

“How Swede It Is”:

Börje Salming and the Migration of Swedish Ice Hockey Players to the NHL, 1957–2012¹

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It could be argued that every European player collecting a salary in the NHL today owes a share to Börje Salming. Way back in 1973, he opened the doors to North American professional hockey for his fellow countrymen. At that time, after the first Summit Series, Canadians and Americans had come to respect the disciples of the Soviet hockey school, but the Scandinavian players were nicknamed ‘Swedish chickens.’ The joke was based on Sweden’s national colors, but no doubt it had a double meaning. Börje Salming helped eradicate that stereotype.²

The abovementioned quotation is taken from the website of the Hockey Hall of Fame. The excerpt is an example of the conventional historical narrative of Börje Salming, and the impact of his illustrious 17-year NHL-career on the ensuing migration of Swedish ice hockey players to Canada and the United States. It is a line of reasoning where the former Toronto Maple Leaf and Team Sweden great is thought to have changed the course of history by himself, through a combination of “European flair” and “North American toughness”.³

This article considers Salming’s status as a trailblazer for Scandinavian NHL players in relation to his performance on the ice and is situated in the context of the profound social and economic reshaping of Swedish society at the turn of the millennium.⁴ Drawing on a wide range of archival material and media sources, including club records, newspapers, autobiographical accounts, popular ice hockey books, and TV-clippings, I argue that Salming’s stellar NHL-career paved the way for generations of his countrymen, and helped dispel the North American myth that Scandinavian players were soft and fragile. At the same time, Salming helped transform Swedish national identity and shaped presumptions of

hegemonic masculinity associated with ice hockey. Ultimately, the aim here is to further the understanding of the globalization of the game in general and the effects of the formation of NHL's transnational labour market in particular.

The first section of the article sets the foundations for the subsequent analysis, outlining in some detail three interrelated concepts: "*folkhemmet*", "*the Swedish model*" and "*sossehockey*". Against this background, the following sections consider Salming's career, from the early years to his professional life since retiring from the NHL and in light of Swedish perceptions of North American professional ice hockey at a whole. The article ends with a concluding remark which draws together the main issues raised in the paper.

Folkhemmet, The Swedish Model and Sossehockey

The commonplace history of 20th century Sweden is deeply connected to the concept of "*folkhemmet*" ("the People's Home"). Although, the origin of the term has been subject of considerable debate, the word itself is commonly associated with the modern, rational and egalitarian welfare state championed by the Swedish Social Democratic Party, the dominating political force in the country from 1932–1976. In the course of just a few decades, Sweden was transformed from a poor and traditional agrarian society on the social and political periphery of Western-Europe, to a hyper-modern industrial nation, widely considered as one of the world's leading welfare states.⁵

It must be noted, however, that the emergence of the modern Swedish welfare state cannot be fully explained in terms of the successful socio-economic campaigning of the social democratic movement. Commentators often make reference to two historical events: the so-called "cow-trading" compromise in the Parliament between the Social Democrats and the Peasant Party in 1933; and the Saltsjöbaden-agreement (1938) in which the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO), controlling a majority of the Swedish workers, agreed on a labour

truce with the mighty Swedish Employers Association (SAF). Most analysts would agree that these events not only paved the way for social and economic development in Sweden, but helped establish a spirit of consensus, cooperation, and decorum that became central ingredients of the Swedish national identity as well.⁶

Closely related to the concept of “folkhemmet” is the widely-used expression “*the Swedish model*”. This is a customary but seldom defined term which draws on the values at the heart of the political culture of “folkhemmet”: i.e. “moderation”, “public-spiritness”, “equality”, “cooperation”, “consensus”, and “a blending of public and private initiatives.” It has often been used as a socio-political catchphrase, referring to the idea of Swedish labour and social democratic policies as a middle way between capitalism and socialism. According to some commentators this political culture has deep historical roots. Yet, most analysts would agree that the collaborative framework began to germinate in the 1930s with the Social Democratic Party’s rise to power, and that it flourished thereafter through a series of compromises between the state, representatives of the commercial sector, and the labour movement, including among other things the “cow-trading” compromise and the Saltsjöbaden-agreement.⁷

The values of the tri-partite Swedish model also saturate the Swedish sports movement. In fact, traits such as “discipline”, “solidarity” and “compromise-propensity” have for decades been considered as cornerstones of the Swedish sports movement and its achievements both on the national and the international level. Success on the playing field for Swedish athletes has simultaneously worked to validate the Swedish model, as demonstrated by the history of ice hockey in Sweden.⁸

Ice hockey was formally introduced in Sweden in 1920. After a slow start, when the new sport spread gradually over the country from its original successes in Stockholm, public

interest in the game exploded in the postwar-era. An important reason for this was that during the cold war Team Sweden – or Tre Kronor (“Three Crowns”) as it is popularly known – came to function as a barometer of how the “Swedish model” compared to both the hockey and socio-political systems employed by the superpowers of the world. Since the Swedish playing style drew heavily on the values of the political culture of “folkhemmet”, with its catchword phrases such as “egalitarianism”, “amity”, and “doing everything in moderation”, Swedish hockey was a representation of Sweden itself in microcosm.⁹

This particular brand of ice hockey has often been dubbed “sossehockey” (an abbreviation for “social democratic ice hockey”). The concept itself is closely tied to but not purposely devised by the legendary Brynäs IF and Tre Kronor-coach Tommy Sandlin (1944–2006). Sandlin’s leadership-philosophy emphasized that “no team-member is more vital than the others, and no one is less significant than the rest of the team”, and that “real success is a combination of shared goals on the ice and personal development in life in general”.¹⁰ For a number of years, the consummate Swedish ice hockey player was thought to be a disciplined and adaptable two-way-player with great skating and puck-handling skills. The ideal player preferred to blend into the group, rather than “flying solo” or being the center of attention. Since playing the game was and still is primarily regarded as a manly activity, and because most of the players have been young men, the prototypical Swedish player defined “appropriate” masculinity as it was understood at the time.¹¹

In the pages that follow we address an important question. How did Börje Salming influence traditional understandings of Swedish hockey and contemporary assumptions of hegemonic masculinity? To answer these questions it is important to outline Salming’s origins and the development of his hockey career over time.

