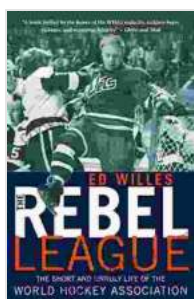


# The Short and Unruly Life of the World Hockey Association: A Tale of Ambition, Excess, and Unfulfilled Dreams

The World Hockey Association (WHA) was a professional ice hockey league that operated from 1972 to 1979. The league was founded by Gary Davidson, a Denver-based businessman, who saw an opportunity to challenge the established National Hockey League (NHL). The WHA attracted some of the biggest names in hockey, including Bobby Hull, Gordie Howe, and Wayne Gretzky. However, the league was also plagued by financial problems and internal strife. In 1979, the WHA merged with the NHL, and the remaining teams were absorbed into the NHL.



## The Rebel League: The Short and Unruly Life of the World Hockey Association by Ed Willes

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 5613 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 304 pages



## The Founding of the WHA

The WHA was founded in 1972 by Gary Davidson, a Denver-based businessman. Davidson was a former minor league hockey player who had

a vision of a new hockey league that would be more competitive and exciting than the NHL. Davidson recruited a group of investors, including several wealthy businessmen and former NHL players, to help him launch the WHA.

The WHA's first season began in October 1972 with 12 teams. The league quickly gained popularity, thanks to its high-scoring games and its willingness to sign players who had been blacklisted by the NHL. The WHA also attracted some of the biggest names in hockey, including Bobby Hull, Gordie Howe, and Wayne Gretzky.

### **The Glory Years**

The WHA's first few seasons were a period of great success for the league. The WHA's teams were competitive, and the league's games were exciting and entertaining. The WHA also made a number of innovations that would later be adopted by the NHL, such as the use of the curved stick and the of the shootout.

However, the WHA's success was short-lived. The league was plagued by financial problems from the start. The WHA's teams were often underfunded, and the league struggled to compete with the NHL for players and fans. The WHA also suffered from internal strife, as several teams filed lawsuits against the league and each other.

### **The Merger with the NHL**

In 1979, the WHA and the NHL agreed to merge. The merger was a victory for the NHL, which had been struggling to compete with the WHA. The merger also saved the WHA's remaining teams from financial ruin.

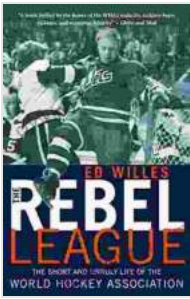
The merger of the WHA and the NHL was a major turning point in the history of hockey. The merger created a single, unified league that would dominate the sport for decades to come. The WHA's legacy is still felt today, as many of the innovations that it introduced have become standard in the NHL.

## **The Impact of the WHA**

The WHA had a significant impact on the NHL and the sport of hockey as a whole. The WHA's high-scoring games and its willingness to sign players who had been blacklisted by the NHL helped to change the way that the NHL was played. The WHA also introduced a number of innovations that would later be adopted by the NHL, such as the use of the curved stick and the of the shootout.

The WHA's legacy is still felt today. Many of the players who starred in the WHA went on to have successful careers in the NHL. The WHA also helped to popularize the sport of hockey in new markets, such as the United States and Canada.

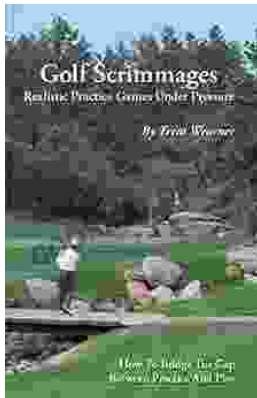
The World Hockey Association was a short-lived experiment in professional hockey. However, the WHA had a significant impact on the NHL and the sport of hockey as a whole. The WHA's high-scoring games and its willingness to sign players who had been blacklisted by the NHL helped to change the way that the NHL was played. The WHA also introduced a number of innovations that would later be adopted by the NHL, such as the use of the curved stick and the of the shootout. The WHA's legacy is still felt today, as many of the innovations that it introduced have become standard in the NHL.



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