

= John Vanbiesbrouck =

John Vanbiesbrouck (born September 4 , 1963) , nicknamed " the Beezer " , is an American professional ice hockey executive and former player . A goaltender as a player , he was inducted into the United States Hockey Hall of Fame in 2007 . Vanbiesbrouck played in the National Hockey League (NHL) for the New York Rangers , Florida Panthers , Philadelphia Flyers , New York Islanders , and New Jersey Devils . He began his career playing major junior hockey for the Sault Ste . Marie Greyhounds of the Ontario Hockey League (OHL) . Following a successful season with the Greyhounds , he was drafted by the New York Rangers in the fourth round , 72nd overall , in the 1981 NHL Draft . After his junior career ended , he played for the Rangers minor league affiliate , the Tulsa Oilers of the Central Hockey League . Despite the team 's near collapses due to financial concerns , Vanbiesbrouck led the Oilers to a league championship and shared the league 's MVP honors .

He began playing full @-@ time with the Rangers in the 1984 ? 85 season . Vanbiesbrouck won the Vezina Trophy as the league 's top goaltender and was named a First Team NHL All @-@ Star the following season . After playing in parts of 11 seasons with the Rangers , he was taken in the 1993 NHL Expansion Draft by the Florida Panthers . In Florida , Vanbiesbrouck was a three @-@ time all @-@ star , and led the Panthers to their first and only Stanley Cup Finals appearance in 1996 . While in Florida he recorded his 300th career victory , becoming the 15th goaltender and only the second American goalie in NHL history to do so . During his career , Vanbiesbrouck compiled a record of 374 wins , 346 losses , 119 ties , and 40 shutouts , making him the winningest American @-@ born goaltender and tying Frank Brimsek for most career shutouts by an American @-@ born goaltender .

Internationally , Vanbiesbrouck has represented the United States on several occasions . He played in the 1982 World Junior Ice Hockey Championships as well as four IIHF World Championships . He was named to the Second All @-@ Star team at the 1985 World Ice Hockey Championships . He also played in two Canada Cup tournaments , registering the lowest goals against average in 1987 and was a back @-@ up goaltender during the Americans ' second @-@ place finish in 1991 . He represented Team USA for the final time in 1998 , serving as the back @-@ up on the Olympic ice hockey team .

Following his playing career , he took over as the head coach and General Manager of the Greyhounds . However , after using a racial slur referencing his team captain , he resigned . Vanbiesbrouck worked as a broadcaster and in hockey @-@ related businesses . In 2013 , Vanbiesbrouck was named the general manager of the United States Hockey League 's Muskegon Lumberjacks .

= = Early life = =

Vanbiesbrouck was born in Detroit , Michigan to a Belgian immigrant bricklayer , Robert Vanbiesbrouck , and an Italian immigrant Sara . He grew @-@ up with two brothers ; the oldest , Frank , who was also a goaltender in youth hockey . He inspired Vanbiesbrouck to play goaltender . John later noted that he learned more about goaltending just from watching Frank than any coaching could , adding that no one ever helped him more to become the player he was .

= = Playing career = =

= = Junior and minor leagues = =

While playing midget level hockey Vanbiesbrouck joined the Little Caesars hockey club , a travel ice hockey team in Detroit . During a tournament in Toronto , Vanbiesbrouck lost his jersey and was forced to wear a teammate 's uniform . He played well in the tournament with junior scouts in attendance . Since Vanbiesbrouck wore another player 's jersey he went undrafted in the midget

draft , while the player whose jersey he wore was drafted in the fourth round . After being unclaimed in the draft Vanbiesbrouck was offered a try @-@ out with the Sault Ste . Marie Greyhounds , members of the Ontario Major Junior Hockey League , later becoming the Ontario Hockey League (OHL) . At the try @-@ out he made the team , winning a spot over several other players and became the starting goalie for the Greyhounds . Vanbiesbrouck played in 56 games and compiled a 31 ? 16 ? 1 record during his first season in Sault Ste . Marie . Following the 1980 ? 81 season he was drafted in the 4th round , 72nd overall of the NHL Draft by the New York Rangers .