The early years

Börje Salming was born on April 17 1951 in the village of Salmi, located outside the small mining-town of Kiruna in northern Sweden. His mother, Karin, was Swedish, while his father, Erland, was a member of the Sami population, the indigenous people sometimes called “Lapps” inhabiting the Arctic area of present day Sweden, Norway and Finland, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia. Though not poor, the Salmings did not lead a life of abundance. To support his family, Erland had to work long hours in the dangerous heavy mining-industry. According to Börje, his father loathed going underground, but since there were few job options for blue collar-workers in Kiruna in the 1950s he was left with no other choice. The tragedy for the Salmings must have been all that greater, therefore, when Erland was killed in a mining-accident in 1956, leaving Karin, a then 29-year-old-housewife and mother of two, in a dire economic predicament.¹²

In order to care for herself and her two children, Börje and his four-year-older brother Stig, Karin took a job as a waitress, relying on her parents to help look after their grandsons. In his memoirs, Börje speaks passionately of the joy he felt while spending time at his paternal grandfather’s place in Salmi hunting and fishing in the outdoors. In addition, he attributes his toughness as an ice hockey player to his Sami heritage and the adversity he faced in the wilderness growing up.¹³

Apart from the loss of his father, Börje admits to having lived a carefree life well into adolescence. He seems not to have paid much attention to the lack of means of his parents, or to his schoolwork for that matter. Instead, Börje and his brother were known as notorious pranksters, spending most of their time doing mischief and playing sports.¹⁴ He enjoyed playing all kind of sports (soccer, wrestling, and handball, to name a few). In his early teens ice hockey became the preferred sport of choice. In *Blod, svett och hockey*, the first of two

Swedish autobiographies of Salming published to date, Börje takes the reader on a walk along memory lane:

I wouldn't say I was the greatest talent, but my passion for the game was unrelenting. In those days, I would have played ice hockey 24/7 if possible. Practicing was almost as fun as playing games.¹⁵

Apparently, Karin did not mind her two sons spending most of their time practicing and playing ice hockey. Börje has stated that “her only demand” was that they should never work in the mines. After leaving school in his late teens, however, Börje had to get a job working for the local mining company, LKAB. The position was not that of a miner, but as a welder above ground. He did not work for long, only for the first of the three months he was employed by LKAB since his union was on strike for the rest of the time.¹⁶

It would seem that Börje did not exert himself while at work, either. Although the company often let him go home early in order to play ice hockey for the local second tier men's team Kiruna AIF (which he made as a 17-year old), he has admitted to sneaking off during his workday to have a nap behind a box in the workshop every now and then. When in the spring of 1970 Börje was asked to join the reigning Swedish champions Brynäs IF from Gavle, located in the middle of Sweden some 10 000 kilometers from his hometown, he quickly accepted the offer, allegedly sweetened with a team-jacket and a pair of brand new playboy shoes free of charge.¹⁷ He had thus made it as an elite ice hockey player and out of the mining industry in accordance with his mother's wishes!

A first taste of national glory

According to Swedish ice hockey lore, Brynäs IF was initially less interested in signing Börje than his Kiruna AIF-teammate Per-Olof Uusitalo who was heralded as the better player of the two up-and-coming Swedish defensemen. However, brother Stig, who had joined Brynäs a few years earlier, is believed to have put in a good word for Börje, persuading the

club to recruit his sibling rather than Uusitalo.¹⁸ Although it is hard to establish what actually happened behind the scenes, it is interesting to note that Börje was not considered a natural choice when picking the most promising young defender in Sweden. It did not take long for him to show everyone that Brynäs had found a gem.¹⁹

Börje had a great first season in Brynäs making the team right away as a 19-year old rookie, scoring 2 goals and adding 8 assists in 27 games en route to the Swedish championship. In the next couple of years Börje went from strength to strength, being named first star in 27 of the 54 games he dressed for the club, winning the Swedish Championship each year, and putting up a total of 6 goals, 9 assists, and 74 penalty minutes.²⁰ In addition, Börje's strong performance on the Brynäs' blueline earned him a spot on the Swedish national team. He made his Tre Kronor-debut on the same night as his brother in a friendly game against Czechoslovakia on September 11 1971. Before long he was a mainstay for Team Sweden, playing in the World Championships in 1972 (Prague) and 1973 (Moscow), collecting bronze and silver medals respectively, and being named to the All-Star Team in 1973.²¹

Hand in hand with Börje's on ice success came fame. Elevated to national sporting hero, he quickly became one of the biggest Swedish ice hockey stars of the time. Despite his success, however, Börje was not considered a prototypical Swedish role model – quite the opposite in fact. As noted earlier, the consummate athlete in postwar-era Sweden was expected to embody the ideals of the Swedish model, to be a modest and well-ordered individual with a team-first attitude. Although considered a shy person with an egalitarian mindset, Börje also had a reputation of being a light-hearted slacker who could not be bothered with getting a proper education or taking up a civil career. He was thought to spend most of his time outside of hockey going to the movies and hanging out in bars. Brynäs coach

Tommy Sandlin was even said to worry that Börje's notorious partying was going to ruin his career.²²

Börje's daring playing style also got him in trouble on more than one occasion.

Opposing teams and their fans saw him as a disdainful and dangerous player. Salming talks about this in the introduction of his autobiography, *Blod, svett och hockey*:

'The Salmings are mad. They fight and scare the living daylight out of everybody on the ice rink'. That is probably how my brother and I were known by opposing teams and their fans, when playing together in Brynäs in the beginning of the 70s. And truth be told, we were not God's best children. We were allergic to taunts and bullying, something that presumably dated back to our formative years in the rugged Kiruna. We were always there for each other, especially Stig for me. Since Brynäs was a much better team than most other Swedish ice hockey clubs at the time (pretty much half of our roster played regularly for Tre Kronor) dirty tricks and thrash talk was part of our opponent's tactics to get us off balance. A good example of this is the time we needed police escort to leave the arena in Timrå, in 1973. Timrå iced a big, heavy and tough team, and had a rowdy home crowd that most definitely did not like the Salmings'. As soon as I touched the puck, the home supporters booed me. We were halfway into the third period when the customary curse words among the players on the ice shifted to minor altercations before ending up in a big brawl....After a stoppage of the game, I skated by Timrå's bench when their gigantic forward Finn Lundström cursed me: 'Cool down, fucking Salming!' I turned around, and knocked him off his feet with my right fist. I was of course expelled from the game. On my way to the locker-room, situated in a shed outside of the arena, I quickly realized there was no time to lose. There were close to 8 000 spectators at the game, and an angry mob of Timrå-supporters who wanted a piece of me followed in my footsteps..., so I ran to the shed and slammed the door in their face.... After the game, the police formed a chain between the shed and our team bus, while the supporter's profanity made it clear to us we were not particularly welcome back [to their town] anymore. It was scary.²³

Borje's Saami heritage also made him a target of frequent abuse, as he often had to endure racial slurs such as "Lappjävel" that were thrown his way.²⁴

At the beginning of the 1970s Börje Salming was not considered a male role model or a respected incarnation of the Swedish national identity. Rather he was depicted as somehow un-Swedish. As then Tre Kronor assistant coach, Sudbury-native and former player Desmond "Des" Moroney matter-of-factly stated: "Salming is more Canadian than the Canadians"

themselves”, (i.e. tougher and more fearless).²⁵ Ironically, it was Borje’s “un-Swedish” demeanor and so-called “North American trait” that would open the door for him to an NHL career. The discussion of Borje’s life-style and on-ice deportment reflected at the same time a decades long debate about the different orientation of European and North American hockey.

