



LUND UNIVERSITY

The Birth of Swedish Ice Hockey : Antwerp 1920

Hansen, Kenth

Published in:

Citius, altius, fortius : the ISOH journal

1996

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Hansen, K. (1996). The Birth of Swedish Ice Hockey : Antwerp 1920. *Citius, altius, fortius : the ISOH journal*, 4(2), 5-27. <http://library.la84.org/SportsLibrary/JOH/JOHv4n2/JOHv4n2c.pdf>

Total number of authors:

1

General rights

Unless other specific re-use rights are stated the following general rights apply:

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Read more about Creative commons licenses: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

LUND UNIVERSITY

PO Box 117
221 00 Lund
+46 46-222 00 00

THE BIRTH OF SWEDISH ICE HOCKEY - ANTWERP 1920

by Kenth Hansen

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to describe how the Swedes began playing ice hockey and to document the first Olympic ice hockey tournament in Antwerp in 1920, since both events happened at the same time. The paper is written from a Swedish point of view and is mainly based on contemporary Swedish newspaper articles. Several Swedish sports writers were present in Antwerp during the tournament, among them three of the most famous ones, viz. ;

Torsten Tegnér, the most famous Swedish sports writer, was publisher and editor of *Idrottsbladet*. He was manager of the magazine, which was the main sports paper in Sweden, from 1915 until the 60's. Torsten Tegnér, whose pseudonym was TT, was also on the board of several Swedish sports federations, among them the Swedish Ice Hockey Federation which was founded in 1922.

Erik Bergvall wrote for *Nordiskt Idrottslif* and was also the publisher of this magazine. He is known as one of the founders of the Swedish Swimming Federation and was later to become a board member of the International Swimming Federation as well as of the Swedish Sports Confederation and the Swedish Olympic Committee. For the Olympic audience he is also known as the editor of the official report of the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm.

Oscar Söderlund, whose pseudonym was Glokar Well, was a journalist at *Stockholms-Tidningen*. He was one of the founders of the Swedish Boxing Federation and later on he became the chairman of the International Boxing Federation.

In this paper there are several quotations from the articles written by these journalists, which I have tried to translate into English as well as could be done. These articles were written in a colorful and somewhat old-fashioned way and it is difficult to keep this style when translating them.

The history of ice hockey up to 1920

The origin of ice hockey was bandy, a game that has its roots in the Middle Ages. Just as for practically all other sports, the game of bandy achieved its modern form during the 19th century in England, more exactly in the Fen district on the East coast. From the Fen district the game was spread to London and from London to the Continent during the second half of the 19th century.

British soldiers stationed in eastern Canada brought the game to the North American continent in the 1850's and '60's. You could find similar games there, played by immigrants (chiefly Dutch) and by Indians. Thus there were a number of different games played on skates with a stick and ball and with varying rules in America before ice hockey was invented.

The proper birth of ice hockey is usually dated to December 1879. A match was then played in Montreal between two teams from McGill University with rules based on those of field hockey. The teams consisted of 30 players each. As a result of this match the first ice hockey club, McGill University Hockey Club, was founded in 1880. Under its management the first codification of the rules took place, a work that was lead by a student called W. F. Robertson. The number of players was decreased to nine. The playing time was two hours and the puck was a square rubber disk. During the last part of the 19th century the rules were

developed further, the number of players and the playing area were cut down. The playing area was also enclosed by low wooden barriers.

Ice hockey was rapidly on its way to becoming one of the most popular sports in Canada. The first national organization, the Amateur Hockey Association of Canada, was founded in 1885, and at the same time the first league was started in Kingston, Ontario. The sport continued to grow. Ice hockey arenas were built in a steady stream and several organisations and new leagues were started.

In 1893 the Canadian governor general, Lord Stanley of Preston, donated a trophy that was to be awarded to the best team of the year in Canada. To begin with the winner was determined by a playoff between the best teams from different leagues, and the first winner of the cup was the Montreal Amateur Athletic Association in 1893-94. From 1917, the Stanley Cup became the award given to the winner of the National Hockey League (NHL) and also the most coveted trophy of ice hockey.

Ice hockey was brought to the United States at the beginning of the 1890's (the first game was played in 1893) and in 1896 the American Amateur Hockey League was founded. Initially the best players were Canadians.

Despite the fact that ice hockey was regarded as an amateur sport, it was nevertheless common practice to pay the players. The first true professional club was founded in the United States in 1903, namely Portage Lakes. The following year saw the origin of the first professional league in the United States. In Canada they were more reluctant to play professional ice hockey, and the first professional league, the Ontario Professional Hockey League, was not started until 1908. Several new professional leagues were started, but the National Hockey Association, later the NHL, that was founded in 1910, finally became the predominant North American professional league.

In 1898 ice hockey was seen for the first time in Europe when a match was played in London, and in 1903 the first English league was founded. At the beginning of the 20th century ice hockey rapidly spread to the European Continent. The game was there to stay and soon the older game of bandy was superseded by ice hockey. In 1908 the International Ice Hockey Federation was founded by Great Britain, Switzerland, France and Belgium. Bohemia joined in the same year, and Germany followed in 1909.

The first European championships were held in 1910 in Les Avants, Switzerland with Great Britain as winner. Another three European championships were held before the first World War; Bohemia won in 1911, Belgium in 1913 and finally Bohemia won once more in 1914.

Bandy had now been completely superseded by ice hockey on the Continent, but had not yet been introduced in the Scandinavian countries. The first World War broke out, and during those years ice hockey was at a standstill in Europe. However, in North America, and especially in Canada, the game flourished. At that time the interest was not focused on the professional leagues, but rather on amateur ice hockey and especially on the Allan Cup, the amateur equivalent to Stanley Cup.

Sweden

Bandy was the predominant winter team sport in Sweden when the news arrived that ice hockey had been placed on the Olympic program for the Antwerp Games. The Swedes still enjoyed the memory of having conquered the giant United States in the 1912 Stockholm Games. In the prestigious and patriotic mood that prevailed, the Swedish chances in the Games were much discussed and every possibility to win Olympic points was analyzed, which was the reason for the sudden interest in ice hockey.

According to Torsten Tegnér, the possibility of Swedish participation in ice hockey was discussed for the first time in September 1919. In a Stockholm restaurant he met with the

influential secretary of the Swedish Soccer Federation, Mr. Anton Johansson, and the Stockholm representative for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, the American Raoul Le Mat. Le Mat, who had played ice hockey in his youth and had been a prominent speed skater, tried to persuade Anton Johansson to enter a team in Antwerp. He had only been in Sweden for a couple of months, but he knew that Sweden had skillful bandy players. At that time bandy was organized in the Soccer Federation, which was the reason why this question was handled by the soccer organization.

The discussions and the planning accelerated at the turn of the year 1919/20. The program for the Antwerp Games had arrived with the confirmation that ice hockey was to be part of the Games. Speculations in the sports press whether Swedish bandy players easily could be transformed into competitive ice hockey players now started to appear. "With the experience and training that our bandy players have, there is hardly any question that in a very short time we can create a team, that can represent us in ice hockey with the utmost success" wrote *Stockholms-Tidningen* and mentioned that "fairly average Swedish bandy players" had become stars in the best foreign teams. The presumptuousness and ambitions were great from the beginning.

At the end of January the Soccer Federation had made up its mind; they would go for an Olympic ice hockey team. Raoul Le Mat was made coach. Having had earlier experience with ice hockey in the United States, he was somewhat more moderate in his statements. Yes, the Swedes were good bandy players - but ice hockey was different, and training was really needed.² Ernest Wiberg was appointed assistant coach. He was a Swedish sports leader who had emigrated to the United States but was now visiting his old country.

The team was to be built around three players with experience from ice hockey abroad. The rest of the team consisted of bandy players from Stockholm and Uppsala. Hans Georgii had played in Germany in 1911-1914, in Berliner Schlittschuh Club to be precise, and had been considered to be the best right wing on the continent. Nisse Molander had belonged to the same club since 1911. He played rover and was the star of the team. The third player, David Säfwenber, brother of the famous bandy goalkeeper "Sleven" Säfwenber, had also played in Berlin for the last two years, but for Berliner Sport Club. As centre-forward he was the leading goal scorer of his team.

