

**REPRISING THE TRAIL SMOKE EATERS: MEN'S HOCKEY IN A MID-
TWENTIETH CENTURY CANADIAN RESOURCE COMMUNITY**

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Abstract

The Trail Smoke Eaters hockey club remains the only Canadian club team to have won two World Championships. The 1939 and 1961 World Championship teams have become mythologized through narrative accounts and popular folklore that remain the focus of memorializing these teams. This study considers the impact the team had on the community and the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada, and who benefitted from this winning team. Relationships between company management, players, and the community are examined to aid in explaining the degree to which workers, who were also hockey players, structured their own lives and the degree to which their lives were structured by the company. Company support followed the success in 1939 in the form of gift giving and player recruitment. The Smoke Eaters became mythologized by narrative accounts in an effort to equate both victories and tie the 1961 championship to the community.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to every person who has stepped on the ice to compete in a Trail Smoke Eaters jersey and to the Italians in the blast furnaces.

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This project would not have been possible without the support of many people.

Rob, I cannot thank you enough for your ongoing support and wisdom throughout this process. I am forever grateful for the time we spent discussing every facet of this project and for your never-ending encouragement.

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List of Abbreviations

BCHL	British Columbia Hockey League
BHL	Boundary Hockey League
CAHA	Canadian Amateur Hockey Association
CM&S	Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada
KHL	Kootenay Hockey League
KSHL	Kootenay Senior Hockey League
TCA	Trail City Archives
TDRPS	Trail District Recreational Projects Society
TTBPC	Trail-Tadanac Board of Park Commissioners

Chapter One:

Introduction

The 1939 Trail Smoke Eaters hockey team arrived home from Zurich, Switzerland, to a gathering of over 7000 fans and supporters at the local Canadian Pacific Railway station, where they were paraded through the streets and celebrated for capturing the 1939 World Hockey Championship. Their impressive tournament record of winning all eight games¹ began a legacy for the city of Trail and the Trail Smoke Eaters hockey organization that paved the way for a second World Championship in 1961. Fans greeted the 1961 Trail Smoke Eaters in a similar fashion to the 1939 team after the team arrived home from Geneva, Switzerland, where they emerged victorious after beating the USSR in the tournament's final game.² The "Smokies" remain the only Canadian club team in history to have won two World Championships.

The Trail Smoke Eaters' historic victories have been recorded in popular narrative accounts, often presented in chronological order, without offering much more than an explanation of positive, factual evidence.³ This examination delves deeper into the history of the Trail Smoke Eaters to understand the team's place in the community of Trail. Literature involving the Trail Smoke Eaters includes primarily narrative, non-scholarly accounts of the teams' story and legacy. This study serves to fill a gap in the literature associated with the sport of hockey in small, industrial cities within Canada, specifically the Smoke Eaters. This examination is a valuable addition to historical literature, as it provides academic analysis through social theories. Additionally, this work is a valuable addition to the existing non-scholarly accounts of the Trail Smoke Eaters and provides a critical lens through which the mythologized 1939 and 1961 World Championship teams may be viewed. To this end, this investigation seeks to discuss the complexity and overlap of the relationships between the owners and managers of the mining and smelting company, the hockey players, and the

community members. This will facilitate an examination of the degree to which workers, who were also hockey players, created their own lives and the degree to which their lives were structured by the company. Furthermore, this study seeks to determine why and how the Trail Smoke Eaters became so important to the community, the club's unique impact on the community that transcended a winning sports team, and the extent to which the accomplishments of the team affected the community. Finally, this investigation aims to shed light on who benefited from the presence of this successful hockey team in Trail and whose interests were not served by the team's prominent position in the community. These areas of inquiry are critical to forming a nuanced understanding of the Trail Smoke Eaters and their place in the community of Trail, providing insight that extends beyond a transparent narrative account of the team. This study aims to focus on re-examining the existing literature and the popular lore surrounding the 1939 and 1961 teams.

Lining one hallway of the Trail Memorial Centre⁴ is the Sports Hall of Memories. The goal of this display is to “collect, preserve and exhibit memorabilia that describes the rich sports heritage of Trail and to honour those individuals who have made a significant contribution to sport in our community.”⁵ Many of the cabinets are filled with Trail Smoke Eaters memorabilia from the 1939 and 1961 World Championships. This memorializing of the team through these two events provides a distorted view of the team's actual history. The aura that exists around the team is largely the result of this distorted view of the past.

The relations between the Trail Smoke Eaters hockey teams and the community were impacted by the clubs success. A winning team meant a winning community, and the town embraced this as the Smoke Eaters captured Savage Cups,⁶ Allan Cups,⁷ and World Championships. Their victories sparked community celebrations and garnered both the team and city international exposure. This ongoing use of the team, and the relationships the team had with

the city and the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada (CM&S),⁸ poses many questions and forms the basis of this investigation.

Guiding Questions

To bring a clearer understanding to the role senior men's hockey played in shaping relationships that existed in Trail in the mid-twentieth century, particularly between CM&S and the residents of Trail, this discussion employs theoretical concepts to bring greater clarity to questions being posed. To situate the concept of cultural hegemony, it is also necessary to consider the social and economic system of capitalism and the related concepts of class and power relations. While the above theoretical concepts are complex, they are useful given the intricacy of the relations that existed in the community, particularly between the Trail Smoke Eaters, CM&S, and the City of Trail. As discussed below in greater detail, an awareness of these concepts provides historians of sport a means to bring greater understanding to the critical place of sport in industrial resource communities. In addition, these concepts provide the author with further direction for questions surrounding how sport impacted social relationships, as they relate to the role sport and hockey played in resource-based industrial communities such as Trail.

This research considers the impact that senior men's hockey, more specifically the Trail Smoke Eaters, had in terms of a cultural influence in Trail. Despite the general lack of involvement CM&S had with the team prior to 1939, there were likely some potential ulterior motives behind the eventual sponsorship and overall involvement with the team after 1939. This examination focuses on how the Trail Smoke Eaters senior men's hockey team served to demonstrate how closely aligned the interests of the community came to be with those of the company. Through a thorough examination of senior men's hockey and the place of the Trail Smoke Eaters hockey club in the community, a clearer understanding of the complex

relationships between the community, company, and team is uncovered. From these foundational inquiries arise several specific questions regarding the company's interest in providing support to the community and, after the Second World War, the senior men's hockey team: How did the team benefit from the support provided by CM&S, and why did the company choose to provide this support to the team and community? Why did CM&S support the Trail Smoke Eaters, community sport, and company recreation? Did broader motivations exist that resulted in company decisions to support the team and community recreation in general? Answering these questions is central to substantiating this thesis and provides a detailed inquiry into the relationships between company managers and executives, workers, and residents of Trail, along with the role that senior men's hockey and the Trail Smoke Eaters played in the city of Trail between the 1930s and mid 1960s.

Method and Methodology

As discussed, this study will critique existing narrative accounts of the Trail Smoke Eaters while also attempting to critically examine the team's place in the community and the company's use of the team to gain greater power over the city, particularly after the Second World War. By interrogating existing historical accounts of the team, events, and people, important questions arise surrounding issues such as how the team served, and the legacy of the World Championship teams continue to serve, the interests of the community, residents, and CM&S. Why the World Championship victories became mythologized in Trail is a subsequent question that requires investigation. It is important to note that the methodologies engaged in this study emerge from the questions not addressed in the histories by Murray Greig and James Cameron and those raised by reconsidering the team's place in the community.⁹ Primarily, this research project relies on archival data that allow the author to provide answers to the questions

posed above, such as the impact the sport of hockey, and the Smoke Eaters specifically, had on the city of Trail. It is imperative to note that the information collected from the Trail City Archives (TCA) is much more than primary source material. The newspaper articles, company meeting minutes and magazines, and player interviews allowed for tremendous insight when answering the above-mentioned questions.

The TCA contain numerous primary source materials, including newspaper articles and oral histories. Archives, as Douglas Booth suggests, are normally seen as “neutral sites of knowledge”¹⁰ from a reconstructionist perspective.¹¹ It is the author’s goal to reconsider the stories of the Trail Smoke Eaters and the community of Trail by examining archival data from a critical perspective to assist in answering how the team promoted the interests of the community of Trail and CM&S and additional questions related to the changing place of the team in the community. Working with archived sport history material, according to Booth, poses a variety of issues one of which is that local, public archives are often missing information, which leaves gaps in timelines and stories. This concern is largely a result of the inconsistencies common to sporting organizations to maintain thorough records.¹² Although the records of the Smoke Eaters are incomplete, the TCA houses materials, including city council meeting minutes, that provide a record of city government involvement and interaction with the Trail Smoke Eaters and the sport of hockey in Trail. Oral histories from some of the World Championship hockey players from both the 1939 and 1961 teams are also located at the archives, which provided rich insight into the lives of the players and their roles within the hockey club, the company, and the community.

Engaging and accessing the voices in the oral histories that exist in the TCA provided the researcher with rich data. These interviews were examined and interpreted, from which “multiple layers of meaning”¹³ were developed. The experiences of the players become a point of entry into understanding how the team was employed by the company and the community to meet

larger goals, such as exercising paternalism. Frequently, interviews are used in conjunction with other sources to provide additional evidence. Furthermore, this approach enables the researcher to procure multiple perspectives of the same event.¹⁴ Already existing interviews with some of the players from both the 1939 and 1961 teams were sufficient in meeting this investigations needs. To this end, select players from the World Championship teams were interviewed for the production “*For the Love of the Game: a Century of Hockey in Trail, B.C.*” of which the raw, unpublished materials are held in the TCA.

Newspapers, as Booth suggests, offer researchers an exclusive view of the past that can present both issues and facts for the historian to interpret.¹⁵ Papers such as the *Trail Creek News* and *Trail Daily Times*, along with publications from surrounding communities, are archived in the TCA and available for investigation. Booth notes that stories appearing in newspapers capture the mood surrounding large events and can be a good source of evidence.¹⁶ Yet, he warns that scores and announcements may still be subject to human error,¹⁷ and direct quotes should not be taken at face value, as they are frequently incomplete and fail to represent the interviewee’s articulation and tone.¹⁸ Additionally, it must be noted that the author recognizes that the local newspaper writers may be unduly positive and supportive in their accounts of the team and community, and thus appropriate interrogation is required. The importance of examining the economic and social interests of the newspaper owners, writers, and editors should not be discounted.¹⁹

Limitations

The author contacted the provincial archives in British Columbia for access to the CM&S/Cominco records, however, was informed that exclusive permission would be required from the company. CM&S/Cominco (now Teck Resources Limited and Trail operations named

Teck Metals Ltd.) did not grant access nor reciprocate correspondence with the author.²⁰ The inability to obtain access to CM&S archives is a primary limitation for this study. The company records and meeting minutes still in existence would have assisted in revealing the company's motivation for supporting senior men's hockey in Trail and providing employee recreation opportunities, particularly post-World War II. Also potentially limiting is that the researcher used pre-existing oral histories and was unable to post questions specific to the aim of this study. However, the voices of these established oral histories could still be effectively engaged.

Delimitations

This study is bookended by the early 1930s and the mid 1960s, as this period includes the build up to the 1939 World Championship, the inter-championship years, the 1961 World Championship, and the decline of senior men's hockey shortly thereafter. However, it was still critical to research the early 1900s through the mid 1970s to determine CM&S' full involvement in both senior men's hockey and the community. Additionally, this study focuses primarily on Trail, British Columbia, Canada. Trail is a part of a larger region called the West Kootenays, an area where mining and industrial commerce were commonplace during the period. This work focuses on CM&S, the region's main ore processing smelter and Trail's major employer. Finally, it is less likely that the historical record will include significant information about the involvement of women with the Trail Smoke Eaters. It is difficult to speculate on the role women played with the team.²¹

In the case of Trail and the Smoke Eaters hockey organization, men in positions of influence made decisions when it came to this primarily male, team sport.²² How the team has been portrayed and its role in legitimizing the entrance of CM&S into the non-work lives of their employees requires examination. Investigation into the relationships involving the community

and company based on social and economic influence that impacted class relations in Trail suggests most of the evidence is concerned with the elite men's amateur leagues in which the Smoke Eaters participated. This is not to say that women were unengaged in decision-making, the community, and the hockey team. Women in Trail during this period may have assumed the role of supporting the men, team, and hockey games, and as Larsen indicates, may have played a significant role at CM&S during the Second World War.²³

Theoretical Framework

The decision to employ or not to employ social theory requires one to consider whether social theory allows for clearer explanations, the ability to generate better questions, and ultimately a more focused study. For this study of senior men's hockey, specifically the Trail Smoke Eaters in the community of Trail, theoretical concepts such as cultural hegemony assist in providing greater insight into, and more focused questions about, the relationships between company managers and workers and how sporting opportunities were viewed from both sides of this complex relationship. As Booth suggests, the decision to make use of social theory allows the author to not only justify which evidence they choose to include in their work, but additionally to be aware of, and aid in, interpreting the selected evidence.²⁴ However, sport historians who deemphasize social theory in their work may suggest that theory impedes upon the evidence being employed to present a historical account.²⁵ Historians who produce narrative accounts of the past could argue that social theory compromises their ability to maintain factual accuracy.²⁶ Yet, theory can, if thoughtfully applied, reveal an understanding of ways groups of individuals operated that is often absent in narrative accounts, and it can provide useful perspectives for understanding the impact social constructions, such as group dominance, had on daily life. Ultimately, sport historians need to clearly understand why they should or should not

use social theory, and if they choose to use theory, why the specific theoretical constructs fit with the research in which they are engaged.

When examining the role senior men's hockey played in Trail, selected theoretical constructs stemming from Marxist frameworks, including cultural hegemony, assist in providing a foundation to address questions related to the role sport, and specifically senior men's hockey, played in the industrial resource community of Trail. Neo-Marxist approaches, including those drawing upon concepts such as power and class have proven useful when researching and writing about the history of sport.²⁷ In the case of Trail, the company owners possessed economic, political, and social power, and thus are assumed to have had a certain degree of control over their worker's lives. However, Peter Burke suggests that power does not simply imply that one institution or social group dominates the rest of a society. He argues that those without any power possess agency, so the concept must be applied with careful consideration. In the case of this investigation, the notion of power assists with focusing on economic, political, and social differences between the various groups and individuals examined in this analysis.²⁸ Power is a highly complex concept that has been employed by individuals ranging from Karl Marx to Pierre Bourdieu.²⁹ Antonio Gramsci's construct of cultural hegemony and Pierre Bourdieu's construct of class are well suited for this study, as they possess a synergy with ideas surrounding power. Both these concepts provide ways to understand the social forces that impacted relations between people and groups in Trail.

Karl Marx's model of relations in industrial societies was developed from his concentrated investigations of working class life, where he noticed stratification within the emerging capitalist economic system. These observations suggested that social, political, and economic resources in this form of society were not evenly distributed. Furthermore, his model focused on how production impacted social relationships, which provided insight into the

complex relations between workers and their peers, as well as workers and those who owned the means of production.³⁰ It was appropriate to employ Marxist influenced theories to this study of CM&S and the citizens of the industrial resource community of Trail.

Neo-Marxist approaches are important with respect to considerations of class, power, and cultural hegemony in Trail.³¹ These particular concepts are products of Marx's earlier social thought and original works, and these later conceptions attempt to overcome the criticisms of traditional Marxist approaches. Traditional Marxism has been criticized as being overly deterministic, whereby his interpretation of the relationship between workers and owners of the means of production are tied strictly to economic considerations with no real account for social or cultural considerations. John Hargraeves, for example, suggests that the label of 'industrial society' is deterministic as it characterizes societies based on their economic development and technological advancements, without consideration of social relationships.³² Thus, historians of sport who look to Marx have primarily employed later neo-Marxist constructs including the concepts of class, power, power relations, and cultural hegemony.

As defined by Anthony Giddens, power is the capacity of an individual, or group of individuals, to employ different types of resources to secure outcomes preferential to the individual or group.³³ Furthermore, Giddens suggests that the resources that favour certain groups serve to define the range of legitimate practices and meanings associated with dominant sports practices. These meanings are indeed both socially produced and reproduced within sport. Sport during the period of industrialization in western societies is undoubtedly an expression of class power and social control; a clear reflection of capitalist social processes and class relations.³⁴ To this end, modern sport is also an expression of dominant ideologies such as capitalism and the notion of succeeding through hard work. In the case of Trail, the company owners and managers comprised the dominant class, and as Giddens proposes, likely played a

critical role in the creation and control of elite team sport, in this case hockey. Sport is a vehicle for political socialization that reflects and reinforces the values of the dominant class. In Trail, the Smoke Eaters senior men's hockey team was understood to be a reflection of the best the community had to offer.

In his examination of miners in nineteenth century Britain, sport historian Alan Metcalfe uses the concept of class to examine the lives of poor working class men and the role sport and recreation played in their lives. Parallels exist with Metcalfe's work and this examination of senior men's hockey in Trail, as Metcalfe investigates working class miners and landowners in Britain. East Northumberland is an example of a resource community where a small, wealthy demographic owned the land and mines with the remainder of the landless residents providing their labour as miners. Metcalfe's ideas provide some insight into the example of Trail, as he employs the theoretical concept of class and situates his work around the life of miners and their recreations. Metcalfe essentially investigates the social and power relationships between different groups and details the class structure of a small mining community. The ideas proposed by Metcalfe provided some direction in terms of considering the place of sport, more specifically hockey and the Smoke Eaters team, in Trail. He uses the concept of class to analyze how the workers could find recreation in the harsh social and economic conditions they faced.³⁵ With a similar social stratification in the case of Trail, albeit during a different time frame and location, the concept of class, and the links between the concepts of class and power, facilitate insight into the social relationships present in Trail in the early and mid twentieth century.

While Pierre Bourdieu is not normally viewed as a historian of sport, his work contributes further to our understanding of the role class has played in the history of sport. Distinct class differences and relationships existed in Trail, which were represented by the rank of individuals being relatively clear based on their position within CM&S, through the

professional service they provided to the community, or perhaps their role within the hockey club. Complex social relationships both within and between classes existed, suggesting that using class as a means to understand social relations enabled the author to provide further insight into how the Trail Smoke Eaters existed within Trail. Peter Burke suggests the historian must carefully consider the period, location, and characteristics of the society under investigation when employing the concept of class.³⁶ Furthermore, he notes that Marx approached the idea of class in terms of the mode of production, conflict, and power, which could be an appropriate model to use in the capitalist, industrial resource community of Trail.³⁷ Yet Burke warns that “the danger of oversimplification is obvious”³⁸ when attempting to employ the concept of class as the author may become pigeonholed into only one understanding of individuals’ lives. Nevertheless, an understanding of the various agents in the context of mid-twentieth century Trail, British Columbia assists in applying the concept of class within this examination. Primarily, a consideration of social class allows the historian to make better sense of how decisions with respect to the provision of sport and recreation were made, in whose favor those decisions were made, and the place of sport in demonstrating either an individual’s social position, or rank, in relation to others.

The work of Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci, in particular his conceptualization of cultural hegemony, provides an applicable theoretical framework to help identify the impact the sport of hockey as part of broader recreation initiatives undertaken by CM&S. Hegemony represents a theoretical concept that has been applied by both historians and sport historians.³⁹ Cultural hegemony essentially proposes that a dominant societal group commands social interactions, and subordinate groups are convinced without the use of force to accept the dominant group’s values.⁴⁰ Fundamentally, the ideals of the dominant group emerge as, and become, the ideals of the subordinate groups. It has also been noted that Gramsci did not merely

wish to have cultural hegemony become a reconsideration of Marxism, though it is clear that hegemony is in fact influenced by Marxist theory, as it incorporates issues of class, power, and social relations, which are more central to neo-Marxist approaches. Through the hegemonic process, the dominant group enjoys privileges, such as political, social, and economic power, based on their position in society or social class. As T.J. Jackson Lears suggests in *The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities*, the subordinate group is not subjected to domination by force, but is generally accepting of their position in society.⁴¹ While the subordinate group recognizes the social, economic, and political disparity, they are not motivated to advance against the dominant block so long as their circumstance is viewed as both workable and livable. Booth suggests hegemony can represent a dynamic concept, one that accounts for the constant modifications by the dominant group in response to the ongoing resistance from the subordinate groups.⁴² However, it should be noted that hegemony has been criticized as being too ‘neat’ of a theoretical explanation.⁴³ For this study, the construct of cultural hegemony serves the purpose of assisting to provide a clearer understanding of relationships and the types of social and political issues that existed in mid-twentieth century Trail.

