



Windsor Juniors - 1889

This is one of the oldest hockey team photos in Canada. In 1889 taking year-end photos of hockey teams was a new idea. The Windsor 'Juniors' was a champion team that competed with teams from King's College, Hantsport, Wolfville, Kentville, Acadia University as well as the Halifax Athletes. They used hand-made hockey sticks and no protective equipment. The team consisted of eight players. Seven played the entire game, with one spare in case of injury. Medallions on their jerseys showed that they were champions for three years, as trophies were used for another decade.



Windsor Ladies Hockey Team

- 1924 The Windsor Ladies began playing hockey in the 1890's. This 1924 team competed with teams from the Valley and Halifax. Excellent skaters, they were real contenders and frequently won with lop-sided scores. They always entertained the other teams following a match. Their skirts were navy serge and sweaters heavy wool which sopped up much water when they hit the thawing ice at winter's

The Windsor Hockey Heritage Society motto:
Supporting hockey for youth – the creators of Canada's great national game

The Windsor Hockey Heritage Society

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The Society solicits donations of antique hockey equipment, photos, memorabilia and information as well as financial assistance.

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For great hockey gift ideas, visit – the Wooden Puck Gift Shop, Windsor Hockey Heritage Museum, or online at BirthplaceOfHockey.com



The Windsor Avonians – 1900

The Avonians named after the Avon River at Windsor, were champions of the town in 1900. They won the Citizens Trophy, donated by Windsor hockey fans for competition of four senior teams in the Town League, the Avonians, Elgraves, Kings College and Resolutes.

The population of Windsor then was a mere 2,000, but then again, that was the same population of Edmonton at the time!

Equipment Chronology

1800 – 1890 No protective equipment used in Ice Hockey

1860 Wooden pucks used in Nova Scotia

1880 Ice Hockey first played indoors at Halifax, Nova Scotia

1890 Quilted knee-length pants and shin pads

1904 Sausage-finger padded gloves

1914 Short pants and long stockings

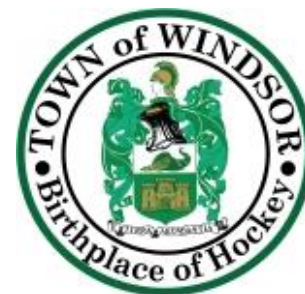
1920 Knee pads

1940 Elbow pads and shoulder pads

1945 Leather helmets

1950 Body pads

1960 Goalie face mask



Ice Hockey in Nova Scotia

The Early Years

by Dr. Garth Vaughan



Acadia University A.A.A. Hockey Team – 1902

Front row center is Owen B. Keddy of Windsor, team captain and center of the seven member team. He became a surgeon and practiced his entire life in Windsor where he was also Mayor of the town and Governor of Acadia University for many years. Note that his name is burned into the handle of his hockey stick with a red hot stove poker, as was the custom. His 100 year old 'Starr Hockey Skates' are on display in the Windsor Hockey Heritage Center.

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Ice Hockey

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The Birthplace of Hockey – 1800
Windsor is the Birthplace and Nova Scotia is the growth place of Ice Hockey. Nova Scotia newspapers chronicle the development of Ice Hockey from Ice Hurley in the early 1800s. Ice Hockey is as Canadian as the Maple Leaf and as Nova Scotian as the Bluenose.

The Evidence
Windsor, settled in 1684, is one of Canada’s oldest towns. King’s College was established in Windsor as the country’s first college in 1788. Having adopted the Irish field game of hurley to the ice of the ‘long pond’ at the back of the college property, King’s boys are credited with the origin of Ice Hockey.

Haliburton and Ice Hockey
The Father of American Humour, Thomas Chandler Haliburton, was born in Windsor in 1796 and was educated at King’s. He became a lawyer, judge and politician. He wrote the first History of Nova Scotia and gained international recognition as an author. He explained to his readers that his works drew on his own experience with people and scenes in Nova Scotia. He attended King’s College School circa 1800. Through his character Sam Slick, he speaks about schoolboy games: “...you boys let out racin’, yelpin’, hollerin’, and whoopin’ like mad with pleasure (playin’) hurley on the long pond on the ice...” This is the earliest reference in English literature to a stick ball game being played on the ice in Canada. Nova Scotia archivist C. Bruce Fergusson brought attention to this in 1965 in the NS Journal of Education.

From Hurley to Hockey 1800 - 1850
Hurley is played year round in Ireland. Snow and ice make Nova Scotia fields too rough for stick-ball games in winter, but the smooth surface of their favorite skating pond seemed ideal for Ice Hurley. Windsor was very important to the provincial capital and known as ‘The Playground of Halifax’. Some of King’s students were from nearby Halifax and Dartmouth, so naturally the game spread there, supported by a healthy Irish population and British military personnel. Over a fifty year period the game was known as hurley, ricket, wicket and finally Ice Hockey. In 1859, The Boston Evening Gazette reported that hockey was being played in Nova Scotia and sent for a set of sticks.

