

Strength in Struggle

Eight stories of resilience—millions more that inspire.



Mason Gomes

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MASON
GOMES

This project is dedicated to the athletes who have faced adversity—those who have battled injuries, personal struggles, and setbacks but refused to give up. Their resilience and determination inspire us to push forward, no matter the obstacles. Through their journeys, they show that true greatness isn't just about winning, but about perseverance, strength, and the will to rise again.

These represent only a small fraction of the competitors around the world who have faced similar circumstances.

Table of Contents

5 **Pierre Gasly**

Formula One Driver

Growth, Hell, Excel

13 **Logan Thompson**

NHL Goaltender

The Doubted

21 **Isaiah Thomas**

NBA Point Guard

Do It For Her

29 **David Pastrňák**

NHL Right Wing

From Heartbreak To Hope

37 **Devin McCourty**

NFL Safety

Faith Amidst Tragedy

43 **Marcus Smart**

NBA Point Guard

The Relentless Hustle

49 **Michael Phelps**

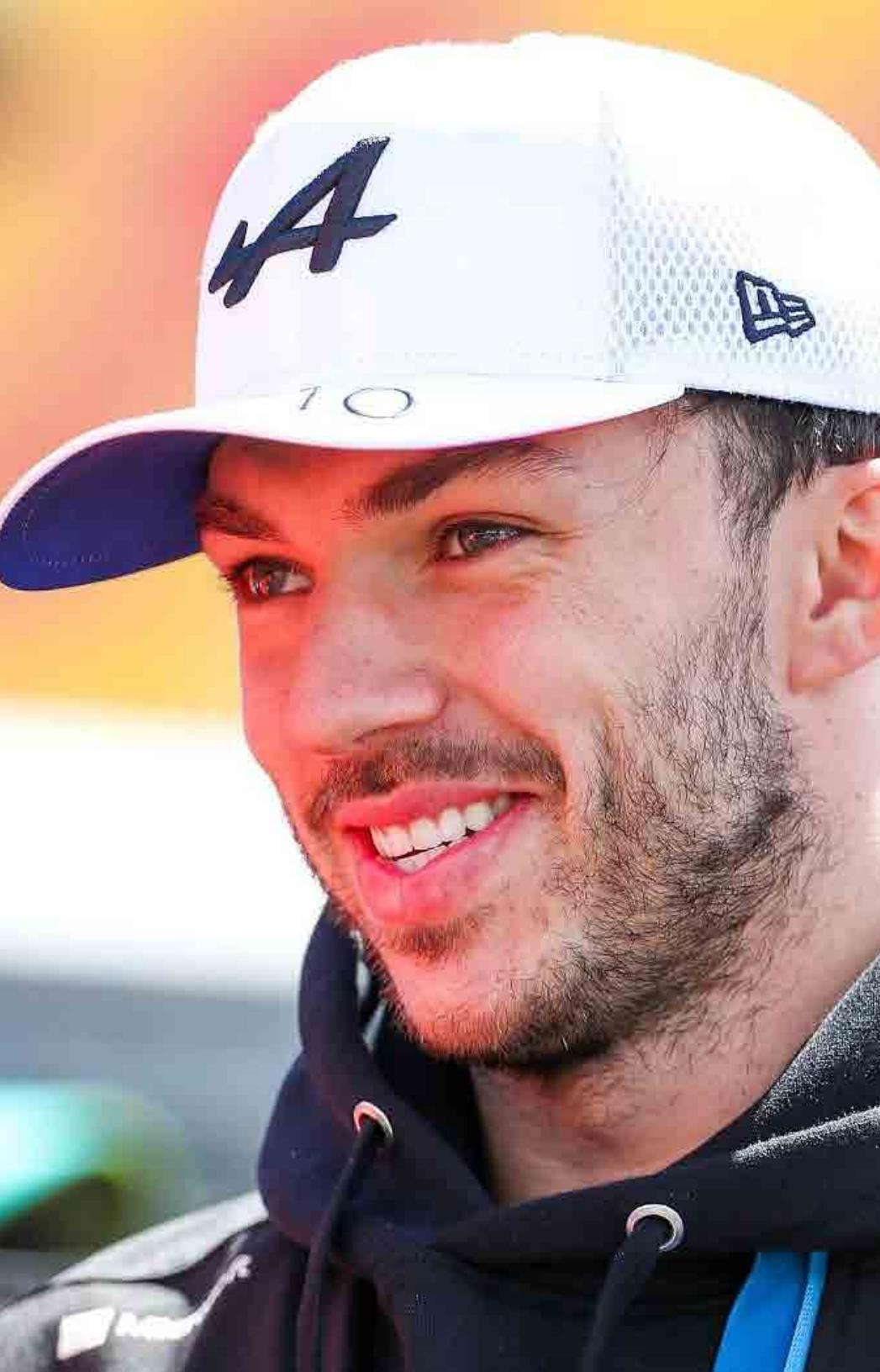
Olympic Swimmer

Success Has Downsides

55 **Romain Grosjean**

Formula One / Endurance / Indycar Driver

Through The Flames



Pierre Gasly

Formula One Driver

Currently racing for
BWT Alpine Formula One Team

Resilient

rə'zilēənt [adjective]

The capacity to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness

Growth, Hell, Excel

Early Life and Karting Beginnings

2006–2010

Born on February 7, 1996, in Normandy, France, Gasly began karting in 2006. Although he finished 15th in the French Minime Championship that year, and he improved to 4th in 2007. By 2009, he was competing internationally in the KF3 category and became runner-up in the 2010 CIK-FIA European Championship.



Single-Seater Racing and Red Bull Team

2011–2014

Gasly moved to single-seater racing, finishing 3rd in the French F4 Championship. He joined Formula Renault Eurocup with R-Ace GP in 2012, finishing 10th. His breakthrough came in 2013 when he won the championship with Tech 1 Racing. Red Bull Junior Team signed him for the 2014 season, marking his entry into the Formula One development program. Gasly raced in Formula Renault 3.5 and made a one-off appearance in GP2, gaining valuable experience.



Reserve Driver and GP2 Success

2015–2016

Gasly got his first taste of an F1 car, testing for both Toro Rosso and Red Bull Racing. He was named Red Bull's reserve driver in 2016 while also competing in GP2, where he became champion with Prema Powerteam. Gasly moved to Japanese Super Formula in 2017, securing two wins and narrowly missing the championship title due to the final race's cancellation. He made his F1 debut at the Malaysian Grand Prix, replacing Daniil Kvyat at Toro Rosso. Gasly continued with Toro Rosso for the remainder of the season, partnering with Brendon Hartley.

Full-Time F1 Driver with Toro Rosso

2018

Gasly became a full-time Formula 1 driver for Toro Rosso, pairing with Brendon Hartley. He impressed early with a 4th-place finish in Bahrain, but his season had ups and downs, including a crash with his teammate. Gasly recorded four more points finishes during the season, including seventh place at Monaco and sixth place at Hungary. He ended the year 15th in the drivers' championship with 29 points.

Promotion to Red Bull and Personal Tragedy

2019

Gasly was promoted to Red Bull Racing alongside Max Verstappen. Despite high expectations, he struggled to match Verstappen's pace and was demoted back to Toro Rosso after the summer break. That same weekend as the demotion, Gasly's best friend, Anthoine Hubert, tragically passed away during an F2 race at Spa-Francorchamps. Despite this emotional blow, Gasly delivered a stunning performance a couple months later at the Brazilian Grand Prix, finishing 2nd and securing his first F1 podium. He concluded the season 7th in the championship with 95 points.



Victory at Monza and AlphaTauri Era

2020

Toro Rosso rebranded to AlphaTauri in 2020. Gasly had a solid season, highlighted by a remarkable win at the Italian Grand Prix battling till the last lap against his former teammate Carlos Sainz Jr. His victory was symbolic, coming just over a year after Hubert's passing. Gasly ended the season 10th with 75 points.



Strong Performance and Podium Finish

2021

The 2021 season saw Gasly continue to perform strongly for AlphaTauri, showcasing his talent with impressive drives. He earned a podium in Azerbaijan after a chaotic race and consistently scored points throughout the year, proving his reliability. Finishing 9th in the championship with 110 points, one of his most consistent seasons. There was speculation about a possible return to Red Bull, as many believed he deserved another chance. However, Gasly will remain the lead driver for AlphaTauri.