Examples exist of sport histories that have successfully used the constructs of cultural hegemony and class to aid in the development and explanation of issues similar to those being examined in this study of elite amateur hockey in Trail. One such example is David Robbins’ article *Sport, Hegemony, and the Middle Class: The Victorian Mountaineers*, where he suggests a need for a more nuanced examination of the various elements that comprised the middle class. Robbins examines middle class sport by employing class relations and cultural hegemony, and he notes that the development of sport and culture in Victorian Britain emerged partly based on the contrasting social classes present.⁴⁴ Similar definitions of various class groups could be applied to understanding the social structure in Trail, and it is possible that workers, or

subordinate groups, were accepting of the dominant groups' values and practices, such as sport. A second example of hegemony being applied in a sport history study is Nancy Bouchier's investigation of sport in mid-nineteenth century Woodstock, Ontario, Canada. Bouchier examines how sport became integral to the lives of the town's people and describes sport's influence on civic planning through the notion of town boosterism. She also examines the social differences and division between the elite and emerging middle classes.⁴⁵

The application and engagement of social theory is critical to this examination of the Trail Smoke Eaters and the community of Trail. To aid in a precise case study of Trail and the explanation of inquiries into the motivation behind CM&S' involvement with the hockey team, it is necessary to employ appropriate theoretical constructs. Being that this investigation is a re-conceptualization of hockey and the Trail Smoke Eaters in a mining community, the selection of concepts such as cultural hegemony, power, and class are most appropriate. By drawing connections and analyzing the relationships between hockey, the emerging hockey and recreation infrastructure of Trail, and the interests of industrial capitalism, the use of the social theories outlined above effectively aid in supporting the critical treatment of the Trail Smoke Eaters and their history in the mining community of Trail.

Review of Literature

The topic of the history of hockey in Canada encompasses a vast body of literature. Books such as *Hockey Night in Canada: Sports, Identities, and Cultural Politics* by Richard Gruneau and David Whitson delve extensively into the implications of the sport of hockey in society.⁴⁶ An additional example of how the history of hockey has been examined in Canada is Andrew Holman's *Canada's Game: Hockey and Identity*, where the author suggests possibilities of why hockey is so important to the Canadian identity.⁴⁷ However, within this literature base

there remain few scholarly investigations of hockey in small, industrial towns with one major employer.⁴⁸ Thus, this examination of the Trail Smoke Eaters in Trail between 1939 and 1961 addresses this gap in the literature by using previously existing general hockey histories and non-scholarly work written about the Trail Smoke Eaters and Trail to provide a critical understanding of the Trail Smoke Eaters.

Existing Trail Smoke Eaters Literature

Previously written literature about the Trail Smoke Eaters primarily includes positivist, narrative accounts that present the team's achievements in chronological order.⁴⁹ While this literature provides accurate, albeit rudimentary and superficial, information regarding the team and their performance, it lacks an analysis of what the team meant to Trail and the promotional role it may have played for both the city and CM&S. Booth suggests, "the typical narrative in sport history is a barren treatise, devoid of imagination" that fails to provide vision into "life and society."⁵⁰ While it is possible to appreciate narratives and their place in the field of sport history, examples such as *Trail on Ice* are simply that: stories.

The narrative *Trail on Ice*, written by Murray Greig, is a TCA publication that contains statistics, profiles, and rosters of both the 1939 and 1961 World Champion teams. The book chronologically follows the teams on their journey to each championship and is particularly helpful in providing broad, factual information. One of Booth's foremost concerns with narratives such as *Trail on Ice* is the connection between the actual events being portrayed and the narrative language used.⁵¹ Booth also suggests that authors who construct narratives often predetermine what they wish to investigate, where the evidence is integrated into the final product based on the author's agenda and their own style of history.⁵² While Greig's *Trail on Ice* provides facts, statistics, and anecdotes, it does not delve into any issues, concerns, or questions

regarding the Trail Smoke Eaters. The author does not critically examine the involvement and role CM&S had with the team and neglects to investigate the motivation behind CM&S support of the team. Additionally, *Trail on Ice* and *The Last Time We Won Hockey* do not specifically discuss how the team served the interests of both the company and community.

Sport in Canadian Resource Communities

By the early 1900s, sports across Canada were becoming increasingly organized. This can be in part attributed to the industrial revolution, which resulted in both social and technological changes. As Don Morrow and Kevin Wamsley suggest, the industrial revolution was pivotal to the advancement of sport as technological advances improved athlete physical fitness and dexterity, transportation, communication, and a standardization of rules. Furthermore, they propose that the mass production of equipment allowed sport to be more attainable at a lower cost.⁵³

During the early 1900s, the notion of community promotion was widespread among small town, resource-based community supported sport.⁵⁴ The importance of winning became increasingly attractive to please spectators, team owners, and civic officials. Morrow and Wamsley point specifically to ice hockey as the sport predominantly responsible for rivalries and inter-town matches in these resource communities,⁵⁵ where the miners and other industrial workers were socially competitive.⁵⁶ The Second World War brought senior men's hockey to a halt in the West Kootenay region of British Columbia and throughout most of Canada as men joined the armed forces and were transported overseas. After the war and toward the end of the period under investigation, the importance of having a successful community team grew and took to a new level of significance for the community and CM&S.

Hockey in the Region

In the southern interior region of British Columbia, including both the East and West Kootenay regions, there were industrial towns similar to Trail. Citizens of these new communities arrived from abroad, and sport served as a site where these new settlers could become a part of the local community. Sports grew increasingly popular, and by 1938, the communities of Trail, Nelson, and Rossland organized sports including lacrosse, curling, baseball, and ice hockey. These sports were organized into teams and leagues covering most age ranges.⁵⁷ As Andrew Holman suggests, the sport of hockey became increasingly popular at the turn of the twentieth century, especially in the logging, mining, and smelting towns in the aforementioned regions of British Columbia.⁵⁸ It was also during this time that these emergent resource communities wanted to establish a sense of identity.

According to Holman, the first game of hockey in Rossland was played in January 1897 on an outdoor ice surface. Formal hockey clubs and associations in Kaslo and Sandon also formed in 1897, with Nelson following in 1899. Skating and hockey enthusiasts in Nelson built a permanent rink in 1894 and Rossland followed in 1898, often filling all 2300 seats for games.⁵⁹ In Trail, hockey was played on natural, outdoor ice surfaces until 1912 when the Trail Fall Fair building was constructed.⁶⁰ Along with the emergence of senior men's hockey, city industrial leagues were created first in Trail in 1901 and in Grand Forks in 1915. These leagues pitched the growing numbers of middle class clerks, professionals, and merchants against one another in inter-city matches. Holman reports that the British Columbia Hockey League (BCHL), formed in 1900, consisted of teams from the Boundary region, Rossland, and Nelson. The Boundary Hockey League (BHL) was formed in 1907 featuring teams from Phoenix, Grand Forks, and Greenwood, and in 1905 the Kootenay Hockey League (KHL) was formed. Both of these leagues amalgamated to create the re-born BCHL in 1908, which also included teams from

western Alberta and the east Kootenay region. The BCHL folded in 1910 and three leagues began operation for the 1911 season, including the Slocan League, Kootenay Senior Hockey League, and BHL.⁶¹ Early hockey in the region was unstable yet growing, representing an important element of these communities' cultural life. It is no surprise that a team was formed in Trail to take part in these leagues. Hockey had become a vibrant part of life in the region.

Industrial Recreation

As defined by Jackson M. Anderson, industrial recreation alludes to “those recreation activities that they [employers] provide to satisfy the particular needs and desires of employees of business and industrial firms.”⁶² Ronald Melchers suggests that companies created associations and provided recreation opportunities outside of the workplace to keep workers positive and improve relations.⁶³ At a broad level, literature examining industrial recreation can aid in providing insight into the understanding of the power relations and social structure of resource communities.⁶⁴ The relationship between company owners and employees was rather dynamic, and, as Melchers suggests, employers had to “anticipate their [workers] demands by giving them, even before they asked, the ‘small joys’ of good workers, a cheap imitation of the ‘good life’ that was not for those of their class.”⁶⁵ In the community of Trail, understanding the popular sport of hockey and the concept of promoting positive relations between owners and workers will aid in distinguishing power relations and divisions in class. All of these notions are relevant to this case examination of Trail and the sport of hockey, the Smoke Eaters, and company-sponsored recreation.

Sport, in this case hockey, represents a site of corporate paternalism that can be directly linked to industrial recreation and is evident in Trail, CM&S, and the Smoke Eaters. It has been suggested that company sponsored recreation facilities and opportunities, publications such as

magazines, pension plans, employee housing, and profit sharing were used to improve and preserve employee morale, increase company loyalty, limit the influence of unions, and control workers time away from the workplace.⁶⁶ In the case of Trail, cultural hegemony existed. Paternalism, however, is evident in the ongoing employee-employer relations. This direct form of control should not be confused with hegemony that operates at the level of internalized beliefs and values of both employee and employer.

John R. Schleppe suggests that social programs, particularly sport and recreation opportunities, were a significant piece of a company's profile during the late nineteenth century.⁶⁷ John H. Patterson introduced many social programs at the National Cash Register company located in Dayton, Ohio, including ten-minute exercise sessions twice per day and the addition of exercise equipment at the office building.⁶⁸ Schleppe notes that "Patterson worked hard for civic improvements" such as parks, playgrounds, and baseball fields.⁶⁹ Elizabeth Fones-Wolf indicates that the Second World War "helped expand and legitimize corporate-sponsored welfarism" by introducing company magazines, company sponsored mortgage plans, libraries, swimming pools, and pension agreements.⁷⁰ She argues companies believed that through offering recreation opportunities, employees would bond together and with the company executives and experience improved health, and thus increase overall production.⁷¹ Also, Fones-Wolf notes that companies, such as the Stearman-Boeing Aircraft Company in Wichita, Kansas, provided

softball diamonds, a golf course, artificial lakes for swimming and fishing, an outdoor theater, an archery range, basketball courts, a football field, and a branch library in the plant. Fifty bowling teams, fifty interdepartmental basketball teams, horseshoe leagues, touch football teams, and a sailboat group rounded out a complete athletic program.⁷²

Industrial recreation practices are directly linked with the practice of town boosterism. Company owners and executives saw great value in providing industrial recreation opportunities, as the benefits for the community were numerous. One such example that reflects both industrial recreation and town boosterism is George Pullman's industrial community named Pullman, neighbouring Chicago in the state of Illinois in 1880.⁷³ Amanda Rees suggests that Pullman was a community that "offered a new suburban-built environment with extensive facilities (shopping, libraries, banks, community halls, churches, parks, and schools)" and "also reflected health and well-being."⁷⁴ It was the industrial recreation opportunities Pullman provided to his population, who were also his employees that aided in the promotion of the community. After all, successful sports teams and employee-athletes created positive media, equating a winning community with a winning company.⁷⁵

Town Boosterism

In the city of Trail, the promotion and support of senior men's hockey by both CM&S and the community is readily apparent, yet mainly after the Second World War in the case of CM&S. A winning Trail Smoke Eaters hockey team meant a winning company and, as a result, a winning community. Company managers and executives pursued the free publicity generated by winning sports teams. The promotion of the community through senior men's hockey by CM&S to promote the company is evident. In the case of Trail, town boosterism can be described as how both CM&S and the community used senior men's hockey to enhance the town's economic and political interests. Beginning when the natural resources in the region were starting to be exploited, investing in local sport and through providing company-sponsored recreation opportunities, companies have played a crucial role in both self-promotion and community

advancement. In the case of Trail, CM&S started to become noticeably involved in these practices after 1939, and particularly after the Second World War.

Nancy Bouchier suggests that event organizers, the hegemonic dominant group, strengthened their position as habitual political and social leaders by the way the community supported lacrosse matches in Woodstock, Ontario.⁷⁶ She notes that lacrosse offered a way for the dominant group to create and preserve their cultural hegemony through town boosterism initiated by civic leaders as a means of demonstrating the town's merit.⁷⁷ Bouchier alludes to the idea that club victories often sparked community celebrations. This was certainly the case in Trail as the community planned large gatherings to welcome home the 1938 Allan Cup champion Trail Smoke Eaters team.⁷⁸ Bouchier suggests that both players and fans profoundly identify with the home team and town. Additionally, a certain level of pressure for winning, and especially the athlete's commitment to winning for the fame of the team and praise of the town, becomes increasingly distinct.⁷⁹ As Dan Mason suggests, this focus on winning resulted in the recruiting of players and subsequently relocated, often with unrevealed monetary benefits, in the mining communities of northern Michigan in the early 1900s.⁸⁰ The practice of recruiting and paying professional athletes by supporters of teams in amateur leagues was also popular in the late 1800s. Colin Howell notes that professional baseball players were often imported to Canada from the United States, lured by financial and other incentives.⁸¹ Frequently, players would equate their sporting success to their ability to represent the town and be a positive, contributing community member.⁸² As Bruce Kidd proposes, the town's team had to be the best and consist of the best players to protect the community's reputation and promote their interests. Finally, this incentive to win to preserve reputation "meant freeing players from their jobs to enable them to practice."⁸³

In his book *Michigan's Lumbertowns: Lumbermen and Laborers in Saginaw, Bay City, and Muskegon, 1870-1905*, Jeremy W. Kilar describes boosterism in these lumbertowns as “a conscious, aggressive, and collective strategy of town promotion.”⁸⁴ He suggests that boosters promoted facilities and an abundance of work, which was especially important given the proximity of many lumbertowns and the constant rivalries between them. Kilar states, “for many town boosters, the most urgent civil goal was to create a climate that invited prosperity” in an effort to attract entrepreneurs, as it “caused the successful to typically identify with the town that gave them success and status.”⁸⁵ Industry-driven communities were interested in appealing to the masses and being better than one another in hopes of recruiting workers to their specific town as workers had a choice of towns to settle in and were not tied to one particular location.

In the case of Trail, celebration and community pride were most apparent when the team earned important national or international victories. In 1938 the Trail Smoke Eaters captured the Allan Cup, sparking plentiful newspaper coverage including full front-page dedications.⁸⁶ The town gathered at the train station to celebrate the team as they arrived home victorious, with Mayor E. L. Groutage lauding the success of the team. The Mayor thanked the team “for the publicity [they had] brought to [the] City” and suggested, “in no other manner could our name have been emblazoned across the country as it has by you.”⁸⁷ As this example suggests, victorious local teams represented a particular imperative when it came to civic boosterism and community identity.

Conclusion

The aim of this examination of the Trail Smoke Eaters and their history in the mining community of Trail is to provide a greater understanding of the complex relationships that existed by drawing connections between senior men’s hockey, the emerging sport infrastructure

of Trail, and the interests of industrial capitalism in the form of CM&S. This investigation suggests that there exists a strong case for the application and engagement of social theory to provide context for the particular questions being posed. Through a case study of mid twentieth century western Canadian senior men's hockey, more specifically the Trail Smoke Eaters, issues including investigating the motivation behind CM&S providing extensive support for the team are explored in greater depth than previous narrative accounts thus critically analyzing the impact of the team on the community and vice versa.

Critical to this re-consideration of the Trail Smoke Eaters are the questions posed. Mainly, why did CM&S support the hockey club after the Second World War? How did the team serve the interests of the community, residents, and CM&S? It is important to look to how the team has been represented in the past to aid in seeking answers to these questions. By addressing these questions, further understanding will arise in regards to the paternalistic and hegemonic relationships that were present between the company managers and executives, workers, and residents of Trail.

The chapters of this thesis are certainly closely related, however they remain separated from one another. The body of this investigation is divided into three chapters. Chapter Two, "Setting the Stage: The Smoke Eaters Before 1939," covers the team prior to their 1939 World Championship victory and unpacks the myth surrounding this event. The chapter discusses the evidence, and lack thereof, which suggests CM&S remained largely uninvolved in decision making for the team, and provides a history of both Trail and CM&S as they relate to this project. How the Trail Smoke Eaters and City of Trail fared during the Depression is addressed, as are broader themes including company-sponsored industrial recreation as it relates to the motives of CM&S to become increasingly engaged in sport and recreation during and after the

war. It is perhaps the 1939 World Championship victory that put the team on CM&S executives' radar, whereby the benefits of supporting local senior men's hockey became evident.

The third chapter, "CM&S, the Smoke Eaters, and Trail Between the Championships," makes use of popular narrative accounts to provide factual evidence, including newspaper articles, CM&S releases and meeting minutes, and other information gleaned from the TCA to further support the broad themes that serve to answer the preliminary questions of this study. This chapter describes the community, the company, and the team during the Second World War and the post-war changes to the city of Trail, CM&S, and the Trail Smoke Eaters, including the building of important sporting infrastructure such as the Cominco Arena in 1949. Chapter Three discusses how CM&S began taking on an increasingly paternalistic role in the community through the sponsorship and promotion of sport and recreation and the intricacies of the hegemonic relationship that characterized the nature of cultural relations in the community of Trail.

Finally, the fourth chapter, "The 'Local' 1961 World Championship Team and the Decline of Senior Men's Hockey" examines the events leading up to the 1961 World Championship, including the active recruitment of players by CM&S and the paternalistic decisions they made regarding the team. The chapter also addresses the motivations behind why CM&S would support a senior men's hockey team in Trail and the company's continued support and impact they had on the community. Chapter Four concludes with an overview of the decline of senior men's hockey in Trail that effectively ended the aspirations of community teams to be world champions.

Notes

¹ “Smoke Eaters in the 1930’s,” Trail Historical Society, accessed December 19, 2011, <http://www.trailsportshistory.ca/smoke-eaters-1930s/>.

² “Smoke Eaters in the 1960’s,” Trail Historical Society, accessed December 19, 2011, <http://www.trailsportshistory.ca/smoke-eaters-1960s/>.

³ See, for example, Murray Greig, *Trail on Ice: A Century of Hockey in the Home of Champions* (Trail City Archives, 1999); and “For the Love of the Game: A Century of Hockey in Trail, BC,” produced by Darryl Taylor and Catherine Manna (Columbia Heights Studios), DVD.

⁴ The Trail Memorial Centre houses the Cominco Arena, Cominco Gymnasium, public library, curling rink, squash and racquetball courts, and various other amenities.

⁵ “Sports Hall of Memories.” Trail Historical Society, accessed September 30, 2013. <http://www.trailhistory.com/sports-hall-of-memories/>

⁶ The Savage Cup is the top prize for senior men’s hockey in British Columbia. The winner of the Savage Cup moved on to play against the top team from Alberta in the first round of the Allan Cup playoffs.

⁷ The Allan Cup is awarded to the top senior men’s hockey team in Canada. Traditionally, the winner of the Allan Cup moved on to represent Canada at the World Championships. The Canadian national hockey program was developed in the mid-1960s and began sending their own team to the World Championships.

⁸ As an ancillary company, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company incorporated Trail’s smelter as the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited in 1906. For the purposes of this investigation, the aforementioned will be referred to as CM&S. All text related to post-1966 discussion will see the company be referred to as Cominco. In 1986, Teck partnered with Cominco (TeckCominco), and in 2001, Cominco was completely bought out by Teck.

⁹ See, for example, Greig, *Trail on Ice*, and James M. Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey (1961)* (Trail: Noremac, 1990).

¹⁰ Douglas Booth, *The Field: Truth and Fiction in Sport History*. (New York: Routledge, 2005), 85.

¹¹ The reconstructionist perspective, according to Booth, allows facts to ultimately provide the groundwork for the interpretation, where the historian remains separate from the history (7–9). From a reconstructionist perspective, history is a “realist epistemology in which knowledge derives from empirical evidence and forensic research into primary sources” (9) and “discovering the past is an objective process, uncontaminated by ideology.” (9)

¹² Booth, “The Field,” 86.

¹³ Alexander Freund. (2009). Oral History as Process-generated Data. *Historical Social Research*, 34 (1): 46.

¹⁴ Freund, “Oral History,” 41.

¹⁵ See Booth, “The Field,” 88–89. Booth notes that, for example, while advertisements may allow the historian to gauge certain cultural values, in different hands these advertisements may become tainted.

¹⁶ Booth, “The Field,” 89.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 90.

¹⁹ The *Trail Daily Times* appears to have remained independent, as there is no evidence to suggest that the newspaper was directly tied to CM&S.

²⁰ This was common practice for CM&S/Cominco/Teck, as historian Takaia Larsen faced the same problem. See Takaia Larsen, “Sowing the Seeds: Women, Work, and Memory in Trail, British Columbia During and After the Second World War” (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 2007), 3–4.

²¹ For a detailed examination of women in Trail, particular during the Second World War, see Larsen, “Sowing the Seeds.”

²² For example, Peter McIntyre, a superintendent and director of manpower at CM&S, participated in many sport organizations in Trail. He was involved with the 1961 World Champion Trail Smoke Eaters team, as he was a committee member of the team’s organizational board.

²³ Larsen, “Sowing the Seeds”

²⁴ Booth, “The Field,” 10–11.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 43. Booth suggests that some sport historians recommend sport history have no theoretical basis.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁷ See, for example, Alan Metcalfe, *Leisure and Recreation in a Victorian Mining Community: The Social Economy in North-East England, 1820–1914* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Nancy Bouchier, “Idealized middle-class sport for a young nation: Lacrosse in nineteenth-century Ontario towns, 1871–1891,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 29 (2),

(1994): 89–110; and Duncan Stone, “‘It’s all friendly down there’: the Club Cricket conference, amateurism and the cultural meaning of cricket in the South of England,” *Sport in Society* 15 (2), (2012): 194–208.

²⁸ Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1992), 77.

²⁹ See, for example, Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. (London: Routledge, 1984) and Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. Paul M. Sweezy (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1964), 44.

³⁰ Karl Marx. Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Tr. S. W. Ryazanskaya, edited by M. Dobb. (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971).

³¹ For the purposes of this investigation, neo-Marxism encompasses theory that is an extension of traditional Marxist theory.

³² John Hargreaves, “Sport and Hegemony: Some Theoretical Problems,” in H. Cantelon & R. Gruneau (Eds.), *Sport, Culture, and the Modern State*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 103–135.

³³ Anthony Giddens, *Studies in Social and Political Theory* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 347.

