the most accurate players when engaging in a direct comparison with Mr. Brassard. In regards to the salary, it will be referred to as the Average Annual Value (AAV) to illustrate the comparisons in the most accurate light.

A. BLAKE WHEELER

Table 3: Platform Year Statistical Comparison³³

Player	GP	G (G/G)	A (A/G)	P (P/G)	+/-	PIM (PIM/G)	Hits	Shooting %	GWG
Derick Brassard	81	18 (0.22)	27 (0.33)	45 (0.56)	2	46 (0.57)	124	11.3	4
Blake Wheeler	48	19 (0.40)	22 (0.46)	41 (0.85)	-3	28 (0.57)	90	14.7	2

Blake Wheeler is directly comparable to Derick Brassard. Although, Blake Wheeler's numbers are slightly higher, we submit that the elevation does not justify a \$600,000 difference. Both players have similar goals, assist, points, penalty minutes, shooting percentage and game winning goals in their platform years. Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Brassard both play equivalent roles on their respective teams as offensively gifted power forwards. They are known for their scoring instincts, excellence in all three zones of the ice, leadership qualities and lastly have a strong physical presence on the ice. Although, it is notable that Mr. Brassard stands above Mr. Wheeler

³² CBA s.12.9(g)(ii)(A)-(G).

³³ All player statistics are referenced from www.NHL.com.

in one key area; physical aggression. Surprisingly, Brassard is remarkably 4 inches shorter and 25 pounds less than Wheeler; but carries himself like a giant. Regardless of the difference in Brassard size, he still ensures all defenders are looking over their shoulders with a strong fore-check. Brassard had an astonishing 124 hits during his platform year which outweighs Wheeler's fractional 90. Brassard plays with physical aggression in a disciplined way. He had over 34 more hits than Wheeler yet averaged the same penalty minutes per game.³⁴ This truly illustrates that Brassard's opponents think twice and keeps the anxiety level up that the possibility of being checked is very real. Suitably, since Mr. Wheeler is compensated at an AAV of \$5,600,000 it would be inconsistent to offer Mr. Brassard an award that falls substantially below this figure. Therefore, we believe that when you compare Mr. Wheeler's career parallel to Mr. Brassard's, an award of \$5,100,000 is visibly justified.

B. RYAN O'REILLY

Table 3: Platform Year Statistical Comparison³⁵

Player	GP	G (G/G)	A (A/G)	P (P/G)	+/-	PIM (PIM/G)	Hits	Shooting %	GWG
Derick Brassard	81	18 (0.22)	27 (0.33)	45 (0.56)	2	46 (0.57)	124 (1.5)	11.3	4
Ryan O'Reilly	80	28 (0.35)	36 (0.45)	64 (0.80)	-1	2 (0.03)	22 (0.28)	13.9	6

Ryan O'Reilly is a justifiable comparison to Derick Brassard. Much like Blake Wheeler, Ryan O'Reilly's numbers are slightly higher than Derick Brassard, and we stick to our prior proposition that the elevation fails to justify a \$1,000,000 difference. Both players have similar goals, assists, points, penalty minutes, shooting percentage and game-winning goals in their platform years. Mr. O'Reilly and Mr. Brassard both play equivalent roles on their respective teams as strong two-way players. They are known for their scoring instincts, excelling in all

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ All player statistics are referenced from www.NHL.com.

three zones of the ice, leadership qualities and lastly have a strong physical presence on the ice. On the other hand, it is notable to point out that Mr. Brassard stands above in one key area; physical aggression. Remarkably, Brassard is only 1 inch shorter and 10 pounds less than O'Reilly; he is as physical as an enforcer. Even though they are of similar size, Brassard is substantially more likely to use his sheer size as a deterrent for the opposing team. Brassard had a whopping 124 hits during his platform year which sidelines O'Reilly's negligible 22. This equals out to over 5 times more hits per game. This truly illustrates that Brassard's opponents think twice when the Player is on the ice as there is a serious possibility of getting hit. Suitably, since Mr. O'Reilly is compensated at an AAV of \$6,000,000 it would be inconsistent to offer Mr. Brassard an award that falls substantially below this figure. Although, Mr. O'Reilly's platform year overshadows Mr. Brassard, it should not account for a million dollar difference. Thus, when one weighs in all of the evidence, it is evident that an award of \$5,100,000 is justified.

VII. CONCLUSION

Based on the evidence provided, Mr. Brassard has shown to be a consistent two-way forward. He has consistently contributed throughout his career in goals, assists and hits and has performed exceptionally well as a member of the New York Rangers. We respectfully submit that Mr. Brassard is entitled to a compensation that is higher than the \$5,000,000 midpoint salary. We submit that an award of \$5,100,000 is appropriate.