The historical development of international ice hockey: European and North American perspectives

The organizational history of European ice hockey began in the early 20th century with the formation of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) in Paris in April 1908. Almost two years later, in January 1910, the IIHF staged the inaugural European Championship in ice hockey in Les Avants, Switzerland. During World War I the game lay fallow in Europe, until the Olympic Games in Antwerp in 1920 – where an ice hockey tournament was included for the first time – helped breathe new life into the sport. The tournament saw Sweden join the growing number of aspiring ice hockey nations. The participation of Team Canada and Team USA was the real difference-maker. Europeans were greatly impressed with their opponents’ athletic prowess.²⁶

For several decades North American college and senior men’s amateur teams more or less ruled supreme at the international ice hockey championships. In fact, up until the late 1940s the North American game was so far superior, that even second- and third-rate Canadian and American amateur clubs could often outplay the strongest European national-squads. North American players of the time were generally known for their crowd-pleasing offense and their skating and stick-handling elegance.²⁷

The successful entrance of the Soviet Union onto the international ice hockey scene in 1954, beating the Canadian East York Lyndhursts’ by a whopping 7–2 score on their way to their first World Championship, marked the beginning of a new era in the game. Team USSR went on to dominate international competition for the next four decades, earning Gold medal

honours in 18 World Championships and 5 Olympic games between 1954 and 1989. The Soviets' prowess, together with the steady improvement of the Czechs, the Swedes, and the Finns, meant that the college and amateur teams that Canada and the US sent to international tournaments could no longer count on placing high in the standings.²⁸

The shifting power-balance in international ice hockey was hard to swallow for a lot of North Americans. Canadian and American ice hockey representatives soon began to accuse the Soviets of cheating: the state-sponsored USSR-players were not amateurs, but "shamateurs" or closet professionals, they maintained. In addition, Canadian officials set out to persuade the IIHF to allow professionals to participate in the World Championships, even withdrawing from international ice hockey for a few years to protest IIHF president John Francis "Bunny" Ahearne's opposition to the proposal. On the ice, the frustration among North American players manifested itself in a growing reliance on force and intimidation tactics to overcome their opponents in international tournaments.²⁹

In this context, the general perception of the North American game was transformed in European ice hockey circles. Canadian and American players went from being "good sports" to "crazy villains" and "dangerous goons".³⁰ On the other side of the ledger, there was a growing appreciation for European players in North American professional ice hockey circles. Sport sociologist Hart Cantelon writes:

As early as 1947 the Boston Bruins had taken the then unprecedented step of placing Czechoslovakian player Jaroslav Drobny on the team's negotiation list. Perhaps it was more a publicity stunt than a serious attempt to sign the talented athlete, for Drobny was more committed to tennis than hockey (he later won at Wimbledon), and he never left his homeland to try out with the Bruins. The first European to try to earn a position in the NHL was Sweden's Sven 'Tumba' Johansson, who attended the Boston Bruins training camp in 1957. As a Canadian youngster growing up at that time, I recall listening to radio broadcasts and reading articles that ridiculed the Swedish player for his lack of fortitude (perhaps the birth of the 'Chicken Swede' insult). Johansson's most visible sin was that, like most European trained players, he wore a helmet for safety purposes. Nowadays, Canadian players, too, have grown up wearing helmets; but in 1957 Charlie Burns was one of the few NHL players to do so, and Johansson was a

marked man. Despite his considerable size and talent, he was quite literally run out of the NHL. Another Swedish player, Ulf Sterner, would be released by the New York Rangers several years later (1964–65) because the club had reservations about his ability to stand up to the physical punishment of NHL hockey. Countryman Thommie Bergman, playing for Detroit in 1972–73, began to dispel the myth about Swedish fragility, and Bergman became the first European to play a complete NHL season. By the end of the 1970s, the impact of talented European players in the WHA made them an attractive commodity for most NHL owners and – with exception of a few notable dinosaurs the animosity of Canadians towards European players has eased over time.³¹

Most Swedish players up until the beginning of the 1970s found it almost unthinkable to even dream of playing professionally in North America. For example, in 1970 when the Vancouver Canucks asked then budding Swedish teenage-phenomenon Anders Hedberg (who later starred for the Winnipeg Jets and the New York Rangers) to sign with the organization, Hedberg declined the invitation. Until that moment he had neither contemplated earning a living as an ice hockey player, nor thought about playing in the NHL, and he did not feel mature enough to take such a step.³²

Borje Salming only learned of the NHL teams looking for players in Europe when he became a Tre Kronor-regular:

There was a lot of talk in the beginning of the 70s. Among else there was talk of a [trans-]European professional league, but no player (or anyone else!) knew much of what was true or not. Nor did we know all that much about the NHL for that matter, goons and excessive fighting were pretty much what we had heard about. Going abroad to play professionally was nothing we as players saw as a real option. One had heard of how it turned out for Ulf Sterner when he crossed the Atlantic. Everything seemed very strange and fishy. Sterner had a reputation of being a real tough-guy in Sweden, but was sent down to the farm-team after five games by the New York Rangers. Apparently, Europeans were to be chased away, frightened.³³

Salming was not one to be scared easily by North American intimidation tactics, however. Quite the opposite in fact! Indeed, it was Salming's own thuggish behaviour that made him stand out as bona-fide NHL-prospect in the first place. At least that is what he still believes.

During the Christmas-break in the 1972-1973 season Brynäs played the Barrie Flyers senior men's amateur team travelling in Sweden for a series of exhibition games. As the going got tough among the players, tempers flared on the ice. Having had enough of the Flyers' skirmishing and the supposed "lackluster effort" of the referee, Salming "blacked-out and ran over" the ref. He was handed a match penalty and thrown out of the game:

I sauntered alone into the locker room and threw the club into a corner. Madcaps! After me came a man in a striking overcoat with a suit and tie underneath. I had never seen him before. 'Would you like to play for the Toronto Maple Leafs in Canada?' [he asked]. 'Yes...' The man shook my hand and disappeared.³⁴

The man in question was Gerry McNamara, who was travelling with the Barrie Flyers as a scout for the Toronto Maple Leafs. Apparently, McNamara was in Sweden to scout for a goalie and to look at Brynäs-winger Inge Hammarström, but when he saw Salming play "he immediately called his boss in Canada to tell him about another Scandinavian genius."³⁵

The Toronto Maple Leafs subsequently approached Salming and Hammarström during the World Championships in Moscow in the spring of 1973, making it clear the club was sincere in its attempt to sign them. Though delighted by the prospect of wearing the legendary blue-and-white, the two Swedes tried to play it cool in order not to sell themselves too cheaply. The Maple Leafs continued to court Salming and Hammarström throughout the spring, and even brought them to Toronto so they could get acquainted with the organization. The two Swedes finally agreed to terms with the club at the beginning of the summer.³⁶ They had made it to the NHL!