On December 5 , 1981 , just months after being drafted , Vanbiesbrouck made his professional debut with the Rangers as an emergency call @-@ up . He defeated the Colorado Rockies 2 ? 1 . Despite only allowing one goal and earning his first NHL win , the Rangers decided to return him to Sault Ste . Marie ? a move intended to aid his development . He finished the year with a 12 ? 12 ? 2 record for the Greyhounds and made his first international appearance , representing the United States at the 1982 World Junior Championships . He played one more season for the Greyhounds , playing 62 games winning 39 of them and being named to OHL Second All @-@ Star Team .

Following his career with the Greyhounds , Vanbiesbrouck moved on to the minor leagues joining the Central Hockey League 's (CHL) Tulsa Oilers . During the 1983 @-@ 84 season , his first with the Oilers , the ownership group was unable to sustain the team . They went bankrupt , were taken over by the league , and forced to play their remaining games on the road . After losing their home rink the team was housed in Denver , Colorado where they shared a practice facility with the University of Denver and fellow CHL team the Colorado Flames . The lack of ice time often forced the Oilers to practice in a Mall where they were not allowed to shoot pucks . For extra practice Vanbiesbrouck had tennis balls hit at him in the parking lot . Despite all the adversity the Oilers won the Adams Cup as league champions . Meanwhile , Vanbiesbrouck won the Terry Sawchuk Award , with back @-@ up Ron Scott , for fewest goals against in the league and shared CHL MVP honors with Bruce Affleck by winning the Tommy Ivan Trophy .

== = New York Rangers == =

He made the Rangers full @-@ time in the 1984 ? 85 season , playing in 42 games and posted a 4 @.@ 20 goals against average (GAA) . The following year Vanbiesbrouck enjoyed a breakout season , playing in 61 games , winning a career high 31 . The 31 victories accounted for all but 5 of the Rangers ' regular season total . His success continued over to the post @-@ season , where he led the Rangers to an upset over the Philadelphia Flyers in the opening round . He then followed it by beating a Washington Capitals team that registered 107 points in the regular season . The Rangers lost in the Conference Finals to the eventual Stanley Cup champion Montreal Canadiens . In the off season Vanbiesbrouck was named a First Team NHL All @-@ Star , won the Vezina Trophy as the league 's top goaltender , and signed a new three @-@ year contract with the Rangers . He was unable to repeat his success in the next season , winning 18 games in 50 games played while losing 20 contests .

Prior to the 1987 ? 88 season Vanbiesbrouck was hit by a puck under his mask in practice , which caused a non @-@ displaced fracture of his lower jaw and a broken tooth . Fortunately for him the injury did not require his jaw to be wired shut , and he was able to return to practice the next day . He showed no ill effects from the injury , playing in 56 games , winning 27 . On June 13 , 1988 Vanbiesbrouck suffered nerve damage to his left wrist after a glass coffee table he was sitting on collapsed and broken glass lacerated his ulnar nerve and three tendons . He was sitting on the table assembling video equipment in anticipation of the birth of his first child . The glass broke beneath him , and as he braced for the fall , his wrist was cut by the glass . Vanbiesbrouck required five hours of microsurgery to remove glass from his wrist and repair the nerve and tendon damage . He was initially expected to miss 4 ? 6 months , but he recovered in time to attend the Rangers pre @-@ season training camp just 3 months later . Again he played in 56 games , and increased his win total to 28 .

He began the 1989 @-@ 90 season as the Rangers ' starting goaltender , but after the Rangers struggled in early January , he began to share the duties with the recently called up Mike Richter .

During the playoffs head coach Roger Neilson employed a rotation system between the two goaltenders . The Rangers won their first round match @-@ up against the Islanders , but lost to the Capitals in the second round . For his part Vanbiesbrouck posted a 2 ? 3 record with a 3 @.@ 02 GAA and a .902 save percentage .