The training was scheduled to start on 27 January. A general notice to attend was dispatched, but no players were individually invited. The ice surface of the Stockholm Stadion was prepared, two ice hockey goals were made and part of the ice was enclosed by a low wooden barrier. An ice hockey puck had also been manufactured. At three o'clock coach Le Mat arrived. "But there was no sight of any players, whom Mr. Le Mat could coach, and none arrived, although one waited for quite some time. A cinema director together with two subordinates with a film camera, two photographers and quite a number of interested spectators, who could be recognized from the soccer stands' section for free tickets, had, however, appeared. The spectators had to be content with witnessing the filming of Mr. Le Mat."³

The Soccer Federation promptly called a meeting to organize the training. On 2 February, some 20 active bandy players gathered, including the leading bandy star of the period, Sune Almkvist. Ernest Wiberg explained the hockey rules and Hans Georgii talked about the tactics of the game. It was agreed that the training would take place both in Uppsala and Stockholm. At Stockholm Stadium there would be training three days a week, in the afternoons as well as between 9 and 10 p.m. At Uppsala, training was restricted to two

¹ *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 3 January 1920

² *Dagens Nyheter*, 21 January 1920

³ *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 28 January 1920

afternoons every week. Fully 30 players had been nominated. Players from the bandy clubs IFK Stockholm, Göta and AIK were in the majority among the Stockholmers, while a few players came from Hammarby, Linnéa, Djurgården and Järva. The Uppsala players came from two bandy clubs: IFK Uppsala and Sirius.

Training now started at the Stockholm Stadium and was carried on during February at the same time as the bandy season was in full swing. However, an early spring caused problems. At the beginning of March the Stadium ice course was closed for the season, and the illumination was removed. A small icy area in the most shady spot of the Stadium was preserved, however, so that the ice hockey players could continue their training for another two weeks before the ice had melted completely. Since the beginning of March there was also a search for an indoor training ground in order to supplement the limited ice training. Two locker rooms were available at the Stadion and the training was focused on stick technique, passes and shots.

The Uppsala players were not as interested in ice hockey training. Sune Almkvist declined to take part and no organized training was started in Uppsala. Hans Georgii did not participate in Stockholm, but trained by himself in Are, a small winter resort in the Swedish fjelds.

The sticks were a major problem. There were none to be gotten in Sweden, they had to be ordered from the United States at the beginning of the year. The sticks arrived by SS Stockholm at the beginning of February, but were held up in the customs at Gothenburg. Several customs officers had been suspended because of theft of incoming goods, and the sticks remained in Gothenburg for the entire ice training period. An attempt to manufacture sticks at Uppsala was unsuccessful. Thus bandy sticks had to be used during training, which naturally made it hard to achieve the right stick technique until the proper American sticks finally arrived.

The rest of the equipment was not very ice hockey-like. Ordinary bandy equipment, consisting of sweater, trousers and stockings, was used. Only the goalkeeper, Albin Jansson, had acquired some sort of protective equipment: he wore his fencing equipment including the fencing mask. During the last training before the departure he found that one could not be careful enough. He took off the fencing mask before training was finished, and was hit by a puck in the eye. This resulted in a black eye, and stopped him from participating in the first Games in Antwerp.

It was not clear which rules would be used in the tournament. The development of the rules had continued in Canada. The number of players had been decreased to six, and the playing time had been set at three periods of 20 minutes each. Since the game was completely new to the Swedes, Anton Johansson of the Soccer Federation ordered the rules at an early stage from the Belgian organizing committee. They arrived in late February, and it turned out that they were an older version of the Canadian ones.

At the end of March it was time for the Swedish Olympic Committee to nominate the participants in the Antwerp Games. David Säfwenberg had written a letter to the Soccer Federation where he spoke of Nisse Molander's merits as ice hockey player at the same time as he declared that he was at their disposal. Molander, in his turn, had recommended another Swede living abroad, viz., Hansjacob Mattsson who lived in England. The latter was fairly unknown in Swedish sport circles, but had previously played in Germany. Hans Georgii was considered to be an obvious candidate. Among the Swedish bandy players Göta's Einar "Stor-Klas" Svensson and Einar "Knatten" Lundell had stood out during training.

The team left Stockholm on 7 April. There was a serious setback at the start, since it turned out that the key player and intended captain, Hans Georgii, had fallen ill and could not go. Thus the team finally was composed as follows:

Leaders: Raoul Le Mat (coach)
 Ernest Wiberg (assistant and masseur)

Goalkeepers: Seth Howander [IFK Uppsala]
 Albin "Abbe" Jansson [Järva IS]

Players: Nils "Nisse" Molander [Berliner Schlittschuh Club]
 David Säfwenbergl [Berliner Sport Club]
 Hansjacob "Knubben" Mattsson [England]
 Einar "Knatten" Lundell [IK Göta]
 Einar "Stor-Klas" Svensson [IK Göta]
 Georg "Fransman" Johansson [IK Göta]
 Wilhelm "Wille" Arwe [IK Göta]
 Erik Burman [IK Göta]
 Einar "Linkan" Lindqvist [IFK Uppsala]

The team travelled by third-class train via Trelleborg and Sassnitz to Berlin, where Molander and Säfwenbergl joined the team. The sight of the star player Nisse Molander was somewhat of a shock. He had had a cerebral haemorrhage, and was still so ill that he had to be led onboard the train. The Swedish team tried to supplement their inadequate equipment in Berlin. This, however, was unsuccessful. After a long and difficult journey through Germany, recently the scene of internal conflicts during the Kapp Coupe, they finally arrived in Antwerp on the evening of 10 April. Albin Jansson, who had been held up at the Belgian border due to customs formalities, did not arrive until later on. Mattsson travelled directly to Antwerp from England.

The first training in Antwerp took place on the very next day, when they played five-a-side. The ice training then continued with two 30 minutes periods every day. It was then clear that the skating was good, but that the shooting ability was not up to standard. The training was not very efficient at first, since coach Le Mat did not arrive until a week later. During training "Stor-Klas" Svensson met with an accident: he was hit over the eye and had to have stitches, which was done by the masseur of the Canadian team, Gudmundur Sigurjonsson. The Swedish team had made good contact with the Canadian team, and especially with the masseur, Sigurjonsson. He assisted the Swedes all through the tournament, which really was a help since they played rough, were ill equipped and had to play many matches.

As for the transatlantic teams - the Swedes believed for a long time that they would not participate in Antwerp. It was not until 31 March that one could read in Swedish newspapers that the United States would send a team, and one week later that also Canada would take part. Naturally, this meant that the Swedish chances had changed a lot. However, the Swedes were even more surprised the first time they witnessed transatlantic ice hockey.

"When the boys saw the Canadians and the Americans play for the first time, they first looked silently on the play, then on one another, and then they said with one voice 'I'll be darned!' You see, these chaps really could play in a way that you never had known. The swiftness, the quick turns and dribbling, the recklessness and mastery with which they shot the puck with extraordinary speed into the goal, made one's head spin, it captivated and thrilled the spectators so that they could not keep quiet, but had to shout and applaud and excite themselves, as if they were a Storm and Mosen audience, speaking with tongues, instead of

⁴Gudmundur Sigurjonsson was engaged by the Swedes in Antwerp to act as coach and masseur to the Swedish track and field team in the summer part of the Antwerp Games.

decent ordinary people with an interest in sports.”⁵ Oscar Söderlund from the *Stockholms-Tidningen* then goes on with comparing transatlantic ice hockey to European as “sparkling fresh champagne to stale cheap lager.”⁶

The Swedes were impressed not only by the transatlantic play, but also by their equipment. The European teams almost completely lacked protective equipment - they only wore simple knee- and leg-pads. The transatlantic teams were, however, heavily protected: strong leg- and knee-pads, cane-reinforced trousers, arm- and shoulder-pads and thick long gloves. Also the skates were different from the bandy skates of the Swedish team. Instead of being low and plane, the blades were high and curved, which allowed them to make quick and low turns. Not only was the Swedish protective equipment unsatisfactory, but the sticks also turned out to be inadequate. Thus Wiberg had to go to Brussels to try to acquire better equipment. He managed to purchase some, and the Swedes later borrowed some spare equipment from the American team.

Canada

In Canada it was decided that the Allan Cup winner of the year would represent the country at the Olympic Games. Winnipeg Falcons and the University of Toronto played in the finals, and the Falcons won by 8-3 and 3-2. The final game was played on 29 March in Toronto, and the SS Melita, the boat for Europe, was to leave Saint John on the east coast of Canada five days later. There was no time to return to Winnipeg, almost 3,000 kilometers west of Toronto. Thus the players received 25 dollars each to buy clothes, and then they were on their way to Europe. In Winnipeg they had followed their team's struggle in the Allan Cup through the newspapers and by news bulletins from loud speakers. A big reception was planned, but this now had to be postponed. With the telephone communications of those days, the players could not even call home and let their families know that they were on their way to Europe, but they had to read about it in the newspapers.

