

Ice Time



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As kids, we all had passions -- something we loved doing, experienced with our friends, dreamed about every spare moment. For Jay Atkinson, who grew up in a small Massachusetts town, it was hockey. When Bobby Orr scored the winning goal in the 1970 Stanley Cup Finals against the St. Louis Blues, Atkinson became a fan for life. In 1975, he played on the first Methuen Rangers varsity hockey team. Once and always a rink rat, Atkinson still plays hockey whenever and wherever he can.

Twenty-five years after he played for the Rangers, Atkinson returns to his high school team as a volunteer assistant. *Ice Time* tells the team's story as he follows the temperamental star, the fiery but troubled winger, the lovesick goalie, the rookie whose father is battling cancer, and the "old school" coach as the Rangers make a desperate charge into the state tournament. In emotionally vivid detail, *Ice Time* travels into the rinks, schools, and living rooms of small-town America, where friendships are forged, the rewards of loyalty and perseverance are earned, and boys and girls are transformed into young men and women. Along the way, we also meet his five-year-old son, Liam, who is just now learning the game his father loves.

Whether describing kids playing a moonlit game on a frozen swamp or the crucible of

team tryouts and predawn bus rides that he endured himself, Atkinson carves out the drama of adolescence with precision and affection. He takes us onto the ice and into the heart of a town and a team as he explores the profound connection between fathers and sons, and what it means to go home again.

From the Hardcover edition.

作者介绍:

目录:

[Ice Time 下载链接1](#)

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[Ice Time 下载链接1](#)

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