The Canada-Russia Summit Series
40th Anniversary Special

Dispatches from Montreal hockey legends
Red Fisher and Ted Blackman

Featuring illustrations by Aislin
Special thanks to Dr. Erle Schneidman who provided the ticket from game 1 of the 1972 summit series played in Montreal on September 2, 1972 and the ticket stub from game 8 played in the USSR on September 28, 1972.

Other tickets from the summit series as well memorabilia from hockey history can be seen at his website: www.canadiensmemorabilia.com
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Summit Series, 40 years later:
Red Fisher begins his journey back to Moscow, 1972
By Red Fisher
The Gazette, August 31, 2012

MONTREAL - National Hockey League players will tell you the real season doesn’t start until after the regular one ends.

It was that way when the Original Six’s 50-game schedule grew to 60 in 1946-47. Four seasons later, the schedule had expanded to 70 games, and it remained that way for 18 seasons until four more games were added after the league doubled in size — and upward to today’s 82.

It’s one thing to make the playoffs, but you’re not a winner unless you’re holding the Stanley Cup aloft. There is nothing to match it, but you’ll get at least a small argument from many of the Team Canada players who competed in the classic 1972 eight-game Summit Series, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this month and none among us shall ever forget.

Team Canada’s professionals versus the “amateur” Soviets. The first four games in Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver on Sept. 2, 4, 6 and 8, the final four in Moscow on Sept. 22, 24, 26 and 28.

Montreal Star editor-in-chief Frank Walker had this question in mid-July: “What are we going to do about that series? Isn’t it coming up in September?”

“It is ... and I’ve got an idea I want to run past you,” he was told. “Nobody knows anything about the Soviet team. Why don’t we get our stringer in Moscow (a freelance writer who contributed occasional articles) to do a series on those people? We could carry them a few days before training camp opens.”

“I’ve got a better idea,” Walker said. “Why don’t you go over there for a week or so? I’ll speak to somebody at the Soviet consulate in Ottawa. We’ll get you cleared for the trip. They’ll want to know who you want to see, where you want to go, so let me know as soon as possible. You can go over there ... talk to the players, come back and do a series. We’ll get our people to sell it. We may even make a few dollars out of this.

“Let’s get going on this,” he added. “I want you over there and back before anybody knows we’re there.”

A few days later, Walker said arrangements had been made to procure a visa and a ticket on Aeroflot, the USSR’s principal airline.

“The people over there know you’re coming,” he said. “You’re leaving in two days ... Wednesday night.”

Walker added: “Aeroflot flies out of here only once a week and we don’t want to waste an extra week. Don’t tell anybody you’re going. I don’t want this to get around to other newspapers.”

Walker’s friend at the Soviet consulate was at the airport on Wednesday. He smiled a lot.
“Everything is in order, Mr. Fisher,” he said. “You will be met at the airport in Moscow by our hockey people. They are looking forward to an exchange of ideas. There are no problems.”

“I’ve got one,” I said. “I don’t have a hotel room in Moscow.”

“That is not a problem,” he said. “Our people will meet you. They will take care of you.

“You will enjoy Aeroflot,” he promised. “It will be very interesting. Goodbye.”

In July of 1972, Aeroflot flew overnight from Montreal to Paris. From there, it was a direct four-hour flight to Moscow, landing at 4.30 p.m. Unless, that is, the pilot had a surprise up his sleeve. Several minutes after the plane lifted off from Orly on Thursday for the Paris-to-Moscow flight, it was announced there would be a “short” stopover in Kiev.

“Did I hear the pilot mention Kiev?” I asked the man sitting beside me. “Isn’t this a direct flight to Moscow?”

“Eventually,” he said with a smile. “It seems we’ll be landing in Kiev first. There are 25 people on this flight whose destination is Kiev. The captain has decided he will fly to Kiev first.”

“I’m supposed to be met in Moscow this afternoon,” I told him. “How much of a delay will there be getting to Moscow?”

“Only six hours,” he said. “All in good time. No problem.”

When the flight from Kiev landed at 10.30 p.m. in Moscow, there was no welcoming committee of hockey people waiting at the airport. Rudy Hucl was there, though.

“I’m the Air Canada manager in Moscow,” he said. “I see you had a short stay in Kiev.”

“Six hours at the airport in 100-degree heat is a short stay? Anyway, it’s a long story, Rudy,” he was told. “Right now, I’m too tired to tell it, but what are you doing here?”

“I saw your name on the Aeroflot passenger list,” said Hucl, a native of Winnipeg. “I figured you might need some help.”

I told Hucl that some Soviet hockey officials were supposed to meet me at the airport, then would take me to a hotel.

“I don’t see any of them around.”

“In this country, it happens a lot,” Hucl explained. “That’s why I’m here. I’ll drive you downtown to your hotel.”

“I hate to tell you this, Rudy, but I don’t have a hotel room.”

“And they let you fly into the country without a hotel room?”

“I’m here and I don’t have a room.”

“No problem,” Hucl said. “Our office is in the Metropol Hotel. I’ll get you a room there.”

The Metropol was an old hotel only a few blocks from Red Square. It had style, though, dating back to the time when many of Russia’s social lions stayed there. (A chap named Lee Harvey Oswald lived there for six months.)
It was midnight when we arrived. Moscow sweltered in the still of the night.

“Biggest heat wave in 30 years,” Rudy explained. “One hundred degrees every day for the last three weeks. No sweat.”

“How’s the air conditioning handling the heat wave?” he was asked.

“Are you kidding?” he laughed. “This is Moscow. The hotel doesn’t have air conditioning. We’ve got one in the Air Canada office, though. Drop in and visit if you’re uncomfortable. Drop in any time.”

Early on Friday, I was on the telephone to the Canadian embassy.

“I’ve got a problem,” I said. “Some Soviet hockey people were supposed to meet me at the airport last night. The plane was six hours late because we made an unscheduled stop in Kiev. Nobody was at the airport. How do I track these people down?”

“Leave it with me,” the embassy man replied. “It might take a day or so.”

Two days later, he was on the telephone with a message that a man named Gresko was awaiting my call. A few minutes later, Alexander Alexeevich Gresko was on the line.

“We have been expecting you,” said the Deputy Chief of the Department of International Sports Relations of the Committee for Physical Culture and Sport Under the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. “We are anxious to meet with you,” he said in flawless English.

“We” included roughly 20 stern-faced men sitting around a table in a conference room.

“We would like to ask you some questions about your Canadian team,” Gresko said.

“Before you do, where were you on Thursday night? I was promised by your embassy in Ottawa that I would be met at the airport.”

“You came a day late,” Gresko said.

“I did not arrive a day late,” I said. “You were informed that I would be arriving on Thursday. Unfortunately, I was six hours late, but that was only because the Aeroflot pilot decided to stop in Kiev before coming to Moscow.”

“You came a day late,” he insisted.

“You came a day late,” he repeated.

“Your Aeroflot flies from Montreal to Moscow only on Wednesday. It’s impossible to leave Montreal on a Wednesday night and arrive in your country the same day. That is why I arrived on Thursday.”

“You came a day late,” he repeated.

“All right, let’s say I arrived a day late. Now that I’m here, where is Valeri Kharlamov? Where is Alexander Yakushev and Boris Mikhailov? Where is Alexander Maltsev? When can I meet with coach (Vsevolod) Bobrov?”

“Ah, since you came a day late, Mr. Fisher, I regret to tell you that Kharlamov is in East Germany, Yakushev is at the Black Sea, Bobrov is at the Caspian Sea,” Gresko said. “Mikhailov and Maltsev are training outside the city.”

“You mean I’ve come all this way and I won’t be able to talk with your players and coach?”
“You came a day late,” Gresko said.

“Mr. Gresko,” I said, “I am certain you’re aware that the Canadian embassy has spent two days trying to find you. I have come a long way and my newspaper has spent a lot of money to get me here. I came here to write about your hockey team, but since, as you say, they are not in Moscow, I must tell you this: there is an Air Canada plane leaving for Montreal tomorrow. I will be on it. My newspaper will expect something in return for all the money it has spent, and right now all I will be able to write is how you screwed me up.”

“Do not be so impatient, Mr. Fisher,” Gresko replied. “We will talk for a little while, and then you will go back to your hotel. We will try and get these people back for you.”

“The first man I want to speak with is your coach,” Gresko was told.

“That would be the elusive Vesovolod Bobrov,” Gresko said. “You will telephone me tomorrow morning at 10 o’clock and we will arrange to talk with Bobrov.”

The next morning, at 10, Gresko was on the line.

“I have not yet heard from Mr. Bobrov, but I will have more information for you in half an hour.”

Thirty minutes later, I called Gresko.

“You will rest a little while longer,” he said, “and then we will have the information we need.”

I continued to sit in my hotel room in the midst of the worst heat wave in Moscow in three decades. No air conditioning. And no telephone calls from the Deputy Chief of the Department of International Sports Relations of the Committee for Physical Culture and Sport Under the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. For the next eight hours, I telephoned his office every hour. Nobody picked up at the other end.

It wasn’t all monotony, however. A journalist who worked for Sovietsky Sport paid me a visit.

“As a Soviet,” he said cheerfully, “I can understand that it is not always easy to discover Bobrov. As a journalist, I have sympathy for you. It is not Bobrov you are trying to reach, it is James Bond.”

Eventually, some hockey people were produced, including coach Bobrov. A few players, but not all. Very little of it was fun.

Every once in a while I think of Alexander Gresko, if only because he was a lot more than the weighty title he carried. Long after the series ended, the international media reported that well before the Summit Series was conceived, Gresko had been one of 10 Soviet spies tossed out of Great Britain in the mid-1960s.

Indeed, this was the same Alexander Gresko who, when the eight-game series was about to begin in Montreal, was among a group of Soviet officials greeted in Ottawa by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. Alex even posed cheerfully with the Prime Minister in the latter’s office. I suspect there were some red faces at RCMP headquarters over this major oversight, but Gresko had a talent for turning up at a lot of unexpected places ... at the 1975 Pan-American Games in Mexico City, for example. Small world.

“What brings you here, Alex?” I asked.
"I have been appointed secretary general of the 1980 Moscow Olympics," he said. "My superiors felt it would be a good idea to see how these Games are organized. It is a learning experience."

We spent several hours together in his hotel room talking about the '72 series and other things.

"The Canadians played with a lot of emotion," he admitted. "It was a learning experience for our players. It is always good to learn. There were some very good players on the Canadian team: (Phil) Esposito, (Paul) Henderson, a few others."

We talked about the spy business in Great Britain.

"A mistake," he said. "There were no spies."

We talked about many things that afternoon. He almost seemed sorry when I rose to leave.

"It's too bad I couldn't get to know you better in 1972," I said. "Maybe we'll meet again."

"Maybe," he said. "Who knows?"

I was still waiting for the hotel elevator when he rushed out of his room.

"Red! Red! Do me a favour," he said.

"What's that, Alex?"

"If you write something, don't mention the spy crap!"

I haven't seen Alex since those few hours in Mexico City so many years ago. He wasn't seen at the Moscow Olympics, either. Strangely, even a few people who were at his side throughout the '72 series denied they ever knew him.

"Where is Alex?" I asked a Russian sportswriter several years later.

"Who?"

