

= Markus Näslund =

Markus Sten Näslund (born July 30 , 1973) is a Swedish retired ice hockey player and former general manager for Modo Hockey of the Swedish Hockey League (SHL , formerly named Elitserien) . He played in the National Hockey League (NHL) for the Pittsburgh Penguins , Vancouver Canucks and New York Rangers , as well as in the Elitserien with Modo Hockey . Nicknamed " Nazy " by Canucks fans and " Macke " or " Mackan " in his native Sweden , he was known for his offensive skills , particularly his wrist shot and stickhandling .

After playing junior hockey within the Modo organization , Näslund turned professional with the club 's Elitserien team in 1990 ? 91 . Selected in the first round , 16th overall by the Penguins in the 1991 NHL Entry Draft , he joined the NHL in 1993 ? 94 . After his tenure with Pittsburgh , Näslund was traded to the Vancouver Canucks in 1996 , where he spent 12 years , including a team record 8 as captain . He received the Cyclone Taylor Trophy as the Canucks ' most valuable player five times and the Cyrus H. McLean Trophy as the leading point @-@ scorer for seven consecutive seasons ? both club records ? en route to becoming the franchise leader in goals and points . In 2008 , Näslund signed with the Rangers , where he spent one season before announcing his retirement from the NHL . In 15 NHL seasons , Näslund was thrice First Team All @-@ Star , chosen in 2002 , 2003 and 2004 , and a Lester B. Pearson Award recipient (now known as the Ted Lindsay award) , winning in 2003 . He was the runner @-@ up for the Hart Memorial Trophy in 2003 . Midway through the 2009 ? 10 season , he returned to play for Modo before retiring a second time . In December 2010 , he became the third Canucks player to have his jersey retired , joining Stan Smyl and Trevor Linden .

Internationally , Näslund has competed with the Swedish national team in two European Junior Championships , two World Junior Championships , four World Championships , two World Cups and one Winter Olympics . He holds the World Junior record for most goals scored in a single tournament , scoring 13 in 1993 , while also winning back @-@ to @-@ back silver medals at the competition . In World Championship play , he won a silver medal in 1993 and two bronze medals in 1999 and 2002 . On April 21 , 2014 , Naslund was inducted into the Swedish Hockey Hall Of Fame .

= = Early life = =

Näslund was born to Sture and Ulla Näslund on 30 July 1973 in Örnsköldsvik , Sweden . The city has produced numerous NHL players , including childhood friend and future Modo Hockey teammate Peter Forsberg , as well as Victor Hedman and future Canucks teammates Henrik and Daniel Sedin .

Growing up idolizing Swedish NHL and Elitserien star Håkan Loob , he played most of his organized hockey at an outdoor rink in his neighbourhood during his youth . At age 14 , Näslund competed with the regional all @-@ star team from Ångermanland , helping the squad win a national under @-@ 16 championship at TV @-@ pucken in 1988 . He received the Sven Tumba Award as the tournament 's best forward .

Born within 10 days of each other , Näslund and Forsberg became well @-@ acquainted while playing on separate youth teams . They went on to join the Ångermanland team together , before competing on the same side at the junior and senior levels for Modo Hockey and the Swedish national team . They attended high school together and had summer jobs at the age of 18 with the same electrical company that employed both Näslund 's mother and Forsberg 's father , Kent .

= = Playing career = =

= = = Modo Hockey = = =

At age 15 , Näslund played a season with Örnsköldsviks SK in Sweden 's third @-@ tier men 's

league . Appearing in 14 games , he scored 7 goals and 13 points . The following season , in 1989 ? 90 , Näslund joined the Modo Hockey organization , playing in Sweden 's highest @-@ level junior league , the J20 SuperElit , where he and Peter Forsberg skated together on one of the most productive lines in the league . The pair helped Modo to win back @-@ to @-@ back junior championships . After a season of junior , in 1990 ? 91 Näslund joined Modo 's professional team in the Elitserien , Sweden 's premiere league . The Modo equipment manager designated him with the jersey number 19 , which Näslund thereafter opted to wear with the Swedish national teams he played on . He recorded 10 goals and 19 points in his rookie season , a record points total for a 17 @-@ year @-@ old in the league , until Robert Nilsson scored 21 in 2002 ? 03 .

In the off @-@ season , Näslund was drafted 16th overall in the 1991 NHL Entry Draft by the Pittsburgh Penguins . The team 's general manager , Craig Patrick , hailed Näslund and Forsberg as the draft 's top two prospects behind first @-@ overall selection Eric Lindros . He compared Näslund to the Los Angeles Kings ' Swedish forward Tomas Sandström , although he did not consider him as aggressive a player , and further claimed that he was a more natural goal @-@ scorer than Penguins forward Jaromír Jágr , who had just completed his rookie year with the club .

Näslund remained in Sweden with Modo for two more years , recording a team @-@ leading 39 points in 1991 ? 92 . He matched that points total the following season before helping Modo to the quarterfinals of the Elitserien playoffs .

