

## RECENT “UNSUNG” HEROES IN THE STANLEY CUP FINAL

Inspired by **Evan Rodrigues**' performance through the first two games of the Stanley Cup Final, a look back at other recent “unsung” heroes in the championship series:

\* **Devante Smith-Pelly** (3-0—3 in [2018 SCF](#)) was on his fourth NHL team in seven seasons when the Capitals made their run to the Stanley Cup Final, but had never collected more than 25 points in a season. During the 2018 Stanley Cup Playoffs, Smith-Pelly had seven goals – a number he outdid in an entire regular season only once in his career – including a goal in each of the last three games of the Final. One of those stood as the winner that gave Washington a 3-1 series lead and another tying Game 5 less than three minutes before the eventual Cup-clinching goal was scored to secure the club's first championship.

\* **Brad Marchand** (5-2—7 in [2011 SCF](#)) had a 41-point rookie campaign in 2010-11 (77 GP) and then collected nearly half that total in 25 playoff games (11-8—19 in 25 GP). After being held without a point in Games 1 and 2 of the Final – both Bruins losses on the road – the rookie Marchand scored a goal in four of the next five games and bookended that stretch with multi-point performances, capped by 2-1—3 in the Cup-clinching 4-0 win in Game 7.

\* **Ville Leino** (3-6—9 in [2010 SCF](#)) had 22 points in 75 career games (including 0-2—2 in 7 playoff games) entering the 2010 Stanley Cup Playoffs but nearly matched that with 21 points – equaling the [NHL rookie record for one postseason](#) – to help the Flyers move within two wins of the Cup. In the championship series, Leino factored in five of six games including the winning goal in Game 4 to tie the series at 2-2 followed by two of his three multi-point showings in Games 5 and 6.

\* **Max Talbot** (4-2—6 in [2009 SCF](#)) hadn't tallied more than 30 points in an NHL campaign during his four-season tenure but collected 8-5—13 during the 2009 Stanley Cup Playoffs (24 GP). The timeliness of his points was key in the Penguins' championship run as half his goal count – which included both tallies in their Game 7 victory – and nearly half his point total came during the last five games of the Final (after the Penguins had fallen behind 2-0 on the road).

\* **Fernando Pisani** (5-1—6 in [2006 SCF](#)) was coming off a career-high 37-point season in which he scored a personal best 18 goals and then nearly matched that goal total across 24 playoff games – including a [franchise record-tying five game-winners](#). After scoring in the opener of the Final, Pisani and the Oilers fell behind 3-1 in the series, but he helped them rally by scoring in each of the last three games including their lone goal in Game 7.

\* **Mike Rupp** (1-3—4 in [2003 SCF](#)) notched 5-3—8 in 26 games as a rookie during the 2002-03 season but was held off the score sheet in his final eight contests and did not crack the Devils' playoff lineup until Game 4 of the Final – a 1-0 overtime defeat that evened the series at 2-2. After an assist in New Jersey's Game 5 win, Rupp saved his biggest performance for Game 7 when he tallied 1-2—3 in a 3-0 victory and became the first rookie in NHL history with a Cup-clinching goal in Game 7.

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**STATS AND INFORMATION**

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