

= James Reimer ( ice hockey ) =

James Reimer / ˈrɑːmər / ( born March 15 , 1988 ) is a Canadian professional ice hockey goaltender for the Florida Panthers of the National Hockey League ( NHL ) . Reimer has also played for the Toronto Maple Leafs and San Jose Sharks . He was selected by the Maple Leafs in the fourth round ( 99th overall ) of the 2006 NHL Entry Draft . He started playing minor hockey in his hometown when he was 12 . He played junior hockey with the Red Deer Rebels of the Western Hockey League ( WHL ) , after being selected in the fifth round of the 2003 WHL Bantam Draft . After turning professional , Reimer played with the South Carolina Stingrays and Reading Royals of the ECHL , as well as the Toronto Marlies of the American Hockey League . Reimer was named the most valuable player of the ECHL playoffs , as the Stingrays won the Kelly Cup in 2009 . Reimer made his NHL debut with the Maple Leafs during the 2010 ? 11 season and went on to replace Jean - Sébastien Giguère as the Maple Leafs ' starting goaltender . He plays for Canada internationally , and first represented his country at the 2011 World Championship . As of 2013 , he had the best save percentage in Toronto Maple Leafs history with a then .918 .

= = Playing career = =

= = = Minor = = =

Reimer started playing goalie when his older brother , Mark , needed practice shooting but had no goalie . A local minor hockey manager heard about his prowess in goal , and recruited him . His parents were unsure if minor hockey was the right fit for their son , so he did not play organized hockey until he was 12 . He was first noticed by agent Ray Petkau when he was 13 , after playing with a church team at a tournament in Steinbach , Manitoba . As of November 2011 , Petkau was still his representative .

Reimer played his last seasons of minor hockey for the Interlake Lightning of the Manitoba " AAA " Midget league . He was the team 's rookie of the year and top scholastic player after the 2002 ? 03 season , and the most valuable player after the 2004 ? 05 season .

= = = Junior = = =

Reimer was selected by the Red Deer Rebels in the fifth round of the 2003 Western Hockey League ( WHL ) Bantam Draft , with a pick that originally belonged to the Spokane Chiefs . The team drafted Reimer largely on the word of a single scout , Carter Sears . After Reimer performed poorly during his first training camp with the club , Rebels head coach Brent Sutter wanted to release him , but Sears was persistent in his support for Reimer . Reimer made the club in his third attempt after having been cut the previous two seasons . His first season in the WHL was a poor one for the Rebels . Reimer played 34 games , recording only 7 wins . Reimer broke his hand late in the season , an injury which cost him a chance to play for Team Canada at the 2006 IIHF World U18 Championships . Reimer was selected by the Toronto Maple Leafs in the fourth round ( 99th overall ) of the 2006 National Hockey League ( NHL ) Entry Draft . John Ferguson , Jr . , the Maple Leafs general manager at the time , remembers Reimer as an unfinished product needing time to develop , being " somewhat raw " . At the time of the draft , Reimer was preparing for his high school graduation , and did not attend the event in Vancouver , British Columbia . He said , " I made a decision not to pay a lot of attention because I was reluctant to get my hopes too high . " His agent , Ray Petkau , called with the news about being drafted and later brought him his Maple Leafs jersey and hat that draftees receive . Prior to the draft , Reimer had mentioned that he would like to be drafted by the Los Angeles Kings , saying " I 'd love to play hockey in all that sunshine . "

Reimer attended training camp with the Maple Leafs in 2006 and 2007 , but was returned to the Rebels both times . During the 2006 ? 07 WHL season , Reimer played in 60 games with the Rebels , and recording 26 wins , 23 losses and 7 ties . This was the only season in his WHL career that

Reimer finished with a winning record . The 2007 ? 08 WHL season was Reimer 's final season in the WHL . He suffered a torn ligament in his ankle , and only appeared in 30 games . In March 2008 , the Maple Leafs signed Reimer to a three @-@ year contract worth an annual base salary of \$ 555 @,@ 000 . The deal included a \$ 180 @,@ 000 signing bonus and playing incentives that could increase the total value of the contract to \$ 1 @.@ 8 million . His base salary was \$ 555 @,@ 000 ? the minimum salary for an NHL player .