= = = Pittsburgh Penguins = = =

Following the 1992 ? 93 season , his contract with Modo expired on 30 April 1993 , and he had not yet come to terms with the Penguins . According to the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) between the NHL and NHL Players Association (NHLPA) , he was entitled to free agency within the league , beginning on 1 July . However , a conflicting agreement between the league and Swedish ice hockey officials required that he sign an NHL contract on or before 30 June in order to leave Sweden . With the deadline approaching , Näslund filed a federal lawsuit against the NHL claiming that their agreement with Swedish officials could not override his rights as a player under the CBA . The case went to a federal judge in Newark , New Jersey , who ruled in favour of Näslund on 29 June . League president and lawyer Gil Stein released an affidavit stating the NHL @-@ Swedish agreement did not apply to Näslund , as he was not under contract with any Swedish team .

Näslund became a Group 4 restricted free agent on 1 July . He did not receive any offers from other teams due to an apparent promise from the Penguins organization to exercise their right to match . After two months of free agency , Näslund and the Penguins agreed to a deal on 9 September 1993 , worth approximately US \$ 1 @.@ 8 million over three years , including a \$ 750 @,@ 000 signing bonus .

Näslund subsequently joined the Penguins for the 1993 ? 94 season . Due to teammate Bryan Trottier already wearing his Modo jersey number , 19 , he chose number 29 instead . He appeared in his first NHL game on 5 October 1993 against the Philadelphia Flyers . Five days later , he registered his first NHL point , an assist , during a game against the Quebec Nordiques . His first NHL goal came the following month on 9 November 1993 in a 3 ? 3 tie against the St. Louis Blues . The goal came in the first period on the powerplay against goaltender Curtis Joseph , assisted by Doug Brown and Marty McSorley . Upon entering the NHL , Näslund struggled and was admittedly frustrated with himself . As a result , he was demoted to the Penguins ' International Hockey League (IHL) affiliate , the Cleveland Lumberjacks , on several occasions . He finished his rookie campaign with four goals and seven assists in 71 games . Although the Penguins qualified for the 1994 playoffs , Näslund did not participate in post @-@ season play , being made a healthy scratch (non @-@ dressing player) , and watched as Washington eliminated Pittsburgh in the first round .

The following season , shortened due to the 1994 ? 95 labour dispute , he continued to split playing time between the NHL and IHL . In 14 games with Pittsburgh , he scored two goals and four points , while recording seven points in seven games with Cleveland . He did not appear in the NHL playoffs for a second straight season , despite the Penguins qualifying . Instead , he was assigned to Cleveland for their playoff season , in which he recorded four points in four games . Frustrated by

his ongoing demotions to the IHL , at one point during the season he requested to be traded from Pittsburgh .

Näslund impressed in his third training camp with the Penguins , held prior to the 1995 ? 96 season . He was labelled in the media as " Mr. September " , referring to his ability to show promise before struggling once the season began . Due to the departures of All @-@ Star left @-@ wingers Kevin Stevens and Luc Robitaille from the Penguins , Näslund had an opportunity for a more prominent role with the club in 1995 ? 96 . He played on the second offensive unit with winger Jaromír Jágr and centre Ron Francis during training camp before being moved up to the first line with Mario Lemieux . He showed an immediate improvement , starting the season with 36 points in 29 games . He recorded his first NHL career hat @-@ trick on 28 November 1995 in a 7 ? 2 win over the Ottawa Senators . However , his production slowed later in the season ; he was scratched on several occasions and was demoted to the third and fourth lines by February .

= = = Vancouver Canucks = = =

= = = 1996 ? 2000 : Trade to Vancouver and captaincy = = =

In the final year of his contract with Pittsburgh , he was the subject of trade rumours . The Pittsburgh Post @-@ Gazette listed the Edmonton Oilers as the most likely candidate to deal for Näslund . However , on 20 March 1996 , he was dealt to the Vancouver Canucks in exchange for forward Alek Stojanov . The deal would be regarded as one of the most lopsided trades in NHL history once Näslund displayed his full offensive capabilities later in his career . Stojanov , who had been drafted eight spots ahead of Näslund in the 1991 Draft , went on to play 45 games , scoring two goals and four assists for the Penguins over the next two seasons . He became a career minor @-@ leaguer and retired by age 29 , while Näslund would eventually play 884 games with the Canucks in 12 seasons .

Näslund made his debut with the team two days following the trade against the Dallas Stars . As his desired jersey number 19 was already being worn on the team by Tim Hunter , the Canucks gave him number 22 . Going pointless in his first nine games with his new club , Näslund recorded a hat @-@ trick in the last game of the regular season , a 5 ? 0 win over the Calgary Flames on 13 April 1996 . The victory qualified the Canucks for the 1996 playoffs . He finished the regular season with a combined 22 goals and 55 points over 76 games between Pittsburgh and Vancouver . Näslund competed in his first NHL playoffs as the Canucks faced the Colorado Avalanche in the first round . He scored his first career NHL playoff goal in the final game of the series , opening the scoring against goaltender Patrick Roy on the powerplay . Colorado won 3 ? 2 to eliminate Vancouver in six games . Näslund added two assists over the course of the series for three points total .