Except for the goalie, Wally Byron, the team consisted of players of Icelandic origin. There was a large number of inhabitants of Icelandic origin in Winnipeg and in the province of Manitoba. In the media the team was therefore often called the Icelanders. Top players of the team were, above all, the captain Frank Frederickson and the speedy skater Mike Goodman. The latter had only one month earlier won the North American speed skating championship. The team consisted of the following players:

Leaders: W[illiam] A[rchibald] Hewitt
H. Axford
Gudmundur Sigurjonsson
W. Fridfinnson
Goalkeeper: Walter “Wally” Byron
Players: Konrad “Connie” Johanneson
Robert “Bobby” Benson
Allan “Huck” Woodman
Frank Frederickson
Magnus “Mike” Goodman
Haldor “Slim” Halderson
Chris Fridfinnson

⁵ *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 27 April 1920

⁶ *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 27 April 1920

The team arrived in Antwerp on 14 April, warmly greeted by the British troupes stationed in Belgium, but also by the Belgians themselves, who remembered what the Americans and Canadians had done during the first World War. Six members of the Canadian team had served in Europe during the war.

United States

In the United States the preparations started in January. At a meeting in Boston at the end of the month representatives from different ice hockey groups met to discuss how to select a representative team. They decided to organize an elimination series between the best teams, and the winning team was to represent the United States at the Olympics. When there were only two teams remaining, Boston and Pittsburgh, the decision was changed. Instead the Olympic team would be an all-star team. Furthermore it was believed that to use only American players would not be enough in the competition against the Canadians, but Canadians playing for American clubs were also elected. Canadian news media protested against Canadian players playing for the United States. This was, however, allowed.

The selected players got together in Pittsburgh at the end of March to practice together under the supervision of Pittsburgh's coach Roy D. Schooley. During the training camp, test matches were arranged to help finance the team's trip to Europe. The opponents in the test matches were the Hamilton Tigers, the Toronto Dentals and the Winnipeg Falcons. The last mentioned team, being the Canadian Olympic representative, beat the American Olympic team by 3-2 on 23 March.

Three days before the team was to depart, coach Schooley had to withdraw, since his wife suddenly had fallen ill. The chairman of the American skating association, Cornelius Fellowes, on short notice had to take over as coach. The team departing on the SS Finlandia from New York on 7 April, consisted of the following players:

Leader:	Cornelius Fellowes
Goalkeepers:	Raymond Bonney [St. Paul A. C. Cyril "Cy" Weidenborner [St. Paul AC]
Players.	Edward "Ed" Fitzgerald [St. Paul AC] George "Jerry" Geran [Boston AA] Leon Tuck [Boston AA] Frank "Moose" Goheen [St. Paul AC] Herbert "Herb" Drury [Pittsburgh AA] Joseph "Joe" McCormick [Pittsburgh AA] Lawrence "Larry" McCormick [Pittsburgh AA] Frank "Red" Synott [Boston AA] Anthony "Tony" Conroy [St. Paul AC]

Four of these players were Canadians: Drury, Synott and the McCormick brothers. Geran had played ice hockey in the NHL two years earlier, where he had played four games for the Montreal Wanderers. In spite of these national and professional obstacles, they were nevertheless allowed to play for the United States in the Olympic Games.

The American team did not arrive in Antwerp until April 19, and the ice hockey tournament was scheduled to start the next day. However, the organizers postponed the start of the tournament until 23 April, so that the American players should have a chance to become acclimatized. The Americans were tremendously popular in Belgium after their military effort during the first World War, and they were met by an enthusiastic crowd on their arrival.

Organization and rules

The tournament was organized by a Belgian committee with Count de Lannoy as president. The Belgian ice hockey players Paul Loicq and Paul Goeminne were members of the committee. Paul Loicq was later to become the president of the International Ice Hockey Federation for 25 years.

The tournament was to be played at the ice palace of Antwerp, the Palais de Glace. The arena was situated at the Rue de la Sante, near the Botanic Gardens in central Antwerp. The rink measured 56 x 18 m.⁷ The figure skating competition was conducted in the Palais de Glace at the same time as the ice hockey tournament.

The ice hockey rules of that time differed on several accounts from those of today. The offside rule had the greatest impact on the character of the play - you were not allowed to pass to a player in front of you, but could only pass sideways or to players behind you. The entire passing game was accordingly made more difficult and the rule invited solo rushes and dribble attacks.

An important rule that primarily affected the goalkeepers, was that you were only allowed to play the puck while standing on your skates. The goalkeepers' technique was thus to remain standing and to whisk away the puck with the stick instead of blocking it while lying down or kneeling.

The teams consisted of seven players with no substitutes. The extra player, compared with today, was a rover. If a player was injured and could not continue to play, the opponents had to take one player off the game as well, in order to compensate for the loss, so that the teams could continue to play with equal number of players.

The playing time consisted of two halves, each of them 20 actual minutes long. There could be no ties, instead you had to play extra times of 2 x 5 minutes until one team had won.

The tournament was to be played according to the "Bergvall System." The idea of this system was to find the winner in an ordinary elimination competition (tournament A). Thereafter a new tournament (tournament B) for the second prize was played between the teams that had been beaten by the winner in tournament A. And, finally, there was a similar tournament for the third prize between the teams that had been beaten in tournaments A and B by the second prize winner. In this way one achieved, in theory, a fair distribution of the medals and did not risk that, for example, the second best team of the tournament was eliminated already in the first round by the final winner.

The draw was made on April 22 in the club house belonging to the Royal Yachtclub de Belgique. There was only a draw for tournament A. The Swedes questioned how tournaments B and C were to be played. It was considered obvious that the teams that had advanced furthest in the A and B tournament, respectively, i.e. had played the most matches, would get a bye in the first round of the succeeding tournament. Nothing had been decided on this issue by the organizers, and this was to become a hot issue in view of how the tournament developed.

The referees were elected at the same time. No special referees had been engaged by the organizers, but the referees were nominated by representatives from the different teams. The elected referees were mainly players or coaches from the participating teams. Only seven teams participated in the tournament, and therefore the games started with the quarter finals. The French team got a bye in the first round.

⁷Just as long as a modern rink, but about 10 meters narrower

Quarter finals

Sweden vs. Belgium 8-0 (5-0)

Date: 23 April (2130)

	Sweden	Belgium		Goalscorers
Goalkeeper:	Seth Howander	François Vergult	1-0	Burman
Defenders:	Einar Svensson	Philippe Van Volckxsom	2-0	Johansson
	Einar Lundell	Gaston Van Volxem	3-0	Burman
Rover:	Nils Molander	Paul Goeminne	4-0	Lindqvist
Forwards:	Eric Burman	Paul Loicq	5-0	Burman
	Einar Lindqvist (C)	Jean-Maurice Goossens	6-0	Johansson
	Georg Johansson	Maurice Deprez	7-0	Molander
			8-0	Lindqvist
Referee:	W. A. Hewitt (CAN)			

Sweden played their first ice hockey match ever against Belgium. Erik Burman was on the team after having excelled in training. Molander was still feeble, but played. Einar Lindqvist, the centre-forward, had been nominated captain of the team. Six of the seven Swedish players played their very first ice hockey match, in their debut on the national team.

The Palais de Glace was crowded when the home team in red sweaters and white trousers, “the red devils,” entered the rink. The Belgians had been very sure of winning before the game as they considered themselves the best ice hockey team in Europe and certain to win the bronze medal trailing only the transatlantic teams.

During the first five minutes the Belgians were pressing hard. In spite of their inferior skating technique they managed to make a few shots, but the Swedish goalkeeper, Seth Howander, played calmly and safely. When the Swedes’ nervousness had subsided, the play began to change. The first Swedish attack was a combination between Molander, Lindqvist and Burman. Shortly after, it was time for the first goal ever for a Swedish national team. Erik Burman captured the puck from a Belgian defender, rounded the goal and shot from two meters distance past the goalkeeper. Soon thereafter, *as* a result of a complicated situation in the comer, the puck arrived at the unmarked “Fransman” Johansson in front of the goal, who easily scored 2-0. The Swedes continued to press on, Lindqvist and Molander both had good shots.

