



# Before the Stars: Early Major League Hockey and the St Paul Athletic Club

*Roger Godin*

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In the early twentieth century, before the National Hockey League had established a presence in the United States, a team from St. Paul played at the highest levels of hockey in the country. Sports historian Roger A. Godin resurrects the story of the St. Paul Athletic Club team--the AC's--and argues they were instrumental in turning Minnesota into one of the nation's first hockey hotbeds and gave birth to what is now known as the "State of Hockey." Godin also paints a fascinating history of the evolution of the sport from its amateur days to the arrival of the professional version we see today. In *Before the Stars* Godin traces the development of the AC's from their origins to their capture of the MacNaughton Cup in 1916 as winners of the American Amateur Hockey Association title and to their later battles in 1922 and 1923 at the national finals of the U.S. Amateur Hockey Association. Godin profiles players such as Tony Conroy, Ed Fitzgerald, Cy Weidenborner, Emmy Garrett, and Frank "Moose" Goheen, who led the AC's to national prominence and was the second American player elected to the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto after the legendary Hobey Baker. Godin argues that Goheen was the greatest player that Minnesota ever produced and one of the best players of his era. Readers are taken back to a time when players fielded seven-man teams using rovers, angry skaters swung at opposing coaches and referees, goal umpires raised white flags to signal goals, and fans watched games in massive hippodromes and celebrated their teams in torchlight parades. *Before the Stars* is a captivating history of the sport's early years and a must read for any hockey fan.

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