³⁴ See, for example, Alan Metcalfe, “The Growth of Organized Sport and the Development of Amateurism in Canada, 1807–1914,” in *Not Just a Game: Essays in Canadian Sport Sociology*, eds. Jean Harvey and Hart Cantelon (University of Ottawa Press, 1998), 33–50; and Bruce Kidd, *The Struggle for Canadian Sport*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 146–183.

³⁵ Metcalfe, *Leisure and Recreation in a Victorian Mining Community*, 1–224.

³⁶ Burke, “History and Social Theory,” 61.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 62–63.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 63.

³⁹ For example, see Alan Ingham and Stephen Hardy, “Sport: Structuration, Subjugation and Hegemony”. *Theory, Culture, & Society* 2, (1984): 85–103.

⁴⁰ T. J. Jackson Lears, “The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities,” *The American Historical Review* 90, (1985): 570.

⁴¹ Lears, “The Concept of Cultural Hegemony,” 569–570.

⁴² Booth, “The Field,” 167.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 166.

⁴⁴ David Robbins, “Sport, Hegemony, and the Middle Class: The Victorian Mountaineers,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 4, (1987): 579–601.

⁴⁵ Nancy Bouchier, *For the Love of the Game: Amateur Sport in Small-Town Ontario, 1838-1895* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003), 3–8.

⁴⁶ Richard Gruneau and David Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada: Sports, Identities, and Cultural Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994). Gruneau and Whitson take an extensive look at the origins of hockey in Canada. Furthermore, they investigate hockey in small towns, provide insight into the violence in the sport, and discuss the commercialization of hockey in Canada.

⁴⁷ Andrew C. Holman, *Canada’s Game: Hockey and Identity* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009). Holman explores how the sport of hockey fits with Canadian identity, and the relationship between the sport and identity. See also Bruce Kidd, “Brand-Name Hockey”, in *The Struggle for Canadian Sport* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

⁴⁸ See, for example, S. Peacock, “Big Leagues in the Northern Bush,” *Beaver* 72 (1): 20–27; David W. Brown, “The Rise and Fall of Rugby Football League in Nova Scotia, 1946–1956,” *Canadian Journal of History & Physical Education* 10 (2): 52–75; and Daniel S. Mason, “The International Hockey League and the Professionalization of Ice Hockey, 1904–1907,” *Journal of Sport History* 25 (1): 1–17.

⁴⁹ See, for example, Greig, *Trail on Ice*.

⁵⁰ Booth, “The Field,” 80.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 65.

⁵³ Don Morrow and Kevin B. Wamsley, *Sport in Canada: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 44–48.

⁵⁴ See, for example, Brown, “Rise and Fall of Rugby.” Brown investigates the rugby football leagues of Nova Scotia during 1946–1956, where athletes were mainly the working class employed through the coal industry.

⁵⁵ Morrow and Wamsley, *Sport in Canada*, 4.

⁵⁶ Andrew C. Holman, “Playing in the Neutral Zone: Meanings and Uses of Ice Hockey in the Canada-U.S. Borderlands, 1895–1915,” *American Review of Canadian Studies* 34 (1), (2004): 41.

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- ⁵⁷ The sports section of many *Trail Daily Times* newspapers in August and September 1938 reports scores, highlights game notes, and provides coverage of these sports.
- ⁵⁸ Holman, "Neutral Zone," 33–57.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 40–42.
- ⁶⁰ "The Early Days," Trail Historical Society, accessed January 4, 2012, <http://www.trailsportshistory.ca/trail-hockey-the-early-days/>. The Trail Fall Fair building was also known as the Trail Rink. It was outfitted with an artificial ice system in 1927.
- ⁶¹ See Holman, "Neutral Zone," 41–42 for a detailed history of hockey in the region from the late 1890s to the 1930s.
- ⁶² Jackson M. Anderson, *Industrial Recreation: A Guide to its Organization and Administration* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1995), 5.
- ⁶³ Ronald Melchers, "Sports in the Workplace," in *Not Just a Game: Essays in Canadian Sport Sociology*, eds. Jean Harvey and Hart Cantelon (University of Ottawa Press, 1998), 52.
- ⁶⁴ For more information in regards to working class industrial recreation, see Alan Metcalfe, "Organized Sport in the Mining Communities of South Northumberland, 1800–1889," *Victorian Studies* 25 (1982): 469–495.
- ⁶⁵ Melchers, "Sports in the Workplace," 53.
- ⁶⁶ See, for example, Gerald R. Gems, "Welfare Capitalism and Blue-Collar Sport: The legacy of labour unrest," *Rethinking History* 5 (1) (2001): 43–58; Herbert G. Gutman, "Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America, 1815–1919," *The American Historical Review* 78 (3) (1973): 531–588; and Stanley Buder, "The Model Town of Pullman: Town Planning and Social Control in the Gilded Age," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 33 (1) (1967): 2–10.
- ⁶⁷ John R. Schleppe, "'It Pays': John H. Patterson and Industrial Recreation at the National Cash Register Company," *Journal of Sport History* 6 (3), (1979): 20–28.
- ⁶⁸ Schleppe, "'It Pays,'" 22–23.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 25.
- ⁷⁰ Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, "Industrial Recreation, the Second World War, and the Revival of Welfare Capitalism, 1934–1960," *The Business History Review*, 60 (2), (1986): 233.
- ⁷¹ Fones-Wolf, "Industrial Recreation," 244–245.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, 247–248.
- ⁷³ Amanda Rees, "Nineteenth-century planned industrial communities and the role of aesthetics in spatial practices: the visual ideologies of Pullman and Port Sunlight," *Journal of Cultural Geography* 29 (2), (2012): 185–214.
- ⁷⁴ Rees, "Nineteenth-century planned industrial communities," 190–191.
- ⁷⁵ For an additional example of industrial recreation, see Adrian Smith, "Cars, Cricket and Alf Smith: The Place of Works-based Sports and Social Clubs in the Life of Mid-Twentieth-Century Coventry," *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 19 (1), (2002): 137–150.
- ⁷⁶ Bouchier, "Idealized middle-class sport", 89–110.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 92–96.
- ⁷⁸ "Monster Banquet Planned In Honour Of Smoke Eaters," *Trail Daily Times*, April 25, 1938, 7.
- ⁷⁹ Bouchier, "Idealized middle-class sport," 93–96.
- ⁸⁰ Mason, "The International Hockey League," 2–3.
- ⁸¹ Colin Howell, *Northern Sandlots: A Social History of Maritime Baseball* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 46.
- ⁸² As Holman suggests, "hockey was an arrow in the quiver of local boosters and newspaper reporters about hockey matches remarked as often on how local players acquitted themselves as representatives of the town as on how well they played the game" in "Playing in the Neutral Zone," 42.
- ⁸³ Kidd, "*The Struggle for Canadian Sport*," 189.
- ⁸⁴ Jeremy W. Kilar, *Lumbertowns: Lumbermen and Laborers in Saginaw, Bay City, and Muskegon, 1870-1905* (Wayne State University Press, 1990), 99.
- ⁸⁵ Kilar, "Lumbertowns," 99.
- ⁸⁶ "Welcome Home Champions," *Trail Daily Times*, April 22, 1938, 1.
- ⁸⁷ "Jubilant Citizens Welcome Smoke Eaters Home," *Trail Daily Times*, April 22, 1938, 3.

Chapter Two:

Setting the Stage: The Smoke Eaters Before 1939

In present day Trail, the Smoke Eaters hockey team carries with it a certain aura. The club is the only team to have won two senior men's World Championships and those championship years have become monumental markers in community history. The years 1939 and 1961 have earned cultural and social significance and thus have become mythologized in Trail. The myths surrounding these teams continue to cloud how the team's history is portrayed today, when only specific championships, teams, and historical markers are traditionally remembered. Due to the absence of any critically informed historical analyses, a limited narrative surrounding the Trail Smoke Eaters has become what is known and accepted within the community. In this chapter, a critical examination of the team, company, and town will interpret this popular myth to reveal a past incongruent with the dominant version of the teams' history that has become a privileged truth.¹

Prior to 1939, there is no evidence to suggest that CM&S was involved with preferential hiring of hockey players, providing recreation opportunities and infrastructure, and controlling of the Trail Smoke Eaters senior men's hockey club as was the case in 1961. Many of the players who formed the 1939 World Championship team arrived in Trail as jobs were abundant, particularly at CM&S, and they would have had to prove themselves to play for the Smoke Eaters. Ab Cronie, born in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, arrived in Trail for the 1934 hockey season.² Cronie suggests that he "got an offer to work and play hockey in Trail" and "besides the hockey, the big attraction in coming to Trail was the work."³ Unlike those recruited to play hockey in the 1950s and

eventually for the 1961 World Championship team, the players on the 1938 Allan Cup and 1939 World Championship team were not hired specifically for their hockey abilities, and the team did not receive material support from CM&S. Cronie recalls that he “arrived in town in the middle of May and started working at Cominco four days later,”⁴ but when it came to leaving town to play for the Allan Cup, it was the players’ responsibility to take financial care of their families while they were away. “The money was so tight that we couldn’t even afford to take our trainer, Bert Repton” recalls Cronie, and it was the International Ice Hockey Federation who picked up travel costs for the trip.⁵ It is evident that CM&S was not covering the players’ salary while they were away competing for the Allan Cup or World Championship in 1938 and 1939, respectively. Cronie notes that “most of the hockey players worked for Cominco and we had a very good arrangement with the company. We’d practise after work and sometimes during the day when we had a game the same night.”⁶ While CM&S may have provided time in lieu for these employee-athletes, there is no evidence supporting any further company involvement with the team. Players came to Trail with hopes of playing for the Smoke Eaters and finding stable employment, and in a community with an employer holding a near monopoly of the available work, they naturally found their way to CM&S.

Jimmy Haight, born in Humbolt, Saskatchewan, Canada, was actively playing hockey in Nelson, British Columbia, a mere 70 kilometers northeast of Trail, during the 1934 hockey season and reports that “it was an opportunity to work and play hockey” that carried him to Trail.⁷ Other players from the 1938 and 1939 teams arrived in Trail as they were hockey players looking to play hockey and knew they would not have difficulty finding work. Mickey Brennen grew up and played hockey in Coleman,

Alberta, and began his career with the Trail Smoke Eaters in 1927. Mel Snowdon, from Calgary, Alberta, arrived in Trail in 1934, and Tom Johnston landed in Trail via playing in High River, Alberta, and Nelson. Aurella Dane, from Edmonton, Alberta, embarked on a career with the Smoke Eaters in 1936 after having previously played just 10 kilometers west from Trail in the community of Rossland.⁸ These are some of the men who became legends in Trail after winning the 1939 world title.

Creating the Myth of the World Champion Smoke Eaters

The common story surrounding the Trail Smoke Eaters' success has undeniably become a myth. A fact-based history of the team's accomplishments does not provide the analytical depth needed to recognize the long history and varied roles assumed by the club. Dan MacKinnon suggests "both collectively and individually, we are led to define major occurrences by how they affected us."⁹ This sentiment speaks to the two highlighted benchmarks in Smoke Eaters history: the 1939 and 1961 World Championships. MacKinnon further notes "myth and memory can combine to distort the past in curious ways and establish certain events as departure points on the timelines of our development."¹⁰ This distortion of the past suggests a difference between the experience of the events of the late 1930s through the early 1960s in Trail and how they are recalled today.

Roland Barthes, a literary theorist and philosopher, suggested, "myth is a type of speech."¹¹ He continues, "myth is a pure ideographic system, where the forms are still motivated by the concept which they represent, while not yet, by a long way, covering the sum of its possibilities for representation."¹² In the case of Trail, it is evident that the

notion of myth is present in the contemporary and accepted discourses *The Last Time We Won Hockey (1961): Canada's Last World Hockey Championship: the 1961 Trail Smoke Eaters* and *Trail on Ice: a Century of Hockey in the Home of Champions*, which have become quite popular and directed at the commercial market. Based on narrative accounts that rely on factual evidence, these interpretations provide a superficial awareness of the impact the Trail Smoke Eaters had on both the community and CM&S. Thus, the popular myths that have emerged around the 1939 and 1961 World Championship teams overshadow the rest of team's history and lack a nuanced understanding of the history of senior men's hockey in Trail. Barthes indicates that the myth "transforms history into nature"¹³ and "is read as a factual system."¹⁴ In the case of the two World Championship Trail Smoke Eater teams, the mythologizing of these teams and events surrounding their success was the product of the re-telling of the two teams' stories based on the now formed expectations and narratives created by those both directly and indirectly involved with the teams.¹⁵

Hockey in Trail began as early as the 1890s when matches between smelter employees and miners became popular in the West Kootenay region.¹⁶ The team competing for Trail found early success in the Boundary-West Kootenay Hockey League that formed in 1913, of which they became champions in 1914. During the 1920s, the senior men's hockey team from Trail was given the name the Trail Smoke Eaters.¹⁷ Eventually, as a senior amateur club, the team won 19 Savage Cups, two Allan Cups, and two World Championships.

The mythical 1939 and 1961 World Championship Trail Smoke Eaters teams are not the only elements of the team's history that has been mythologized. One story about

how the team was named has gained mythic status. It has been suggested that during the 1928 Allan Cup championship game, rubbish was thrown onto the ice after a Trail player was penalized. A pipe that remained lit once it hit the ice was allegedly picked up and smoked by a Trail player. A cartoon depicting this event appeared in a newspaper, where the author referred to the Trail team as ‘smoke-eaters.’¹⁸ Greg Nesteroff, a local historian in the Trail area, contradicts this mythologized account, as he suggests that since 1901, some sports teams in Trail carried the name Smoke Eaters. Furthermore, he notes the Trail Smoke Eaters name was recorded in the *Trail Daily Times* during the 1920s and 1930s. Additionally, Nesteroff reports that the cartoon published in *The Province* newspaper appeared on March 8, 1931, not in 1928.¹⁹

The 1938 Allan Cup victory by the Trail Smoke Eaters could be viewed as the first major bookend in what present day community residents and fans would consider the team’s history. According to the *Trail Daily Times*, over 500 fans decorated with team buttons and ribbons travelled by train to Calgary, to cheer their team to the Allan Cup victory.²⁰ CM&S employees showed their support as those “working on shift at night drove cars equipped with radios into the plants beside the humming of industry to follow closely the triumphant march of the Smelter City puckmen throughout the West.”²¹ The 1938 Allan Cup generated many articles in the local Trail newspaper detailing the game and victory.²² These confident and encouraging articles welcomed the team home, offered congratulations, and thanked the team for being a positive representative for the city of Trail.

In addition to the often-glowing reports of the Smoke Eaters published in the local press, there are also several monographs that attempt to present an unofficial history of

the Trail Smoke Eaters. One such example is the popular narrative *Trail on Ice* by Murray Greig.²³ Greig provides the reader with a quality, chronologically-ordered narrative of the events surrounding both the 1939 and 1961 championships. Furthermore, Greig affords the reader a brief, fact-based discussion regarding the building of the new hockey rink and the various opponents the Smoke Eaters faced between 1940 and 1959. He takes the reader through the team's travels and exhibition games across Canada and eventually through the championship games overseas. Greig relies heavily on primary source documentation such as team meeting minutes and interviews with players and staff to provide factual information, but he rarely addresses deeper issues such as the involvement CM&S had with the team.²⁴ Another narrative that became popularly accepted by the community is *The Last Time We Won Hockey* written by James Cameron.²⁵ Cameron, an employee of CM&S, who served as president of the 1961 World Championship Smoke Eaters team, takes readers through a firsthand experience as the team travelled across Canada and Europe on their way to winning the Championship. While Cameron's book provides many personal stories and accounts, this popular remembrance is another example of the uncritical nature of the current literature concerned with the team and its history.

Trail on Ice and *The Last Time We Won Hockey* both provide informative narrative accounts intended for an audience who expects a history that focuses on the popular myths that have emerged from the community's understanding of the team's history based within the factual history of the Trail Smoke Eaters hockey team. Greig and Cameron do not, however, offer a critical analysis of deeper issues that become prevalent when delving into the history of the team. For example, these narratives neither question

nor address the issues surrounding CM&S' involvement with the team; the relationship between the company, community, and team; or the benefits the community and company acquired from the success of the Trail Smoke Eaters. The purpose of these books is not to answer questions, such as what motivated CM&S to support the team and how the team promoted the interests of both Trail and company, but rather to provide a story to the reader. These books, however, should not be discounted, as they do provide some historical context and information that aid in explaining and framing the questions being addressed in this examination of the Trail Smoke Eaters, CM&S, and Trail.

Both *Trail on Ice* and *The Last Time We Won Hockey* have aided in memorializing the Trail Smoke Eaters historical place in the city of Trail. This memorializing has shaped how the team's legacy has been left to the community and also how the history of the team is viewed and understood today. While the information is not incorrect, these fact-based narrative accounts offer, in themselves, limited critical analysis of the team and its place in the community.²⁶ The history of the Trail Smoke Eaters, specifically an analytical consideration of the decades prior to 1939, the 1939 and 1961 World Championships, and the time between, needs to be reconsidered through critical methods of inquiry to allow for well-informed answers to central questions: How did the team benefit from the support provided by CM&S and why did the company choose to provide this support to the team and community? Why did CM&S support the Trail Smoke Eaters, community sport and company recreation? Did broader motivations exist that resulted in company decisions to support the team and community recreation in general? These critical questions require interrogation of the popular narratives and mythologized team through the careful consideration of power relations and hegemonic

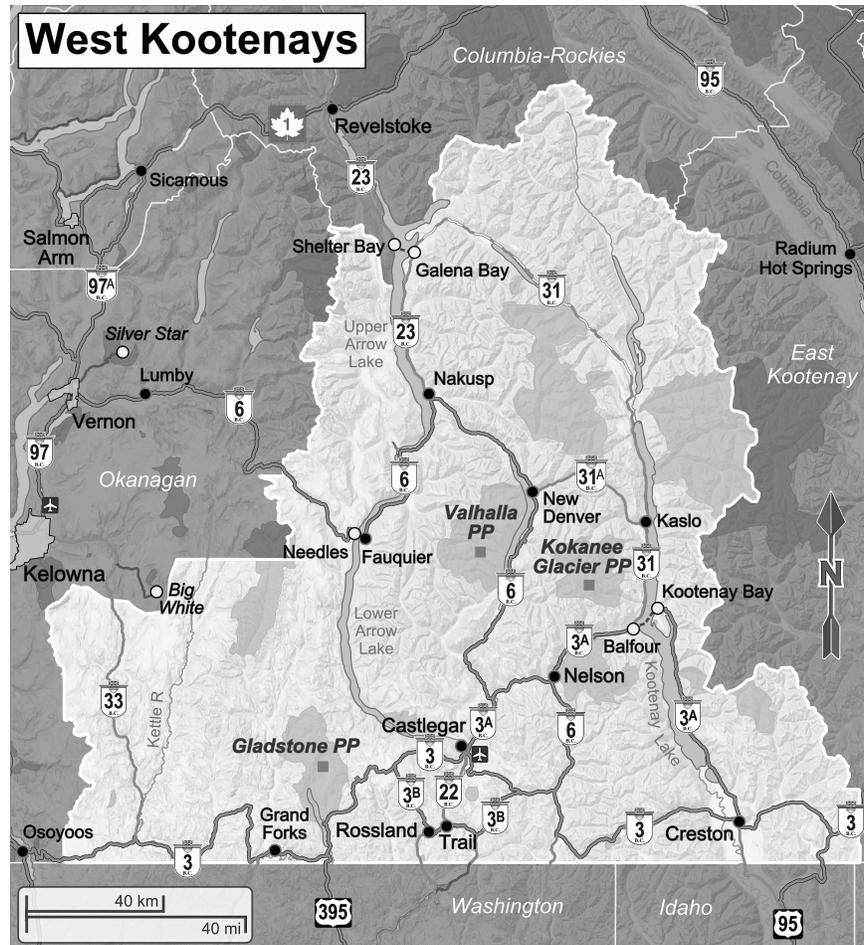
dynamics. Considering the impact that senior men's hockey had on the city of Trail is not answered by popular books such as *Trail on Ice* or *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, a clear need exists for a further, more critical examination of this sporting phenomenon, particularly regarding understanding the team leading up to both 1939 and 1961.

A Brief History of Trail

Red Mountain, located just west of Trail, was the site of a large copper and gold claim staked in 1890 by mining entrepreneurs Joe Morris and Joe Bourgeois. By 1895, a smelter was constructed to treat the ore excavated from the mine. A mere three years later, in 1898, the Canadian Pacific Rail Company purchased the smelter and it underwent its first expansion. In 1901, the City of Trail was incorporated,²⁷ and just five years later, in 1906, Walter H. Aldridge became the manager as three mines and the Rossland Power Company combined interests to create the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada (CM&S).

Located alongside the Columbia River in the interior of British Columbia is the community of Trail. The city of Trail cannot be examined without considering its historical relationship with CM&S, as the early building of the community effectively represented the growth of the company. As the smelter expanded and production increased, the city grew in both population and infrastructure. Between 1911 and 1926, steady economic growth aided in the planning and construction of concrete roads, schools, a bridge, commercial buildings, and a hospital. During this period, social life in Trail began to prosper as choirs, musicals, and plays were produced. Furthermore, in

1933, a local radio station was created.²⁸ An expansion of city infrastructure and the establishing of cultural institutions thus marked the first decades of the twentieth century.



