

National Hockey League

Steve Smith



Twenty Plus Years An NHLer

James Stephen Smith was born in Glasgow, Scotland, but **immigrated to Cobourg as a young lad**. He was tall for his age, even gangly, and coaches who saw him on the ice were unimpressed. But as he grew things changed.



At seventeen he stood 6'3", weighed 180 lbs. and caught the attention of the Junior "A" *London Knights*. Working his way up the ranks of the Ontario Hockey League and the American Hockey League, Steve arrived with the National Hockey League *Edmonton Oilers* for two games in 1984. He stayed on with the *Oilers*, playing in 55 games the following year.

Steve went on to become one of the better NHL defencemen of his era. Blessed with balance and agility on skates and **a ridiculously long reach**, he was tough to beat one-on-one. Over sixteen seasons with the *Oilers*, the *Chicago Blackhawks* and the *Calgary Flames*, **he played in 804 games, scoring 72 goals, 303 assists, and earning 2,139 penalty minutes** while winning two Stanley Cups and a Canada Cup.

While Steve's big body was sometimes an asset, it also gave him trouble. He constantly battled **a bad back and twice broke his leg**. One other thing he has had to battle is the memory of the game winning goal he accidentally **scored into his own net**, giving the *Calgary Flames* the 1986 Smythe Division

Championship. And, it was on his birthday!

But he was a rookie then, and has put in more than **20 years playing and coaching in the NHL since**. That helps!

Steve Smith is currently an Assistant Coach with the *Carolina Hurricanes*.

