

Synturf for Hockey – Sequel to 1976 Olympics

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Sequel to 1976 Olympics in the Evolution of Synthetic Turf for Hockey: 1977-1986

Status of Synturf Pitch Installations for Hockey World-wide by 1976

By the time of the 1976 Olympics, only about half a dozen countries in the world had access to a Synthetic Turf Pitch for Hockey: Canada, USA, England, Netherlands, Germany and France, with a total of a score or so of Synthetic Turf pitches world-wide.

Manufacturers and Products

Amongst the few available products and their manufacturers were Tartan Turf (3M), AstroTurf (Monsanto) and Poligras.

Significant Installations (Pre-1976 Olympics)

1970 Installation of Tartan Turf (3M) Vancouver
1975 Installation of AstroTurf (Monsanto) Molson Stadium McGill University Montreal
1976 Installation of a Synturf Hockey pitch in Limburg West Germany
197? Installation of a Synturf Hockey pitch in ?? England (Crystal Palace ??)
197? Installation of a Synturf Hockey pitch in ?? Netherlands (Amstelveen??)
197? Installation of a Synturf Hockey pitch in ?? France (Racing Club de Paris ??)

FIH Initiatives

Following the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, FIH creates an Advisory Board
JMcB recalls being requested by a Board appointee (NED?) to share personal experience
(JMcB recollection that Dr Hugo Budinger of West Germany was appointed Chair)

Olympic Games Hockey Tournaments 1980 & 1984

1980 Moscow on Synturf (Poligras?) 6 Men's Teams / 6 Women's Teams
1984 L.A. on Synturf (Manufacturer-Product??) 12 Men's Teams / 6 Women's Teams

Note: At the 1976 Montreal Olympics, the hockey pitch was watered by a truck with a large water tank which traversed the pitch towing a trailer with watering capability based on agricultural irrigation systems. The process took 7-8 minutes and was quite effective. Its longer-term disadvantage was that it was very damaging to the underlying e-layer. At the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, watering was accomplished manually. Courtesy of the local fire brigade, numerous fire-hoses were deployed to water the pitch by hand. This was also reasonably effective, but was of course very labour-intensive.

FIH World Cup Tournaments 1976-1986

1978 Men's WC in March hosted by ARG in Buenos Aires (14 Teams) / Grass Pitches
[Advance decision by FIH before Synturf mandated]

1978 Women's WC September; hosted by ESP-Madrid / 10 Teams) / **Synturf** / Manuf ?

1982 Men's WC hosted by IND in Bombay-Mumbai (12 Teams) / **Grass**
[Decision by FIH to play on grass knowing that surface conditions would be ideal]

1983 Women's WC hosted by MAL in KL (12 Teams) / **Synturf** / Manuf ?

1986 Men's WC hosted by ENG-London OCT (12 Teams) / **Synturf** / Manuf-Product?

1986 Women's WC hosted by NED-Amsterdam AUG (12 Teams) / **Synturf** / Manuf ?

FIH Champions Trophy 1979-1986

1979 First Champions Trophy in Lahore (6 Teams) on **Grass**

1980 Second Champions Trophy in Karachi (6 Teams) on **Synturf**

All subsequent (annual) Champions Trophy Tournaments on **Synturf**

Hockey Tournaments Marking Continental Highlights 1979-1982

1979 Esanda World Tournament (10 Nations) Perth WA. First **Synturf** in AUS
[First Synturf hockey pitch in the Southern Hemisphere]

1979 PanAm Games Hockey Tournament in San Juan Puerto Rico (10 Teams)
[First **Synturf** hockey pitch in the South & Central America & Caribbean]

1982 Esanda World Tournament (10 Nations) Tournament Melbourne AUS
Second **Synturf** in AUS [First Synturf hockey pitch in Eastern Australia]

Record of Number of Countries and Number of Pitches Worldwide (1976-1986)

Year	No of countries	No of Pitches
1976	6	20
1981	18	75
1986	34	400

Table above represents an estimate of the number of countries with at least one synthetic hockey pitch and number of synturf hockey pitches worldwide.
(Data collated in 1987)

Relationship between CFHA and Monsanto (1974-1989) and (1998-2002) (See Below)

Relationship between CFHA and Monsanto (1974-1989), (1990-1992), (1998-2002)

The full story of the relationship between CFHA and Monsanto, begun in 1974-75 in the run-up to the 1975 Pre-Olympic Tournament in Montreal. This close relationship continued through 1976 (Olympics) and beyond. The contact for Monsanto during these Olympic and pre-Olympic years was Ed Milner.

In 1978 CFHA, FHAA, Monsanto, Pan Am HF, USOC and the Organising Committee of the 1979 Pan Am Games in San Juan Puerto Rico coalesced to ensure that a Synturf Hockey pitch was installed by the time of the 1979 Pan Am Games Hockey Tournament. This facility was an AstroTurf Hockey Pitch.

The year 1989 marked the 25th Anniversary of Monsanto AstroTurf and the Canadian Team's participation in Tokyo 1964, Canada's first entry into Olympic Hockey competition. To mark the occasion, Monsanto helped sponsor a dinner at the UBC Faculty Club in 1989 to celebrate the occasion. Approximately 50 guests attended, including Ed Milner of Monsanto, Victor Warren (CFHA President), Peter Buckland (Key-note Speaker), Allan Woods (President of FHAA) as well as John McBryde (Master of Ceremonies), all of whom had been closely involved over the previous two decades in the evolution of synthetic turf for Hockey.

Pewter Tankards were presented to the above noted pioneers as well as members of the Canadian Teams which had competed in the four Olympics for which Canada had qualified between 1964 and 1988.

The special relationship between Monsanto and CFHA continued for many more years:

In early 1992, a 16-page Handbook for Synthetic Turf Pitches for Hockey, financed by funding from the Men's Olympic Endowment Fund with a generous financial contribution from AstroTurf, was published by Field Hockey Canada (created in 1990 via the merger of CFHA and CWFHA) and distributed widely around Canada in order to promote the installation of Synturf Hockey pitches nation-wide.

The close connection with AstroTurf was maintained for a further decade, resulting in the installation in 2002 of an AstroTurf Hockey pitch at the University of British Columbia. This facility at UBC served as Canada's National Hockey Centre from 2002-2017.