MAP 1: West Kootenay Region of British Columbia (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

In the 1930s, the city of Trail expanded further as CM&S grew with the addition of a fertilizer plant located just west of the city in a village called Warfield. The company also built a dairy at their fertilizer operations to provide milk to the residents of Trail. CM&S also began exploring for, and investing in, mines in northern Canada, which eventually led to the building of the Columbia Gardens Airport,²⁹ which eased travel and allowed for prominent CM&S employees involved in geological activities surrounding new deposits of ore to fly in and out of the city. The company had a large impact on the

development of communities surrounding Trail. In 1922, the residential area just adjacent to the smelter incorporated as Tadanac. The proximity of the area to the company was so appealing that the company constructed company-owned housing for managers and some employees.³⁰

Prior to the 1939 World Championship victory, the evidence suggests CM&S was involved in developing groundwork within the city of Trail and immediate vicinity, but did not become involved in sporting infrastructure. The first ice rink constructed in Trail was the Fruit Fair Building in 1912 that served as the local curling, skating, and hockey facility until World War One. In 1925, the Fruit Fair Building was outfitted with an artificial ice system as the popularity of hockey in the city increased. There is no evidence to suggest that CM&S funded this undertaking. It was this ice surface that has been credited for promoting hockey in Trail, and allowed for the success of the Smoke Eaters between 1926 and 1933. Over this period, they brought home the Savage Cup, the British Columbia provincial title, for seven consecutive years. As the interest in, and the support of, the sport of hockey increased, the city of Trail required a new ice hockey facility.

History of CM&S/Cominco

A critical investigation of Trail and the Trail Smoke Eaters unquestionably requires a consideration of CM&S. The smelter sits overlooking the city on what locals commonly call smelter hill, symbolically representing the company's position of power over the town. The industrial giant towers over the city and, without doubt, was and remains a major influence in terms of providing recreation opportunities to those residing

in Trail and the surrounding region. As academics and historians such as Takaia Larsen and David Michael Roth suggest, Trail was a company town where the smelter works employed the majority of the town's residents. It was paid work the company had monopoly over and, in turn, this created an engaging hegemonic dynamic between social groups that included the company owners and managers as the dominant group, and CM&S employees and citizens of Trail as the subordinate group.³¹ The citizens of Trail have been accepting of CM&S's dominant role in their lives, and in return, the company reciprocated to maintain this status quo through providing gifts in the form of infrastructure and the ongoing security of employment. As the need for increased production at the company grew, so, too, did the company's willingness to provide its workers and the community support through building infrastructure.

In 1895, the original smelter was built to process the ores from the Rossland³² mines on land that would eventually become Trail—the city was constructed around the smelter. The smelter capacity was expanded in 1906, whereby the Rossland Power Company, St. Eugene, War Eagle, and Centre Star mines, and the Trail smelter banded together to form CM&S. From this time until mid-1945, Selwyn G. Blaylock held the titles of president and managing director of CM&S. Ralph W. Diamond assumed the leading management position after Blaylock's death in 1945. Diamond had originally been employed by CM&S to develop a method for treating ore from the Sullivan Mine.³³

As the dominant force in the community, CM&S influenced and controlled many aspects of life for those who resided in Trail. Roth notes that by the middle of the twentieth century, "Trail inhabitants . . . had internalized company power to the point where they believed that what was good for the 'Company' was good for them."³⁴ Trail

was and remains undoubtedly a company town. CM&S assumed a paternalistic role in the city by constructing homes for employees and becoming involved in financing civic infrastructure improvements. The company also demonstrated their paternalistic nature by keeping employees on at reduced hours and by allowing them to participate in work-sharing programs and government make-work projects including the highway to Castlegar and the Esplanade river wall during the Depression. By using a waste by-product from the smelter, the company was effectively able to increase the land available to build on by filling large voids with it.³⁵ Such projects provide context when considering that CM&S was interested in the social good of the community, but had not yet caught on to supporting the local hockey team. The company also assisted in both the financing and operation of local recreation facilities and organizations. Larsen suggests that CM&S “dominated almost all aspects of life in this town and the people who lived there were generally accepting of this domination because they were guaranteed steady jobs with decent pay.”³⁶ The paternalistic approach that CM&S took in the city caused the citizens of Trail to not challenge their subordinate rank in the hegemonic order. Ongoing relations between CM&S, its employees, and the citizens of Trail established and formalized, not consciously or through any formal means, this paternalistic dominance. Sport, specifically hockey in Trail, represented one visible example of how the company—as evidenced through the interests of management—was able to exert an ongoing influence over employees and the city.

History of Hockey in Trail and the Region

At the turn of the twentieth century, the sport of hockey was growing in popularity across western Canada, particularly in industrial communities in both the East

and West Kootenay regions of British Columbia.³⁷ Communities such as Rossland, Kaslo, Sandon, Nelson, and Grand Forks were engaged in hockey by 1901.³⁸ Many of these communities erected arenas to house hockey games, public skating, and other public events at this time. Along with the rapid growth in both popularity and facilities required for the sport, an organizational structure emerged.³⁹ By 1901, the city of Trail and CM&S had coordinated a City Industrial League,⁴⁰ and with bragging rights up for grabs, company-sponsored teams began battling one another ultimately for pride at work as these teams were based on the plant in which the players worked.⁴¹ Provincially, organized leagues were formed and eventually most folded, were restructured, or renamed. The restructuring of these leagues occurred due to the addition or removal of teams. Often, when new teams were formed, a league became too large, requiring restructuring, typically based on geographic location. For example, the first British Columbia Hockey League (BCHL) was created in 1900. The Kootenay Hockey League (KHL) was formed in 1905 and the Boundary Hockey League (BHL) was created in 1907, both featuring teams from their geographic locale. In 1911, the Kootenay Senior Hockey League (KSHL) emerged, featuring teams from Trail, Nelson, and Rossland. The Boundary-West Kootenay Hockey Association formed in 1913 when the BHL and KSHL amalgamated.⁴²

Hockey's cultural significance was established in the city of Trail by the 1910s. The mining, logging, or other resource industry-based towns in the Kootenay regions were largely made up of migrants from other parts of Canada and the world.⁴³ The sport of hockey certainly played a role in assisting the process of community building and in forming a regional identity.⁴⁴ As Andrew C. Holman suggests, "the strength of a town's

ice hockey seven could be a source of civic pride and celebration.”⁴⁵ Crowds upwards of 2300 routinely gathered in Rossland during the early 1900s to cheer on local teams, suggesting that hockey provided the community with a setting for social engagement and community building.⁴⁶ The commencement of the First World War brought the sport of hockey to a near halt as players left to serve their country.⁴⁷ As in other communities in the region, hockey rebounded in Trail after the war and in the years that followed, remained dominant on the regional and provincial stages.

The Trail Smoke Eaters hockey club had a long history of success at the regional and provincial levels prior to the team’s success in 1939 at the World Championship. The team captured its first Savage Cup⁴⁸ title during the 1926–1927 season and went on to win seven straight from 1926 through 1932.⁴⁹ Today, banners hang from the rafters of the Trail Memorial Centre commemorating these victories, however these early Savage Cup victories did not become part of the team’s popular and established history, perhaps given that they pre-dated the involvement of CM&S with the team. By the late 1930s, rivalries had been created and consistent regular season victories and league championships came to be viewed as a sign of the community’s place in the region. The Trail Smoke Eaters provided the city of Trail with an identity outside of CM&S. After winning the 1938 Allan Cup, Trail Mayor E. L. Groutage thanked the Trail Smoke Eaters “for the publicity you have brought to our City” and also suggested that “in no other manner could our name have been emblazoned across the country as it has by you.”⁵⁰

The Trail Smoke Eaters hockey club provided the city of Trail with a source of pride. The growth of hockey and sport in Trail mirrors the growth of both the city and CM&S. Hockey not only offered the workers in Trail a sense of community and

belonging, but also gave residents a site to gather socially. Hockey in Trail allowed individuals a break from work and daily life where they could be brought together to share a common experience. As suggested by Susan L. Forbes in her work investigating leisure activities of female workers at the T. Eaton Company during the 1920s and 1930s, “by promoting certain cultural practices held to be *the* culture of a society, the dominant group is able to impart its beliefs, values and ideas to the subordinate classes thereby maintaining the dominant group’s position of power.”⁵¹ In the case of Trail, CM&S likely viewed the success of hockey and the Smoke Eaters as a way to influence their workers outside of the workplace. Whilst there was no formal company involvement with the team prior to the 1939 World Championship, because the players were company employees and those in managerial roles at CM&S were sometimes involved with the team, CM&S played a least an informal role in the team’s early years.

Gerald R. Gems has investigated the role company-sponsored sport and recreation played in the late 1800s in the United States.⁵² One example Gems uses is that of George Pullman, the inventor of the Pullman sleeping car, who established a company town called Pullman located near Chicago, Illinois. Gems indicates that Pullman endorsed company-sponsored facilities and sporting opportunities to increase employee productivity and reduce the risk of labour disruptions.⁵³ Successful Pullman athletes and teams, such as those competing at the annual cycling race, provided both George Pullman and his company positive media coverage, which was appreciated to further the economic ends of the company.

Company sport, according to Gems, provided more than just positive publicity. Citing Elizabeth Lewis Otey, Gems argues that company-sponsored sport and recreation

was also “intended ‘to prevent strikes and labour organization’, better relationships between labour and management and increase loyalty to the company.”⁵⁴ The experience of success in sports and competition was seen by the company to provide similar potential success in the workplace.⁵⁵ Elizabeth Fones-Wolf echoes Gems’ notions and suggests that industrial recreation opportunities “provided one key to solving the problems of labour turnover, absenteeism, illness, and accidents.”⁵⁶ Multiple parallels can be drawn between Gems’ and Fones-Wolf’s work and the case of Trail and CM&S. In Trail, CM&S often had intramural matches between department teams and Gems notes this typically occurred with larger companies. Additionally, Gems reports that successful players were sometimes promoted at work or paid higher wages, and companies gave employee-athletes time off from work to attend practice, which was certainly evident in the case of Trail.⁵⁷ While Cronie may suggest that CM&S provided some time off for employees to attend Smoke Eater practice, there is no additional evidence to support formal company involvement with the team prior to 1939.⁵⁸

Roth provides a detailed history of how the smelter workers became organized in unions, such as Mine Mill Local 480, and the subsequent union involvement at CM&S.⁵⁹ Although it is important to mention the significance of union involvement in Trail, there is no need for a comprehensive investigation for this particular project.⁶⁰ There is no evidence that supports union involvement hampering CM&S’ efforts to support industrial recreation and the Trail Smoke Eaters. At a broad level, Fones-Wolf proposes “competition from unions also discouraged companies from continuing their industrial recreation programs.”⁶¹ This does not appear to be the case for CM&S. Furthermore,

CM&S and the city of Trail did not seem to suffer as much during the Depression given the continuous need for smelted products.

Despite the Great Depression, CM&S fared well during the 1930s. As Roth suggests, “from 1929 to 1939 CM&S incurred losses in only two years: \$713,000 in 1931 and \$2.9 million in 1932.”⁶² The general manager and vice-president of CM&S’ Trail operations at the time was Selwyn G. Blaylock, and he and his company executive continued to push forward and expand operations through the addition of fertilizer plants. Roth reports that in 1937, CM&S made \$14.66 million, but employees faced layoffs, reduced hours, and a decreased wage. CM&S did not abandon its support of industrial recreation and corporate welfare during this period. “During the depression, CM&S continued to operate recreational facilities such as the curling and hockey rink, to support various charities, self-help societies and pension plans,” Roth advocates.⁶³ The paternalism CM&S assumed over the city of Trail expanded through to their support of employee picnics and pension plans, a company mortgage plan, and their support of community projects.⁶⁴ The hegemonic relationship in Trail was certainly evident and remained unimpeded as the company continued to extend their power over the community.

It is evident that both CM&S and the city of Trail became acutely aware of the Trail Smoke Eaters hockey team and their public relations potential after the team won their first world title in 1939. CM&S knew and understood the value that supporting the team provided the company, its employees, and the community. A successful team represented a successful community and a successful company.⁶⁵ L. J. Roy Wilson suggests that having teams in the city of Medicine Hat, Alberta was simply not enough,

where “it was necessary that the teams be the best in the Territories in order to enhance the image of the town as a leading, progressive community”⁶⁶ with the intention of drawing more residents to the city. Furthermore, it could be suggested that CM&S viewed the team’s utility in a manner similar to other forms of industrial recreation; as a form of social control the company could use, at least in part, to control the time workers spent away from work by providing them with distractions such as hockey and other events held at the arena. Fones-Wolf notes that

company-sponsored recreation, together with effective advertising, allowed corporations to increase their prestige and power in the community. By providing recreational facilities and programs to society at large, firms could demonstrate their social responsibility and indirectly undermine the influence of unions.⁶⁷

Through their support of the Trail Smoke Eaters, CM&S executives and city leaders reinforced the notion that those who made decisions in the community of Trail believed that hockey represented a suitable, non-work time activity in which the workers could engage. CM&S furthered their paternalistic influence through the support of senior men’s hockey and recreational infrastructure in the city of Trail and knew what was best for their community. Prior to 1939, however, it is apparent that CM&S remained largely uninvolved in the decision making of the Trail Smoke Eaters, but those coming to Trail with hopes of playing for this elite level team were also attracted by the provision of stable work.

In Greig’s book *Trail on Ice*, he cites an interview with Ab Cronie, a member of the 1939 World Championship team. Cronie states that Trail was an attractive place to settle not only because of hockey, but also because of stable employment. “I didn’t know where I was going to live or what I was going to do,”⁶⁸ Cronie said, reflecting on when he went to purchase his train ticket. A similar sense of uncertainty was apparent when the

team departed for their almost entirely self-funded World Championship tour to Europe in 1939. He continued, “[t]he biggest thing when we started the tour, was that we didn’t have any money. None. Our boat trip to Scotland was paid for by the International Ice Hockey Federation, but that was it.”⁶⁹ The team worked its way east across Canada playing exhibition games along the way to collect some of the earnings from ticket sales and to keep their hockey skills sharp. This continued in Europe and was a necessary step in financing the trip. Cronie also mentions

we [the team] were going to be gone for something like five months, and there were five or six of us who were married and had children. We had to get enough money together to support our families while we were away. The money was so tight that we couldn’t even afford to take our trainer.⁷⁰

It is not known what arrangement the players had with CM&S regarding their jobs and being away for six months, but it does not seem that they lost their positions.

Based on the aforementioned interview with Ab Cronie, it would be reasonable to propose that the team and players funded the 1939 World Championship tour. It appears that CM&S did not have any formal involvement with the team prior to this Championship, as the team members were ultimately responsible for taking care of their families while away. Cronie stressed the importance of receiving a fair portion of the gate money so players could survive while on their trip overseas and afford a ticket for the boat ride home.⁷¹ Furthermore, the team was forced to wear their Smoke Eater jerseys and not a team Canada jersey, as no local sponsor could be found.⁷² The local Trail newspaper briefly mentioned the 1939 World Champion Trail Smoke Eater team, perhaps due to the Championships being held overseas, where there was no local reporter in attendance.⁷³ The evidence, or lack thereof, suggests that CM&S and the City of Trail were not formally involved in supporting the Trail Smoke Eaters hockey club up to 1939.

Although there was no formal involvement by CM&S on pre-1939 Smoke Eaters teams', the dominant group was comprised of mainly CM&S executives and the town's merchants and professionals. These individuals sought positions on club executives such as the Smoke Eaters. For example, P. F. McIntyre, the controller of manpower and later a superintendent at CM&S, was an active community member participating in the Trail and District Welfare Society, Trail/Tadanac Parks Board, and the Trail Athletic Association.⁷⁴ In 1938, he attended the Smoke Eaters Allan Cup championship run, flying home from the championship game while the rest of the club returned home via the railway.⁷⁵ He was also a member of the 1961 World Champion Smoke Eaters committee.



FIGURE 1: 1939 Trail Smoke Eaters after winning the World Championship (Courtesy of Trail City Archives)

Conclusion

The 1938 Allan Cup victory could be seen as the start of the popular history of the Trail Smoke Eaters, while the 1939 World Championship justified and legitimized both

company and civic support of the team. From this point, both the company and the town came to recognize the community-building and promoting opportunity afforded by the team. The 1939 and 1961 World Championship victories by the Trail Smoke Eaters have become mythologized in Trail. The lack of critical examination of the team's full history, including the World Championships and events leading up to them, has caused the two Championship years to become what is remembered. Without doubt, there is more to the Smoke Eaters' history that warrants further critical examination, particularly regarding CM&S and community involvement. The provincial, national, and world victories, and the building of the team as part of the growing hockey culture of interior British Columbia in the 1920s and 1930s, led the City of Trail and CM&S to eventually recognize that a winning team could make for a winning community and a winning company, respectively. This realization in the aftermath of the teams' 1938–39 successes set the stage for the 1940s and 1950s Trail Smoke Eaters team as well as CM&S' increased involvement for providing recreational facilities for the city. The evidence suggests that CM&S did not become formally involved with the Smoke Eaters and sporting infrastructure until after the 1939 World Championship victory, as discussed in the succeeding chapter.

Notes

¹ This chapter remains focused on the period leading up to 1939. Providing a brief history of Trail provides context and better places the team and company in the community.

² Murray Greig, *Trail on Ice: A century of hockey in the Home of Champions* (Canada: Trail City Archives, 1999), 42.

³ Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 46. It is unlikely that Cronie received an offer from CM&S to play hockey at this time. More likely, however, is that Cronie spoke with some of the Smoke Eaters players and was told that he would not have trouble finding work if he were to come to Trail and play hockey.

⁴ Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 48.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., 50.

⁸ Ibid., 44–45.

⁹ Dan MacKinnon, “Myth, Memory, and the Kitchener-Waterloo Dutchmen in Canadian International Hockey,” *Sport History Review* 31 (2000): 2.

¹⁰ MacKinnon, “Myth, Memory,” 2.

¹¹ Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Anette Lavers (New York: The Noonday Press, 1972 (12th printing 1991), 107.

¹² Barthes, *Mythologies*, 126.

¹³ Ibid., 128.

¹⁴ Ibid., 170.

¹⁵ For additional information regarding myth in sport, see Malcolm MacLean, “Myths and Milestones in the History of Sport,” *Sport in History* 33:1 (2013), 114–117.

¹⁶ Andrew C. Holman. “Playing in the Neutral Zone: Meanings and Uses of Ice Hockey in the Canada-US Borderlands, 1895–1915.” *American Review of Canadian Studies* 34(1) (2004): 39–45.

¹⁷ Trail Historical Society. “Historic Trail Smoke Eaters: First Period.” Accessed November 14, 2013. <http://www.trailhistory.com/sports-hall-of-memories/>

¹⁸ See Trail Historical Society. “Historic Trail Smoke Eaters: Overtime.” Accessed April 19, 2015.

<http://www.historicsmokeeaters.ca/overtime/> and Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 28–29 for the story of how the Trail Smoke Eaters earned their name.

¹⁹ Trail Historical Society. “Historic Trail Smoke Eaters: Overtime.” Accessed April 19, 2015.

<http://www.historicsmokeeaters.ca/overtime/>. Also see Greg Nesteroff, “How the Trail Smoke Eaters Didn’t Get Their Name,” *Trail Journal of Local History* 2 (2004).

²⁰ “Over 500 Staunch Smoke Eater Fan Travel to Calgary,” *Trail Daily Times*, April 14, 1938, 6.

²¹ “Welcome Home Champions” and “Hail, The Smoke Eaters!” *Trail Daily Times*, April 22, 1938, 1.

²² The 1938 Allan Cup victory generated many articles in the local newspaper. See, for example, “TRAIL WINS ALLAN CUP,” *Trail Daily Times*, April 21, 1938, 1; “Sports Extras,” *Trail Daily Times*, April 21, 1938, 7; “WELCOME HOME CHAMPIONS. Hail, The Trail Smoke Eaters,” *Trail Daily Times*, April 22, 1938, 1; “Yes Sir—We’re Mighty Proud of Our Smoke Eaters,” *Trail Daily Times*, April 22, 1938, 2; “Jubilant Citizens Welcome Smoke Eaters Home,” *Trail Daily Times*, April 22, 1938, 3; “Monster Banquet Planned In Honour Of Smoke Eaters,” *Trail Daily Times*, April 25, 1938, 7; “Allan Cup Filled as E. Pisapio Entertains Champions and Friends,” *Trail Daily Times*, April 26, 1938, 7; “Civic Banquet For Smoke Eaters To Be Staged May 7 In Rink,” *Trail Daily Times*, April 29, 1938, 7.

²³ Greig, *Trail on Ice*. As per his brief biography in the book, Greig, a self-reported professional journalist, began his career in northern British Columbia then became a certified boxing trainer. He served as the managing editor of the *Trail Daily Times* newspaper from 1992–1995.

²⁴ Out of his 159-page book, Greig spends 14 pages discussing the years 1900 to 1926 and 30 pages discussing the years 1926 to 1940.

²⁵ James M. Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey (1961)* (Trail: Noremac, 1990).

²⁶ See, for example, Greig, *Trail on Ice*; and Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*.

²⁷ The City of Trail was known as Trail Creek prior to 1901.