Challenges and Alpine Interest

2022

Gasly faced challenges with AlphaTauri, as the car lacked pace. Despite this, he delivered consistent point-scoring finishes. Near the end of the season, Alpine showed interest in Gasly, as Red Bull was willing to release him. The Japanese Grand Prix was marked by controversy when Gasly avoided a collision with a recovery vehicle on track during a wet race. This incident was similar to Jules Bianchi, who tragically passed away after a crash at the same circuit in 2014. Bianchi had collided with a recovery vehicle during similar conditions and succumbed to his injuries nine months later. Gasly voiced strong criticism of race management, stating that such an event should never happen again. He finished the season 14th with 23 points.

Joining Alpine and Continued Resilience

2023

Gasly joined Alpine for the 2023 season, partnering with former karting rival Esteban Ocon in an all-French driver lineup. His debut race was a testament to his resilience, as he recovered from starting last to finish 9th, immediately showcasing his racecraft. Although Alpine struggled with performance and consistency throughout the season, Gasly still delivered strong drives, including a standout podium finish in the Netherlands, where he capitalized on changing conditions and strategy. Despite the team's challenges, he secured multiple points finishes and ended the season 11th in the championship with 62 points, proving his ability to maximize results.



Building Momentum and Strong Finish

2024

Gasly continued with Alpine and showed resilience despite early-season struggles. A standout moment came in Brazil, where he finished 3rd alongside teammate Ocon's 2nd-place finish—the best result for the team. Gasly concluded the season 7th in Abu Dhabi, helping Alpine secure 6th in the constructors' standings. He finished the season 9th in the drivers' championship with 72 points. Gasly is signed with Alpine until 2026 and looks forward to the new season with rookie teammate Jack Doohan.



Career Stats

Career F1 Wins



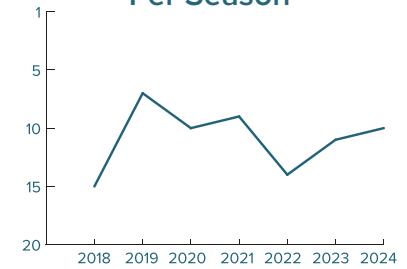
Career F1 Podiums



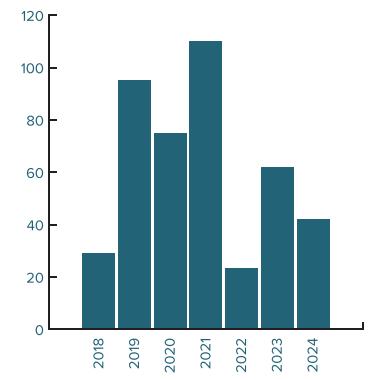
Average Qualifying Position

11.2

Drivers' Championship Per Season



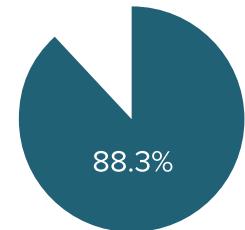
Points Per Season



Average Finishing Position

10.2

Percent Of Finished Grand Prix



Fastest Laps

3



Logan Thompson

NHL Goaltender

Currently playing for the
Washington Capitals

Tenacious

/tə-nāSHəs/ [adjective]

Someone who is persistent and determined, unwilling to give up easily

The Doubted

The Beginnings

1997–2015

Logan Thompson was born on February 25, 1997, in Calgary, Alberta. As a child, he showed a natural affinity for hockey, often choosing to play goalie while other kids preferred scoring goals. He played youth hockey in Calgary and quickly stood out for his competitiveness and lightning-fast reflexes.



WHL Tenure with the Brandon Wheat Kings

2014–2018

Thompson began his junior hockey career with the Brandon Wheat Kings in the Western Hockey League (WHL) during the 2014–15 season. Over four seasons, he played 122 regular-season games, achieving a .905 save percentage and a 3.36 goals-against average. Notably, he contributed to the Wheat Kings' WHL Championship victory in 2016. Despite his steady improvement, Thompson went undrafted, leaving his professional future uncertain.



Professional Beginnings in the ECHL

2019–2020

Post-university, Thompson signed with the Adirondack Thunder of the ECHL in March 2019, appearing in eight games. He then secured a professional tryout with the Binghamton Devils of the AHL, playing in one game. In May 2019, he signed a one-year contract with the Hershey Bears of the AHL but spent the 2019–20 season with their ECHL affiliate, the South Carolina Stingrays. There, he recorded a 23–8–1 record, a .929 save percentage, and a 2.25 goals-against average. Thompson's persistence began to pay off.



Transition to Canadian University Hockey

2018–2019

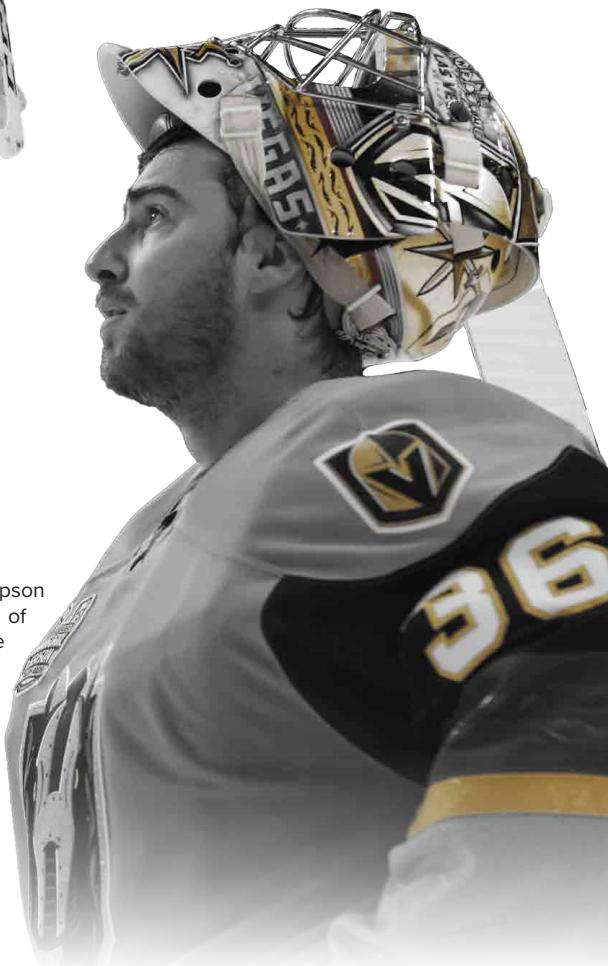
After his WHL tenure, Thompson joined the Brock Badgers in the Ontario University Athletics (OUA) for the 2018–19 season. He excelled with an 18–6–0 record, a .934 save percentage, and a 2.22 goals-against average. His outstanding performance earned him the U Sports Rookie of the Year and Goalie of the Year awards. Though his talent was evident, NHL teams still overlooked him, forcing Thompson to take an unconventional path to pro hockey.



Professional Breakthrough

2019–2020

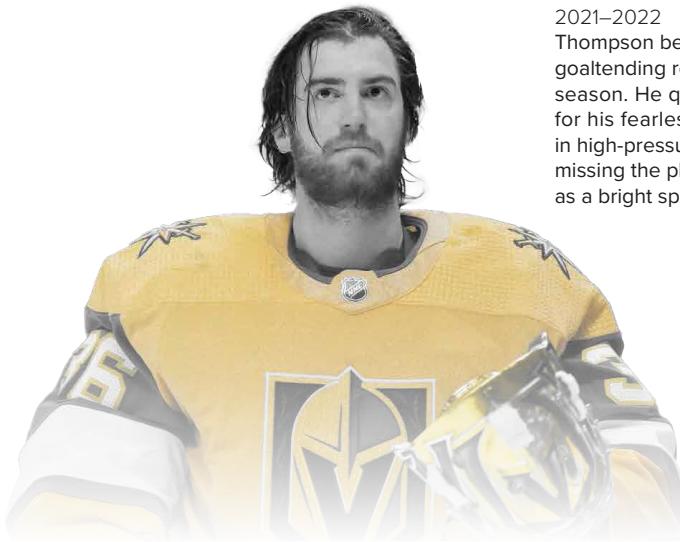
Thompson signed with the Vegas Golden Knights organization in 2020 after playing with the ECHL's South Carolina Stingrays. Despite starting in the lower leagues, his performance caught the attention of Vegas management. He was promoted to the American Hockey League (AHL), where he became a standout goaltender.



