

United States' Connor Hellebuyck (37) skates around the ice with the American flag after the US defeated Canada in the men's ice hockey gold medal game at the 2026 Winter Olympics, in Milan, Italy, Sunday.



HOCKEY HISTORY

Hellebuyck, Hughes join Craig, Eruzione as US Olympic hockey champions

MILAN — Go ahead and put the names Jack Hughes and Connor Hellebuyck right in the same revered place that Mike Eruzione and Jim Craig have occupied since their “Miracle On Ice” triumph in 1980.

It had been 46 years since the United States won the men's hockey gold medal at an Olympics. This time, the country can thank Hughes, he of the lost teeth and the winning goal less than 2 minutes into overtime Sunday, for a 2-1 victory over Canada at the Milan Cortina Games, and Hellebuyck, he of the 41 saves, many of them spectacular.

They will be remembered — and always associated with this win. “As a kid, when you're growing up and you're watching the Olympics, you kind of remember moments. I'm sure this is going to be a moment that younger kids are talking about: ‘You see Jack scoring the OT winner?’” American forward Brock Nelson said. “I'm sure that's a moment that kids are probably going to try to recreate and try to envision themselves in that spot later on in life.”

That's precisely the reason that when

U.S. defenseman Charlie McAvoy was trying to find the right words to praise Hellebuyck, this is what he went with: “He channeled his Jimmy Craig tonight.”

Nelson's uncle was a member of that 1980 championship team at the Lake Placid Games, and was present Sunday. Nelson's grandfather was on the only other U.S. men's hockey team to claim gold, at Squaw Valley in 1960. That means this 2026 victory is the first for the country in this sport outside the United States.

Way back when, the stars — the players most strongly associated with the most recent men's hockey title at a Winter Games until Sunday — were Eruzione, he of the winning goal against the heavily favored Soviet Union along the way to the gold, and Craig, the star goalie who famously looked into the crowd for his father after that game.

Eruzione, who was at the arena Sunday, and Craig were part of a collection of amateurs who stunned the world.

The big difference this time, of course, is that Hughes and Hellebuyck are professional players, certified stars of the NHL, which brought its players back to the Olympics for the first time since 2014. So there is less to be shocked by with Sunday's outcome.

What those four have in common are the gold medals they'll own forever.

Hughes, a center for the New Jersey Devils, deposited his winner past Jordan Binnington off the rush, with an assist from Zach Werenski, during the 3-on-3 OT.

“In this tournament, he showed he's one of the best players in the world — clearly,” said Quinn Hughes, the older brother and teammate of the newest American star.

The siblings — Jack is 24; Quinn is 26 — were consistently among the best U.S. players at these Olympics.

This comes after Jack was criticized for his performance a year ago at the 4 Nations Face-Off, which Canada won. And his goal Sunday is the best thing to happen to him on the ice after a rough stretch over the past 11 months. He had shoulder surgery that ended his 2024-25 NHL season, then missed five weeks earlier this season after slicing his right thumb open at a team dinner.

“Last couple years,” Jack said, “a lot of things have happened to me.”

Not surprisingly, his brother offered a strong endorsement, including praising Jack for handling it well when he was placed on U.S. coach Mike Sullivan's fourth line.

“He takes a lot of (gruff). No one loves the game more than him,” Quinn said. “He's got so much passion. He's a gamer. He made it happen.”



MEDAL TRACKER

Nation	G	S	B	Tot
Norway	18	12	11	41
United States	12	12	9	33
Italy	10	6	14	30
Germany	8	10	8	26
Japan	5	7	12	24
France	8	9	6	23
Switzerland	6	9	8	23
Canada	5	7	9	21
Netherlands	10	7	3	20
Sweden	8	6	4	18
Austria	5	8	5	18
China	5	4	6	15
South Korea	3	4	3	10
Australia	3	2	1	6
Finland	0	1	5	6
Great Britain	3	1	1	5
Czech Republic	2	2	1	5
Slovenia	2	1	1	4
Poland	0	3	1	4
Spain	1	0	2	3
New Zealand	0	2	1	3
Latvia	0	1	1	2
Bulgaria	0	0	2	2
Brazil	1	0	0	1
Kazakhstan	1	0	0	1
Denmark	0	1	0	1
Estonia	0	1	0	1
Georgia	0	1	0	1
Neutral Athletes	0	1	0	1
Belgium	0	0	1	1

116 of 116 total events
Final results as of Feb. 22

TALKING POINTS



“I looked on the ice and saw my teeth,” I was like, ‘Here we go again.’”

