



Pat Stapleton

Pat, or Whitey, as he was known, began his NHL career for the Boston Bruins in 1961-62. After a season and a half in Boston, he was returned to the minors for almost 3 seasons only to make his return with the Chicago Blackhawks in 1965-66. It was here that Pat thrived until 1973.

Pat teamed with Bill White in Chicago to form one of the premier defense partnerships in the NHL. The Hawks won 4 consecutive West Division championships with Pat and Bill anchoring the blueline – Pat the offensive player and Bill the stay-at-home man. Pat topped out at 54 point in the 1966-67 season, a great offensive output for that era. He was a Second Team All Star three times in 1966, 1971 and 1972.

In 1972, Pat was chosen to play for Team Canada in the Summit Series versus the USSR. Pat played in 7 of those 8 games including the dramatic game eight. Pat was on the ice as the final buzzer went giving Canada the one-goal victory in a game of historical national importance. As Pat was in possession of the puck at the end of the game, he calmly scooped it up and has it amongst his hockey treasures today.

For the 1973-74 season, Pat signed with the Chicago Cougars of the WHA as player-coach. In his first season, he won the Dennis A. Murphy Trophy as the WHA's best defenseman and was a First Team All Star. He also purchased the team that year, along with some teammates, in order to keep the team afloat. After the following season, Pat joined the Indianapolis Racers for two seasons before spending one final season playing for the Cincinnati Stingers.

Pat will always be remembered by his teammates as a practical joker. His antics keep his teammates loose and laughing. Pat's son, Mike, also went on to enjoy an NHL career.