Making it

To say that Börje Salming was an overnight sensation in Toronto is almost an understatement. Initially Salming had wondered whether he would be truly accepted by his team-mates. Having heard of other imports being spurned as foreigners stealing jobs from Canadians,

Salming feared being ostracized by the rest of the team. That didn't happen. He and Hammarström were both accepted right away by their team-mates. The Maple Leafs had a new coach in Red Kelly and a lot of new faces in the line-up. This likely made it easier for the two Swedes to become familiarized with the rest of the squad. They were probably not the only ones that felt a little bit lost and insecure.³⁷

Then again, as Salming has noted, what ultimately mattered was how the newcomers performed on the ice. Both Salming and Hammarström had great camps; the latter was the team's leading scorer in the exhibition games. But Hammarström wore out his welcome in Toronto in a few short seasons. He was labelled a finesse-player who lacked physical toughness. Club owner Harold Ballard once told reporters that he "could go into the corners with half a dozen eggs in his pocket and not break one of them." By contrast, Salming's reputation as a fierce competitor -- anything but a Chicken-Swede -- seems to have been etched in stone in his first NHL-game, the season-opener on home ice against the Buffalo Sabres on October 10 1973.³⁸ Salming was named first star, and the following day the Toronto-papers raved at his well-rounded game and his self-defying use of the body. The renowned sportswriter Jim Proudfoot of the *Toronto Star* was only one of many to sing his praises: "Toronto is up 7-4, it is ten seconds left of the game. Then Salming throws himself to the ice and blocks a shot! Geez, this is the kind of player the Leafs need".³⁹

However, as writer Bruce Meharg has put it:

[t]he most impressive aspect of Salming's first season is that he even made it through in spite of the racist taunts of the most ignorant of hockey fans, like the ones in Philadelphia. At that time the Flyers were in the midst of winning two straight Stanley Cups.... Known throughout the seventies as the Broad Street Bullies, this group clawed and scratched its way to the top being the toughest, meanest and most physically aggressive squad ever assembled in the NHL.... Salming proved his mettle one night in Philadelphia. With taunts of 'Chicken Swede' ringing in his ears, he rushed the puck through the entire Flyers team with total disregard for all the dirty tactics they all used to try and stop him. That was the end of the taunting that night. Over the course of the next few seasons he proved that he was no soft player and he finally earned the respect he deserved.

For six straight seasons, from 1974–75 to 1979–80, Salming was an All-Star Team Selection, five times to the second and in 1976–77 to the first team. That season saw him record career highs of 66 assists and 78 points and he followed that up with four straight seasons of 66 or more points. His best goal production was 1979–80 when he finished one shy of the 20-goal plateau. His career assist total of 620 still stands as the all-time Maple Leaf record, he continues to lead all the Leaf defensemen in career goals and points and is third on their all-time team career points list behind only Darryl Sittler and Dave Keon.... Salming is best remembered for his accurate passing, a very strong wrist shot, his end-to-end-rushes and most of all for his fearless shot-blocking. His athleticism allowed him to perform excellently on both offense and defense and his willingness to act as a human shield and unhesitatingly throw himself in front of a slap shot was incredible.⁴⁰

Although Salming immediately established himself as a force on the Toronto Maple Leafs blue-line, and was soon recognized as a superstar in the NHL, his North American exploits were not all that easy to swallow in Sweden, at least not to begin with. When the first Swedes went abroad to play professionally in North America their Swedish clubs and the Swedish Ice Hockey Association were taken aback. While it was absurd for most Swedish players to even dream of turning professional up until at least the first half of the 1970s, the possibility of anyone actually going to North America was nothing the administrators or the management personnel seemed to have been contemplating. The Swedish ice hockey establishment was thus taken off guard when the first wave of Swedes signed on to play with professional clubs in Canada and the USA.⁴¹ There were mixed emotions. On the one hand, having Swedes playing in the NHL – and later the WHA – could be taken as evidence of the quality of the national ice hockey program. In that sense, the emigration of Swedish players to North American professional ice hockey was understood as something positive, especially as it would motivate others to do their best to become world-class athletes. On the other hand, representatives of the Swedish elite clubs and the Swedish Ice Hockey Association felt duped and abandoned by the players going abroad, maintaining that it drained the national program of talent. This should come as no big surprise. The player movements often meant that elite

clubs, as well as the Tre Kronor coach, were left with the impossible task of replacing an established national team veteran. The situation was perhaps most precarious for Team Sweden, since it drew the national team into highly contentious professionalization debate in the international ice hockey world at the time. The fear of the Swedish Nationals being banned from the Olympic Games – on the grounds of not living up to the IOC’s rigid definition of amateurism – hung ominously over the administrators’ heads.⁴²

What made matters worse, was the general Swedish perception of America at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. As Swedes criticized the Vietnam War, and as the environmental movement gained strength in Europe, the USA was criticized for its bullish foreign policy and its environmentally unfriendly and superficial consumerism. At the same time the economic recession of the 1970s occasioned a growing concern about the well-being of the folkhem-project in Sweden. The egalitarian ideals of the Swedish model seemed to be coming under heavy fire as well.⁴³

Increasingly the bigwig officials in Swedish ice hockey were up in arms about the escalating “proffsflykt” (“escape to professionalism”) to Canada and the USA. The Swedish Ice Hockey Association and the elite clubs thus set out to thwart the emigration of Swedish players, and in turn to fend off the “transatlantic ambitions” of people like Bruce Norris who hoped to launch a European Hockey League. What was at stake, Swedish officials believed, was protecting the national ice hockey program from devolving into “some sort of broiler-farm.”⁴⁴ In facing these challenges the Swedish Ice Hockey Federation began distributing funds – the so-called “landslagspengar” (“National Team-money”) – to elite clubs in order for them to have the means to pay keep their star-players in Sweden. Given the lure of greener pastures in North America, this amounted to paying them to stay at home.⁴⁵

In the early years the first players to sign with NHL and WHA teams were castigated as greedy and self-serving traitors. Ulf Sterner, the first European-trained player to spend a whole season in North American professional ice hockey, was perhaps most scorned by the Swedish ice hockey establishment. When he left to join the New York Rangers, Sterner was derided by the vice president of the Swedish Ice Hockey Association, Rudolf Eklöv, as a diva with delusions of grandeur who risked “having his teeth knock out” by North American hockey hoodlums.⁴⁶

Börje Salming and Inge Hammarström followed in the footsteps of countrymen Sven Tumba Johansson, Ulf Sterner and Thommie Bergman, and as a result had perhaps an easier ride than their predecessors. Salming and Hammarström were nonetheless considered inconsiderate renegades by the Swedish ice hockey establishment. Brynäs actually forbade Salming and Hammarström from using the team locker-room for their summer training in Gävle before leaving for Toronto. Although this might seem like a small matter, it served as a subtle but unambiguous reprimand and evidence of Brynäs’ disenchantment with the two players. The two Swedish Maple Leafs now were *persona-non grata*.⁴⁷

In his memoirs, Börje Salming has written of Brynäs executives having a hard time digesting his and Hammarströms move to go abroad. “[T]he situation was totally new to them, and they were older men who had worked for the club voluntarily all their life”.⁴⁸ Salming has come to be more lenient in his opinion of the Swedish officials with the passage of time. His memoirs downplay the falling-out the two players had with Brynäs after their signing with the Maple Leafs. In fact, when leaving for Toronto, Salming and Hammarström were disgruntled enough to threaten Brynäs with a lawsuit, accusing the club of withholding money they were entitled to – their cut of so-called “landslagspengar” as compensation for playing in the World Championships in 1973. However, the Brynäs management passed the whole thing off as a *faux pas*, referring to Swedish Ice Hockey Associations directives for the

payment of the funds as means of compensation for players on Swedish teams.⁴⁹ It is hardly surprising that Börje Salming eventually took a more understanding position on the whole ordeal, given that he became recognized as being “the King” not only in Toronto but in his native Sweden as well.

