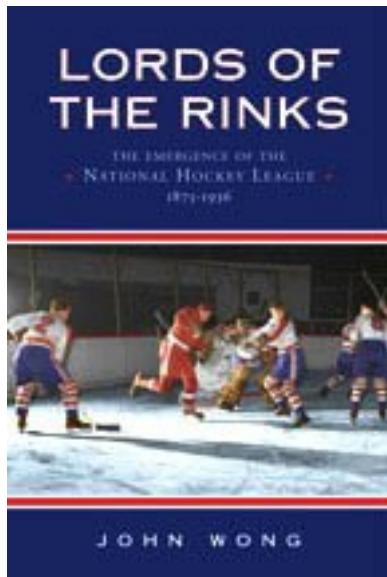


# Lords of the Rinks



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No sport is as important to Canadians as hockey. Though there may be a great many things that divide the country, the love of hockey is perhaps its single greatest unifier. Before the latest labour unrest in the National Hockey League (NHL), however, it was easy to forget that hockey is also a multi-million dollar business run, not by the athletes or coaches, but by corporate boards and businessmen. The Lords of the Rinks documents the early years of hockey's professionalization and commercialization and the emergence of a fledgling NHL, from 1875 to 1936. As the popularity of hockey grew in Canada in the late nineteenth century, so too did its commercial aspects, and players, club directors, rink owners, fans, and media had developed deep emotional, economic, and ideological interests in the sport. Disagreement came in the ways and means of how organized hockey, especially at the elite level, should be managed. Hence, some coordination, by way of governing bodies, was required to maintain a semblance of order. These early administrative bodies tried to maintain a structure

that would help to coordinate the various interests, set up standards of behaviour, and impose mechanisms to detect and punish violators of governance. In 1917, the NHL held its first games and by 1936 had become the dominant governing body in professional hockey. Having performed extensive research in the NHL archives ? including league meeting minutes, letters, memos, telegrams, as well as gate receipt reports ? John Chi-Kit Wong traces the commercial roots of hockey and argues that, in its organized form, the sport was rarely if ever without some commercial aspects despite labels such as amateur and professional. The Lords of the Rinks is the only truly comprehensive and scholarly history of the league and the business of hockey.

作者介绍:

目录:

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