²⁸ Trail Historical Society. “History of Trail.” Accessed September 4, 2013.

<http://www.trailhistory.com/history/>

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ The Tadanac subdivision of Trail backs directly onto CM&S property.

³¹ Takaia Larsen, "Sowing the Seeds: Women, Work, and Memory in Trail, British Columbia During and After the Second World War" (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 2007), 15; and David Michael Roth, "A Union on the Hill: The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers and the Organization of Trail Smelter and Chemical Workers 1938–1945" (MA thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1991), 19.

³² Rossland is a small community located just west of Trail.

³³ Funding Universe. "Cominco Ltd. History." Accessed November 6, 2013.

<http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/cominco-ltd-history/> Also, see Trail Historical Society. "History of Trail." Accessed November 6, 2013. <http://www.trailhistory.com/history>

³⁴ Roth, "A Union on the Hill", 20.

³⁵ Trail Historical Society. "History of Trail." Accessed September 4, 2013.

<http://www.trailhistory.com/history/>

³⁶ Larsen, "Sowing the Seeds," 16.

³⁷ See, for example, Alan Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play: The Emergence of Organized Sport, 1807–1914* (Oxford University Press, 1997), 72; and Don Morrow et al., *A Concise History of Sport in Canada* (Oxford University Press, 1989), 176–177.

³⁸ Holman, "Playing in the Neutral Zone," 40.

³⁹ The Kootenay region of British Columbia saw several ice hockey rinks develop, including one in Sandon in 1893. Nelson followed in 1984 with a rink, and in 1898 Rossland opened an arena. Holman, "Playing in the Neutral Zone," 40.

⁴⁰ Holman, "Playing in the Neutral Zone," 41.

⁴¹ CM&S had divided their buildings up largely by the particular operations occurring in each (for example, the Lead Refinery, Blast Furnaces, etc.). The hockey teams from each operations unit competing against each other were the Wood Butchers, Zinc Tank Rooms, Oxide Rangers, Tadanac Fire Department, Fire Department, Foundry, Roasters, Rinky-dinks, Oxide Plant, Lead Furnace, and Zinc Roasters. "Shift Hockey League Away; New Schedule," *The Trail Times*, January 9, 1931, 1.

⁴² Holman, "Playing in the Neutral Zone," 41–42. As discussed in Chapter One, many teams and leagues were formed and disbanded up until the First World War, which was part of a larger growth of hockey in the region.

⁴³ Both Roth, "A Union on the Hill", and Larsen, "Sowing the Seeds", broadly address the cultural dynamics and composition of the West Kootenay region, specifically Trail.

⁴⁴ Holman, "Playing in the Neutral Zone," 35.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 42.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 50.

⁴⁸ The Savage Cup was presented to British Columbia's senior men's hockey team champion.

⁴⁹ "Savage Cup Winners." Accessed November 14, 2013. <http://www.allancup.ca/SavageCupWinners.htm>.

⁵⁰ "Jubilant Citizens Welcome Smoke Eaters Home," *Trail Daily Times*, April 22, 1938, 3.

⁵¹ Susan L. Forbes, "The Influence of the Social Reform Movement and T. Eaton Company's Business Practices on the Leisure of Eaton's Female Employees During the Early Twentieth Century" (PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 1998), 4.

⁵² Gerald R. Gems, "Welfare Capitalism and Blue-Collar Sport: The legacy of labour unrest," *Rethinking History* 5 (1) (2001), 43–58.

⁵³ Gems, "Welfare Capitalism," 44. See also John R. Schleppe, "'It Pays': John H. Patterson and Industrial Recreation at the National Cash Register Company," *Journal of Sport History* 6 (3) (1979), 20–28 and Roberta J. Park, "'Blending Business and Basketball': Industrial Sports and Recreation in the United States from the late 1800s to 1960," *Stadion* 31 (1), 35–49 for additional examples of how companies used sport and recreation opportunities to aid in efficiency and productivity.

⁵⁴ Gems, "Welfare Capitalism," 45; and Elizabeth Lewis Otey, "Employers Welfare Work," *United States Bureau of Labour Statistics Bulletin* 123 (1913), 52.

⁵⁵ Gems suggests that employers sought efficiency and cooperativeness out of their employees and sport taught values such as self-sacrifice, obedience, and teamwork. Gems, "Welfare Capitalism," 47.

⁵⁶ Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, "Industrial Recreation, the Second World War, and the Revival of Welfare Capitalism, 1934–1960," *The Business History Review*, 60 (2) (1986), 245.

⁵⁷ See Gems, "Welfare Capitalism," 46–49. Gems suggests that in 1893 a mine in Butte, Montana rewarded star athletes with jobs.

⁵⁸ Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 48.

⁵⁹ Roth, "A Union on the Hill," 1–96.

⁶⁰ The players may in fact have been union members; however, CM&S' involvement with the Trail Smoke Eaters appears to have been unaffected by unionization.

⁶¹ Fones-Wolf, "Industrial Recreation," 236.

⁶² Roth, "A Union on the Hill," 15.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁶⁵ Gems, "Welfare Capitalism," 49. Employers wanted the free publicity and employee enthusiasm generated by winning teams.

⁶⁶ L. J. Roy Wilson, "Medicine Hat—'The Sporting Town', 1883–1905," *Sport History Review*, 16(2) (1985), 16.

⁶⁷ Fones-Wolf, "Industrial Recreation," 255.

⁶⁸ Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 46.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 48–49.

⁷² Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 46–48. Players picked up their own sixteen-dollar bill for their Allan Cup championship jackets.

⁷³ "Smoke Eaters Win World Title," *Trail Daily Times*, February 13, 1939, 6. The players' photographs also appear on page six.

⁷⁴ "Peter McIntyre," Trail Historical Society, accessed January 14, 2012, <http://www.trailsportshistory.ca/home-of-champions/peter-mcintyre.html>.

⁷⁵ "Trail Wins Allan Cup," *Trail Daily Times*, April 21, 1938, 1.

Chapter Three:

CM&S, the Smoke Eaters, and Trail Between the Championships

The 1938 Allan Cup and 1939 World Championship were the marquee events that not only cemented the popularity of hockey in Trail, but also highlighted the need to improve sporting infrastructure and recreation opportunities in the community. These successes provided the community an additional claim to fame apart from being home to CM&S. While both the 1939 and 1961 World Championships are indeed significant achievements, popular narrative accounts of the team's history have largely centered on these two events, and as a result, the two World Championships have become mythologized. Often forgotten are the Savage Cup victories in the years after World War Two,¹ where the desire to put Trail back on the international hockey stage led to greater involvement by CM&S management in the affairs of the Smoke Eaters. Dave Rusnell, a former Trail Smoke Eater and member of the 1961 World Championship team, suggests that CM&S had "very sympathetic people and personnel up there that would look for players. I think that's where the calibre rose and once it's there people demand it, and the executive knows they need good hockey players."² The community's continuing frustration with not winning another World Championship, or at least an Allan Cup, effectively became the company's frustration. When the Junior Chamber of Commerce, a local community group, failed to raise the required funding for a new facility, the Trail District Recreational Projects Society (TDRPS) was formed and headed by C. H. Wright.³ The TDRPS was another citizens group tasked with soliciting funding for a new arena but it, too, was unable to rally enough community support to have a new facility built. CM&S executives recognized an opportunity to construct a new hockey arena for

both the Trail Smoke Eaters and the City of Trail, further extending their paternalistic influence into the non-work lives of their workers, and the city.

The focus of the Trail Smoke Eaters in the city of Trail during the 1940s and 1950s appears to emphasize winning and the need to achieve recognition on the national and international stages. The building of the Cominco Arena in 1949 indicates that the sport of hockey in Trail and the Trail Smoke Eaters organization were well established and important to both the community and company. The popularity and relevance of the Trail Smoke Eaters was sustained after World War II, as evident through widespread coverage of the team in the local newspaper.⁴ However, building on the team's achievement in 1939 did not occur immediately. The start of the Second World War resulted in senior men's hockey in the West Kootenay region of British Columbia coming to a halt.

Despite winning seven provincial Savage Cups between their World Championships, it seems the Smoke Eaters' success continued to be measured by national and international championships. Senior men's hockey in the West Kootenay region was postponed in 1942 as a result of the Second World War, and the Smoke Eaters began their post-war victories the first season the league was back in action, capturing the Savage cup in the '45-'46 season. Murray Greig reflects on the local media coverage of the team during this period when the team was not emerging as victorious at the national or international levels suggesting that

in addition to marking the start of the Smokies' rebuilding phase, the early 1950s saw two occurrences that at the time only qualified as "sidebar" items in the newspaper. The first was the Smoke Eaters contribution to the 1952 Olympic champion Edmonton Mercurys; the second was the return of Rossland-born goaltending legend Seth Martin.⁵

The Savage Cup victories receive little attention aside from a brief mention of the game scores, players involved, and opponents in the narrative accounts by Greig and James Cameron,⁶ further cementing that the history of the team started and ended with the 1939 and 1961 World Championship teams.

The 1939 World Championship team effectively came to be understood as the pinnacle of success in Trail. The town was now on the map in the hockey world and had no intentions of fading away. The 1940s and 1950s represented a time to build on this victory and aim for repeat success at the provincial, national, and international levels of play. While this chapter focuses on the building of the Cominco Arena, this event also highlights broader changes including the increasing agency and influence assumed by the company's managers in the organizing of sport and recreation in Trail, and the increasing alignment of the company's and the city's common interests.

CM&S Managers Become Involved

Evidence of the company's influence can be found in James Buchanan, the general superintendent of CM&S in 1938, who was known as the "Dean of Hockey in Trail."⁷ Selwyn G. Blaylock, according to Elsie G. Turnbull, "ran both plant and town according to his own ideas, but he could only do so with the consent of the majority of employees and townspeople."⁸ The managers', specifically R. W. Diamond, growing involvement in community affairs resulted in CM&S making the decision to finance and build the new arena for the community.⁹ While CM&S may have wanted some control over workers' lives outside of work hours to foster a more productive and obedient workforce, there is no evidence that suggests the men with power at CM&S deliberately

made decisions for the reasons of social control and company boosterism. Rather, those in positions of power at CM&S seemed to genuinely care about the community where they resided, and their motive, although paternalistic, was to leave a lasting legacy through social infrastructure that could provide the community with recreation opportunities for many years. The 1939 and 1961 World Championship teams became important markers in the community, and the success of hockey in Trail came to be equated with both community and company success.

The years between the World Championship victories represented a period of continued success; however, the team changed from being a representative and a symbol of the community to an ambassador for both the community and the company. Greig chooses to remember the World Championship teams but offers little to the reader beyond a chronological, rudimentary overview of events in his book *Trail on Ice*. The author does not investigate issues such as how the Smoke Eaters World Championships became mythologized in the community and does not critically deal with the role CM&S played in the city of Trail and in support of senior men's hockey. What this narrative fails to address is how the community ceded autonomy and became beholden to the company, a broad structural change that resulted in increased control exerted by the company over the Smoke Eaters.¹⁰ In a 1989 interview, Ralph "Tuffy" Garland, a former goaltender for the Smoke Eaters, was asked if it were the city or the company who was recruiting players for the team. Garland answered, "Naw, Cominco. Consolidated Mining and Smelting."¹¹ The end goal for the company was a winning hockey team, which in turn meant a winning company and winning community. Rusnell suggests "that these big corporations, in order to keep people happy in the winter time and through these long

seasons, they needed hockey players. They bring them in and give them a job and a lot of hockey players needed a job.”¹² The team, by the 1950s, had effectively become a public and community relations tool for CM&S. The company maintained its position of dominance by incorporating the team and its value so members of the community understood their value and the team’s were the same as the company’s.

With the population growing in the city of Trail, the demand for sporting infrastructure and recreational opportunities began to increase.¹³ The original Fruit Fair Building was constructed in 1912 and outfitted with an artificial ice system in 1925 as the popularity of hockey in the city increased.¹⁴ The original objective of this building was to function as a Fall Fair Building. It is this ice surface that must be credited for Trail’s hockey foundation and ultimately the success of the Smoke Eaters between 1926 and 1933 when the team skated to seven consecutive Savage Cup titles.¹⁵ The Fruit Fair Building also played home to the team that went on to win the Allan Cup and eventually the World Championship in 1939. In the decades preceding World War II, the sport of hockey and the rink were community projects of little interest to CM&S, although many of the players were employees.¹⁶ The reason why the company did not become involved in hockey in the pre-war years is not clear. It is possible the managers at CM&S were disinterested in the team and hockey, or that community sport did not, or was considered not to be, the responsibility of the company. Citizens, keen to obtain a new arena, began generating interest in the new arena project during the final years of the war. A community group, the Junior Chamber of Commerce, “was especially progressive and were largely responsible for stirring up public enthusiasm in the initial stages of this venture.”¹⁷ While community groups did not raise enough capital to fund a new facility

on their own, the proceeds were applied to early planning work after CM&S became involved in the project. Fundraising was difficult during this period, as community groups were more likely to have been required to spend money on other war-specific priorities. Furthermore, the absence of the elite team as players departed to war could be another reason why fundraising for a new hockey rink received little public interest.

Effects of World War Two and the Building of the Arena

The Second World War saw participation in all sports in Trail decline greatly.¹⁸ The overall quality and quantity of hockey in the region dropped as players departed to serve overseas.¹⁹ Hockey in the West Kootenay region of British Columbia was suspended in 1942, but in 1945 the players were back in action, once again skating around the ice surface inside the Fruit Fair Building. Championships had been suspended at all levels during the war. Both the Savage Cup and Allan Cup tournaments were cancelled during the 1944–1945 season, and the World Championship was cancelled from 1941 through 1946.²⁰ The war also impacted other areas of life as many citizens who could not serve overseas, including women, were recruited to work at CM&S to help fulfill war-related contracts.²¹ These broad changes to life in Trail and the disappearance of top level senior men's hockey quickly dissipated any momentum toward building on the success of the 1939 World Champions. Although the Trail Smoke Eaters were not playing, the influence of the war in the area of company involvement in sport and recreation would have a post-war impact on the team. Additionally, during the war, CM&S became increasingly involved in the daily lives of their employees in part through

hiring female workers. From their paternalistic position, CM&S managers likely viewed supervising female workers as a greater responsibility.

Prior to the Second World War, CM&S was largely uninvolved with the Trail Smoke Eaters and the sport of hockey, and did not generally support community recreation activities. After the war, the company assumed a paternalistic position regarding providing social benefits to the community, primarily through the sponsorship of social and recreational infrastructure to the city in the form of gifts. Greig suggests during the years immediately following the Second World War, the sport of hockey “was used primarily as a vehicle to provide recreation and keep domestic morale high.”²² It is possible that CM&S’ provision of wartime benefits to female employees fostered a recognition among the company’s management that this assistance improved employee loyalty and productivity.²³ A healthy workforce meant increased productivity, and it is also likely the company recognized the paternalistic impact it could have on the community. In the case of Trail, CM&S’ paternalistic disposition provided the impetus for the company to promote both the city and the company through the support of the winning senior men’s hockey team. The city of Trail became analogous with both CM&S and the Trail Smoke Eaters.

At a broad level, the city of Trail underwent significant change as a result of the Second World War. The end of the war saw the socially constructed ‘natural’ order re-established in Trail with the women hired by CM&S for war-time efforts being returned to the domestic sphere and the Trail Smoke Eaters returning to league competition. It is possible the experiences of the war and an interest in providing support for the returning workers led CM&S decision makers to recognize the value of supporting the new arena

facility. It is perhaps during this time that CM&S decision makers in Trail began to see the value in a winning hockey team as part of their broader program of industrial recreation and recreation-based infrastructure.

Following the Second World War, economic conditions in Trail improved due to CM&S completing their wartime contracts and ramping production back up to pre-war levels.²⁴ Hockey resumed its full schedule, and quality players, including Ab Cronie, Larry Kwong, and Jim Morris, returned to the ice. It was relatively easy for players to want to come to play in Trail, as the availability of work was a non-issue. As Louis Forte describes, “they got a steady job, you know, it wasn’t like up in the Crowsnest Pass when they worked two, three days a week. They had a steady job.”²⁵ It was not only the availability of work that brought hockey players to Trail. As Rusnell suggests, if CM&S “needed players, they’d go get them. They tried to get the best teams they could.”²⁶ CM&S remained a profitable company and had money to spend.²⁷ As the major employer in the community, the company held both a certain aura and degree of power in the city. CM&S understood the importance of keeping employees and the community happy and did so, in part, by supporting public and industrial recreation opportunities through corporate donations and sponsorships, and through the creation of new infrastructure. On 20 December 1948, Ralph W. Diamond, vice-president and general manager of CM&S operations in Trail, disclosed the company would build a \$500,000 ice rink that would be called the Cominco Arena.²⁸ Along with the donated land and labour, the company vowed to turn the arena over to the City of Trail once complete. The city, more specifically the Trail-Tadanac Board of Park Commissioners (TTBPC), would then be responsible for the operation of the arena. Eight months after construction began on the

building, on 29 November 1949, the Cominco Arena was officially opened and turned over to the City of Trail as a gift.²⁹ The Trail Smoke Eaters skated to victory over the Kimberly Dynamiters, beating them by a score of 9–2 in front of a full arena.³⁰

The goal to complete the facility for the 1949–1950 hockey season was made possible through large-scale community involvement. Local tradesmen donated their skilled labour before or after their work shift at CM&S or on their days off to complete the building for the coming hockey season.³¹ The citizens of Trail were told by the TDRPS that they were “urged to help until it hurts a bit. You need the facilities, the community needs the facilities, from the point of view of health, recreation and civic pride.”³² Once an individual had donated 60 hours of labour, the TDRPS rewarded these workers with a season ticket for that hockey season.³³ It is clear the project’s end goal was to promote hockey and the Trail Smoke Eaters, and thus the community. There is no evidence to support that the City of Trail and CM&S had any ulterior motives besides providing recreation opportunities to the citizens of the community. Both the company and city officials were interested in how to best promote hockey in Trail and develop another World Championship winning team.

Between 1945 and 1961, the Trail Smoke Eaters existed in a new socio-political situation where CM&S had become a driving force behind sport through supporting recreation opportunities including hockey. The TRDPS was established in 1947 with the intent to “promote the financing, planning and construction of adequate recreational facilities in Trail and District.”³⁴ The TRDPS eventually gathered enough funding to support the curling rink, Kids’ Rink, and library additions to the Cominco Arena. Local support from individuals, businesses, and clubs in the form of both labour and monies

made these additions to the social infrastructure in Trail achievable.³⁵ Furthermore, the TRDPS assisted with projects associated with Butler Park, the local baseball field.³⁶ Originally, funding for the new arena in Trail was to have been secured through private donations. However, when it became evident this fundraising method was inadequate, CM&S came forward and announced the company would generously donate the sum of \$500,000 to the City of Trail.³⁷ There is no evidence to suggest CM&S had any specific motive for funding this project. In his public address to the citizens of Trail at the opening of the arena, Diamond stated “I feel that I can speak for the President and Directors of our Company when I say that they are keenly conscious of the needs and welfare of the communities centred around our activities.”³⁸ The entry of the company into this area of community life that had previously been organized and administered by the city for its citizens resulted in a loss of agency. Activities that had previously fallen under the control of the citizens and city increasingly fell under control of the company, where the balance of power over how people experienced sport became part of the company’s control over non-work time activities.

The Cominco Arena served many interests in Trail. For the city, the arena provided residents with “a solid foundation for recreational development” and offered an opportunity for additional growth of recreation opportunities.³⁹ Also benefiting from the new arena was the Trail Smoke Eaters hockey club. The team could now host large crowds, which became increasingly important as the emphasis on winning increased.⁴⁰ The Cominco Arena now provided the team with the means to potentially provide the city with a repetition of the splendour that surrounded the 1938–1939 Allan Cup and World Championship victories. The myth of hockey success in Trail started and ended with

Allan Cup and World Championship victories. The Cominco Arena served as a site where the best hockey players could play in the best facility in hopes of becoming successful on the national and international stages again.⁴¹ While the city and the team benefited from the arena, so too did CM&S. CM&S sustained their hegemony and dominance in the city of Trail by gifting the arena to the city and having the TTBPC responsible for the operation of the facility.⁴² Through these actions, the company increased its control over workers' lives outside of work and the community. Industrial recreation became an increasingly important piece of CM&S' identity, helping boost employee morale and overall health, thus increasing production and profit. The community accepted their position and CM&S maintained their hegemony in the city of Trail.

The arena received positive feedback from many individuals. In a memorandum from J. Bryden to Diamond regarding representative comments about the CM&S Arena, P. F. McIntyre, the manager of the personnel division at CM&S suggested "the unanimous reaction of everyone to whom I have spoken is that the new arena is a dream – away beyond everybody's expectations. This covers the opinion of a great number of people, from the Italians in the lead refinery up."⁴³ McIntyre, in addition to being a manager at CM&S, also served as the chairman of the TTBPC for the city.⁴⁴ CM&S management had a vested interest in city-sponsored committees and used these various groups and boards to influence city infrastructure and programming. Furthermore, J. V. Rogers, the assistant chief engineer for the Cominco Arena build, suggested "Cominco's stock stands very high in this community at the present time,"⁴⁵ and the president of the Trail Hockey Club indicated that CM&S was "certainly progressive."⁴⁶ Perhaps more

importantly, though, is the building of the arena may have provided CM&S managers with additional impetus to consider further projects to improve social infrastructure. CM&S influenced the city to consider additional projects because they could rely on their financial support.

