

# TOP SHELF



**FIGHTING SAINTS BREAK  
FRANCHISE RECORD FOR NHL  
DRAFT PICKS**

**OHIO STATE  
WOMEN'S HOCKEY**

**Hockey-Beer  
Leagues**

# TAKES



# Letter from the author:



**M**y love of working in sports media first started working in hockey in Dubuque, Iowa. I give a lot of credit to the sport of hockey and its unique culture. If it weren't for my time working as an intern for The Dubuque Fighting Saints, I don't think I'd be working in sports today.

Working as a woman in sports, oftentimes you're in the minority group. Therefore, I want to thank all the people in my career that have taught me, *you deserve to be here just as much as everyone else*. To all the girls wanting to work in sports: take the leap, even if you're the only woman in the front office, on the field, or on the ice, you belong there. Whether it is women behind the camera, or in front of it, it is important to have women in sports media telling the stories from their perspective.

This magazine is intended to combine both my love for the sport of hockey, and working in sports. I wanted to highlight all different backgrounds of hockey, all coming from my hometown, Dubuque, Iowa. From your Sunday night hockey-beer leagues, to your Division 1 women's hockey players, to your NHL Draft picks.

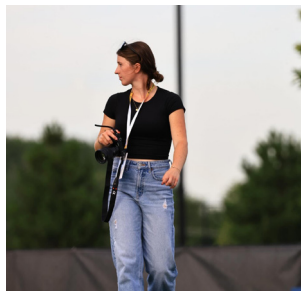
Last, a special thank you to everyone who helped this become a reality. The Dubuque Fighting Saints Staff and Team, Maria Roth, Fossils Hockey, Jim Connely, Casey Weitz, Craig Schaefer, Jill Specht, and Seth Myers.

-Caroline Hutchinson

*How it started*



*How it's going*



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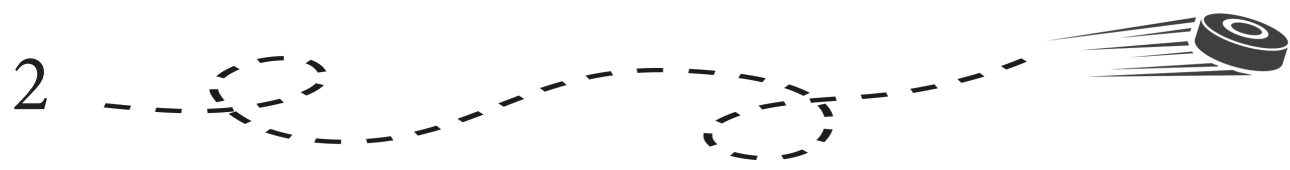


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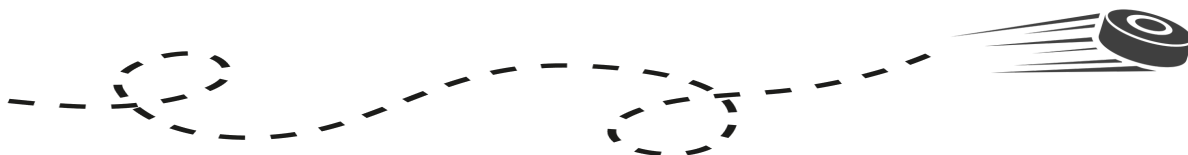




SHATTUCK-ST.MARY'S

*A message to young girls in hockey:*

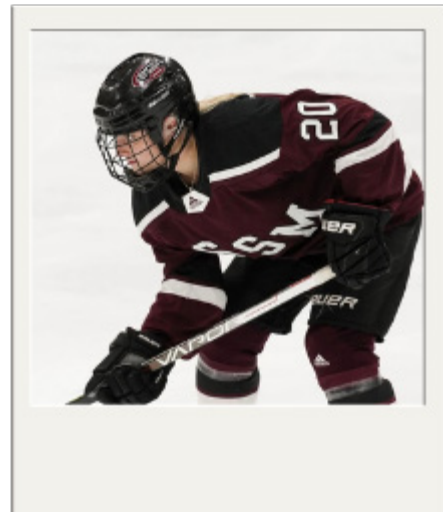
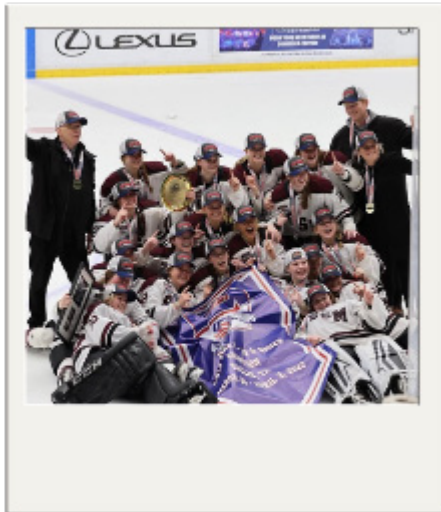
“Don’t let anything or anyone hold you back or doubt your abilities. Hockey is an amazing sport that has taught me so much, not just on the ice, but about perseverance, teamwork, and pushing yourself beyond what you thought was possible. Yes, it can be tough and intimidating at times, especially when you’re one of the few girls on the ice, but remember that you are a part of something so special. Keep working hard, stay focused on your goals, and surround yourself with people who support and believe in you. The opportunities are out there, and you can achieve anything you put your mind to.” - Maria Roth







