

Incident Shocks Area St. Louis Blues Fans: Defenseman Bouwmeester Reported Doing Well and Recovering

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
February 12 2020 5:13 PM





GODFREY - The collapse and hospitalization of Blues star defenseman Jay Bouwmeester Tuesday night during a game at Anaheim, Calif., has riveted St. Louis hockey fans throughout the region.

Bouwmeester was reported today "doing well and recovering" in an Anaheim-area hospital after suffering what was described as a "cardiac episode" on the St. Louis bench during the team's contest against the Ducks in California.

At a press conference Wednesday afternoon, Blues General Manager Doug Armstrong spoke for the team about Bouwmeester.

"Jay Bouwmeester is doing very well at the UCI Irvine Medical Center in Anaheim," he said. "Jay is currently undergoing a battery of tests to determine the how and why of what happened last night but things are looking very positive."

Armstrong commended team athletic trainer Ray Barile, the Blues medical staff and the medical staff on-site at the Honda Center for the fast reaction to Bouwmeester's sudden



collapse.

"At 12:10 of the first period, Jay suffered a cardiac episode on the bench. Jay became unresponsive and the medical personnel used a defibrillator to revive him. Jay regained consciousness immediately and was transported directly to the UCI Irvine Medical Center."

The NHL game between the St. Louis Blues and Anaheim Ducks at Honda Center in Anaheim, Calif. was postponed in the first period after Bouwmeester collapsed.

Joe Smith of Godfrey has been a lifelong St. Louis Blues fans and has been with them through thick and thin. His initial reaction to what happened was that of shock, then devastation when Bouwmeester was rushed to the hospital.

"At first, I didn't know what had happened," Smith said. "They interviewed announcer Darren Pang and he looked like he was ready to cry, so I knew something drastic had happened and the game was canceled. I knew he must have gone into cardiac arrest. "He (Bouwmeester) has been a big part of their success for years; he is probably one of the players on the team the longest. You do feel like the players are a part of your family when you watch them so often for years. I had a hard time sleeping after this happened. I have to commend the NHL and those who revived him and got him to the hospital."

With 7:50 left in the period, and the score tied 1-1, Bouwmeester returned to the bench after completing his shift, and suddenly collapsed on the bench. Blues players Vince Dunn and captain Alex Pietrangelo immediately called for the team's training staff, who also received assistance from both the Ducks' training and medical staff. A portable defibrillator on the bench helped revive Bouwmeester, and he was stretchered off on an ambulance to a nearby hospital but was both conscious and alert as he was taken to the ambulance.

"Thankfully, with the quick response of our medical trainers, Anaheim medical trainers and their team physicians, they were able to stabilize Jay," said Blues general manager Armstrong in a statement." He was alert and moving all of his extremities as he was transported to UC-Irvine Medical Center."

The game was postponed shortly after, with a make-up date to be announced. The Blues are scheduled to play the Vegas Golden Knights in Las Vegas on Thursday.

Bouwmeester, 36, has played for the Blues for eight seasons, playing a key role in the team's first-ever Stanley Cup championship last season. He has a goal and eight assists for the Blues this season.

Blues captain Alex Pietrangelo also talked about the incident, and how the scene on the bench unfolded.

"It happened so fast; it felt like it was an eternity for us. We really just reacted as fast as we could. Everybody wanted to help and do something. But once we handed it over to Ray and the doctors and the EMT, they were impressive to see when they go into action what they were doing," Pietrangelo said.

"Hockey gets pushed aside really quickly when you're talking about something like this. You play against each other and battle against these guys, but we all have enough respect for each other," Pietrangelo said.

Pietrangelo acknowledged he went to see Jay and his father, Dan, who was on the team for the 'dad's trip', in the hospital Tuesday night. Pietrangelo said it was important for him and the rest of the team to see him, so "we facetedimed."

'Bo' had the opportunity to kind of see everybody after we facetedimed," Pietrangelo said. "Everybody sent him their wishes and I think it made everybody feel a lot better knowing he was in good hands."