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## **Interorganizational Power: A Case Study of the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association's Involvement in the 1936 Winter Olympics**

In Power: A Case Study of the Ontario Hockey Association, 1890-1936, Alan Metcalfe suggests that Canadian amateur sport governing bodies formed a network that effectively controlled amateur sports in early twentieth century. Being one of the most popular winter sports, ice hockey, represented by the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA), was one of the sports that had tremendous influence in the Canadian sporting power structure. While the CAHA's dominance was by no means universal in the hockey world, it did have a firm hold on a large number of constituents within organized amateur hockey in Canada. The CAHA hegemony, however, faced serious challenges in the 1930s. Internal dissension among member associations and external threats from various international amateur and professional governing bodies culminated into a fiasco for the Canadian hockey team at the 1936 Olympic Winter Games. Undefeated in previous Olympic tournaments, the Canadians had to settle for second place after Great Britain and elicited much public criticism regarding the results and the conduct of the Canadian contingent. More importantly, this loss forced the CAHA to examine its relationship with other hockey and amateur sport governing bodies and ultimately led to a re-orientation of the power structure in hockey. After 1936, the CAHA began to depart from a dogmatic view to a more accommodating stance in regard to amateurism. This new approach to organizing amateur hockey opened the way for the dominant professional league, the National Hockey League (NHL), to extend and expand its influence over amateur hockey and, in time, relegated the CAHA as a developmental league to the professionals.

Based on newspaper and archival sources, this paper seeks to address the process of organizational change in relations to the issue of organizational power. It investigates the interplay of power politics among organizations of shared interests and how power politics, driven by agendas of these different organizations, eventually promoted one organization's agenda over the rest.

There were no guarantees how long the newly promoted agenda would dominate the policies of the various organizations. As the context under which the organizations existed changed, organizational goals changed as well and the process of power politics began anew. This paper helps our understanding of how one organization, the NHL, came to be dominant power in setting agendas.

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