

MEAGHER, Rick.

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# Will not confirm

## Meagher says

By Brian O'Meara

The Intelligencer

Thirty-seven-year-old Belleville native Rick Meagher is calling it quits with the St. Louis Blues of the National Hockey League...or is he?

Reports out of St. Louis Friday had Meagher, a 12-year NHL veteran, announcing his retirement but the Belleville Minor Hockey Association graduate was evasive when contacted Friday at his home in Kirkwood, Missouri.

"Nothing is official yet," he said. "There has been no official announcement. There's a lot of things going on here and I can't say any more about them."

Meagher, who has spent the past six seasons with the Blues, suffered a serious knee injury



Rick Meagher

during the 1990 playoffs - an injury which kept him out of the St. Louis lineup until this past January.

He managed to play in 24 games this season and suited up in 1991 playoff action against Detroit Red Wings and Minnesota North Stars recently.

Meagher indicated that the Blues will offer him a contract for next season - "I have until September to tell them whether I'll be back or not," he said.

He admits that, in a discussion with a St. Louis reporter this week, he "overstepped myself" in talking about retirement.

While Meagher won't confirm his retirement, a betting man

# retirement

## announcement was premature

wouldn't give him great odds at playing next season.

He told The Intelligencer last summer prior to the third annual Rick Meagher Benefit Golf Tournament, that post-career possibilities existed with Anheuser-Busch, the giant beer company and owner of the Blues.

"I just can't say any more about what's going on," he added. "Not yet anyway."

The 37-year-old center is a graduate of Boston University - in his last season of NCAA hockey, he scored 80 points in just 34 games and joined the Montreal Canadiens organization as a free agent June 27, 1977.

He spent two seasons with the

Canadiens' farm team in Nova Scotia, scoring 81 points in 79 games in the 1978-79 season.

In 1979, he had a 'cup of coffee' with the Habs, playing in two games and eventually was dealt to Hartford Whalers in 1980 where his NHL career finally got untracked.

He stayed with Hartford for two and one-half seasons, scoring 43 points in 1981-82 - that would prove to be his best one-year point total.

He was dealt to New Jersey Devils in 1982 and spent two seasons in the Meadowlands before landing in St. Louis in August of 1985.

It was in St. Louis that Meagher found his niche as a defensive specialist, generally assigned to cover the opposition's top center.

To that end, Meagher was nominated twice for the Frank J. Selke Trophy as the NHL's best defensive forward, winning the award last June in an emotional ceremony in Toronto where Rick thanked his parents, Al and Doreen for their continued support throughout his years of hockey.

In 691 regular season NHL games, Meagher scored 144 goals and added 165 assists for a career total of 309 points. He spent 383 minutes in the penalty box.

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