"Alexander Gresko. You were always with him in '72."

"I don't know that name," he said.

I met the same sportswriter several times during the '80s. Every time Gresko's name was mentioned, I received the same response: "I don't know that name."

We met once more in September, 1990, when the Canadiens trained for several days in Moscow. By then, there were signs everywhere that the breakup of the Soviet Union was imminent. The people were more outgoing. They talked more. They had opinions. The iron curtain of secrecy was rising.

"Gresko, what's happened to him? Nobody seems to know where he is," the Russian writer was told.

"These days," he said with a tight, little smile, "who knows where a full colonel in the KGB would be."
Russians confident on eve of 'friendly' series

Russia's confident on eve of 'friendly' series

Soviet sailors here at sea with hopes for tickets

Drapeau plan opposed

Single village for Olympics here favored

Today's Gazette

NPD sweep: He asked the voters for a chance and
Barrett turns Canadian's third NPD provincial government.

That smarts!

Montreal shippers criticize

Trudeau tells NDP no inquiry into CMHC

Barrett goes fishing to ponder win

Supervised 'diligently'

Canada wins two silvers at Olympics

195th YEAR 10 PAGES MONTRAL, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1972

Full sport coverage in Monday's Gazette

The Gazette's edition of Monday will have full coverage of the year's biggest weekend in sports.

HOCKEY: Sports Editor Ted Blackmore.. highs on espresso and photographs who will cover the first game of the Canada-Russia series at the Forum tonight.

THE LOTTERY: President Cy Dokov and George Beaton will continue to review from the 10th Stilmar on Saturday.

FOOTBALL: There are four games in the Canadian Football League on Monday, with the Toronto Argonauts winning the Alouettes. There will be a full-page program story.

RACING: France's grand standing in the Deauville Fontainebleau— they've been by only $2,000 and $4,000 in his last three races and four other out in the past.

Barrett turns Canadian's third NPD provincial government.

That smarts!

There was one minor casualty yesterday—when the Canadian Union of Merchants' Council in St. Lawrence's Sunday papers.

The Bulletin: The December holiday concert.

That's all for this week's edition of the Bulletin.

Barrett goes fishing to ponder win

Supervised 'diligently'

Trudeau tells NDP no inquiry into CMHC

Canada wins two silvers at Olympics
A dark day: Sept. 2, 1972; when pride turned to trauma
By Ted Blackman
The Gazette, Sept. 4, 1972

TORONTO — We'd better take another look at maple syrup and moose meat. Maybe our wheat causes worldwide dandruff. Really, Joyce Davidson loves the Royal Family and Anne Murray detests music, Niagara Falls could be no more than a leaky faucet back at Brockville.

Tell me, was Laura Secord in truth a frontier junkie dealer?

When our national institution crumbles with one bolshevik body check, what then can preserve the adjacent out-buildings of our culture? Nothing. Our national inferiority complex, defended only by our hockey, may now become terminal neurosis.

No, I'm not calling it a conclusion with seven games to go. After all, we won a few face-offs and killed several penalties. But, after the dark date of Sept. 2, 1972, is chiselled in marble by weeping historians, we'll never be the same. We are unlikely again to be so...

'Arrogant and conceited' — Fisher


Our haughty outlook changed forever doing a meaningful span early in the second period that lasted no longer than give, maybe six seconds. It was 3-2 Russia and none of were yet convinced that Team NHL wouldn't soon bring down all its wrath and power upon the impudent invaders.

Then it happened. Alexander Yakushev, a 190-pound Bobrov Bobcat, jolted Ron Ellis with a classic check that sent him to the bench with fluttering wings. Seconds later, Valeriy Kharlamov knocked Guy Lapointe to the ice with a thump... and then — and then Gary Bergman iced the puck!

Whatever Team Canada had presumed about the Russians (and it's a safe bet they presumed nothing more than a playground picnic against comparative novices), their notions had altered with the manifest admission. Ice the puck, brother, these cats have got us on the run.

The Russians demand respect

Canada will come back. With each furiously-paced game, more oxygen will reach the lungs and more red blood will fuel their legs, but Eagleson's All-Stars will never forget this hardy lesson. Russia not only acquired their respect, they demanded it in no uncertain terms. "We were stunned, absolutely stunned," Harry Sinden said.
Sinden and his squad are left to sing an operetta of the obvious. And the rest of us, too. For every Canadian who cackled in anticipation of a chauvinistic coup sur glace, the Russians proffered a streak of speed, a brilliant pass, a robust body check, a gallant save.

To say we took Russia lightly is to hear General Custer ask: "What Indians?" We spotted the challengers playing dates the most favorable to them and the least favorable to us, clucking confidently that we'd clean 'em anyway. Our invincible image now lays bare, a myth.

**Conditioning the only factor**

Conditioning was the factor. The only factor. Canada's best, which would include Bobby Orr and Bobby Hull, would beat Russia's supreme lineup, Anatoli Firsov added, four out of five times. But not in September, when sinew is soft and lungs short of breath.

Sport is speed and speed is stamina. Paul Warfield beats the cornerback because he is fast, Cesar Cedeno hits .340 because he can beat a thrown ball to first base, Yvan Cournoyer scores 47 times because he has speed. Because has speed six months of the year. September isn't one of those months.

Canada didn't skate with Russia? No, Canada COULDN'T skate with Russia. We didn't backcheck as they did. We COULDN'T. The Russians dominated in every aspect of the game, except in the face-off circle, because they had the speed and stamina to do it.

**Team Canada still our best ever**

To believe otherwise is to accept unreasonable premises. Canada's scruffy national teams were rarely outclassed so demonstrably, and yet we can be sure Team Canada would dismantle any of our previous international squads. You can't tell me Sinden is a 7-3 loser under normal conditions.

"Gotta play games ... gotta play games," Wayne Cashman said.

That's what Father Bauer and Jackie McLeod tried to tell us for years, but we were too all-knowing to listen. The Nats skated 'til their blades wore the ice down to the pipes, but pleas for tuneup games against the National Hockey League went unanswered. You saw the results.

Team Canada against the advice of the most prominent pro hockey intellects, was conscripted to play on ill-chosen dates by one of the nation's foremost millstones, Hockey Canada. And yet, despite its own criticism of the logistics, the NHL gave the green light with arrogance so characteristic.

That's not "I-told-you-so" gratuity. Me, you, all of us, we weren't any different.
They can play this game, too

We learned too late that Russia is numerically weaker in goaltenders, but that the rules state only one man has to play that position and he just might be as qualified as our best. We discovered, not in time, that team work has merit, that other can hit, that we have no lock on finesse.

Those soon-heralded skills are electrifying when coupled with our lack of preparedness. When Brad Park skates on double runners and Phil Esposito can't hit the corner and Yvan Cournoyer can't reach a loose puck, you'll have trouble beating the Valois Tavern.

"Damn it, did we learn a lesson!" Frank Mahovlich said.

Not one of Team Canada's members miss the point; not too many Canadians did either. It was a humiliating lesson, one so justly deserved, and it still rattles our very cultural institutions.

Next they'll tell me a beaver is nothing more than a buck-toothed rodent.

the
KHARLAMOV
summer
hockey school

skate like a HOWIE MORENZ
stickhandle like a MAX BENTLEY
shoot like a CHARLIE CONACHER
score goals like a ROCKET RICHARD

YOU CAN LEARN HOW!
Feeling a little better, folks?
Life worth living after all?

TORONTO — Okay. Move over and make room for Team Canada! That loud noise you heard around 10:30 last night came from 35 hockey players — and perhaps 20,000,000 Canadians — exhaling all at once!

“We played a more sensible game,” said Harry Sinden, after his “new look” NHL All-Stars put it together for a 4-1 victory over the Soviet Nationals. “We didn’t run around like we did in the first game. We had control in positional play. I think our changes helped.”

Helped? Does Rockefeller earn a living wage? Can Mark Spitz swim?

Tony in action

The name is Tony Esposito, and when the Canada-Soviet series opened on Saturday in Montreal, he was a spectator. Now it’s two nights later, and the gun is leveled at his right ear-lobe because if the Soviets handle Team Canada the way they did in their 7-3 series opener . . .

Anyway, there’s no score in the first period and Brad Park is in the penalty box. A kid named Alexander Maltsev sweeps down the wing to Esposito’s left, flips a quick pass to Valary Kharlamov, catches the puck and in one motion snaps it at the open side to Esposito’s right. Tony turns it aside with his skate.

One goal doesn’t make a game, but in last night’s game, one goal is all that was scored for two periods. And in the first period, at least, Tony was IT with several brilliant saves.

The changes helped.

Wayne Cashman is the name, and if there was one major part of the Team Canada game which was laced with cavities on Saturday, it was in the area of hard-nosed, aggressive forechecking. There’s a rumor going around that last night, Cashman bodychecked a Soviet played in the warm-up — he was that aggressive. Nothing that caught the referee’s eye particularly but the blood in Cashman’s eye was like a red light to the Soviets most of the night.

Good lookers

“He had them looking,” agreed Stan Mikita, who was another “change” last night. “He had a lot of game. Everybody was coming back and it made it a lot easier for the defencemen. If
we skate . . . did you see that Cournoyer go around Ragulin? . . . we can beat them. We can’t beat them eight straight now, but we can come close. If we play like we did tonight . . .”

Skating and work. That’s what brought Team Canada its first goal – and give most of the applause to Cashman for this one.

It’s in the eighth minute of the second period, and a delayed penalty is called on the Soviets. The puck springs loose and Cashman races for it, undressing a Soviet defender on the way. That included the defenceman’s stick. Cashman has the puck in the corner, works his way beyond the stickless defenceman and gets the puck to Esposito. Phil finds an open corner.

Remember Savard talking about Cournoyer’s burst around Alexander Ragulin? It happened in the second minute of the third period, at which time Gannady Tsygankov was in the penalty box. He was a forlorn figure there, but not a lonely one, because he had Kharlamov as company, the latter seving a 10-minute misconduct for stealing a page out of the professional book and pushing the referee. Cournoyer gets the pass half a stride behind Regulin and sweeps in on Vladislav Tretiak, who has been something of a heroic figure for the Soviets thus far in the series. This time, Tretiak has his legs open just enough to allow Cournoyer’s shot to get through.

Russian’s score

If you’re thinking that the Soviets decided to flip onto their backsides, snap a Russian obscenity and quit at this point, you haven’t been reading the latest memos from the Kremlin. The Soviets simply don’t do these things. But just like other human being, they start looking when they head the thunder of skates. They even kick up a little snow now and then. But they skate . . . and shortly after Bobby Clarke was caught slashing at 5:13, Egeny Zimin was on his way unmolested toward Tony Esposito from centre ice, shot wide, but was able to break into a gold-toothy grin from sideburn to sideburn when his great and good friend Yuri Liapkin got the puck to Alexander Yakushev about six feet in front of Tony.

It’s goose-bumps time, folks!

Here it is with something like 14 minutes left in the third period, and now Pat Stapleton is heading for the penalty box. There’s only one goal separating the teams now, and ALL our side really is hoping for is that Phil Esposito and Peter Mahovlich can kill off the penalty. You can’t depend on this Mahovlich, however. Ask him to do a simple thing like killing off a penalty, and he’ll go one step farther. As a matter of fact, he went many steps farther. Esposito started the play by getting the puck to Mahovlich on this side of the Soviet blueline. That’s Poladyev waiting for him . . . and then looking at Peter’s retreating back. Peter fakes to his left, moves to his right, and could that be an empty net he’s staring at? You betcha.