Dominance in the AHL

2020–2021

During the 2020–2021 season, Thompson was named the AHL's Goaltender of the Year after posting a remarkable save percentage and leading his team to several key victories. His performance earned him a call-up to the NHL, where he made his debut for the Vegas Golden Knights. Thompson's outstanding play also led to his selection for the AHL's All-Rookie and Pacific Division All-Star teams. He concluded the season with a stellar 1.96 goals-against average and a .943 save percentage, further cementing his status as a top goaltending prospect.



NHL Debut Season

2021–2022

Thompson became a regular part of Vegas' goaltending rotation during the 2021–2022 season. He quickly earned a reputation for his fearless play and calm demeanor in high-pressure situations. Despite Vegas missing the playoffs, Thompson emerged as a bright spot and a fan favorite.

Rising Star and Heartbreaking Injury

2022–2023

By the 2022–2023 season, Thompson was Vegas' starting goaltender. He was having a career-best season, including an all-star appearance, when, in March 2023, he suffered a severe lower-body injury that sidelined him for the remainder of the season. While Vegas went on to win the Stanley Cup, Thompson watched from the sidelines, grappling with a mix of pride and personal disappointment. Despite missing the on-ice celebration, he remained a supportive teammate and promised to return stronger.



A Rollercoaster Year

2023–2024

The 2023 season was filled with highs and lows for Logan Thompson. Returning from his devastating injury the previous year, he started strong, quickly regaining his form as a reliable netminder for the Vegas Golden Knights. Thompson played a pivotal role in keeping Vegas competitive throughout the season. Despite his efforts, the team faced inconsistency and narrowly missed the playoffs. Thompson's resilience and ability to bounce back from adversity cemented his status as one of the league's rising stars, setting the stage for future success.



The Trade to Washington

2024 Offseason

In a shocking turn of events during a fan signing session in Las Vegas, Thompson learned he had been traded to the Washington Capitals. The news was unexpected, but Thompson handled it with professionalism. "I've faced challenges before. This is just a new chapter," he said.



Fresh Start with the Washington Capitals

2024

Thompson made an immediate impact with the Capitals, solidifying their goaltending situation and helping the team return to playoff contention. His impressive performance earned him accolades and admiration from Washington fans, as well as a six year contract extension. As the 2024–2025 season unfolded, Thompson emerged as the second-best goaltender in the NHL. His save percentage, clutch performances, and ability to read plays made him a cornerstone of the Capitals' success. Analysts and fans marveled at how Thompson had not only rebounded from his setbacks but exceeded all expectations.



Career Stats

Career Stanley Cups



Career W / L / OTL

84 / 36 / 16

Career Save Percentage

.913%

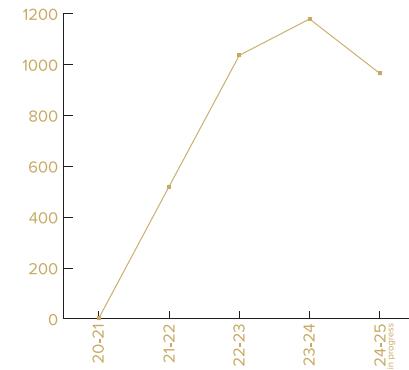
Career Shutouts

6

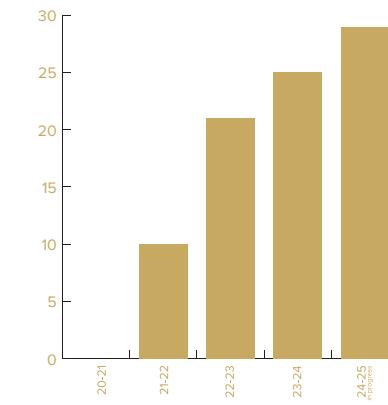
Career Goals Against Average

2.59

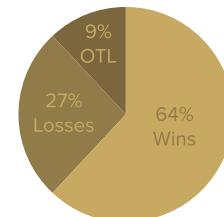
Saves Per Season



Wins Per Season



Career W / L / OTL





Isaiah Thomas

NBA Point Guard

Currently playing for the
Salt Lake City Stars

Heartfelt

/härt-felt/ [adjective]

Deeply sincere and full of genuine emotion, often driven by personal passion, love, or meaningful experiences

Do It For Her

Early Life and Love for Basketball

1989–2005

Isaiah Thomas was born on February 7, 1989, in Tacoma, Washington. Named after the legendary Detroit Pistons player (with a slight spelling variation), Isaiah was destined for basketball greatness. Despite being undersized, his speed, court vision, and relentless work ethic set him apart. By high school, Thomas had earned a reputation as one of the most dynamic point guards in the state.



College Success and NBA Draft Doubts

2006–2011

Thomas played for the University of Washington, where he became a star for the Huskies. Known for his clutch performances, including a game-winning shot in the 2011 Pac-12 Tournament, he proved that size was no obstacle to success. Despite his college accolades, Thomas faced skepticism from NBA scouts due to his height (5'9"). In the 2011 NBA Draft, he was selected 60th overall—the last pick—by the Sacramento Kings. Many believed his NBA career would be short-lived, but Thomas had other plans.



Early NBA Years in Sacramento

2011–2014

Thomas quickly outperformed expectations, becoming a starter for the Kings and averaging double-digit points in his rookie season. His fearless drives to the basket and playmaking ability earned him the nickname "The Pizza Guy" for always delivering on the court. By the 2013–2014 season, Thomas was averaging 20 points and 6 assists per game, cementing himself as one of the best young point guards in the league.



Journey to Boston

2014–2015

After a brief stint with the Phoenix Suns, Isaiah Thomas was traded to the Boston Celtics in 2015 as part of a midseason deal. He embraced the challenge of playing for one of the NBA's most storied franchises and quickly became a fan favorite. Despite coming off the bench initially, he proved himself as a dynamic scorer and fearless competitor. His clutch performances, unmatched heart, and leadership helped revitalize the team, turning the Celtics into a rising force in the Eastern Conference and setting the stage for his breakout seasons.

The Breakout Year

2016–2017

The 2016–2017 season was a career-defining year for Thomas, solidifying his status as one of the NBA's elite players. He earned his second All-Star appearance and led the Celtics to the top seed in the Eastern Conference with his electrifying performances. Averaging 28.9 points per game, he became one of the league's most explosive scorers and a true fourth-quarter specialist. His fearless drives, deep three-pointers, and ability to take over games made him a nightmare for defenders, elevating Boston's championship aspirations and cementing his legacy in Celtics history.



Tragedy and Heroics

April 2017

On April 15, 2017, just one day before the Celtics' first playoff game, tragedy struck. Thomas' younger sister, Chyna, was killed in a car accident in Washington State. Heartbroken and grieving, Thomas had the option to sit out the game, but he chose to play in her honor. On April 16, 2017, with tears in his eyes and "Chyna" written on his shoes, Thomas scored 33 points against the Chicago Bulls. His emotional performance inspired fans, teammates, and even opponents. It was a display of incredible courage and resilience.

"I wanted to play for her," Thomas said after the game, holding back tears. "She would've wanted me to."



The 53-Point Masterpiece

May 2017

Just weeks after his sister's tragic passing, Isaiah Thomas delivered one of the greatest playoff performances in NBA history, showcasing resilience and heart. On May 2, 2017, what would have been Chyna's 23rd birthday, Thomas erupted for 53 points in a thrilling overtime win against the Washington Wizards, leading the Boston Celtics to victory. Battling grief and a lingering hip injury, he displayed incredible determination, with his performance serving as a testament to his mental strength, love for the game, and unwavering dedication to his family.



Injury and Setbacks

2017–2019

Despite his heroic performances, Thomas' career took a devastating turn due to a lingering hip injury that severely impacted his explosiveness and mobility. He underwent surgery and was traded to the Cleveland Cavaliers in 2017 as part of the Kyrie Irving deal. Thomas struggled to regain his All-Star form, bouncing between teams, including the Los Angeles Lakers and Denver Nuggets, while facing limited playing time and ongoing rehabilitation challenges.

Fighting for a Comeback

2020–2022

Thomas faced significant challenges finding a permanent NBA home but never wavered in his determination to return. Despite being overlooked by many teams, he remained relentless in his pursuit of another opportunity. He played in the G League, showcasing his scoring ability, and earned multiple 10-day contracts with the New Orleans Pelicans, Los Angeles Lakers, and later the Charlotte Hornets. His unwavering love for the game and belief in his abilities kept him going, proving that his passion and perseverance were just as strong as ever.