Now the play began to get rough, and Lindqvist, who used his size and weight in the play, was sent off together with a Belgian. After two minutes, when Lindqvist entered the rink after his penalty time, he captured the puck, rounded the Belgian goal and passed to Burman, who scored 3-0. The rough play continued, Lindqvist was sent off once more and was followed by “Knatten” Lundell and the Belgian Loicq, both being sent to the penalty box at the same time.

The most spectacular goal of the match was 4-0. Burman made a rush along the board, passed to Lindqvist, who shot a goal from a narrow angle. The noisy Swedish supporters on the stand, the rough Swedish play and, above all, that the Swedes were well on their way to outclass the home favourites, turned the spectators more and more against the Swedes, who nevertheless continued: 5-0 was scored by Burman after a pass from Lindqvist.

Now the penalties began to be really frequent. Lundell was first sent off after having bumped into the Belgian goalkeeper. Then Johansson, shortly afterwards followed by Lindqvist and a Belgian player, were sent to the penalty box. With four players against the six Belgians on the rink, Sweden was pressed back but still managed to defend their goal.

The Canadian referee Hewitt had had a laborious first half. He said “the Swedes were rough even by Canadian standards. They had a theory that the thing to do was to knock down every Belgian player and then pick up the loose puck.”⁸ He had stopped the game and inquired if any of the Swedes spoke English. Seth Howander said that he did and Hewitt told him to tell his teammates to change their style of play. A brief discussion ensued among the Swedish team members. Howander returned to Hewitt, and said: “They say they don’t know how you play hockey. They just know how they play.”⁹

The second half began with “Linkan” Lindqvist still in the penalty box, but the Swedes continued to score goals, now with Nisse Molander in the lead. “Fransman” Johansson scored 6-0 after a pass from Molander, who had dribbled through the Belgian defense. Molander himself scored 7-0 after a new dribble attack, which he ended by tricking the goalkeeper. Belgium had given up, but eagerly wanted a comfort goal. They had a few nice attacks, but the goalkeeper Howander refused to surrender.

The play began to get rougher again, even Molander was sent off, which was said to be for the first time in his career. The Swedish newspaper men on the stand had a different view of the Swedish team. “There was a break, while the weak Belgian right wing was carried off the rink, after having managed to hack himself in the knee. The spectators were by now furious with the Swedes and drowned the cheerings of the small but exclusive Swedish group in angry bawls. However, one should not be surprised if our boys may have been a bit too rough on the opponents, since these were very apt in playing various tricks on our boys, but in such a devious way that it was difficult catching them in action. The Swedes, on the other hand, who are new to ice hockey and have not yet gained knowledge in such dirty tricks, had to do so in a more open and honest way, if they wanted to get even, so to speak.”¹⁰

¹ *Idrottsbladet*, 26 April 1920

The Swedes managed to play their first ice hockey match ever without allowing any goals. Einar Lindqvist finished the scoring by making Sweden’s eighth goal.

“After the match the teams saluted each other. And the music played a strange composition of the latest operettas by Lehßr and Christinée’s foxtrot, during which the spectators rose and uncovered their heads. The undersigned thought that this was something like God save the king, but was informed that this was the Swedish national anthem “Du gamla, du fria’! .”¹¹

Canada’s captain, Frank Frederickson, congratulated the Swedes on their victory after the game “well done, but it was not ice hockey!”¹²

USA vs. Switzerland 29-0 (15-0)

Date: 24 April

	USA	Switzerland	Goalscorers
Goal keeper:	Raymond Bonney	René Savoie	Conroy 8
Defenders:	Leon Tuck	Marius Jaccard	McCormick 7
	Edward Fitzgerald	Paul Lob	Goheen 6
Rover:	Frank Goheen	Louis Dufour	Drury 6
Forwards:	Joseph McCormick (C)	Max Holzboer	Fitzgerald 1
	Herbert Drury	Max Sillig	Tuck 1
	Anthony Conroy	Rodolphe Cuendet	
Referee:	Raoul Le Mat (SWE)		

⁸ Cosentino/Leyshon, *Winter Gold*, p. 15

⁹ Cosentino/Leyshon, *Winter Gold*, p. 15

¹⁰ MDBR

¹¹ *Dagens Nyheter*, 30 April 1920

¹² *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 30 April 1920

“Don’t kill us” a Swiss said to an American colleague after the draw. Everyone was totally convinced that the United States would beat the Swiss easily - and this also turned out to be the case. Up to 13-0 the average American goal scoring was one goal per minute. Sometimes the goals came very frequently - four times with less than 10 seconds between them. Then the Americans slowed down.

In spite of the many goals the Swiss goalkeeper did a good job. From time to time the Americans became somewhat too careless, they wanted to make an extra pass in front of the goal, with the result that the Swiss defenders could get in between. The United States allowed Switzerland to start attacking. Then they easily captured the puck and thus had a large space to attack on.

The superiority of the American team could also be seen from an episode in the second half. First, Drury was sent off (for five minutes for having kicked the puck), and then Conroy. Switzerland managed to press on a bit, but the defender Fitzgerald captured the puck, counter-attacked and scored in spite of being two men short.

The best players of the American team were Drury, who made several solo dribblings and often scored, and “Moose” Goheen, who made marvelous rushes. Also Joe McCormick was good, scoring several goals on long shots.

The Americans had something new to show the European spectators - numbers on the backs of the players. According to Torsten Tegnér these were used to perform combinations learned previously. A few knocks with the stick meant for example 5 - 8 - 6, i.e., a way of passing the puck that had been decided earlier on.

Canada vs. Czechoslovakia 15-0 (7-0)

Date: 24 April

	<u>Canada</u>	<u>Czechoslovakia</u>	<u>Goalscorers</u>
Goalkeeper:	Walter Byron	Jan Peka	Halderson 7
Defenders:	Konrad Johanneson Robert Benson	Otakar Vindyš Jan Palouš	Fredrickson 4 Goodman 2
Rover:	Allan Woodman	Karel Hartmann	Woodman 1
Forwards:	Magnus Goodman Frank Frederickson (C) Haldor Halderson	Karel Pešek Josef Šroubek (C) Vilém Loos	Johanneson 1
Referee:	?		

In the quarter finals Canada showed the same superiority as the American team, but they took it somewhat easier. The Czech team was also better than the Swiss one, they skated well, had a good grip of the game and a fine technique with the sticks, which was the reason why the scoring figures were not too high.

Canada built their game on team-work, while the American team had depended more on individual skills. As previously said, the Winnipeg Falcons took it easy, they played for fun and often passed the puck between themselves all the way into the goal. Sometimes the Canadian play exploded in a very fast passing game between the forwards, finished by a stinging shot that nearly blew the goal to pieces.

The captain, Frank Frederickson, was a brilliant leader of the forward-line, but it was the wing Halderson who was the leading goal scorer. The defender Johanneson became somewhat of a favorite to the public due to his marvelous skating technique.

Semi finals

Sweden vs. France 4-0 (2-0)

Date: 25 April (1700)

	<u>Sweden</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>Goalscorers</u>	
Goal keeper:	Seth Howander	Jacques Gaittet	1-0	Burman
Defenders:	Einar Lindqvist (C)	Henri Couttet	2-0	Svensson
	Einar Lundell	Jean Chaland	3-0	Molander
Rover:	Nils Molander	Pierre Charpentier	4-0	Lindqvist
Forwards:	Eric Burman	Alfred de Rauch		
	Einar Svensson	Léonhard Quaglia		
	Georg Johansson	Georges Dary		
Referee:	Garon (CAN)			

The first semi-final was played between Sweden and France. The French were greeted enthusiastically, since they had been Belgium's allies during the war. The domestic spectators would probably also welcome a defeat of the rough Swedes, but the captain Lindqvist instantly made the spectators more friendly by shouting "Vive la France" directly after the Marseillaise had been played.

The French team consisted of several middle-aged gentlemen, all of them veterans from the war, from clubs in Paris and Chamonix. Most noticeable was one of the defenders with a long black beard and a paunch. It had been difficult to form a team, and at its late arrival in Antwerp, it had only had three weeks of practice.

The Swedish team was the same as in the match against Belgium, but "Stor-Klas" Svensson started the play as centre-forward, and Lindqvist as defender. Le Mat had been given strict orders before the game: "Play for the spectators, take it easy, and, above all, don't play rough."

The referee, who actually was the Canadian coach of the French team, had seen Sweden's previous match and stated clearly that he would not allow such rough play.