Soviets generous

The Soviet game may not have gone to pot at this point, but it started to look a little tin at the seams. Vyacheslav Starshinov made it officially by giving the puck to Frank Mahovlich, and Peter’s brother caught the far corner. He also patted Vyacheslav on the back for his generosity.
“Using six defencemen,” said Sinden, “was important to us. For one thing, they played exceptionally well. For another, we were able to divide the work among them so that they had a lot going for them while they were on the ice. Also . . . they had a little more help than they had on Saturday.”

Translation: the forwards backchecked. They did so perhaps as well as any team can, but does that mean that Team Canada played as well as it can last night?

“We always strive for the perfect game,” said Sinden, “so I guess we can play better. I think they (the Soviets) knew we weren’t the same team they had run into on Saturday. They knew we were playing aggressive hockey, and I think some of them were looking at our aggressiveness and maybe doing a little thinking. Our system hurt us on Saturday because we didn’t have any system. Tonight, they were mentally up . . . a little more composed.”

**Changes in mind**

Between Saturday and last night’s game, Sinden made nine changes, including Eddie Johnston, who was the backup goalie. Is it conceivable to believe that other changes are on the way in Winnipeg tomorrow night?

“It’s conceivable that we won’t change at all,” said Sinden, “but there are one or two things I may want to change. I don’t want to get into that now, though.

“The important thing,” he said, “is that we won. We haven’t won the series. They’ve won one, and we’ve won one. Yessir, we even won with a bunch of individuals,” which was an obvious reference to the praised heaped on the Soviets’ “team” victory last Saturday.

A slight dig, perhaps, at the authors of criticism leveled at him, but on this night, he earned the luxury of striking back.

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**Russians make new discovery: Footsteps**

By Ted Blackman

The Gazette, Sept. 5, 1972

"Team Canada has got to play the National Hockey League way. If they go out and try to win 1-0, then they'll win 4-1."

TORONTO — The Russians claim to have conceived everything from pizza to applejack. Well, they can add another discovery now. Footsteps. Bobrov’s Bobcats came face-to-face with intimidation last night an old fashioned game of river hockey.

Hmm. Saturday's supermen were Monday's mortals, with 20-20 hearing to boot.
"Yeah, I saw some signs," Harry Sinden allowed cautiously after Team Canada salved the national ego with a textbook 4-1 victory, destroying Russia's short-lived domination. Sinden cooled it. Said no more. It was all so obvious.

Canada's emotional cripples collected themselves while the bandwagon bunch, including NHL President Clarence Campbell, preached of doom. In one scoreless period of organized thumping Team Canada had the Russians peering over their shoulder for based, not passes. "In the first game we ran around," Sinden said. "This time we were in control of ourselves. It's always going to be an aggressive game when you play the man. When you hit, you've got to wait for your turn to come up."

Wayne Cashman's number flashed all night. So did Jean-Paul Parise's, Gary Bergman's, Pete Mahovlich's. But it was Cash most of all, tapping the Soviets on the back of their helmets with his stick and throwing every limbs at them in the corners.

He set up Phil Esposito's goal with a highly-representative act of aggression. Taking Vladimir Luchenko down in a heap, he snapped the big defence man's stick and eventually grabbed the puck to set up Espo as the Russians tried in vain to clear it with his skates.

Espos made a great whirl around outside the crease for the shot that click. Yvan Cournoyer's brilliant dash down the wing produced the winner. Peter Mahovlich scored the prettiest goal he may ever get, a solo masterpiece while Canada was shorthand. Frank Mahovlich added another.

So much for Russia's total commitment to teamwork. Canada showed 'em plenty of cohesive action, playing positional hockey so well they can use this game for an instructional film. In the end, though, it was several outstanding individual efforts that flash-froze Russia.

After the first period, there was widespread fear Canada would eventually succumb to inferior conditioning. But it was the Russians sagging at the finish, their stamina erased by an endless melody of thump thump thump.

You can't play this game with your head. And you can't collect those blind, drop passes with your head up. Something has to give in a close-checking affair and the Russians chose to give up the passing, preferring to watch for Cashman's next rude grreeting.

"There's an organized way to play this game and a disorganized way," Sinden said. "You've seen both in three days. Tonight, we had our composure. On Saturday we were wild men. Tonight, we cruised up and down our wings, hitting and backchecking."

Every aspect of Team Canada's game was improved. Which wasn't hard to do. But few expected Sinden's club to attain this level of efficiency in so short a time, including the rats who jumped ship at the first.

"We learned a few things last weekend — on and off the ice," Sinken said, refusing to elaborate.
It didn't take John Manolesco to read his mind. Earlier today he had read Clarence Campbell's critique on the choice of lineup for the opening game and had heard of Douglas Fisher's put-down. He was visibly angered over the unexpected desertions.

"Two months ago I was just a little guy from Rochester with a million friends," Siden had said before the game. "Now I can count 'em on five fingers. When this is over I'll have something to say. If we win it big, I'll say it in spades."

**It was like change of uniforms**

As the second game progressed, it was obvious that Russia's supposed takeover of hockey had been premature nonsense. By the third period, it appeared the team had changed Saturday's uniforms. Team Canada dominated when they were supposed to fade, carried the play near-totally.

"Sports is great 'cause you can always play the same guys again 24 hours later," Siden said. "You find guys can be different people after they regain their composure. As I said, if we don't play well it will be life and death."

And if Canada plays to its peak (a plateau to be reached as the conditions and polish improves), it will turn this serious around so quick Vsevolod Bobrov's borscht will bubble. Canada will never run the Russians out of the rink, but the NHL won't be humiliated again.

Tony Esposito played like you expect a 15-shutout man to perform. Brad Park found he could carry the puck from his end. Yvan Cournoyer at last found the net, scoring after five periods without a shot on goal. At the finish the tables were fully turned.

The Russians, beautiful players, will be still better for the upcoming experience.

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**Hockey — NHL style — Proves to be winning formula**

By Red Fisher
Montreal Star, Sept. 6, 1972

Winnipeg — “Will you look at that?” giggled Phil Esposito on the morning after Game Two . . .

Peter and Frank Mahovlich looked toward centre ice at Maple Leaf Gardens, and then Brad Park looked up. Then the chuckles started, and pretty soon a dozen of the players were looking and laughing.

The players were about to start a shooting drill, but at centre ice, two of the athletes who have not yet dressed for a game against the Soviet Nationals were standing and grinning at each other. Dennis Hull was one. Marcel Dionne was the other. Dionne handed Hull a Soviet pennant, and then Hull tapped Dionne lightly on the knee with the blade of his stick. They shook hands, exchanged toothless grins, and then their heads bobbed up and down in
gestures of friendship. Then, as the laughter rose, the players skated to their sides of the rink.

“Characters, aren’t they?” said Park to a guy through a mouthful of cavities. “But . . . . say, how come you didn’t drop down to the jail to see us today?” he asked.

He was greeted with a discreet silence.

“Didn’t you hear that stuff on the radio? About how the Canadians should be charged with attempted murder for what they tried to do to the Russians in the second game?”

“Attempted murder?”

“I couldn’t believe it,” sighed Park.

Some of the moralist of the uninformed media had been at it again on the morning after Game Two. I’ve rarely seen a better hockey game, but the people Park was listening to didn’t see the same one, apparently, because all that caught their eye was the blood in Wayne Cashman’s. Attempted murder . . . NHL style . . . which doesn’t quite match the real thing, I suppose in the fun and games they held in Munich yesterday. The message is: let’s stop these murderous Canadian hockey players before they cripple somebody in these “friendly” matches. Call out the cops . . . Cashman is on the loose! Cashews!

What’s going on over here, anyway? Does anybody really think that the NHL will – or should – turn their backs on the game they have played all their lives just because the opposition happens to be the friendly Soviet Nationals? Wayne Cashman probably bodychecked the midwife who delivered him, so what makes anybody think he’s ready to change his style now? And who says the NHL all-Stars have a lock on elbows, sticks and muscle?

Did you notice who it was that ran at and into one of the officials Monday night? The kid’s name was Valary Kharlamov, who happens to be a hockey player first, and a member of the Soviet team second. Nobody I know asked for his head after the game was over – except, perhaps, his coach. If Cashman had been the one who bodychecked an official, the sheriff would have been there with a warrant between the second and third periods. Clarence Campbell would have asked for a board of inquiry, and the moralists would have demanded that his right to vote be taken away.

I don’t want Kharlamov’s head because he roughed up an official. He paid for it. Anybody as valuable and as talented as this kid who’s prepared to lose 10 minutes of hockey game for something as futile and irrational as messing around with a referee is picking his own pockets clean of rubles. It happens. It could happen again, because Kharlamov is a competitor who plays to win, just as Cashman or any of the other NHL All-Stars play to win. What I’m saying is: we all know that our NHL players often are inclined to let their emotions run away with them. The same Cashman almost decapitated another player last season, and he loses me when he does that. But the Cashman of Monday night, or any of the other players – on both sides – who leaned to aggressiveness, get no argument from me. Nor should they get any from anybody else.
The exchange of pennants before the start of an international game is fine. It’s a nice touch. The NHL players, who prefer to exchange dirty looks, consider the practice humorous, but they accept it. They’re even prepared to accept the shaking of hands after 60 minutes of running into each other. But don’t ask them to change their game, because they won’t – and shouldn’t.

Let me tell you something about the Soviet Nationals. I watched them for two weeks in a tournament in Sweden in 1969, and one of the games involved them with the Czechs, not long after Soviet tanks had bodychecked the country, into submission. I have never seen more slashing, spearing, swinging of sticks at an opponent’s head than took place in that game. If a game as violent as that one had taken place under NHL auspices, the paddy wagons would have been rolled up to the dressing room doors.

The officials were lenient Tuesday night – to both sides. The Soviets don’t use their sticks only to pick their teeth. There could have been more penalties called, it’s likely that both teams will get their share.

What the NHL All-Stars should understand, however – and I think they do – is that some of the charging they’re doing in the Canadian series won’t be accepted with as much generosity once the series shifts to Moscow. A hard stare attracts a penalty from European referees, and too many penalties are likely to upset Canada’s game. The Canadians know this by now. They also know that playing on the wider European rink represents a more severe challenge, so playing with a full team is important.

In other words, at least a small adjustment will have to be made when the series moves to Moscow. Don’t forget about the forechecking and the aggressiveness, because that’s the NHL game. But don’t throw away the game with cheap penalties, either. Y’hear?
Soviets equal to Bruins: Sinden  
By Ted Blackman  
The Gazette, Sept. 7, 1972

WINNIPEG — Harry Sinden last night declared the Russians were as strong as any team in the National Hockey League and said he'll be the first of professional coaches to begin implementing invocations he's seen in the Russia-Canada series.

"They're as good as any NHL club," Sinden said. "Yup, as good as the Boston Bruins, too. I think this serious will change some of the things we do. Nobody ever said we knew all there was to know about the game — except ourselves."

