

= Christian Ehrhoff =

Christian Ehrhoff (born 6 July 1982) is a German professional ice hockey defenceman , currently a member of the Chicago Blackhawks of the National Hockey League (NHL) . He is known primarily as an offensive defenceman with strong skating and shooting abilities .

Prior to playing in the NHL , Ehrhoff spent several years playing professionally in Germany , starting with EV Duisburg of the third @-@ tier Oberliga and the Krefeld Penguins of the premiere Deutsche Eishockey Liga (DEL) . He spent three years with Krefeld , winning the German championship in 2003 .

Selected 106th overall by the San Jose Sharks in the 2001 NHL Entry Draft , Ehrhoff moved to North America for the 2003 ? 04 season . He spent one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half seasons with the Cleveland Barons , the Sharks ' American Hockey League (AHL) affiliate , before joining San Jose on a full @-@ time basis beginning in 2005 ? 06 . After playing six seasons within the Sharks organization , he was traded to the Vancouver Canucks in August 2009 . During his two seasons with the club , he won back @-@ to @-@ back Babe Pratt Trophies as the team 's top defenceman and helped them to the 2011 Stanley Cup Finals , where they lost to the Boston Bruins .

Internationally , Ehrhoff has played for the German national team in numerous tournaments , including three Winter Olympics , four World Championships and a World Cup .

= = Early life = =

Ehrhoff was born and raised in Moers , a city on the left bank of the Rhine . His father , Achim , is a drummer in a band , and he has a sister named Katrin . Ehrhoff first played hockey at the age of six , deciding to play the sport after watching an NHL game on television . As his hometown did not have a hockey program , he played minor hockey 20 kilometres away in the Krefeld Penguins ' system . He won a national championship with the club around the age of 12 ; Ehrhoff has recalled scoring in the final on a penalty shot . Following the NHL growing up , Ehrhoff has singled out Wayne Gretzky , Pavel Bure and Uwe Krupp as his childhood heroes . He was inspired to play in the style of an offensive defenceman after watching a video of Bobby Orr as a 10 @-@ year @-@ old .

At the age of 16 , he considered moving to North America to further his hockey career in the major junior Canadian Hockey League (CHL) , but his father had developed Hodgkin 's lymphoma at the time . Ehrhoff consequently decided to stay in Germany and continued in Krefeld 's system at the junior level ; his father eventually overcame the cancer .

= = Playing career = =

= = = Germany (1999 ? 2003) = = =

After playing in the junior system of the Krefeld Penguins , Ehrhoff signed a professional contract with the team in 1999 , at the age of 17 . He debuted in nine games with Krefeld in Germany 's premiere Deutsche Eishockey Liga (DEL) , while primarily playing with EV Duisburg of the third @-@ tier Oberliga on loan . Over the course of the season , he practiced mornings with Krefeld and evenings with Duisburg . He finished his first professional season with 15 points in 41 games with Duisburg and a goal in nine games for Krefeld . The following season , he joined Krefeld full @-@ time and had 14 points in 58 games for the team in addition to three points in six games with Duisburg . After the conclusion of the season , Ehrhoff was selected 106th overall in the 2001 NHL Entry Draft by the San Jose Sharks . One of three Germans selected by the Sharks in the draft , Ehrhoff was happy to be taken by the team , as they also had another German , Marco Sturm , on their roster at the time .

Ehrhoff attended the Sharks ' subsequent training camp following the draft , but was returned to Germany as an early cut on 11 September 2001 . Continuing to play for Krefeld , he notched 24 points in 46 games . Despite impressing with his skating and offensive skills at the Sharks ' 2002

training camp , he was returned to Krefeld for the second straight year . After notching a German career @-@ high 27 points in 48 games in 2002 ? 03 , Ehrhoff helped Krefeld win a German championship in his final season with the club . He recorded nine points in the post @-@ season .

= = = San Jose Sharks (2003 ? 09) = = =

With the expectation from Sharks management that Ehrhoff would join their organization either with the NHL club or in the AHL , he was signed to a contract on 22 June 2003 . Ehrhoff made his NHL debut on 9 October 2003 , against the Edmonton Oilers . He recorded his first point , an assist , on 15 November against the Toronto Maple Leafs . Later that month , he scored his first NHL goal , a game winner against Michael Leighton in a 3 ? 2 win against the Chicago Blackhawks on 26 November . Ehrhoff was selected to play in the 2004 NHL YoungStars Game , along with teammate Jonathan Cheechoo . After helping the Western Conference YoungStars to a 7 ? 3 win over the East , Ehrhoff also did colour commentary during the All @-@ Star Game for a German telecast .

