



Clint Malarchuk

Clint Malarchuk has a story that must be heard to be believed. Like many Canadian boys of his era, playing in the NHL was his goal. He was drafted in the 4th round of the 1981 NHL draft by the Quebec Nordiques where he spent 5 seasons and made the all-star team and finished 4th in Vezina Trophy voting in the 1985-86 season. In the summer of 1987, he was involved in a blockbuster trade with the Washington Capitals where he spent the next two seasons, again making the all-star team. After a trade to the Buffalo in 1988, he finished his playing career with the Sabres in 1992. In 338 career games, he finished with 141 wins, 130 losses and 45 ties along with a 3.47 goals against average, a very respectable number to this high scoring era.

After leaving the NHL, Malarchuk played for the San Diego Gulls and the Las Vegas Thunder of the IHL and then served as coach of the Idaho Steelheads as well as the Vegas team. Clint then went on to work with NHL goaltenders for the Florida Panthers, Columbus Blue Jackets, Atlanta Thrashers and Calgary Flames.

While hockey is central to Clint's story, there is so much more to it than saves and stats. On March 22, 1989 in a game against the St. Louis Blues, Malarchuk was tending goals for the Sabres when the skate of a falling Blues player cut Clint's neck; his jugular vein was sliced and he came close to bleeding out on the ice. The fast-thinking Sabres trainer saved his life by pressuring the 6 inch gash to suppress the bleeding.

Then, on January 26, 1992, Malarchuk was struggling with anxiety and combined alcohol and pills; his heart stopped and he was revived at the hospital. Finally, on October 7, 2008 he attempted suicide. He put a gun under his chin and pulled the trigger. He blew a hole through his chin, tongue and roof of his mouth with the bullet lodging just millimeters from his brain where it remains to this day. After checking into a rehab centre to battle alcoholism, he was diagnosed as a lifelong sufferer of high anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Clint has battled for his life and together with his wife Joanie, is winning the war. In 2014 he published his life story titled "The Crazy Game: How I Survived in The Crease and Beyond" to great acclaim. Today Malarchuk is a mental health advocate, ready to speak openly and frankly about the challenges of his own mental illness. His aim is to help others deal with a topic that has long had a stigma attached to it; he has come to know that mental illness is not a weakness, it is a chemical imbalance in the brain.



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