The Crowning

In Sweden, the professionalization debate came to a close in 1976. That year the Swedish Ice Hockey Association refrained from having Tre Kronor participate in the Innsbruck Olympics on the grounds that the players in the Swedish Elitserien (“the Elite League”) were not true amateurs. However, few seem to have bought the argument, believing the real reason to be that the administrators found it too costly to have two international tournaments (the Olympic Games and the World Championships) affecting the domestic schedule in the same season and reducing gate receipts.⁵⁰ This seeming hypocrisy effectively put an end to the most ardent criticism of Swedes going to North America to earn a living in the NHL or the WHA. Now even the players on home ice were considered professionals.

The first Canada Cup was staged in September 1976. All things considered, this tournament can be considered a watershed in Swedish ice hockey history, especially with respect to the general appreciation of Swedes playing professionally in North America. Mixing nationalism and pragmatism, even the most fervent opponents of the emigration of Swedish players could suddenly embrace the Swedes in the NHL and the WHA. Everything now boiled down to having the best team possible on the ice when the puck dropped. Ultimately, too, the overwhelming adulation of Börje Salming in Canada during the event made the Swedish ice hockey community feel good about his achievements. As the prominent Swedish sport-journalist Ulf Jansson has pointed out:

This was something we had been awaiting for a long time. For the first time ever the best National teams in the world were about to go head to head in an international tournament. All professional players were allowed to play in the tournament. We had great expectations and they were also met. It truly was a series of well-played, tough and dramatic matches. The most amazing thing – something one will never forget – was the reception Börje Salming got in the Maple Leaf Garden in Toronto. When he was introduced before the game against the USA there was an outbreak of cheers that never seemed to come to an end. The people in the stands stood screaming and clapping their hands for several minutes. One got the impression they would have kept on going for the rest of the night if the speaker had not introduced the next player in the Swedish line-up. The same thing happened in the game against Canada. Börje was more applauded than the Canadian players. Of course, he was mostly embarrassed, but we...got a confirmation of what we had long known: [Börje] was the king of Toronto!⁵¹

To be sure, Börje Salming had been adored as a great player and idolized as one of the biggest sport stars in the country since the early 1970s, but this tournament saw his popularity skyrocket in Sweden. So did the interest in North American professional ice hockey. Having a Swede being proclaimed a superstar in the NHL and being nicknamed “the King” in Toronto, the so-called Mecca of the game, was something that fascinated the Swedish public. For countless Swedish boys and young men, this suggested that they could make it big themselves. For the Swedish ice hockey community at large, Salming’s success served as a validation of the merit of the national athletic program and of the Swedish model.⁵²

While Jansson’s article was published two decades after the event, noting Salming’s discomfort with the standing ovation, and that “we...got a confirmation of what we had long known: [Börje] was the king in Toronto”, it remains a telling example of how the representations of Salming changed after tournament. The many earlier accounts of Salming as a talented but dangerous young athlete in need of discipline soon gave way to warm portrayals of the athlete as a gentle and restrained player and person.⁵³

Most Swedish pundits agreed that Börje Salming was one of the few bright spots on a star-laden but painfully underachieving Tre Kronor in the Canada Cup in 1981. Other Swedish players from the NHL received few accolades. Having a roster stocked with

celebrated NHL stars was of questionable value, many concluded. Most of the players were neither prepared to work as a team, nor willing to give all they had in every situation. The officials at the Swedish Ice Hockey Association were concerned that Swedes abroad were regressing in their athletic development while playing in the NHL. They had “such distinctive special roles in their respective NHL-teams that they [were] no longer able to really play the game. They [were] no longer [Swedish] as ice hockey players, but Americans or Canadians!”⁵⁴ Ironically, while Swedish players in general were criticized for becoming un-Swedish and picking up bad manners in North American ice hockey, Börje Salming was more and more considered as a consummate Swedish role model on the ice. Off ice, however, his reputation as notorious party animal continued to follow him.

In 1985 Salming admitted publicly that he had tried cocaine at a party a couple of years earlier. According to Salming, his speaking out was to clear the air following an article in *Sports Illustrated* on alleged drug-abuse among the Edmonton Oilers. In addition, there had been persistent rumours of him using cocaine, given his chronically sore sinuses. Unfortunately the attempt to put these rumours to rest backfired and Salming suddenly found himself caught up in a rampant media-frenzy because of his “drug problem”. Alarmed by the bad publicity, the NHL subsequently suspended Salming for the entire 1986/1987 season, though he eventually served only eight games before being reinstated and allowed to play again for the Maple Leafs.⁵⁵

Through distressed by the NHL’s attempt to make him a scapegoat, Salming claimed that what he found most troublesome was that the rumours took on a life on their own in Sweden:

I know I was considered for Team Sweden in the World Championships in 1985; and I would have played if being asked. What happened? Well, the coach of the Swedish Nationals, Leif Boork, did not want me on the team because of my purported drug-abuse. But, he never called me up and asked to hear my side of the story or checked the facts....Eventually, it went so far that the rumours of me

being a junkie became a frequent topic of discussion at Swedish coaching-seminars....After having had it, [my brother] called me and asked me straight up: ‘What the hell are you doing?’ He was of course worried and wanted to know what was really going on. And it was obviously hard for him to know what to think, since we did not see each other all that much. It was sad to hear that even my [brother] doubted me, but I do not regret having gone public with what I had done.⁵⁶

When reading Salming’s remarks one must keep in mind that the hullabaloo in Sweden was not caused simply because he admitted to having tried cocaine once at a party. Rather, his confession of drug-abuse seems to have triggered a latent cultural anxiety and fear of Americanization in Sweden, a fear that has waxed and waned for well over a century. Also, with the tragic loss in November 1985 of the Tre Kronor goalkeeper, Pelle Lindbergh, in a car-crash after a drinking bout with his Philadelphia Flyers-teammates, Salming’s story of drug use did nothing to lessen suspicion of the NHL as a source of hedonism and unruliness. On the contrary it reinforced those perceptions!⁵⁷

It is quite easy to imagine the joy Börje Salming must have felt, therefore, when he was named to play for Team Sweden on home ice in the World Championships in Stockholm in 1989. At first, most commentators were flabbergasted that the Tre Kronor coach and former Brynäs bench-boss Tommy Sandlin decided to have his former protégé on the roster. They cited Salming’s advancing age of 38 years as a critical disadvantage and noted that he had not played in a World Championship on a European-sized ice surface since 1973.⁵⁸

