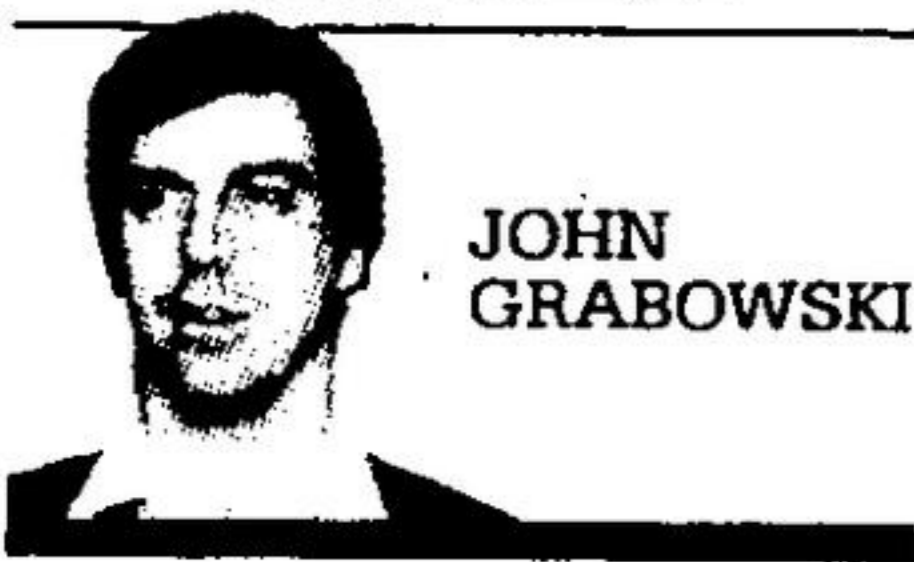


Who led the NHL during the decade of the 80s?

STAT SHEET



JOHN GRABOWSKI

When Wayne Gretzky of Los Angeles tallied the 1,851st point of his career early this season, he became the NHL's all-time scoring leader, surpassing the legendary Gordie Howe. Gretzky's first season in the league

was 1979-80. His remarkable average for the 10 NHL seasons that ended in the 1980s was 183.7 points per year.

That put Gretzky far ahead of Quebec's Peter Stastny, the runner-up for NHL scoring honors in the '80s. Stastny, who won the Calder Trophy as the league's top rookie (1980-81), totaled 986 points in the 1980s — 851 fewer than Gretzky.

Gretzky, of course, also set the pace in both goals and assists during the 1980s. "The Great One" powered 637 pucks into the net, nearly 200 more than runner-up Mike Bossy of the New York Islanders (451). And Gretzky assisted on 1,200 other goals, or 570 more than Stastny, who finished second

It's no surprise that Gretzky was also No. 1 in shorthanded goals, with more than twice as many (60 to 29) as the No. 2 men, Mark Messier and Jari Kurri, both his former teammates with the Edmonton Oilers.

What is surprising, perhaps, is that Gretzky is not in the top spot in the 1980s in power-play goals or game-winning scores.

Marcel Dionne (Los Angeles and New York Rangers) and Michel Goulet (Quebec Nordiques) were 1-2 in goals (150 and 143, respectively) when their teams had a man advantage. Gretzky was third (at 136). Mike Bossy edged Gretzky in game-winners, 68 to 66, during the '80s.

You can make a good case for any of several NHL players as the top goalie of the decade. Yet the numbers point to Pete Peeters (of Philadelphia, Boston and Washington).

Among goalies who appeared in at least 200 games, Peeters had the best goals-against average (3.06 per game), and the second-most shutouts (19).

Also, he was the only goalie to record two of the top 10 single-season NHL performances of the decade in goals allowed per game. His 1982-83 goals against average (GAA) of 2.36 was the top mark of the past 10 years; and his 2.73 average in 1979-80 was the ninth best.

Mike Liut (St. Louis, Hartford) edged Peeters in white-washings with 20. But Liut's GAA was only 3.53 — tied for 10th place on the decade list.

Bob Froese (Philadelphia, New York) was closest to Peeters' GAA average in the 1980s at 3.08. But Froese appeared in only 227 contests, compared to Peeters' 434.

Peeters won the Vezina Trophy, symbolic of goaltending supremacy, in 1983 while with the Bruins. Neither Liut nor Froese has won the award.

In the matter of penalty minutes, Dave "Tiger" Williams made his mark on the 1980s. Williams, who performed with Toronto, Vancouver, Hartford and Los Angeles, spent more than 41 hours in the penalty box (2,493 minutes) during the decade. Chris Nilan (Montreal, New York) was next in line with 2,447 minutes.