The following season the two goaltenders formed the best duo in the NHL . The duo remained together even after Vanbiesbrouck had a chance to leave via free agency in 1992 . A new collective bargaining agreement established him as a group 2 free agent , allowing the Rangers to match any offer from another team or to claim draft choices as compensation if he were to sign with another team . After not receiving much interest from other clubs , Vanbiesbrouck re @-@ signed with the Rangers , signing a two @-@ year deal with an option for the third averaging \$ 1 million per season . At the end of the 1992 ? 93 season , the decision was made to trade Vanbiesbrouck . With the upcoming expansion draft the Rangers would only be able to protect one goaltender . Faced with the prospect of losing one of their two goaltenders , the Rangers traded the " equally talented " but older Vanbiesbrouck to the Vancouver Canucks for future considerations (Doug Lidster) .

= = = Florida Panthers = = =

Vancouver made the trade not with the intention of keeping Vanbiesbrouck , but rather in an attempt to keep other players on their roster from being drafted . Rules of the 1993 NHL Expansion Draft allowed teams to protect one goaltender , nine forwards and five defensemen . Additional rules stated that teams could only lose one goaltender in the draft and prevented teams from losing both a defenseman and a goaltender . Prior to the draft Florida Panthers general manager Bobby Clarke won a coin @-@ toss giving them the first pick in the draft . Thus with their first selection , the Panthers picked Vanbiesbrouck to be the number one goalie for their team . Upon his arrival in Florida , Vanbiesbrouck went on a " mall tour " to help elevate the visibility of the franchise and made an informative video explaining ice hockey terms for Blockbuster , then owners of the franchise . In January 1994 he made his return to Madison Square Garden . In his first game back to his former home venue , Vanbiesbrouck made 51 saves ultimately losing the game 3 ? 2 to his former team . During the season he was also named to the All @-@ Star game as the Panthers ' sole representative . In the game Vanbiesbrouck played the third period , made six saves and was credited with the win . At the completion of his first season in Florida , he played in 57 games posting a 21 ? 25 ? 11 record , registering a 2 @.@ 53 GAA , and his career best save percentage of .924 ranked him second in the league . Vanbiesbrouck was named a Second Team NHL All @-@ Star and was shortlisted for the Hart and Vezina Trophies . His 21 wins tied the Minnesota North Stars ' Cesare Maniago 's record for the most by an expansion goaltender . The record was later passed by Ron Tugnutt during the Columbus Blue Jackets inaugural season . The Panthers finished the season with 83 points , one point behind the New York Islanders , for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference . The following season was shortened due to the 1994 ? 95 NHL lockout . As a result , Vanbiesbrouck played in just 37 games registering a 14 ? 15 ? 4 record . He lowered his GAA from the previous year to 2 @.@ 47 and increased his shutout total from one to four . However his save percentage dropped to .914 . The Panthers again fell a point short of making the playoffs .

In the 1995 ? 96 season , Vanbiesbrouck was named to the All @-@ Star Game . In the game he played the second period and gave up three goals on seven shots . The Panthers were in playoff position for more than half of the season , but faltered late in the season and were close to falling out of the playoff race . Late in the season Vanbiesbrouck shutout the New Jersey Devils putting Florida into the playoffs . At the end of the regular season he played in 57 games posting a 21 ? 25 ? 11 with 2 shutouts . His games played ranked him tenth in the league while his GAA of 2 @.@ 68 was ninth . In the first round Florida defeated the Boston Bruins in five games . Their second round match @-@ up was against the heavily favored Philadelphia Flyers . Vanbiesbrouck posted a shutout in the first game of the series , the third post season shutout of his career and the first in Panthers playoff history . During the series Vanbiesbrouck held the Flyers scoreless for 116 : 46 straight minutes , as Florida upset Philadelphia winning four games to two . In the Conference Finals

the Panthers were again huge underdogs to the Pittsburgh Penguins , a team that featured the leagues two top scorers in Mario Lemieux and Jaromir Jagr . The Penguins took a 3 ? 2 series lead , but the Panthers won game six 4 ? 3 to force game seven . In game 7 Vanbiesbrouck made 39 saves in a 3 ? 1 Panthers victory , winning the Eastern Conference and putting them in the Stanley Cup Finals . The Panthers fell behind the Colorado Avalanche 3 ? 0 in the series . Game four was considered one of the classic games in finals ' history . The game was a 0 ? 0 tie entering the third overtime period . Early in the period , a long shot from Colorado 's Uwe Krupp eluded Vanbiesbrouck giving the Avalanche a 1 ? 0 win and the Stanley Cup . Vanbiesbrouck made 55 saves in the loss and finished third in voting for the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP .

