

= 1985 ? 86 Calgary Flames season =

The 1985 ? 86 Calgary Flames season was the sixth season in Calgary and 14th for the Flames franchise in the National Hockey League (NHL) . It was a banner season for the Flames , who overcame a franchise record eleven game losing streak to finish 2nd in the Smythe Division and captured the franchise 's first Clarence S. Campbell Bowl as Campbell Conference champions . In doing so , they became the first Calgary team to reach the Stanley Cup Finals since the Calgary Tigers in 1923 ? 24 . The Flames season ended at the hands of the Montreal Canadiens , who defeated Calgary in five games in the final .

The season began with the departure of franchise leading scorer Kent Nilsson who was sent to the Minnesota North Stars in a trade . Rookie goaltender Mike Vernon emerged as the team 's top goaltender and Joe Mullen was acquired in a major trade midway through the season . Gary Suter captured the Calder Memorial Trophy as the league 's top rookie while also being named to the NHL All @-@ Rookie Team . Additionally , Suter was the team 's lone representative at the 1986 All @-@ Star Game . Håkan Loob captured the Molson Cup .

The Flames upset the heavily favoured Edmonton Oilers in the Smythe Division final to end the Oilers ' hopes of winning a third consecutive championship . The series winning goal was scored into his own net by Oilers rookie Steve Smith . As Smith collapsed to the ice , Flames players celebrated the difference maker in what would finish as a 3 ? 2 Calgary win . Smith 's error remains one of the most legendary blunders in hockey history .

= = Regular season = =

The Flames began the year with a similar roster as finished the 1984 ? 85 season , with one major exception . Kent Nilsson , the franchise 's all @-@ time leading scorer , was dealt to the Minnesota North Stars for two draft picks . Nilsson was viewed as a player with immense talent who ended each season as a perennial disappointment in the playoffs . Though he scored 99 points the season before , the Flames received few offers before agreeing to send him to Minnesota . As the deal provided no immediate help for the team , co @-@ captain Doug Risebrough anticipated that 1985 ? 86 would be a transitional year for the Flames and the loss of Nilsson might force the team to play a more defensive style when compared to the team that finished second in league scoring the year previous .

The season opened in Calgary with a game against the Winnipeg Jets , the team that eliminated the Flames in the first round of the previous spring 's playoffs . It ended with an 8 ? 3 victory for the Flames , but not before a bench @-@ clearing brawl resulted in the ejection of five players . Calgary was one of the top teams in the league in the early going , standing third overall on December 10 with a 15 ? 8 ? 3 record .

Four nights later , they were defeated by the Vancouver Canucks , 4 ? 3 , and continued losing for nearly a month . After the Hartford Whalers handily defeated the Flames 9 ? 1 on January 7 , 1986 , to send Calgary to its 11th consecutive defeat , a franchise record , coach Bob Johnson promised changes . Among them was the recall of goaltender Mike Vernon from the Moncton Golden Flames , who was given the start ahead of Rejean Lemelin in their next game , against Vancouver . He held the Flames in the game long enough for Jim Peplinski to score in the first minute of overtime for a 5 ? 4 victory that ended the eighth @-@ longest losing streak in NHL history .

During the losing streak , on December 29 , the Flames hosted Soviet team Dynamo Moscow in an exhibition game as part of the 1986 Super Series . Vernon was given the start for the game to let Lemelin rest and led Calgary to a 4 ? 3 victory over Dynamo . It was the Flames ' second victory in three years against a Soviet league club , and came despite what the team considered biased officiating by the Russian referee working the game .

The team enjoyed greater success in the second half of the season , finishing the final 40 games with a record of 22 ? 12 ? 5 . Vernon established himself as the starting goaltender by mid February and finished the regular season with only three losses in 15 decisions . The Flames ended the season in second place in the Smythe Division , sixth overall in the NHL , with 89 points . Seeking to

upgrade the team 's offence as the playoffs approached , General Manager Cliff Fletcher completed a six @-@ player trade with the St. Louis Blues that brought Joe Mullen , a player who had scored at least 40 goals each of his previous two seasons , to Calgary . A second deal in March had the Flames acquire four @-@ time Stanley Cup champion John Tonelli from the New York Islanders and initiated a war of words with Edmonton Oilers general manager and coach Glen Sather , who accused Islanders general manager Bill Torrey of trying to help Fletcher eliminate the Oilers in the upcoming playoffs .