

# U.S. player lost teeth before gold-winning goal

BY HOWARD FENDRICH  
AP NATIONAL WRITER

MILAN — Jack Hughes lost some teeth before he won Olympic gold for the United States.

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 at the Milan Cortina Games on Sunday did so with a bloody mouth and less of a bite than he began the game with. That's because Hughes was spittin' chiclets after taking a stick to the mouth from Sam Bennett in the third period.

"I looked on the ice and saw my teeth," said Hughes, who had one knocked out in an NHL game a few years ago, too. "I was like, 'Here we go again.'"

Well, that's a mouthful to say.

The 24-year-old Hughes is a forward for the New Jersey Devils. He scored past Canadian goalie Jordan Binnington after a little more



LUCA BRUNO/Associated Press

**United States' Jack Hughes (86) and Clayton Keller (91) react after receiving their gold medals after the USA defeated Canada in the men's ice hockey gold medal game at the 2026 Winter Olympics, in Milan, Italy, Sunday.**

than 1 1/2 minutes of extra time.

Hughes' older brother, Quinn, 26, is a defenseman for the Americans, who won the country's first gold in

men's hockey since the 1980 "Miracle on Ice" team that upset the heavily favored Soviet Union at Lake Placid.

"No one loves the game more than him," Quinn said

about Jack. "He's got so much passion. He's a gamer. He made it happen."

Other teammates figured that Jack Hughes will be just fine without some of his

chompers. There was not exactly a whole lot of sympathy going on around among the 2026 Olympic champs.

After all, it is a well-known and frequent occurrence for hockey players to lose a tooth — or teeth — in their often-violent sport.

"Who cares at this point, to be honest?" said Matt Boldy, who scored the other U.S. goal on Binnington, just 6 minutes after the game began. "I think more people are looking at his medal than his teeth. I'm sure he'll be OK."

That's certainly something to chew on.

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