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## Serge Savard



He has been called "The Senator" for as long as most fans can remember. The originator of what Danny Gallivan loved to call a 'Spinarama,' Serge Savard was an integral part of one of the greatest eras in Montreal Canadiens' history; a part of a dynamic defensive troika that included Larry Robinson and Guy Lapointe that helped lead Montreal to eight championships in twelve years. Serge joined the Canadiens full-time in 1967-68. That spring, the Montreal Canadiens won the Stanley Cup in Serge's first NHL season. In his second NHL season, Savard was becoming the dominant team player we reflect back upon today. For a second straight season, Montreal not only finished first in the East, but proceeded to capture the Stanley Cup. Savard was outstanding, blocking shots, clearing the zone and collecting ten points in fourteen games. His four goals was one shy of an NHL record for playoff goals by a defenseman in one season and helped earn Serge the Conn Smythe Trophy as the most valuable playoff performer as his Canadiens swept the St. Louis Blues in four games. But injuries hampered Savard's

continued progress. In a March 1970 game against the Rangers, Serge crashed into a goal post and broke his leg in five places. Despite missing substantial portions of two seasons, Serge Savard was chosen to be a member of Team Canada in the 1972 Summit Series against the Soviets.

Serge played fourteen seasons as a Montreal Canadien, and was part of eight Stanley Cup championships during that time, including four consecutive between 1976 and 1979. Serge was Montreal's captain from 1979 to 1981. But in 1981, Savard decided that he had had enough. The team had been struggling and Savard, who had proven to be a savvy businessman through his years with Montreal, decided to pursue those interests outside of hockey.

The Winnipeg Jets plucked the star defenseman in the waiver draft that summer and attempted to convince Serge that he should reconsider his retirement and become a Jet in Winnipeg. With the leadership and influence of Savard patrolling the blueline, the Jets added 48 points to their regular season total of 1980-81 and finished in second place in the Norris Division in 1981-82. Serge spent two seasons with the Jets, guiding the team to the division semifinals both seasons. Then, with much fanfare, the Montreal Canadiens hired Savard as Managing Director on April 28, 1983. Serge retired as a player having played 1,040 regular season games in which he accumulated 106 goals and 333 assists for 439 points. Savard added 19 goals and 49 assists for 68 points in 130 playoff contests. Besides the Conn Smythe Trophy in 1969, Serge won the Masterton Trophy for perseverance and dedication in 1979.

As a senior executive with the Canadiens, Savard was easily as clever as he had been both on the ice and in his personal business career, which had amassed him a considerable personal fortune. In 1986 and 1993, the Canadiens won the Stanley Cup, while the team went to the finals in 1989. Savard then turned his attention away from hockey and continued developing his business ventures. He built a new career as a real estate developer, hotel owner and investor, and garnered considerable power in both the business and political arenas. His hockey legacy includes ten Stanley Cup rings (two in management and eight as a player) and representing Canada in the 1972 Summit Series and the 1976 Canada Cup. The piece de resistance for Serge Savard came with his 1986 Induction into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Canada:  
RR#5, 13332 Tenth Line,  
Georgetown, ON L7G4S8 Canada  
Phone: 954-330-6362 Fax: 905-873-8334

United States:  
49 N. Federal Hwy. #264  
Pompano Beach, FL 33062 U.S.A.  
Phone: 954-330-6362 Fax: 954-353-1962