Team Canada's coach, visibly and verbally satisfied with the draw, wouldn't elaborate on the Russian techniques he might adopt. "All I'm saying is that they do some things we don't and I haven't anything wrong with most of them."

While Sinden was admitting "each game is a monumental struggle in itself," the Russians indicated they were using the Canadian end of the series out prospects and (Yikes!) would present a stronger team in Moscow.

Three youngsters

"We used a very young line with no world championship experience," Russian coach Vsevolod Bobrov said of a rookie unit of Vyacheslav Anisin, Alexander Bodunov and Yuri Lebedev, all 21-year-olds who only say North America for the first time this winter in student games at Lake Placid.

"Back home, we have more experienced players," he said. "As you know, we have veterans Firsov and Davidov, who will play in Moscow. We have other more experienced players there. We will be better in Moscow. Here, we are giving young players experience."

Lebedev and Bodunov produced the last two Russian goals for the tie and Anisin, for fast, fast relief, helped set up both. At the end of the game, the young trio was still skating strongly while Canada's veterans were tiring again.

"It's kind of early in the year for us to be playing every other night," Sinden said. It was his only excuse, if that's the right word, and otherwise he said the slow ice was "fine" and the referees "okay" — although he was demonstrative behind the bench over some calls.

Lost control

"Let's face it, we lost control of the corners," Sinden said. "We'd go into a corner with a Russian and he'd come out with the puck. That's how they got two of their goals. No, I can't fault Tony Esposito at all. On one, the guy was in alone, and another was a deflection."
Both Sinden and Bobrov agreed the key save in the game was on Paul Henderson at 4:16 of the third period. Bobby Clarke fed him a perfect pass in the slot, Henderson got all the lumber on it, but Vladislav Tretiak picked it off like Ron Fairly at first base.

"Paul had him dead," Sinden said. "He got the puck up just like you should in that spot, but the guy picked it off. Great glove! Whoever said there was something wrong with that guy's glove?"

Sinden said the Canadians played as well as they had in Toronto, but the Russians were improved. "I don't think I've ever seen our guys give out as much." Bobrov agreed his team was better last night, and attributed it to mental rather than physical causes.

**More desire**

"We had more desire to win this time than in the first two games," he said. "The skills and techniques weren't as good as the first two games."

Sinden, who had predicted earlier the scores would ride as the pace took its toll and produced mistakes, said there were more errors by both sides in this game and his face turned into a frown when the Team Canada power play was mentioned.

"We give up two shorthand goals, three in the series," he said, shaking his head. "We're taking too many chances at the blue line, I guess."

Someone asked, "Then the mistakes beat you, Harry?"

"See, there you go," he said, his voice rising. "Calling a tie a loss. Canadians have no right to criticize this team. Anyone who thinks we're not playing like heck is crazy."

Someone said "Only Clarence Campbell has criticized you?"

"Is that what you think?" Sinden shot back. "Well, you don't see the telegrams I get. Even after victories we're getting knocks from across the country."

**In short:** Annis Stukus, the garrulous Lith who is making his debut to hockey as general manager of the Winnipeg Jets of the WHA, says that "hockey players are the strangest people I have ever death with — in any field. Of course," said Annis, "you have to be a little odd to be willing to play 78 games, running in and out of town without time to open your suitcase" ...

The barn-like Winnipeg Arena is adorned at the north end with probably the biggest remaining portrait in the Commonwealth of the Queen...

Hockey Canada's handling of this national tour is now being compared — unfavorably — with Napoleon's retreat from Moscow. Arrivals and departures from each city are confounded by
snafus in reservations and transports and the stays are without any kind of communications or hospitality for journalists from foreign countries. Whatever the outcome of the series, it has been a disaster in public relation for the country ...

The non-playing members of Team Canada, returning from practice yesterday, spotted a sign on the roadway heralding "The Black Sheep" restaurant. "That's where we should be eating," said one disgruntled "sub."

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**Canada didn’t give it all away – Soviets took it!**

By Red Fisher

Montreal Star, Sept. 7, 1972

WINNIPEG — What’s the dialogue during the coffee break today, folks? Are you warming up the cyanide? Or breathing a sigh of relief?

Did you think, as so many people thought here, that after leading 3-1 and 4-2, Team Canada GAVE it away?

Mark this down: There were mistakes by Team Canada – after all, how does anybody explain two shorthanded goals? But Team Canada didn’t give it away. The Soviets TOOK it away.

“Aren’t we all glad to be alive to watch that kind of hockey?” Harry Sinden was asking after the NHL All-Stars and Soviet Nationals emerged with a 4-4 non-verdict.

Translation: Team Canada probably was glad with a tie, even though the shooting margin belonged to Canada, 38-25, and even though Team Canada did, indeed, hold two-goal margins at various points of the hockey game.

“That’s the way things always turn out in games against this Russian team,” said Ken Dryden. “People leave the rink feeling that we ‘gave’ the game away, but that’s the way they play. They keep coming and coming. They’ll never outshoot you, but every time they shoot, either the goalie has to make a good save or it’s a goal.”

Want a few more assessments of this Soviet team after three games of this eight-game series?

Sinden: “I haven’t seen any players on that team who couldn’t play in the National Hockey League.

“They’d compare with any team in the NHL.

“All of us will have to change our approach to hockey after seeing what they can do!”
Harry has a point. He also has a few changes to make. In fact, at practice this morning in Winnipeg he said he would have seven or eight changes for tomorrow night’s game in Vancouver.

A certainty is on defence, where Team Canada will surely be without Guy Lapointe, who has played well in the first three games of the series. Lapointe returned to Montreal today, and while he will miss the Vancouver contest, he is expected to make the return trip overseas. Lapointe went to hospital here last night with a bad charleyhorse after being struck down midway through the third period. The preliminary diagnosis by coach Sinden was that Lapointe “bruised his leg a little,” but it seems now it is a little more serious.

Team Canada had the Soviets on the ropes last night, but ended up swinging and almost strangling.

They got an early goal from Jean-Paul Parisé, even though the Soviets took a page out of the Team Canada book and forechecked the Canadians with much vigor in the first couple of minutes. But then: a short-handed goal by Vladimir Petrov at 3:16 stunned Team Canada momentarily and even appeared to arouse them. Put it this way: if Team Canada had a period in the game during which everything fell into place, it was during the last half of the first period. They got only one goal out of it – by Jean Ratelle – but the pressure was on. The hitting was fierce. The forechecking worked. Only the superb goaltending of Vladislav Tretiak kept the Soviets alive and healthy for their second-period assault, which produced a 3-1 margin in goals and established the tie.

‘Anxious’ power-play

“I don’t know what it is . . .” mused coach Sinden, “about those shorthanded goals. Maybe we’re too anxious on our power-play.”

Maybe. But the Soviets have demonstrated they can turn it around even with their rib-cages against the Winnipeg Wall.

Picture this: It’s in the 13th minute of play. By that time, Team Canada has a 3-1 lead, and could have had a couple more. Tretiak, for example, saved brilliantly on Ron Ellis at the eight-minute mark . . . Then Alexander Maltsev is stopped magnificently by Tony Esposito and that seems to arouse Team Canada even more. There’s a kid named Yuri Lebedev on this Soviet team. Last night was his first time in a game of such importance, along with linemates Vyacheslav Anisin and Alexander Bodunov. A few months ago, they were part of a student team which played in Lake Placid, but last night they were on the ice against Team Canada and at the 11-minute mark, Lebedev has a delayed penalty.

Serge Savard and Guy Lapointe have good cracks at Tretiak. He stops them both. The pressure is on, though, with Team Canada striving for another goal, and then it happens: Gannady Tasygankov is in the corner. He passes the puck across the ice, where it’s banked off the boards and deflected onto the stick of Valary Kharlamov waiting alone at centre ice. Goodbye! Brad Park can’t catch him and Esposito can’t stop him. It’s now 3-2, and even
though Paul Henderson provided Team Canada with another two-goal margin at 13:47, the Soviets needed less than five minutes to get the two goals they needed.

Did homework

Remember the students? They did their homework well. First, Lebedev at 14:59, and then Boudounov, at 18:28.

After that: life and death . . . even to the point where Maltsev once had the puck behind Esposito, only to have Park get there before the puck crossed the goal-line. And another time, Kharlamov and Mikhailov BOTH were behind Esposito, and in their anxiety, managed to shoot the puck out of danger.

Where, oh, where was the positional play of Monday night? Team Canada’s, that is. Was it a case of Team Canada losing its cool in the opening moments, or was it a case of the Soviets figuring that if it worked for Canada Monday – why not for the Soviets? It appeared more of the latter than the former, even though it was Parisé who scored the first goal though it was Parisé who scored the first goal. All the way . . . it was Parisé, going behind the net for the puck, muscling a defender off it and getting the puck back to Bill White. A high shot – and what’s this? Could that be Tretiak giving up a rebound? The puck bounces to the ice and Parisé is where he should be. So is the puck.

Big ‘M’ goofs

Frank Mahovlich will not include the Soviet goal among his treasured memories. Valary Vasiliev is in the penalty box for elbowing, of all things, and Mahovlich has the puck at his blueline. Cournoyer is on a break down the right side, but Mahovlich misses him and passes the puck back to one of the Team Canada defenders. He gets it back. Now, he passes it to Vladimir Petrov, who doesn’t happen to be a member of Team Canada. (One of the fundamentals of hockey – professional or amateur – is to pass the puck to a man wearing the same sweater as you do). A 40-footer snapped through Esposito’s legs.

What turned it around in the last half of the period? Hitting, probably. Some of the hitting may have incurred the displeasure of European referees, but . . . anyway, it was turned off. And so was the Soviet pinpoint passing. Turned off to the point where they allowed people like Cournoyer and Ratelle to sweep in with two-on-one breaks.

“It’s a good sign,” murmured Red Berenson. “We had to wait until the second period before we took over. Now we’ve got them on the run after only half a period, right?”

Wrong!

Cashman banished

Berenson was wrong, because while Team Canada was exerting some pressure in the first half of the second period, it was downhill all the way after that. It’s true that Henderson had a goal picked off by Tretiak in the opening moments of the final period. But after that, the
only real attention attracted by the NHL All-Stars was when Wayne Cashman rapped Yuri Shatalov over the helmet with his stick, and managed to attract a minor and a misconduct for his trouble. Cashman and Shatalov had been conducting a fairly active game, but Shatalov won it by default. At 10:44, Cashman was out of it, and the Soviets were making life miserable for Team Canada.

What did last night's game all come down to? Was it a matter of Team Canada running out of petrol? Probably. It also was a matter of several players not even approaching victory. Mahovlich (Frank) had a bad night. So did Park. Tony Esposito didn’t have much of a chance on any of the goals, except for the 40-foot short-handed goal that went through his legs, but he was fighting the puck from the start.

“It could be,” said Sinden, “that games every other night are too much for some of our players this early in the year. We weren’t doing much at the end of the game (Team Canada had six shots in the third period), and they were playing better.”

Could be.

“I know one thing,” said Sinden, “the game in Vancouver won’t be any easier.”

That, too, could be.
Esposito booed, raps ungrateful fans
By Ted Blackman
The Gazette, Sept. 9, 1972

VANCOUVER — Phil Esposito, having just played the best week of hockey in his life and heard the boos of the bandwagon bunch, fired back last night at critical fans and writers for deserting Team Canada at the first sniff of adversity.

