

= Steve Bégin =

Joseph Denis Stéphan Bégin ( French pronunciation : ? [ stef ? ? be ? ? ? ] ) ; born June 14 , 1978 ) is a Canadian former professional ice hockey centre who played in 13 National Hockey League ( NHL ) seasons . He was a second @-@ round selection of the Calgary Flames , 40th overall , in the 1996 NHL Entry Draft , and played with the Flames , Montreal Canadiens , Dallas Stars , Boston Bruins and Nashville Predators in his NHL career . After missing a full season due to injury , Bégin made a successful comeback by rejoining the Flames in 2012 ? 13 before another injury forced his retirement .

Bégin played junior hockey in Quebec with the Val @-@ d 'Or Foreurs where he was a member of their Quebec Major Junior Hockey League ( QMJHL ) championship winning team in 1998 . He also led the Saint John Flames to the American Hockey League ( AHL ) ' s Calder Cup championship in 2001 and won the Jack A. Butterfield Trophy as the most valuable player of the playoffs . Bégin adopted a role as a defensive specialist and grinder in an NHL career where he has played over 500 games .

= = Personal life = =

A native of Trois @-@ Rivières , Quebec , Bégin grew up in a single parent household , raised by his father Gilles on a welfare income . Gilles worked as a landscaper , while Steve often helped his father at work until he was 18 years old .

Introduced to hockey by family friends , Bégin began playing at age six and was an offensively minded player in his minor hockey years . He wore second @-@ hand equipment as his father struggled to pay the costs of hockey , but from a young age expressed his confidence he would make it to the National Hockey League ( NHL ) .

Bégin moved to Val @-@ d 'Or , Quebec to play junior hockey , where he met his wife , Amélie . The couple have two daughters and eventually settled in Montreal .

= = Playing career = =

= = = Junior = = =

Bégin played three years for the Val @-@ d 'Or Foreurs of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League ( QMJHL ) between 1995 and 1998 , where he scored 44 goals and recorded 117 points to go along with 520 penalty minutes in 157 games . The Calgary Flames selected him with their second round pick , 40th overall , in the 1996 NHL Entry Draft . Following the 1996 ? 97 QMJHL season , the Flames assigned Bégin to their American Hockey League ( AHL ) affiliate , the Saint John Flames , with whom he recorded two assists in four playoff games .

Bégin earned a spot with the Calgary Flames to begin the 1997 ? 98 season . He made his NHL debut on October 1 , 1998 , against the Detroit Red Wings , and appeared in five games before he was returned to Val @-@ d 'Or for the remainder of the season on October 28 . The Foreurs went on to win the President 's Cup as QMJHL champions .

Bégin made his lone appearance with the Canadian national team that season , playing and serving as an alternate captain with the junior team at the 1998 World Junior Hockey Championship . He had no points and ten penalty minutes in seven games in what was an eighth place finish for Team Canada .

= = = Calgary Flames = = =

After graduating from junior hockey , Bégin played his first full professional season with Saint John in 1998 ? 99 . He had 20 points and 156 penalty minutes in 73 games , and scored his first professional goal on October 8 , 1998 , against the St. John 's Maple Leafs . Bégin spent the

majority of the next two seasons in Saint John , but made sporadic appearances with Calgary . He appeared in 13 games with the Flames in 1999 ? 2000 and scored his first NHL goal on February 12 , 2000 , on goaltender Sean Burke of the Phoenix Coyotes . He played in four NHL games in 2000 ? 01 while enjoying the best statistical season of his professional career in Saint John , scoring 28 points in 58 games . In the playoffs , Bégin led Saint John to the Calder Cup championship . He scored 17 points in 19 games and was named the recipient of the Jack A. Butterfield Trophy as the most valuable player of the post @-@ season . His 17 points were fourth best in the AHL , and 10 goals were second .

Bégin played his first full NHL season in 2001 ? 02 , appearing in 53 games for the Flames where he scored 7 goals and 12 points to go along with 79 penalty minutes . He had 4 goals and 4 assists in 50 games for Calgary in 2002 ? 03 . He left Calgary in the offseason as he was part of a three team trade on July 3 , 2003 . Bégin was dealt to the Buffalo Sabres along with Chris Drury in exchange for Rhett Warrener and Steve Reinprecht , whom the Sabres acquired from the Colorado Avalanche to complete the deal .

= = = Montreal Canadiens = = =

Bégin was promoted by Buffalo coach Lindy Ruff as a hard working , " blue collar " type player that Sabres fans would enjoy watching , but he never played a game with the Sabres . He was exposed to the waiver draft prior to the start of the 2003 ? 04 NHL season and claimed by the Montreal Canadiens . He played an energy role for the Canadiens , and scored 10 goals for Montreal in 52 games .

