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It's hard not to wince watching Bobby Orr's latest TV commercial, which highlights the many scars on his knees from the injuries that shortened his Hall of Fame hockey career.

"When I first saw it, I thought 'I'm not going to be a leg model,'" said Orr, the former Boston Bruins and Chicago Blackhawks superstar and member of the Hockey Hall of Fame. "I asked my wife what she thought and she was choked up.

"There were some tough times, but there were good times, too."

The ad for MasterCard features an animated scar working its way around one of Orr's knees that acts as a timeline listing the many achievements of his career, ending of course with the word "priceless."

It is to begin airing later this month on television and on the scoreboard screens in Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa and Vancouver.

Orr had surgery on his knees more than a dozen times in his career, which began in 1967 in Boston and ended with 26 games played over three seasons with Chicago in the late 1970s.

He was considered the greatest player of his era and a prototype of the rushing defenseman that is now common in the NHL.

Orr is the only defenseman to win a scoring title, in 1969-70 and 1974-75, was league MVP three times and won the Norris Trophy as the NHL's top defenseman eight consecutive years from 1968 to 1975.

Many wonder how much more he may have accomplished had his knees held up, or if modern arthroscopic surgery had been available in his day. Back then, when a doctor wanted to know what was wrong with a knee, he had to cut into it to take a look. Now the looking and the surgery are done with a small incision that barely leaves a mark.

"I don't think there's any question about that," he said. "I had scopes later, when they were cleaning it out, and it was a lot easier."

But Orr, 60, isn't feeling sorry for himself.

"It was the way I played," he said. "I liked to carry the puck and if you do that, you're going to get hit.

"That's the way it goes. I wish I'd played longer, but I don't regret it. I had a style -- when you play, you play all-out. I tried to do things. I didn't want to sit back. I wanted to be involved."

Orr is now a player agent, with a pool of clients that includes the Staal brothers and Ottawa star Jason Spezza, and is still very much in touch with the NHL.

He likes the fast-paced modern game, but is less thrilled with the increased importance of power plays and some aspects of the crackdown on obstruction fouls.

"You can't hold a guy up, you can't protect your partner," he said. "I agree that if there's a one-on-one and one guy is faster and other guy is hooking and holding him, that's a penalty, but some nights ...

"It's a tough game. You've got to let them battle."

Like many, Orr is picking the Detroit Red Wings and Pittsburgh Penguins to meet in the Stanley Cup finals for a second consecutive year, but said several teams have a chance and that goaltending and injuries will do much to determine which clubs make it.

Orr's No. 4 has been retired by the Bruins. The No. 2 he wore in junior with OHL Oshawa will be retired Nov. 27.

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