"To give up my summer and a ton of money, and then be booed, is beneath my dignity," Esposito said, repeating his national television blast outside the the dressing room. "I'm really disappointed — and every guy on the team is behind what I said.

"Although most of us play for United States team and are paid by United States teams, we come back to play for Canada because we love the country. I'm disappointed in the fans in Winnipeg and the fans here, and the press in general.

Raps Berton
"No, not the writers who've followed this thing all along," he added. "The guys who get me are the Pierre Bertons and Charles Templetons, jumping on Wayne Cashman like they did. They've never seen a hockey game before.

"You and I know that's the way Cash has played for years. I don't play that way, some others don't, but that's the way Cashman plays and has always played. No one in Canada takes shots at him if he's running at Gordie Howe. But a Russian? That's different?" he asked.
"Yes, I'd still do it again," Esposito said at the conclusion of his speech. "You'd better believe it."

Esposito was joined by Brad Park and Frank Mahovlich in an astonished appraisal of the behavior of the fans, who gave the Russians the loudest cheer even before the game started. Some of the players were openly regretful they'd made the summer sacrifice.
"I won't be back next year if they play again," Park said. "Maybe the year after, but not next summer. I gave up too much this year to play for this team and then, to be booed, it really make you wonder. The players felt no one was behind them — we all felt that way."

Why me?

Park felt he'd donated an important month of his life to Team Canada, his wife having given birth to their first child the day after the Russia-Canada opener. He was concerned over the birth because his wife is also his first cousin.

"They're both fine, but I'm not throwing away something like this again," Park said. "This is everything. There are more important things in life. Why should I worry personally about the Russians, they don't take any bread off my table."
Esposito, his temper soaring, pointed to Serge Savard and Bobby Orr as examples of the sacrifice made.

**Big M's amazed**

"This thing could cost somebody a Stanley Cup," he said. "Look at Savard, a broken ankle. Christ, that coulda been me, you know. Bobby Orr, working out, risking damage to his knee. Why? To play for Canada, for the people who booed us."

Mahovlich, who has heard the boos before, was amazed the fans jumped him for delaying the Russian goalie when he tried to return to his net. The Big M had squatted on him like mother hen, waiting for something to hatch. Like a goal.

"What the hell's going on?" Frank said. "Don't see why they booed me. There's nothing wrong with what I did until the referee calls it. He didn't. Man, I'm amazed. As a matter of fact, this whole darn series has me amazed."

Ken Dryden was disappointed in the boos, too. But didn't lash out at the fans quite as severely.

**Fans frustrated**

"I'm disappointed, but I can understand it," he said. "The fans wanted us to do really good, and they're frustrated we didn't. I didn't think I deserved to be booed. Tretiak frustrated us, but I guess I didn't frustrate them enough. Still, I didn't deserve it."

Park said the sportswriters and most fans had been fair, but hit out at the Page Six editorialists who had condemned Cashman's belligerent play in the second game — and the only one Canada won, incidentally.

"Sure, Cashman took a poke at a guy with his stick in Winnipeg and got a penalty for it. But no one saw the same Russian guys laughing at him, because the Russian knew that earlier he'd run at Cashman from 30 feet and provoked Wayne.

"They don't see that, do they? Everyone is fully behind us until we lose. There are more loyal fans in New York, but I love Canada. That's why I come back here every summer to live. But I don't know... it really makes you wonder. I'm very upset."

Park, as he spoke, fought back the swelling of moisture in his eyes. Having played four games in eight nights like Esposito and Mahovlich, he couldn't understand the lack of appreciation for the effort they'd put in.

"We get nothing — not a dime for this. Brother, I'm sick."
Soviets grab lead in series
By Red Fisher
Montreal Star, Sept. 9, 1972

VANCOUVER — Perhaps the Godfather, who is Alan Eagleson, summed it up best before Game Four:

“The only thing I don’t like about this series,” the executive-director of the NHL Players’ Association was saying, “are the games!”

It goes without saying that Eagleson liked them even less after Game Four. Mark this down: a 5-3 victory for the Soviets, which provided them with a 2-1-1 record for the games in Canada. It also provided them with one more victory than they had hoped for the route they had charted for a series victory.

Mark this down too: The victory was rarely in doubt from the time the Soviets moved into a 2-0 lead on the power play goals by Boris Mikailov – both while Bill Goldsworthy was in the penalty box. And deservedly so each time.

Put it this way: This was the first time in the series that Team Canada had to play catch up hockey from the start. And while they managed to get a goal in the second period from Gilbert Perreault after a great end-to-end rush (the puck finally going into the net from an impossible angle off defenceman Valery Vasiliev), there was no time, really, when Team Canada threatened to take over in any way.

The goaltending was not the type of goaltending normally produced by a Ken Dryden. There were moments when he appeared shaky.

Dryden’s analysis: “The Soviets shoot quicker than NHL players. They start moving around a defenceman and while an NHL player would do the job and then shoot, the Soviets seem to release their shots while they’re moving around the defencemen. And this business about them not shooting hard . . . perhaps collectively they don’t shoot as hard as this (Team Canada) team, but they can shoot as hard as the average NHL team.”

Dryden touched on this area of the Soviet game. But there were others in which they left the NHL trailing. Many others . . .

The result: At no time, after Team Canada’s first goal, did the Canadians get closer than the one-goal margin. Yuri Blinov scored while Pat Stapleton was cause up the ice, and before the period was over, the Soviets had a 4-1 margin on Vladimir Vikulov’s goal. Earlier, a Team Canada goal had been disallowed when the referee ruled that Rod Gilbert kicked the puck into the net.

Goals by Bill Goldsworthy, the Soviets’ Vladimir Shadrin and Dennis Hull came in the final period, with Hull’s goal scored with only seconds remaining in the game.
There was little different in the Soviet style last night from the first three games of the series. Skating, of course, was of paramount importance. Defensively, they made errors now and then, but they still appeared stronger than their opposite numbers on Team Canada. Passing? Once again, they had it. As usual, they didn’t shoot quite as often as they should have, waiting, instead, for more of a “sure” thing. That would come under the heading of a man moving into the slot when they puck-carrier was beside the net, or in a position where he didn’t have what the Soviets considered a good shot at Dryden.

It was clockwork and precision work. There were shots off target, of course but there were many more which barely missed or which forced Dryden into excellent saves. In capsule form, a fairly one-sided game – a game in which the Soviets simply skated away from Team Canada.

The reaction? Monstrous in the eyes of Team Canada players in that the Vancouver crowd hooted the Canadians frequently. They brayed at Dryden now and then. (“It was frustration on their part,” shrugged Dryden.) They directed sour cries at Bill Goldsworthy, after his two penalties led to Soviet goals. (“I’m ashamed to be a Canadian,” snapped Goldsworthy.) And the braying reached its loudest when Frank Mahovlich held onto goaltender Vladislav Tretiak when the goalie came out of his nets on one occasion.

“I was puzzled at that reaction,” Mahovlich mentioned later. “I held on to him because the net was open. I saw the puck at the blueline and I figured that if I held on a little, maybe a goal is scored. On the other hand, why should I be surprised? The whole series has surprised me! And didn’t the crowd give the Russians a louder cheer before the game began than we got? How do they (the Soviets) manage to do this? They must have a politician on the bench!”

Clearly, the adverse crowd reaction nettled most Team Canada members. “Unfair,” was the way Phil Esposito put it after the game, “and something we didn’t deserve. We gave up a lot for this series . . . money . . . our vacations. Mind you, I’d do it again tomorrow if I were asked, but we didn’t deserve it!”

The jury will have to remain out on that assessment. They braying was strange and, no doubt, a source of irritation to the athletes. But it’s not the first time a losing team has been the object of disaffection. The only difference here, perhaps, is that it’s a case of Canada-vs-Russia. If applause and acceptance were measured strictly on the merits of which team played better, the Soviets deserved what they got.

The fact is, the Soviets monopolized the play, pressing and, when they needed it, getting superb goaltending from Tretiak.

It’s 3-1 for the Soviets in the second period. Yvan Cournoyer is sent into the clear on a great pass from Rod Seiling. He’s 20 feet in front of Tretiak when he releases one of his great shots, and the goalie stops it.
Now picture this: It’s the same shift. Cournoyer gets into the clear again, and this time – properly – Cournoyer decides that he’s going to stickhandle into Tretiak’s territory. After all, a searing shot hadn’t beaten him seconds earlier . . .

Tretiak beats him again.

“All that guff we heard about the Soviets . . . they beat us good,” said Espo. “They beat us fair. The scouts . . . they should give up scouting. And that goaltending. Did I hear somebody say that their goaltending was supposed to be weak? Hell, he reminded me of Dryden the year the Canadiens beat us in the playoffs.”

It was the goaltending, all right, but it was much more. If the Soviets had to rely strictly on the goaltending, they would not now be leading the series. It’s easy to say that the goaltending turned it around for the Soviets, but the last time anybody looked, Tretiak hadn’t scored any goals for his team. He did his job, and others in front of him did theirs.

Many, many Soviets did their jobs, and not enough Canadians were able to do theirs. Not because they didn’t try. Perreault, for example, was a fairly strong performer, particularly for a first game. And Esposito once again was the work-horse, the brilliant individualist. It was Espo who did most of the work on the last two Canadian goals.

But it wasn’t enough . . . not nearly enough.
Russia 5, Canada 4: Undone by Super Soviet Rush
By Ted Blackman
The Gazette, Sept. 23, 1972

MOSCOW – Paul Henderson wasn’t one of those shaking his head in bewilderment. But only because he couldn’t move it. He’d crashed headlong into the boards late in the second period and had left with a throbbing neck in the aftermath of the nightmarish experience.

“Those bastards should have been in Siberia at the end of the second period,” Henderson was saying back at the Intourist Hotel where Team Canada’s puzzle personnel sat sullenly over post-game steaks with wives who dared not speak.

“We gave the damn puck away too many times. We had them beaten, had them off stride and we were pulling away. Siberia, that’s where they were headed. Then we let ‘em off the hook. There’s Bobby Clarke. Wasn’t that it, Clarkie?”

“No doubt about it,” said Clarke, who with Henderson and goalie Tony Esposito provided most of the thrust for a 4-1 Canada lead that quickly evaporated into a 5-4 loss to Russia. “We’re not a defensive club and yet we tried to play defensively.”

Clarke scored once and Henderson twice, the latter giving Canada a 4-1 lead at 4:56 of the third period when Russia began showing new life. In a span of six minutes and forty seconds, the NHL elite gave up four goals and the game.

Canada took the first 10 minutes of the game to get untracked, then commanded the play thoroughly for the first time in the series. Commanded it, that is, until the Russians broke through with a fortunate deflection at 9:05 of the third period.

His back to the net, Vajcheslav Anisin – as in Anisin for fast, fast relief – blindly steered a shot between Esposito’s legs to make it 4-2. Eight seconds later Vladimir Shadrin whacked Brad Park’s stick and the puck bounced past Esposito.

“That was the big goal, the third one,” Tony Esposito said. “Brad’s carrying the puck across the front of the net and this guy takes a poke at it ... bang, it’s in. When you start giving up three goals in a period, you start to get concerned.”