During the 1996 ? 97 season he was elected by the fans to the All @-@ Star Game as the starting goaltender . Vanbiesbrouck ' 200 @,@ 457 votes led the Eastern Conference . By season 's end Vanbiesbrouck finished in the top ten in the NHL for save percentage (6) , GAA (5) and tied for 11 in wins (27) . The Panthers finished fourth in the Eastern conference and faced the Rangers in the first round of the Stanley Cup Playoffs . Vanbiesbrouck made 34 saves in game one , shutting out the Rangers 3 ? 0 . It was the only game the Panthers won as the Rangers defeated them 4 ? 1 in the series . The following season Vanbiesbrouck reached a personal milestone . On December 27 , 1997 the Panthers defeated the New York Islanders 6 ? 2 at Nassau Coliseum . The win marked the 300th of his career , making him the 15th goaltender , and second American , in NHL history to reach the mark . Despite his personal milestone Vanbiesbrouck suffered through his worst statistical season with the Panthers . The team fared no better as they finished the season in 12th place in the Eastern conference and out of the playoffs .

= = = Post Panthers = = =

During the off @-@ season Vanbiesbrouck signed a two @-@ year \$ 7 @.@ 25 million contract , with an option for a third year , with the Philadelphia Flyers . His first season with Philadelphia was successful , he posted a career best 2 @.@ 18 GAA , notching 6 shutouts , playing in a career high 62 games and registering a 27 ? 18 ? 15 record . However , he struggled in the playoffs . Despite posting good individual numbers , Vanbiesbrouck let in " soft " goals that cost the Flyers games . Philadelphia was eliminated in the first round by the Toronto Maple Leafs in six games . He continued to be " shaky " at the beginning of the 1999 ? 2000 season . As a result , rookie Brian Boucher began playing more . Vanbiesbrouck reached another milestone during the season , becoming the 8th goaltender in NHL history to play in 800 games . He played in 50 games during the season registering a 25 ? 15 ? 9 record , but in the playoff the Flyers went with Boucher .

During the 2000 NHL Entry Draft , Philadelphia traded Vanbiesbrouck to the New York Islanders for a fourth @-@ round draft pick . The Islanders made the trade with the intention of having Vanbiesbrouck mentor first overall draft pick Rick DiPietro . He played in 44 games for the Islanders winning 10 of them and recording a shutout . On the eve of the NHL trade deadline , the Islanders traded Vanbiesbrouck to the New Jersey Devils for Chris Terreri and a ninth @-@ round pick . New Jersey made the deal with the intent to give starting goaltender Martin Brodeur some rest prior to the playoffs . With Terreri struggling they felt it best to bring in someone who had played regularly throughout the year . Vanbiesbrouck played in 4 games for the Devils , winning them all , and recorded his 40th career shutout . The shutout tied him with Frank Brimsek for the most shutouts by an American born goaltender in NHL history . Vanbiesbrouck did not play during the playoffs , but the Devils advanced to the Stanley Cup Finals . The Devils played the Colorado Avalanche and lost in seven games . Vanbiesbrouck retired immediately after game seven on June 10 , 2001 . He stated that " it 's time " and he wanted to leave the game healthy . He was retired for only eight months before he agreed to terms with the Devils to come out of retirement . He posted a 2 ? 3 ? 0 record as the Devils back up , finishing his career with 374 wins . His win total is the most by an American born goaltender in NHL history . He again did not play in the playoffs as the Devils were eliminated in the first round by the eventual Eastern Conference champion Carolina Hurricanes . Vanbiesbrouck retired for the second and final time on May 24 , 2002 .

