

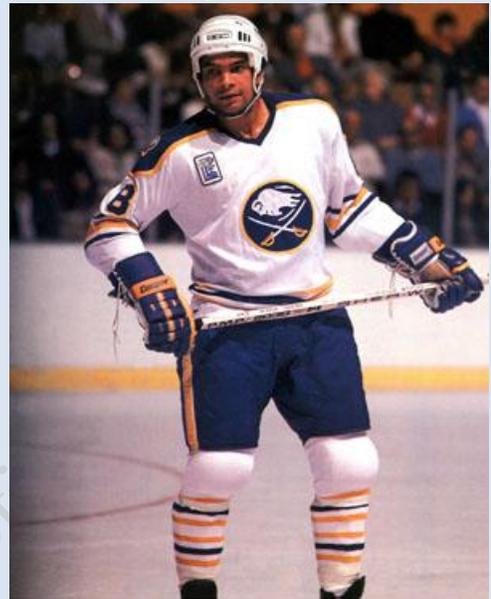


Tony McKegney

One of the game's most underrated natural goal scorers, Tony was blessed with soft hands and a deft touch around the net. His was a career defined by timely tallies and the unrelenting pursuit of excellence.

In his rookie season, the forward fired home eight goals and had 22 points in 52 games. While they weren't the numbers he had hoped for, McKegney's display showed more than just the occasional flash of brilliance, and in doing so, left no doubt as to what lay ahead.

For all of his abilities, McKegney's time in the NHL would be one of constant change. After a trade to the Nordiques in 1983, he went on to play with Minnesota, New York Rangers, St. Louis, Detroit, Quebec (for the second time) and Chicago. Although his address changed on several occasions, his ability to bulge the twine did not. In all, McKegney would produce eight 20-goal seasons in 912 career games, including a three-year span (1981-83) where he found the back of the net 96 times.



For most, playing on seven different clubs would wreak havoc on their confidence. But that's where McKegney was different. Rather than view it as a negative, he saw it as an opportunity, a chance to prove that he was a valuable contributor in both the offensive and defensive zones. The only stigma attached to an oft-traded player that rubbed McKegney the wrong way, is a term he can't help but chuckle at these days. "I remember someone referred to me as a journeyman and it threw me for a loop," he recalled. "I was an All-Star the year before and now I'm a journeyman? It was strange to be called that."

Tony scored over 300 career goals, including 40 in the 1987-88 season. His total of 78 points in the same season would remain the highest ever recorded by a Black player until Jarome Iginla's breakout 2001-2002 campaign.

McKegney may have been the fourth Black hockey player to enter the NHL, but contemporary Blacks playing in the league, or aspiring to make it, often acknowledge him as their foremost source of inspiration.

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