Stole puck

Two minutes later, Valeriy Kharlamov stole the puck in the corner and began a play that resulted in Alexander Gusev’s tying goal – a shot from the point that changed direction on Esposito when it hit a teammate in front of the net.
Some 3,000 Canadians kept up their chant, “Go, Canada, go,” but now the Russians began to drown them out with cries of “Shaibu” — meaning, of all things, “puck.” Canada was on the run and it took only three minutes for Harry Sinden’s boys to make their next mistake.

Vladimir Vikulov beat Rod Seiling to a puck on the boards inside the blueline and skated toward the net parallel to the goal-line. Esposito went down as Vikulov crossed in front, and the Russian coolly slid the puck home for the winner at 15:48.

“That was my fault, not Rod’s,” Bobby Clarke confessed. “I tried to pass it back to him and it bounced. You shouldn’t be passing the puck inside your blueline at that point of the game. God, I don’t know what I was thinking about.”

**Great game**

It was another blue chip hockey game, and for the first time Canada appeared in shape to skate with the Russians. Their strides were fluid and effortless, especially after Jean-Paul Parise rifled home Gilbert Perreault’s pass from beside the net at 15:30 of the first.

Canada dominated the second period, scoring twice when Clarke pulled off another of his specialties — ramming the puck home from beside the net — and Henderson deflected a shot by Guy Lapointe. Minutes later, Henderson crashed into the boards after a near-breakaway.

“I don’t know what happened,” said Henderson, who left the game on wobbly legs but returned for the third period. “I was off balance when I shot, and I just went after that. The doc’s going to put a brace on it tonight, but I’ll be okay.”

**Bobrov**

Russian coach Vsevolod Bobrov credited a change in tactics with the swift reversal, adding that his team regained its calm after the second period, but Harry Sinden dismissed that claim and blamed the loss on individual mistakes.

“We were the better team, and we should have won,” Sidnen said. “Did Bobrov tell Pat Stapleton to get caught up the ice for the first goal? Did he tell Park to give the puck away? Did he tell Seiling not to get Clarke’s pass?”

At the same time, Sinden didn’t withhold praise for the Soviet team. “I’m still worrying about our condition. I wonder what it takes to beat them. Damn it, we were prepared for this game but you’ve got to give ‘em marks. They don’t quit.

“Tell me this ... what NHL team thinks it has a chance to win when it’s down 4-1 with 10 minutes to play? These guys never change. They make the same passes whether they’re up by three or down by three. They’re conditioned perfectly, mentally, as well as physically.”

Sinden thought the Russian’s superior condition was a factor in the finish and Bobrov agreed, saying, “Canada spent its energy in the first two periods.”
Sinden said the gap “is so obvious it’s bewildering.”

Sinden promised “one or two changes” for tomorrow’s game, the first of three Canada must sweep to take the series. He wouldn’t reveal the possible moves, but Wayne Cashman is physically fit to resume his right-wing job in place of Rod Gilbert and Ken Dryden might start in goal.
Canada edges Russians, refs: 'Never gonna beat us again'
By Ted Blackman
The Gazette, Sept. 25, 1972

MOSCOW — Eddie Johnston said, "They ain't never gonna beat us again."
John Ferguson said, "If Toe Blake was behind the bench, it would have cost him a couple of thousand."

And Phil Esposito said, "These two guys are no more referees than my old man."
But, surprisingly, there was little acrimony in the thoughts of Team Canada in the wake of a 3-2 victory over Russia that featured terrible — and almost spiteful — officiating.

'Worst I've seen'

Harry Sinden called the work of the two West Germans, Franz Baader and Josef Kompalla, "entirely incompetent — the worst officials I've ever seen in my life." He said he would meet with the Russians to seek to have both relieved of their assignments for Thursday's final game.

Chances of a bilateral agreement in this matter range from slim to zero, for the Russians found no fault in their work. "It's the Canadian tradition to complain about the officials, not the Russian tradition," said Boris Kulagin, assistant coach of Russia.

Presumably, he forgot for a moment that Russian officials invaded the referees' dressing room to berate the two Americans who worked the second game of the series, a 4-1 Canadian victory fashioned similarly with effective bodywork in the first two periods.

By NHL standards, yesterday's was a tame game but Canada accumulated 31 minutes in penalties to only four for the Russians and played short-handed for 17 minutes and nine seconds — and for two of those minutes were down two men.

One last penalty

Russia's power play, though, continued to be as ineffective as the Canadians' in the series and they managed only one goal. Fittingly, the game came to dramatic conclusion with Canada killing off a penalty to Ron Ellis.

"They got every break in the world," Eddie Johnston said. "And they didn't beat us. To think we blew the game the other night or otherwise we'd be head. They ain't never gonna beat us again. Two more for us and we win the series, right?"

Right indeed, since Canada now trails by a game — having won two, tied one and lost three. Last night, they did it largely with five men — and astonished even themselves by controlling the play thoroughly in the last period.
It wasn't so much the penalty calls that irked Canada as much as two offside whistles and a pair of face-offs. Phil Esposito, for one, admitted he was outsmarted by Alex Ragulin on two occasions and drew needless penalties.

**Esposo's troubles**

Espo took a double charging penalty midway through the first period when he halted the Russian, then bumped him again as his opponent approached him. Late in the second period, Ragulin again came into contact with Espo and the Canadian captain drew five minutes for high-sticking.

"After I got the charging penalty he came at me and lie you'd do in the NHL, I reacted defensively by giving him this," Esposito said, raising an imaginary stick. "That's those international rules. You can't do that. He was smarter than me.

"In the second period, I truthfully don't know what happened. We collided and he could have hit his head on the boards or my stick. I wasn't going to get a penalty until he went begging to the ref. Hey, did you see him shaking hands with the ref after the game?"

Yes, Ragulin made straight for Baader and Kompalla, the gents who hosed Canada at Stockholm — while all other players shook hands at centre ice. It's traditional, though, for the captains to wish the referees well after a game. This time the gesture must have been heartfelt.

"That's how they got their second goal — the crummy face-offs," Espo said. "Twice he dropped the puck when I wasn't ready. I was trying to talk to Gary Bergman. That's the first job of a centre, get the other guys in position.

"So, while I'm saying 'Bergy, take that guy,' the dummy drops the puck. Bang-bang and it's in the net. Hell, that's awful. It's not bad, it's worse than bad. God, I thought I saw some bad referring when I was a kid, but they're even worse than my old man."

As a result of the decidedly unfavorable calls, Canada was under pressure for most of the first two periods but several NHLers came up with their first big games of the series. Most notable of the sudden achievers were Brad Park and Ken Dryden.

"Yes, I was beginning to think of it," Dryden said of a winless streak against Russia that dates back to his amateur career and includes two losses, 7-3 and 5-3, to the Soviets in Canada. "It bothers you to lose when there's no reasonable explanation."

Dryden made several magnificent saves, especially the two off Juri Lapkin from the point during the Ellis penalty at the game's finish, but it was a one-man game. Serge Savard, Pete Mahovlich, Bill White and Pat Stapleton were brilliant on the penalty-killing unit.

"It feels good," Savard said, without a limp for the first time in two weeks. He had played on a healing fractured ankle and made some of his typical spin-around moves. "I still can't spin to the right, but it's coming."
The goals?
Oh yeah, Lapkin gave Russia a 1-0 lead early in the second period with a point shot that never left the ice as it travelled through a screen. But then Canada caught the Russians in a lapse, scoring three times within one minutes and 26 seconds.

First, Dennis Hull banged in a rebound after Rod Gilbert had worked furiously for two shots on net, at 5:13 of the second. Then Yvan Cournoyer slapped in a rebound resulting from Red Berenson's wide shot. Then, Paul Henderson intercepted a pass and beat a sleepy Vladislav Tretia.

Russia narrowed it to 3-2 at 17:11 of the second, when Dennis Hull was serving the most flagrant miscall — a slashing penalty for whacking at the puck along the boards. Alex Yakushev finished off a crisp play against a helpless Dryden.

A half-minute later, Baader was handing Esposito five minutes for high-sticking and drawing blood while Kompalla was at the Canadian bench nailing Ferguson for a bench penalty. Fergy apparently annoyed the West German yelling: "You're the original hot dogs — from Frankfurt, no less."

Between the second and third periods, Sinden advised everyone to lay off the referees no matter what the provocation. Since Canadian bodychecks, notably those inflicted on Valeriy Kharlamov by Park, were already doing the job, there was no need for further risk.

Ferguson and the entire team were angered most by officials hopelessly out of position under the two-man system. Both whistles killed three-on-one breaks and even normally-objective players claimed the two plays were legit.

"They're so dumb, those refs," Paul Henderson said. "They gave Bobby Clarke a misconduct for calling him something. What a joke. It was me that said it."

Briefly: Sinden has the choice of refs for the third game here tomorrow, so Sweden's Dahlberg and Czechoslovakia's But a will work it. There appears to be no way of avoiding Baader and Kompalla in the last game, despite Canadian protests.

Even the guys who play are checking out now, since Gilbert Perreault went home. What do the other players think? Well, they feel the departing players are no less than quitters. Says Pete Mahovlich: "I'm going home if they keep playing me — I thought this was a vacation." Broke everyone up ...

TV missed two goals Friday because the Russians decided in the middle of the second period that there would be no more timeouts for commercials. CTV had to get them in, even at the price of missing some of the play. Russians felt the timeouts were slowing their team...

Vic Hadfield may have started to feel unwelcome in Stockholm when he came on the ice to kill a penalty with Bobby Clarke. "Where do you want me on the face-off?" he asked Clarke, who answered: "On the bench, Vic."
Canada-Russia series: Down to the wire
By Ted Blackman
The Gazette, Sept. 27, 1972

MOSCOW — The Russians steadfastly refuse to single out heroes when they win, claiming all players are equal in a collective team effort, but after a loss... brother, better pack the long johns for the trip north.

"Gennadiy Tsygankov — he cost us the victory," Vsevolod Bobrov declared in a rare burst of frankness after Canada stole a 4-3 victory from Rusia last night to square the series and set up tomorrow night's showdown for the Borscht Bowl.

Tsygankov was the goat on Paul Henderson's winning goal with little more than two minutes to play. He was rooted to the ice as Henderson slipped the puck through his skates, dashed behind him to pick it up and fired a high shot past Vladislav Tretiak at 17:54.

"Never got more personal satisfaction out of a goal," Henderson said of his sixth score of the series and second winner in as many games. "I didn't see it go in, he tripped me after I shot, and when the light didn't go on I was worried."

Toe Blake trick

The goal light flashed for a micro-second, the crowd took moments to react and John Ferguson, sensing another nightmare, quickly remembered an old Toe Blake trick and ordered the players on the bench over the boards for a celebration.

"Remember the 1966 Stanley Cup when Henri Richard slid into the net with the puck in overtime?" Fergy asked. "Well, Toe didn't waste any time. He told us to get on the ice and start hugging Henri before the ref disallowed it."

Richard's goal stood and so did Henderson's, placing Team Canada on the threshold of a series triumph that seemed impossible after it blew the first game here. Both teams have now won three and tied one and the final game could leave a permanent knot if it ends in a draw.