In the off @-@ season , he was re @-@ signed by the Canucks on 8 August 1996 . Näslund switched his jersey number back to 19 from his time with Modo , as Hunter left the team . In his first full campaign with the Canucks , he recorded 21 goals and 41 points over 78 games . The Canucks failed to qualify for the playoffs that season ; they would not return to the post @-@ season until 2001 . At the start of the 1997 ? 98 season , Canucks head coach Mike Keenan scratched a healthy Näslund , prompting him to request a trade once again . He finished the year with 14 goals and 34 points over 76 games .

The following campaign , Näslund emerged as an offensive leader with the Canucks . Injuries to forwards Alexander Mogilny and Todd Bertuzzi , as well as the absence of Pavel Bure , resulted in Näslund earning more ice time . He scored his third NHL career hat @-@ trick on 5 December 1998 during a 4 ? 1 win against the Dallas Stars . At mid @-@ season , he was named to his first NHL All @-@ Star Game , held in January 1999 . He went on to record a team @-@ leading 36 goals and 66 points , resulting in him being awarded the Cyclone Taylor Trophy as the Canucks ' most valuable player ? his first of five during his tenure with Vancouver ? as well as his first of two of the team 's annual Most Exciting Player Awards (he received his second two years later) . In the off @-@ season , he was re @-@ signed by the Canucks to a three @-@ year , \$ 7 @. @ 2 million

contract .

During the Canucks ' 2000 ? 01 training camp in Sweden , Näslund was named team captain on 15 September 2000 . He replaced Mark Messier , who had returned as a free agent to the New York Rangers , and became the first European @-@ born captain in Canucks ' history . Näslund has cited Messier as his greatest playing influence , having played alongside him the previous three seasons . In his first year as team captain , Näslund continued to improve offensively and was named to his second NHL All @-@ Star Game , held in February 2001 . With 10 games remaining in the season , he suffered a broken leg on 16 March 2001 during a contest against the Buffalo Sabres . Chasing a loose puck in the third period , he was hit by Sabres defencemen Jay McKee and Rhett Warrener simultaneously , falling awkwardly on his right leg . Näslund was sidelined for the remainder of the season , as he required surgery to repair broken tibia and fibula bones . His 41 goals at the time of the injury were tied for third in the league , while his 75 points ranked in 11th place . As a result , he received his first of three career Viking Awards , given to the best Swedish player in the NHL . Without Näslund in the lineup , the Canucks finished the season with the eighth and final seed in the Western Conference , but were swept in the first round by the Colorado Avalanche in four games .

The Canucks ' return to the playoffs marked a turning point in the team 's success . After undergoing a rebuilding period in the late @-@ 90s under leading point @-@ scorers Messier , Bure and Mogilny , Näslund formed a new core that included Bertuzzi , Brendan Morrison , Ed Jovanovski and Mattias Öhlund . He recalls " grow [ing] up together in the early 2000s " with this group of players as his " fondest memory " in the NHL .

= = = = 2001 ? 2005 West Coast Express = = = =

Set to enter the final year of his contract , Näslund re @-@ signed with the Canucks to a three @-@ year extension on 28 June 2001 . He spent the off @-@ season rehabilitating his leg , which was held together with a titanium rod and screws following surgery , at his private gym in his hometown of Örnsköldsvik . He returned from his injury in 2001 ? 02 and improved to 40 goals and 90 points , which ranked second in the league behind Jarome Iginla . The 2001 ? 02 campaign marked the beginning of what was widely considered the most effective line combination in the league for several seasons . Näslund and Bertuzzi had already formed a duo as wingers on the Canucks ' top line for more than two seasons when head coach Marc Crawford replaced centre Andrew Cassels with Brendan Morrison during a game on 9 January 2002 . The trio were dubbed the " West Coast Express " , named after Vancouver 's commuter rail service of the same name .

The formation of Näslund 's new line coincided with an eight @-@ goal , 21 @-@ point effort over 14 games in January 2002 , earning him NHL Player of the Month honours . He was later chosen to represent the World Team at the 2002 NHL All @-@ Star Game in Los Angeles and scored the game @-@ winning goal in an 8 ? 5 victory over the North American team . The Canucks finished the season with the eighth seed in the Western Conference for the second straight year , resulting in a first @-@ round playoff match @-@ up with the Detroit Red Wings . It was Näslund 's first appearance in the post @-@ season since his initial year with the Canucks in 1996 . He was limited to a goal and an assist as Vancouver was eliminated by Detroit in six games . In the off @-@ season , Näslund received NHL First Team All @-@ Star honours as the league 's top left @-@ winger . He also finished fifth in Hart Memorial Trophy balloting .

