News Clips
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The Hockey News

TOP 100
GOALIES OF ALL-TIME
32 JONATHAN QUICK

The man whose name fits his game to a "T" has used that style to get the better of his childhood idol. BY SCOTT SAVARD

Jonathan Quick: It's a name that suits him perfectly with his agile and acrobatic style. "Quick" is a technique that has helped win him a Conn Smythe Trophy, two Jennings Trophies and two Stanley Cups. His name also takes the bronze as the best aphrodisiac in sports next to sweater-supreme Udo Udo and basketballet's Tim Duncan.

Quick's style didn't come out of nowhere. It was crafted from childhood when he swayed the local Hartford Whalers and struck up a worship-based relationship with the center of his idol on his bedroom wall. Mike Richter meant everything to young Quick, and watching the super stopper work his magic with the New York Rangers drove Quick to try to follow in his footsteps. Richter played with an aggressive, never-give-up approach. So does Quick.

Ten seasons into Quick's NHL career, he's way ahead of Richter's totals at the same time - 293 wins to 208, and two Cups to one. Richter played another four seasons and finished with 301 career wins. Quick knocks good to top that number sometime in November. In fact, Quick, 32, is a pretty good bet to become the NHL's all-time winningest U.S.-born goalie by the time his contract expires in 2023. He needs just 81 regular-season wins to pass John Vanbiesbrouck at 374. (Ryan Miller is second among U.S. goalies with 370 wins, but he's 38.) The only thing getting in the way of that mark is Quick's propensity for groin injuries. He missed a third of the season in 2013-14 and played just 17 games in 2016-17.

Quick's brilliance was never more evident than in the 2012 playoffs. He posted a 16-4 record and a stingy goals-against average of 1.41 in 20 games to deliver Los Angeles its first Cup. In the final against the New Jersey Devils, Quick outplayed three-time Cup champion Martin Brodeur, posting a save percentage of .947. That helped Quick become the second U.S.-born goalie, after Tim Thomas in 2011, to win the Conn Smythe Trophy.

DID YOU KNOW?

Quick wasn't always destined to be a goalie. In youth hockey, he played his first two years as a defenseman until his dad said an outfielder either played in net or he wouldn't play hockey at all.

33 ROGIE VACHON

Canada Cup hero was a sturdy little secret for much of his career in Southern California. BY KEN CAMPBELL

Perhaps it's because he rolled outside the spotlight for most of his career that it's easy to forget Rogie Vachon's brilliance. The kids might not be able to fathom this now, but there was a time when playing in Los Angeles was the NHL's version of being dispatched to Siberia.

Vachon was 21 when he signed with the Kings in 1969, and eventually - 34 years after he retired - earned a place in the Hall of Fame on the strength of his Hollywood nights. But there are other parts of his career that may have slipped fans' minds as well. The first is he was a member of three Stanley Cup final teams with the Montreal Canadiens before losing the net in 1970-71 to Ken Dryden. He had a 14-5 playoff record for the Habs, including a 6-3 mark and 1.86 goals-against average in Stanley Cup finals. You may also have forgotten that Vachon was in Canada's net for the 1978 Canada Cup. Darryl Sittler scored the overtime winner in the clinching game, but Vachon was also heroic, playing seven games, including both of Canada's wins over the Czechoslovaks in the final, and gave up just 10 goals.

And almost 40 years ago, Vachon melted a trail by becoming one of the NHL's first true free agents. Prior to 1979-79, Vachon signed a five-year deal with Detroit worth $1.5 million after the Kings refused to offer him the security of a five-year deal. That contract made him the highest-paid goalie in the league at the time.

And while Vachon never reached the level in Detroit, and later Boston, that he had with Los Angeles, his legacy as one of the league's most outstanding small, über-athletic goaltenders ever had been carved in granite.

DID YOU KNOW?

Growing up in rural Quebec, Vachon's goalie idol wasn't local hero Jacques Plante, but anglophone Terry Sawchuk. Vachon, who couldn't speak English as a child, played a bricked style, much like Sawchuk.