"But I think we can win it," Gary Bergman said. "I know we were not at our best tonight, but we deserve to get a break just once. Boy, if we were playing this thing in the middle of the season. There's no way they can skate with us when we're in shape."

Bergman was involved in a near-fight with Boris Mikhailov late in the game and the cause of the rhubarb was symptomatic of what irritates the NHLers about the officiating. There's no complaint with the penalties Canada takes, but with what the Russians escape.

"He kicked me twice and the second shot went right through my pad into my leg," Bergman
said. "I couldn't believe it — this bugger is kicking me. It's the first time I've been kicked in my life and, brother, I'm not going to put up with it."

Another rash of penalties left Canada shorthanded much of the night, but it seems the NHLers play best when down a man. Russia scored only one power play goal, at 5:15 of the third period when Bergman was 11 seconds from returning to the ice.

Unlike the first two games here, the first period featured most of the scoring. Phil Esposito sandwiched two goals around a pair by the Russians, Alex Yakushev and Vladimir Petrov, and the teams played a scoreless second period.

Rod Gilbert gave Canada the lead at 2:13 of the third, beating Tretiak with a soft backhander. Yakushev, perhaps the best of the Russians despite the attention showered on the injured Valeriy Kharlamov, quickly tied it with a power play goal three minutes later.

Serge Savard, with Bill White the best on defence, started the play for the winning goal with a pass to Henderson at centre ice. Tsygankov tried to trip the fleet Leaf and did, but not before Henderson got all his strength into a shot with complete balance.

"That ought to be worth $25,000," Alan Eagleson said, indicating that he and Henderson are building up points for an upcoming renegotiation of Paul's contract. "Henderson and Ellis have done a lot for Canada and Harold Ballard owes it to them."

By necessity, Canada was outstanding on defence and Harry Sinden conceded, "we could never get untracked offensively."

"No one could figure out why, but Bobby Clarke said he felt the team was at its lowest point in terms of spirit.

"It's this town," he said, implying that Moscow isn't exactly a cheerful place. "We'll be up for Thursday's game just knowing we're getting out of this joint."

**Early jitters**

Tony Esposito, who appeared weak on Yakushev's first goal but wound up the night as a saviour, said he felt he'd played better in Friday's 5-4 disaster and attributed first-period shakiness to a case of the jitters.

"Man, I've never felt so much pressure," said Esposito, who'll give way to Ken Dryden in the final game. "Yeah, more than a Stanley Cup. You're representing many organizations, other players and millions of fans. I'm even nervous now — an hour after the game.

"Hey," he said, adding in afterthought, "was that the brother Phil we know so well — hogging the puck all night?"

Phil Esposito again was the outstanding Team Canada player, killing penalties and forechecking furiously. He was willing to expend so much energy that Sinden used him on
back-to-back shifts at times with fresh sets of wingers.

"Who know me — I play best when I'm on the ice all the time," he said. "Told you last week, didn't I? Even after we lost, I told you we knew who was the better team. We'll go out there Thursday night and prove it once more. Three straight in Moscow — what a finish."

**Briefly:** Kharlamov didn't play, his ankle still hurting from a Bobby Clarke slash. "I'm surprised he can walk, let alone limp," Clarke says. Alex Maltsev moved over to left wing and Eugeni Mikshakov took over the centre position on the line ...

"They tried to steal it and we stole it back," Alan Eagleson said. "No matter what happens now, tonight's victory was worth the whole trip." ...

Sinden indicated he would go with the same lineup for the final game, the only change being the insertion of Dryden in goal. He planned to alternate Dryden and Esposito no matter what.

Mention Brad Park's name and half the Canadian team begins growling off-the-record. "He's not trying and wears that silly smirk all the time," one said. "Beats me why Harry keeps playing the bum." Park was on the ice for three goals by Russia and carries most of the responsibility for the ineffective NHL power play. He can't organize a rush. In 17 power play chances, Canada has scored only once and had three goals against (shorthand goals).

The game against the Czech national team, the world's champs, is definitely on for Saturday night. There've been 50,000 applications for the 14,500 seats in the Prague rink. It'll be on TV at 1:30 p.m.
Henderson had that certain feeling ... 6-5, and it’s all over
By Ted Blackman
The Gazette, Sept. 29, 1972

MOSCOW – Paul Henderson had a feeling... perhaps déjà vu, since he’d already scored two winners in two games... and there was an urgent look of pleading in his eyes when he turned to Harry Sinden as the game ticked into the final minute.

“Harry, who’s on next?”

“Ratelle’s line,” said Sinden, then a pause. “No, you, you’re next.”

“Pete, Pete, how are you?” Henderson screamed at Pete Mahovlich.

“Alright, but get out there.”

And a few moments after that frantic scene on the bench, and 34 seconds from the finish of a game that might have left the Super Bowlski in a limp tie, Paul Henderson bagged his third winner in three games to complete Canada’s breathless comeback win against Russia.

“Takes an unselfish hockey player to do that and Pete Mahovlich deserves a lot of credit,” said Henderson in a dressing room that throbbed with compliments for the heroes, for the non-starters who stuck it out, for Harry Hinden and the brass and mostly for the fans.

Fans great

“The fans here: They were our biggest asset,” Henderson said. “And the guys who didn’t play but stuck it out. It was tougher to watch than to play. The 31 guys who stayed with us get marks for guts, for working with us every day.”

“Yeah,” Pete Mahovlich said sarcastically as he entered the room. “We won it for the guys who quit.” Then the sour expression disappeared and he explained why he’d let Henderson replace him, although his own shift had just begun. “Because he tol me he was going to score a goal – that’s why.”

Henderson’s goal – his seventh of the series – completed a series of incredible comebacks in what has to be the best hockey confrontation ever seen. It came at 19:26, the third and last of the third-period goals that wiped out a 5-3 deficit and left Muscovites weeping in their seats.
Biggest thrill

“It was the biggest thrill of my life to make this team,” said Henderson, a slender but quick left winger who wears a helmet in the NHL but glides with abandon and aggression in international arenas. “It was a big thrill to make the starting lineup – now this.”

His sentiments left off there and were picked up in the adjacent room, where Phil Esposito said: “I’ve never been moved so emotionally in my life,” and where Don Awrey said, “I only played one game but this is bigger than the first Stanley Cup at Boston – bigger by far.”

“Better write something about that guy,” Ken Dryden said, pointing to Esposito as he stripped off his pads. “ Didn’t he show us just what kind of a hockey player he is – just how great he is?”

Esposito launched the rally with a typical Esposito goal at 2:27 of the third period, catching Pete Mahovlich’s pass and teeing it up in the slot. Ten minutes later, Yvan Cournoyer banged in the tying goal, the first of two for which no goal light shone.

“Light the goddam light,” Alan Eagleson shouted, leaving his seat to approach the timekeeper’s bench. He was immediately grabbed by two dozen Russian cops and was only set free after Pete and Gary Bergman led a player’s charge over the boards.

But nothing – not a Russian goal judge, not unfavorable dates, not the surprising excellence of the opponents, not decidedly adverse rules and officiating – could stay Team Canada from its magnificent feat. The NHLers won the Borscht Bowl with three victories on Moscow ice.

“Told you we’d never lose another,” Eddie Johnston said, reminding all of his predictions after Team Canada blew a 4-1 lead with 11 minutes to play in the opener of what could have been a four-game sweep here. “They ain’t ever going to beat us never.”

The action swirled around Espos, who had been falsely maligned in mid summer when a Boston newspaper said he wouldn’t play for Canada unless he was paid – without bothering to talk to Espo.

The competitive Paisano picked up all the slack.

“We came back because we were in condition this time and because we started playing like a team,” said Espo, the man who grabbed the reins of leadership. “In Canada, we were a collection of individuals put together in two weeks’ playing time.

Humiliation

“What got me so motivated? Mostly it was the humiliation in that first game in Montreal ... the fans who booed in Vancouver and some of the crap we had to read the papers. Alright, I’ll be explicit ... the crap on the editorial pages.”
Serge Savard, who added a cracked ankle to a pair of fractured legs and still contributed heavily to the restoration of Canada’s hockey pride (nay, national pride), said the victory was larger in his life than 1969’s Conn Smythe Trophy and the Stanley Cup.

“That year we won for our fans and our province. This time, we had 22 million Canadians behind us ... 15 million watching on television. No one was against us – even those who booed when we played in Vancouver.

**Luck started**

“You know, I was a little down after Winnipeg when I broke my ankle. I wonder again if I’ll ever play. But when I was able to skate a week later in Stockholm, I thought maybe this is the start of good luck in my life – the beginning of my luck.”

Savard wasn’t in a losing game in the series – having played the Toronto win and Winnipeg tie, then the last three in Moscow – but singling out individual achievements wasn’t anyone’s desire. Harry Sinden himself refused a Russian request to pick an all-star team.

“All I’m going to say is repeat what I said when I took this job,” said Sinden, the coach who emitted class in the darkest hours. “I said the series would prove the character and integrity of the professional athlete. You will agree it has, I’m sure.”

**Short comment**

The Russians, of course, keep their dressing room doors barred and the only comment from that side came from assistant coach Boris Kulagin when asked by a Tass representative why all four Russian games were decided by one goal. “Great teams on the ice. It can be the only result – one goal,” Kulagin said.

Despite the distracting aggravation over officials and a few broken agreements, the Russian and Canadian players and particularly the fans would readily agree the two teams had played a monumental series of hockey – one that makes the upcoming NHL season look pale by comparison.

Each game was wired to high-voltage emotion, from the distant fans who were knocking off work and missing school to the now-hoarse 3,000 who paid $700 for the live show and now find the daily diet of smoked fish oh, so palatable.

Gorki Street was like the Royal York after Grey Cup – and more.

In Moscow, the faithful stood and cheered “We’re Number One” with the last rasps their lungs could produce and in the downtown hotels they peeled labels off bottled of champagne for souvenirs. They wound up the game with “O Canada” and wept on the buses returning from the rink.
‘Heart’

“We have one thing the Russians haven’t got – heart,” Gary Bergman said. “They take it as a game, not as an episode in life. I’ve never won a Stanley Cup, but I can’t imagine it’s as good as this: I’ll have to win one to find out.”

Yvan Cournoyer, who scored the tying goal but didn’t have the series most of us expected, slumped in the corner of the room, drained. His only words explained his performance and the enormity of the series: “I’ve never felt so much pressure in my life,” said the guy who’s helped to win six Stanley Cups.

Dryden, who had duplicated Savard’s 1969 feat with a Conn Smithe trophy and a Stanley Cup in 1971, said that this achievement outdid the first. “When we look back on this series in 20 years, it’ll have been the most important,” he said.

Close call

He was still shaking his head over Russia’s third goal – the one that could have killed the Canadian team. After fighting back twice for a 2-2 tie at the end of a hectic first period, Canada fell behind at 21 seconds of the second of a goal resulting from a rebound off the high netting behind the goal.

“I guess I could have caught the shot, although you don’t like to touch a shot you know is well off the net because you know it can dribble off your glove sometimes,” Dryden said.

“I know what you were thinking,” said Tony Esposito, his fraternity brother and dressing room neighbour. “You played it like the NHL, thinking it was glass instead of petting.”

“That’s right,” said Dryden, “and it’s a rough way to start a period because we were ready to do some skating.”

