



Black Ice: The Lost History of the Colored Hockey League of the Maritimes, 1895-1925.

Fosty George, Darril Fosty

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The Colored Hockey League of the Maritimes was formed in 1895 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Comprised of the sons and the grandsons of runaway American slaves, the league helped pioneer the sport of ice hockey, changing this winter game from the primitive "gentleman's past-time" of the Nineteenth Century to the to the modern fast moving game of today. In an era when many believed Blacks could not endure cold, possessed ankles too weak to effectively skate, and lacked the intelligence for organized sport, these men defied the established myths.

The Colored League was one of the most complex sports organizations ever created and was lead by Baptist ministers and church laymen. Natural leaders and proponents of Black Pride, these men represented a concept in spots never before seen. Their rule book was The Bible. Their game book, the coded words and oral history derived from the experiences of American slavery and the Underground Railroad. Their strategy, the principles and teachings of American Black leader Booker T. Washington (the founder of the Tuskegee Institute) and a believer in the concept of racial equality through racial separation.

Twenty-five years before the Negro Baseball Leagues in the United States, and twenty-two years before the birth of the National Hockey League, the Colored League would emerge as a premier force in Canadian hockey and supply the resilience necessary to preserve a unique culture which exists to this day. Unfortunately their contributions were conveniently ignored, or simply stolen, as White teams and hockey officials, influenced by the Black league, copied elements of the Black style or sought to take self-credit for Black hockey innovations.

Seven years of research has gone into this book. This is the first book ever written on the Colored Hockey League of the Maritimes.

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