

= Luc Bourdon =

Joseph Luc Bourdon ( February 16 , 1987 ? May 29 , 2008 ) was a Canadian professional ice hockey defenceman who played for the Vancouver Canucks of the National Hockey League ( NHL ) and their American Hockey League ( AHL ) affiliate , the Manitoba Moose , from 2006 until 2008 . After overcoming childhood arthritis , he was selected third overall in the 2003 Quebec Major Junior Hockey League ( QMJHL ) draft and played for the Val d'Or Foreurs , Moncton Wildcats , and Cape Breton Screaming Eagles , spending four seasons in the QMJHL . The Canucks drafted Bourdon with their first selection , tenth overall , in the 2005 NHL Entry Draft . Noted as a strong defenceman who could contribute on offence , Bourdon represented Canada in three international tournaments , winning two gold medals at the IIHF World U20 Championship and a silver medal at the IIHF World U18 Championship . Bourdon died at the age of 21 near his hometown of Shippagan , New Brunswick , when his motorcycle collided with a tractor trailer .

= = Early life = =

Born on February 16 , 1987 , Bourdon was an only child raised by his mother , Suzanne Boucher , in the small French speaking community of Shippagan , New Brunswick . When he was nine , he was diagnosed with juvenile arthritis and needed to use a wheelchair , which he later overcame . As a teenager , he attended Marie Esther Secondary , where he was a straight A student . Growing up in a fishing town , he worked summers on his uncle 's crab fishing boat .

He played as a 13- and 14 year old with the Peninsula Acadien Lynx , and with the Miramichi Rivermen from ages 15 ? 16 , both local minor ice hockey teams . After being the third overall choice in the 2003 QMJHL draft , Bourdon left home when he was 16 , returning in the off season to live with his mother . Upon turning professional and signing his first contract , he anonymously donated C \$ 10 000 to the local minor hockey association for families who could not afford equipment . His donation was posthumously revealed by his former bantam hockey coach , Gilles Cormier , who managed the local arena at the time of Bourdon 's death .

= = Playing career = =

Bourdon joined the Val d'Or Foreurs for the 2003 ? 04 season , registering eight points in 64 regular season games and scoring one goal in seven playoff games . He appeared in all 70 games with the Foreurs in 2004 ? 05 , scoring 13 goals and 19 assists , and participated in the CHL Top Prospects Game , an exhibition for draft eligible players . In June 2005 , Bourdon was the tenth pick overall , selected by the Vancouver Canucks , at the 2005 NHL Entry Draft . Ranked sixth overall for North American skaters coming into the draft , Bourdon was noted as a physical two way defenceman with significant offensive skills and a strong shot , as well as an excellent skater . He was the second Shippagan born hockey player to be drafted in the NHL , after goaltender Yanick Degrace was drafted by the Philadelphia Flyers in 1991 .

Invited to the Canucks training camp , Bourdon almost made the team as an 18 year old , but instead was returned to the QMJHL for further development . He began the 2005 ? 06 season with the Foreurs , registering 20 points in 20 games , before being traded to the Moncton Wildcats , who were hosting the 2006 Memorial Cup . In exchange for Bourdon , the Wildcats sent Ian Mathieu Girard , Jean Sébastien Adam , a fourth round pick , and a first round selection in 2008 to Val d'Or . Shortly after the trade , Bourdon injured his ankle , suffering a fractured fibula , high and low sprains , and a second degree ligament tear . Although he returned to join Moncton in the playoffs , doctors told him that it would take two years to fully recover . He managed a full recovery after one year , but his turning ability and backwards skating sometimes lagged . Competing in the Memorial Cup , he reached the Canadian Hockey League ( CHL ) final with the Wildcats , who lost 6 ? 2 to the Quebec Remparts .

After signing a three year contract , worth \$ 850 000 per year with the Canucks on May 4 , 2006 , Bourdon earned a spot on the team 's 2006 ? 07 opening roster . He played his first NHL

game on October 10 , 2006 against the Minnesota Wild , but after playing nine games and scoring no points , he was sent again to the QMJHL for further development . On January 8 , 2007 , Bourdon was again traded in the QMJHL , with Moncton sending him to the Cape Breton Screaming Eagles in exchange for Mark Barberio and a first round selection in the 2007 QMJHL draft . As a Screaming Eagle , Bourdon lost in the QMJHL semi @-@ final against his former team , Val @-@ d 'Or . He finished the 2006 ? 07 QMJHL season with 20 points in 36 games . When the Canucks did not qualify for the playoffs , they sent Bourdon to play five games for the Manitoba Moose , who were in the middle of the AHL playoffs . He was held pointless through five AHL playoff games . Including his participation in the 2007 World Junior Championships , Bourdon played for five different teams throughout the 2006 ? 07 season .

Initially failing to make the Canucks starting roster out of training camp , Bourdon began the 2007 ? 08 season with the Manitoba Moose ; however , because of a series of injuries among the Canucks ' defencemen throughout the season , Bourdon was called up on several occasions . Bourdon scored his first goal on November 16 , 2007 , against goaltender Niklas Bäckström in a 6 ? 2 win over the Minnesota Wild . Bourdon finished the season on the Canucks roster , and was sent back to the Manitoba Moose for the AHL playoffs , playing in six playoff games for the Moose . He appeared in 27 games for the Canucks over the season , scoring two goals , as well as scoring 14 points during 41 games with the Moose .