In 2002 ? 03 , with the West Coast Express line intact for a full season , Näslund finished with a career @-@ high of 48 goals and 104 points , finishing second in the league in both categories . Furthermore , he led the league with 54 powerplay points and 12 game @-@ winning goals . Näslund 's linemates also produced career seasons as Bertuzzi recorded 97 points , which ranked fifth in league scoring , while Morrison tallied 71 . Together , the trio accounted for 45 % of the Canucks ' 264 goals .

Early in the season , Näslund scored his eighth career NHL hat @-@ trick , scoring three goals in a seven @-@ minute span during the second period of a 5 ? 2 win over the San Jose Sharks on 21 October 2002 . On 14 December , he scored a career @-@ high four goals in a 6 ? 3 win over the Edmonton Oilers , tying a Canucks record for most goals in a single game . Named to his third

consecutive All @-@ Star Game , held in February 2003 , Näslund scored a goal in the first shootout in All @-@ Star Game history to help the Western Conference defeat the Eastern Conference 6 ? 5 . He was joined on the All @-@ Star squad by three other Canucks ? Bertuzzi , Ed Jovanovski and head coach Marc Crawford . Crawford paired Näslund on a line with Peter Forsberg , marking the first time in nearly 10 years the two had played together . Later that month , Näslund registered another career @-@ high game with a six @-@ point night (one goal , five assists) in an 8 ? 0 victory over the Atlanta Thrashers on 14 February 2003 . The win extended the Canucks ' franchise record unbeaten streak to 14 games . On 27 March , he recorded an assist in a 5 ? 1 win against the Phoenix Coyotes for his 100th point of the season , becoming the third Canuck to reach the plateau after Pavel Bure and Alexander Mogilny .

On the last day of the 2002 ? 03 regular season , the Canucks lost the Northwest Division title to the Colorado Avalanche through a defeat against the Los Angeles Kings . Näslund had also begun the night as the league 's leading point ? and goal @-@ scorer , but was surpassed by Avalanche forwards Peter Forsberg and Milan Hejduk , respectively . After the game , Näslund apologized to the home fans at General Motors Place , saying the team " choked . " Qualifying for the 2003 playoffs , Vancouver won its first @-@ round matchup against the St. Louis Blues in seven games after trailing the series three games to one . Näslund scored a goal in the deciding game to help the Canucks advance . Against the Minnesota Wild in the next round , the Canucks were eliminated by relinquishing a three @-@ to @-@ one series lead of their own . Näslund finished the playoffs with a career @-@ high 14 points in 14 games .

In the off @-@ season , Näslund received the Lester B. Pearson Award (since renamed the Ted Lindsay Award) , given to the league 's best player as voted by the NHLPA . By beating out fellow award nominees Forsberg and Boston Bruins centre Joe Thornton , he became the first Swedish @-@ born recipient of the award , as well as the first Canucks player . He was presented the trophy during a ceremony at the Hockey Hall of Fame . Näslund was also a finalist for the Hart Memorial Trophy , awarded to the league 's most valuable player as voted by the Professional Hockey Writers ' Association . He finished as first runner @-@ up to Forsberg , receiving five first @-@ place ballots out of 62 compared to Forsberg 's 38 . Second runner @-@ up Martin Brodeur of the New Jersey Devils had 14 first @-@ place ballots , but less voting points overall than Näslund . Despite losing the Hart , he was chosen by The Hockey News as the league 's most valuable player that year . Näslund also received both the Viking Award and First Team All @-@ Star honours for the second time .

The following season , Näslund led the Canucks in scoring for the sixth @-@ straight year . His 84 points ranked fourth in the league , while his 35 goals was seventh . His even @-@ strength points topped the league at 58 . It marked , however , the beginning of a consistent decline in offensive production for the remainder of his NHL career . He was briefly sidelined in early December 2003 due to a groin injury , but returned to score his second career four @-@ goal game , scoring all the Canucks ' goals in a 4 ? 3 overtime win against the Pittsburgh Penguins , on 9 December 2003 . At mid @-@ season , he was selected as team captain for the Western Conference at the 2004 NHL All @-@ Star Game in Minnesota .

On 16 February 2004 , during a game against the Colorado Avalanche , Näslund received a body @-@ check to the head from opposing forward Steve Moore . Outstretched to retrieve a loose puck , he was hit by Moore with his elbow and shoulder . The league 's leading scorer at the time , he sustained a minor concussion , requiring 13 stitches on his forehead and nose , and was sidelined for three games . He also suffered a hyper @-@ extended elbow when he fell to the ice , which he played with through the remainder of the regular season and playoffs . Moore 's hit went unpenalized and several Canucks players vowed to exact revenge when the Canucks and Avalanche were set to play each other again on 8 March . Late in the third period of that subsequent game , Todd Bertuzzi skated behind Moore around the ice , punched him in the head and pushed him to the ice . Moore suffered career @-@ ending injuries and Bertuzzi was suspended indefinitely by the league . A close friend of Bertuzzi 's , Näslund was deeply affected by the incident , as subsequent lawsuits and public scrutiny negatively impacted Bertuzzi 's career . Several years later , Näslund stated , " It still bothers me what Todd has had to go through ... There 's no question he

was standing up for me ... it all went too far . "