Before too long, Salming’s inclusion on the Swedish blue-line would be celebrated as a stroke of genius on Sandlin’s part. Salming showed immediately that he was no spent force, and could still be counted among the elite defenders in the world and as one of the greatest leaders in the game. A number of Salming’s teammates admitted to having grown up idolizing the Toronto Maple Leaf great, even being in awe of playing with him in the tournament. Anders Eldebrink, considered one the best defensemen in Europe in the 1980s,

initially expected Salming to be a “cocky professional”, but changed his mind when meeting him, considering him “one of the best teammates of all time, and perhaps the most humble”.⁵⁹

From the outset Salming had the Swedish ice hockey community eating from his hand. When he first set foot on Swedish soil before the tournament, he announced to the assembled greeting committee at the airport that: “For me, nothing compares to being given the opportunity to play for Sweden”. Having a seasoned NHL player and veteran of 16 successful years in “the toughest league in the world” talking unpretentiously about the delight of being asked to play for Tre Kronor, was also a delight to most Swedish hockey fans. Rather than taking his roster-spot on the National Team for granted or agreeing to come because he felt obligated to do so, Salming’s veneration of Swedish hockey was more than welcome at a time of national concern over the dismantling of the Swedish welfare system and an emerging neoliberal zeitgeist. At a time when the constant defection of Swedish players to the NHL showed no sign of slowing down, Salming’s behaviour buttressed the national program and the supposed splendour of the Swedish model in its athletic adaption: *sossehockey*.⁶⁰

Despite Salming’s involvement the World Championships in Stockholm in 1989 has since gone down in Swedish ice hockey history as a watershed in the commercialization of the game. In many ways the tournament was the first big event where sponsors and marketing gurus – “the suits”, to use the popular expression – dominated the organizational arrangements. At the same time, Salming’s massive popularity in Sweden during the tournament boiled down to him being an affluent NHL-player, living a glamorous life, who nonetheless in both word and deed reaffirmed the traditional ideals of Swedish ice hockey. In so doing he served as a bridge between “an older way of life” and the “new world order”.⁶¹

With the World Championships in Stockholm in 1989 Salming became “the living legend” of Swedish hockey and a seeming representation of appropriate masculinity. The

press detailed discussions of the damage caused to his body (scars, stitches, broken bones, and concussions) during almost two decades of self-defying play in the “toughest league in the world”. In so doing they helped to turn Salming into a male role model and a potent sex symbol. He was even being dubbed “the manliest” and “the sexiest” man in Sweden, in spite of his age. That reputation was greatly enhanced after Salming retired from the NHL and left North America for life in Sweden in 1990.⁶²

When Börje Salming moved back to Sweden permanently he surprised the ice hockey community by signing with the Stockholm-club AIK to play in Elitserien. Though widely considered one of the best defenders in the game the year before, the very thought of a 40-year old Salming playing alongside a bunch of teenagers and 20 to 30 year olds seems to have confounded a lot of Swedish “experts”. Accused by some of playing solely for the money, Salming retorted that he still loved the game and felt that he had more to give. He displayed that talent on the ice, being one of the best players in Elitserien the three years he played, and was named to the Swedish Olympic Team in 1992.⁶³ Playing for AIK helped him in turn to establish “many business relationships for the future”.⁶⁴

Since hanging up his blades for good Salming has been working as an entrepreneur in Sweden, launching his own underwear, cosmetics and Salming sport-brand. He is an importer of Canadian beer, works as a leadership consultant, and has published a series of cookbooks. Salming has also become a vocal spokesperson for Sami rights and the conservation of the wilderness in the Nordic parts of Sweden, and has done some acting and modelling, the latter mainly for his own underwear-collection.⁶⁵

As far as Salming’s involvement with hockey is concerned, he has been a regular performer in exhibition games for veteran Tre Kronor and NHL players. Something akin to a grey eminence in Swedish ice hockey, Salming is the one that people call upon when they

want to know “what’s what” in the NHL. Of course, this elevated position comes with the respect he garnered as the first European superstar in “the toughest league in the world”, a Hockey Hall of Fame inductee (1996) and an IIHF Centennial All-Star Team-nominee.⁶⁶

Interestingly enough, Börje Salming’s emergence as a national icon went hand in hand with a growing popularity of North American professional ice hockey in Sweden. To be sure, the issue of the emigration and the draining of the national program of important talent is still brought up every now and then, but mostly it is in reference to young players leaving Sweden to play in the in the Junior-A leagues in Canada. Having a large number of Swedish NHL players and draft picks every year seems instead to reveal the strength of the domestic ice hockey system and to increase Swedish self-confidence. The last couple of years have seen an increasing number of NHL games broadcast in Sweden, and the interest among the fans appears to be blossoming.⁶⁷ There is evidence today of a fundamental shift in cultural values associated with Swedish ice hockey. More and more Swedes –and the players themselves – have come to call for the introduction of the smaller North American-ice surface and the introduction of the NHL’s more liberal stance on fighting, claiming that it will make for a more intense and cleaner game than the bigger European-sized rink and the harsher European rules on violence.⁶⁸

Secondly, during the last decade or so we have seen more than a few Swedish NHL players – such as Ulf “Robocop” Samuelsson, Tomas “The Demolition Man” Holmström and Niklas “Kron-wall-of-pain” Kronwall – adopt a playing-style more akin to the conventional North American than the traditional Swedish game. The scorning of North American players with broken noses and no teeth, quite common in the postwar-era, has given way to a new found romanticization of playing through pain and having scars to show it. One example of this, of course, is the popular eroticization of Börje Salming’s scarred body.⁶⁹

Thirdly, the once highly commended idea of sossehockey is nowadays perceived as out-dated. Rather than having a roster stocked with disciplined and adaptable two-way players, demonstrating great skating and puck-handling skills and performing as a team, “experts” now regularly cite the need for the great individualist, a player with the unique talent to do the unexpected like delivering a thunderous body-check or making an extraordinary play with the puck.⁷⁰

Finally, where the prototypical Swedish ice hockey player in the cold war-era was an egalitarian and locally rooted sportsman – preferring to blend into the group – today he is a hard-boiled, metrosexual celebrity with the world as his playground, and praised for being remarkable. This new imagery of hockey masculinity is perhaps best exemplified by former NHL-superstar Peter Forsberg and current New York Rangers goalkeeper, Henrik Lundqvist. The former was a world-class power forward with a cherished all-around game, the latter a Vezina Trophy-winner often referred to as one of the best dressed and most beautiful persons in the world.⁷¹

This process of transition is not surprising since sports do not exist in a vacuum. The last few decades have seen a profound social and economic reshaping of Swedish society, with the advent of the new globalized and neoliberal world order, accompanied by an ascent of a new media-driven celebrity culture and a growing cultural importance of sport.⁷² Hockey could hardly have escaped those larger cultural forces.

