TREATY RELATIONS
COMMISSION OF MANITOBA

LET'S EXPLORE

TREATY TURNING POINTS

WHAT ABOUT ..?

ACKNOWLEDGING TREATY TERRITORY AT THE RINK

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Rhonda Head, an award-winning classical singer from the Opaskwayak Cree Nation sang 'O Canada!' in Cree at the Winnipeg Jets hockey game on February 25, 2024.

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENTS

Territorial acknowledgement statements recognize and pay respect to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people and their traditional and/or current homelands on which we live and work upon. In Manitoba, they often mention a Treaty or Treaties.

Today we see hear them as part of school opening exercises, read them on course outlines, and at listen to them at public gatherings. Territorial acknowledgements act as reminders of Canada's colonial past and our nation's steps toward reconciliation.

In Australia, a settler nation with a colonial history similar to Canada's, territorial acknowledgements began in the 1970s, becoming more common in the early 2000s. They were brought to the forefront in Canada after the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commisson's Calls to Action were released in June 2015.

AT THE RINK

On October 13, 2016 at a Winnipeg Jets home hockey game a territorial acknowledgement announced that the Jets play on "Treaty 1 land which consists of the original territories of Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation".

This is believed to be the first time in Canada that such an announcement was made at a professional sporting event. The Edmonton Oilers stated that they would follow the Jets lead and make territorial announcements part of their opening ceremonies as well.

"There is a growing awareness and conversation across Canada about reconciliation and moving forward to a positive future," said Tim Shipton, spokesman for the Oilers Entertainment Group, which owns the team and operates the new arena. "We know that as a pro sports organization, we can be a force of good in the community and we know this is something that a lot of people are talking about."

Source: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/reconciliation-more-than-land-acknowledgments-indigenous-groups-say-1.3936171#:~:text=At%20his%20suggestion%2C%20the%20Winnipeg%20Jets%20became%20the,landholders%20of%20the%20area%20at%20each%20home%20game.

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Graphic designer Leticia Spence of Pimicikamak Cree Nation designed the Indigenized logos in 2020 for the Winnipeg Jets and Manitoba Moose WASAC games.

RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS

Since January 12, 2021, a land acknowledgement has been announced before singing the national anthem at every Winnipeg Jets home game. Many see this as a step toward reconciliation.

Addtional to the territorial acknowledgement, the Jets organization has taken other measures to grow public awareness about Indigenous peoples.

In 2018, they began the annual WASAC (Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre) games, celebrating Indigenous culture and sharing spaces with youth from northern and remote Indigenous communities. On January 19, 2020, a pro sports first, *The Strong Warriors Girls Anishinaabe Singers*, opened the Jets game by singing 'O Canada!' in Ojibwe.

Sports like hockey are more than just a game. 15,000 people listening to a territorial acknowledgement is a way to raise public awareness of Canada's past and grow awareness of the Treaty relationship between First Nations and all Canadians.

SHARE YOUR UNDERSTANDINGS

- Why are territorial acknowledgement statements offered before public gatherings?

- In what ways have they acted as a turning point in Treaty relationships?