

**Statement from Josh Gorges:**

I would like to take this time to announce my retirement from the game of hockey. I have taken my time and thought long and hard about this decision, but it is a decision that is best for me and my family at this time.

There are a lot of people I would like to thank that have helped me along the way and helped me get to where I am today.

First and foremost is my family. I want to thank my mom and dad for the massive sacrifice they made to make sure I always had everything I needed to play hockey, and to get me to all my practices and games growing up. I do not remember a practice or a game growing up that my dad was not at, so thank you! My mom, my sisters Steph, and Megan, as well as my brother Jonah, thanks for the support and always being there to help mould me into the man I am today!

There were a lot of coaches I had growing up, too many to name and I don't want to forget any of them, but thank you so much to all of you that helped me!

To Shane Pizzey, my strength coach, thank you for all the years of pushing me to my limits. You helped me get to the highest level, and even with all the battle wounds and surgeries you constantly evolved to know what was best for me and my body. Thank you for always being there over the years.

To the Kelowna Rockets, the Hamilton family, and Lorne Frey, thank you for taking a chance on a skinny little 16-year-old kid, and making his dreams of being able to play in his hometown come true! In four years I grew from a young kid who knew nothing to a young man ready to take on the world! To end my career in junior by winning a Memorial Cup championship in my home town will forever be one of the greatest highlights of my life!

To the San Jose Sharks, I would like to thank you for once again taking a chance on an undrafted kid and making his lifelong dream of playing in the NHL come true! I grew up a Chicago Blackhawks fan, and to be able to play my first career game in Chicago was a thrill I cannot put into words. Not many organizations would give a kid a chance like you guys did with me, so for that I thank you! Thank you for making my dreams come true to play in the National Hockey League.

To the Buffalo Sabres, I want to thank you for being a classy organization that treated me and my family with respect! I am honored to have been a part of your organization and it is great to see you guys taking steps forward.

Lastly to the Montreal Canadiens, I want to thank you for making eight years of my life arguably the greatest eight years of my hockey career! There were ups and downs, highs and lows, but I will always be grateful for my time as a Canadien! From my first game to my last I gave everything I had to help win a Stanley Cup. Even though we came close a couple of times, it will always be disappointing to me to not win a Cup as a member of the Montreal Canadiens because

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I still believe there would be no greater honor! Montreal is and will always be my second home!

I want to thank my agents Kevin Epp, and Jarrett Bousquet. You guys have stood by my side from the very beginning and always had my best interest in mind. Our relationship has grown over the years and I am thankful I had you guys represent me. I think of you guys as friends and not business partners, which is rare in our business, so thank you!

Lastly I want to thank my wife Maggie, and my two boys Noah and JJ! You guys mean everything to me, and through the darkest and hardest times you were always there to make me smile and help me remember it is just a game! I love you all so much and I am excited for the next chapter in my life being a husband and a father. Being able to watch you guys put on skates and play hockey with your mini sticks in the house gives me as much joy as playing the game myself.

I am very fortunate and grateful to have been able to play the incredible game of hockey at the highest level for as long as I did! The friendships I have made along the way because of hockey are the ones that will last forever. I still believe hockey is the greatest game on earth, and it has taught me how to be a man, how to be a teammate, how to push myself to places I never thought possible. It has set me up to be successful in my life after hockey, and for that I will forever be grateful!

Thank you all!

Josh Gorges