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## Orr's rookie jersey fetches \$191,000

Randy Boswell, Canwest News Service

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Canwest News Service - Bobby Orr's iconic No. 4 Boston Bruins jersey, worn by the hockey legend during his 1966-67 NHL rookie season, sold at a U.S. auction Friday for about \$191,000 - well beyond the predicted price of \$100,000.

Bidding by phone and Internet was feverish before Texas-based Heritage Auction Galleries accepted a top offer of \$160,000 - plus a standard buyers' surcharge totalling about \$31,000 - for an artifact associated with one of the sport's all-time greats.

It wasn't immediately known who bought the sweater, which exhibits stitched-up tears and other evidence of Orr's on-ice battles more than 40 years ago.



A Boston Bruins jersey, worn by Bobby Orr during his 1966-67 rookie season, is expected to sell for at least \$100,000 in an auction later this month.

But it is known that the sale has produced a tidy sum for the item's consignor, Kingston, Ont., resident John Rows.

Rows was given the sweater in the late 1960s by his uncle, Garry Young, a Bruins scout at the time.

"He had it in a box for years and years," Rows' father, Orville, told Canwest News Service earlier this month.

Heritage had stated ahead of the sale that, "Holy Grail" terminology is too often used in the hyperbolic world of auction catalogue copywriting, but we make no excuses for its utilization here."

Orr, a junior hockey phenomenon from Parry Sound, Ont., won the Calder Trophy in 1967 as the NHL's top rookie. He went on to an unprecedented string of eight Norris Trophy titles as the league's best defenceman and even won a pair of Art Ross trophies as the NHL's top scorer - a feat unmatched by any other blueliner in the league's history.

He also won three Hart trophies as the league's

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most valuable player and twice led the Bruins to the Stanley Cup, capturing the Conn Smythe Trophy in both of those championship runs - in

1970 and 1972 - as the playoff MVP.

The auction house claimed to have used vintage photographs and an analysis of the jersey's manufacture to confirm its identity as one of three used by Orr in his rookie NHL season.

"Pegging this extraordinary garment to Orr's rookie season is a simple accomplishment, even without the ironclad Garry Young provenance," Heritage stated. "Orr wore the round-neck style only during his freshman NHL season, as the Bruins would adopt the tie-down collar style for the 1967-68 campaign, which they would continue to feature for the remainder of Orr's tenure."

The auction house further noted that "enormous game wear" is evident all over the jersey, "with extensive team repairs covering wide expanses upon the sleeves and smaller wounds inflicted to the torso. Over a dozen individual holes are patched, several quite sizable."

Orr's No. 4 will never again be worn by a Bruin. The franchise retired the number in January of 1979, just months after Orr's damaged knees made further play impossible.

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