Despite the absence of Bertuzzi for the remainder of the season , Näslund led the Canucks to the Northwest Division title they had lost the previous season . Bertuzzi was replaced on the top line by Matt Cooke . The Canucks ' division title placed them third in the Western Conference standings , matching them against the sixth @-@ placed Calgary Flames in the opening round of the 2004 playoffs . In the seventh and deciding game of the series between the two teams , the Canucks faced a one @-@ goal deficit in the final minute of regulation time . With the Canucks having pulled their goaltender for an extra attacker , Näslund stickhandled the length of the ice past two defenders , before shooting the puck on goal . Calgary goaltender Miikka Kiprusoff saved the shot before Cooke scored on the rebound with six seconds left in the game . Despite the effort , Calgary subsequently eliminated Vancouver a minute @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half into the subsequent overtime period on a powerplay goal . Näslund finished the playoffs with nine points in seven games .

At the end of the campaign , he received his second consecutive and third career Viking Award and First Team All @-@ Star mention . In the three seasons from 2001 ? 02 to 2003 ? 04 , Näslund scored the most goals (123) and points (278) of any NHL player .

During the NHL labour conflict , he returned to play for Modo Hockey of the Elitserien in 2004 ? 05 . Näslund announced his return in mid @-@ January in order to meet the 31 January player @-@ transfer deadline for European clubs , joining Canucks teammates Daniel and Henrik Sedin , as well as former Modo teammate Peter Forsberg on the squad . He was originally expected to sign with Modo before the season started in September , but he returned to Vancouver after spending the summer in Sweden . Vancouver radio @-@ station Team 1040 cited high tax premiums explaining the decision , while Näslund later reasoned that he preferred to be readily available for the NHL , just in case the league and NHLPA could come to an agreement and the season was salvaged .

He played his first game for Modo in nearly 12 years on 20 January 2005 , receiving a standing ovation from the home crowd . Näslund went on to appear in 13 games , scoring 17 points . Modo finished in sixth place during the regular season before being eliminated in the first round of the playoffs by Färjestads BK .

== == Post @-@ lockout == ==

As NHL play was set to resume for the 2005 ? 06 season , Näslund became an unrestricted free agent . On the open market for several days , he re @-@ signed with the Canucks for three more years on 3 August 2005 , at \$ 6 million per season . Vancouver newspaper The Province reported that two other teams had offered deals that matched the contract he signed , but Näslund ultimately chose to remain with the Canucks because he felt the club had a better chance of winning the Stanley Cup . At the time , Näslund said he hoped to retire as a Canuck .

For a franchise @-@ record seventh consecutive season , he led the Canucks in scoring , with 32 goals and 79 points . Despite new NHL rules set in place after the lockout that sought to allow skilled players such as Näslund and his linemates to thrive , all three members of the Canucks ' top line saw decreased offensive production in 2005 ? 06 . Furthermore , the Canucks failed to make the playoffs for the first time in four seasons , finishing at ninth place in the Western Conference , despite early @-@ season projections to be Stanley Cup contenders . Consequently , significant changes to the Canucks ' personnel were made in the off @-@ season . Of particular significance to Näslund , longtime linemate Bertuzzi was traded to the Florida Panthers in exchange for goaltender Roberto Luongo , while Alain Vigneault replaced Marc Crawford with a more defensive @-@ minded coaching approach . Crawford later recalled the 2005 ? 06 season as a turning point in Näslund 's role as the offensive leader on the team , noting that Henrik and Daniel Sedin had surpassed him and Bertuzzi in that respect as the campaign progressed .

Facing significant changes in the 2006 ? 07 season , Näslund 's points total continued to decrease . He began the season by scoring his 300th goal as a Canuck during the team 's home @-@ opener against the San Jose Sharks on 14 October 2006 . The goal tied Canucks teammate Trevor Linden for the franchise lead in all @-@ time goals . He soon surpassed Linden with his 301st goal against

the Edmonton Oilers on 17 October . Near the midway point of the season , however , Näslund went through a 17 @-@ game stretch without a goal . He completed the season with 60 points , his lowest output since 1997 ? 98 . Teammate Daniel Sedin had 84 points , marking the first time in eight seasons that Näslund did not lead the team in scoring . In the 2007 post @-@ season , Näslund contributed five points before the team was eliminated by the Anaheim Ducks in the Conference Semifinals .

In 2007 ? 08 , Näslund set several more career marks . On 21 November 2007 , Näslund tied the Canucks ' franchise record of 10 hat @-@ tricks with a three @-@ goal game against the Minnesota Wild , a 4 ? 2 win for Vancouver . It was his first hat @-@ trick since December 2003 and 11th in his career overall . Several games later , on 5 December , Näslund became the Canucks ' franchise leading point @-@ scorer , assisting on defenceman Mattias Öhlund 's goal and passing Linden with 725 points . The following month , on 17 January 2008 , Näslund played his 1,000th career game against the Detroit Red Wings , scoring a goal in a 3 ? 2 shootout loss . Playing parts of the season on a line with Daniel and Henrik Sedin , he recorded 25 goals and 55 points .