Concluding Remarks

Media sport-researcher Gary Whannel has argued that celebrity:

for many...writers, is intrinsically vacuous and banal. I contend the opposite, that the type of figures who accomplish celebrity status provides important and revealing evidence about the cultural formation they exist within, and it is relevant and important to pay close attention to the ways in which they are celebrated, examining the themes, values and discourses that are in play.⁷³

I take my cue from Whannel and contend that Börje Salming's career, or to be more precise, media representations of it, can be read as a barometer of the changing perception of North American ice hockey, and the concomitant and dominant imagery of nationhood and masculinity in Sweden. Over the time-period discussed here, from the 1970s onward, one can say that:

- the Swedish ice hockey establishment has gone from actively trying to deter Swedish player migration to North American professional teams and castigating them as greedy traitors, to greeting them as national heroes whose success is taken as evidence of the strength of the domestic ice hockey program
- that the endemic and hegemonic understanding of ice hockey masculinity has been transformed from an egalitarian and locally rooted pal, a player who preferred to blend into the group, to a more hard-boiled, metrosexual celebrity with the world at his feet, now much-admired for standing out as individuals.

Börje Salming has acted as both cause and effect in this historical process. "Sports stars are both producer and product" and "providers of the magic moments and golden memories that allow their elevation into the heroic and mythic" realm. Indeed,

[s]tardom is a form of social production in which the professional ideologies and production practices of the media aim to win and hold our attention by linking sporting achievement and personality in ways which have resonance in popular common sense.⁷⁴

I would argue, therefore, that Börje Salming's stellar NHL career not only paved the way for generations of his countrymen to follow him by working to dispel the North American myth

that Scandinavian players were soft and fragile, but at the same time that he helped transform Swedish national identities and the hegemonic understanding of ice hockey masculinity.

ENDNOTES

¹ This article is based on research partly funded by the Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies at Linnaeus University in Sweden.

² <http://www.legendsofhockey.net/LegendsOfHockey/jsp/LegendsMember.jsp?mem=p199602&type=Player&page=bio&list=ByName>.

³ See also for example Ulf Jansson (1997a), “Sterner var den förste. Sju svenskar bland NHL:s superstars”, in *Svensk ishockey 75 år: Ett jubileumsverk i samband med Svenska ishockeyförbundets 75-årsjubileum. Historien om svensk ishockey*, Janne Stark & Hasse Andersson (ed.), Strömbergs/Brunnhages förlag: Vällingby, 220–227; Bruce Meharg (2006), *Legends of the Leafs: Toronto’s 200 Greatest Hockey Heroes*, Authorhouse: Bloomington, Indiana, 12–14; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B%C3%B6rje_Salming.

⁴ On the profound social and economic reshaping of the Swedish society at large, at the turn of the millennium 2000, see for example Alan Barnier, *Sport, Nationalism, and Globalization: European and North American Perspectives*, State University of New York Press: Albany, NY 2001, 155–161; Lennart Schön, *En modern svensk ekonomisk historia: Tillväxt och omvandling, under två sekel*, SNS förlag: Stockholm 2009, 433–527; Lars Magnusson, *Sveriges ekonomiska historia*, Norstedts 2010, 373–452.

⁵ See Bairner (2001); Tobias Stark (2010), *Folkhemmet på is: Ishockey, modernisering och nationell identitet i Sverige 1920–1972*, Idrottsforum: Malmö (Diss.)

⁶ Bairner (2001); Stark (2010).

⁷ Bairner (2001); Stark (2010).

⁸ Bairner (2001); Stark (2010).

⁹ Tobias Stark (2001), “The Pioneer, the pal, and the Poet: Masculinities and National identities in Canadian, Swedish, and Soviet Russian Ice Hockey During the Cold War”, in Colin Howell (ed.), *Putting It On Ice: Vol. 2 Internationalizing ‘Canada’s Game’*, Gorsebrooke Institute: Halifax; Stark (2010).

¹⁰ Stark (2001); Stark (2010); Tommy Sandlin & Gerhald Karlsson, *Bjud på dig själv: En bok om positivt ledarskap*, SISU Idrottsböcker: Farsta 1995; Tommy Sandlin & Ulf Jansson, *Ett spel för livet*, Sportförlaget, Västerås 1997.

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¹² Börje Salming & Gerhard Karlsson (1995), *Blod, svett och hockey: 17 år i NHL*, Wahlströms: Stockholm, p. 20; Börje Salming & Ola Liljedahl (2000), *The King*, Sportförlaget: Västerås, 25.

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- ¹³ Salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl (2000), 20, 36.
- ¹⁴ Salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl (2000).
- ¹⁵ Salming & Karlsson (1995), 22.
- ¹⁶ Salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl (2000).
- ¹⁷ Börje Salming signed with Brynäs, April 12 1970. Salming & Karlsson (1995), 35.
- ¹⁸ Karlsson & Salming (1995), 30-31. <http://www.eliteprospects.com/player.php?player=15016>
- ¹⁹ Salming & Liljedahl, 5.
- ²⁰ Salming & Karlsson (1995), 30–31; Salming & Liljedahl (2000); <http://www.eliteprospects.com/player.php?player=1551>.
- ²¹ Salming & Karlsson (1995), 30–31; Salming & Liljedahl (2000).
- ²² Salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl (2000); Lars-Rune Ölund (2001), *Brynäs IF: Det kompletta uppslagsverket*, 127.
- ²³ Salming & Karlsson (1995), 15–16 (quotation). See also Ronnie Johansson Rönnkvist (2012), *Old school Hockey: Hockeyns historia berättad av spelarna som var med och skrev den*, Idrottsförlaget: Västerås, 101–108.
- ²⁴ Salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl (2000).
- ²⁵ Salming & Karlsson (1995), 35.
- ²⁶ Hart Cantelon (2006), “Have Skates, Will Travel: Canada, International Hockey, and the Changing Hockey Labour Market”, in *Artificial Ice: Hockey, Culture, and Commerce*, David Whitson & Richard Gruneau (ed.), Broadview Press, 215–236; Tobias Stark (2012), “Ice Hockey, Europe”, in *Sports Around the World: History, Culture, and Practice. Volume 2: British Isles and Europe*, John Nauright & Charles Parrish (ed.), ABC-CLIO: Santa Barbara, Denver, Oxford.
- ²⁷ See for example *Ishockeyboken 1946/47*, 29–43; *Ishockeyboken 1956/1957*, 4–6.
- ²⁸ Stark (2001); Stark (2012); *World of Hockey: Celebrating A Century of the IIHF*, Szymon Szemberg & Andrew Podnieks (ed.), Fenn Publishing: Bolton, ON: Fenn Publishing.
- ²⁹ Cantelon (2006), p. 219; Szemberg & Podnieks (2007); Stark (2001); Stark (2010); Stark (2012).
- ³⁰ Szemberg & Podnieks (2007); Stark (2001); Stark (2010).
- ³¹ Cantelon, 224.
- ³² Salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl (2000); Johansson Rönnkvist (2012), 97.
- ³³ Salming & Karlsson (1995), 40-41. See also; Ronnie Johansson Rönnkvist, 97.
- ³⁴ Salming & Karlsson (1995), 47–48.

