



Celebrating 25 Years of Success

PRESS RELEASE

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BC'S LEETCH NAMED HOCKEY EAST'S TOP ALL-TIME DEFENSIVE DEFENSEMAN

WAKEFIELD, Mass. - The Hockey East Association is pleased to announce that Boston College's Brian Leetch has been named Hockey East's Best Defensive Defenseman, as the league continues its 25th Anniversary celebration. Leetch was chosen in a vote comprised of Hockey East fans and members of the league's 25th Anniversary Committee.

"Brian is one of our most notable NHL alumni and he has always represented us well on and off the ice. He certainly one of the most talented players the conference has ever seen," said Hockey East Commissioner Joe Bertagna.

Leetch, a native of Cheshire, Conn., compiled a Hockey East Hat Trick of Awards during the 1986-87 season when he was received both Hockey East Player of the Year and Rookie of the Year honors and also was named the Most Valuable Player of the Hockey East Tournament. In his only season at the Heights, Leetch helped the Eagles to a record of 31-8-0. That season, Boston College earned the Hockey East regular season title with a record of 26-6-0 and topped Maine, 4-2, to win BC's first Hockey East Tournament title.

Leetch, who was named a First-Team All-American, posted nine goals and 38 assists for 47 points during his memorable season at Boston College. His 38 assists ranks second in Boston College history for assists by a freshman.

"During his one year at Boston College, Brian Leetch was the most talented and near-perfect athlete I have ever coached. He then became just as proficient and a true pleasure to watch as a professional for so many years. Equally important, Brian was one of the most humble and respected hockey players wherever and whenever he appeared, both on and off the ice. I'm indeed proud and honored to have had Brian as a player and a friend," said Len Ceglarski, former Boston College head coach (1972-92).

Leetch played 18 seasons in the NHL, including parts of 17 seasons as a member of the New York Rangers. He is one of only five NHL defensemen to score 100 points in a season with his career-high 102-point campaign in 1991-92 with the Rangers. Leetch posted 1,028 points in 1,205 career games in the NHL. He was a two-time Norris Trophy winner as the NHL's best defenseman (1992, 1997) and remains the only American-born winner of the Conn Smythe Trophy as Stanley Cup Playoff MVP for his brilliant performance during the Rangers' run to the 1994 Stanley Cup. He won the Calder Trophy as the NHL Rookie of the Year in 1989 and his 23 goals that season remain an NHL record for rookie defensemen.

Here is a list of the remaining players that finished in the Top Ten voting for Best Defensive Defenseman, in alphabetical order (because of a four-way tie for tenth place, there are 12 players listed): Peter Ahola (BU), Andrew Alberts (BC), Bob Beers (Maine), Greg Brown (BC), Hal Gill (PC), Chris Imes (Maine), Scott Lachance (BU), Dan McGillis (NU), Freddy Meyer (BU), Brooks Orpik (BC), Peter Taglianetti (PC) and Eric Weinrich (Maine).

Hockey East's Best Defensive Defenseman was chosen by a fan vote through the league's official website – HockeyEastOnline.com - and votes from Hockey East's 25th Anniversary Committee, which includes representatives from each Hockey East school.

Throughout the season, fans can cast their ballots for Hockey East's All-Time Team, Top 25 Forwards, and Top 25 Defenders. In addition to these major categories, the conference will unfold a number of other ballot questions at regular intervals throughout the year. The next short-term ballot will begin on January 1 and run through January 11. At that time, fans will be able to cast their votes for "Hockey East's Best Defensive Forward."

The league has already announced three award winners during the 25th anniversary celebration, including: Top Goalie (Chris Terreri- PC), Best Goal Scorer (Brian Gionta- BC) and Best Playmaker (Paul Kariya- Maine).

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