Ehrhoff was often a healthy scratch with the Sharks during his rookie season and spent time with their AHL affiliate , the Cleveland Barons . In 41 games with the Sharks during the 2003 ? 04 season , Ehrhoff recorded 12 points in 41 games , while in the 27 games he played for the Barons , he notched 14 points . He began asserting himself early in his NHL career as an excellent skater with offensive capabilities . Ehrhoff then played a full season with the Barons in 2004 ? 05 due to the NHL lockout , tallying 35 points in 79 games . He was chosen to represent PlanetUSA in the 2005 AHL All @-@ Star Game in Manchester , New Hampshire .

Returning to the Sharks in 2005 ? 06 , Ehrhoff recorded a 23 @-@ point campaign . He began earning more ice time near the end of the season as he improved his defensive play . On 13 April 2006 , he scored the game @-@ winning overtime goal against the Vancouver Canucks for the Sharks to clinch a playoff berth , despite San Jose having previously been eight points out of a playoff spot with a month @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half remaining in the season . Ehrhoff added eight points over 11 post @-@ season games ? first among team defencemen ? in his first Stanley Cup playoffs as the Sharks were eliminated in the second round by the Edmonton Oilers . He then signed a two @-@ year contract worth US \$ 1 @.@ 7 million in the off @-@ season .

Ehrhoff responded with a career @-@ high 33 points in 2006 ? 07 . He notched a personal @-@ best three assists in one game late in the season in a 3 ? 2 win against the Los Angeles Kings on 27 March 2007 . San Jose were once again losers in the second round of the playoffs , being eliminated by the Detroit Red Wings in six games . Ehrhoff had two assists in 11 post @-@ season games . His regular season production decreased to 22 points in the 2007 ? 08 season . On 28 December 2007 , Ehrhoff was awarded a penalty shot during a game against the St. Louis Blues ; he missed against Manny Legace , though the Sharks nonetheless still won , 1 ? 0 . Later in the season , Ehrhoff missed four games due to a lower body injury , suffered on 6 April 2008 . After finishing as the second seed in the West , San Jose were defeated in the second round against the Dallas Stars . Ehrhoff notched five assists in ten playoff games .

Ehrhoff became a restricted free agent once more in July 2008 and re @-@ signed with the Sharks to a three @-@ year contract worth \$ 9 @.@ 3 million . The following season , 2008 ? 09 , he reached the 40 @-@ point mark for the first time in his career with 42 points in 77 games . He had missed three games in March 2009 due to a lower body injury . Ehrhoff 's personal success coincided with a franchise year for the Sharks , who earned their first Presidents ' Trophy as regular season champions in team history with 117 points . In the ensuing playoffs , however , they suffered a first @-@ round defeat to the eighth @-@ seeded Anaheim Ducks . Ehrhoff was held pointless in six games .

= = = Vancouver Canucks (2009 ? 11) = = =

In the summer of 2009 , Ehrhoff was traded to the Vancouver Canucks on 28 August 2009 , along with defenceman Brad Lukowich , in exchange for prospects Patrick White and Daniel Rahimi . The deal was done primarily to clear salary cap space in anticipation of the Sharks ' acquisition of star

forward Dany Heatley from the Ottawa Senators . For the Canucks , Ehrhoff 's acquisition addressed the need for a puck @-@ moving defenceman to rush the puck up the ice .

Ehrhoff scored his first goal in a Canucks uniform on 5 October 2009 , in a 5 ? 3 loss to the Columbus Blue Jackets . The following month , he notched his first two @-@ goal game in the NHL , adding an assist , in a 5 ? 2 win over the Colorado Avalanche on 20 November . Late in the season , he missed two games in April 2010 due to a sprained left knee . Prior to the last game of the regular season against the Calgary Flames , Ehrhoff was awarded the Babe Pratt Trophy as the Canucks ' fan @-@ voted best defenceman . He finished his first season in Vancouver leading all team defencemen with career @-@ highs of 14 goals , 44 points , a + 36 rating and an average ice time of 22 : 47 minutes per game . His 44 points tied Uwe Krupp for the most points by a German @-@ born defenceman in an NHL season , while his + 36 rating broke the single @-@ season team record shared by Pavel Bure and Marek Malík by one point (Daniel Sedin tied with Ehrhoff for the record in 2009 ? 10 , as well) . In the subsequent 2010 playoffs , he added seven points in 12 games as Vancouver was eliminated by the Chicago Blackhawks in the second round .

