

I already know that not creating my own ownership group to buy the Penguins will go down as a huge mistake. There are only so many hours in the day, and I didn't have the time, or the expertise in hockey to do it right. My mistake.

I'm still an NBA junkie first and foremost, but a long time NHL fan as well. When the Mavs were in Pittsburgh to play the Cavs in a preseason game, I snuck in to Mellon Arena and managed to catch the last period of the [Pens – Devils game](#). Hockey games are fun to go to. Watching the [NHL on HDNet](#) is great. But what I saw in just 1 period in Pittsburgh was the most exciting glimpse of NHL greatness I have ever seen.

In the 3rd period of a 3-2 game, Malkin took a bullet pass straight to the stick from Sid the Kid Crosby, did a cross over move with a puck, that if Allen Iverson would have done it with a basketball, would have broken several ankles, split two defenders, nothing but net.

I'm a Stars and Pens season ticket holder and have been going to hockey games since I was a kid. This was the first time I literally just stood, my jaw dropping in amazement and just shook my head. The most amazing goal I had ever seen. The entire arena stood and every one just looked at each other with that "Are you kidding me" look. I was with Al Whitley, the Mavs equipment manager who is from Vancouver and we just looked at each other and laughed. It seemed like a minute before the crowd actually cheered. That's how amazing it was.

The Pens took home a 4-2 W, which was cool. I stopped in the fan shop, picked up my Malkin Sweater for a not so cheap \$277 dollars and headed back to the hotel.

The next night was our Mavs Cavs game. I obviously was pumped to bring our Mavs back to my hometown. I had tons of friends there. People I hadn't seen since junior high were coming up and telling me stories. Obviously since it was an exhibition game, things were casual. I got to meet LeBron for the first time. It was just a good start to what would be a fun night.

During the 2nd half, I walked over and sat down with some of my high school buddies who had gotten tickets in the front row behind the Cavs bench. While I'm yucking it up with them, with LeBron, DJones, Scott Pollard and others giving me a hard time, the security guard points up to some seats at mid court and lets us know that Malkin is here at the game.

So with LeBron and the Cavs right there, the game going on, my attention turns to how I can run back to the locker room, get my Malkin jersey that I had bought the night before, and then get up to Malkin who barely speaks any English and doesn't know me from Adam, to sign my Malkin Jersey.

So the next time out, I run back to the locker room, get the jersey and a sharpie. I didn't want to create a distraction by shuffling in front of 3 rows of people to get to him from where we were, so I had to spend the next 5 minutes convincing Boafie, my high school buddy to take the trip for me.

After a few minutes of coaxing, Boafie set off on the mission to get an autograph from my new all time favorite NHL player. We obviously were following the track and when he got to Malkin, watching Boafie try to explain that the jersey was for me to a guy who doesn't speak English. Was worth the price of admission. Finally, he just put the jersey in his lap, pen in his hand and pointed. He got it signed.

The Mavs won on last second free throws. The highlight of the night. My autographed Malkin Jersey.

You may or may not be an NHL fan, but if you are a fan of greatness in the making, watch the Pens. Malkin, Sidney Crosby, Jordan Staal, Marc-Andre Fleury, the oldest of the 4 is about 20 years old. All have super star qualities. Crosby and Malkin? They will not only remind Pens and NHL fans of Mario and Jamir Jagr, but could have them wondering whether watching them play together is what watching Mario and Gretzky playing together would have been like.