

KINGS LEGEND LUC ROBITAILLE VOTED GREATEST NHLER TO EVER WEAR NO. 20

👤 Ryan Cowley 🕒 December 27, 2015

In 2006, he retired as the NHL's all-time leading scorer among left-wingers. In 2007, the Los Angeles Kings raised his number to the rafters of STAPLES Center. In 2009, he was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame. Then, this past February, his statue was unveiled outside of the aforementioned STAPLES Center – an honor bestowed upon to only a handful of professional athletes from any sport, much less hockey. It is as if the end of the road has been finally reached in terms of Luc Robitaille's personal achievements. But not so fast.

Last Monday, Sports Illustrated took all 463 NHLers to ever wear No. 20 and determine who was the best of them all. That privilege went to Mr. Robitaille.

From Sports Illustrated:

“Surprisingly little competition for such a commonly worn number, but Lucky Luc would hold his own in a more stellar bunch with his 668 career goals, 1,394 points and Hall of Fame enshrinement.”

The current President of Business Operations for the Kings, Robitaille spent 14 of his 19 NHL seasons with the organization spanning three different tours of duty. The Hall of Fame also had stops with the Pittsburgh Penguins, New York Rangers and Detroit Red Wings – the latter he won a Stanley Cup with in 2002.

But it was with the Kings where Robitaille enjoyed the most success and his playing – and post-playing – career, tallying a franchise-best 557 goals in addition to 597 assists.

Robitaille also holds impressive season records, such as most goals by a left-winger with 63 in 1992-93 and most points by a left-winger with 125 that same season, which also stands as an NHL record.

Robitaille also notched a franchise-best 45 goals as a rookie in 1986-87, which helped win him the Calder Trophy as the league's most outstanding freshman. That certainly isn't too bad for a player who was drafted in the ninth round.

Whether you are a fan of Sports Illustrated or not, few can argue that they nailed this one right on the head. While he did spend the majority of his career on the west coast, the dreaded east-coast bias wasn't

as prevalent when Robitaille stepped onto the ice.

Overcoming the odds of his low draft status and his modest size, Robitaille excelled not only individually but from a team standpoint, carrying the Kings through some of their toughest challenges like the 1992-93 campaign when Wayne Gretzky was lost to injury for much of the year.

Congratulations are in order for Mr. Robitaille who not only left his mark on the game of hockey but who has made his trademark No. 20 synonymous with ultimate success in the sport. Now, if we can only get the NHL to retire it league-wide like former teammate Wayne Gretzky's No. 99.

Hey, you can't blame a man for trying.

Source: makewayfortheKings.com