



JEROME MIRON | Imagn Images

Oilers center Connor McDavid scores against Stars goaltender Casey DeSmith during Thursday's second period in game five of the Western Conference Final of the Stanley Cup Playoffs in Dallas.

Oilers oust Stars, clinch rematch against Panthers

Field Level Media

The Edmonton Oilers get their shot at revenge in the Stanley Cup Final after claiming a 6-3 road victory over the Dallas Stars on Thursday to close out the Western Conference finals.

Connor McDavid collected one goal and one assist as the Oilers dispatched the Stars in five games in the best-of-seven series.

Next up is a rematch of last year's finals against the Panthers, won by Florida in seven games.

"They're a really good team and we're a really good team as well," Oilers forward Leon Draisaitl said of the Panthers. "It's nice to get a shot at getting some revenge, but we're a long ways from that. We'll enjoy this and

get ready."

Game 1 will be Wednesday at Edmonton.

Corey Perry, Mattias Janmark, Jeff Skinner, Evander Kane and Kasper Kapanen also scored for the Oilers, who have won 12 of their past 14 playoff games and eliminated the Stars in the conference finals for the second consecutive year.

Edmonton goaltender Stuart Skinner made 14 saves.

In last year's Stanley Cup Final, Edmonton lost the first three games but pushed it to the limit before dropping the deciding game 2-1.

Now the Oilers have their opportunity to not only win the Stanley Cup but claim the crown against the club that broke their hearts.

"I think we're better for going through last year,"

McDavid said. "It's a great learning experience and really driven us all year. This run has felt very different than last year. It's felt very normal. ...

"Games can be emotionally draining, but we're not drained. We've got as good a chance as they do."

Jason Robertson scored twice and Roope Hintz tallied once for Dallas, which has lost out in the Stanley Cup chase in the third round three straight years. Wyatt Johnston and Thomas Harley each recorded two assists.

Starting Dallas goalie Jake Oettinger was pulled after surrendering goals on the first two shots he faced. Casey DeSmith made 17 saves in relief.

"We felt we had a solid group from top to bottom, and that's why this stings pretty bad," Stars captain

Jamie Benn said. "It (hurts). Three years in a row now you get that close and come up short. It's not a good feeling."

Sensing their chance to close out the series, the Oilers staked an early 3-0 lead thanks to goals by Perry at 2:31, Janmark at 7:09 and then Skinner -- playing his first game since the playoff opener -- 58 seconds later for his first career playoff goal.

On Perry's goal, McDavid collected his 100th career playoff assist in his 90th game, the second-fastest player to hit the century mark for postseason helpers, behind only Wayne Gretzky (70 games).

Robertson scored for the third consecutive game at 11:40 of the opening frame and Hintz made it a one-goal game with a power-play tally at 12:27 of the second period to draw Dallas close.

However, McDavid restored Edmonton's two-goal lead two minutes later with a breakaway tally.

Robertson's second of the game 38 seconds into the third period again brought the Stars within one, but Kane responded at 3:21 of the final period. Kapanen's empty-net goal in the last minute rounded out the scoring.

Dallas failed to record a shot on goal in the final 16:17 of the game, but a big story going forward will be the goalie change.

"I didn't blame it all on Jake, but the reality is if you go back to last year's playoffs, he's lost six of seven games to Edmonton (before Thursday)," Stars coach Peter DeBoer said. "And we give up two goals on two shots in an elimination game. It was partly to spark our team and ... status quo had not been working."

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Capitals: Email on Ovechkin's 'final season' a mistake

Field Level Media

In an email sent to season ticket holders, the Washington Capitals appeared to reveal that all-time NHL goals leader Alex Ovechkin will play his final NHL campaign in 2025-26.

"OCTOBER - the start of Capitals hockey and Alex Ovechkin's FINAL NHL SEASON," read the email sent on Thursday, according to The Hockey Writers.

Not so fast, said the team. The Capitals released a statement Thurs-

day afternoon saying that "no decision has been made" on Ovechkin's future beyond next season, blaming one of its employees for the misunderstanding.

"An email was sent from an individual with the corporate sales department that mistakenly alluded to next year being Alex Ovechkin's final year," the team posted on X.

Ovechkin, who turns 40 in September, said after the Capitals were eliminated from the 2025 Stanley Cup Playoffs earlier this month that he would be back for his 21st NHL season.

The Russian winger has one season remaining on a five-year, \$47.5 million contract.

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