The Swedes began the game at a very low pace, and the players did all they could to avoid body contact. Nevertheless, the game was immediately transferred to the French half of the rink. The Swedes had many shots, but due to a very good goalkeeper and many players in front of the goal, the French were able to defend it.

Sweden did not score until the end of the first half, when the French became tired. "Stor-Klas" Svensson passed to Burman, who by means of a swift shot scored - 1-0. "Stor-Klas" himself could then add to the Swedish lead before the half-time break.

In the second half the Swedes had been ordered not to hold back too much, and the pressure on France became more intense. "Stor-Klas" Svensson returned to play defender, and Lindqvist was again centre-forward. The French gathered in front of their goal, and even when the puck was sent backwards to the Swedish goal, they were reluctant to leave their own goal by more than a few metres.

The pattern was the same as in the first half; Swedish pressure without result until the end of the half when the French began to be really tired again. The third goal was scored by Molander, after having dribbled through the French defense. "Knatten" Lundell made the preparatory work for the final goal, that was shot by Lindqvist from a narrow angle just before the final whistle.

Molander, who had not yet fully recovered, "Knatten" Lundell and "Linkan" Lindqvist, who was a fast skater with good technique, were best in the Swedish team. The

goalkeeper, Howander, had had a peaceful evening, only having had to block one lame long shot.

Canada vs. USA 2-0 (0-0)

Date: 25 April (2130)

	<u>Canada</u>	<u>USA</u>	<u>Goalscorers</u>	
Goal keeper:	Walter Byron	Raymond Bonney	1-0	Fredrickson
Defenders:	Konrad Johanneson Robert Benson	George Geran Edward Fitzgerald	2-0	Johanneson
Rover:	Allan Woodman	Frank Goheen		
Forwards:	Magnus Goodman Frank Frederickson (C)	Joseph McCormick (C) Herbert Drury		
Referee:	Haldor Halderson Alfred de Rauch (FRA)	Anthony Conroy		

Everyone agreed that the moral final was played between Canada and the United States. In front of sold-out stands, where there were somewhat more American supporters than Canadian, the best game yet seen in Europe was played. It is also said that this was the first international match between the two neighboring countries. The Swedish reporters present had never seen anything like it, and they exceeded one another in lyrical descriptions of what they had witnessed. We leave the word to Oscar Söderlund of *Stockholms-Tidningen*:

“I have never seen the like of this sports competition. Every single player on the rink was a perfect acrobat on the skates, skated at tremendous speed without regard to himself or anyone else, jumped over sticks and players with ease and grace, turned sharply with perfect ease and without losing speed, and skated backwards just as easily as forwards. And during all this, the puck was held down on the ice and was dribbled forwards by means of short shoves of the stick. In bandy you often have to play the ball in the air to pass it, but here the puck was kept gliding on the ice without interruption, even though the space for each player was less than a third of that in bandy. How the players were able to rush forward at such high speed and thread their way through the attacking opponents together with the long stick and puck on this insignificant space, where the distance between team mates and opponents hardly ever reached one metre, is quite beyond comprehension and had to be seen to be believed.

In soccer and bandy you say that there can be much pressure on a player, but the worst situation in these games is as sitting in a comfortable armchair compared to what these players did to one another. The players attacked each other with a roughness that would have sent an ordinary bandy player far into the next week, and you might possibly have a notion of what it was all about when the small Canadian defender Johanneson at one time was pushed headlong into the barrier board, so that it was cracked. However, he happily continued to play on, as if nothing had happened.

The small puck was moved at an extraordinary speed around the rink at all directions, so that the spectators almost became giddy, and the players fought for it like seagulls, that flutter about after bread crusts from a boat. In the same daring manner the players dived for the puck and turned away in a circle if anyone else had retrieved it, so as to glide round and try to get into a better position for capturing the coveted thing.

And there were shots at goal! At the worst speed the players had such extraordinary control that they confidently could send the puck towards the goal so hard that you could not follow it with your eyes. When you previously had seen the goalkeepers in their thick leg-pads which almost covered half of the goal, you had imagined that they only had to stand still

to deal with the shots. But in this game you could see that there really is such a thing as goalkeeping. Because not one of the shots were directed towards the goalkeeper, but instead aimed at the bottom comers of the goal, preferably a few decimetres above the ice. The goalkeepers had to dart about like mad, and be active all the time, sometimes using their feet and sometimes their stick, and they had an inconceivable ability to be in the right position to fend off the ball, even before the spectators had had time to realize there had been a shot. A few times the Canadian goalkeeper had to stop the puck with his hand, and despite his thick gloves his fingers were smashed until they bled. Those shots had great speed, and the puck is not soft.”¹³

The game was rough and the French referee, who was not used to this kind of ice hockey, found it hard to keep up. The French coach, Garon, had officially been nominated referee. This might seem to have been a good choice, a Canadian who was an officer in the American Red Cross. Both of the teams accepted him, but the Canadians reserved the right to have him replaced if he did not do well. Under such circumstances he did not want to act as referee, so de Rauch was chosen instead.

The American team, dressed in white trousers and black sweaters with the American flag shield on the chest, based their game on individual skills. Most of the time it was Drury or Conroy who tried to break through. Canada, who played in fawn-coloured trousers and yellow sweaters with a horizontal broad black stripe with a red maple leaf, had, however, the best team work, which in the long run turned out to be victorious.

During the first half the teams were even. Due to excellent goal keeping from both Wally Byron and Ray Bonney, the result was 0-0.

In the second half the game became even faster. To begin with, the Americans managed to get a grip of the game when the Canadian captain, Frederickson, was sent off. Above all, it was the right wing Joe McCormick who managed to get through. But then Canada took over. By effective back-checking the American rushes were stopped early, which forced them to shoot from a long distance. Instead the Canadian forward line started to dominate by means of good combinations, well supported by the rover Woodman. It did not take long before the first goal. Frank Frederickson managed to dribble the puck across the entire rink. His shot was saved by Byron, but Frederickson succeeded in getting the rebound in behind the goalie.

The United States had not surrendered. Joe McCormick had a good chance but missed. Shortly thereafter he and Frederickson were sent to the penalty box for five minutes each. This was when Canada decided the day. After an excellent combination between Goodman and Halderson, the puck went to the defender Johanneson. He was attacked hard at the same time as the puck was placed on edge. With a swing shot, at the same time as he fell, he succeeded in scoring - 2-0.

After this the Canadian defense played hard, fast and safely. The United States did not manage to get any serious chances to score, so 2-0 turned out to be the final result. After the signal there was a major scuffle, not because the players were angry with each other, but for the puck to bring home as a souvenir. In this fight the United States were victorious!

Final

Canada vs. Sweden 12-1 (5-1)

¹³ *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 4 May 1920

Date: 26 April (2000)

	Canada	Sweden	Goalscorers		
Goal keeper:	Walter Byron	Seth Howander	1-0	1.15	Halderson
Defenders:	Konrad Johanneson	Einar Lindqvist (C)	2-0	1.55	Fridfinnson
	Robert Benson	Wilhelm Arwe	3-0	5.20	Frederickson
Rover:	Chris Fridfinnson	Einar Svensson	3-1	15.58	Svensson
Forwards:	Magnus Goodman	Eric Burman	4-1	16.00	Frederickson
	Frank Frederickson (C)	Hansjacob Mattsson	5-1	17.35	Frederickson
	Haldor Halderson	Georg Johansson	6-1	23.47	Goodman
			7-1	28.09	Benson
Referee:	Joseph McCormick (USA)	8-1	29.15	Frederickson	
		9-1	29.30	Frederickson	
		10-1	34.55	Frederickson	
		11-1	36.20	Halderson	
		12-1	39.02	Frederickson	

Everyone expected that Sweden would lose the final. Nobody, not even the Swedes themselves, believed that they would have any chance of winning. This was the reason why they had changed the line-up. "Knatten" Lundell, who had an injured toe, did not play and was replaced by Wille Arwe. Furthermore, Molander, who still was not feeling well, was saved for the more important matches for the silver- and bronze medals. He was replaced by "Stor-Klas" Svensson as rover. Lindqvist started as defender and Mattsson, who was on the team for the first time, played centre-forward. Canada had replaced the magnificent rover Woodman by Chris Fridfinnson.

