



COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS DEFENSEMAN ZACH WERENSKI NOMINATED FOR BILL MASTERTON MEMORIAL TROPHY**

***Werenski has posted career highs with 7-42-49 in 64 contests in 2023-24 after missing final 69 games of 2022-23 season due to shoulder injury***

**COLUMBUS, OHIO** – The Columbus chapter of the Professional Hockey Writers Association has nominated Blue Jackets defenseman Zach Werenski for the Bill Masterton Memorial Trophy, the club announced today. The award is given annually to the player who best exemplifies the qualities of perseverance, sportsmanship and dedication to hockey. It's the second time that Werenski is the team's nominee for the award as he was previously recognized in 2017-18.

Werenski, 26, missed the final 69 games of the 2022-23 season due to shoulder surgery and has returned to record seven goals and 42 assists for 49 points with 22 penalty minutes and 191 shots on goal, while averaging 24:28 of ice time in 64 contests this season. He leads the club in time on ice and ranks second in assists and points as well as ranks 11<sup>th</sup> among NHL blueliners in assists-per-game (.66) and 13<sup>th</sup> in points-per-game (.77). He has set single-season career highs in assists and points, registering the second-most assists (James Wisniewski, 44 in 2013-14) and third-most points (Seth Jones, 57 in 2017-18) by a defenseman in a season in franchise history.

The Grosse Pointe, Michigan native has totaled 86-208-294 with 115 penalty minutes and 1,277 shots on goal on 23:23 TOI in 480 career NHL appearances with the Blue Jackets since being selected in the first round, eighth overall, at the 2015 NHL Draft. He entered the 2023-24 season as the franchise's leader among blueliners in career goals and points and collected his 174<sup>th</sup> career assist vs. Pittsburgh on November 14 to surpass Seth Jones for the most career assists by a defenseman. The 6-1, 215-pound blueliner also recorded his 205<sup>th</sup> career assist at Vegas on March 23 to move past David Vyborny for sole possession of second place on the franchise's career assists list (Rick Nash, 258). A two-time NHL All-Star who made his NHL debut in 2016-17, Werenski is in his third campaign as an alternate captain and is the second-longest tenured Blue Jacket behind captain Boone Jenner.

The winner of the Masterton Trophy is selected by a poll of the 32 chapters of the PHWA at the conclusion of the regular season. The trophy was first presented by the NHL writers in 1968 in honor of the late Bill Masterton, a player for the Minnesota North Stars who exhibited the qualities for which the trophy embodies, and who died on Jan. 15, 1968. Last season's winner was Carey Price of the Montreal Canadiens. Previous Blue Jackets nominees for the award include: Kevin Dineen (2000-01 and 2001-02, finalist both years), Luke Richardson (2002-03), Manny Malhotra (2003-04), Duvie Westcott (2005-06), Fredrik Norrena (2006-07), Pascal Leclaire (2007-08), Raffi Torres (2008-09), Jared Boll (2009-10), Derek MacKenzie (2010-11), Curtis Sanford (2011-12), Vinny Prospal (2012-13), Nick Foligno (2013-14, 2014-15 and finalist in 2018-19), Fedor Tyutin (2015-16), Sergei Bobrovsky (2016-17), Werenski (2017-18 and 2023-24), Nathan Gerbe (2019-20), Zac Dalpe (2020-21), Justin Danforth (2021-22) and Boone Jenner (2022-23).

The Blue Jackets return to action on Saturday when they host the Philadelphia Flyers. Game time from Nationwide Arena is 7 p.m. ET. Live coverage on Bally Sports Ohio, Bally Sports + and the Bally Sports app begins at 6:30 p.m. ET. The game will also be heard on the Blue Jackets Radio Network, including 97.1 The Fan in Columbus, and online at [BlueJackets.com](http://BlueJackets.com).

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*Single game tickets for all home games played at Nationwide Arena during the 2023-24 season are on sale now. Information on all ticketing options, including 2024-25 season tickets, can be obtained by calling (614) 246-3350 or visiting [BlueJackets.com/tickets](https://www.bluejackets.com/tickets).*

**Contacts:**

Todd Sharrock, Vice President of Communications & Team Services – 614/246-4157 or [tsharrock@BlueJackets.com](mailto:tsharrock@BlueJackets.com)

Glenn Odebralski, Manager of Communications – 614/246-0288 or [godebralski@BlueJackets.com](mailto:godebralski@BlueJackets.com)

Madison White, Senior Communications Coordinator – 614/246-4237 or [mwhite@BlueJackets.com](mailto:mwhite@BlueJackets.com)