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The first Canada Winter Games were held February 11-19, 1967, in Quebec City. They came about from an idea to bring Canada closer together, or unite the country through sports. The first Games' President, Georges Labrecque, said in his opening ceremonies speech, "we had in mind to strengthen mutual understanding and friendship and to bring closer the amateur athletes and the 20 million members of our Canadian family (McLaughlin and McDonald, 1979, p. 8)." Winter was chosen for the first Games because of Canada's climate. Canada has a good winter climate and many of the sports that Canada is good in are during the winter. Labrecque also said in his speech, "snow being the natural link between all Canadians, we believe that a winter sports meet will constitute an authentic Canadian manifestation (McDonald and McLaughlin, 1979, p. 8)." The 1967 Canada Winter Games were also the very first time ever that athletes from all of the ten provinces and two territories were brought together to compete in a national sports event, and Quebec was the testing grounds (McDonald and McLaughlin, 1979, p. 8). The hope was to carry this event on for years to come, but if it failed in Quebec then it would not be carried out again. The Games did have some problems, but overall they were a huge success and continue to this day.

Part of the Nova Scotia team that went to Quebec for the first Games were cross country skiers. The coach of the first Canada Games cross country ski team was Ragnar Axelson from Port Hawkesbury. The members of the team were George MacIntosh from Halifax and three family members, Peter Junper, Percy Junper and Katrina Junper, all from Chester (Nordic Ski Nova Scotia). There is not much known about the individual athletes or how they did in the first Games. Overall though, the Nova Scotia ski team placed fifth in the Games in a combined score with the alpine team. At that time, both alpine and cross country went as one team (Chronicle Herald, February 20, 1967).





History of Canada Winter Games Cross Country Ski Team for Nova Scotia



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