CM&S and their Paternalistic Role in Trail's Sporting World

The literature suggests the Cominco Arena was constructed with future expansion in mind.⁴⁷ CM&S managers demonstrated their paternalistic stance through the additional funding provided for these future expansions. Furthermore, CM&S could have viewed the arena and future expansions as part of a larger community relation's initiative to attract and retain employees, and possibly as a recruiting tool for the Smoke Eaters. It is likely Diamond understood Trail would continue to increase in population and thus would require additional infrastructure for recreation opportunities. The arena's open concept lobby allowed for additions such as a library, curling rink, Kids' Rink, and Cominco Gymnasium. Furthermore, Diamond believed

team games are an important part of any youngster's training. They build character as well as health and strength. Knowing those who are responsible for organized sport in Trail, I feel sure that every effort will be made to encourage the younger generation to make full use of this building.⁴⁸

It is clear Diamond's comments demonstrate a view of sport as a community-building tool, whereby a stronger community equated with a stronger workforce and subsequently a stronger company. Additionally, Diamond may have demonstrated a genuine interest in contributing to a healthy community, and there is no evidence to suggest he had a company-focused ulterior motive. The available evidence suggests Diamond and CM&S were genuinely concerned with the welfare of their workers and the residents of Trail; the

individuals who called Trail home and gratefully accepted the company's paternalistic role, one that reinforced the company's dominant position within the hegemonic order.

Additions to the arena included a curling rink in 1951 and the 'Kid's Rink' in 1953. The Kid's Rink was a smaller, practice sheet of ice meant for the growing minor hockey program. As Holman suggests, "local rink managers began to feel the pinch: a civic obligation to preserve free skating time bumped up against the increasing demands of hockey clubs for more and more match time."⁴⁹ As both the population and popularity of the sport of hockey grew, so too did the demand for ice time. One way to meet these demands was to construct additional ice surfaces. In the case of Trail, they built the 'Kid's Rink.' The gymnasium opened in 1955 and the public library in 1958. The building was, by this time, called the Trail Memorial Centre.⁵⁰

When the new arena opened, the Trail Smoke Eaters became the most important tenants in the City of Trail's premiere sporting facility. The reciprocal relationship of the community being represented by the team and the team representing the community may, in part, explain why CM&S committed to financially supporting civic projects starting with the arena. The company extended their influence beyond the workplace into the city of Trail by becoming increasingly involved in the organizing and financing of social and recreational opportunities in the community. By providing these social goods, "CM&S practiced diligent paternalistic relations,"⁵¹ often in the form of gift giving to keep workers and citizens happy. Through their efforts to provide social goods to the smelter workers and residents of Trail, CM&S and city officials, many of whom were company managers, further solidified their position as the dominant hegemonic group.

The company's investments in the community fostered management's broader goals for a stronger business, a more productive workforce, and furthered their position as the community's dominant authority. As Larsen suggests, "the company dominated almost all aspects of life in this town and the people who lived there were generally accepting of this domination because they were guaranteed jobs with decent pay."⁵² It is evident the residents of Trail willingly accepted their subordinate-group status. Paternalistic initiatives including a Workmen's Co-operative Committee, company-built housing for employees, the provision of recreation opportunities, and the continued funding of community infrastructure represented avenues through which CM&S wielded unrelenting power in the city of Trail.⁵³ The evidence suggests the company believed by looking after the citizens of Trail, they would be able to continue successfully reinforcing their paternalism and increase their control over the lives of their workers outside of work. It is important to note that many of the hockey players recruited to play for the Smoke Eaters wound up calling Trail home, remaining as a resident of the city many years after their hockey career ended. Cesare Maniago, born in Trail and former goalie of the Chatham Maroons team that beat the Smoke Eaters to win the 1960 Allan Cup, recalls, "so many guys have come here to play hockey and then have just settled here."⁵⁴

He advises

for a hockey opportunity, got their jobs be it with the fire department be it with the smelter ... I believe, you know, they fell in love with the area for not only what it can give back to you but the people themselves. And I think that that's what Trail has had to offer, and that's the reputation that it's had, you know, of all the years that they've [CM&S] been involved.⁵⁵

Residents understood and accepted their paternalistic relationship with CM&S. Not only did hockey players have an opportunity to play on an elite senior men's hockey team, but

also they had an opportunity to acquire gainful employment at the smelter where they worked hard and played even harder.

As discussed above, the Cominco Arena was built with expansion in mind. One of the most significant expansions to the building was the Cominco Gymnasium, which Diamond turned over to Mayor Fletcher when it opened 18 October 1955. The gymnasium was CM&S' latest gift to the City of Trail, providing residents with another recreation facility. The financial bill for CM&S for the gymnasium totalled \$275,000.⁵⁶ C. H. Wright, President of TRDPS, said "there has been an inspired spirit of support throughout the whole community which has made for better living for all."⁵⁷ The spirit of support Wright was alluding to may very well have been the original gift of the Cominco Arena to the city from CM&S. Additionally, Wright suggested the residents of Trail were able to "take a very justifiable pride in their accomplishments in the recreational field."⁵⁸ Yet, the identity that seemed to overshadow the city was the success of the 1939 World Championship Trail Smoke Eaters hockey team, whereby the definition of success for the team was now equated to this mythical victory. Quality recreational facilities afforded the hockey players the ability to perform and thus kept the citizens of Trail happy through the successful sports teams. However, by the mid-1950s, citizens became restless for another championship.

There was a need for the Trail Smoke Eaters to be successful to ensure their gifts were acknowledged and thus extend the company's already maintained position of influence in the community to non-work aspects of life. By doing this, CM&S effectively sustained their implicit control over the city through the funding of social infrastructure. C. A. Tony Joyce cites John J. Coakley stating, "the structure of sport is so much like the

structure of work organizations and capitalist society as a whole that it serves to stabilize the system and promote the interests of people who are in positions of power.”⁵⁹

Diamond likely recognized this, either implicitly or explicitly, and he continued his support of recreation and health promotion through sustained gift giving in the form of infrastructure. This notion could almost entirely be attributed to his keen interest in both the promotion of the community and keeping CM&S the dominant party in the relationship. In other words, through his executive position at CM&S, R. W. Diamond was able to see his genuine interest in providing social infrastructure and recreation opportunities for the community come to fruition with the economic backing of the company. There is no evidence to suggest Diamond, a highly privileged individual with a matching worldview, did not have the residents’ best interests in mind. From his perspective he may have been simply bettering the community by providing and establishing social infrastructure. The residents of Trail approved of the facilities, which was “important because the Cominco Gymnasium had become their gymnasium.”⁶⁰ This sense of community ownership of this social infrastructure furthered the hegemonic relationship between CM&S and the community. The managers took great pride in the gymnasium as well. This was evident in the weeks prior to the opening of the gymnasium as detailed in the meeting minutes and separate planning committee for Cominco Gymnasium Opening.⁶¹

Conclusion

The 1938 Allan Cup and 1939 World Championship Trail Smoke Eaters paved the way for the continued success of hockey in the city of Trail. Hockey became a

common means to promote civic pride, and the mythologizing of 1939 World Championship served to naturalize the dominant position the sport of hockey had in the community. The success of the Trail Smoke Eaters between 1946 and the mid-1950s was measured by comparing the team to the aforementioned 1939 champions. Despite winning seven provincial Savage Cups between their World Championships, the team's success continued to be evaluated by national and international championships. A lack of satisfaction began to build as the Savage Cup was not considered to be sufficiently prestigious compared to the 1939 World Championship. There is no evidence to suggest CM&S' paternalistic approach was to promote social control or company boosterism.

What was being said in the community about the team falling short of competing for championships at the international level? Why, and at what point, did the company step in to recruit the players who would win the 1961 World Championship? These are two crucial questions that need to be investigated to develop a deeper understanding of how town boosterism functioned in the city of Trail. Not only did CM&S finance, build, and allow the community to use company-sponsored facilities after the Second World War, they gave the infrastructure to the City of Trail. This eventually led the community to view the team as their own and further cementing the company's hegemonic position and paternalism over the city and its citizens.

Notes

¹ The Savage Cup is awarded to British Columbia's senior men's hockey champion. The Trail Smoke Eaters have won this trophy a total of 19 times since 1926 (seasons ending in 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1938, 1940, 1941, 1946, 1948, 1949, 1952, 1960, 1962, 1979, 1983, and 2004).

² Dave Rusnell, documentary footage interview by Darryl Taylor, Trail City Archives (TCA), 2007.

³ Dr. Charles Holstead Wright started with CM&S in 1925 as a chemical engineer. He organized and served as president of the Trail District Recreational Projects Society (TDRPS). He was involved with many other local and provincial organizations, including the British Columbia Chamber of Commerce, Boy Scouts Association, and the Trail and District Arts and Crafts Association.

⁴ "Smokies and Spartans Each Trim Nelson by 3-1," *Trail Daily Times*, November 3, 1947, 8. "Cronie To Play Right Wing," *Trail Daily Times*, November 5, 1947, 8. "Home-Brews Star Again As Smokies Blast Leafs," *Trail Daily Times*, November 15, 1947, 8. There were 15 total articles in November 1947 that featured or mentioned the Smoke Eaters in the daily newspaper *Trail Daily Times*. The articles provided game previews, game highlights/reports, and commentary about what was happening around the league.

⁵ Murray Greig, *Trail on Ice: A century of hockey in the Home of Champions* (Canada: TCA, 1999), 72.

⁶ James M. Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey (1961)* (Trail: Noremac, 1990).

⁷ In 1939, just after winning the World Championship, James Buchanan was promoted to general manager of CM&S. "Advance of CM&S Officials is Popular; Recalls Long Service," *Trail Daily Times*, April 19, 1939, 1.

⁸ Elsie Turnbull, *Trail Between Two Wars: The Story of a Smelter City* (Canada: Elsie G. Turnbull, 1980), 71. In 1911, Blaylock became the assistant general manager at CM&S and was promoted to general manager in 1919. In 1922, he became the director and five years later, he was promoted to vice-president. Blaylock became president and managing director in 1939, and his final promotion came in 1943 when he was named chairman and president.

⁹ Diamond, an engineer by profession, was in charge of many significant projects during his time at CM&S. His success as a professional is evident by the numerous industry awards he achieved. See Trail Historical Society. "R. W. Diamond." Accessed April 27, 2015. <http://www.trailsportshistory.ca/home-of-champions/rw-diamond.html>

¹⁰ See both Takaia Larsen, "Sowing the Seeds: Women, Work, and Memory in Trail, British Columbia During and After the Second World War" (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 2007) and David Michael Roth, "A Union on the Hill: The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers and the Organization of Trail Smelter and Chemical Workers 1938-1945" (MA thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1991).

¹¹ Ralph Garland, interview by Pete White, *Kootenay Lake Archives*, November 10, 1989. It is unclear whether Garland was referring to the pre- or post-WWII era, however it is more likely the latter period.

¹² Dave Rusnell.

¹³ The population of Trail grew from 3020 in 1921 to 7573 in 1931, 9392 in 1941, and 11430 in 1951. Service BC. "British Columbia Municipal Census Populations (1921-2011)." Accessed April 12, 2015. www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/MunicipalPopulations.aspx

¹⁴ Note that a smelter construction engineer designed the building, but there is no evidence to suggest that CM&S funded the construction of the Fruit Fair building. See Turnbull, *Trail Between Two Wars*, 22-23.

¹⁵ Trail Historical Society. "Historic Trail Smoke Eaters-First Period." Accessed April 12, 2015. <http://www.historicsmokeeaters.ca/first-period/>

¹⁶ Many of the '39 World Championship Trail Smoke Eaters players were employed by CM&S, including Ab Cronie and Jimmy Haight.

¹⁷ TCA, TDRPS Fonds, Accession 86-1, TDRPS, Trail Senior Hockey Club, Smoke Eater Souvenir Booklet Commemorating the Opening of the Cominco Arena, November 29, 1949.

¹⁸ Takaia Larsen, "Sowing the Seeds: Women, Work, and Memory in Trail, British Columbia During and After the Second World War" (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 2007) refers to the broad notion of the decrease in participation sport and recreation

¹⁹ Two 1939 World Champion Smoke Eaters were killed in action: Buck Buchanan and Sammy Saprunoff.

²⁰ Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 58-59.

²¹ See Larsen, "Sowing the Seeds."

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- ²² Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 58.
- ²³ See Larsen, "Sowing the Seeds," 32–35.
- ²⁴ Roth, "A Union on the Hill," 13–21, 58.
- ²⁵ Community Memories. "Similar Journeys, Different Trails: One Destination." Accessed April 12, 2015. http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/sgc-cms/histoires_de_chez_nous-community_memories/CM_V2_Apps/ui/remWindow.php?remID=52276&remP=%2Fsgc-cms%2Fhistoires_de_chez_nous-community_memories%2Fhdcn-cm%2FACFO%2F0001%2Ftext%2F&remEx=Similar+Journeys%2C+Different+Trails%3A+One+Destina tion&lg=English
- ²⁶ Dave Rusnell.
- ²⁷ As early as 1919, CM&S was reporting a 15-month profit of \$1,011,212.68 (Spokane Chronicle, April 23, 1920). Profits for the last half of 1928 were \$3,176,381 (Spokesman Review, December 20, 1928). In 1936, the company reported a profit of \$6,953,138 (Spokane Chronicle, April 15, 1937). Production of zinc increased from 10,000 tons to 165,000 tons, silver from 10,000 to 150,000 tons, and lead from 10,000 to 240,000 tons between 1906 and 1946. Roth, "A Union on the Hill," 13–21.
- ²⁸ "CM&S Announces Rink Gift for Trail," *Trail Daily Times*, December 20, 1948, 1.
- ²⁹ TCA, TDRPS Fonds, Accession 86–1, TDRPS, C.H Wright (chairman, TDRPS) memo to CM&S re: opening ceremonies (December 1, 1949); also Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 64.
- ³⁰ Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 64. Frank Turik was credited with the first assist in the new building after setting up Don Anderson who scored the first goal in the Cominco Arena.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 63. An additional donation for the Cominco Arena came in the form of an electronic score clock from the Imperial Tobacco Company.
- ³² TCA, TDRPS Fonds, Accession 86–1, TDRPS, Trail Senior Hockey Club, Smoke Eater Souvenir Booklet Commemorating the Opening of the Cominco Arena, November 29, 1949.
- ³³ *Ibid.*
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*
- ³⁵ The curling rink and Kid's Rink "were erected by public subscription at costs of \$160,000 and \$130,000 respectively." TCA, Accession 86-1, Cominco Gymnasium Opening – background data, Cominco Press Release 19 October 1955.
- ³⁶ In 1950, the TDRPS added lights to Butler Park so games to occur at night. In 1956, CM&S funded and constructed a new grandstand for the baseball field.
- ³⁷ TCA, TDRPS Fonds, Accession 86–1, CBC press release on Cominco Arena opening.
- ³⁸ TCA, TDRPS Fonds, Accession 86–1, 'To The Citizens of Trail' public address from R. W. Diamond on opening night of the Cominco Arena, Trail Senior Hockey Club, Smoke Eater Souvenir Booklet Commemorating the Opening of the Cominco Arena, November 29, 1949.
- ³⁹ "For the others, the Cominco Arena opening meant a solid foundation for recreational development in the City." Porteous, A., Ed. (1949, December). Cominco Arena Opens. *The Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Ltd.*, 1.
- ⁴⁰ "Now, the teams can be supported during their home games by large crowds, an especially important feature during playoffs." Porteous, A., "Cominco Arena Opens," 2.
- ⁴¹ Winning the 1938 Allan Cup and 1939 World Championship meant a great deal to the citizens of the city of Trail, the Trail Smoke Eaters, and CM&S. Senior men's hockey in Trail now had a standard to achieve. This winning benchmark and the '38 and '39 teams became mythologized, and both the citizens of Trail and CM&S executives became dissatisfied with the lack of continued success at the national and international level.
- ⁴² CM&S sustained their paternalism as the company had previously established its paternalistic nature over the City of Trail through providing employment as the nearly sole-employer in the city.
- ⁴³ TCA, TDRPS Fonds, Accession 86–1, 'Cominco Arena' correspondence from J. Bryden to R. W. Diamond December 5, 1949.
- ⁴⁴ McIntyre was the Personnel Division Manager for CM&S.
- ⁴⁵ TCA, TDRPS Fonds, Accession 86–1, 'Cominco Arena' correspondence from J. Bryden to R. W. Diamond December 5, 1949.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁷ Porteous, A., "Cominco Arena Opens," 1–3.

⁴⁸ TCA, TDRPS Fonds, Accession 86-1, 'To The Citizens of Trail' public address from R. W. Diamond on opening night of the Cominco Arena, Trail Senior Hockey Club, Smoke Eater Souvenir Booklet Commemorating the Opening of the Cominco Arena, November 29, 1949.

⁴⁹ Holman, Andrew C. "Playing in the Neutral Zone: Meanings and Uses of Ice Hockey in the Canada-US Borderlands, 1895-1915." *American Review of Canadian Studies* 34(1) (2004): 40.

⁵⁰ CM&S took on an increasingly paternalistic role after the Second World War. Post-war memorial facilities were often present in wealthy urban centres and typically housed "practical facilities that enriched community life," such as sports facilities and public libraries. See Donald G. Wetherell and Irene Kmet, *Town Life: Main Street and the Evolution of Small Town Alberta, 1880-1947* (University of Alberta, 1995), 258-259.

⁵¹ Larsen, *Sowing the Seeds*, 16.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Cesare Maniago, documentary footage interview by Darryl Taylor, TCA, 2007.

⁵⁵ Cesare Maniago.

⁵⁶ TCA, Accession 86-1, Cominco Gymnasium Opens In Trail, Cominco Press Release October 19, 1955.

⁵⁷ TCA, TDRPS Fonds, Accession 86-1, C. H. Wright public address at Cominco Arena opening ceremony.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ John J. Coakley, "Sport in Society: An Inspiration or An Opiate," *Sport in Contemporary Society*, ed., D. S. Eitzen, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 29 in C. A. Tony Joyce, "Sport and the Cash Nexus in Nineteenth Century Toronto," *Sport History Review*, 30, (1999): 140-167.

⁶⁰ Weir, Craig. Ed. Cominco Magazine, The Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Ltd., December 1955, 2.

⁶¹ The Planning Committee for Cominco Gymnasium Opening met August 22 and 29, 1955, September 7, 14, and 30, 1955, and October 11, 1955, and the Program Sub-Committee of Gymnasium Opening Committee met August 26, 1955, and September 2, 12, and 30, 1955 prior to the grand opening on October 18, 1955 to discuss details regarding the gymnasium's opening ceremony. During the August 29, 1955 meeting it was noted that CM&S would cover any shortfall in funding for the event.

Chapter Four:

The ‘Local’ 1961 World Championship Team and the Decline of Senior Men’s

Hockey

The growing influence of CM&S over life, sport, and hockey between 1939 and the mid-1950s in Trail suggests the expectations facing the Smoke Eaters hockey club to again compete for the World Championship were tied closely to the company’s interests. In the broad sense of community development, social infrastructure and physical recreation were beginning to impact the city of Trail after the Second World War. The urbanization of the city, and continued growth of the mining and smelting industry, provided greater access to physical recreation opportunities for the citizens of Trail.¹ CM&S played a large role in providing the citizens of Trail, who were also employees, these opportunities to participate in recreation as the company’s leadership continued to support the required infrastructure, teams, and programs. CM&S management likely saw value in providing sport and recreation opportunities to the citizens of Trail. These opportunities served to define suitable activities in which employees could engage during non-work hours, and by promoting physical wellness to reduce the risk of union disruption and to foster productive, compliant workers. However, CM&S did more than build infrastructure and promote community sport and recreation. Publicity from successful sports teams translated into a winning community and a winning company, essentially creating the impression of a strong city and company. There was value in using the Trail Smoke Eaters to endorse both the city and the company. It appears as though those in a position of power at CM&S demonstrated a genuine concern for the

community and sought to leave a legacy that improved the lives of Trail citizens and strengthened the company.

This chapter is concerned with the Smoke Eaters during the years immediately prior to and following the 1961 World Championship. Furthermore, the issues surrounding the victory, specifically to address how the winning team was constructed and the emergence of the myth of a 'local' team.² It must be noted this myth, as with the broader myth surrounding the decades after 1961, are in a large part products of the historical accounts including James Cameron's *The Last Time We Won Hockey (1961)*, and are addressed.³ This chapter also discusses the shift to an amateur national team representing Canada rather than the winner of the Allan Cup, and the eventual decline of company involvement with senior men's hockey in the city of Trail. The possibility of winning the World Championship was no longer a reachable objective. The 1963 failure of the Smoke Eaters to win a World Championship led, at least in part, to the adoption of a Canadian national team.⁴ With a national team, the possibility of a community winning a World Championship disappeared and with it the support of the local benefactors such as CM&S. This change in who represented Canada on the international stage directly impacted the relationship between the Trail Smoke Eaters and CM&S after 1964.

