

= Gary Suter =

Gary Lee Suter (born June 24 , 1964) is an American former professional ice hockey defenseman who played over 1 @, @ 000 games in the National Hockey League (NHL) between 1985 and 2002 . He was a ninth round selection of the Calgary Flames , 180th overall , at the 1984 NHL Entry Draft and played with Calgary for nine years . He won the Calder Memorial Trophy as the NHL 's top rookie in 1986 , played in four All @-@ Star Games and was a member of Calgary 's Stanley Cup championship team in 1989 . He was traded to the Chicago Blackhawks in 1994 , then to the San Jose Sharks in 1998 , with whom he finished his career .

Suter played with the United States National Team on numerous occasions . He appeared in two World Championships and two Canada Cup tournaments . He was a member of the American team that won the inaugural World Cup of Hockey in 1996 and was a two @-@ time Olympian , winning a silver medal in 2002 . Suter is an honored member of the United States Hockey Hall of Fame , inducted in 2011 .

= = Early life = =

Suter was born on June 24 , 1964 , in Madison , Wisconsin . He is the youngest of five children , all of whom were heavily involved in sports . Gary followed his three elder brothers , John , Bob and Steve into hockey , while his sister was a figure skater . Their father Marlow was a senior player in the 1950s , and helped found and coach the Madison Capitols minor hockey system that all four boys played with in their youth . Gary idolized his brother Bob , who was a member of the American " Miracle on Ice " team that won the gold medal at the 1980 Winter Olympics .

After playing his junior and senior seasons of high school hockey with the Culver Military Academy , Suter joined the Dubuque Fighting Saints program in the United States Hockey League (USHL) . He appeared in 18 games with the Fighting Saints in the 1981 ? 82 season , recording 3 goals and 7 points . He was eligible for the 1982 NHL Entry Draft , but listed at five feet , nine inches tall by the Central Scouting Bureau , was considered too small for the NHL and went undrafted . Suter established himself as one of the first star players in the USHL 's junior era , improving to 39 points in 41 games in 1982 ? 83 and leading Dubuque to the Clark Cup championship . The team 's captain , he also led Dubuque to a national junior championship . He was again passed over by the NHL in the 1983 Draft , but accepted a full scholarship to play at the University of Wisconsin ? Madison .

Suter was the third member of his family to play defence for the Wisconsin Badgers , following brothers John and Bob . He appeared in 34 games in 1983 ? 84 , scoring 22 points . Ian McKenzie , coordinator of scouting for the Calgary Flames , noticed Suter 's play at Wisconsin and that he had added over two inches of height , which Central Scouting had failed to update in its record on him . The Flames picked Suter with their ninth round selection , 180th overall , in the 1984 Draft . Suter , who had been working in a beer factory , was initially disappointed at his selection . He was in his last year of draft eligibility and was hoping to follow other college players who signed lucrative contracts as free agents after going unselected . Following his sophomore season of 1984 ? 85 , in which he recorded 51 points in 39 games for Wisconsin , Suter left Wisconsin to turn professional .

= = Playing career = =

= = = Calgary Flames = = =

The departure of Kari Eloranta prior to the 1985 ? 86 NHL season created an opening on the Flames ' defense . Suter excelled in training camp and not only earned a spot on the team , he was quickly recognized by head coach Bob Johnson as the team 's best overall defenseman . He scored his first two goals in his second NHL game , a 9 ? 2 victory over the Los Angeles Kings , and by mid @-@ season was among the league 's rookie scoring leaders . He was one of two first @-@ year

players (along with Wendel Clark) to play in the 1986 All @-@ Star Game , while his offensive production and ability to play in all situations made him a top contender for the Calder Memorial Trophy . Suter finished the season with 18 goals , and his 68 points tied Al MacInnis for the team lead for scoring among defensemen . He added ten points in ten playoff games , but was knocked out of the postseason in the Smythe Division Final against the Edmonton Oilers after suffering stretched knee ligaments following a hit by Mark Messier . Suter watched as the Flames reached , and ultimately lost , the 1986 Stanley Cup Final to the Montreal Canadiens . Following the season , he was named to the All @-@ Rookie Team on defense and was voted the winner of the Calder Trophy . Suter was the third American @-@ born player to win the award , given to the NHL 's top rookie .

