



Smith won Stanley Cup with Carolina

Record staff

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Cambridge native Ron Smith, a longtime National Hockey League coach who won a Stanley Cup in 2006 while scouting for the Carolina Hurricanes, died Monday in Hamilton. He was 72.

Smith was born in Galt in 1944 and had a distinguished sporting career, initially as an athlete and later in administration and coaching.

Smith was an accomplished baseball player who spent two years in the San Francisco Giants organization before quitting the game to continue his education at the University of Waterloo.

After graduation, he became a teacher at Glenview Park Secondary School while playing six seasons, starting in 1968, with the Galt Hornets of the OHA senior league.

He moved on to a head coaching role in 1975 with the Guelph Holody Platers of the Southern Ontario Junior Hockey League and Ontario Provincial Junior Hockey League.

He spent four years in Guelph before accepting an assistant coaching position under Roger Neilson with the National Hockey League's Buffalo Sabres in 1980.

Neilson and Smith moved to the Vancouver Canucks the following season and guided the team to its first appearance in the Stanley Cup final. The Canucks were swept by the New York Islanders in the final.

Smith spent three more years with the Canucks before joining the New Jersey Devils in 1986 for a two-year stint.

He spent the 1988-89 season as head coach of the Guelph Platers of the Ontario Hockey League but returned to the pro ranks the following season to coach the Binghamton Rangers of the American Hockey League.

The New York Rangers summoned him midway through 1992-93 season to assume the head coaching duties after the dismissal of Neilson, but the team failed to make the playoffs and Smith moved back to the Canucks for the next two years as an assistant.

He was Pat Quinn's sidekick in 1994 when the Canucks lost to the New York Rangers in a seven-game Stanley Cup final.

He coached six seasons (1995-2001) with the Cincinnati Cyclones of the International Hockey League and three seasons (2001-2004) with the Lowell Lock Monsters of the AHL.

He lifted the Stanley Cup for a first time in 2006 while working for Carolina as a pro scout.

Prior to joining the professional coaching ranks, Smith was head coach at York University and served as director of player personnel with the Canadian Olympic program. He was also technical director of Ontario Hockey Association and played a key role in the development of the Canadian National Coach Certification program.

Smith's death Monday coincided with his 52nd wedding anniversary to his wife, Patti. He is also survived by two sons, Landry and Devin, and four grandchildren.

Two visitations (2-4, 7-9 p.m.) are scheduled for Wednesday in Cambridge at the Lounsbury Funeral Home, 1766 Franklin Blvd. A memorial reception will be held Thursday from 1-4 p.m. at the Galt Country Club, 750 Coronation Blvd.