A Veteran Leader

2022–Present

After a brief stint with the New Orleans Pelicans in April 2021, Isaiah Thomas continued to seek opportunities in the NBA. He signed 10-day contracts with the Los Angeles Lakers in December 2021 and the Dallas Mavericks later that month. In March 2022, Thomas joined the Charlotte Hornets on consecutive 10-day contracts before securing a deal for the remainder of the season. Despite his efforts, he did not play during the 2022–2023 season. In March 2024, Thomas signed with the Salt Lake City Stars of the G League, where he averaged 32.5 points over four games, leading to a 10-day contract with the Phoenix Suns. He extended his stay with the Suns through the end of the 2023–2024 season. As of January 2025, Thomas rejoined the Salt Lake City Stars, aiming for another NBA comeback.



Career Stats

Career Playoff Appearances

6

Average Points Per Game

17.5

Average Minutes Per Game

28.0

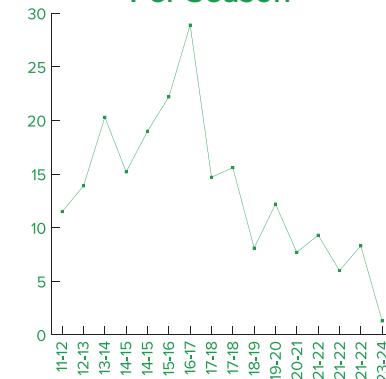
Field Goal Percentage

43.4%

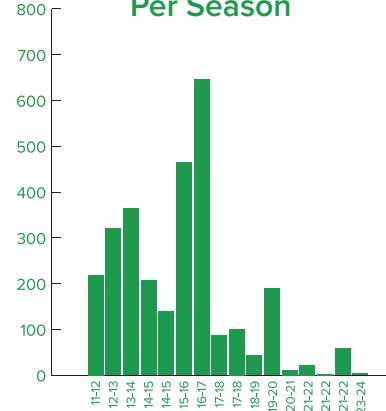
3-Point Percentage

36.3

Average Points Per Game Per Season



3pt Attempts Per Season



Career Win Percentage





David Pastrňák

NHL Right Wing

Currently playing for the
Boston Bruins

Unyielding

/ən-yēldiNG/ [adjective]

Not giving in or compromising
despite difficult circumstances

From Heartbreak To Hope

Early Life and Junior Success

1996–2014

David Pastrňák was born on May 25, 1996, in Havířov, Czech Republic. His father, Milan, was a key influence, introducing him to hockey at a young age. David quickly stood out as a natural talent, dazzling on the ice with his speed and scoring ability. In his teenage years, Pastrňák moved to Sweden to play for Södertälje SK, a move that showcased his drive to compete at a higher level. His success in Sweden caught the attention of NHL scouts, and in the 2014 NHL Draft, the Boston Bruins selected him 25th overall.



NHL Debut and Early Growth

2014–2016

Pastrňák made his NHL debut during the 2014–2015 season as one of the youngest players in the league. Despite being undersized at the time, his skill and creativity made him an instant fan favorite. He scored 27 points in 46 games in his rookie year, hinting at his potential as a future star.

In 2015–2016, Pastrňák continued to develop, though injuries limited his playing time. The Bruins saw flashes of brilliance as he showed his ability to dominate games with his offensive talent.



Breakout Season

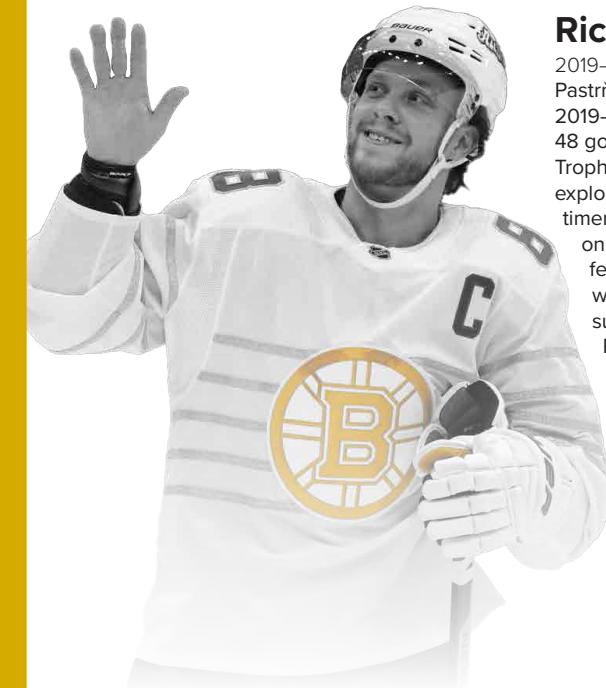
2016–2019

The 2016–2017 season marked Pastrňák's breakout year, as he scored 34 goals and recorded 70 points in 75 games, nearly doubling his previous season's totals. His chemistry with teammates Patrice Bergeron and Brad Marchand helped form one of the league's most dominant lines, driving the Bruins' offensive success and leading the team to a playoff berth.

Rising to NHL Stardom

2018–2019

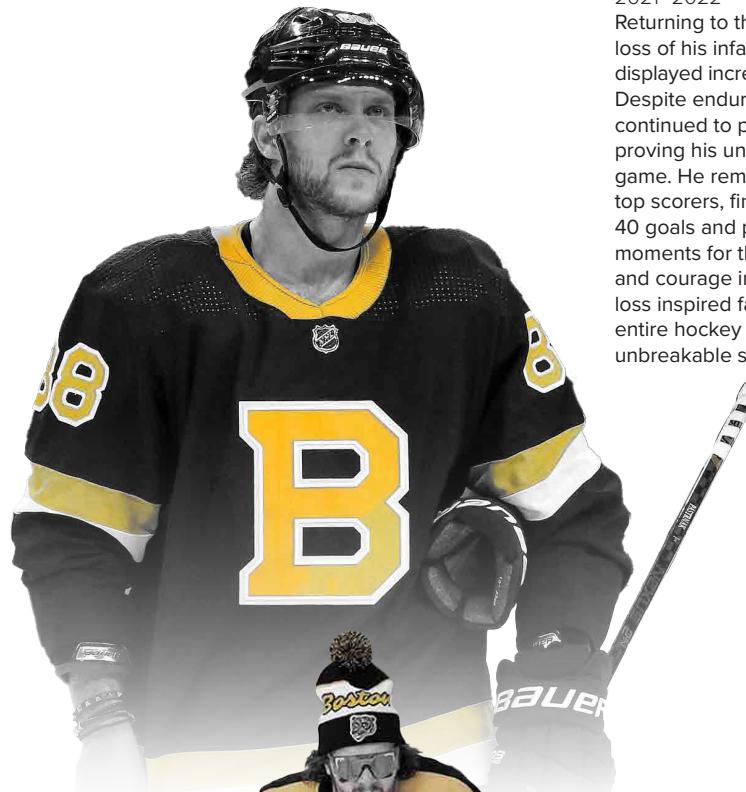
By the 2018–2019 season, David Pastrňák had firmly established himself as one of NHL's top scorers and most dynamic offensive talents. He earned his first All-Star Game selection, showcasing his elite goal-scoring ability and playmaking skills. As a key member of the Boston Bruins' top line alongside Patrice Bergeron and Brad Marchand, he had a crucial role in the team's deep playoff run. Pastrňák helped the Bruins reach the Stanley Cup Final with clutch performances, though they fell short in a heartbreakingly seven-game series against the St. Louis Blues.



The Rocket Richard Race

2019–2020

Pastrňák hit new heights during the 2019–2020 season, scoring a career-high 48 goals and sharing the Rocket Richard Trophy with Alexander Ovechkin. His explosive offensive play, deadly one-timer, and ability to score from anywhere on the ice made him one of the most feared forwards in the league. He was a driving force behind the Bruins' success, helping them secure the Presidents' Trophy as the NHL's top regular-season team. His clutch performances and skill set further cemented his status as one of the league's best goal scorers.



Tragic Loss

2021

In June 2021, Pastrňák and his partner, Rebecca, suffered an unimaginable tragedy with the loss of their infant son, Viggo Rohl Pastrňák, just six days after his birth. The devastating loss was a heartbreakingly tragic chapter in Pastrňák's life.

Despite the immense grief, Pastrňák found strength through hockey, his family, and the support of the Bruins organization. He later spoke about honoring his son's memory by continuing to play with love and passion for the game.