In spite of the difficult opposition, the Swedes did not play defensively with a wall of players in front of the goal to keep the scoring low. Instead they tried to attack as soon as they saw an opportunity to do so, in the spirit of "attack is the best defense". This meant that the play was not entirely on the Swedish side of the rink, but that it surged backwards and forwards. The Canadian goalkeeper was also put to work, but the Swedish attacks were far more lame than the Canadian ones,

The Canadians scored from time to time, but after 3-0, when the Swedes had began to get a grip of themselves, there was a long period when Canada did not score at all. "And then the miracle occurred! The Swedes were attacking - they had done so several times before - and the puck reached Svensson who shot from 10 meters distance. The puck just barely touched a player's leg, but this was enough to change its direction so that the goalkeeper did not have time to position himself, but had to watch it entering the goal. An enormous cheer followed this goal, and the American referee McCormick warily watched the ceiling to see if it would stand the trial."¹⁴ The Swedes thought that this goal was their prime achievement in the tournament. This was the only goal made by a losing team in the entire tournament, but above all it was the only goal any team succeeded in scoring against the outstanding Canadians. Not even the United States had managed to score against Canada. The Canadian goalkeeper was so surprised that he actually fell to the ice in shock. But Canada immediately retaliated. Two seconds after the face-off they scored 4-1.

After halftime the Swedes were below by an honorable 5-1. Canada increased the speed in the second half and they began to play as they had against the United States. But the Swedes defended themselves valiantly and skillfully, and the goalie Howander was excellent. A few minutes into the second half the Canadian defender Johanneson was injured and had to leave the

¹⁴ *Stockholms-Tidningen* 6 May 1920

rink. According to the rules, Sweden then had to take one player off the rink, and Mattson was chosen. In the middle of the second half the play began to get rougher. The referee sent one Canadian off - this was the only suspension of the game - and the intensity of the play decreased.

The Swedes considered the final result, 12-1, to be a success. The wings Burman and "Fransman" Johansson were the best players of the team. The latter was brilliant, with a solid defense and beautiful rushes forwards. As previously stated, Howander was excellent, and the two giants of the team, "Stor-Klas" Svensson and "Linkan" Lindqvist, were also very good. Wille Arwe was the best new player and compensated an inferior defense by a good offense. However, Mattson was quite inferior to the rest of the team, and was a disappointment.

After the match the Swedes received much appreciation, not only from Canada, but also from the American team. Canada, who had now played their last match, gave their sticks away to the Swedish players as a memento.

Second place tournament

USA vs. Sweden 7-0 (5-0)

Date: 27 April (2250)

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Sweden</u>	<u>Goalscorers</u>
Goalkeeper:	Cyril Weidenborner	Seth Howander	Geran 3
Defenders:	George Geran	Einar Lindqvist (C)	?
	Leon Tuck	Einar Lundell	
Rover:	Frank Goheen	Wilhelm Arwe	
Forwards:	Frank Synott (C)	Eric Burman	
	Herbert Drury	Einar Svensson	
	Anthony Conroy	Georg Johansson	
Referee	?		

It was decided that Sweden was to meet the United States in the first round of the tournament for second place, and for the second night in a row Sweden had to play a late evening match. Lundell was back on the team, but Molander, who still was not well and had suffered a sleepless night, was again replaced by Wille Arwe. A couple of substitutes played for the United States. Weidenborner had replaced Bonney as goalkeeper, and "Red" Synott was captain instead of Joe McCormick.

Le Mat had given the Swedes orders to play calmly and try to avoid being injured or exhausted. He was thinking ahead of future matches for the bronze medals. Sweden's tactics were purely defensive, only two men were to attack and the defenders were told to send the puck well back into the American half of the rink and remain in a defensive position. During the first half these tactics did not prove very successful. The United States could attack undisturbed, and when they met the Swedish defense their speed was at maximum.

In spite of this the game started with a couple of Swedish attacks that were finished off by shots on goal, but then the Americans took over completely. They made five goals before the half time break, among them three successive beautiful distance shots by the defender Geran.

During the break the Swedes got really angry about the lame resistance they had offered, and got the coach's permission to play at full speed. At the same time "Knatten" Lundell was made rover, instead of Arwe, and he took the opportunity to attack briskly. The play became more even, and the Americans found it really difficult to continue to dominate the game. Sweden had many good attacks, and Weidenborner had to show his real ability in quite

a different way from the first half. The United States reacted to the new gravity of the game, and the play got rougher which resulted in several suspensions. “Fransman” Johansson had a nose-bleed due to having been hit by an opponent’s head and had to be dressed by Sigurjonsson, the Canadian masseur.

The result of the second half was that the United States only managed to score twice, the last goal just before the final signal. Again Sweden had been defeated honourably.

USA vs. Czechoslovakia 16-0 (7-0)

Date: 28 April (2200)

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Czechoslovakia</u>	<u>Goalscorers</u>
Goalkeeper:	Cyril Weidenborner	Jan Peka	L. McCormick 5
Defenders:	Edward Fitzgerald Frank Goheen	Otakar Vindyš Jan Palouš	?
Rover:	Frank Synott	Karel Hartmann	
Forwards:	Joseph McCormick (C) Lawrence McCormick	Karel Pešek Josef Sroubek (C)	
Referee	Anthony Conroy Paul Loicq (BEL)	Vilém Loos	

Both the McCormick brothers were on the team when the United States played the decisive match for the silver medals against Czechoslovakia. But the team’s great individualist, Herb Drury, was missing, since he had been injured in the match against Sweden. Czechoslovakia, who had played very defensively against Canada in their only match so far, had undoubtedly learned a lot from Sweden’s different tactics against the Americans. This was the reason why the team now played very offensively, and hard and fairly recklessly at the same time.

The United States started off in a casual manner, but Czechoslovakia’s rough play irritated them. Since the referee, the Belgian Loicq, was really poor, the game turned into a veritable battle. The play got even rougher during the second half, and came close to degenerate.

When it came to capacity, the Czechs had no chance. The American team won the silver medals clearly, after having scored seven times in the first half and nine in the second. Five of the goals were scored by the debutant Larry McCormick.

Third place tournament

Sweden vs. Switzerland 4-0 (0-0)

Date: 28 April (2330)

	<u>Sweden</u>	<u>Switzerland</u>	<u>Goalscorers</u>
Goalkeeper:	Albin Jansson	René Savoie	1-0 Säfwenberg
Defenders:	Einar Lindqvist (C) Einar Lundell	Marius Jaccard Paul Lob	2-0 Johansson 3-0 Arwe
Rover:	Nils Molander	Louis Dufour	4-0 Arwe
Forwards:	David Säfwenberg Wilhelm Arwe Georg Johansson	Bruno Leuzinger Max Sillig Rodolphe Cuendet	
Referee	Frank Frederickson (CAN)		

In order to finish the tournament before the medal ceremony, it was decided that Sweden was to play against Switzerland in the first match of the bronze tournament. Czechoslovakia played against the United States for the second prize the same day. Sweden had to play for the fourth day in a row, and once again the match was played late in the evening and did not end until after midnight.

The Belgian Loicq had officially been selected referee. Sweden protested against this and referred to the adverse attitude from the Belgian audience and the Belgian leaders since Sweden's premiere match against Belgium. Sweden was supported by the other teams, and finally the Belgian organizers gave in. Instead Canada's captain Frank Frederickson was chosen to be referee.

Many of the Swedish players were tired after having played so many matches. Thus, neither Erik Burman nor "Stor-Klas" Svensson played, and the same went for the goalkeeper Seth Howander. David Säfwenberg and "Abbe" Jansson made their debut on the team. Sweden wanted to have as fresh a team as possible for the decisive match for the bronze medals. It was considered absolutely certain that Sweden was to beat Switzerland.

Talking of the goalkeeper, "Abbe" Jansson, many years later he described what it was like to be a goalkeeper in those days, especially considering the meagre equipment. "To be a goalkeeper under such conditions was especially risky, but I and Seth Howander equipped ourselves with whatever things we could find. We put padded cushions where we thought we needed them most. Naturally, we had bandy leg pads, but they only protected the front. A puck from behind was sheer disaster. Personally, I usually played without gloves, since I thought that I could handle the stick better that way. According to the rules of those days, the goalkeeper was not allowed to 'throw himself' on the ice. All players had to stand on their skates to have the right to play the puck. This went for goalkeepers as well. As a result of this, you did not catch the puck in some kind of catching glove as the goalkeepers of today, but you defended your goal as best as you could. In other words, you fended off all pucks, whether they came along the ice or in the air. You had to be good at 'tennis', and I was fairly apt at that too."¹⁵

Sweden was completely superior in the game. "Abbe" Jansson had to fend off one shot at the beginning of the first half, but that was the only one during the whole game. Instead, there were many shots against the Swiss goal, but no scoring was made. This was due both to the Swiss goalkeeper playing well, but also to the Swedes pressing on too hard, so that there was a human wall in front of Switzerland's goal.

