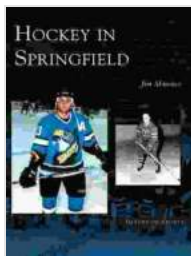


# Hockey in Springfield: A Glimpse into the Heart of the Sport



## Hockey in Springfield (Images of Sports) by Jim Mancuso

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 128 pages

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Springfield, Massachusetts, has a rich history in hockey, dating back to the early 20th century. The city has been home to several professional and amateur teams, and has produced a number of notable players. This article provides a comprehensive look at the history of hockey in Springfield, from its humble beginnings to its current status as a major hockey hub in the United States.

## **The Early Years**

The first organized hockey game in Springfield was played in 1904 at the Eastern States Exposition Grounds. The game was between two local teams, the Springfield Hockey Club and the Holyoke Hockey Club. The Springfield team won the game, 4-2.

In 1908, the Springfield Hockey Club joined the New England Hockey League. The league was made up of teams from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. The Springfield team won the league championship in 1910 and 1911.

In 1914, the Springfield Hockey Club became the Springfield Indians. The Indians played in the International Hockey League from 1914 to 1956. The team won the league championship in 1921 and 1922.

## **The Professional Era**

In 1956, the Springfield Indians joined the American Hockey League. The AHL is the top minor league hockey league in the United States. The Indians played in the AHL for 33 seasons, winning the league championship in 1961 and 1971.

In 1994, the Springfield Indians became the Springfield Falcons. The Falcons played in the AHL for 24 seasons, winning the league championship in 2011.

In 2016, the Springfield Falcons relocated to Tucson, Arizona, and became the Tucson Roadrunners. The city of Springfield was without a professional hockey team for the first time in over a century.

### **The Springfield Thunderbirds**

In 2016, the Springfield Thunderbirds were founded as a member of the AHL. The Thunderbirds are the city's first professional hockey team since the Falcons left in 2016. The team plays its home games at the MassMutual Center in downtown Springfield.

The Springfield Thunderbirds have quickly become one of the most popular teams in the AHL. The team has a strong fan base and has been very successful on the ice. The Thunderbirds have made the playoffs in each of their first four seasons, and won the division championship in 2019.

### **Notable Players**

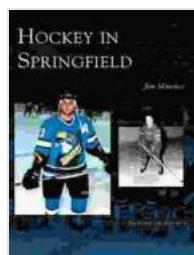
Springfield has produced a number of notable hockey players over the years. Some of the most famous players include:

- **Hobey Baker:** Baker was born in Springfield in 1892. He played college hockey at Princeton University and was a member of the United States Olympic team in 1920. Baker is considered one of the greatest hockey players of all time.
- **Eddie Shore:** Shore was born in Springfield in 1902. He played professional hockey for 20 seasons and was a member of the Boston

Bruins for 14 seasons. Shore is considered one of the greatest defensemen of all time.

- Willie O'Ree: O'Ree was born in Fredericton, New Brunswick, in 1928. He played professional hockey for 12 seasons and was the first black player to play in the NHL. O'Ree is a member of the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Hockey is a major part of the culture of Springfield, Massachusetts. The city has a long and storied history in the sport, and has produced a number of notable players. The Springfield Thunderbirds are the city's current professional hockey team, and they are one of the most popular teams in the AHL. The future of hockey in Springfield is bright, and the city is excited to continue to be a major hub for the sport in the United States.

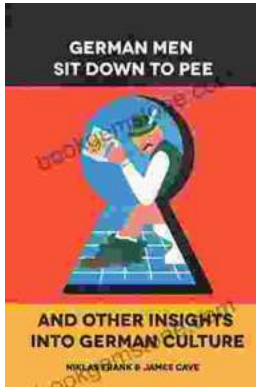


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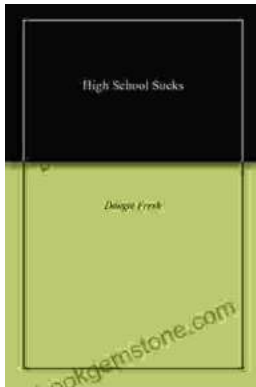
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