IN THE MATTER OF A SALARY ARBITRATION BETWEEN:

CHRIS STEWART

-AND-

THE ST. LOUIS BLUES HOCKEY CLUB

BRIEF IN SUPPORT OF THE ST. LOUIS BLUES HOCKEY CLUB

TEAM 26

MARK PROVENCAL

AARON SAMUEL
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I. INTRODUCTION

This brief analyzes the past performance and contributions of right-wing forward Chris Stewart (the “Player” or “Mr. Stewart”) of the St. Louis Blues Hockey Club (the “Club” or the “Blues”) of the National Hockey League (“NHL”). Mr. Stewart was signed to a three year entry level Standard Player Contract (“SPC”) with the Colorado Avalanche Hockey Club on April 3, 2007\(^1\). On September 15th of that year, Mr. Stewart was 18 years of age. Having acquired more than five years of professional experience, Mr. Stewart is eligible for salary arbitration pursuant to article 12.1 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (“CBA”)\(^2\). The CBA establishes that the following evidence is to be considered in determining the Player’s salary arbitration award: the overall performance of the Player in all seasons; the number of games played by the Player and his injuries or illnesses in all seasons; the length of service of the Player; the overall contribution of the Player to the competitive success or failure of the Club in the preceding season; 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\(^3\).

A. Club Position

This brief will consider each of these criteria in turn. As will be clear from the evidence of his past performance and contributions presented in this brief, Mr. Stewart is a valued member of the Blues organization. With desire to keep Mr. Stewart a long term member of the Club and the criteria that will be mentioned, Mr. Stewart is fairly entitled to a salary below the $4.15

\(^3\)Ibid., 12.9(g)(ii)(A-G)
million midpoint figure. The club respectfully requests that the panel find that he is entitled to a salary arbitration award of $4.1 million.

B. Player Profile

Throughout his career, Mr. Stewart has been described primarily as a “power forward”. With a 6’2”, 228 lb. build, Mr. Stewart is more than physically capable of handling the rigors of NHL scheduling. Born and raised in the Greater Toronto Area, Mr. Stewart played his major junior hockey with the Kingston Frontenacs of the Ontario Hockey League. In his rookie season in the NHL with his former club, Mr. Stewart posted a respectable 11 goals and 8 assists for a total of 19 points in 53 games. In his sophomore season, Mr. Stewart demonstrated that he was well worth a 1st round selection by posting 28 goals and 36 assists for a total of 64 points in 77 games played. Up to this point in his career, Mr. Stewart has recorded 100 goals and 102 assists for a total of 202 points in 319 career games. Importantly, points per game average (“PPG”) serves as a powerful statistic for evaluating the performance of offensive players. Mr. Stewart’s career PPG is 0.63.

Table 1: Career Stats for Chris Stewart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>PTS</th>
<th>PPG</th>
<th>+/-</th>
<th>PIM</th>
<th>PIM/G</th>
<th>PPG</th>
<th>GWG</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>-18</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>-6</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>-19</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Platform Year

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4 Chris Stewart NHL.com profile, http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8473485
5 Ibid., for nominal career stats
During his platform year (“PY”), Mr. Stewart put up a rather impressive 0.75 PPG during the shortened season due to the lockout. Without expanding the discussion further, the use of the 2012-2013 season for PY statistics is more than of academic concern considering the season was unlike a season that was shortened due to injury or illness.

While Mr. Stewart has a build considered that of a power forward, his off the puck play is something left to be desired considering his size. Qualities that are to be considered for a power forward can be quite dynamic but reasonably the following criteria has been cited in description of “power forwards”:

- **Scoring Ability:** In this area, Chris Stewart has been able to establish himself among the NHL’s best for a forward of his stature to find the net via goal or assist. In scoring 28 goals in his sophomore season with his former club, Mr. Stewart demonstrated to the Club that he was well worth the consideration when the Club decided to trade for his services in dealing former 1st overall pick Erik Johnson, Jay McClement, and a first round pick for Mr. Stewart, defenseman Kevin Shattenkirk and a second-round pick. During his PY, Mr. Stewart again has demonstrated his ability to find the net by leading the Blues in scoring with 36 points while amassing 16 goals which also led the team.

- **Durability:** Mr. Stewart’s PY marked the first time that he had been able to play in all regular season games without any missed due to injury. During his 2010-2011 season, Chris Stewart missed 21 games due to an injury from a broken hand.