The knee injury hampered Suter throughout much of the 1986 ? 87 season ; he attempted to play through it , but ultimately missed 12 games . Nonetheless , he still scored 49 points in 68 games played . Healthy for 1987 ? 88 , Suter had the finest season of his career . His 70 assists and 91 points were the highest single season totals he would record in his career . He played in his second All @-@ Star Game , was named a Second Team All @-@ Star and was a finalist for the James Norris Memorial Trophy as the NHL 's top defenseman . Suter appeared in his third All @-@ Star Game in 1988 ? 89 , but missed 16 games after undergoing an emergency appendectomy . He had 62 points in 63 games . As had happened in 1986 , Suter was injured in the early stages of a deep post @-@ season run by the Flames . He missed most of the 1989 Stanley Cup Playoffs after suffering a broken jaw in Calgary 's opening round series against the Vancouver Canucks . He watched as the team won the Stanley Cup in six games over Montreal .

Suter reached the 70 point mark in the next two seasons , finishing with 76 in 1989 ? 90 and 70 in 1990 ? 91 . His latter campaign earned him his fourth All @-@ Star Game appearance . Suter also played much of the season while awaiting trial after he was arrested following a June 1990 scuffle with police as they tried to arrest fellow NHL player Chris Chelios . The issue was resolved in February 1991 when he agreed to a plea bargain on reduced charges and paid an \$ 8 @, @ 250 fine . A knee injury caused Suter to miss ten games in 1991 ? 92 , but he reached two milestones during the season . He scored his 100th career goal on February 25 , 1992 , against the Buffalo Sabres , and played in his 500th game on March 12 against the Philadelphia Flyers .

A career @-@ high 23 goals led Suter 's 81 @-@ point campaign in 1992 ? 93 , but he again struggled with a pair of knee injuries that caused him to miss three months of the 1993 ? 94 season and limited him to 25 games for the Flames . His tenure with Calgary ended on March 10 , 1994 , when the team included him in a six @-@ player trade . The Flames sent Suter , along with Paul Ranheim and Ted Drury , to the Hartford Whalers in exchange for James Patrick , Zarley Zalapski and Michael Nylander . The move surprised Suter : " Calgary 's meant a great deal to me . You always hear how trades are part of the game and that you don 't have any control over them . When it happens , it 's a shock . It just blows me away . "

= = = Chicago Blackhawks = = =

Suter 's tenure with the Whalers lasted only one day , as Hartford immediately dealt him to the Chicago Blackhawks along with Randy Cunneyworth and a draft pick for Frantisek Kucera and Jocelyn Lemieux . Suter appeared in 16 regular season games with the Blackhawks , finishing the season with 41 games played and 18 points combined between Calgary and Chicago . He quickly established a place alongside Chris Chelios as the team 's top defensive pair . In his first full season in Chicago , Suter was looked upon to serve as a team leader and played a key role with the team 's power play . He appeared in all 48 games of the lockout @-@ shortened 1994 ? 95 season , scoring 37 points , but missed several playoff games after suffering a broken hand against the Vancouver Canucks .

With 67 points in 1995 ? 96 , Suter was named to an All @-@ Star Team for the fifth time , but a knee injury prevented him from participating in the contest . The 1996 ? 97 season was one of frustration for Suter , as he battled a season @-@ long slump that saw him go 26 games without scoring goal at one point early in the season , then 21 games without a point late . He finished with

28 points , compared to an average of 69 in his previous nine campaigns .

In the final year of his contract with Chicago , Suter improved to 42 points in 1997 ? 98 . When attempts to negotiate a new deal during the season failed , the team publicly shopped his playing rights around the league late in the season but failed to complete a trade . Chicago 's best contract offer was a two @-@ year proposal that would have paid Suter \$ 1 @.@ 85 million per season . Unable to reach terms following the season , the Blackhawks quietly traded his negotiating rights to the San Jose Sharks for a ninth round pick a few days before he would have become an unrestricted free agent . He signed a three @-@ year contract worth \$ 10 million with San Jose .