Resilience and Return to Form

2021–2022

Returning to the ice after the heartbreaking loss of his infant son, Viggo, Pastrňák displayed incredible resilience and strength. Despite enduring unimaginable grief, he continued to perform at an elite level, proving his unwavering dedication to the game. He remained one of the league's top scorers, finishing the season with 40 goals and providing countless clutch moments for the Bruins. His perseverance and courage in the face of personal loss inspired fans, teammates, and the entire hockey community, showing his unbreakable spirit both on and off the ice.

Leadership and Milestones

2022–2023

Pastrňák emerged as a leader for the Bruins, not just through his scoring but through his mentorship of younger players. He recorded 61 goals and 113 points, setting new personal and franchise records.

His dynamic play helped the Bruins set the NHL record for most points in a regular season, though their postseason run ended in disappointment. Nevertheless, Pastrňák's ability to consistently perform at an elite level further solidified his legacy in Boston.

Continued Excellence

2023–2024

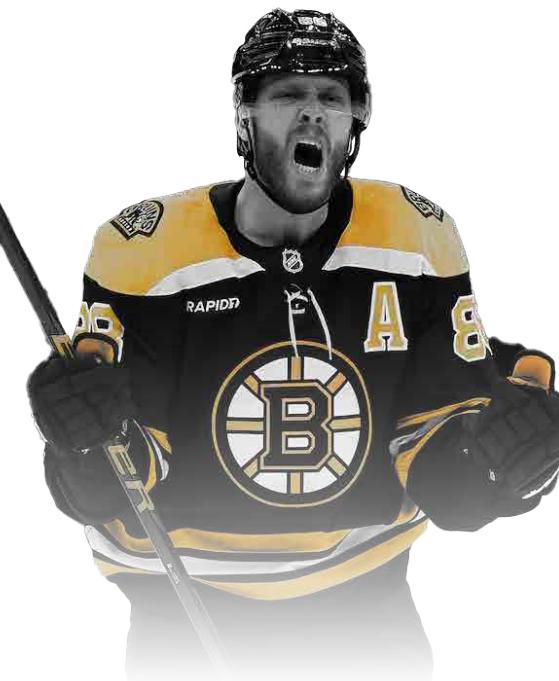
As the 2023–2024 season unfolded, Pastrňák continued to be a cornerstone of the Bruins' success, leading the team with his elite offensive production. He remained one of the league's most feared scorers, showcasing his trademark one-timer, dazzling puck skills, and dynamic playmaking ability. His leadership on and off the ice helped guide Boston through intense competition, while his consistency in clutch moments kept the Bruins among the NHL's top teams. Pastrňák's relentless drive and passion for the game further solidified his reputation as one of hockey's premier superstars.



The Unstoppable Star

2024–2025

Entering the 2024–2025 season, Pastrňák was widely regarded as one of the top players in the league, continuing to elevate his game. His determination, skill, and leadership on the ice reflected not only his immense talent but also his ability to overcome adversity. As a key figure in the Bruins' pursuit of another championship, he embraced the role of a veteran leader, mentoring younger players while maintaining his status as an elite goal scorer. His relentless work ethic and passion for the game ensured that he remained a driving force for Boston's success.



40

Career Stats

Career Stanley Cup Final Appearances

1

Career Goals

382

Career +/-

+138

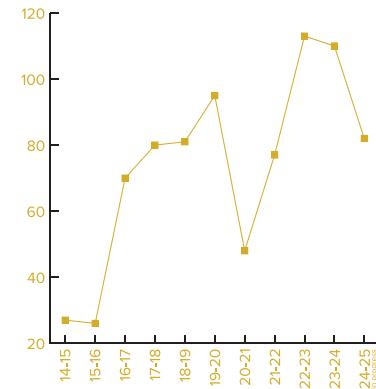
Rocket Richard Trophies



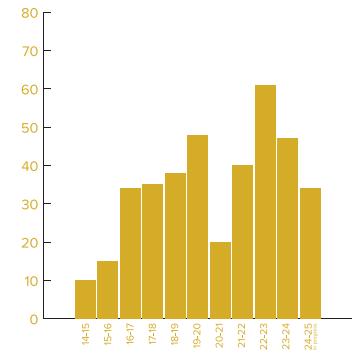
Average Time On Ice Per Game

18:19

Points Per Season



Goals Per Season



Career Win Percentage





Devin McCourty

NFL Safety

Retired

Perseverant

/pər-sə-vir-ənt/ [adjective]

Continuing to push forward and remain committed despite hardships or setbacks

Faith Amidst Tragedy

Early Life and High School Success

1987–2005

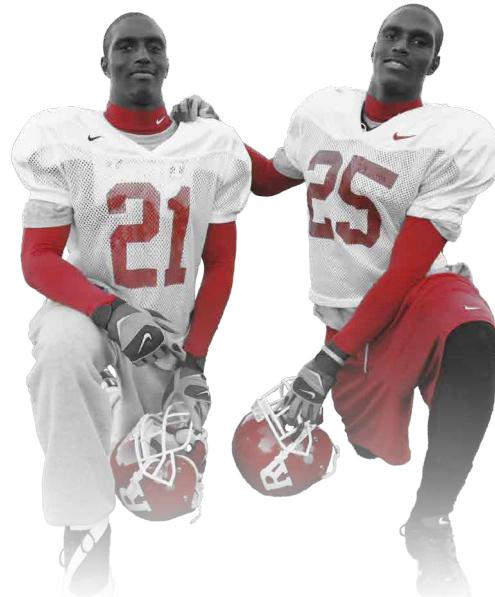
Devin McCourty was born on August 13, 1987, in Nyack, New York. Raised alongside his twin brother, Jason, Devin developed a passion for football at a young age. The twins attended Saint Joseph Regional High School in Montvale, New Jersey, where Devin excelled as a cornerback, showcasing exceptional athleticism and football intelligence.



College Career at Rutgers University

2005–2010

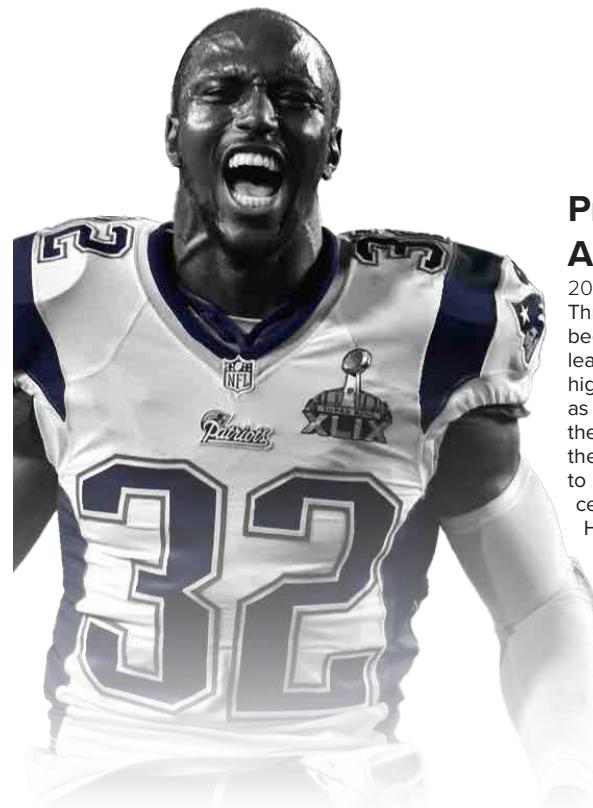
Devin continued his football journey at Rutgers University, playing for the Scarlet Knights and quickly making a name for himself. Over his collegiate career, he distinguished himself as a versatile defensive back and a special teams standout, displaying exceptional football IQ and athleticism. His ability to play both cornerback and safety made him a valuable asset to the team's defense. Beyond his on-field contributions, his leadership and work ethic earned him the respect of coaches and teammates alike. His strong performances and dedication set the stage for a promising professional career in the NFL.



Entering the NFL

2010

In the 2010 NFL Draft, the New England Patriots selected Devin McCourty in the first round with the 27th overall pick, recognizing his versatility and leadership. He made an immediate impact as a rookie, earning Pro Bowl honors and quickly establishing himself as a cornerstone of the Patriots' defense. His instincts, speed, and ability to read the game allowed him to excel at both cornerback and safety, making him a crucial piece of Bill Belichick's system. McCourty's strong work ethic and leadership set the foundation for a long and successful career in New England.



Professional Achievements

2010–2020

Throughout the decade, Devin McCourty became synonymous with excellence and leadership in the NFL. His consistency and high-level play earned him a reputation as one of the top defensive backs in the league. He played a pivotal role in the Patriots' secondary, contributing to multiple Super Bowl victories and cementing his place in franchise history.