Following his playing career Vanbiesbrouck earned several accolades . The Sault Ste . Marie

Greyhounds retired his number (1) . NHL.com named him the best NHL player to wear jersey number 34 , and on October 12 , 2007 Vanbiesbrouck was inducted into the United States Hockey Hall of Fame . He remains thirteenth in NHL history in wins . However , he is also fifth in all @-@ time in losses .

= = International play = =

Vanbiesbrouck made his international debut in 1982 representing the United States at the World Junior Championship . In five games he posted a 1 ? 3 ? 0 record with a 5 @.@ 70 GAA , as the Americans finished in sixth place . The next year he again participated in the World Junior Championship . He appeared in five games and lowered his GAA to 3 @.@ 64 , helping the American team improve to fifth place .

In 1985 he played for Team USA at the IIHF World Championships . Vanbiesbrouck posted a 6 ? 3 ? 0 record , defeating three of three top ranked teams in the world (Canada , Czech Republic and Sweden) . He later noted that those three victories gave him the confidence to be successful at the NHL level . The Americans were the second seed following the preliminary round . However they failed to win a single game in the championship round and finished the tournament in fourth place . Individually Vanbiesbrouck was named to the Second All @-@ Star team . Two years later he played in his second World Championship . He was unable to duplicate his prior success posting a 2 ? 5 ? 0 record , as Team USA finished in seventh place one position away from being relegated to Division I. During 1987 Vanbiesbrouck also participated in the Canada Cup , registering a 2 ? 2 ? 0 record with a 2 @.@ 25 GAA . He registered the lowest GAA in the tournament , but the United States finished in fifth place . He played in two more World Championships in 1989 and 1991 going 1 ? 2 ? 1 and 3 ? 4 ? 2 respectively , as the US improved to sixth place in 1989 and finished just short of winning a medal in 1991 placing fourth . Vanbiesbrouck was named to the Canada Cup team in 1991 , but spent the tournament as Mike Richter 's back @-@ up . He played only one game in the tournament defeating Finland 4 ? 3 . The United States finished the Canada Cup in second place losing the best of three championship to Canada 2 ? 0 . He was named to the 1996 World Cup of Hockey team but missed the Americans ' victory due to a small cartilage tear in his right shoulder that required off @-@ season surgery to repair .

Prior to the 1998 Winter Olympics an announcement was made that NHL would shut down for two and a half weeks to allow its players to participate in the international tournament for the first time . Vanbiesbrouck was named to the United States team , but spent the majority of the tournament on the bench , playing in one game for only one minute . As a team the Americans finished in a " disappointing " sixth place .

= = Playing style = =

Vanbiesbrouck was a hybrid goaltender who combined the butterfly style and the more traditional stand @-@ up style . He was strong at playing his angles and challenged shooters well . Small for a goaltender , standing only 5 ' 8 " , he relied on his quickness to regain his feet after making saves or to make additional saves in goalmouth scrambles . Vanbiesbrouck was aggressive when it came to playing the puck , which helped him tie the Rangers single season record for assists by a goaltender and set the Rangers career record as well . Although he was considered one of the best positional goaltenders in the league , his greatest attribute may have been his self @-@ confidence . Former teammate Tom Laidlaw once noted that he believed Vanbiesbrouck 's confidence carried him farther than his talent .

= = Retirement = =

= = = Trevor Daley incident = = =

When he retired from the NHL , Vanbiesbrouck took over as the head coach and director of hockey operations for the Sault Ste . Marie Greyhounds . In February 2003 , the team had a record of 18 @-@ 24 @-@ 4 @-@ 3 . A month later on March 7 , the Greyhounds lost 6 ? 1 to the Guelph Storm . After the game Vanbiesbrouck used a racial slur in expressing his anger with Trevor Daley (now with the Pittsburgh Penguins) , a black player and Greyhounds ' team captain , to two of Daley 's white teammates . Daley was told of the remarks by his teammates and was advised to leave the team by his agent Bobby Orr . Daley returned home to Toronto and informed the commissioner of the OHL about the remarks . The day after Daley left the team , Vanbiesbrouck resigned his positions as coach and general manager , and sold his ownership stake in the team . In his apology Vanbiesbrouck stated " I used the ' N ' word instead of calling him Trevor , I used it just not thinking . It 's a mistake and consequences have to be paid by me , I 've embarrassed everybody and my family by this one comment . It 's not what they represent and it 's not what the Sault Greyhounds organization represents . " He added " I told Trev this is an old wound with me , I grew up with it . I 'm as sorry as anybody that it 's stuck with me . " Daley returned to the team three days after leaving , but Vanbiesbrouck never returned to a coaching position .