After playing through injury in 2003 ? 04 , Bégin underwent shoulder surgery that caused him to miss five months of playing time . When he returned to action , an ongoing labour dispute in the NHL led to his being assigned to the AHL 's Hamilton Bulldogs in February 2005 , with whom he was immediately counted upon to play a leadership role . Bégin returned to the Canadiens in 2005 ? 06 and set career highs in goals ( 11 ) , points ( 23 ) and penalty minutes ( 113 ) . The Montreal media named him the recipient of the Jacques @-@ Beauchamp Molson Trophy , a team award given to a Canadiens ' player who played a " dominant role " with the team , without earning any other honours . Plagued by injuries , Bégin missed time due to rib and shoulder injuries . He appeared in only 52 games in 2006 ? 07 and 44 games in 2007 ? 08 and scored 18 points combined over the two seasons .

= = = Dallas , Boston and Nashville = = =

Bégin was increasingly left out of the Canadiens ' playing lineup in 2008 ? 09 , and after being sat out of the lineup for five consecutive games , expressed a desire to be traded if the team had no use for his services . The Canadiens obliged , completing a deal on February 26 , 2009 , that sent him to the Dallas Stars in exchange for defenceman Doug Janik . Stars ' general manager Les Jackson promoted Bégin 's qualities as a checking @-@ line forward : " Steve is a gritty , honest player with a very strong work ethic . He 's good on the penalty kill and he is a competitor in every sense of the word . " Bégin had 12 points in 62 games combined between Montreal and Dallas .

Leaving Dallas following the season , Bégin signed a one @-@ year contract with the Boston Bruins for the 2009 ? 10 season . He played in 77 games for Boston , the most of any single season in his career , and recorded 14 points . He scored his first career playoff goal , in his 30th post @-@ season game , against the Philadelphia Flyers . The Bruins opted not to re @-@ sign the 32 @-@ year @-@ old Bégin , due both to their salary cap constraints and a desire to build a younger lineup .

Without a contract , Bégin remained a free agent as the 2010 ? 11 season began . He eventually signed a one @-@ year contract with the Nashville Predators on October 22 , 2010 , but was assigned to their AHL affiliate , the Milwaukee Admirals . Bégin spent the majority of the season in Milwaukee and appeared in only two games with Nashville .

## == Return to Calgary ==

Plagued by a hip injury , Bégin was again left a free agent prior to the 2011 ? 12 season . He signed a professional tryout offer with the Vancouver Canucks , but was released by the team during the pre @-@ season . Bob Hartley , coach of ZSC Lions in the Swiss National League A offered him a spot on their team . Though he had already scheduled surgery to repair his hip , Bégin was willing to put it off to play in Switzerland , but was convinced by Hartley to complete the procedure . His recovery prevented Bégin from playing anywhere during the season .

When Hartley took over as the Flames ' head coach prior to the 2012 ? 13 NHL season , he offered Bégin a tryout in Calgary . Bégin 's work ethic during the team 's training camp prior to the lockout @-@ shortened season earned him a contract with the Flames , who believed he could serve as a penalty killer and energy player . Over two years since his last NHL game , Bégin returned to the league , and appeared in his 500th game on February 24 , 2013 , against the Coyotes . He appeared in 36 games for the Flames , scoring four goals and adding four assists . In recognition of his successful comeback , the Calgary chapter of the Professional Hockey Writers ' Association named him the Flames ' nominee for the Bill Masterton Memorial Trophy for dedication and perseverance .

Bégin was signed to a one @-@ year , AHL contract with the Abbotsford Heat for the 2013 ? 14 season . He was unable to play due to another injury and , after doctors informed him that he would miss the entire season , Bégin announced his retirement on January 16 , 2014 .

## == Playing style ==

Bégin 's father taught his son that his best chance of making a career in hockey was as a defensive specialist and impressed on him the need for a strong work ethic . He was raised to follow role players like Mario Tremblay , Guy Carbonneau and Bob Gainey rather than stars such as Guy Lafleur or Wayne Gretzky . Bégin has played the majority of his career as a grinder , willing to play a physical game . His style often results in bruises and injuries , a part of the game he relishes . Speaking of his comeback with the Flames in 2013 , he noted : " What I missed the most was the pain of playing hockey . The pain from blocking shots , getting hit , hitting people ... I missed it a lot . " That attitude impressed his coaches ; Bob Hartley argued that players like Bégin are a valuable commodity : " Players with the commitment of Steve Begin , I really believe that there ? s not enough ( of them ) in the NHL . I always admired the way that he played . I look at the spirit , the leadership . Pretty amazing what he ? s done for us . "

## == Career statistics ==

### == Regular season and playoffs ==

### == International ==

## == Awards and honours ==