

## Jarome Iginla scores first goal as a Bruin

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MATTHEW J. LEE/GLOBE STAFF

Jarome Iginla celebrated his first goal as a Bruin with teammate Milan Lucic.

There are few surprises left for Jarome Iginla in the NHL. The Bruins' 36-year-old right wing has been in the league for 17 years and before Thursday night's game against the San Jose Sharks, he had scored 530 goals. But he had not scored as a Bruin.

In his first eight games with Boston, Iginla came up empty. The savvy veteran, playing alongside David Krejci and Milan Lucic, had plenty of chances and plenty of patience, but as a free agent this summer, he came to the Bruins to score goals and win games, not to be patient.

Thursday night, he finally got his first score, picking up a carom off the end boards and stuffing the puck between the pads of Sharks goalie Antti Niemi to give the Bruins a 1-0 lead at 18:48 of the second period. The goal was made possible when defenseman Dennis Seidenberg made a great save at the left point, corralling a pass from Iginla to keep the puck in the offensive zone, then flinging it to the net for Iginla to find.

"I was pretty excited to get my first goal as a Bruin," Iginla acknowledged. "It's been longer than I would have liked but it sure felt good to get it here and to get it at home, with it being a tight game."

When the puck hit the back of the net, Lucic pointed at Iginla to mark the moment.

"Obviously it was a good bounce," Iginla said, still grinning broadly long after the Bruins had pulled out a 2-1 victory on Krejci's last-second goal.

"It wasn't exactly how I envisioned it, but at this point you take anything."

Lucic has five goals and four assists this season, and Krejci (2-8-10) recorded his second goal with 0.8 seconds left in the game. Iginla wanted to get in on the scoring.

"They've been great," Iginla said of his linemates. "All the guys have been great. Playing with Looch and Krech — they're playing awesome this year. They just keep getting better and better and they're forces. I'm getting great chances with them and you just want to contribute and get rolling with them. To be honest, when I shot it, I wasn't sure if it was mine or not. It went off of something. I was pretty excited when they were pointing that I had gotten it and got the monkey off my back."

Against Buffalo the night before, Iginla said he thought he scored but it turned out Lucic tipped in the shot.

“But it was good, I got the feeling,” he said. “I remembered what it felt like to feel for a second like ‘Oh, it went in,’ but I knew it was a pretty soft shot and must’ve been deflected.”

Iginla, whose totals are 531 goals and 1,111 points, said he expects goals to come more easily now, perhaps in bunches.

So does Lucic. “He’s shown that once he gets hot, he gets hot,” Lucic said. “So hopefully, the floodgates open.”

“It’s deserving, he should have had one a long time ago the way he’s played,” said coach Claude Julien. “It’s nice to see him get rewarded for all the hard work he’s done since the start of the season.”

The goal gives Iginla four points in the last three games (1-4-5 overall), with the Devils coming to TD Garden Saturday.

“It’s funny, before you get your first, you always try not to think about it,” Iginla said. “And every year you want to get on the board, and then as it goes on, every shot you think — instead of just playing you’re thinking, ‘Maybe this could be the one. It could be here, it could be here.’ You try not to think of it that way but it just creeps into your mind. Sometimes you pull the trigger too quick or you aim it. The best thing is when it just kind of happens naturally, not when you’re thinking that way.”