



From Ty Dilello's **MOSIENKO – THE MAN WHO CAUGHT LIGHTNING IN A BOTTLE**, Here is an excerpt from the Winnipeg Warriors winning the WHL title and Edinburgh Trophy in 1955-56. The book will be released in October/2021 in time for what would have been Billy Mosienko's 100th birthday (Nov 2). <https://www.greatplains.mb.ca/product/mosienko/>

All that talent on the Warriors team came through as they edged Calgary by two points to win the Prairie Division. Mosienko would end the season with 45 points in 64 games.

In the playoffs, the Warriors swept Saskatoon in three straight games and then disposed of Calgary four-games-to-one to advance to the league final against the Coast Division champion Vancouver Canucks.

In Vancouver, the teams split the first four games of the best-of-seven series. Back home in Winnipeg, the Warriors won Game 5 handily by a 4-0 scoreline.

Heading into Game 6, Winnipeg was up three-games-to-two and had a chance to close out the series. Vancouver was up 2-0 after the first period, but when the game was over, the final score showed 6-3 Winnipeg.

Mosienko's goal started the avalanche of Warriors goals. Finding himself on the outside of the circle by the right boards near the Canucks goal, he spun in a familiar fashion and let the puck fly. Vancouver goalie Ray Mikulan, appearing as if he thought Mosienko was trying a pass, made his move. The puck caught the inside of his right skate and clicked into the net. No one appeared more surprised than Mosienko.



After the final horn sounded, Mosie accepted the President's Cup from league president Al Leader at centre ice.

The Winnipeg Warriors were President's Cup champs, and the biggest smile in the locker room afterwards certainly belonged to Mosie. After all, it was his first championship since he was eleven years old with his Tobans playground team.

In the dressing room, champagne flowed freely, and the Warriors celebrated joyfully.

"Took a long time, didn't it?" yelled Skip Burchell at Mosie. He was referring to championships, for in all Mosienko's years in the NHL, he never won a Cup.

"We got close one year in Chicago, but Montreal beat us in the final."

To top things off, the Mosienko family welcomed a brand-new daughter, Wendy, to the fold shortly after the President's Cup triumph.



After the game, Bill rushed to the hospital, where he was presented with his daughter. Still out of breath, he gulped, "Just what we wanted."

Bill and the team's celebration was short-lived because the season wasn't over yet. Winnipeg now had to play the Montreal Royals in a best-of-nine series for the Canadian minor pro championship.

The Edinburgh Trophy final featured the champions of the Quebec Hockey League and the Western Hockey League. All the games were held in western Canada because of the expense of travelling across the country and the travel time involved. Cross-country flights were not that common yet!

The Edinburgh Trophy finals were held after the Stanley Cup playoffs had wrapped up in order to minimize competition from television and radio broadcasts of the Stanley Cup games.

It was a best-of-nine series that was played in Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg. However, the Warriors needed only six of those games to dispatch the Montreal club.

The final game saw the largest crowd in Winnipeg hockey history to that point, 10,072, witness them winning the championships by a 3-1 score.

The applause for Mosienko after the Warriors won was tremendous. He was the last Warrior to be introduced after the game.

It was a touching moment. The fans kept up a terrific yell until arena manager Stew MacPherson motioned Mosienko to say a few words. The roar continued for 45 seconds and probably would have lasted much longer had Mosie not taken the mic.

"Chicago was never like this," said Billy, and he sounded as if he'd just sprinted around the rink a dozen times. Then he thanked the fans for their tremendous patronage and Jack Perrin and coach Alf Pike for the way they handled the club.

The fans cheered the Montreal Royals, who played hard, and for every Warriors player that was introduced. But that prolonged cheer for Mosie was the greatest.

"It will probably be remembered long after the Edinburgh trophy is forgotten," wrote the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

"Bill scored a couple of goals that night, but that wasn't what caused such an ovation. He played his heart out all year and provided the fans with more excitement than any other player. It was the fans' opportunity to say 'thanks, Bill Mosienko.'"





"I've played with some great teams and some great guys," said Mosienko, "but it's hard to beat this bunch!"

Once again, champagne flowed in the dressing room. And each player on the Warriors also earned an extra \$2,100 as a playoff bonus, which was more than the NHL players received for winning the Stanley Cup.

When asked where to go from here after winning the championship, Bill said, "Our spring league at the alleys is all ready to go right now, then maybe a little golf and some work around the house. I've got more family now, you know!"

The *Winnipeg Tribune* reported that "The best all-round player in the series was Bill Mosienko, primarily because of his offensive strength and consistent positional checking on defence. Eric Nesterenko was the best defensive forward, having had only three goals scored by the opposition while on the ice."

Mosienko remarked that the Warriors were a "happy family" and that the team's strong friendship and camaraderie helped the club bring home this championship.

Owner Jack Perrin said the turning point on the road to success was the day the club signed Mosienko. "Mosie has been a wonderful inspiration to every player on the team, especially the younger members," said Perrin. "He's a fine, proud hockey player who is not satisfied with mediocrity."

"When they won the Edinburgh Trophy against Montreal, the celebration party when they returned was at our home on Cathedral Avenue," recalled Bill Jr. "It was still an unfinished basement, but they partied hard late into the next day. Early on in the evening, I can still recall Pete Kapusta and another player, carting a huge stereo record player down into the basement to keep the party going strong throughout the night!"