Hockey in Montreal - 1875
James George ‘Aylin’ Creighton was born in Halifax in 1850 when Hurley and Hockey were interchangeable names for the same game. A graduate of Dalhousie University, he was also a football player and figure skater. When he moved to Montreal in 1872 to work as an engineer, he joined the Montreal Football team and taught new athletic friends to play Nova Scotia’s game of Ice Hockey.

His influence as a judge of figure skating gave him access to the Victoria Skating Rink for hockey team practice and on March 3rd, 1875, Creighton and friends provided Montreal with the first game of Ice Hockey played inside a covered rink. There were nine players a side and Creighton captained the winning team. The game was played by the Halifax Hockey Club Rules, written by Creighton, who arranged for friends back home to ship two dozen sticks for the game. Without realizing it, this Nova Scotian had become the Father of Organized Hockey. In Nova Scotia, because of the rough nature of the game, it was still not allowed to be played in skating rinks and remained an outdoor game until 1880.

Hockey in Ottawa – 1884
Creighton acquired a law degree in 1880 at McGill University and soon moved to Ottawa as a Law Clerk for the Senate and became involved in establishing hockey there. In 1884 he organized the Rideau Hall Rebels with senators and aides de camp along with two sons of the new Governor, General Lord Stanley. Enthused by the game and his sons involvement, he donated a Canadian Amateur Challenge Trophy. In 1893 it later became the famous Stanley Cup, used for professional ice Hockey to this day.

Canada’s Great National Game - 1890
In 1886, the Royal Military College and Queen’s University took up the game in Kingston, Ontario. Then, as the western province began playing in 1890, Ice Hockey became Canada’s national winter obsession.

Evolution of Hockey Equipment

“Made in Nova Scotia”

Local Nova Scotia MicMac carvers and other craftsmen created hand-made sticks from young hardwood trees, using the root as blade and trunk as handle. They supplied Canada’s “hockeyists” with their favorite Micmac Hockey Sticks into the 1930’s.

The Elusive Puck
Hurley, like other stick-ball games, uses a leather covered ball. Being unwieldy on ice, it was replaced with a wooden disc. There is documented evidence of wooden pucks being used in Nova Scotia since the mid-1800s. As the game was taken up in Montreal, the description of the first game indicated that a wooden disc was used there as well.

Vulcanized rubber was not used for pucks until the Royal Military College and Queen’s University of Kingston, Ontario took up the game in 1886.

Block Skates and Starr Skates
The World’s Best
When Ice Hockey was in its infancy, skates were all hand-made and held to boots with ropes or leather straps. In 1863, John Forbes, the foreman at Starr Mfg. Co. Ltd. In Dartmouth, NS invented self-fastening ‘spring’ skates which applied to the soles of boots with the flick of a lever. They sold for 75 cents a pair, became world-famous and revolutionized skating and Ice Hockey.

Box Nets
Nova Scotia Scores Again
Rocks were first used to mark the goals, then posts were stuck into the ice. In 1899 the “Nova Scotia Box Net” was invented in Halifax. Tried in Montreal the following season, they were then accepted all across Canada. *Amazing!*



Nova Scotia Ice Hockey Trivia

- Nova Scotia’s major hockey games were played outdoors on natural ice surfaces for nearly a century before covered rinks were built, allowing the games to come on out of the weather.*
- For the first 63 years that ice hockey was played in Nova Scotia, players attached skates to their boots with ropes or leather straps. They were hand-made by local blacksmiths.*
- For at least the first 100 years that hockey was played, sticks were hand-made and no two were the same. Players picked the one that suited best.*

- Nova Scotia Mi’kmaq craftsmen supplied Canada’s professional hockey players with hand-made sticks well into the 1930’s when factory-made sticks captured the market.*
- For the first 75 years that ice hockey was played, the number of players was not limited. The number of players was fixed at nine in 1875 and soon reduced to seven.*
- The 7th player was known as the ROVER - another Nova Scotia addition to the game. The Rover was the fastest skater and best scoring player on the team. He was allowed to play where and as he wished and was catered to by team mates. The Rover was discontinued in Nova Scotia in favour of coordinated ‘team play’ in 1913. The Rover position was adhered to until 1923 on the west coast.*
- Nova Scotia Starr Hockey Skates were the favourite of Canadian Hockey players into the 1930’s.*
- Admission to games in Nova Scotia changed with the times.*

1886: 10 cents	1902: 25 cents
1899: 20 cents	1940: 25 cents

1788 Windsor, Nova Scotia - home of Canada’s First College - King’s College

1800 (c.) King’s College School boys played Hurley on ice which became Ice Hockey.