After the first half scoreless tie, Sweden changed their tactics and did not press on so hard. The play opened up, and as the Swiss players grew tired, Sweden started to score. Säfwenberg scored 1-0 with a long shot from the right wing. "Fransman" Johansson made number two on a rebound after a shot from Wille Arwe. Arwe himself scored 3-0 as well as 4-0. The latter was one of Sweden's most beautiful goals. Säfwenberg skated up along the right wing, passed the puck one meter in front of the goal, and Arwe shot directly.

Sweden had now arrived at the decisive match for the bronze medals and the battle of European superiority.

Czechoslovakia vs. Sweden 1-0 (1-0)

Date: 29 April (2300)

¹⁵ Pucken, p. 69

	<u>Czechoslovakia</u>	<u>Sweden</u>	<u>Goalscorers</u>
Goalkeeper:	Karel Wälzer	Seth Howander	1-0 Šroubek
Defenders:	Otakar Vindyš Jan Palouš	Einar Lindqvist (C) Einar Lundell	
Rover:	Karel Hartmann	Nils Molander	
Forwards:	Karel Pešek Josef Šroubek (C) Vilém Loos	Eric Burman Einar Svensson Georg Johansson	
Referee:	Frank Frederickson (CAN)		

“Well, now everything is over, and all that remains is to drink the bitter wine of defeat, put on a happy face on the splendid sports achievement of the Swedes down here. They began and ended this Olympic period, and not one day has passed that they have not participated in the games. They, if anyone, have made an achievement in this prelude, since they have participated in everything. And, whether they have won or lost, they have always been feared opponents, the mightiest battle has been fought where the Swedish colors shone.

“All that remains to be bitterly deplored, is that the ice hockey players did not get a better reward for their pains. No one has endured such hardships as they have, no one has had to play so many and such rough matches or had such little rest, and no one has been so badly treated as they have. But in return, they have fought their way in a splendid manner through all difficulties, and it was only exhaustion that finally defeated them.

“Because even if we lost the match for third prize, the Swedish team has carried out the finest work, and has turned out to be the absolutely best European team. If we had lost our third prize to a worthier opponent, nothing could have been said about it, but what is most annoying about it, is that we were defeated by a weaker team, whose play also was inferior in the game against the Swedish team. It is true that the boys were totally exhausted and lacked the edge in their game, but their superiority was nevertheless just as indisputable as it ever was against the French, the Belgians or the Swiss.”¹⁶

Oscar Söderlund has well interpreted the Swedish feelings after the match; the bitter disappointment after the loss, but also the pride in what the Swedish players had performed during the tournament.

Sweden used its ordinary team in yet another night match, the same team that played the first two matches of the tournament. It turned out that the game was decided already after a few minutes play. The Czech captain Šroubek skated along the left side of the rink and shot from a long distance. “Knatten” Lundell tried to stop the puck with his hand, but only managed to touch it so that it changed direction. Howander was taken by surprise, and could not reach the puck in time with his foot, and thus it glided into the goal.

The Czechs had yet another dangerous situation in front of the Swedish goal, before the game was transferred to the other half of the rink. As the Swedes took over the play, it began to get rougher. The Czechs defended themselves forcefully, sometimes a bit to brusquely.

The Swedish team continued to dominate in the second half. A maximum offensive had been ordered in half-time, and Lindqvist was made centre-forward instead of “Stor-Klas” Svensson in order to increase the pressure. For long periods of time all the Swedish players except Howander could be found on the Czech half of the rink. There was a formidable amount of shots on the Czech goal, but no scoring was made. According to Erik Bergvall there was one puck that passed the Czech goal-line before the goalkeeper managed to push it out,

¹⁶ *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 7 May 1920

but the referee did not see it. The Czech team also used some modern tricks to defend their goal. They shot the puck over the barrier board to gain time, and in a few pressed situations the Czech goalkeeper turned the goal over, so that the game had to be stopped.

A few minutes before full time a Czech player tried to attack, but was caught by “Knatten” Lundell, who fell and dragged the Czech player with him. In a rage (as it seemed), he slashed out with his stick and hit Lundell over the nasal bone and below the eye. “Knatten” Lundell, who fainted with blood gushing from nose and mouth, had to be carried off the rink and it is said that he did not come to until half an hour after the end of the game. The game had to be finished with one player less for each team.

The result stood firm during the whole match, and the Czech team won the bronze medals. According to *Dagens Nyheter* the shot statistics were 16-2 in the first half, and 32-0 in the second half. With a total of 48-2 in shots, it is easy to understand that the match has been described as being completely dominated by the Swedish team, and to lose by 1-0 under such conditions must have been bitter.

Summary

Participants: 60 Nations: 7 Date: 23-29 April

Final Standings:

		<i>W</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>Pts</i>	<i>GF</i>	<i>GA</i>
1.	Canada	3	0	0	6	29	1
2.	United States	3	1	0	6	52	2
3.	Czechoslovakia	1	2	0	2	1	31
4.	Sweden	3	3	0	6	17	20
=5.	France	0	1	0	0	0	4
	Belgium	0	1	0	0	0	8
	Switzerland	0	2	0	0	0	33

After the final match between Sweden and Czechoslovakia, which did not end until midnight, the prizes were given away by count Baillet-Latour. The whole tournament was finished by a dance until “late in the night.”

During and after the tournament the “Bergvall system” was much discussed. This system turned out to have great disadvantages for the Swedish team, that had to play six matches in seven days, while the bronze medallists Czechoslovakia only had to play three. At the draw Torsten Tegnér was enthusiastic about the system, which according to him would select all the medalists with “mathematical precision and a minimum of matches.”¹⁷ The only question at the draw was how the silver and bronze tournaments was to be played. Tegnér and Bergvall agreed that the team that had advanced the furthest in the preceding tournament would get a bye in the first round if there was an uneven number of teams left. At the draw Tegnér also anticipated how the tournament would turn out, viz. that Sweden would play in the finals against Canada, then lose to the United States in the silver final and finally meet the Czechoslovakian team in the bronze final.

Furthermore Tegnér stated that it was actually he who had invented the system. Sometime during 1913/14, when he worked for Erik Bergvall at *Nordiskt Idrottslif*, he told his

¹⁷ *Idrottsbladet*, 30 April 1920

boss about the idea concerning a new system. Bergvall laid his hands upon the idea and presented it to the Olympic Committee as "System Bergvall."

Torsten Tegnér ended his article with: "In any case we can be satisfied that through 'system Bergvall' a fair and sound sports organization principle has become generally accepted, and this on a Swedish initiative, in spite of the fact that at this time the reform might turn out to be at our disadvantage. A second prize in the hockey tournament, with the two North American teams on the other half of the playing schedule, had been unfair as well as offensive to any idea of sports."¹⁸

Oscar Söderlund of *Stockholms-Tidningen* was also very pleased at the draw, as far as Sweden was concerned. "The draw couldn't have turned out better for the hockey players than it actually did. Because if our boys were to be sure of the third prize, they needed as much training as possible, and then they couldn't get on to a better start than to meet Belgium in the first match. We considered ourselves good enough to beat the Belgians fairly easily, and with the experience gained from this match, we shouldn't have any problem with disposing of France in the second round. After that we had to take a lot of beating in, and learning a lot from, our matches against Canada and America, but after these the team should have been knocked into a team that played ice hockey, and under these circumstances Czechoslovakia's cause must be considered as lost when the decisive match for the third prize was to be played between them and us. In this way our boys have to play more matches than any other team - five in all - but this is just what they needed."¹⁹

Thus the Swedish attitude was positive before the tournament. It was considered that the system created a sporting justice, and that, in spite of the fact that the silver medals were lost compared to an ordinary elimination tournament, it nevertheless was to the Swedish team's advantage to play many matches.

When it was time for the B-tournament, and it turned out that it was Czechoslovakia instead of Sweden that got the bye, doubts about the system were beginning to set in. That Sweden was to play against the United States, before the Czechs did it, did not matter so much, but what mattered was that the Czechs got the bye in the C-tournament as well. This decision was taken by the organizers in order to get to finish the tournament in time, and the result of this was that the Swedish team was being deprived of one day of well needed rest, especially considering the amount of late night matches they had had to play.

