# Investigation Continues into Ice Hockey Player's Tragic Death



### Ice Hockey Player's Death Leads to Prolonged Investigation

On October 28, 2023, Nottingham Panthers ice hockey player Adam Johnson, 29, sustained a fatal neck injury during a game against the Sheffield Steelers at Utilita Arena in Sheffield, witnessed by 8,000 fans. The incident occurred when Johnson's neck was struck by the skate of opponent Matt Petgrave. Despite immediate medical attention, Johnson was pronounced dead at the hospital.

The day after the incident, South Yorkshire Police arrested an unnamed man on suspicion of manslaughter. This individual has now been re-bailed for a third time, with his bail extended until June 26, 2024. Police have emphasized that the investigation remains complex, and they continue to keep Johnson's relatives in their thoughts.

The tragedy has deeply affected the ice hockey community. Johnson's teammate, Victor Bjorkung, who passed the puck to him moments before the accident, has spoken about experiencing relentless flashbacks and expressed disbelief over the "freak accident." Bjorkung has since left the Nottingham Panthers and returned to Sweden.

The incident has also raised concerns about player safety, specifically the use of neck guards in ice hockey. Following Johnson's death, the English Ice Hockey Association announced that neck guards will become mandatory in 2024, although the Elite Ice Hockey League, where the Panthers and Steelers play, will only "strongly encourage" their use.

An inquest into Johnson's death was initially opened but has been suspended pending the ongoing investigation. Coroner Tanyka Rawden issued a Prevention of Future Deaths Report, urging for mandatory neck guards to prevent similar tragedies.

Johnson had joined the Nottingham Panthers in August 2023 after playing in Germany and Sweden and previously participated in 13 games for the Pittsburgh Penguins in the NHL. His death has left a lasting impact, prompting tributes from fans and teammates, including a memorial game held in his honor.

South Yorkshire Police continue to investigate the circumstances surrounding Johnson's death, assuring that his loved ones remain at the forefront of their efforts.