1859 Boston Evening Gazette Editor sends to Nova Scotia for a set of sticks to introduce Ice Hockey to New England

1863 Clamping device invented by Starr Mfg. Co. of Dartmouth. Skates fastened to boots quickly with a small lever. Patented in Nova Scotia, Starr skates revolutionized skating and ice hockey. ♦ Halifax Skating Rink was Nova Scotia’s first covered skating rink.

1866 Starr hockey skates with rounded ends and rocker-shaped blades patented in Nova Scotia.

1870 Windsor’s first skating rink built on Fort Edward.

1875 Two dozen sticks sent from Halifax to Montreal for a game on March 3, 1875. ♦ Nine players constituted a team. ♦ The first indoor ice hockey game played in Canada.

1880 Hockey played indoors in Nova Scotia at Sarre’s Rink, Halifax. It was previously banned.

1886 Ice hockey introduced to Kingston Ontario, hockey sticks were sent from

Nova Scotia. ♦ Referees chosen by team captains.

1888 Nova Scotia’s first hockey league.

1889 Philip Hamilton, of Windsor training to be a wheelwright, told in a diary of making hand-carved hockey sticks for all of his "Windsor Juniors" team mates. ♦ The Windsor Junior photo depicts the players wearing three championship medallions.

1890s - 1912 Teams consisted of seven players who played the entire game

1890s Before silver trophies, medallions were pinned to jerseys. ♦ Screws and rivets first used to permanently fix skates to boots.

1893 Very elegant 36” high Starr trophy donated for Halifax Hockey League

1899 Previously, goal posts were called “flags” and were without net. ♦ ‘Nova Scotia Box Net’ invented in Halifax.

1900 Halifax Crescents challenged for the Stanley Cup and lost to the Montreal Shamrocks ♦ Lightweight ‘Silver King’ tube skates were invented by Starr Mfg. Co. ♦ Mi’kmaq craftsmen at Millbrook, near Truro, sent sticks by freight trains to Halifax. ♦ ‘Nova Scotia Box Net’ adopted across Canada. ♦ Coloured Hockey Championship of the Maritimes operated from 1900 to 1920. Blacks were not allowed to play with whites – formed own team. Seven teams in loosely organized league – Africville Seasides, Halifax Eurekas, Dartmouth Jubilees, Hammond’s Plains Mossbacks, Truro Victorias, Amherst Royals and Summerside West End Rangers. Games lively and well attended but no trophy was awarded.

1904 Starr Trophy used for Maritime Senior Hockey League.

1905 First NS University League formed

1906 New Glasgow challenged for the Stanley Cup and lost to the Montreal Wanderers.

1908 Canadian Professional Hockey began with the formation of the National Hockey Association replaced by the NHL in 1917.

1909 Harry McCulloch could not use skates because of a congenital foot deformity, tended goal – he wore boots as Port Hawkesbury captured the Cape Breton Junior Championships on harbour ice.

1910 Professional hockey began in NS.

1912 Programs were first given out at a Dartmouth - New Glasgow game

1913 Referees first paid ♦ Sydney Millionaires challenged for the Stanley Cup and lost to the Quebec Bulldogs.

1917 NHL replaced NHA. Stanley Cup, Amateur Trophy now used for professional Ice Hockey

1920 King’s College burned. Windsor was a college town for 135 years. ♦ “Skates” first cited in Ice Hockey rules - skates are assumed to be a given in Ice Hockey ♦ Skates first mentioned in dictionary meaning of Ice Hockey ♦ At Halifax Market, hockey sticks made by Mi’kmaq and Afro-Nova Scotia craftsmen sold for 25 cents each. Children picked up leftovers on Saturday for 10-15 cents each.

1923 King’s College rebuilt in Halifax on Dalhousie Campus. King’s College School remains in Windsor.

1927 Manager Art Ross indorsed Starr Hockey skates on behalf of all Boston Bruin payers.

1920s - 30s Arthur Sawler, Windsor made steam-bent ash hockey sticks called ‘Swipers’ that sold for 50 cents each.

1930s - 40s “Pirate Hockey Stick Company”, Wolfville employed Mi’kmaq craftsmen to hand-carve sticks from hornbeam, a native hardwood akin to birch. Used in Annapolis Valley League.

1930s Nova Scotia’s Starr Skates were the favourites of Canadian professional hockey players. ♦ Nova Scotia’s MicMac Hockey Sticks were the choice of Canada’s hockey players. ♦ Laminated sticks made in Ontario first appeared. They often came apart where glued.

1957 Canada’s first hockey school was held at Kentville in July.

1964 Starr Trophy used for Maritime Senior Hockey since 1904. ♦ Windsor Maple Leafs won the Starr Trophy that now rests in the Windsor Hockey Heritage Museum.