— Jack Hughes, who lost some teeth before he won Olympic gold for the U.S. The forward who put the puck in the net in overtime to give the Americans a 2-1 victory over Canada in the men's hockey final Sunday did so with a bloody mouth and less of a bite than he began the game with.



CONTENT BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2026 WINTER GAMES

Eileen Gu finds gold on the halfpipe to make it 6 medals in 6 Olympic events over her career

LIVIGNO, Italy (AP) — Eileen Gu snatched a gold ribbon off a gift basket on her way to the mountain Sunday and stuck it in her pocket just in case.

Just in case?

If her 16-day odyssey at the Milan Cortina Games taught the world anything, it's that there are no sure things in sports. Especially when the athletes flip 15 feet over rock-hard snowscapes for a living.

But that gold ribbon Gu tied into a bow in her hair after her curtain-closing Olympic performance on the mountain did, in fact, match the color medal she won in the women's ski halfpipe final.

And that gold medal also was the third she's won over two Olympics — more than any athlete in her sport.

And she is now 6 for 6 — six events,



six medals, three of them gold, three silver — over a still-young Olympic career that has cascaded well beyond sports, veering into geopolitics, inclusion and, as the gold ribbon reminded us, fashion.

“I took a big risk in trusting myself,” Gu said of her frenetic quest this year, “and I'm glad that I did.”

Gu, born in the United States but competing for her mother's homeland of China, knows that the modeling career, the fame, the platform she commands and the message she sends wouldn't be possible if she weren't the best freeskiier in the world. She was also the only woman willing to divide her attention between halfpipe, slopestyle and big air over the 2 1/2-week marathon of Olympic risk-taking.

It was a quest that limited her training, rest and sometimes her sanity. Never her confidence, though.

“I'm not a gambling woman, but if I were, I took a pretty big bet on myself,” Gu said. “There was a chance everything

could go wrong and I could have walked away with nothing, because I was trying to do too much. But in my head, even if everything crashes and burns, I tried. I'll never regret trying.”

Olympic curling scandal like ‘foot fault in tennis or traveling in basketball,’ Canada official says

MILAN — The double-touching scandal that plagued his country's curling team was like “a foot fault in tennis or traveling in basketball,” the CEO of the Canadian Olympic Committee said on Sunday.

David Shoemaker, who is also the committee's secretary general, was asked by The Associated Press about the controversy a day after the Canadian men swept aside the cheating allegations to claim gold at the Milan Cortina Games.

He said it “was not cheating.”

“For me it's like a foot fault in tennis or traveling in basketball,” Shoemaker



added. “If LeBron James takes four steps on the way to the hoop, I wouldn't say LeBron James is a cheater.”

“I understand the furor that's erupted on social media, but that part is not fair and hopefully we will see that go away.”

While there are officials to rule on foot faults in tennis and traveling in basketball, curling is mostly self-umpired. So the sport was sent into turmoil during the round-robin phase when Oskar Eriksson of Sweden accused Canada vice skip Marc Kennedy of touching the rock again after initially releasing it down the sheet of ice. Kennedy responded with an outburst full of expletives.

“Marc Kennedy probably regrets his choice of words,” Shoemaker said. “And he'll find the time and place to express that sentiment beyond what he's privately shared with his teammates and his family and the rest of us.”

Footage circulating online appeared to show Kennedy touching the granite stone with his outstretched finger after he had already released it.