You could see the goal coming all the way through the Moscow series. Alexi Yakushev, evenbetter than the highly-headlined Valeriy Kharlamov, slapped shot that sprung off the net like a jai alai toss. Vladimir Shadrin quickly potted the ricochet.

Bill White eventually tied it, the third of four times Canada rallied from a deficit to take the series 4-3-1, but Russia then scored twice. Yakushev got his second goal when Brad Park dozed on a faceoff and Valeriy Vasiliev made it 5-3 with the Soviets’ third power-play goal.

“Even then, I knew we were far from dead,” Sinden said. “We’d just come off our best period of hockey.”

Between the second and third periods, Tony Esposito rose to make a short and poignant speech: “If those bastards can score five on me in one period (as they had last Friday night) then we can get enough in the third.”
Almost goat

His brother, Phil, had appeared to be the goat on the goal that made it 4-3 and temporarily doused the Canadians’ fire. But while Espo pointed out that the Russkies were becoming sharper on faceoffs (“They used to lose ‘em all, but not anymore – they catch on fast”) he wouldn’t be blamed for this one.

“I’m not the defenceman,” he said, quite pointedly.

And the verbal fingering spotlighted Brad Park, a bust in the series and – although better in this game – the apparent culprit on the goal. Espo said he won the faceoff, couldn’t tie up the centre because of the rule prohibiting faceoff interference and that his opponent managed a pass to Yaksuhev.

Too nervous

Park took the blame, and for once, there wasn’t that smirk he’s worn from the start. “I’ve never been so nervous in all my life,” he said. “I was so nervous I felt like my hands were tied. I just couldn’t handle the puck.”

But the sub-par performances were lost in the overall victory, an indisputable cognizance of North American hockey superiority – though not by the margin we’d expected.

So gripping was the spectacle that Phil Esposito say spent at the finish and asked the question least expected from the winning captain.

“We won 5-4, didn’t we?”

No, Phil, it was 6-5, but we understand.

‘We’re happy because the people want us’

By Red Fisher
Montreal star, Oct. 2, 1972

Montreal – I don’t know where – or when – it started with you, but for me it began in mid-July on the streets of Moscow. The air hung like a heavy blanket pressing . . . pressing in on a visitor.

“The heat,” somebody was explaining, “has been with us for seven weeks.”

The people shuffled along Gorky Street in their dark, unpressed clothes. Some of them clutched briefcases under their arms . . . hurrying along and looking neither to left nor right.
That seems to happen a lot in Moscow . . . people going somewhere and nowhere. But people . . . everywhere.

The training camp for Team Canada which began on a hot August morning, the numbness of two defeats and a tie in a cross-Canada tour . . . the unbelievable, astonishing, remarkable comeback in Moscow, ending with the 3-3 deadlock in Prague Saturday night with Serge Savard getting the tying goal with only four seconds remaining in the game and the Team Canada net empty.

It had to finish that way, didn’t it? Starting with Game One in Moscow – even in a losing venture – the astonishing had become routine with the team. So what’s so special about scoring a tying goal with four seconds left in a game? Doesn’t everybody do it? Just because Paul Henderson wasn’t around Saturday night to score the big goal, as he had done with time vanishing in the last three games against the Soviets – what’s wrong with a guy like Serge Savard getting it? After all, hadn’t he scored the first goal of the game, followed by Peter Mahovlich’s goal to give the Canadians a 2-0 lead in the tour ending game with the Czechs? A routine tie . . . that’s what it was for this team which was hugged to 20 million breasts in Canada in recent days.

Frank Mahovlich was skating around in the warmup Saturday night, wearing a tight, little smile.

“What your checks,” he was telling his associates, get it??? Not a bad line for the big guy!”

All of you saw what happened. Team Canada toyed with the checks . . . errrerrr, Czechs, during the first period and then fell out of it. Completely! How’s three shots in the second period – all of them from beyond centre ice – strike you?

No Yankushevs

Let’s get this non-game out of the way, shall we? If you’re wondering how good this Czechoslovakian team is – or was Saturday – it’s sufficient to mention that they can’t carry the Soviets’ balalaikas. They play more of a Canadian style of the game than the Soviets – American League vintage – but in terms of talent, they haven’t got a Yakushev or a Kharlamov or a Maltsev. They have Josef Horesofsky, but he’s no Lutchenko. They have a Bohslav Stastny, who scored two goals Saturday, but he’s not even a Boris Mikhailov.

Anyway, Team Canada had the Czechs in the first period, and then the talent (there were nine changes in the lineup) allowed them to get away. It’s the beginning of the third period and Bobby Clarke is in the penalty box for drawing blood on Frantisek Pospisil, of all people, and Jiri Kochta, the li’il devil, comes out from behind the net, and beats Ken Dryden. That makes it 3-2, folks, and things aren’t looking too good, right? Especially after Yvan Cournoyer shoots wide on a breakaway in the seventh minute of play and, well . . . what are these guys gonna do for an encore? Where is it written that a team has a lock on small miracles? What happened to Hitchcock?

Okay, how’s this: there are 35 seconds left in the game, and Dryden is out of the nets. Harry Sinden sends Phil Esposito, Frank Mahovlich, Yvan Cournoyer, Serge Savard, Brad Park and
Jean-Paul Parise onto the ice, with the faceoff taking place in the circle to the Czech goalie’s left. But before the puck is dropped, Harry crooks a finger at Mahovlich, and sends Bobby Clarke to take the faceoff.

It happens, of course. Clarke loses the faceoff, sprints into the corner and gets the puck back to Park. There’s a scramble around the nets, but Jiri Holecek flops on it.

Now, there are 13 seconds left. The same group is lined up and Clarke is awaiting the faceoff.

What a memory!

“Some strategy, huh?” Sinden was mentioning yesterday in the moments awaiting Team Canada’s flight home and their thunderous receptions in Montreal and Toronto. “You need the big guys in front of the net. I wanted Savard there, because I remember that son-of-a-buck beating us that way when I was with Boston.”

Thirteen seconds to go and the guy is still thinking of at least tying the game. What’s wrong with the Sinden fella, anyway? Doesn’t he know when to quit?

So it’s Clarke again, and this time he wins the faceoff, and back goes the puck to Park – who was brilliant Saturday. Yeah, the same Park I thought was Bob Blackburn in Canada. Park shoots, and it’s blocked. He gets it again, and he shoots again. This time, the puck gets through to the goalie and he’s on his knees scrambling for it. Parise is along, and swipes at the loose puck. Know something? I thought he snapped it into the empty net, but what actually happened was that he missed – and Savard was there . . . Savard on his knees and Savard shooting the puck into the net.

The referee pointed at Parise and signalled a goal. The players rushed at Parise and thumped him on the back and shook his hand vigorously. But Savard was the goal-scorer and the man who tied the game, and what else is new? Here’s a guy who appeared in two games in Canada, three in Moscow and one in Prague. And all he has to show for it is four victories and two tied. Somebody had better talk to Serge. Another tie or two and he’s liable to be marked down as a loser.

Marvellous!

It started on the steaming sidewalks of Gorky Street and it continued in Montreal and Toronto and Winnipeg and Vancouver and then over to Sweden and to Moscow and finally to Prague. Have you any idea how much sleep has been lost during that world tour? How many words have been written? How many disappointments? How many high moments? I looks back to the first game of the series in Montreal, and can still see Phil Esposito scoring 30 seconds into the game, and then Paul Henderson getting one with a little more than six minutes elapsed. A laughter, right? Does anybody remember what happened after that?
Andrei Starovotov, who’s one of the big men of Soviet hockey, greets a guy after the game. There’s almost a hint of a smile starting at the corners of his mouth. He sticks out his hand. “Remember what you said about the series going eight straight games when you were in Moscow in July?” he asked.

“I remember it too well,” I said.

“You may be right,” he said.

Team Canada wins 4-1 in Toronto, and everything seems to be falling into place. Savard, who has played in his first game, taps a guy on the shoulder after it’s over and says: “You said we’d win in eight straight. We can’t do it now, but you may be close!”

A tie in Winnipeg . . . an embarrassing 5-3 loss in Vancouver and what part of your mortgage would you wager on Team Canada pulling out the series? You’ll remember Vancouver, won’t you? The Vancouver people heap derision on Team Canada, which is what often happens when a team isn’t playing well. Some of the players mutter angrily about the sour reception and a few go much farther. Phil Esposito foes on national television and talked heatedly about the non-reception the team had received – and how something about this Esposito?

Of all of the people on Team Canada, he had the most credentials to speak his piece. Don’t get me wrong: This isn’t the first time I’ve heard the home side made the object of derision. But if Esposito wanted to object to it strenuously, he had earned the right to do it with four of the finest games he has ever played in terms of all-out effort and desire. Even while Team Canada was losing twice and tying once in four games, Esposito was a winner all the way. Annis Stukus put it best when he said: “Esposito wouldn’t play that hard for only money.”

Near trauma

You’ve heard enough about the series in Moscow . . . the near-traumatic experience in the first game when Team Canada allowed a 4-1 lead to fritter away with a breath over 10 minutes remaining. How was this team supposed to regain its dignity after that? Where would the inner strength come from? Was it there at all?

You all know what happened after that: three one-goal victories, including the final game which may have been one of the great finishes anyone ever has seen – in any sport. Forget about Saturday night’s game. That didn’t matter. This thing began and ended with the Soviet series, and if any of you are still wondering whether or not it was all worth it, what have you been talking about since last Thursday night? How many of you are naming the new baby ‘Paul’? Were you among the screaming thousands at the International Airport in Dorval? When was the last time you did something like that? Did you walk into the office with your chin a little higher last Friday morning? It almost felt good getting up, didn’t it?

Everything is almost a hazy memory now, but you should know that some of the athletes, at least, still remember Vancouver.
“We’ve got a lot of friends waiting for us now, I guess,” one of the players was mentioning on the flight yesterday. “It wasn’t like that a few weeks ago. They could hardly wait to get rid of us after Vancouver.”

The answer to that, of course, is that it’s part of the game. Professionals should know this by now, and if they can’t live with it, they should turn their attention to something else. I prefer Pete Mahovlich’s view:

“When I was on that Stanley Cup team a couple of years ago, it took about three days for me to realize how happy I was. Now this thing is over . . . I’m so happy . . . happier than I’ve ever been. I’m happy because we’re going back and all the people back there are waiting for us – and want us. Most of the guys know this . . . that’s why all of us are happy. Know what I mean?
Henderson had that certain feeling...

...6.5, and it's all over!

By ROY BLANDER
Grosvenor Sports Editor

Hockey sidetracked city for three hours as fans all over stayed riveted to screens

CRUSH TERROR—Sharp

By DOROTHY LAVRAM
United Press

TOURS TOWNSHIPS

Wagner wants parole checks

Today's Gazette

Red topic: scenic, the Soviet agress for foreign travelers, constantly rearranging city tours, aiming to keep visitors in the wake of the annual Dollard tour. They promised to help the Dollard with the annual Dollard tour. The Dollard promised to help the Dollard with the annual Dollard tour. The Dollard promised to help the Dollard with the annual Dollard tour. The Dollard promised to help the Dollard with the annual Dollard tour.

Westmounters vow court action

Police merger blasted again

Anti-Israeli mail bombs in Rio