= = = Professional = = =

= = = = Toronto Maple Leafs = = = =

After attending the Maple Leafs training camp in September 2008 , he was assigned to the Toronto Marlies of the American Hockey League ( AHL ) . After starting the season with the Marlies , Reimer was assigned to the Reading Royals of the ECHL . He was recalled by the Marlies and recorded his first AHL win by a score of 3 ? 2 in a shootout on December 27 , 2008 against the Manitoba Moose . In two stints with the Marlies , Reimer had a record of one win and two losses , with a goals against average ( GAA ) of 3 @.@ 28 and a .882 save percentage . With the Royals , Reimer had a record of ten wins , seven losses and three ties . At the ECHL trade deadline , Reimer was moved to the South Carolina Stingrays , a team that had gone through eight goaltenders during the season . The deal was facilitated to expose Reimer to post @-@ season experience , as the Royals were out of playoff contention . While with the Stingrays , Reimer helped them win the 2009 Kelly Cup championship . Recording four wins and one shutout over eight games in the post @-@ season , he was named the ECHL Playoffs Most Valuable Player .

After attending the Maple Leafs training camp ahead of the 2009 ? 10 National Hockey League ( NHL ) season , Reimer was again sent down to the AHL . As part of the Marlies ' pre @-@ season , Reimer competed in the Gardiner Cup , held as part of Scotland 's 2009 Homecoming celebrations . He stopped 33 shots in the final as the Marlies lost 3 ? 1 to the Hamilton Bulldogs . Back in the AHL , he spent the majority of the 2009 ? 10 season with the Marlies , playing in 26 games and recording 14 wins . He had a GAA of 2 @.@ 25 and a save percentage of .925 . Reimer was called up by the Leafs on an emergency basis on October 13 , 2009 , when starting goaltender Vesa Toskala was injured . Serving as Joey MacDonald 's backup , he did not receive any playing time in his first NHL call @-@ up ; he was sent back down to the Marlies on October 25 , 2009 . Reimer missed significant time with an ankle injury during the 2009 ? 10 season . It was not the same ankle he injured during his final season with the Red Deer Rebels .

At the outset of the 2010 ? 11 NHL season , Reimer again was assigned to the AHL 's Marlies . Reimer was not expected to contribute to the Maple Leafs at the NHL level during the 2010 ? 11 season . Expectations for the young netminder were low heading into the season , with head coach Ron Wilson saying " We wanted him to play in the minors and continue to get better , develop and try to stay healthy . " He was recalled by the Maple Leafs several months into the season , making his NHL debut on December 20 , 2010 in relief of Jonas Gustavsson against the Atlanta Thrashers . He played 14 minutes in the third period , stopping all four shots he faced . Reimer made his first NHL start against the Ottawa Senators on January 1 , 2011 . The Maple Leafs won the game 5 ? 1 , with Reimer recording 32 saves while picking up his first career NHL win . On February 3 , 2011 , Reimer recorded 27 saves and picked up his first career NHL shutout against the Carolina Hurricanes . A combination of injuries and poor play by Gustavsson and Jean @-@ Sebastien Giguere provided an opportunity for Reimer at the NHL level . His strong play caused the Leafs to carry three goalies on their NHL roster , a fact which did not surprise Giguere , who said " The way he played the last time he was up , you knew he was going to get another chance . " Leafs head coach Ron Wilson acknowledged Reimer as the team 's starting goalie as they set out on a late @-@ season run for a playoff spot , saying " It ? s going to be his ball the rest of the way . As long as we stay in the race . And I think he ? s up to it . "

Reimer became a quick fan favourite during his rookie NHL season , earning the nicknames "

Optimus Reim " and " The Statue " . The former is a reference to the Transformers protagonist Optimus Prime , while the latter resulted from head coach Wilson 's attempts to suppress the hype around the rookie goalie only a short time into his NHL career , saying " There 's all this [ attention ] around here , a guy wins a game and we 're ready to build a statue for him . " Reimer 's strong performance was recognized by the league when he was named the NHL 's Rookie of the Month for March 2011 . Reimer would have become a restricted free agent on July 1 , 2011 , but he signed a three @-@ year contract worth \$ 5 @.@ 4 million ( \$ 1 @.@ 8 million salary cap hit ) on June 9 , 2011 .