= = = San Jose Sharks = = =

Suter played only one game for the Sharks in the 1998 ? 99 season , missing virtually the entire campaign after a microbe in his triceps caused an infection that required three surgeries to alleviate . During treatment , doctors also discovered a hole in his heart that required another surgery to correct . At 35 years old , Suter said he never contemplated retirement due to the ailments as he wanted to repay the Sharks for their support of him . He agreed to defer a portion of his salary that year to allow San Jose to sign a replacement player . Suter returned for the 1999 ? 2000 season healthy and played over 20 minutes per game as San Jose 's most experienced defenseman .

Reaching a career milestone , Suter played in his 1,000th NHL game on October 25 , 2000 , scoring a goal in a 3 ? 1 victory over the Columbus Blue Jackets . He said the achievement meant a lot to him given both the ailments he overcame and that he was dismissed by critics as unlikely to play in the NHL when he was drafted in 1984 . Suter finished the regular season with 34 points , but missed nearly the entire playoffs after suffering a concussion in the Sharks ' first post @-@ season game .

Signing a new one @-@ year contract , Suter returned to San Jose for a final season in 2001 ? 02 in which he scored 33 points , including his 200th career goal , against the Philadelphia Flyers on January 2 , 2002 . He announced his retirement as a player following the season .

= = = International = = =

Suter made his international debut with the American national junior team at the 1984 World Junior Ice Hockey Championships where he recorded a goal and an assist in seven games . He was playing college hockey with Wisconsin when he made his debut with the senior team at the 1985 World Championship . One of his team 's top players in the tournament , he was named co @-@ MVP of Team USA . Suter played in a second World Championship in 1992 .

His international career was marred by three controversial incidents . Suter was the target of international criticism following a vicious incident during the 1987 Canada Cup in a game against the Soviet Union . Following a physical battle with Andrei Lomakin , Suter was speared in the neck by the Soviet player . He retaliated with a " baseball swing " that broke his stick across Lomakin 's face , causing a gash that required 20 stitches to close . Suter was given a six @-@ game suspension from international competition by the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) , while the NHL assessed a four @-@ game ban of its own . Suter was again vilified in the 1991 Canada Cup tournament after he knocked Canada 's Wayne Gretzky out of the tournament with a check @-@ from @-@ behind in the first game of the best @-@ of @-@ three final . Gretzky forgave Suter for the hit , noting that he was usually a clean player . In the second game , he was responsible for two turnovers that led to goals , including what proved to be the championship @-@ winning marker in a 4 ? 2 victory for Canada . Suter was a member of the American team that won the inaugural World Cup of Hockey in 1996 .

The third incident occurred during an NHL game shortly before the 1998 Winter Olympic tournament while Suter was a member of the Chicago Blackhawks . In a game against the Anaheim Ducks , he cross @-@ checked Paul Kariya in the head as the latter player celebrated a goal . The hit knocked Kariya , who was expected to represent Canada , out of the Olympic tournament . Suter was given a four @-@ game suspension by the NHL that carried through the Olympic tournament .

However , the IIHF allowed him to play in a decision that incensed Canadian officials and resulted in Suter receiving a death threat from an angry Canadian fan .

At the age of 38 and in the final season of his playing career , Suter appeared in his second Olympics , playing in the 2002 tournament at Salt Lake City . He recorded one assist in six games for the silver @-@ medal @-@ winning American team . The medal came 22 years after his brother Bob 's gold in 1980 . In recognition of his career and achievements , Suter was inducted into the United States Hockey Hall of Fame in 2011 .

= = Off the ice = =

Suter returned to Wisconsin following his playing career , settling in the rural community of Minocqua where he and his wife Cathy raised their family . They have two sons , Jake and Jared , both of whom also play hockey . Jake is currently a defenseman for the UMass Lowell River Hawks . In addition to his sons , several of Suter 's nephews are also defensemen . Among them is Bob 's son Ryan , who also plays in the NHL and is an Olympian , and whom Gary considered unretiring to play with when the younger Suter was drafted by the Nashville Predators in 2003 . Instead , he turned to coaching , working with the Madison Capitols program , as well as assisting with the Lakeland Union High School T @-@ Birds in Minocqua . Gary is one of several members of the Suter family who operate a youth hockey camp in Madison that was held for the 17th year in 2012 .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = Regular season and playoffs = = =

= = = International = = =

= = Awards and honors = =