



# ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

## SILVER MEDAL 1972



TOP ROW: Stu Irving \* Tom Mellor \* Robbie Florek  
Coach: Murray Williamson \* Tim Regan \* Tim Sheehy  
Richard McGlynn BOTTOM ROW: Paul Molaughlin  
Thayer Tutt Award Winner \* Inductee: Tom McNeely  
Dan Eedale - President Massachusetts Hockey

SAPPORO-Japan.  
By: Bob Rogers

They did it! The USA Hockey National Team brings home the Silver Medal. This team had no chance to go further than the first round. That's what the critics, experts and hockey aficionados said; guess who has egg on their faces now.

Murray Williamson's boys have done it. Early in the Games the Americans had astonished Sapporo, by walloping the powerful Czechoslovakian Team 5-1. The



afternoon after the Czech game the coach of the mighty Russian team spotted USA Coach Murray Williamson, ran over, threw himself, on his knees in the snow and salaamed deeply. There was even talk of them possibly beating the gold medal favored Russian Team.

No one quite knew how this had come about, but everyone was impressed, particularly with US Goalie Mike Curran of Green Bay, a peppery fighter who alternately cursed and coaxed his team into action.

**1972 SILVER MEDAL TEAM  
" THE FORGOTTEN TEAM "  
REMEMBERED:**

Why don't we remember them?

Just as the soldiers returned from the war in Vietnam with little or no fanfare, so to did the 1972 Silver Medal Olympic team. America's consciousness was focused on the turmoil going on in the streets and in the jungle of Vietnam. Not on speed skaters, Dianne Holum's Gold Medal in the 1,500-meter race or Anne Henning, the perky 16 year old, winning gold in the 500-meter event. Both young ladies are from Northbrook Illinois, and both broke the Olympic record in Sapporo. No, not even the Richmond Vermont slalom skier, gold medallist Barbara Cochran our next-door neighbor. Yes we missed a glorious moment; yes we lost forever the chance to welcome back our soldiers and our Olympians.

For the past 20 years we have clung to the hero's of 1980, the U. S. Gold Medal Team, the "Miracle on Ice". It was now a quiet time in America, a time to enjoy the Olympics and reflect and to dream.

Well hockey fans it time to meet some new hero's. On October 1st, 2000, some 28 years late, eyes were opened as Massachusetts Hockey inducted the members of the 1972 Olympic Hockey Team " The Forgotten Team" into the Mass Hockey Hall of Fame. As they spoke, I can tell you truthfully, there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

Stu Irving (Assistant Coach Merrimack College) was virtually plucked from the jungles of Vietnam. Serving several months there before being called to play for the team. All together 5 members of the team were serving in the military before being called to play. Some of the honorees hadn't seen each other in 28 years and some had spoken only briefly in that time.

Robbie Ftroek had lost contact all together as his schedule in the NHL kept him busy.

Robbie (Former LA Kings—Jersey Devil Coach) gave a speech from the heart, as did the others, which had us captivated by their emotional recollection of the events and what it meant to them.

Stu Irving spoke with vivid re-collection of how he had been plucked from Vietnam, thanking Jim Logue (Assistant Coach Boston College) for recommending to Williamson, that he (Irving) join the team.

Tim Sheehy spoke of how he had played these international teams before without much success and how happy he was to have beaten them, (Poland 6-1 Czech 5-1) and how the 72 team softened up the Russians for the 1980 "Miracle On Ice Team".

Dave Silk (1980 Olympic Team) was the Master of Ceremonies, which made the give and take lively and quite funny.



Coach Murray Williamson, not from Massachusetts but first naturalized, then inducted, spoke first, and why not. Most people do not know of the genuine separation of hockey in the 70s, Midwest vs. East. As a mid-westerner, Murray was expected to choose all mid-western players for the team, and did not. Although, many of the players chosen were mid-western Murray chose a handful of easterners. He created a lot of animosity for himself and all the eastern players knew it. To a man, all the inductees when contacted, said we have to have Coach Murray inducted with us, as we would no have been chosen for the team without him.



USA Hockey Vice-President Larry Reid opened the festivities, reminiscing about the 1972 Silver Medal Team. His re-collections were both funny and accurate.

Larry, former New England Registrar and a mainstay of hockey in Rhode Island came through the ranks of USA Hockey.

Tim Sheehy accepts inductee Kevin Ahearn's award from Mass Hockey President Dan Esdale and Dave Silk. Kevin



could not be with us tonight but I am sure his speech would have been as fascinating and funny as the others.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that all the inductee's families were present and specifically spoken of with great love and affection by each inductee.

One funny moment was when Tim Sheehy spoke of being at one of his teammates homes (Ftorek) and as young men do, they were shooting pucks, balls, whatever in the house and Robbie's Mom told them to "Take it outside". (Sound familiar)



(LEFT TO RIGHT) TIM REGAN \* STU IRVING \* RICHARD MCGLYNN



TIM SHEEHY \* ROBBIE FTOREK



Both Ftopek and Sheehy have been inducted into the U. S. Hockey Hall of Fame but for some reason I feel they both a thrilled with their induction into the Massachusetts Hockey Hall.

I have been going to the Mass Hockey meeting for the past 16 years. Never have I been so moved, so humbled and impressed by these inductees’.

This has been by far the best meeting I have attended in all those 16 years.

## MASSACHUSETTS/USA HOCKEY MEMBERS I BRING YOU THE 1972 SILVER MEDALLIST

Centers	Keith R. Christiansen	Duluth, Minnesota
	* Robbie B. Ftopek	Needham, Massachusetts
Wings	* Kevin Ahearn	Milton, Massachusetts
	Larry Bader	Minnetonka, Minnesota
	Henry Boucha	Warroad, Minnesota
	* Stuart Irving	Beverly Farms, Massachusetts
	Ronald Naslund	Burnsville, Minnesota
	Craig Sarnier	North St. Paul, Minnesota
	Mark Howe	Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
	* Tim Sheehy	International Falls, Minnesota
Defense	Charles Brown	Bloomington, Minnesota
	James McElmury	St. Paul, Minnesota
	* Richard McGlynn	Medford, Massachusetts
	Bruce McIntosh	Edina, Minnesota
	* Thomas Mellor	Cranston, Rhode Island
	Walter Olds	Minneapolis, Minnesota
	Frank Sanders	St. Paul, Minnesota
Goalies	* Tim Regan	Providence, Rhode Island
	Peter Sears	Lake Placid, New York
	Michael Curran	International Fall, Minnesota
Coach	* Murray Williamson	Displaced Baystater

\* Massachusetts Inductees’