

distinct from national "all-star" teams) have won 19 world championships and six Olympic hockey titles for Canada. In addition, Canada has, since 1945, sent many amateur teams on exhibition tours through such countries as Japan, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, and East and West Germany.

In the last few years, the calibre of hockey in other countries has so improved that Canada now feels justified in moving into the all-star classification, rather than sending a strengthened club team into world competition. The experiment with a national team started with the Ninth Winter Olympic Games at Innsbruck in 1964, at which Canada was represented by a group of young Canadians, mostly university students, between the ages of 19 and 27. The improvement in European teams was dramatically shown by a three-way tie for second place among Canada, Czechoslovakia and Sweden. When the goal averages were calculated, Canada, for the first time in history, failed to win an Olympic hockey medal.

In 1970, Canada withdrew from international competition on the ground that it was not allowed to send its best (i.e. professional) players. The issue has not yet been resolved, although negotiations at the 1975 meetings of the International Ice Hockey Federation seem to indicate that a solution may be reached in the near future.

Team Canada 1972 and 1974

Years of negotiation between hockey officials of the Soviet Union and Canada culminated in September 1972 in an agreement that a series of eight games would be played pitting Canadian professionals from the National Hockey League against the amateur world champions from the U.S.S.R. After a first-game defeat, the ill-prepared Canadians stumbled across Canada losing three of four games played in Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver.

Accompanied by nearly 3,000 devoted fans, Team Canada went on to defeat the Soviet team in Moscow, thereby regaining some of the prestige lost during the Canadian half of the series.

In 1974, the newly-formed World Hockey Association, with a group of players far better prepared physically and psychologically than the 1972 Team Canada, took up the challenge of the Soviet Union to play a second series of eight games. This time the Soviet team defeated the Canadian "selects" fairly easily.

International rules and style of play

International hockey, under the rules of the International Ice