As Näslund 's free agency approached on 1 July 2008 , Näslund made it clear that the style of play and the player personnel of a team would be important factors in determining which team he would sign with after his contract with the Canucks expired . He was admittedly frustrated with Vigneault 's defensive coaching style . Furthermore , since Bertuzzi 's departure in the summer of 2006 , Vigneault placed Näslund on inconsistent line combinations , often with career minor @-@ leaguers . While he did not rule out the possibility of returning to Vancouver , he sold his Vancouver home and described his return as questionable .

== = New York Rangers == =

Näslund signed a two @-@ year , \$ 8 million contract , including a \$ 1 million signing bonus , with the New York Rangers on 3 July 2008 . Upon signing , he revealed New York was his preferred destination heading into free agency . He left Vancouver as the franchise 's all @-@ time leader in goals and points with 346 and 756 , respectively . His departure also ended his eight @-@ year tenure as team captain , matching Stan Smyl 's captaincy as the longest in franchise history . General manager Mike Gillis , who formerly acted as Näslund 's agent , released a statement on behalf of the Canucks organization , commending him as " one of the greatest athletes to ever represent the Canucks both on and off of the ice " .

As the Rangers held their training camp for the 2008 ? 09 season overseas in Europe , they competed in a one @-@ game challenge against Russian squad Metallurg Magnitogorsk on 1 October 2008 in Bern , Switzerland . The Rangers won the game 4 ? 3 , capturing the inaugural Victoria Cup . On 3 October , Näslund was named an alternate captain for the Rangers . The next day , he scored his first goal as a Ranger during the season @-@ opener in Prague , Czech Republic , a 2 ? 1 win against the Tampa Bay Lightning . In his only season with the Rangers , Näslund led the team in scoring with 24 goals and was fourth in points with 46 . He added three points in the playoffs , as the Rangers were eliminated in the first round by the Washington Capitals .

Following the Rangers ' defeat , he announced his retirement from the NHL on 4 May 2009 , at the age of 35 . Näslund had informed Rangers general manager Glen Sather , head coach John Tortorella , and his teammates of his intention to retire prior to the team 's playoff elimination . By announcing his retirement early in the off @-@ season , Näslund forfeited a \$ 2 million buyout from the Rangers , which would have counted against the team 's salary cap for the following season had he waited until he was formally bought out . Näslund retired from the NHL second among all @-@ time Swedish players with 395 goals (behind Mats Sundin 's 564 ; he retired the same year) . His 869 points ranked fifth , while his 1 @,@ 117 games played ranked fourth .

== = Return to Modo and retirement == =

Näslund returned to Sweden with his family in the summer of 2009 . During this time , Peter

Forsberg was attempting a return to the NHL for the 2009 ? 10 season , playing with Modo and the Swedish national team for conditioning purposes . Among the NHL teams interested were the Vancouver Canucks . Näslund had previously tried recruiting Forsberg to play for the Canucks prior to the 2007 ? 08 season , when Forsberg was an unrestricted free agent , without any luck . Weighing in on Forsberg 's possible NHL return , Näslund speculated that Forsberg would remain in Sweden to continue playing for Modo . Several days later , Canucks general manager Mike Gillis confirmed Näslund 's speculation , asserting that Forsberg intended on finishing the season with Modo .

The following day , on 17 November 2009 , Näslund announced he was coming out of retirement to join Forsberg with Modo for the remainder of the 2009 ? 10 Elitserien season . He explained that while he did not miss playing , both he and Forsberg desired to help their former club out of financial troubles and a last @-@ place standing in the league , facing potential relegation . The announcement crashed the Modo web server as a result of the heavy volume of people visiting the site . As a board member of the club , Näslund said he and Forsberg would play without salary .

Näslund played in his first game back with Modo on 28 November , 11 days after the announcement , registering an assist on the first goal of the game by Forsberg . Modo won the game 4 ? 1 over Rögle BK . The following match , on 1 December , he registered two assists , setting up the game @-@ tying goal with two seconds remaining in regulation by team captain Per Svartvadet and the overtime @-@ winner by Forsberg . He scored his first goal since his return on 8 December in a 4 ? 1 win over HV71 . On 27 February , he notched a hat @-@ trick against Färjestads BK in a 10 ? 3 win . Playing in 29 of Modo 's 55 games , Näslund scored at a point @-@ per @-@ game pace with 10 goals and 19 assists . Ranked last in the league prior to Näslund 's return , Modo went on to earn 58 points in the remaining 36 games of the season , but finished one point out of a playoff spot . Näslund confirmed his second retirement following the campaign .