The Edmonton Oilers edged the Philadelphia Flyers by a narrow margin as the NHL's most successful regular-season team in the 1980s. Each club won 446 contests, but the Oilers had four fewer losses (and four more ties).

Edmonton tied the Islanders for the most Stanley Cup titles with four apiece.

The Oilers won in 1984, 1985, 1987 and 1988, while the New Yorkers won the NHL crown in each of the first four years of the decade.

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Pro basketball should follow NHL lead

By John Grabowski

OK, gang, quiz time. Who were the three top scorers last season in the National Basketball Association?

The top spot is easy — Chicago's Michael Jordan scored 2,633 points to lead the league with a 32.5 points per game average.

The next two names are a little tougher, but with some thought, many basketball fans will come up with the correct answers: Karl Malone of Utah (2,326, 29.1) and Dale Ellis of Seattle (2,253, 27.5).

Now suppose the NBA kept track of its leading scorers the same way that the National Hockey League does — with assists counting the same as goals.

Would Air Jordan still have taken the title?

The answer is yes.

Jordan passed off for 650 buckets last year, accounting for 1,300 points.

McNally posts tie and a loss

A tie and a loss were added to Georgetown's McNally Construction Minor Novice Rep team's record this past week.

Last Thursday night, Nov. 9, Brampton was in town for a good defensive battle.

After a scoreless first period, Brampton scored the only goal of the second to go ahead 1-0. Finally, at 2:45 of the third period, Derek Buckton, off a pass from Matthew Hotham, scored for Georgetown for a final score of 1-1.

Travelling to Milton on Sunday afternoon was less successful for the McNally Construction team.

In the first period, Milton scored a power play goal, the only goal of the period.

Georgetown's Danny Smith answered back in the second with a goal assisted by Trevor Cash and Mathew Walinga.

However, Milton scored again to go ahead by a goal.

With no scoring in the final period, Milton beat Georgetown's Minor Novices 2-1.

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Added to his own scoring total, the result is 3,933 combined points, or an average of 48.6 "points accounted for" per game.

Under this point system, second place last season went to Magic Johnson of the Los Angeles Lakers. Johnson's 988 assists would add 1,976 points to his total, giving him 3,706 points accounted for, or 48.1 per contest. Without the assists, Johnson's 1,730 points scored placed him 15th in the NBA.

Following Johnson, John Stockton, the playmaking guard of the Utah Jazz, was third in points accounted for.

Stockton passed off for an incredible 1,118 baskets last year — the third-highest season total in league history (trailing only his 1,128 in 1987-88, and Isiah Thomas's 1,123 in 1984-85).

With 1,400 points last season, Stockton tied for 44th place among NBA scorers. His assists, therefore, helped him jump 41 places in the rankings, giving him a total of 3,636 points accounted for (44.3 per game).

Of the 92 players who scored 1,000 or more points in 1988-89, the only one to make a bigger jump when assists were included was Sleepy Floyd of Houston.

Floyd finished with 1,162 points to put him in 67th place among scorers (14.2 per game). When his 709 assists are figured in, his total leaps to 2,580 points accounted for, or 31.5 per game. By more than doubling his scoring average, he finishes 15th, a gain of 52 spots in the listings.

The only other players to account for 3,000 or more points last year were: Kevin Johnson of Phoenix (4th place, 3,632, 44.8); Clyde Drexler of Portland (5th place, 3,023, 38.8); and Chris Mullin of Golden State (6th

place, 3,006, 36.7). Their actual scoring totals, respectively, of 1,650, 2,123, and 2,176 points placed them 21st, sixth, and fourth for the year.

Although Michael Jordan accounted for a league-leading total of 3,933 points on shots and assists last season, that was still quite a bit less than the NBA's all-time record.

The level of 4,000 points accounted for in a season has been surpassed by three players a total of eight times in the history of the NBA.

Oscar Robertson, considered by many to be the game's greatest all-around player, reached that plateau on five different occasions. Wilt "The Stilt" Chamberlain did so twice.

Robertson's high of 4,230 points accounted for occurred in 1961-62. He did not lead the league that year, however, as Chamberlain accounted for 4,413 points and a 55.2 per game average in taking the top spot. His total was based on an all-time record 4,029 points and 192 assists.

The single-season record, however, does not belong to either of these legends.

Tiny Archibald of the Kansas City-Omaha Kings was responsible for 4,539 points in the 1972-73 season. He became the first — and only — player

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in history to lead the NBA in both scoring and assists in the same year, with totals of 2,719 and 910, respectively.

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