After Sweden's fatal loss against Czechoslovakia, the consequences for the Swedish team from "System Bergvall" became absolutely clear, and the system was now considered to be unjust. Torsten Tegnér, no longer claiming to have been the inventor of the system, wrote the following regarding Sweden's loss: "The blame must be put on the organizers and on Bergvall, who had come up with and carried out this comical tournament system."²⁰

Oddly enough, or, for Tegnér perhaps not so funny, his article from the draw, that had been sent by mail, and the article from the final match, that had been cabled, were both published in the same edition of *Idrottsbladet!* This way Erik Bergvall had some good arguments for his reply, which was published in the next edition of *Nordiskt Idrottslif*. He made ironic remarks about Tegnér's about face, and drew the attention to the remarkable fact that Tegnér invented the system in 1913/14, when it was used already in the 1912 Olympic waterpolo tournament!

Erik Bergvall further claims, after the end of the tournament, that the system was not used correctly. It was his opinion that after all teams having played one match, a tournament consisting of all the losing teams (including Czechoslovakia) was to start immediately. The

¹⁸ *Idrottsbladet*, 30 April 1920

¹⁹ *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 30 April 1920

²⁰ *Idrottsbladet*, 30 April 1920

purpose of this tournament was to select the team which, together with those teams that lost against the gold medalists in the subsequent rounds, was to play the B-tournament. The losing teams of the B-tournament were then to meet in a C-tournament. In this way both Sweden and Czechoslovakia would have had to play five matches each.

It is correct, as Bergvall claims, that the "Bergvall system" was used for the first time in the 1912 waterpolo tournament. The system was further used in 1920, in soccer, tug-of-war and waterpolo as well as in ice hockey. In the Olympics the system was thereafter only used for waterpolo (1924 and 1928), the sport that Bergvall himself was most involved in.

It is a fact that in these tournaments the system was used differently. Sometimes the B-tournament was preceded by a tournament between all the losing teams of the first round, and sometimes the B-tournament was played only after the main final between the teams that had lost to the gold medalists. An exact application of the method was never found, even if the basic idea of the system was theoretically correct. Almost everytime the Bergvall system was used, the principles and the match order differed. It is also interesting to note, in view of the criticism concerning the 1920 ice hockey tournament, where the main injustice was considered to be the number of matches played, that the same thing occurred when the system was used in the Olympics for the last time in 1928. In the match for third place, France, who had played five previous matches, met Argentina, who had only played one. However, there was one difference, and this was that France won.

The International Ice Hockey Federation held a congress in Antwerp in connection with the Olympic ice hockey tournament. The activities of the Federation, that had been at a standstill during the World War, were now resumed. Sweden, Canada and the United States joined the Federation, but at the same time the "Central Empires" were excluded on Belgium's request. At the Congress it was decided to hold World and European championships the following year, the nascent ice hockey nation Sweden getting the honor of being organizers. Canada as well as the United States promised to send teams, but in 1921 when the time came, only Czechoslovakia and Sweden participated. Thus the championships were classified to be European only.

Furthermore there was a major revision of the ice hockey rules. The Canadian rules, which, i.e., stated that the teams were to consist of six players with two substitutes, were assumed without alteration. The playing time was determined to be 3 x 20 minutes for World Championships, and 2 x 20 minutes for other matches. It was also decided that there were to be two referees instead of one.

The Swedish players were properly celebrated on their arrival home. Of the eleven members of the team, seven returned to Stockholm, where the Swedish Soccer Federation gave a banquet shortly after the return. The players received the Federation's silver medal, while coach Le Mat got a commemorative cup and the Federation's international championship badge.

Of the remaining players, Molander and Säfwenbergl returned to Berlin, while Mattsson went back to London. "Abbe" Jansson became employed in Antwerp and remained in Belgium for many years. Among other things he became Belgian ice hockey champion three times. Erik Burman returned to Sweden, but shortly thereafter he went to Berlin and settled down. After a few years, and after a temporary stay in Antwerp, he moved to the United States.

Swedish ice hockey had a flying start as a result of the successful participation in the Antwerp tournament. The sport successfully competed with the established bandy. During the 20's and 30's ice hockey was mainly played in the Stockholm area, but after the war ice hockey became the predominant winter team sport all over the country, Sweden's international success, apart from a few European championships during the interwar period, started with a world championship title in 1953. After this, Sweden has won the World Championships another five times, in 1957, 1962, 1987, 1991 and 1992. According to my

opinion, the peak is the Olympic gold that was won in Lillehammer after a final against Canada, never to be forgotten.

References

Literature

- Bass, Howard. *International Encyclopaedia of Winter Sports*.
Bergvall, Erik. *De Olympiska Spelen i Antwerpen 1920*.
Bergvall, Erik (ed). *VII Olympiaden*.
Coleman, Jim. *Hockey is our Game*.
Cosentino, Frank and Leyshon, Glynn. *Winter Gold*.
Eklöv, Rudolf (ed). *Pucken. En bok om svensk ishockey*.
Heller, Mark. *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Ice Skating*.
Ice Hockey US Record in Olympics and World Championships 1920-1979.
Kamper, Erich. *Lexikon der Olympischen Winterspiele*.
Kihlberg, Morgan. *Idrottshistoria*.
Kluge, Volker. *Olympische Winterspiele. Die Chronik. Chamonix 1924-Lillehammer 1994*.
Lindhagen, Sven. *Mina femton olympiader och några till*.
Mallon, Bill. *The Unofficial Report of the 1920 Olympics*.
Mallon, Bill and Buchanan, Ian. *Quest for Gold. The Encyclopedia of American Olympians*.
Nordisk Familjeboks Sportlexikon.
Report of the American Olympic Committee. Seventh Olympic Games, Antwerp, Belgium, 1920.
Wallechinsky, David. *The Complete Book of the Olympics*.
Wasner, Fritz. *Die Olympische Winterspiele 1924-1936*.

Magazines and newspapers

<i>Dagens Nyheter</i>	1919-1920
<i>Idrottsbladet</i>	1919-1920
<i>Manitoba Free Press, Winnipeg</i>	1920
<i>The New York Times</i>	1920
<i>Nordiskt Idrottslif</i>	1919-1920
<i>Olympic Review</i>	No. 197, 1984
<i>Stockholms-Tidningen</i>	1919-1920

Personal communications

Mallon, Bill.
Nordmark, Birger.
Pruner, Jaroslav.
Srámek, Miroslav.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tuesday, 5 December 1995, marked the fourth anniversary of the founding of ISOH and our first "Olympiad" has now come to a close. Sadly, just a few weeks earlier we learned of the death of Erich Kamper, our Honorary President, and the doyen of Olympic historians. Although I never had the pleasure of meeting Erich, my first letter from him was dated 20 April 1974 and after 21 years of regular correspondance it seems as if I have lost a close friend. I am sure you will all share the sentiments expressed by Bill Mallon in the accompanying obituary.

When ISOH was founded by a small group of historians in London in 1991, I was delighted to be asked to serve as the first President although I can now confess that I entertained some reservations about the need for such an organization. I felt that I knew of just about everyone interested in Olympic History and that the need to formalize many years of amicable correspondance was perhaps not necessary. How wrong I was! Since the founding of ISOH, I have made countless new and knowledgeable friends, many of whom I have had the pleasure of meeting personally and I am sure that through ISOH other members have also been able to widen their field of contacts.

The main vehicle for learning of members with similar interest is, of course, our journal, *Citius, Altius, Fortius*, and we owe an immense debt to Bill Mallon for editing a publication of such high quality. From the very first issue he produced a journal which was far superior to many of the publications of societies of much longer standing. However, all of Bill's efforts would have been in vain without the necessary finances to meet the printing and postage costs. Here we are indebted to IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch, for making funds available to meet the cost of publication.

Speaking of the IOC, many of you will already know that Karel Wendl, former Director of the Olympic Studies and Research Centre for the IOC, has now retired and I am delighted to report that, in recognition of all the help he gave to ISOH during our early years, Karel has been elected an Honorary Life Member by the Executive Committee. We wish him a long and happy retirement.

I believe it can be safely said that our first "Olympiad" has been successful. We are now recognized by a number of international academic bodies, and many of our members have published the results of their researches in a particular field. The wide-ranging nature of the articles in the Journal also serves to confirm the growing interest in Olympic history. Starting in 1996, ISOH will be listed as a recognized organization in the *Olympic Movement Directory*, published by the IOC.

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to the members of the Executive Committee for their support during my term of office and I look forward to meeting them and many other members in Atlanta.

Ian Buchanan
President, IS OH