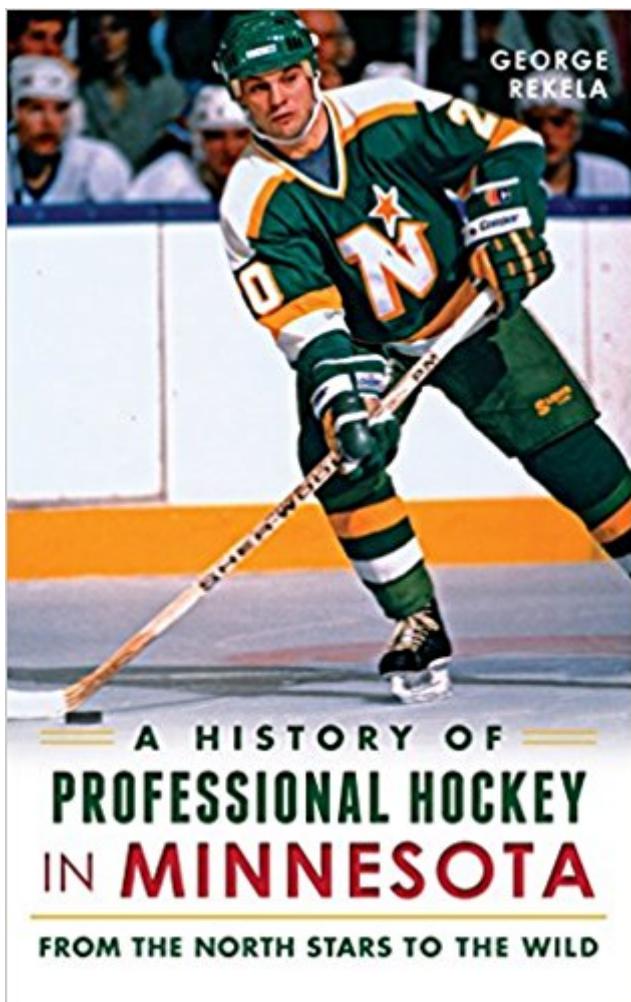


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A History Of Professional Hockey In Minnesota: From The North Stars To The Wild



Synopsis

Of the four major sports leagues, the National Hockey League was the most conservative, clinging to only six cities until 1967, when it improbably doubled its size. The resulting upheaval gave birth to the Minnesota North Stars and the construction of the Metropolitan Sports Center. Though the well-loved Stars made the playoffs seventeen times, including two Stanley Cup Finals appearances, they never achieved ultimate success. Their loyal fan base watched in anguish as the franchise merged with another, divided in two and relocated to Dallas. In 1997, the Twin Cities' sports market was awarded an expansion franchise. Named the Minnesota Wild, the team sold out 409 consecutive games, setting the highest sell-out streak for an expansion franchise, and returned the game back to the State of Hockey.

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Minnesota native George R. Rekela grew up playing pond hockey in the Mesabi Iron Range, home of the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame. He is a journalism graduate of the University of Minnesota and has authored a dozen sports books, including biographies of, among others, Brett Favre, Hakeem Olajuwon, Karl Malone and Kurt Warner. He currently serves as publisher emeritus of the Twin Cities' Southside Journal, a research, focused sports information publication.

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