

= Eric Nystrom =

Eric Thore Nystrom (born February 14 , 1983) is an American professional ice hockey left winger who is currently an unrestricted free agent of the National Hockey League (NHL) . He was a first round selection of the Calgary Flames , taken 10th overall in the 2002 NHL Entry Draft , and made his NHL debut with Calgary in 2005 . Nystrom has also played for the Minnesota Wild , Dallas Stars and Nashville Predators . He played four seasons of college hockey with the Michigan Wolverines before he turned professional . On four occasions , Nystrom has played with the United States national team , most recently at the 2010 World Championship . He is the son of former NHL player Bob Nystrom .

= = Early life = =

Nystrom was born and raised in Syosset , New York , where his father , Bob , was an NHL player for the New York Islanders . Bob , who was himself born in Sweden but grew up in Hinton , Alberta , won four consecutive Stanley Cups between 1980 and 1983 . Bob coached his son during his formative years in hockey . Nystrom is Jewish as is his mother , and became a Bar Mitzvah . He attended high school at Portledge School in Locust Valley , New York . He has an older sister , Marissa .

Nystrom grew up playing several sports , including soccer and baseball , and only seriously considered a hockey career in his mid @-@ teens . While Eric was regarded as an NHL prospect himself , his father encouraged him to seek an education first , which the younger Nystrom did upon earning a scholarship to play for the University of Michigan Wolverines in 2000 . He spent four years at Michigan where he earned a degree in liberal arts .

= = Playing career = =

= = = Junior and college = = =

Nystrom established a hard @-@ working style similar to his father 's , which helped earn him an invite to play with the US National Development Program (USDP) . He played 55 games for USDP in the North American Hockey League in 1999 ? 2000 , scoring seven goals and 23 points . He split the 2000 ? 01 season with the national under @-@ 18 program and the junior team in the United States Hockey League , also representing the United States at the 2001 IIHF World U18 Championships . He later represented the United States at the 2002 and 2003 World Junior Ice Hockey Championships .

He moved onto the University of Michigan , earning a place on the Central Collegiate Hockey Association (CCHA) All @-@ Rookie team in 2002 after scoring 18 goals and 31 points . On the strength of that season , the Calgary Flames selected him with their first pick , 10th overall , at the 2002 NHL Entry Draft . Before turning professional , Nystrom completed his final three seasons of college eligibility , finishing with 111 points in 160 career games , and serving as the Wolverines ' captain in his senior year of 2004 ? 05 .

= = = Calgary Flames = = =

Upon turning professional in 2005 , Nystrom was assigned to the Omaha Ak @-@ Sar @-@ Ben Knights of the American Hockey League (AHL) . He was recalled by the Flames at the start of the 2005 ? 06 season and made his NHL debut against the Colorado Avalanche on October 10 , 2005 . He played two games with the Flames before being returned to the AHL to complete the season . Nystrom missed most of the 2006 ? 07 after suffering a tear in his right shoulder during a pre @-@ season game . He attempted to rehab the injury and then play , before opting on surgery . The injury limited Nystrom to just 12 regular season games for Omaha , but he returned in time to play five

playoff games for the Knights .

Nystrom split the 2007 ? 08 season between the Calgary and the Quad City Flames . He appeared in 44 regular season games for Calgary , and scored his first NHL goal on October 30 , 2007 , against the Nashville Predators . He scored a career @-@ high four points , two goals and two assists , in the Flames final game of the regular season , a 7 ? 1 victory over the Vancouver Canucks . Following the season , he signed a two @-@ year contract extension with the Flames .

Nystrom played his first full NHL season with the Flames in 2008 ? 09 , playing in 76 games and scoring five goals , three of them game @-@ winning . He added a fourth game @-@ winning goal in the 2009 Stanley Cup Playoffs against the Chicago Blackhawks . He more than doubled his career high in 2009 ? 10 , scoring 11 goals despite struggling through a groin injury for a large part of the season . He was invited to play with the American team at the 2010 IIHF World Championships .

= = = Minnesota and Dallas = = =

Nystrom chose to leave Calgary as a free agent , signing a three @-@ year , \$ 4 @.@ 2 million contract with the Minnesota Wild on July 1 , 2010 . He scored four goals and eight assists in his first season with the Wild , a season which Nystrom admitted was not good , and " snowballed negatively " for him . The 2011 ? 12 season posed early challenges for Nystrom . In a pre @-@ season game against the Edmonton Oilers , his attempt to avoid an icing call resulted in his stick getting caught up in the skates of Edmonton 's Taylor Fedun , sending the latter player crashing into the boards at high speed . Fedun suffered a broken leg and the play renewed calls for the NHL to move to no @-@ touch icing to avoid similar incidents in the future . He was waived by Minnesota prior to the season 's start , but went unclaimed by any other team and was demoted to the AHL 's Houston Aeros , with whom he appeared in one game .

On October 12 , 2011 , the Wild dealt him to the Dallas Stars . Minnesota had to place him through re @-@ entry waivers first , and while Dallas could have claimed him at that point and been responsible for only half of his \$ 1 @.@ 4 million salary , they took on his full salary via trade so as to meet the league 's minimum payroll rules . Dallas general manager Joe Nieuwendyk praised Nystrom as being an effective penalty killer who would add depth to his team . Though he was anticipated to play in a defensive checking role , Nystrom added an offensive touch for Dallas , scoring 10 goals in his first 21 games with the team . His 12th goal of the season set a new career high , and he finished the year with 16 .

Due to the 2012 ? 13 NHL lockout , Nystrom signed with Stavanger Oilers late November and made his debut in the Norwegian GET @-@ ligaen in a match against Vålerenga on December 20 . Nystrom had four goals and three assists in his first game . He played only six games with the team , but recorded 14 points . Returning to the NHL once the lockout was resolved , Nystrom scored 11 points in 48 games with Dallas .

= = = Nashville Predators = = =

Nystrom left the Stars as a free agent following the 2012 ? 13 NHL season and signed a four @-@ year deal with the Nashville Predators worth \$ 10 million . He recorded the first hat trick of his NHL career on January 24 , 2014 , against the Calgary Flames and finished with a franchise record four goals . The Predators lost the game , however , 5 ? 4 in a shootout .

On June 29 , 2016 , Nystrom 's three @-@ year tenure with the Predators was brought to an end , as he was placed on waivers for the intent to buy @-@ out the remaining year of his contract .

= = Off the ice = =

Nystrom has frequently involved himself with charitable endeavors throughout his career . While with Quad City , he performed an on @-@ ice striptease that mimicked the one performed by the character Ned Braden in the movie Slap Shot as part of a team jersey auction . The event raised \$

30 @,@ 000 . He served as a player ambassador for the Reading ... Give it a Shot ! program as a member of the Flames and visited local schools as part of the team 's campaign to increase literacy among students . Nystrom is active with Garth Brooks ' Teammates for Kids Foundation .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = Regular season and playoffs = = =

= = = International = = =

= = Awards and honours = =