His ability to make crucial plays in big moments, coupled with his leadership both on and off the field, earned him respect league-wide.

Personal Tragedy

May 2020

Devin and his wife, Michelle, faced an unimaginable loss. At 31 weeks into her pregnancy, Michelle delivered their stillborn daughter, Mia. Sharing their grief publicly, Michelle wrote, "We are so heartbroken. We are devastated. We are speechless. We are angry. We are sad. We are confused. We are numb."

Devin expressed his emotions, stating on Instagram, "I've seen and felt God in so many ways in this last week. 1st was holding my 3rd child Mia and telling her I love her and then telling her see you later... all in one day. 2nd has been leading such a strong and powerful woman (speaking about his wife)...her strength has brought me to tears but also inspired me to be what God has called me to be. 3rd Gods love on earth has been shown to us by unbelievers friends and family who have checked on us daily, and hourly. Thank you everyone for your love and prayers -Dmac"



Resilience and Advocacy

2020–Present

After the devastating loss of his daughter Mia in 2020, Devin McCourty used his grief into advocacy for stillbirth awareness, using his platform to support families facing similar tragedies. Inspired by his wife Michelle's strength, McCourty returned to the Patriots with renewed focus, becoming a symbol of resilience both on and off the field. His leadership continued to inspire teammates, and remained a key figure in the Patriots' defense. Through public speaking and community involvement, McCourty highlighted the importance of finding purpose in hardship, earning widespread respect as a beacon of hope.

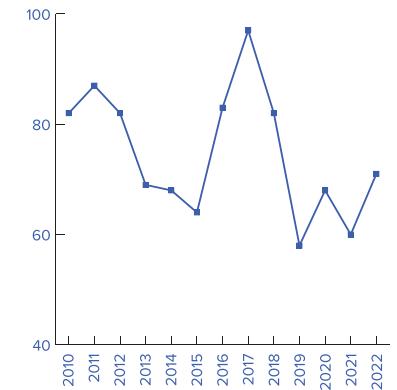


Career Stats

Super Bowls Won



Points Per Season



Passes Defended

110

Total Tackles

971

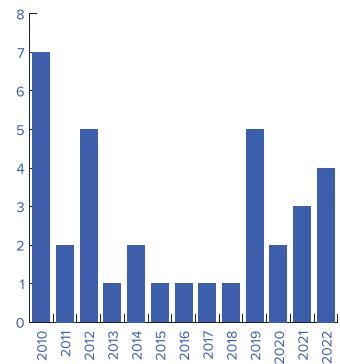
Total Interceptions

35

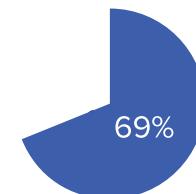
Forced Fumbles

12

Interceptions Per Season



Career Win Percentage





Marcus Smart

NBA Point Guard

Currently playing for the
Washington Wizards

Grounded

/ˈgraʊndəd/ [adjective]

Sensible, realistic, and emotionally stable; not affected by external influences

The Relentless Hustle

Early Life and High School Success

1994–2012

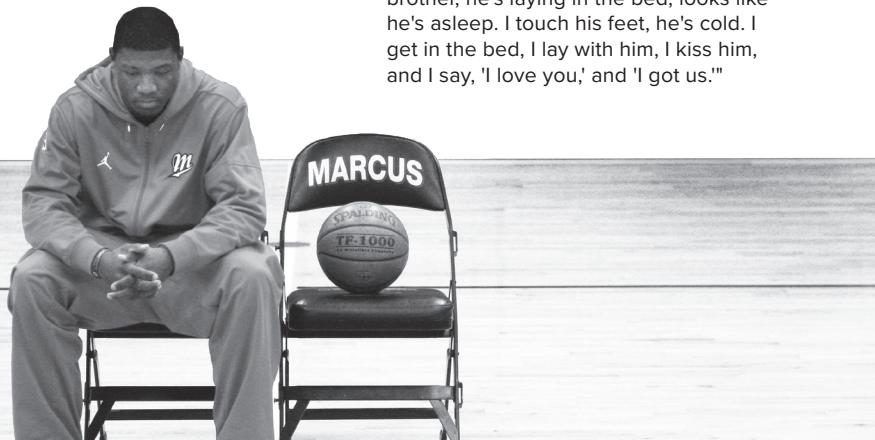
Marcus Smart was born on March 6, 1994, in Flower Mound, Texas. Growing up in a challenging environment, he found solace and purpose in basketball. At Edward S. Marcus High School, Smart showcased his talent, leading his team to two state championships and earning recognition as a McDonald's All-American. His tenacity on the court made him a standout player nationwide.



The Loss of His Brother Todd

2004

At the age of nine, Smart faced a profound personal tragedy when his oldest brother, Todd Westbrook, passed away from cancer. Reflecting on that moment, Smart shared, "I remember running, all my family's crying, and I go in, I touch my brother, he's laying in the bed, looks like he's asleep. I touch his feet, he's cold. I get in the bed, I lay with him, I kiss him, and I say, 'I love you,' and 'I got us.'"



College Stardom at Oklahoma State

2012–2014

Smart committed to Oklahoma State University, where he continued to impress. As a freshman, he averaged 15.4 points, 5.8 rebounds, and 4.2 assists per game, earning him the Big 12 Player of the Year award. Opting to stay for a second year, he further honed his skills, solidifying his status as a top NBA prospect.

Entering the NBA

2014

In the 2014 NBA Draft, the Boston Celtics selected Smart with the sixth overall pick. Known for his defensive prowess and leadership qualities, he quickly became an integral part of the team's core, contributing significantly on both ends of the floor.

His other brothers emphasized the importance of staying focused and making positive choices, understanding that their mother now relied on him. They told him, "Mama ain't got nobody no more."



Another Heartbreaking Loss

2018

Smart's mother, Camellia, was diagnosed with myelodysplastic syndrome, a form of cancer. Despite the emotional toll, Smart remained a pillar of strength for his family and continued to perform at a high level on the court. Her passing in September 2018 was another significant blow, but it further fueled his determination to honor his family's legacy.



Establishing Himself as a Leader

2019–Present

Over the subsequent seasons, Marcus Smart emerged as the heart and soul of the Celtics, and even the Memphis Grizzlies in 2023. His defensive tenacity, playmaking abilities, and leadership were instrumental in the team's successes, making him a key figure in their championship aspirations. Known for his ability to guard multiple positions and disrupt opposing offenses, Smart's impact went far beyond the box score. In 2022, he was recognized as the NBA Defensive Player of the Year, a testament to his relentless work ethic, high basketball IQ, and ability to change the course of games with his defense.

Career Stats

Career Playoff Appearances

9

Average Points Per Game

10.6

Minutes Per Game

29.6

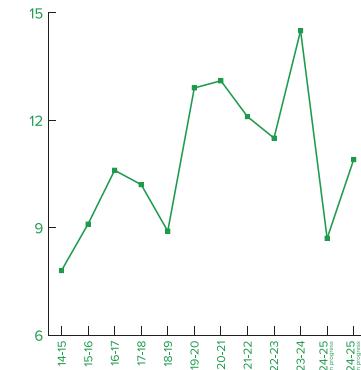
Field Goal Percentage

38.8%

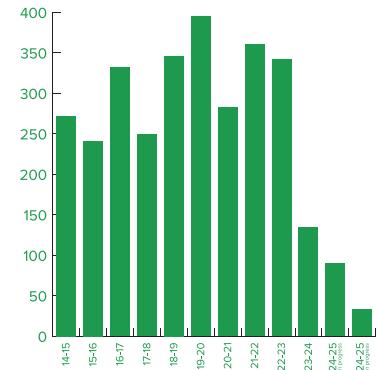
3-Point Percentage

32.3

Average Points Per Game Per Season



3pt Attempts Per Season



Career Win Percentage





Michael Phelps

Olympic Swimmer

Retired

Vulnerable

/vəl'nər(ə)bəl/ [adjective]

Willingness to expose emotions and psychological struggles, acknowledging imperfections and uncertainties

Success Has Downsides

Early Life and Swimming Beginnings

1985–2000

Michael Phelps was born on June 30, 1985, in Baltimore, Maryland. Growing up in a family of athletes, Phelps quickly showed an affinity for swimming. His mother, a former swimmer, and his father, a well-known figure in the Baltimore community, encouraged his interest in the sport from a young age. At seven years old, Phelps began competitive swimming, setting the stage for what would become one of the greatest swimming careers of all time. By the age of 15, Phelps had already qualified for the 2000 Sydney Olympics, though he did not get a medal. Phelps was determined to come back stronger.