At the start of the 2010 ? 11 NHL season , the NHL and NHLPA honoured Näslund with a tribute and ceremonial puck drop prior to a game held in Stockholm , Sweden , between the San Jose Sharks and Columbus Blue Jackets . Several months later , the Canucks retired his number 19 jersey prior to a home game against the Tampa Bay Lightning on 11 December 2010 . Attending the on @-@ ice ceremony were his wife , three children , parents and sister , as well as former Canucks teammates , coaches and executives . The night included a video tribute highlighting his hockey career , speeches from team personalities and gift presentations from the organization . In honour of Näslund and his wife 's past philanthropy in the Vancouver community , the team also announced the establishment of a sports equipment centre for underprivileged children . Prior to the jersey raising , Näslund thanked those involved in his career . Reflecting on his career , he commented , " Young hockey players from northern Sweden never dream of a night like this ... To go from sitting up in the press box as a healthy scratch to be standing here in front of you is quite amazing . " By having his jersey retired , he became the third player in team history to receive the honour , after Stan Smyl and Trevor Linden .

= = International play = =

Näslund made his first international appearance for Sweden at the 1989 Four Nations Tournament in the Soviet Union . The following year , he competed in the 1990 European Junior Championships , an under @-@ 18 tournament . He went pointless in six games , but helped Sweden to a gold medal finish . He improved the following year with a tournament @-@ leading 14 goals . His 16 points ranked second overall to teammate Peter Forsberg . Sweden failed to defend their gold medal .

Näslund continued to play in junior tournaments over the next two years , competing in the 1992 and 1993 World Junior Championships , where Sweden won back @-@ to @-@ back silver medals . During his first tournament appearance in Germany , he recorded 10 points , ranking third among all players , including a tournament @-@ leading eight goals (tied with four others) . Sweden finished second in the tournament 's round @-@ robin format to the Commonwealth of Independent States with a record of five wins , one loss and one tie .

The following year , Sweden hosted the World Junior tournament in Gävle . Näslund set a competition record for most goals scored in a single year with 13 , while playing on a line with Forsberg and Niklas Sundström . His 24 points were second in the tournament behind Forsberg 's 31 . Although Sweden and Canada finished with identical records of six wins and one loss , Canada was awarded the gold medal by virtue of their 3 ? 2 win against Sweden during round @-@ robin play . Näslund was named along with Forsberg to the Tournament All @-@ Star Team .

Näslund made his senior international debut later that year at the 1993 World Championships in Munich and Dortmund , Germany , where he earned another silver medal with Sweden . He contributed a goal and an assist over eight games . Three years later , he was added to Sweden 's roster for the 1996 World Championships in Vienna , Austria , after the Canucks were eliminated in the NHL playoffs . He was pointless while competing in one game , as Sweden failed to medal . Several months later , Näslund competed in the inaugural 1996 World Cup , but was again limited to one game . Sweden reached the semifinal , where they were eliminated by Canada . Competing in his third World Championships in 1999 , Näslund helped Sweden to a bronze medal with a 10 @-@ point effort in 10 games .

In 2002 , Näslund made his first and only appearance in the Winter Olympics at the 2002 Games in Salt Lake City . He scored his first and only two Olympic goals during a 7 ? 1 win against Germany . After going undefeated in the round @-@ robin and heralded as medal favourites , Sweden was defeated by Belarus 4 ? 3 in the quarterfinal . The loss was widely considered one of the most surprising results in Olympic history , while Näslund described the defeat in a post @-@ game interview as " devastating ... for us and our country . " He finished the tournament with two goals and an assist over four games , ranking fourth on the team in scoring .

Several months later , he participated in his final World Championships in 2002 , a tournament Sweden hosted in the cities of Gothenburg , Karlstad and Jönköping . He was added to the roster prior to the quarterfinal , following the Canucks ' first @-@ round elimination in the NHL playoffs . Sweden was defeated by Slovakia 3 ? 2 in the semifinal . They went on to win their consolation match against Finland 5 ? 3 to capture the bronze medal . It was Näslund 's second bronze medal in as many tournament appearances ; he scored three points in three games .

Prior to the 2004 ? 05 NHL lockout , Näslund participated in his final international competition at the 2004 World Cup , where he failed to score a goal in four games played . Although he was named to Team Sweden for the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin , Näslund chose not to play due to a groin injury . Sweden went on to win the gold medal , defeating Finland in the final .

= = Playing style = =

Näslund was known as a highly skilled offensive player with good skating and puck @-@ handling abilities . The most prominent aspect of his game was his wrist shot , which was known to be one of the most accurate in the league and accounted for a large portion of his goals . He also earned many of his points on the powerplay . Regarding his skill level and creativity , his first Canucks head coach , Marc Crawford , heralded him as one of " a handful of players in this game who can take a play where there 's nothing ... and turn it into a scoring chance " .

Näslund 's prime coincided with the contributing performances of his linemates Bertuzzi and Morrison . His finesse and goal @-@ scoring abilities were complemented by Morrison 's playmaking and Bertuzzi 's strength and aggression as a power forward . They were known for playing a fast and entertaining style . As a result , head coach Marc Crawford implemented a highly offensive coaching strategy .