In December 2010 , Ehrhoff was struck in the ear by a puck during a game against Anaheim . He left the contest with what was initially considered a concussion ; however , he was later diagnosed with vertigo instead and missed three games . Recording new career @-@ highs in assists (36) and points (50) , he led all Canucks defencemen in scoring , while ranking seventh among League defencemen . Ehrhoff was awarded his second consecutive Babe Pratt Trophy for his regular season efforts . Having won the Presidents ' Trophy for the first time in team history , the Canucks entered the 2011 playoffs with the first seed in the West . They eliminated the Chicago Blackhawks , Nashville Predators and San Jose Sharks in the first three rounds to advance to the Stanley Cup Finals for the first time in 17 years . Facing the Boston Bruins , the Canucks lost the series in seven games . While Ehrhoff led Canucks defencemen and ranked second in the League overall with 12 points (two goals and ten assists) over 23 games , he had a team @-@ worst ? 13 rating . It was revealed following the Canucks ' Game 7 defeat to Boston that he had been playing with an injured shoulder .

= = = Buffalo Sabres (2011 ? 2014) = = =

Set to become an unrestricted free agent on 1 July 2011 , Ehrhoff and the Canucks failed to come to terms on a new contract . Three days ahead of his free agency , 28 June 2011 , his negotiating rights were traded to the New York Islanders in exchange for a fourth @-@ round pick in the 2012 NHL Entry Draft . It was reported that Ehrhoff had turned down the same deal that former defensive teammate Kevin Bieksa had signed the previous day ? a five @-@ year , \$ 23 million contract ? to remain with the Canucks . Although the Islanders had three days of exclusive negotiating rights with Ehrhoff , General Manager Garth Snow self @-@ imposed a one @-@ day deadline to sign him . Unable to agree on a contract (Snow commented that the proposed deal was " well north " of the Canucks ' offer) , Ehrhoff was traded to the Buffalo Sabres on 29 June in exchange for a fourth @-@ round pick in the 2012 NHL Entry Draft . Two days later , Ehrhoff signed a ten @-@ year , \$ 40 million deal with the Sabres . The contract pays him \$ 18 million in the first two years , then \$ 4 million annually from the third to sixth years , \$ 3 million in the seventh and \$ 1 million in the remaining three . Ehrhoff admitted having a desire for the freedom of unrestricted free agency , but was ultimately won over by the Sabres ' contract offer and quality as an organization able to compete for the Stanley Cup .

Ehrhoff made his debut with the Sabres in Helsinki as the NHL opened the 2011 ? 12 season abroad , on 7 October 2011 , against the Anaheim Ducks . He recorded an assist on a Thomas Vanek goal in a 4 ? 1 win . Ehrhoff recorded his first goal as a Sabre 11 days later , an empty @-@ netter to secure a 3 ? 1 win over the Montreal Canadiens . He finished the year with five goals and 32 points in 66 games as the Sabres finished ninth in the Eastern Conference , failing to make the 2012 playoffs .

The Sabres began the process of buying @-@ out the remainder of Ehrhoff 's contract on 29 June 2014 . They will be paying Ehrhoff \$ 12 million over 14 years (around \$ 850 @,@ 000 per year) .

= = = Later years = = =

On 1 July 2014 , it was announced that the Pittsburgh Penguins signed Ehrhoff to a one @-@ year , \$ 4 million deal . Ehrhoff made his debut with the Penguins on 9 October 2014 , against Anaheim . An injury shortened season saw Ehrhoff appear in only 49 games , scoring three goals to go with 11 assists .

On 23 August 2015 , it was confirmed by General Manager Dean Lombardi that the Los Angeles Kings signed Ehrhoff to a one @-@ year , \$ 1 @.@ 5 million deal . In the 2015 @-@ 16 season , Ehrhoff began the season as a regular on the blueline for the Kings . Ehrhoff struggled to perform to past expectations , and after scoring just 2 goals in 40 games was waived by the Kings and assigned to AHL affiliate , the Ontario Reign on February 11 , 2016 .