Expectations increased for the Smoke Eaters during the 1950s as successive teams failed to repeat the success of 1939. During this time, to strengthen the team, top players from western Canada and beyond were recruited. The team won the Savage Cup during the 1951–1952 season, representing their last appearance in the provincial final for eight years. The Korean War from 1950–1953 had economic and political impacts that resulted in an economic boom in North America, decreasing unemployment and increasing the

demand for steel and fuel. Productivity within the steel industry rose, but employment levels remained the same, stressing employees. At the same time, demand for skilled and educated workers increased with an associated decrease in unskilled workers.⁵ In the period prior to and following 1939, and well into the post-war era, the Smoke Eaters had assumed a place of prominence within the community. Gruneau and Whitson suggest hockey became a tradition in community life.⁶ Despite these economic and political changes, the Trail Smoke Eaters gained momentum during the 1950s, winning the Savage cup for the fifteenth time in 1960, then hosting the Allan cup finals against the Chatham Maroons of Ontario.⁷ Through this decade, elite amateur hockey in Canada underwent significant restructuring, while at the same time, the economic fortunes of CM&S had provided the company with the opportunity to offer support to the Smoke Eaters and recreation in Trail. The company recognized the opportunity to assume a leadership role in recapturing the World Championship for both Trail and Canada.

It was within these changing social circumstances, and a complete change in world amateur hockey with the rise of the Soviet Union, that the company began searching for more skilled players. The world of amateur hockey was changing in the 1950s, yet Canadians continued to expect their top amateur teams to dominate and win at world and Olympic tournaments. 1954 became a pivotal year for international hockey as the Soviet Union started to become a major competitor. They became an international powerhouse and dominated the sport of amateur international hockey through the second half of the twentieth century.⁸ This rise in competitive hockey out of the Soviet Union certainly impacted Canada's participation in the 1961 World Championships. Although the Smoke Eaters lost to Chatham, the champions declined the invitation to represent

Canada at the World Championship in Geneva, Switzerland. Both Cameron and Greig speculate the Maroons declined the invitation due to financial hardship.⁹ The Smoke Eaters were extended the invitation by the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA) and subsequently won their second World Cup Championship, defeating the USSR in the final game.¹⁰ Canada's governing body for the sport of hockey became more involved now that USSR hockey was becoming competitive, and they told Trail they must strengthen their team prior to competing overseas.¹¹ Part of the reason why the 1961 championship team came to be mythologized is for their defeat of this new threat in international hockey. The 1961 World Championship team was shaped in part by both the CAHA and CM&S, whereas the 1939 team had not been. Yet a team similar to 1939 could not have been successful in 1961. The world of hockey had changed and to be successful, teams required players who would help them win. Generally, a small community such as Trail could not field a team to be this successful, and thus required recruited players. Given the social, political, and economic changes, coupled with the changes to the game itself, comparing the 1939 and 1961 victories is impossible. Separated by over two decades, each team is uniquely remarkable and each team reflected their time, pre- and post-World War II. Cameron and Grieg say little about losing the 1960 Allan Cup, and the 1961 World Championship team becomes mythologized in an effort to not lose the connection to the city of Trail.¹² This loss in 1960 is overlooked because the team won the World Championship a year later. This famous victory came to be enshrined in the folklore of the community along with the 1939 team, forever tying the feats to Trail and CM&S.

This analysis offers insight into the specific issues that framed the social, political and economic forces that impacted the team from the early 1950s through the mid-1960s. These forces continued to impact CM&S and its place in the community. Additionally, CM&S' role in the development and continuation of hockey, including the Smoke Eaters team, suggests continued motivation behind CM&S' involvement in and support of the hockey team. The broader changes in Trail after the Second World War shaped the relationship that formed between the team, the company, and the community. The nature of these relationships is evident through the voices of the players along with local newspaper coverage of the team.

CM&S Supporting the Team and Community

From the time the flame was lit in the first melting furnace in the late 19th century through to the late 1950s, CM&S had grown in size and manpower, allowing the company to become a major force impacting almost every element of life in the city of Trail.¹³ Specifically, executives and others with managerial responsibilities at CM&S made decisions that affected not only the company, but also the people in the community, and city governance. It appears CM&S executives such as Ralph Perry and R. W. Diamond, effectively the men who made the decisions to fund and construct facilities and to support the Trail Smoke Eaters, valued not only running a profitable mining and smelting company, but also the health and physical wellness of the citizens of Trail.¹⁴ Although those in charge of CM&S' Trail operations may have been simply attempting to keep the citizens of the town distracted from social issues, such as war and the unequal distribution of wealth among workers, there is little evidence to suggest these ends represented the primary focus of the men. The managers and individuals who made

decisions concerning the operation of CM&S lived in the community; however they did not assume the same physical risks as their fellow citizens. These men worked in office buildings and not the smelter. Moreover, these men were also clearly avid sports and hockey fans. They wanted the citizens of Trail to be happy and healthy, to be able to embrace the leisure benefits of top recreational facilities, and to rally community pride around the local elite senior men's hockey team. For example, when John Paolone was asked about CM&S' involvement in senior men's hockey in Trail, he noted:

Cominco was smart, how do we keep people happy? First of all you gotta have entertainment, you gotta have something, and how do you get the entertainment here . . . is you get players.¹⁵

The community relations power of the team was also evident in an interview with former player Dave Rusnell, who when asked about what he thought made hockey so important in Trail, responded:

Well I think this is because of Cominco. But I believe in these big corporations, in order to keep people happy in the wintertime and these long seasons, they needed hockey players.¹⁶

The CM&S leadership was well respected in the community, furthering their hegemonic position as Paolone reminisces about his time spent as an employee at CM&S and more recent issues surrounding industrial pollution: "But again, can't say anything bad about Cominco, CM&S."¹⁷ It is plausible to suggest both leadership at CM&S and their workers understood the power the company held in the community. The leaders, from this position, certainly demonstrated and assumed a paternalistic attitude toward their workers who comprised the majority of the citizens of Trail.

In a near sole-employer city, a healthy community resulted in a healthy workforce, which in turn contributed to employee buy-in and preventing unions from

forming.¹⁸ Similarly, a satisfied community meant a happy workforce. By creating this environment, the company leadership could minimize the potential of union disruptions. In the 1950s, the company's need to defend against unionization also likely influenced their decision to support worker recreation and the hockey team.¹⁹ It is evident in the case of CM&S and the City of Trail, a reciprocal relationship existed particularly with respect to the loyalty workers and employers had for one another. It was, in part, through the company's paternalistic gift giving in the form of recreation opportunities, infrastructure, and entertainment that a hegemonic relationship persisted, reinforcing company executives' dominant role in the community. The citizens and employees who comprised the subordinate group remained compliant, as they embraced the opportunities and infrastructure provided for them. This set of relations may persist into the present, thus aiding in explaining the strength and continuing relevance of the myths surrounding the Trail Smoke Eaters and why the company became so invested in the team.

Corporate entities such as CM&S in Trail had come to recognize the value of supporting workers through providing recreation opportunities. As a result, CM&S leaders saw an opportunity to promote the community and the team. As part of these changing employee–employer relations, CM&S saw themselves in a position to recognize female worker effort during the Second World War, which spurred company executives to involve females in recreation opportunities. After the war, the company assumed an increasing paternalistic role and their involvement in local hockey increased as they built the arena and had a vested interest in the recruitment of players. CM&S leaders saw their involvement in local hockey as a way to promote both the town and company.

During the decade from 1950 to 1960, a period during which hockey and the Trail Smoke Eaters remained popular, the company focused on recruiting top players to support a winning team. To do this, CM&S supported the team and players financially and provided employment for those they recruited.²⁰ By the latter half of the 1950s, however, this strategy of recruiting top-level amateur players did not meet the standard of success set by previous teams that had achieved both national and international titles. By the late 1950s, as the myth suggests, the focus shifted to recruiting players who fit with the team and who were loyal to and passionate about Trail and the Trail Smoke Eaters.²¹ By the latter half of the 1950s, the team had a strong core of players who were able to compete successfully at the highest level of amateur hockey; however, by the 1960 Allan Cup championship, this core group had clearly become the community's team. It was not until decades later the 'local' myth emerged as a way of cementing the championship as a local achievement, comparable to 1939.

CM&S provided financial support in many ways to the team and to individual players. Certain company executives, such as James Cameron, were involved in recruitment and arranging financial support for players. Serving as both CM&S' public relations supervisor and as the Smoke Eaters club president, Cameron presumably served the interests of both parties equally when attending the 1961 World Championship.

Cameron explains:

Early along I went to see Ralph Perry²² in his office in Trail. Ralph was Cominco's senior man in the west. After hearing his good wishes, Ralph asked: 'How much money do you want?' 'I don't know,' I said lamely. Ralph smiled. 'We'll give you \$4000 right now. Come back if you need more.' I didn't feel Canada's hockey championship should be Cominco's financial burden and decided to do anything to avoid going back.²³

It is reasonable to suggest Cameron did not wish to seek additional funding from CM&S as he may have believed the initial offering by Perry to be fair. Also, any additional sponsorship and funding from this corporate body may have jeopardized, or at least called into question, the notion of the Trail Smoke Eaters senior men's hockey team being amateur.²⁴ The evidence provided by former players suggests the funding provided by CM&S had strings attached. One example of this can be found in the circumstances surrounding Cameron's inclusion in the touring party that travelled to the 1961 World Championships. Norm Lenardon explained "He did it that year and I think it was all political, and that's how I think we got the money from CM&S."²⁵ The Trail Smoke Eaters were fundamentally a company team and the narratives written about the team's history suggest most of the players were Trail-born individuals who worked for CM&S, and it was these local boys who had been successful at the 1939 and 1961 World Championships.

The history of resource community teams in Canada seeking out high-level players and paying them is well documented. For example, cities such as Houghton, Calumet, and Sault Ste Marie in northern Ontario "were able to support professional hockey financially as early as 1904."²⁶ CM&S was likely not the only company in the west that sought high-level players, paying them to play and finding them work in the mines and smelters. In the first decades of the twentieth century, resource communities had already taken the opportunity to form a semi professional league in the Kootenay and Boundary regions. This corporate support created a semi-professional hockey league, the first in British Columbia.²⁷ By the mid-1950s, the ostensibly amateur Trail Smoke Eaters were actively recruiting top players. For example, Cal Hockley, born in Fernie, British

Columbia, arrived in 1956 from Kimberly, British Columbia. Don Fletcher, born in Calgary, Alberta, also arrived in 1956 from the Springfield Indians of the American Hockey League.²⁸ Dave Rusnell explains, “If they needed players, they’d go and get them.”²⁹ One example, that of Rusnell who was recruited in 1960, illuminates how the process worked. Cameron notes Rusnell was promised a “Cominco staff job (personnel manager Pete McIntyre allowed us one, and only one). I promised to move him and his family to Trail—and even had to offer to move them back after the season if they didn’t like it.”³⁰ Former player Harold Jones³¹ suggests the availability of jobs at CM&S was essentially based on recruitment numbers, noting “Back then [1950s] they guaranteed you so many jobs. You could bring five hockey players in and they would guarantee you five jobs.”³² Company executives and decision-makers sought to continue recruitment efforts, with hiring practices centered on attracting and retaining quality hockey players. However, the promotion of players based on their hockey ability is not clearly demonstrated.

Personnel at CM&S, who were also involved with the hockey team, would look to scout players to meet public demand and to work toward the ultimate goal of a second World Championship victory. Dave Rusnell provides a succinct explanation of this situation, noting “They had some very sympathetic people on personnel up there that would look for players. I think that’s where the caliber rose. Once it’s there, people demand it.”³³ Rusnell further alluded to expanding on recruiting as he suggested this arrangement seemed to work for the players, the company, and the community. “They’d [CM&S] bring them [hockey players] in and give them a job, and a lot of hockey players needed a job so it worked out for everybody,” he suggested.³⁴ When asked about why

CM&S recruited players, Jones noted, “It helped to pack the arena and sell the game . . . You can’t operate if you don’t have the money to operate and if you don’t get the crowds you don’t get the money.”³⁵ The readiness of company executives to recruit players fits with the paternalistic relationship that persisted between managers, their workers, and the community. This ongoing relationship based within unequal power relations between player–worker and company executive is more direct than hegemonic. However, this relationship served to maintain the interests of those in power through using this senior men’s hockey team to demonstrate their commitment to the community and to winning.

Despite this high level of support for the team, CM&S sent some mixed messages to the players, who were, of course, expected to be productive and accountable on the job and on the ice. Players could lose \$18 per day for not going to work or taking time off for hockey.³⁶ However, at the same time, leave of absences were granted for the 1961 World Championship trip as Cameron reports, “We were aware that Cominco would give the 15 or so employees leaves of absence.”³⁷ Furthermore, Cameron explains, “Cominco had nicely told me to take a leave with pay, so I wouldn’t cost the club anything.”³⁸ It was fitting that Cameron, who was pulling double duty as a prominent CM&S manager and serving on the Smoke Eaters executive committee, gave himself the final ticket to Europe.

The Myth of the Move to ‘Local’ Players

Popular narrative accounts written about the Smoke Eaters in the 1990s argued that in the 1950s, there was a growing concern over the team’s inability to win another national or world title. In these later accounts, the program was identified as having been

over-reliant on players from outside the community.³⁹ These commentators may have created this myth. It is possible to assume that this was done in an effort to dispel any questions or possible concerns that the 1961 World Championship victory was anything other than a local achievement, attributable solely to the community of Trail. The popular narratives suggest there was a shift in strategy toward a focus on recruitment of local players throughout the mid- to late 1950s. The myth of ‘local recruitment’ seems to have been developed after the fact, and to have begun under the reigns of Coach Bobby Kromm, who brought back locals such as Harry Smith in 1957 and Harold Jones in 1960.⁴⁰ Ugo DeBiasio, Smoke Eaters’ manager at the time, explained the decision to focus on local recruitment in a 1975 interview:

When we were getting ready for Europe, I had at least half a dozen top-name players contact me, wanting to come with us. I couldn’t even afford to call them back. I’d tell them ‘If you don’t hear from me, you know we’re not going to do anything with your offer.’ But we’d been [down] that route before. For years prior to 1960 we always had top name players, or supposedly top name players coming here. It just didn’t measure up. We never won anything. Then when Bobby took over as coach a whole new concept was born. ‘Hell, we’re not going anywhere with the so-called name players,’ he said. ‘Let’s see what we can do with what we have locally.’ And that was it. With a hometown lineup, we went all the way to the Allan Cup final.⁴¹

The myth suggests this change in team composition led to more successful teams from 1959–1961, culminating in a second World Championship victory. In fact, it does not seem to have been the case that many of the players recruited were actually local. It is clear, however, when the CAHA determined the Smoke Eaters would represent Canada internationally at the 1961 World Championships the stipulation was the team be strengthened.⁴² The myth suggests a change in team composition, when in actuality the composition of the team remained fairly consistent when compared to the teams of the

mid-1950s. This ‘local team’ myth further suggests a broader issue exists concerning the need to equate the victory in 1961 with 1939, despite the world of hockey being considerably different with the emergence of the Soviet Union by the 1950s.

These players, whether local or recruited, had to work, not just play hockey. In fact, when they beat the Moscow Selects on 27 January 1960, at the Cominco Arena, it was suggested by Lenardon that many of the men had already put in a full day’s work:

The amazing thing was that a lot of us had worked that day, too. I’d come off shift at Cominco after laying bricks in the oven all night, and Seth (Martin) had only finished his (fireman’s) shift at Cominco a few hours before we got to the rink.⁴³

The Moscow Selects were an all-star team made up of players from the Moscow City League and were on tour in Canada.⁴⁴ The Smoke Eaters were responsible for handing the Soviet team their only loss during their cross country tour and the victory “showed the rest of Canada what local fans had known for some time: the country’s best senior hockey was played in the WIHL.”⁴⁵ Richard Gruneau and David Whitson describe the change in international hockey that occurred in the 1950s in their book *Hockey Night in Canada: Sport, Identities and Cultural Politics*:

Canadians had become used to the idea that hockey was “our game,” and when Canadian teams began to lose in international competition – especially to the Soviet Union – enough popular concern was created that some politicians began to take an interest. In a time of Cold War rhetoric the emergence of the Soviet Union as the dominant power in international hockey gave an added edge to the competition.⁴⁶

This investigation does not intend to dispute the players’ work hours or effort. However, Paolone, who began working at CM&S in 1951 suggested, “In eight hours we used to work an hour and a half.”⁴⁷ Retrospectively, the idea that most of the players were local would have assuaged any concerns over the unseemliness of recruiting players, as well as

demonstrating the players' level of commitment. Paolone explains, "They played with passion. They played for Trail. And they played for the World Championship. Any time they went out they were playing for Trail. That was tradition."⁴⁸ As a result, over time, the belief emerged that players had the same stake in the success of the community as the fans and their co-workers at CM&S.

The popular narratives about the Trail Smoke Eaters history, particularly surrounding the 1961 World Championship, have perpetuated the myth suggesting a 'local team' achieved the victory. However, Bobby Kromm, the Smoke Eaters' player-coach, was born in Calgary, Alberta, and joined the Smoke Eaters in 1950. Dave Rusnell was born in Wadena, Saskatchewan, and was recruited to play in 1960. Hockley, born in Fernie, British Columbia, arrived in Trail after playing years of hockey away from the West Kootenay region of British Columbia. Born in Saskatchewan, Jackie McLeod played only the 1960–1961 season with the Smoke Eaters after playing with various professional and semi-professional teams from 1949 to 1959. Don Fletcher, a native of Calgary, played his junior hockey outside of Trail. Arriving in Trail for two seasons after playing in Flin Flon, Manitoba; Vancouver, British Columbia; and Spokane, Washington, was Walt Peacosh who was born in The Pas, Manitoba. Darryl Sly, born in Collingwood, Ontario, played the 1960–1961 season for the Smoke Eaters. Claude Cyr and Michele Lagace, both from Quebec, and George Ferguson, born in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, played for the '61 World Championship team after junior careers with other teams.⁴⁹ Ten of the 18 players, including their player-coach, were born outside of the Trail area and many of them had longstanding hockey careers elsewhere prior to arriving to play for the Smoke Eaters for the 1960–1961 season.

The players on the '61 squad born in Trail included Adolf Tambellini, Norm Lenardon, Harold Jones, Hugh McIntyre, Harry Smith, Gerald Penner, Ed Cristofoli, and Seth Martin. Despite the popular myth of this team being dominated by locals, many of the players born in Trail pursued hockey outside of the area and then returned to Trail just prior to or for the 1959 to 1961 seasons. Enticed by the availability and steadiness of work, it is likely they found their way back home or were recruited back to Trail. If they had earned themselves a good name in the hockey world, CM&S likely helped make their employment more secure.



FIGURE 2: 1961 Trail Smoke Eaters (Courtesy of Trail City Archives)

During the early 1950s, the company-recruited players were not producing on the ice and perhaps were just not good enough to compete at this level of elite senior men's hockey. It is also possible that CM&S had not yet begun to provide sufficient support. The myth suggests the mid- to late 1950s saw a shift to the recruitment of local players, an initiative led by player-coach Bobby Kromm. The 1961 World Championship team is often regarded as a 'local' team, but as outlined above, the team was far from 'local.' The

1960 Smoke Eaters team performed well, however, they lost to the Chatham Maroons in the Allan Cup final and were only given a chance to represent Canada at the World Championship tournament in Europe because the Maroons declined the CAHA's invitation. Losing in the Allan Cup final remains an enduring blemish on the 1960–1961 team and in retrospect may have led to team members and officials creating the 'local' team myth. Whether CM&S officials and Trail residents at the time viewed the Allan Cup loss as a failure is not apparent, it is more likely that the world title provided both with sufficient reason to celebrate.

The popularity of the team was being sustained by strong community support. The community of Trail seemed to not be concerned if the players were 'local' or not. People came to the games as a form of entertainment and paid to see the games.⁵⁰ The team wanted to be profitable, splitting the profit between players at the end of the season: "You're providing entertainment for hundreds of people who pay to see it."⁵¹ The community support was crucial for facilitating the team's participation in the Allan Cup and World Championship trips and winning the 1961 championship.⁵² It is reasonable to assume those donating money to the Smoke Eaters intended that their generosity be reflected in positive press for the town and company. According to Cameron, discussing the financing of the 1961 trip, "The CAHA would give us a grant of \$1000, the IIHF, \$8000."⁵³ He further describes the team estimated they would require \$45,000 to cover all expenses:

Making up lost wages was a big expense. Players had wives, families, mortgage payments, car payments, etc. We decided to pay all players \$90 per week while they were away – slightly below the average wage. All would receive the same money. We also decided to give each player \$200 to buy a suitcase and handle miscellaneous costs. That totalled about \$19,000.⁵⁴

Other sources of financial assistance came from both within the Trail community and outside of the immediate local community. Cameron notes the local high school raised \$1800, Senator Molson sent a personal cheque for \$500, and the Montreal Canadiens contributed \$1000 and one of their goalies, Claude Cyr.⁵⁵ In this period between 1950 and 1960, the team was ultimately under the company's control. More than ever before, the need to recapture the World Championship led company leaders to provide increasing support to the team with the expectation that their investment would be repaid. At the time, the 1939 victory was looming large and the hopes of recapturing the world title were fading. There were a variety of reasons why this occurred, including the even greater pressure exerted by the CAHA requiring stronger players to participate and recognition that the Allan Cup champion no longer being sufficient to compete. The result of the changing world of elite amateur hockey was the creation of a national team. CM&S realized there was no need to try and recapture the World Championship after 1964 because it simply was impossible.