As captain of the Canucks for eight years , Näslund was a self @-@ professed " leader by example " with his work ethic and play on the ice . He was often criticized by the media and fans in his final few seasons with the Canucks for not being sufficiently vocal or emotional as the team 's captain . Former teammates in Vancouver have described him as a quiet leader that spoke when needed nonetheless . They have also commended him for his integrity , professionalism and the caring manner in which he treated everyone in the organization . In particular , fellow Swedes Daniel and Henrik Sedin have singled him out as a player that mentored them early in their NHL career . New

York Rangers general manager Glen Sather reiterated the guiding influence Näslund had on young players coming into the league .

These criticisms began especially in light of his decreasing offensive production following the 2004 ? 05 NHL lockout . The decline was often attributed in the media to him becoming more defensively responsible under new Canucks coach Alain Vigneault . Bertuzzi 's absence following the 2005 ? 06 season was also seen as a negative factor for Näslund individually . It was further proposed that the physical effects of his concussion , as a result of Steve Moore 's hit against him in 2004 , as well as the emotional toll of Bertuzzi 's subsequent retaliation against Moore strained his playing efficiency .

= = Management career = =

Midway through the 2010 ? 11 Elitserien season on 17 December 2010 , Näslund was named the general manager of the Modo organization , overseeing all the organization 's sports clubs . In his first season with the organization , the hockey club finished last in the Elitserien , six points out of a playoff spot . Facing relegation to the second @-@ tier HockeyAllsvenskan , Modo finished second in the 2011 Kvalserien , retaining their Elitserien status for the 2011 ? 12 season .

In the off @-@ season , Näslund was joined by Peter Forsberg on Modo 's management team . Forsberg was announced as Modo 's assistant manager in April 2011 .

= = Off the ice = =

= = = Personal = = =

Näslund and his wife Lotta have three children : Rebecca , Isabella , and Alex . During his NHL career , they spent their summers in Sweden . Like Swedes Nicklas Lidström and his childhood idol , Håkan Loob , Näslund had expressed a desire to raise his children in his homeland Sweden . He made headlines when he first publicly contemplated an early retirement from the NHL to serve those purposes during the 2002 ? 03 season . However , he also considered Vancouver his home and cherished his time spent in the city as a member of the Canucks .

Upon being signed by the Rangers , Näslund and his family moved to Tarrytown , New York . Following his retirement from the NHL in 2009 , they returned to Sweden , where Näslund began coaching his son 's minor @-@ league hockey team before he became the general manager of Modo . He participated in the construction of a new house in Örnsköldsvik that his family moved into .

It has been reported that Naslund is a devout Christian when he has actually not been a part of the Christian Church for many years .

= = = Philanthropy = = =

In 2002 , Näslund and Forsberg founded Icebreakers , an organization that raises money for sick and disabled children in their home region of Västernorrland . A team of Swedish all @-@ stars are annually assembled to host exhibition charity games against varying challengers .

In Vancouver , Näslund ran a program called " Nazy 's Suite 19 " that gave underprivileged children the opportunity to watch Canucks games from a private suite in GM Place . Game attendees were chosen through local children 's charities . The program was later taken over by Canucks goaltender Roberto Luongo and renamed " Lui 's Crease Club " after Näslund 's departure from Vancouver . Along with other Canucks players , Näslund made regular visits to Canuck Place , a children 's hospice that provides specialized care for children with life @-@ threatening illnesses ; BC Children 's Hospital ; and was a contributor to the Canucks For Kids Fund . He also appeared in a public service announcement with BC Children 's Hospital , educating provincial viewers on mental health issues .

Following his NHL retirement , he joined the anniversary tour of the NHLPA 's Goals and Dreams

program , a charity that donates hockey equipment to underprivileged children . Näslund began the tour in Örnsköldsvik before joining former Canucks teammates Jyrki Lumme and Pavel Bure for stops in Helsinki and Moscow , respectively .

== Endorsements ==

At the peak of his career , Näslund signed multiple endorsement deals , most notably with Nike Bauer and Electronic Arts (EA) . In 2004 , EA Sports selected Näslund to appear on the cover of NHL 2005 , EA 's yearly hockey video game . He is also on the European cover of NHL 2000 .

== Career statistics ==

== Regular season and playoffs ==

== International statistics ==

== All @-@ Star Games ==

== Awards ==

== Sweden ==

== International ==

== NHL ==

== Vancouver Canucks team awards ==

== Records ==

== International ==

World Junior Championships ' record ; most goals , single tournament : 13 (1993)

== Vancouver Canucks ==

All @-@ time hat @-@ tricks : 10 (tied with Tony Tanti)

All @-@ time powerplay goals : 114

Longest tenured captain : 8 years (2000 ? 08)

Single @-@ season points by a left wing : 104 (2002 ? 03)

Single @-@ season goals by a left wing : 48 (2002 ? 03)

Single @-@ game goals : 4 (twice ; 14 December 2002 vs. Edmonton Oilers ; 9 December 2003 vs. Pittsburgh Penguins ; tied with 10 others)

