

# Smyth's departure doesn't compare to these guys'



GATEWAY  
SPORTS STAFF

Group  
Commentary

After two weeks of Ryan Smyth withdrawal, we here at the Gateway felt that it was important to remind Edmonton that it isn't the only city to ever lose a beloved athlete. In fact, many far more successful and famous stars have been shipped off for various reasons—most of them monetary in nature—much to the chagrin of fans. With this in mind, here are our picks for the most devastating loss of a franchise player.

## Nick Frost

Though the trade itself didn't come as a shock to many, given his well-publicized feud with former head coach Mario Tremblay, it was still a shock for fans of the Montréal Canadiens to have to watch their star goaltender, Patrick Roy, take to the ice as a member of the Colorado Avalanche.

On 2 December, 1995, Tremblay elected to embarrass Roy by subjecting him to the jeers of the furious Montréal faithful and leaving him in to allow nine goals on 26 shots in a game against the Detroit Red Wings. After he was finally pulled, Roy made his way over to former Habs president, Ronald Corey, and stated that, as long as Tremblay was coach, he would never play for Montréal again—although, I'm sure the word

tabernac was used in this conversation as well.

Four days after the incident—in what has since been dubbed “Le Trade” by Canadiens fans and Montréal media alike—Roy was traded, along with then-captain Mike Keane, to the Colorado Avalanche, in exchange for forwards Andrei Kovalenko and Martin Rucinsky, and goaltender Jocelyn Thibault.

Of course, to make matters even more embarrassing for the Habs, Roy went on to win the Stanley Cup later that season with the Avalanche, while Montréal bowed out after six games in their Eastern Conference quarter-final against the New York Rangers. I'd be willing to bet a poutine and a Molson Dry that Ronald Corey wishes he had gotten rid of Tremblay rather than Roy.

## Trevor Phillips

When the Boston Red Sox sold the greatest baseball player in the history of the world to the New York Yankees, it was reportedly so their owner could finance a Broadway musical. What it brought was the most infamous curse in all of professional sports—The Curse of the Bambino.

Before the 1920 deal that sent Babe Ruth to the Yankees, the Sultan of Swat was one of the most versatile men in the big leagues. Most people know The Babe as a hitter, and a great hitter he was—his career batting average, on base and slugging percentage are all among the highest all time at .342/.474/.690, and he sits third all-time with 714 home runs. For his five years with the Sox, however, Ruth was

a pitcher too, and a damn good one. Ruth won 20 games in a season twice and pitched the longest complete game in World Series history—14 innings in 1916—while helping Beantown to three championships in four years. In 1919, his last year in red socks, Ruth became the power hitter he would be remembered for and belted a team-record 29 homers.

Ultimately, Ruth would go on to make the Yankees the most powerful franchise in sports history. The Yankees have won 26 World Series since the deal, four with Ruth in the lineup while the Red Sox started an 86-year drought that brought misery to the city for the better part of a century.

## Paul Owen

When the Winnipeg Jets dealt Teemu Selanne, Marc Chouinard and a fourth-round pick to Anaheim for Chad Kilger, Oleg Tverdovsky and a third-rounder, not only did it rip the heart out of a city with piteously little to cheer for, it provided the death knell for the franchise.

Mired in severe financial trouble and attempting to offload salary for their new owners, the Jets decided to open up some money by sending their best and most exciting player—a guy who scored 76 goals only three seasons earlier—to the NHL's version of purgatory. Nevermind that Kilger and Tverdovsky combined were worth less than the Russian-English dictionary coach Terry Simpson used to berate Igor Ulanov and Sergei Bautin, dealing Selanne not only weakened the team, but lowered the value of the Jets' other two top scorers: Keith Tkachuk and

Alexei Zhamnov.

Less than month earlier, the NHL had approved the sale of the Jets to a pair of Phoenix businessmen, but no one in the city truly believed they'd move the White, Red and Blue south until the Selanne deal went down. Not only was the town hero ripped from their grasp, but two months later, the team was as well.

## Chris O'Leary

The list reads like a Mitch Albom book: painful to deal with and trying with everything it's got to make you cry. While we've all got a story on a professional athlete who was traded for a sack of potatoes, a punch to the nuts and the contract of Alonzo Mourning, the franchise player I want to talk about is memorable to only a few. The impact he had on the team he left, though, was catastrophic.

Mark Korthoski was the '65" do-it-all centre on my high school

basketball team. When he was in eleventh grade, he carried our team to the best record the school had seen in a decade. Though we didn't get anywhere in the playoffs, the talk of next year was serious and frequent. The problem was, though, that come September, Korthoski was nowhere to be found.

Our MVP decided that he needed to do what was best for him, which meant ditching the eleven scrubs he played alongside and transferring to a rival school. The real salt in the wound came when we had to play his team that year and he led them in soundly thumping us by 40 points.

The least he could have done was transfer to a different city.



MIKE KENDRICK



Melanie Mehes is pursuing a PhD in Biomolecular Sciences.

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