- **Consistency:** Being described as a power forward comes from an established or expected level of play. As early as his time in major junior hockey, Chris Stewart has been described as a power forward. While there lies no specific definition to the position and it is not

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7 “Blues send former No. 1 pick Erik Johnson to Avs”, <http://www.nhl.com/ice/news.htm?id=553408>
officially recognized it is well grounded on one’s physical build, ability to get to the net and remain durable. Underlying these qualities is consistency as it maintains the reputation and justifies compensation for a highly sought quality in a forward. To this end, Mr. Stewart has had varying level of consistency. As demonstrated by his play and his utilization by the Club it is imperative that Mr. Stewart’s consistency be a key factor in determining his salary. Aside from his rookie season, the Player’s PPG per year has varied from 0.38 in 2011-2012 to a high of 0.85 in the 2010-2011 season.

II. PLAYER COMPARABLES

A. Selection Criteria

Determining which players may be utilized in comparison must have tangible characteristics that of Mr. Stewart. Those characteristics must strive to put into context what players of an equal calibre are being considered in the form of average annual salary. The Club has chosen primarily right-wingers who have been best described as a “power forward” and players who had been arbitration-eligible over the last 3 seasons. With respect to the above criteria, the comparable players submitted are Ryan Callahan, Jakub Voracek, Wayne Simmonds and Drew Stafford. Out of this grouping of players, the Club submits that Simmonds and Stafford are the most comparable.

Table 2: Contractual Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Date Signed</th>
<th>Contract Year</th>
<th>AAV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chris Stewart</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Callahan</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>July 2011</td>
<td>2,300,000</td>
<td>4,275,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakub Voracek</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>July 2012</td>
<td>2,250,000</td>
<td>4,250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Simmonds</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>August 2012</td>
<td>1,175,000</td>
<td>3,975,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew Stafford</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>June 2011</td>
<td>1,900,000</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 CapGeek, www.capgeek.com
Table 3: Career to Platform Year Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>PTS</th>
<th>+/-</th>
<th>PIM</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chris Stewart</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>-19</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Callahan</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakub Voracek</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Simmonds</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew Stafford</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>713</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Platform Year Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>PTS</th>
<th>+/-</th>
<th>PIM</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chris Stewart</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Callahan</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakub Voracek</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Simmonds</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew Stafford</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Platform Year Statistics: Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>G/ GP</th>
<th>A/GP</th>
<th>PTS/GP</th>
<th>S%</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>BK S</th>
<th>GvA</th>
<th>TkA</th>
<th>SH TOI/G</th>
<th>PP TOI/ G</th>
<th>AVG TOI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chris Stewart</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>:00</td>
<td>2:19</td>
<td>15:49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Callahan</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2:13</td>
<td>3:23</td>
<td>19:54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakub Voracek</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>:33</td>
<td>3:21</td>
<td>16:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Simmonds</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>:02</td>
<td>3:13</td>
<td>15:54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew Stafford</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>:20</td>
<td>2:57</td>
<td>16:32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Player Comparisons

i. Ryan Callahan

Ryan Callahan is a right-wing forward who plays for the New York Rangers Hockey Club. 5’11” and 190 lb. native of Rochester, New York was drafted in the 4th round of the 2004 NHL Entry Level Draft. Mr. Callahan became arbitration-eligible in the summer of 2011 after 5 years of NHL experience. The New York Rangers and Mr. Callahan avoided arbitration and

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9 Stats compiled from NHL.com
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
12 For Per Game Statistics, Hockey-Reference.com
13 Ryan Callahan, Rangers - http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8471339
settled on a 3 year deal\textsuperscript{14}. The average annual value ("AAV") of the deal was $4,275,000. Mr. Callahan has served as an alternate captain for the New York Rangers since October 2, 2009 and has been since named the captain of the team as of September 12, 2011\textsuperscript{15}.

Both Callahan and Mr. Stewart lead their teams in PPG during their respective PY. Callahan posted 0.80 PPG while Stewart posted 0.75. Callahan also provided more areas outside of standard scoring. Callahan posted the second highest number of hits for his team that year by posting 224 Hits for a 3.73 Hits per game ("H/G") compared to Mr. Stewart’s 41 hits over 48 games which equates to 0.85 H/G. Callahan also serves on both the power play and penalty kill units. Mr. Stewart however only serves on the power play unit. Given the varying roles between the comparable player and Mr. Stewart, the Club does not feel that these players are directly comparable.

ii. \textbf{Jakub Voracek}

Jakub Voracek is a 6’3” 205 lb. right-wing forward for the Philadelphia Flyers. Jakub Voracek originates from Kladno, Czechoslovakia and was drafted 7\textsuperscript{th} overall in the 2007 NHL Entry Draft by the Columbus Blue Jackets\textsuperscript{16}. He was traded to the Philadelphia Flyers in the summer of 2011. He became arbitration-eligible during the summer of 2012 but decided to re-sign with the Flyers on a 4-year deal with an AAV of $4,250,000\textsuperscript{17}.