Rising Star and Breakout Success

2001–2004

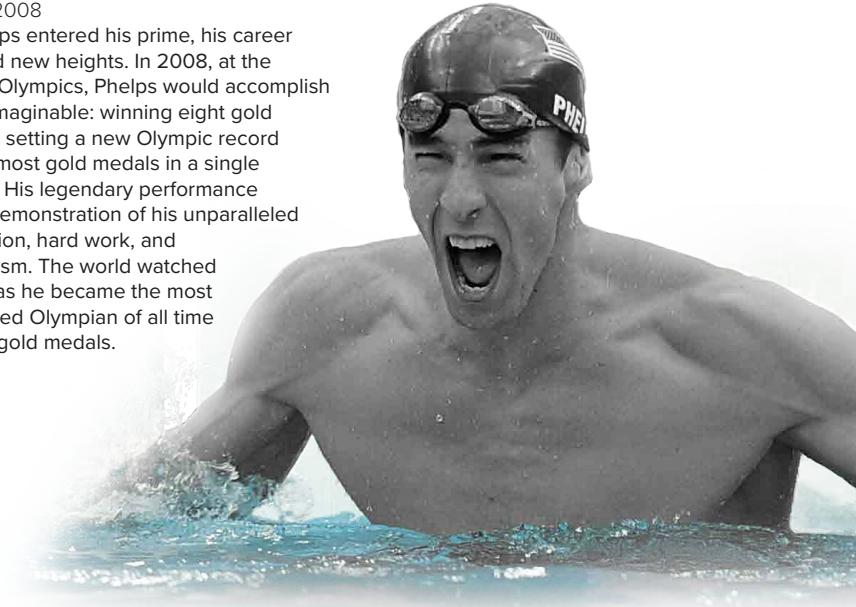
At 16, Phelps set his sights on the 2004 Athens Olympics. By then, his training under coach Bob Bowman had prepared him for greatness. At the age of 19, Phelps won six gold medals and two bronze at the 2004 Olympics, cementing his status as a rising star in the swimming world. His unmatched versatility across multiple disciplines made him a dominant force in the pool, and by the time he returned to the United States, everyone knew his name.



Dominating the World Stage

2005–2008

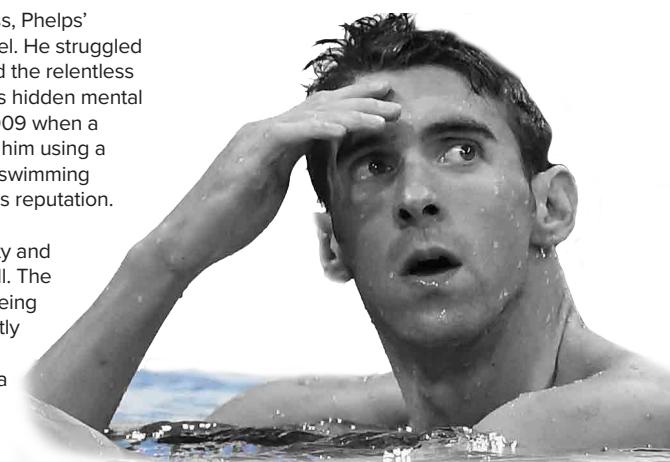
As Phelps entered his prime, his career reached new heights. In 2008, at the Beijing Olympics, Phelps would accomplish the unimaginable: winning eight gold medals, setting a new Olympic record for the most gold medals in a single Games. His legendary performance was a demonstration of his unparalleled dedication, hard work, and athleticism. The world watched in awe as he became the most decorated Olympian of all time with 14 gold medals.



Struggles and Mental Health Challenges

2009–2012

Despite his immense success, Phelps' personal life began to unravel. He struggled with anxiety, depression, and the relentless pressures of global fame. His hidden mental health battles surfaced in 2009 when a controversial photo showed him using a marijuana pipe, shaking the swimming community and damaging his reputation.



He later admitted that anxiety and depression took a severe toll. The overwhelming pressure of being the sport's face and constantly living up to expectations led him into deep self-doubt. In a 2016 interview, he revealed, "I didn't want to be alive. I didn't want to be here."

Olympic Redemption and Mental Health Advocacy

2012

Despite his mental health challenges, Phelps returned to the 2012 London Olympics, where he once again dominated the pool. He won four gold medals and two silver, further cementing his legacy as one of the greatest swimmers of all time. Behind his success, Phelps continued to battle with his mental health and began therapy. His personal struggles reached a tipping point, leading to a brief retirement in 2012.

Recovery and Triumphant Return

2014–2016

Phelps made a comeback to swimming. He returned with Coach Bowman, and was also addressing his mental health in a way he never had before. Phelps sought therapy, which helped him open up about his struggles. He began to talk publicly about mental health, using his platform to encourage others to seek help. During the 2016 Olympics, his performances in Rio were extraordinary: he won five gold medals and one silver medal. His success at the Rio Games not only cemented his place as the greatest Olympian of all time, but it also marked the culmination of his personal journey from struggle to triumph.

Retirement and Advocacy

2016–Present

After the 2016 Olympics, Phelps retired from competitive swimming but his journey wasn't over. He turned to advocating mental health and using his story to help others. In 2018, Phelps spoke openly about his battles with depression and anxiety, encouraging others in the sports world to prioritize their mental health. He also launched the Michael Phelps Foundation to promote water safety, health, and fitness.



Career Stats

Gold Medals



Silver Medals



Bronze Medals



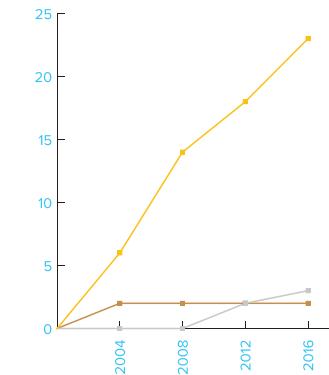
Olympic Games

5

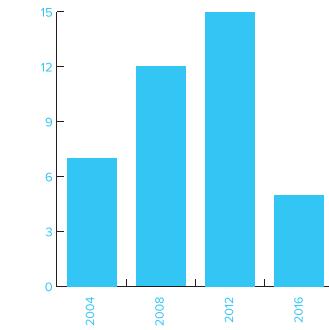
World Records Broken

39

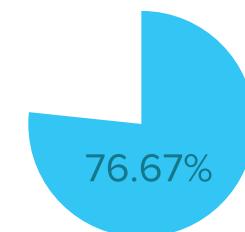
Career Medals



World Records Broken Per Year



Career Win Percentage





Romain Grosjean

Formula One / Indycar Driver

Currently racing for
Lamborghini Squadra Corse

Persistent

/pər-sis-tənt/ [adjective]

Continuing with unwavering determination, even when the road ahead is uncertain

Through The Flames

Early Life and Racing Beginnings

1986–2007

Romain Grosjean was born on April 17, 1986, in Geneva, Switzerland. Growing up in a family of racing enthusiasts, he quickly found his passion for motorsport. His early years were spent karting, where he displayed immense talent. At the age of 14, Romain moved up to single-seaters, racing in various European competitions. His rapid ascent through the ranks caught the attention of Formula 1 teams, setting him on a path toward the pinnacle of motorsport.



Climbing the Ladder in Formula 1 and GP2

2008–2011

Grosjean's first significant break came in 2008 when he joined the Renault Formula 1 team as a test driver. He made his official F1 race debut in 2009 with the same team, but it was in 2011 that he earned a full-time seat with Lotus, having gained considerable experience in the GP2 series. While his F1 career began with ups and downs, Romain's raw talent and determination were undeniable. His performances in lower formulae continued to build his reputation, and he quickly became known for his aggressive driving style and ability to get the best out of the car.



62



Formula 1 Career with Lotus and Haas

2012–2020

Over the years, Romain's F1 career saw him driving for the Lotus team (later Renault) and the Haas F1 Team. He achieved notable success, including multiple podium finishes and several memorable drives, establishing himself as a capable driver in a highly competitive field. However, Romain's career was also marked by struggles, particularly with his consistency. Despite this, his spirit remained unbroken, and his perseverance continued to fuel his ambition for success in F1.