After 5 games with the Reign , Ehrhoff 's tenure within the Kings organization came to a close when he was traded to the Chicago Blackhawks in exchange for former teammate and Kings defenceman Rob Scuderi on February 26 , 2016 .

= = International career = =

As a junior , Ehrhoff competed for Germany 's under @-@ 18 team at the inaugural 1999 IIHF World U18 Championships , hosted in Füssen and Kaufbeuren , Germany . He returned the following year for the 2000 IIHF World U18 Championships in Switzerland , where Germany finished in seventh place . Ehrhoff then debuted at the under @-@ 20 level in Division I of the 2001 World Junior Championships . Hosting the tournament in the cities of Füssen and Landsberg , Germany missed a promotion to the main tournament the following year by finishing in second place behind France . Ehrhoff made his second appearance at the Division I level for the 2002 World Junior Championships in Austria , leading all tournament defencemen with three goals and 10 points in five games . He helped Germany earn a promotion to the main tournament for the following year , defeating Austria 7 ? 1 in the gold medal game . In both years competing in the tournament , Ehrhoff earned Top Defenceman honours .

Two months after his final international junior appearance , Ehrhoff debuted with Germany 's senior team for the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City . He played in seven games as the second youngest player in the tournament . Germany was eliminated by the United States in the quarterfinal with a 5 ? 0 shutout loss . Later that year , he competed in the 2002 World Championships , scoring five points in seven games . Germany was defeated in the quarterfinal by Sweden 6 ? 2 . Ehrhoff made his second World Championships appearance in 2003 , but failed to register a point as Germany were once again losers in the quarterfinal round . After his rookie season in the NHL , Ehrhoff competed for Germany in the 2004 World Cup . They lost 2 ? 1 to Finland in the quarterfinal . The following year , he registered an assist in six games at the 2005 World Championships . Germany finished second @-@ to @-@ last in the tournament . After failing to qualify for the quarterfinal , they won one of three games in the relegation round .

On 21 December 2005 , Ehrhoff was named to the German Olympic team , along with Sharks teammate Marcel Goc , for the 2006 Winter Games in Turin . His lone goal of the tournament came against Canada , a 5 ? 1 loss . He added an assist in the tournament for two points in five games as Germany failed to win a preliminary game , missing out on the playoff rounds . Four years later , he was named to Germany 's Olympic team for the 2010 Winter Games in his NHL hometown of Vancouver . He went pointless in four games , while leading his team in ice time . Germany was eliminated by Canada in an 8 ? 2 qualifier for the quarterfinal .

Shortly after the Vancouver Canucks were eliminated from the 2010 Stanley Cup playoffs several months later , Ehrhoff joined Germany for the 2010 World Championships . Germany played as tournament host in the cities of Cologne and Mannheim . Joining his team midway through the tournament , he missed the first three games before scoring a goal and an assist in six contests . Germany made it to the semifinal , where they were defeated by Russia 2 ? 1 . Ehrhoff assisted on Germany 's lone goal and was named his team 's player of the game . They went on to lose the

bronze medal game 3 ? 1 to Sweden . Their fourth @-@ place finish marked their best placing at the World Championships since 1953 when they won silver . Leading Germany in average ice time with 23 : 34 minutes per game , Ehrhoff was named to the Tournament All @-@ Star Team , along with German goaltender Dennis Endras .

= = Playing style = =

Ehrhoff is known as an offensive defenceman . He has strong skating ability , which allows him to quickly carry the puck up the ice , starting plays from his team 's defensive zone , as well as join offensive plays deep in the opposing team 's zone . He also possesses a hard shot , which earns him significant time on the power play . Upon joining the NHL with San Jose , he had to adjust his game to be more defensive . He gradually became counted upon more in defensive situations and has been used on the penalty kill , as well .

= = Personal life = =

Ehrhoff and his wife , Farina , have 3 daughters , Leni born in mid @-@ 2009 , Milla born mid @-@ 2011 , and Olivia born late 2014 . During his time with the Canucks , they lived in the Vancouver neighbourhood of Yaletown . During the off @-@ seasons , they return to Germany , where they have a condo in Krefeld .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = Regular season and playoffs = = =

= = = International = = =

= = Awards = =

= = Records = =

Vancouver Canucks record ; highest plus @-@ minus rating , single @-@ season : + 36 in 2009 ? 10 (surpassed Pavel Bure and Marek Malik ; tied with Daniel Sedin)