Voracek achieved a 0.63 PPG during his PY which was .12 less than Stewart’s PY PPG. Voracek was able to compile a +12 +/-. Voracek contributed to both the power play and to a lesser degree on the penalty kill units. Most importantly, Jakub Voracek contributed 10 points

\textsuperscript{14}“Rangers, Callahan Avoid Arbitration With Three-Year Deal”, http://www.tsn.ca/nhl/story/?id=372579
\textsuperscript{15}“Callahan named Rangers’ 26\textsuperscript{th} captain”, http://rangers.nhl.com/club/news.htm?id=588191
\textsuperscript{16}Jakub Voracek, http://flyers.nhl.com/club/player.htm?id=8474161
\textsuperscript{17}“Flyers Sign Voracek To Four-Year, $17 Million Contract”, http://www.tsn.ca/nhl/story/?id=401489
over the course of the 2011-2012 post season. His post-season play contributed 0.90 PPG which is demonstratively higher than Chris Stewart’s post-season play during the 2012-2013 playoffs. In 6 games, Chris Stewart was only able to garner a single point. Based on playoff impact, the Club feels that these two players are not directly comparable.

iii. **Drew Stafford**

Drew Stafford is a 6’2” 214 lb. right-wing forward for the Buffalo Sabres Hockey Club. He was drafted in the 13th overall in the 2004 NHL Entry Draft and has spent his 7 year career with Buffalo Sabres\(^{18}\). Drew Stafford became arbitration-eligible the summer of 2011 but elected to re-sign with the club prior to the start of the free agency period. His contract for 4 years has an AAV of $4,000,000\(^{19}\).

During Mr. Stafford’s PY, he put up 0.84 PPG which was 0.09 higher than Chris Stewart’s PY PPG of 0.75. Like Mr. Stewart, Stafford put up a demonstratively high shooting percentage (“S%”). During his PY, Stafford had a S% of 17.3 while Stewart had a S% of 18.6. Comparatively, both players’ real-time statistics in regards to hits, giveaways and takeaways are similar during their respective PY. With this in mind, the Club feels that Drew Stafford is a directly comparable player to Chris Stewart.

iv. **Wayne Simmonds**

Wayne Simmonds is a 6’2” 183 lb. right-wing forward for the Philadelphia Flyers. Mr. Simmonds a native of Scarborough, Ontario, Canada was drafted in the 2nd round of the 2007 NHL Entry Level Draft by the Los Angeles Kings\(^{20}\). He was traded to the Philadelphia Flyers in

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\(^{18}\) Drew Stafford, http://sabres.nhl.com/club/player.htm?id=8471226

\(^{19}\) “Sabres Re-Sign Stafford Before The Start of Free Agency”, http://www.tsn.ca/nhl/story/?id=367774

\(^{20}\) Wayne Simmonds, http://www.nhl.com/ice/player.htm?id=8474190
the summer of 2011. Mr. Simmonds would have become arbitration eligible during the summer of 2013 but instead decided to sign a contract extension with an AAV of $3,975,000. For that matter, use of Mr. Simmonds 2011-2012’s statistics will be utilized for his PY.

During Mr. Simmonds PY, he put up a lower PPG compared to Stewart, as he put up 0.60 compared to 0.75. He did however share a comparatively similarly high S% of 14.2 compared to Stewart’s 18.6, which would still be considered above league average for forwards. For Mr. Simmonds, his PY marked the second time that he played in all 82 regular season games and fourth time he played over 70 games played (“GP”). Comparatively, Mr. Stewart has only played over 70 games in two of his 5 NHL seasons and his PY was the first time he played all possible regular season games (48). Considering both players’ background and career history up to this point that the two players should be considered directly comparable.

III. CONCLUSION

The Club has attempted to demonstrate the valued contributions of Chris Stewart to St. Louis Blues over his time with the club. The Club has also tried to demonstrate Chris Stewart’s contributions compared to his peers in the NHL who are in the same category of player, a power forward. The list of comparable players demonstrate the wide range of what can be considered a power forward and what salary values have been attributed to those players’ contributions. The mean AAV of the comparable players from Table 2 is $4.1 M With respect, the Club submit to the arbitration panel that Chris Stewart’s salary should fall in line with this average. The St. Louis Blues Hockey Club contend that proposed salary of $4,100,000 for the 2013-2014 season is fair and equitable compensation for a player of this calibre.