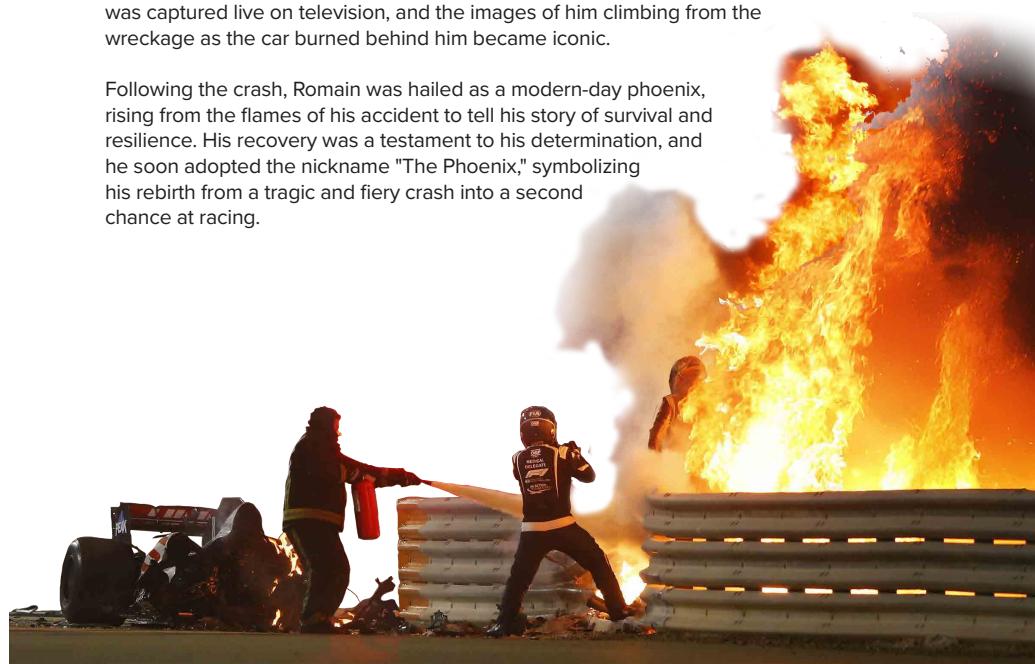
The Fireball Crash and "The Phoenix"

2020

The defining moment of Grosjean's career came at the 2020 Bahrain Grand Prix. In one of the most harrowing moments in modern motorsport history, Romain was involved in a fiery crash on the opening lap of the race. His car collided with the barriers at high speed, splitting in two and bursting into flames.

Incredibly, Romain managed to escape the wreckage after what seemed like an eternity trapped inside the burning car. Despite suffering burns to his hands and feet, Romain's survival was nothing short of miraculous. His rescue was captured live on television, and the images of him climbing from the wreckage as the car burned behind him became iconic.

Following the crash, Romain was hailed as a modern-day phoenix, rising from the flames of his accident to tell his story of survival and resilience. His recovery was a testament to his determination, and he soon adopted the nickname "The Phoenix," symbolizing his rebirth from a tragic and fiery crash into a second chance at racing.





Transition to IndyCar and Endurance Racing

2021

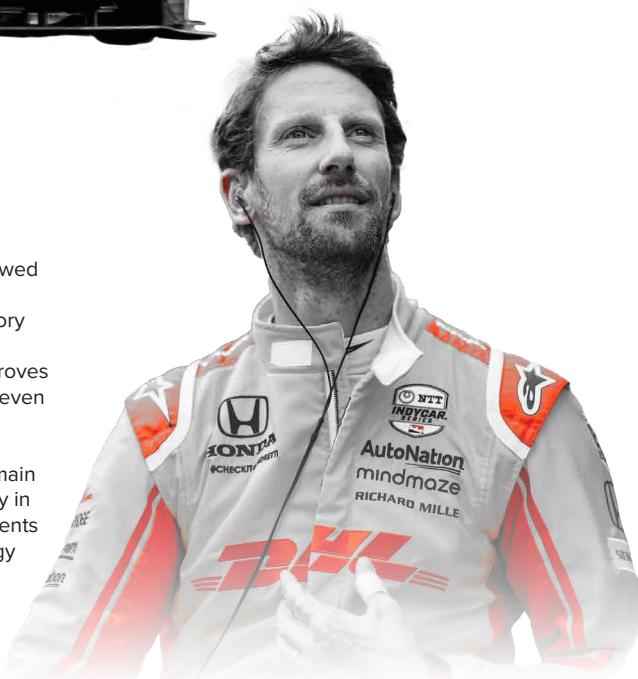
After his departure from Formula 1, Romain took a bold step into the world of IndyCar and endurance racing. He joined the IndyCar Series with Dale Coyne Racing, quickly adapting to the new discipline with strong performances and demonstrating his skills on American soil. Romain's experience in IndyCar allowed him to further prove his resilience and versatility as a driver. He also joined the FIA World Endurance Championship, taking part in several races with the prestigious team, Chip Ganassi Racing, and driving the iconic Ligier JS P217. His success in these series added to his reputation as a driver who could excel across different forms of motorsport, showcasing his adaptability and determination.

A New Chapter in Racing

2022–Present

Romain continues to race with a renewed sense of purpose, now competing in endurance racing and IndyCar. His story has become one of inspiration, as he continues to defy expectations and proves that resilience can carry you through even the most life-altering challenges.

Beyond his racing achievements, Romain has become an ambassador for safety in motorsport, advocating for improvements in driver protection and the technology that saved his life. His fiery crash, while tragic, served as a turning point for F1 and racing safety, and Romain's courage in the aftermath has earned him admiration from fans and fellow competitors alike.



Career Stats

Formula 1 Podiums



Indycar Podiums



Formula 1 Starts

179

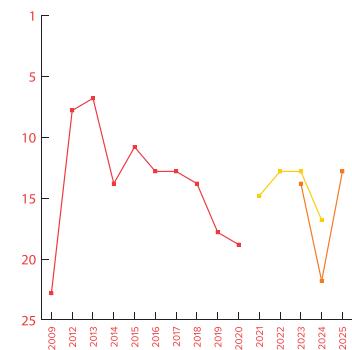
Indycar Starts

65

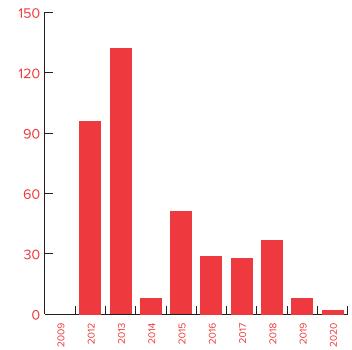
Endurance Starts

7

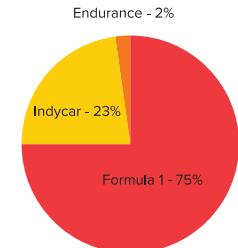
Drivers' Championship Per Motorsport Per Season



F1 Points Per Season



Career Motorsport Starts



More Stories of Perseverance

David Ortiz

Overcame MLB release, injuries, and a near-fatal 2019 shooting.

Simone Biles

Overcame childhood trauma and mental health struggles to become a gymnastics icon.

Max Verstappen

Overcame a strained relationship with his father while pursuing racing success.

A.J. Brown

Overcame depression and anxiety while becoming a top NFL receiver.

Serena Williams

Overcame injuries, setbacks, and discrimination to become a tennis legend.

Joe Andruzzi

Overcame cancer, had a successful NFL career, and founded a cancer charity.

Niki Lauda

Overcame a life-threatening crash, severe burns, and returned to racing.

Francis Ngannou

Overcame poverty, homelessness, and a difficult upbringing to become a UFC champion.

Jimmy Butler

Overcame a challenging childhood and personal struggles to become an NBA star.

Jorge Martin

Overcame injuries and personal challenges to become a top competitor.

Peyton Manning

Overcame multiple injuries and a neck surgery to become an NFL legend.

Rob Gronkowski

Overcame multiple injuries and surgeries to become an NFL star and champion.

Marc Marquez

Overcame multiple injuries and surgeries to return as a top competitor.

Tiger Woods

Overcame personal scandals, injuries, and surgeries to reclaim golf success.

Damar Hamlin

Overcame cardiac arrest on the field to return to the NFL.

...and to all the other athletes who inspire us with their stories.

Learn how athletes persevered through tough times, overcame injuries, personal struggles, and setbacks with resilience, proving that true greatness comes from never giving up.

MASON
GOMES

College of Visual Performing Arts
Graphic Design
Senior Capstone Project
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
North Dartmouth, Massachusetts
Spring 2025