Reimer began the 2011 ? 12 season as the starter going 4 ? 0 ? 1 . He suffered an injury on October 22 in a game against the Montreal Canadiens . During the game Reimer was run into by Brian Gionta , he finished the first period , but did not return after the intermission . The team called the injury whiplash despite rumors that he was suffering from a concussion . Reimer missed 19 games with the injury , and struggled upon his return , yielding some starts to Gustavsson . After recording two back @-@ to @-@ back shutouts on February 1 and February 4 , Reimer seemed to have solidified the starting position once again .

Near the end of March 2012 , Reimer was starting to play to an acceptable standard again , but an upper @-@ body injury ( later revealed to be a neck injury ) sidelined him for the remainder of the season from March 29 . On April 9 , he told the media that he would be available by training camp in September 2012 . Due to the NHL lockout , Reimer was afforded more time to heal and attended training camp in January 2013 . Reimer held off an early challenge from rookie backup Ben Scrivens to remain Toronto 's starting goaltender . On February 11 , Reimer suffered a MCL strain , which kept him out of action for a little over two weeks , he won all three of his next starts after returning . Upon returning Reimer backstopped the Maple Leafs to their first playoff berth since 2004 and finishing the regular season with a career best 2 @.@ 46 GAA and .924 SV % in 34 games .

Prior to the 2013 ? 14 season , the club acquired Jonathan Bernier from the Los Angeles Kings . At the beginning of the season , Reimer and Bernier were splitting time in the Toronto goal , but as the season progressed , Bernier cemented his status as the Leafs ' starting goaltender .

Following the 2013 @-@ 2014 season , Reimer became a restricted free agent . Dissatisfied with his role as the Leafs ' backup , he requested a trade from the Leafs . On July 25 , 2014 , the Leafs and Reimer avoided a salary arbitration hearing scheduled for the next week by agreeing to terms on a two year contract with an average annual value of \$ 2 @.@ 3 million .

Reimer began the 2015 @-@ 16 season as Bernier 's backup , a role he had held since the team acquired the latter . However , Bernier was injured early in the season , and Reimer was given starting duties . He took off with the job , going 3 @-@ 0 @-@ 0 with a 1 @.@ 62 goals @-@ against average and .952 save percentage to be named the 3rd star for the week of November 9 ? 15 , 2015 . Reimer would hold the position as Maple Leafs ' starting goaltender for the rest of his tenure , earning praise for his play on a Toronto team that struggled throughout the year .

== San Jose Sharks ==

As the February 29 trade deadline approached , Reimer 's future with the rebuilding Maple Leafs became uncertain . On February 27 , 2016 , two days before the deadline , Reimer was traded to the San Jose Sharks , alongside Jeremy Morin , in exchange for Alex Stalock , Ben Smith and a conditional fourth round pick in the 2018 draft .

Reimer had the best 5 on 5 save percentage and the best Fenwick save percentage in the NHL for the 2015 / 16 season ( 1200 minutes minimum TOI ) at .9404 and .9573 respectively .

== Florida Panthers ==

On July 1 , 2016 , as a free agent for the first time in his career , Reimer was signed to a 5 @-@ year contract with the Florida Panthers .

= International play =

Reimer 's first brush with international hockey came near the end of the 2005 ? 06 season . He was selected to play for Team Canada at the 2006 IIHF World U18 Championships , but was unable to compete due to a broken hand he suffered while playing for Red Deer . After his strong rookie season in the NHL , Reimer received another invitation from Hockey Canada , this time to compete at the 2011 IIHF World Championship . Reimer got his first win in the tournament beating Belarus 4 ? 1 .

= = Playing style = =

Reimer plays in the butterfly style of goaltending . Observers have attributed Reimer 's success during the 2010 ? 11 season to his ability to maintain his focus and confidence . Reimer tries to focus on the basics of playing goal , feeling that the fundamentals of goaltending are the key to success , saying " It ? s not about making the great save , or making a diving save or playing outside yourself . It ? s all about pushing , stopping , and being square and just relying on that . Most of the time if you let out a rebound the defenceman is there so it ? s more about being solid fundamentally . "

= = Personal = =

Reimer was born in Arborg , Manitoba , to parents Harold and Marlene Reimer . His father owns a business moving homes . He graduated from Morweena Christian High School in his hometown . His favorite hockey team growing up was the Toronto Maple Leafs , and his favourite player was Ed Belfour . Reimer met his wife , April , at a junior hockey game in Moose Jaw , Saskatchewan .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = Regular season and playoffs = = =

= = = International = = =