= = = Broadcasting career , management = = =

After leaving the Greyhounds , Vanbiesbrouck spent some time as a broadcaster , working as an analyst for Versus network as well as hockey broadcasts on HDNet . In 2010 Vanbiesbrouck , along with Steve Goldstein , formed the broadcast team for Westwood One 's radio coverage of the Winter Olympic hockey games . In 2013 , Vanbiesbrouck was named the general manager and director of hockey operations for the United States Hockey League 's (USHL) Muskegon Lumberjacks .

= = Personal = =

Vanbiesbrouck grew up as the youngest of three brothers . His oldest brother , Frank , was a goaltender who played three seasons of junior @-@ A hockey from 1974 until 1977 . His other brother , Julian , played left wing for the University of Michigan and briefly played in the International Hockey League as a member of the Toledo Goaldiggers . When Vanbiesbrouck was with the Rangers , his brother Frank showed signs of severe depression and suicidal tendencies . During this time John attempted to reach out to Frank , occasionally flying separately from the team on road trips to check in on his brother , and talking to him every day . Despite his efforts Frank committed suicide in 1993 . Vanbiesbrouck called Frank 's death " devastating , " and that he " felt very empty " when Frank died , adding that his Christian faith and the Bible helped him through the difficult time .

While playing with the Flyers , Vanbiesbrouck and his family lived in Moorestown Township , New Jersey . He and his wife , Rosalinde , have four sons , Ian , Ben , Nicholas and Daniel . Ian was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) when he was five @-@ years old . As a result , Vanbiesbrouck started the Vanbiesbrouck Foundation for children with Attention Deficit Disorder to increase awareness of and raise money for children with ADD . However , when he left Florida via free agency the foundation was dissolved and the mission of the program went into an information service based in South Florida . Vanbiesbrouck is also the celebrity sponsor of a golf event in support of The Alan T. Brown Foundation to Cure Paralysis . He returned to his home state of Michigan following his playing days .

= = Awards and honors = =

F. W. " Dinty " Moore Trophy (OHL ? best rookie goals against average) winner in 1981 .

Selected to the OHL Second All @-@ Star team in 1983 .

Selected to the CHL First All @-@ Star Team in 1984 .

Terry Sawchuk Trophy winner in 1984 (shared with Ron Scott) .

Tommy Ivan Trophy (CHL Most valuable Player) winner in 1984 (shared with Bruce Affleck) .

Selected to the NHL First All @-@ Star Team in 1986 .

Selected to the NHL Second All @-@ Star Team in 1994 .
Vezina Trophy Winner in 1986 .
Played in 1994 , 1996 , and 1997 National Hockey League All @-@ Star Games .
Became the 15th , and only the 2nd American , goaltender in NHL history to record 300 career wins .
Inducted into the United States Hockey Hall of Fame in October 2007 .
Ranked No. 31 on the all @-@ time list of New York Rangers in the book 100 Ranger Greats .
Vanbiesbrouck appears on the NHL 97 cover .

== = Records = = =

Holds New York Rangers all @-@ time franchise record for most assists in a single season by a goaltender (5) (shared) .
Holds New York Rangers all @-@ time franchise record for most career assists by a goaltender (25) .
Holds NHL all @-@ time record for most Victories among American born goaltenders (374) .
Holds NHL all @-@ time record for most Shutouts among American born goaltenders (40) (shared with Frank Brimsek) .

== Career statistics ==

Bolded numbers indicate league leader .

== = Regular season = = =

== = Post season = = =

== = International = = =