

Aurora Tigers land former NHLer to coaching staff

The Aurora Tigers have brought in former NHL winger for the Boston Bruins and the Toronto Maple Leafs, Greg Johnston, as associate coach.

The club announced Johnston's arrival on August 19 via social media.

Team Governor Jim Thomson says this is a serious signing.

“Greg and I were teammates with the Toronto Marlboros in the OHL. He's a knowledgeable hockey man. The fact that he was available to add to what Jim Wells and Robert Powers are going to be doing, to me, it's a serious signing to get him,” Thomson explained.

Thomson adds bringing back General Manager Dermot Anderson to the club was important. He says Anderson is a very hard worker and has put together an exceptional team this offseason.

He admires Johnston for playing in the NHL and says he is a great mentor both on and off the ice.

Tigers head coach Jim Wells Jr. is also a big admirer for the former NHL player. He says he looks forward to his consistency.

“It's one thing me saying something, but he's actually been there. When he speaks, he's actually done it. He has the credibility.”

“Our personalities after meeting each other, we're similar but different. I think we really complement each other. It will be easier for us to give us a consistent message,” said Wells.

Johnston was drafted by the Boston Bruins 42nd overall in the 1983 NHL draft. As an 18-year-old, Johnston first appeared for the Bruins in the 83-84 season, scoring two goals in 15 games.

His most recognized season with the Bruins and of his NHL career came years later in the 1986-87 season. Johnston recorded 27 points in 76 games.

He spent many years flipping in and out of the AHL as a Bruin with the Maine Mariners.

In June 1990, Johnston was traded to the New York Rangers for Chris Nilan, and quickly flipped to the Toronto Maple Leafs for Tie Domi and Mark LaForest.

Johnston spent majority of the 90-91 season with the Newmarket Saints recording 82 points in 72 games. He made one appearance for the Maple Leafs that season.

In 1991-92 Johnston recorded another outstanding year this time with the St. John's Maple Leafs, with 73 points. Unfortunately, he was called up to the Maple Leafs roster for only three games, recording one assist.

From 1994 to 2002, Johnston travelled to Europe and played for the Iserlohn Roosters, Kassel Huskies, Berlin Capitals, MODO Hockey Ornskoldsvik and the Munich Barons.

The Barrie native has coaching experience in the OJHL with the Collingwood Colts. Under Dermot Anderson, Johnston was relieved of his duties in September 2019 and has reunited with Anderson here in Aurora.

By Robert Belardi