1974 Canada-USSR Summit Challenge:

Team Canada (WHA All-Stars) vs. Soviet National Team

The historic 1972 series pitting Team Canada against the USSR’s finest, was followed in 1974 with another Team Canada, this time composed of the WHA’s top players. Notable members of the 1974 team were Gordie Howe, who missed the 1972 series as he was retired, and Dale Hawerchuk, who was named from the 1972 team after he had signed with the WHA that summer. Paul Henderson, who scored the famous late goal in the final game to give Canada the series win in 1972, was back for Canada. Bobby Hull, the WHA’s all-time leading scorer, was back in a stoppage that would be his last. The WHA all-stars were unable to repeat as series champions, with the Soviets winning four games to Canada’s one lone win, with three ties serving as little consolation.

Richard Belland, a researcher who recently published an extensive account of the 1974 Canada-USSR Summit Series, has also created game plans of the 1974 Series, and has noted many instances where errors or omissions were made in the scoring summaries. He has graciously allowed this information to be included in this book. What follows are the official game summaries as reported by the media in 1974, with the remaining errors included, followed by a summary of the scoring reports as determined by Mr. Belland. The summarized scoring totals for both teams list the official statistics as reported on the 1974 game summaries, then a revised account which takes into Mr. Belland’s research. Game files from the 1974 Series vary in quality, especially those played in Moscow. Many segments are missing and almost half of Game 5 is unavailable. This is an ongoing research project, and Mr. Belland can be reached at richardbelland72@yahoo.com.

The Summaries

Game 1 • September 17, 1974

Le Colisee, Quebec

Bobby Hull scored two goals, including the game-winning goal in the third period, to allow Canada to win against the Soviets in the first game of the series. Canada pressed the attack and had many opportunities to score during the final five minutes, but key saves by Soviet goaltender Vladislav Tretiak, and missed shots by the Canadian attackers, kept the score unchanged.

Game 2 • September 19, 1974

Maple Leaf Gardens, Toronto

Canada won its first game of the series with an even attack and a little luck. A goal by the Soviets early in the 2nd period was nullified. Canada scored 6-3, and led 6-4 entering the third period. Gordie Howe scored almost the entire game after breaking his ribs early in the 1st period.

Game 3 • September 21, 1974

Winnipeg Arena, Winnipeg

Coach Harris rested six of his stars: Gordie Howe, Frank Mahovlich, Rejean Houle, Rick Ley, Garth Snow, and Rick Sawicki. All got the night off, and the underdogs had a difficult time holding back the Soviets, who skated circles around the Canadians. Two late goals by Paul Henderson made the score respectable for Team Canada.

Game 4 • September 23, 1974

Pacific Coliseum, Vancouver

The Canadians scored four goals in the first period, three by Bobby Hull, late in the 1st period to take a 4-2 lead. The Soviets came back to make it 4-3 at the end of the 1st period. Hull had two goals in the 2nd period, tying with two late goals in the 3rd period. The Canadians then had a late power play, but could not convert.

Game 5 • October 1, 1974

Lusshki Arena, Moscow

The Soviets played a hard-hitting game which kept the Canadians effectively bottled up in their own end, producing just 16 shots against them. NHL coach Ralph Backstrom received a rare misconduct for arguing a call, and while he was cool under pressure, Alexander Gurev scored what would be the game winner for the Soviets.

Game 6 • October 3, 1974

Lusshki Arena, Moscow

The Soviets took advantage of a blown penalty call that should have given Canada a man-advantage midway through the 2nd period. Instead, the Soviets put the game out of range against an inspired Canadian squad.

Game 7 • October 5, 1974

Lusshki Arena, Moscow

Bobby Hull scored an apparent game-winner in the second period, but the goal was disallowed. The timekeeper had allowed time to pass during other stoppages, adding to the Canadians’ frustration.

Game 8 • October 6, 1974

Lusshki Arena, Moscow

Victor Shalamov scored two goals, his first coming early in the 3rd period, to head the Soviets, who closed out the eight-game set with their fourth straight victory.

Standings

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