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- ³⁵ Salming & Karlsson (1995), 48; Meharg (2006), 12.
- ³⁶ Salming & Karlsson (1995), 49–67; Salming & Liljedahl (2000); Inge Hammarström & Singel Ericson (1974), *Drömmen om NHL*, CEVE Förlaget: Sundsvall.
- ³⁷ Salming & Karlsson (1995), 71; Meharg (2006), 12–14.
- ³⁸ http://proicetheabout.com/od/history/a/harold_ballard.htm (quotation); Salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl (2000); Meharg (2006), 12–14.
- ³⁹ The quotation is a translation of a Swedish rendering of the article in Salming & Karlsson (1995), 69.
- ⁴⁰ Meharg (2006), 12–13.
- ⁴¹ Salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl (2000); Johansson Rönnkvist (2012), 97.
- ⁴² Jansson (1997), 220–227; Salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl (2000).
- ⁴³ Bairner (2001); Martin Alm (2002), *Americanitis: Amerika som sjukdom eller läkemedel. Svenska berättelser om USA åren 1900–1939*, Lunds University Press: Lund; Lars-Arne Norborg (2004), *Sveriges historia under 1800- och 1900-talen: Svensk samhällsutveckling 1809–1998*, Liber AB: Stockholm.
- ⁴⁴ *Svenska ishockeyförbundets årsberättelse 1972/1973*, p. 5 (quotation); Stark (2010).
- ⁴⁵ Record of Brynäs IF board-meeting, 22/10 1973, Arkiv Gävleborg, Gävle.
- ⁴⁶ Rudolf R:et Eklöw, “Skall vi slå på käft eller spela på puck”, in *Ishockeyboken 1964/1965*, 90; Stark (2001).
- ⁴⁷ Record of Brynäs IF board-meeting, 22/10 1973, Arkiv Gävleborg, Gävle; salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl, 2000).
- ⁴⁸ Salming & Karlsson (1995), 65.
- ⁴⁹ Record of Brynäs IF board-meeting, 22/10 1973, Arkiv Gävleborg, Gävle; salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl, 2000).
- ⁵⁰ Bobby Byström (1997), “Från amatör till proffs: från ett mål mat till pensionsförsäkring”, in *Svensk ishockey 75 år: Ett jubileumsverk i samband med Svenska ishockeyförbundets 75-årsjubileum. Historien om svensk ishockey*, Janne Stark & Hasse Andersson (ed.), Strömbergs/Brunnhages förlag: Vällingby, 214–219.
- ⁵¹ Ulf Jansson (1997b), “Tre olika förbundsordföranden. Fem olika förbundskaptener. Elitserien kommer till”, in *Svensk ishockey 75 år: Ett jubileumsverk i samband med Svenska ishockeyförbundets 75-årsjubileum. Historien om svensk ishockey*, Janne Stark & Hasse Andersson (ed.), Strömbergs/Brunnhages förlag: Vällingby 1997, 60–67. Quotation at 64.
- ⁵² See for example Salming & Karlsson (1995); Jansson (1997b), 60–67; Ölund (2001), 122–129.
- ⁵³ See for example Salming & Karlsson (1995); Jansson (1997b), 60–67; Ölund (2001), 122–129.

⁵⁴ Hasse Andersson, “En samling individer – men inget LAG”, *Hockey*, No. 7, 1981, 14–15. Quotation at 14. See also Leif Emsjö, “Svensk ishockeys kvalitet inte raserad”, *Hockey*, No. 7, 1981, 7; Hasse Andersson, “Tre Kronor – akterseglat för gott?”, *Hockey*, No. 7, 1981, 13; Hasse Andefrsson, “Superproffsen – inga superspelare”, *Hockey*, No. 7, 1981, 17.

⁵⁵ Mats Olsson, “Salming bryter tystnaden om knarkskandalen”, *Expressen*, 28/10 1986; Salming & Karlsson, 146–152.

⁵⁶ Salming & Karlsson, 151–152.

⁵⁷ See for example Alm (2002); <http://deadspin.com/5687562/pelle-lindbergh-died-twenty+five-years-ago-today>.

⁵⁸ Hasse Andersson, “Återkomsten och avskedet”, *Hockey*, No. 5 1989, 24 – 27. Quotation at 26; Singel Ericsson, “Börje Salming – den givne ledaren”, in *Årets ishockey 1989*, 20–21. Quotation at 20.

⁵⁹ Hasse Andersson, “Återkomsten och avskedet”, *Hockey*, No. 5 1989, 24–27; Singel Ericsson, “Börje Salming – den givne ledaren”, in *Årets ishockey 1989*, 20–21. Quotation at 20.

⁶⁰ Singel Ericsson, “Börje Salming – den givne ledaren”, in *Årets ishockey 1989*, 20–21. Quotation, at 20; Stark (2010).

⁶¹ Charlie Wedin, “Tack Globen, publiken, sponsorerna och – Tre Kronor!”, in *Hockey*, No. 5, 1989, 64–65; Stark (2010).

⁶² See for example Salming & Karlsson (1995), 155–164; Singel Ericsson (1989), 20–21; Stark (2010); www.bloggz.se/search?q=börje&s=rel&page=4; <http://nyheter24.se/nyheter/inrikes/453929-mat-tina-ar-svenska-mannens-dromkvinna>.

⁶³ Salming & Karlsson (1995); Salming & Liljedahl (2000); Johansson & Rönnkvist (2012).

⁶⁴ Johansson & Rönnkvist (2012).

⁶⁵ See for example Salming & Karlsson (1995; Salming & Liljedahl (2000); Johansson & Rönnkvist (2012).

⁶⁶ <http://www.aftonbladet.se/sportbladet/hockey/landslag/trekronor/article14231581.ab>; <http://www.aftonbladet.se/sportbladet/hockey/internationellt/nhl/article12582111.ab>; www.expressen.se/sport/kronikor/magnus-nystrom/nystrom-lidstrom-ar-sveriges-storste-genom-tiderna/; <http://www.swehockey.se/HockeyHallofFame/InvaldaiHallofFame/>.

⁶⁷ See for example “15 av 30 NHL-lag har svenska målvakter”, i *Aftonbladet* 18/1 2013; <http://blogg.st.nu/tikare/2012/04/10/silfverberg-vantade-med-nhl/>; <http://www.expressen.se/sport/kronikor/anna-friberg/friberg-hela-nhl-i-tv---om-du-har-rad-med-det/>.

⁶⁸ See for example Stark 2001; www.expressen.se/sport/hockey/nhl/nhl-proffsen-ar-eniga-om-straфф-for-slagsmal/

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⁷⁰ See for example <http://www.expressen.se/sport/kronikor/magnus-nystrom/nystrom-arvidsson-kommer-att-fixa-final/>; <http://www.dn.se/sport/ishockey/segerreceptet--en-mer-egoistisk-stjarna>; http://www.nyheterna.net/SPORTEN/nej_till_sossehockey.

⁷¹ See for example <http://www.expressen.se/sport/hockey/nhl/peter-forsberg-hyllas-av-nhl-legendaren/>; <http://www.expressen.se/sport/hockey/nhl/peter-forsberg-hyllas-av-nhl-legendaren/>.

⁷² See for example Bairner (2001); Gary Whannel (2002), *Media Sport Stars: Masculinities and Moralities*, Routledge: New York, 46; Norborg (2004); Stark (2010).

⁷³ Whannel (2002), 46.

⁷⁴ Whannel (2002), 49.