The End of an Era: Post 1961 and the Decline of the Trail Smoke Eaters

From 1920 to 1963 a senior men's club team represented Canada at the amateur World Championships. In 1962, the Trail Smoke Eaters were the last club team to represent the country and went to the Allan Cup finals for the last time, defeating the Montreal Olympiques to bring home the cup. The 1962 Allan Cup victory is an important piece of Smoke Eater history but is overshadowed by the mythologized 1939 and 1961 World Championship victories. Ab Cronie, a member of the 1939 Smoke Eater team, recalls the importance of the 1938 Allan Cup in a 1997 interview:

For me, the Allan Cup was a much bigger thrill than winning the world championship, and I think most of the other players felt the same way. In fact, I think our team should be on the (Trail) Monument of Champions for winning the Allan Cup, not the world tournament. That's how big it was.⁵⁶

It is clear the mythologized 1939 and 1961 World Championship teams continue to dominate all aspects of Trail Smoke Eater history.

Following their Allan Cup victory in 1962, the Smoke Eaters represented Canada at the 1963 World Hockey Championship in Stockholm, Sweden, finishing in fourth place.⁵⁷ The Trail Smoke Eaters were the last independent ice hockey club to represent Canada in international competition. In 1963, a national men's hockey team was established by Father David Bauer to represent Canada at the amateur World Championships.⁵⁸ As Gruneau and Whitson suggest, "despite the success in 1961 of the Trail Smoke Eaters – it had become clear the small cities that supported senior hockey could no longer provide teams of the calibre necessary to be competitive at world championships."⁵⁹

At the same time, senior amateur hockey in Canada experienced unprecedented change, the ability of CM&S to support recruitment of top-level hockey players became more difficult with the rise and role of unions in the 1960s.⁶⁰

When I took over the Smoke Eaters in '67, they had just started cutting back. Because the Union was stronger so there was no way that you were going to get a job over a, [another person] if you were the hockey player, over a guy that wasn't a hockey player, they had to be careful. But all those years, and they all became, again, I repeat, supervisors.⁶¹

Union involvement and influence likely caused difficulties for CM&S' recruiting efforts, and therefore their involvement dwindled. Furthermore, the team's potential to bring international glory ended, as they were no longer eligible to win the World Championship. Between 1964 and 1973, senior men's hockey in Trail suffered, as the

Smoke Eaters did not finish better than fourth place in their league. During the 1970s, the company was largely uninvolved with the team. The team underwent a rebuild, and at the time coaches were forced to recruit nearly an entire roster for the upcoming season given the high turnover of players. This turnover could, in part, be due to the lack of job security and recruitment by the company. Grieg and Cameron mention little about company involvement post-1964 and it can be assumed that since there was no opportunity for Trail to represent Canada on the international stage, the company began withdrawing its paternalistic hand.⁶²

The Trail Smoke Eaters were successful in capturing the Savage Cup in 1979 and again in 1983, but were unsuccessful in competing beyond this championship. Greig notes “the franchise was in shambles both on and off the ice and the ticket-buying public was no longer interested.”⁶³ The team disbanded after the 1986–1987 season and the Western International Hockey League folded at the conclusion of the 1987–1988 season. This decline mirrored the broader decline in senior men’s hockey across Canada as teams and leagues began to fold.⁶⁴

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the specific experiences and perspectives of different stakeholders related to the Trail Smoke Eaters hockey club from the late 1950s through the last world title and the period of decline during the 1960s, ’70s, and ’80s. These experiences provide insight into winning again, as it became the driving force behind the company’s support of the team, as well as the decline of the program. The decline of senior men’s hockey in Trail was the result of the end of the

world championship era, the increased influence of the union, and the general decline in senior men's hockey in Canada. How these circumstances related to or contributed to social circumstances of the times, including the rise of the Soviet Union suggests the relationship between the team, company, and community had changed by the mid 1960s.

The examination of CM&S, their post-war involvement with and their direct impact on the success of the Trail Smoke Eaters through their recruitment of players, demonstrates that the 1961 success was more than simply a team achievement. The company understood that they could leverage a winning sports team to help promote the town, and in turn reinforce the hegemonic relationship that ensured their position of power and influence in Trail. Although there is no evidence, based on the players speaking retrospectively, the narratives attempt to highlight that the team was comprised of local players, and tie them to the community in a way that discounted the company's role in forming and sustaining the team after the Second World War. The 1961 World Championship team becomes mythologized in part due to Cameron's historical account of the team. It may have been the intent of the coach to recruit local players, but as noted above, the majority of players were not born in Trail and did not play the majority of their hockey careers in the community. Furthermore, when this 'local' team failed to win the Allan Cup in 1960, they were forced to strengthen their team with recruited, non-local players to be competitive at the 1961 World Championship. However, what the players do not recognize is that there was no need to justify their success by creating the myth of the local team. By the late 1950s, and with the growing dominance of the Soviet team, the circumstances of their victory were very different than that which faced the 1939 champions.

Notes

¹ The population of Trail grew from 7573 in 1931 to 9392 in 1941, and 11430 in 1951. Service BC. “British Columbia Municipal Census Populations (1921–2011).” Accessed April 12, 2015.

www.bestats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/MunicipalPopulations.aspx. After the Second World War, citizens had more money and time for sport and government involvement in sport and physical recreation had increased. See Colin D. Howell, *Blood, Sweat and Cheers: Sport and the Making of Modern Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 134–137.

² This myth serves the purpose of making the investment by the company and the city in the team worthwhile. Furthermore, it reinforces the hegemonic relationship whereby the status quo may have been out of order by the bringing in of non-local players, thus reincorporating and reigning in of the oppositional.

³ James M. Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey (1961)* (Trail: Noremac, 1990).

⁴ Richard Gruneau and David Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada: Sport, Identities and Cultural Politics* (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1993), 258–262.

⁵ See James L. Stokesbury, *A Short History of the Korean War* (New York: W. Morrow, 1988); William Stueck, *The Korean War: an International History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995); Scott Snyder and Joyce Lee, “The Impact of the Korean War on the Political-Economic System of North Korea,” *International Journal of Korea Studies*, 14 (2), (2010): 161–182.

⁶ Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 206.

⁷ The 1960 Allan Cup games were hosted by the Smoke Eaters at the Cominco Arena. The Chatham Maroons defeated the Smoke Eaters to win the Allan Cup and were offered the chance to head overseas to compete for the World Championship. The Maroons were forced to decline the invitation due to financial tribulations. Losing the Allan Cup in front of their hometown perhaps provided the Smoke Eaters with additional drive to accept the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association’s (CAHA) invitation to compete for the 1961 World Championship. The Maroons also defeated the Smoke Eaters with Trail-born goalie Seth Martin, further demonstrating that players were recruited to play senior men’s hockey throughout Canada. See Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, 5–7 and Murray Greig, *Trail on Ice: A century of hockey in the Home of Champions* (Canada: Trail City Archives (TCA), 1999), 80–82.

⁸ Canada won an Olympic gold medal in 1952 and not again until 2002. International Ice Hockey Federation. “Olympic Ice Hockey Tournaments, Men.” Accessed April 15, 2015.
<http://www.iihf.com/fi/iihf-home/history/all-medallists/olympics/men/>

⁹ Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, 5–7 and Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 80–82.

¹⁰ The Trail Smoke Eaters defeated the Soviet team on 12 March 1961 by a score of 5–1 in front of a crowd of over 17,000 at the Ice Palace in Geneva, Switzerland. Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 89–91. Trail’s goals were scored by Smith, McLeod, Jones (two goals), and Lenardon. Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, 118.

¹¹ The Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA) was the national governing body that oversaw the sport of hockey between 1914 and 1994, particularly Olympic and international teams.

¹² Cameron only briefly addresses Trail losing the Allan Cup to the Chatham Maroons and states, “They had a strong, polished team. They won four games and tied one to take the Allan Cup.” Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, 5.

¹³ CM&S underwent great expansion during this period. In 1906, the company was restructured to include a hydroelectric company, three mines, and the smelter in Trail. CM&S purchased an additional mine in 1911 and in 1916 began producing zinc. By 1923, the company was using profit to fund intensive research and a new way of refining lead and zinc was implemented. In 1931, CM&S expanded once again to begin producing fertilizer. See David Michael Roth, “A Union on the Hill: The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers and the Organization of Trail Smelter and Chemical Workers 1938–1945” (MA thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1991), 12–15.

¹⁴ TCA, Trail District Recreation Projects Society (TDRPS) Fonds, Accession 86–1, ‘To The Citizens of Trail’ public address from R. W. Diamond on opening night of the Cominco Arena, Trail Senior Hockey Club, Smoke Eater Souvenir Booklet Commemorating the Opening of the Cominco Arena, November 29, 1949.

¹⁵ John Paolone, documentary footage interview by Darryl Taylor, TCA, 2007.

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- ¹⁶ Dave Rusnell, documentary footage interview by Darryl Taylor, TCA, 2007.
- ¹⁷ John Paolone.
- ¹⁸ See, for example, Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, "Industrial Recreation, the Second World War, and the Revival of Welfare Capitalism, 1934–1960," *The Business History Review*, 60 (2) (1986), 232–257 and Gerald R. Gems, "Welfare Capitalism and Blue-Collar Sport: The legacy of labour unrest," *Rethinking History* 5 (1) (2001), 43–58.
- ¹⁹ The development of Local 480 at CM&S in Trail is well documented. See David Michael Roth, "A Union on the Hill: The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers and the Organization of Trail Smelter and Chemical Workers 1938–1945" (MA thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1991). The first agreement between Local 480 and CM&S was signed in 1945, after seven years of organizational attempts.
- ²⁰ Bill Boyd, *Hockey Towns: Stories of Small Town Hockey in Canada* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1998), 62-70.
- ²¹ For the purposes of this examination of the Trail Smoke Eaters and the City of Trail, a local player is defined as an individual from the Kootenay region of British Columbia with strong ties to the Trail area, and had been playing for the team in the mid- to late 1950s.
- ²² Ralph Perry was a vice-president and general manager at CM&S during the late 1950s through early 1960s.
- ²³ Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, 9.
- ²⁴ These amateur teams relied heavily on financial support from sponsors. See Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 264, and Jay Scherer, Gregory H. Duquette, and Daniel S. Mason, "The Cold War and the (re)articulation of Canadian national identity," in *East plays West: Sport and the Cold War*, eds. Stephen Wagg and David L. Andrews. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 168–172.
- ²⁵ Norm Lenardon, documentary footage interview by Darryl Taylor, TCA, 2007.
- ²⁶ Don Morrow and Kevin B. Wamsley, *Sport in Canada: A History* (Canada: Oxford University Press, 2005), 80.
- ²⁷ "By mid-way through the 1910s, hockey culture began to lose its character as a cultural tie that connected the region's towns and settlements—its people. Why? Clearly, professionalism played a prominent part in this change. Accusations of "importing" and paying hockey players for their performance were not unheard of in the Kootenay region, especially around tournament time. But until the 1910s, these assertions were far too few to upset the prevailing perception that hockey teams were supposed to be local amateurs – products and reflections of the communities they represented." Andrew C. Holman. "Playing in the Neutral Zone: Meanings and Uses of Ice Hockey in the Canada-US Borderlands, 1895–1915." *American Review of Canadian Studies* 34(1) (2004): 49. There is no evidence to suggest that CM&S was paying players as early as the 1910s.
- ²⁸ Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 74.
- ²⁹ Dave Rusnell.
- ³⁰ Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, 10. Rusnell was hired as a research technician.
- ³¹ Jones was born and raised in Trail, but pursued his hockey career outside British Columbia. He arrived back in Trail for the 1960–1961 season.
- ³² Harold Jones, documentary footage interview by Darryl Taylor, TCA, 2007.
- ³³ Dave Rusnell.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Harold Jones.
- ³⁶ Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, 5.
- ³⁷ Ibid., 9.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 13.
- ³⁹ Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 82.
- ⁴⁰ Newspapers and archival data from the 1950s were reviewed and no evidence could be found demonstrating a concern over the origins of the players.
- ⁴¹ Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 82. Note that DeBiasio does not attribute the World title to the local team.
- ⁴² The non-Trail born players performed well at the 1961 World Championship tournament, scoring 29 of the 45 total goals scored.
- ⁴³ Ibid., 78.

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- ⁴⁴ Ibid., 78–79. The Moscow Selects began their tour of Canada in December 1959 and won eight consecutive games in Ontario before beating a senior club from Vernon, B.C. and being defeated by the Smoke Eaters.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 78–80.
- ⁴⁶ Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 248.
- ⁴⁷ John Paolone.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid.
- ⁴⁹ Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, 15–21.
- ⁵⁰ See Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, 6–7 for Harry Smith’s explanation regarding fundraising and the payment of ‘amateur’ players.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., 7.
- ⁵² Community support for the team would not have been unique for the City of Trail and the Smoke Eaters team during this period.
- ⁵³ Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, 8.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid., 9–10.
- ⁵⁶ Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 50.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid., 95.
- ⁵⁸ For additional information regarding the development of Canada’s national men’s hockey team, see Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 259–262.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid., 259. This seems to be a continuation and slowly growing recognition that the world of ‘amateur’ hockey had changed with the growing dominance of the Soviet Union.
- ⁶⁰ For a detailed analysis of the rise and role of unions at CM&S, see Roth, “A Union on the Hill: The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers and the Organization of Trail Smelter and Chemical Workers 1938–1945” (MA thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1991). The decline of CM&S’ recruiting efforts in the mid- to late 1960s was likely due to the inability to win another World Championship. Furthermore, it is likely the organization and growth of Local 480 at CM&S made it far more difficult to give hockey players jobs.
- ⁶¹ John Paolone.
- ⁶² See Cameron, *The Last Time We Won Hockey*, 132–133 and Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 92–102. Both Cameron and Greig only briefly discuss Hockey in Trail after the 1961 World Championship.
- ⁶³ Greig, *Trail on Ice*, 101.
- ⁶⁴ Gruneau and Whitson, *Hockey Night in Canada*, 260.

Chapter 5:

Conclusions

“We’re whipping along and suddenly cars behind start honking. We can’t see a goddamn thing out the rear window because of the frost. We figure they wanted to race so the guy driving steps on it. Christ, they stay right behind us, still honking like hell. It turns out our exhaust pipe had set the sticks on fire. We must have looked like a goddamn rocket flying down that highway streaming flames.”¹

- Cal Hockley

I was born and raised in Trail, and this is the type of story that citizens and former players reminisce about and have become a part of the folklore in the community. My father, uncle, brother, and I are all products of the hockey system in Trail. As such, there is no shortage of orange and black memorabilia in our family home. We know exactly where our championship banners hang in the Trail Memorial Centre, and memories fill our minds as we step through the doors and into the arena. This thesis serves as one version of the Trail Smoke Eaters story and represents my attempt to look beyond the popular understandings of the team’s history and the relationship with Trail and CM&S.

The World Championship teams have been positioned in the community as the pinnacle of success. This examination of senior men’s hockey, specifically the Trail Smoke Eaters in Trail, British Columbia, from the building of the 1939 World Championship team to the demise of senior men’s hockey in the 1960s serves to examine the underlying relations that existed between the community, CM&S, and the team. More specifically, this study aims to answer the central questions upon which this investigation is built: How did the team benefit from the support provided by CM&S and why did the company choose to provide this support to the team and community? Did broader interests (beyond altruism) exist that motivated the company executives’ decisions to support the team and community recreation in general? Through addressing these

questions it has been possible to critically examine the history of the Smoke Eaters and situate the team's place in the history of Trail. In addition, although broadly related to these questions, is how the hockey club's World Championship teams have come to be mythologized. An interrogation of the existing narratives brought upon a clearer understanding of the complex relationships that existed between the company, community, and team. This examination demonstrates the close alignment of interests, such as town and company boosterism, between the community and the company, and how the Smoke Eaters served these interests.

The specific theoretical constructs employed throughout this study serve to provide an analytical framework that is especially useful for providing both context and an understanding of how CM&S and the Trail Smoke Eaters impacted life for residents through the middle decades of the twentieth century. This examination highlights the benefits that the community, company, and team received, and how hegemonic relations, those between dominant company managers and their subordinate workers, perpetuated divisions based on power and privilege. The community and team become part of the larger process and come to serve the interests of the goal of the company. Within this set of relations the Smoke Eaters served to reinforce and normalize these hegemonic relations. During and after World War II, CM&S assumed a paternalistic role in the city of Trail and, as a result, had a critical influence on the community and team through the 1940s, '50s, and early '60s. Analyzing the relationships between the city, company, and team provides a means to understand how sport, including hockey, provides a window to examine the complexity of these relationships.

In the case of the Smoke Eaters and Trail, CM&S owners and their representatives possessed economic, political, and social power. These men, through their positions in the company, maintained a certain degree of control over their worker's lives. Given that the company owners were also residents of the community and avid sport and recreation enthusiasts, they believed it was a responsibility to give back to the community and provide a lasting legacy through the team's championships and facilities. The case of Trail was not unique, as through the early decades of the twentieth century companies in Canada and the United States had recognized the benefits of providing company-sponsored recreation and social and sporting infrastructure. Gerald R. Gems investigated the company town of Pullman, located close to Chicago, Illinois, and found George Pullman, the inventor of the Pullman sleeping car, promoted company-sponsored recreation facilities and sporting opportunities. Gems argues the intent of providing workers with recreation opportunities served to maintain hegemonic stability and increase employee productivity.² This form of company support is directly tied to the notion of town boosterism, as a winning sports team meant a winning company and community.

After the victory in 1939, CM&S realized an opportunity existed to use the Trail Smoke Eaters as a site to reinforce and normalize hegemonic relations. The 1939 World Championship team was a community team and largely predates the formal involvement of CM&S. Players arrived in Trail primarily seeking the stability of steady work and were not directly recruited to the team by the company like many players in the 1950s and 1960s. Furthermore, the 1939 victory essentially caused CM&S to recognize the potential for company-sponsored sport and thus infrastructure such as the Cominco Arena came to fruition. The managers at CM&S were residents of the community too and

undoubtedly recognized the benefits of offering sport and recreation opportunities to the citizens of Trail, who were nearly all employed by the company. In 1947, CM&S executive R. W. Diamond suggested the company “was prepared to give \$125,000 on a dollar-for-dollar basis on other funds raised to help provide recreational and cultural facilities for the city.”³ As Nancy Bouchier suggests, the dominant group in the hegemonic dynamic is able to strengthen their position as successful sports teams demonstrated the town’s merit.⁴ It is clear in the case of Trail and the Smoke Eaters that a successful senior men’s hockey club served the interests of the community and company.

The 1939 World Championship Smoke Eaters were a community team and the 1961 victors could be labeled as a company team. The circumstances surrounding both victories are very different as company support increased, the world of amateur hockey was changing, the rise of the Soviet Union hockey program, and the general societal transformations that occurred after the Second World War. CM&S had no formal involvement prior to the 1939 victory and players came to Trail for steady employment. Throughout the 1950s senior amateur hockey underwent changes that eventually led to the creation of the national team. The Soviet Union started to become a major competitor and began dominating international hockey. The Smoke Eaters, having lost the 1960 Allan Cup with their ‘local’ team, were not invited to compete at the World Championship until the Chatham Maroons declined the invitation. Even then, the Smoke Eaters club was forced to strengthen their team in order to be competitive on the international stage.

In the case of Trail and the Smoke Eaters, it appears the myth of a ‘local’ 1961 team emerges out of James Cameron’s narrative and is furthered by Murray Grieg’s

interpretation of Cameron's work. Furthermore, the myth does not materialize out of issues surrounding unionization or environmental concerns, and CM&S used their support of the team to assuage these concerns. It is true that the Smoke Eaters club was relatively unsuccessful (with success being equated to national and international honours) throughout the 1950s. It must be noted that this 'local' team failed to capture the 1960 Allan Cup. They were given the chance to represent Canada only after the Allan Cup champions declined the invitation and they were forced to strengthen their roster with non-local players. It makes sense for local authors writing narratives to try and equate the two World Championship victories as it simplifies from the real understanding of what happened in 1960 and 1961 and provides an easy way to equate 1939 with 1961, despite the significant change in the world of international hockey between these two events.

The myth of the 'local' 1939 and 1961 World Championship Trail Smoke Eaters allows us to understand some of CM&S' motivations behind their decisions to support the team. The myths serve to more than simply equate the championships. The myths provide those living in Trail today with the ability to construct an easily understandable history that is needed to address the complexity of sport, hockey, and life in their community's past. Respectfully, there is no doubt the city of Trail and the Trail Smoke Eaters were and continue to be a company town and a company team.

Notes

¹ Bill Boyd, *Hockey Towns: Stories of Small Town Hockey in Canada* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1998), 70.

² Gerald R. Gems, "Welfare Capitalism and Blue-Collar Sport: The legacy of labour unrest," *Rethinking History* 5 (1) (2001), 43-58.

³ "Diamond Tells Legionnaires Of Company Contributions To Welfare of the City," *Trail Daily Times*, November 1947, 2.

⁴ Nancy Bouchier, "Idealized middle-class sport for a young nation: Lacrosse in nineteenth-century Ontario towns, 1871-1891," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 29 (2) (1994), 89-110.

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1939 Trail Smoke Eaters after winning the final game in the World Championship in Switzerland [image 2F10676]

1961 Smoke Eaters [image 2F228]

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