As a young and promising defenceman , Bourdon was regularly mentioned in rumours of trades for more offence at the forward positions . Most significantly , he was speculated to be part of a package in exchange for Tampa Bay Lightning forward Brad Richards . Although Bourdon had a powerful shot , he did not play defence responsibly enough to earn a regular spot on the roster . He began to show signs of improvement and maturity as the Canucks used him more in the 2007 ? 08 season .

= = = International play = = =

Bourdon made his international debut representing Team Canada in the 2005 World Under @-@ 18 Championships , held in the Czech Republic , earning one assist in a silver @-@ medal effort .

In the 2006 World Junior Ice Hockey Championships in British Columbia , Bourdon competed in his first of two consecutive World Junior Championships . He was named player of the game in round @-@ robin play after a scoring a goal and an assist in a 4 ? 0 win against Norway . He finished the tournament leading all defencemen in scoring with six points in six games and was named to the tournament 's all @-@ star team . Upon winning gold , Bourdon returned to Shippagan and showcased his medal at the local arena to crowds of supporters .

At the 2007 World Junior Championships in Leksand and Mora , Sweden , Bourdon was awarded a second player of the game distinction after the first round @-@ robin contest against Sweden , in which he scored the game @-@ winning goal in a 2 ? 0 victory . Later in the tournament , Bourdon scored the game @-@ tying goal in the third period of a 2 ? 1 shootout win over the United States in the semi @-@ final . In total , Bourdon picked up two goals and two assists in six games , helping Canada to a second straight gold medal .

= = Death = =

Bourdon was killed instantly in a motorcycle collision in Lamèque , New Brunswick , near his hometown of Shippagan on May 29 , 2008 , when he hit a tractor @-@ trailer after losing control of his 2009 Suzuki GSX @-@ R1000 and crossing the centre line . Environment Canada showed winds gusting to more than 50 km / h ( 31 mph ) in the area at the time of the accident . The RCMP stated that Bourdon 's inexperience with motorcycles may have been a factor in the crash .

Bourdon 's agent , Kent Hughes , stated that he never knew about his client 's new hobby ( motorcycles ) . " I had no idea , " he explained to CKNW in Vancouver . " Another client of ours , Kris Letang , said Luc let him know he was riding his dad 's motorcycle with some friends a week or two ago . I have since been told ? though I don 't know ? that he actually bought a motorcycle two days

ago " . Maryse Bourdon , Luc 's stepmother , said he had purchased the motorcycle about three weeks before . Letang , Bourdon 's close friend and former roommate from junior hockey , planned to buy a motorcycle after Bourdon told him about his ; because of the crash , he decided against it .

The American Hockey League , where Bourdon had played for the Manitoba Moose , observed a moment of silence in Bourdon 's honour prior to game one of the Calder Cup Finals between the Chicago Wolves and the Wilkes @-@ Barre / Scranton Penguins just hours after the accident , and on May 31 , the Pittsburgh Penguins and Detroit Red Wings observed a moment of silence before game four of the 2008 Stanley Cup Final . During the 2008 NHL Draft , the Canucks ' management wore guitar pins to remember Bourdon , because he was an avid guitarist .

At the Canucks ' 2008 ? 09 NHL season home opener against the Calgary Flames , the Canucks honoured Bourdon with a brief pre @-@ game ceremony . Bourdon 's family was presented with his last game @-@ worn jersey , given by the fan who won the jersey during an annual charity event the previous season . Afterwards , Tom Cochrane and Red Rider performed " Big League " during the video tribute . Commemorative pins were handed out to fans attending the game and were worn throughout the season by General Motors Place hosts . The Canucks also wore " LB " on their helmets that season in memory of Bourdon . At General Motors Place , the Luc Bourdon Wall of Dreams was established to commemorate Bourdon .

The Manitoba Moose honoured Bourdon with a video tribute before their 2008 ? 09 home opener on October 10 , 2008 . Moose players all wore # 4 Bourdon jerseys during the warmup , and " # 4 LB " patches were worn on the jerseys of players all season . A senior men 's ice hockey team in New Brunswick , the Lameque / Shippagan Pêcheurs , also honoured him , wearing a " 28 Bourdon " patch on their jerseys over the course of the 2008 ? 09 season . During the 2009 World Junior Ice Hockey Championships , Team Canada honoured Bourdon by wearing LB stickers in their opening game . In addition , no Canadian player wore the jersey number 6 , the number Bourdon wore with the national team , throughout the tournament .

In the 2008 @-@ 2009 season , the QMJHL Moncton Wildcats hockey club where Luc had played during the 2006 season paid tribute by having former New Brunswick professional musician Roland Gauvin from 1755 French musical group play " Le monde a bien change " along a video tribute . Also presented to the Bourdon family from the Wildcats Franchise Executives was Luc 's Moncton Wildcats Jersey as well as Flowers . The team wore the LB patch as well for the season .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = Regular season and playoffs = = =

= = = International = = =

All statistics taken from NHL.com