*Writing history*



Credit: Shattuck St.Mary's Athletics





Credit: Ohio State Athletics

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# The Road to Success



**Maria Roth:**

Ohio State Women's Hockey Player

**D**ubuque native, Maria Roth, paves the path of a story of sacrifice and determination for the love of hockey. From growing up being the only girl on a boys' team in her hometown, to Minnesota for boarding school, to her dream of playing Division 1 Hockey at Ohio State, Maria Roth is an inspiration to the game of women's hockey.



**Roth highlights the inspiration behind her journey:** "I started playing hockey at 5 years old in Dubuque, following in the footsteps of my dad, Ben Roth, and his five

siblings, who all grew up playing. My Aunt Mery, my dad's sister, had a successful hockey career as an athlete and is now the coach of the women's ice hockey team at Harvard. She has always been my biggest role model and the reason I started and continue playing hockey."

**This dream, inspired by Roth's Aunt Mery, came with commitment though,** "I have always had a goal of playing Division I hockey, so my family and I realized that in order to achieve this goal, I had to move away. I decided to attend Shattuck St. Mary's in Faribault, Minnesota and was there for my junior, senior, and postgraduate years of high school. It was an amazing experience, and I am so thankful for the opportunity I had to attend boarding school, but it came with many sacrifices in order to follow my dreams."

**It is safe to say that Roth's sacrifices paid off.**

After years of traveling from practices, to tournaments, to boarding school, Roth successfully committed to Ohio State University, a dream school of hers. The culture and history of the program drew an interest in Roth, when on the college search.



**Ohio State's culture stands true:**

"Every day, I am pushed to become better both on the ice and in the classroom. It has been an incredible opportunity, and I am grateful for the chance to grow as a student-ath-

lete." While Division 1 Hockey has always been the goal for Roth, she is faced with a new option nearing graduation.



**Roth speaks to the future of women's hockey.** "The new

Professional Women's Hockey League is a huge step for women's hockey, and I'm really excited about the new opportunities it brings. The league will help grow the sport and attract more fans. With a league like this, women's hockey gets more attention and inspires more young girls to see that they can make it to the highest level of the game."





# Fossils Hockey





# Key



# “Winner, Winner, Chicken Dinner”



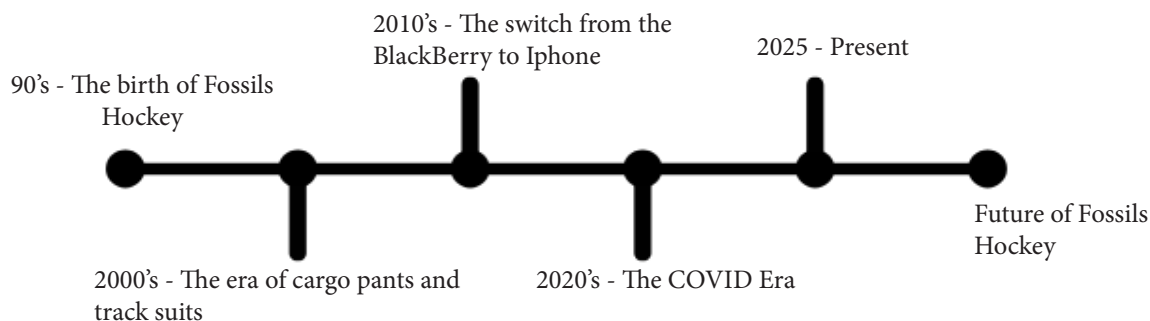
**F**ossils Hockey, a local hockey-beer league, has been gathering every Sunday for the past thirty years. Fossils Hockey is now a beloved, long-standing tradition in Dubuque, Iowa. What started as a group of hockey parents watching their kids play, has turned into a tight-knit group of now, hockey players themselves. Every Sunday, they gather to compete for a rubber chicken and have a beer.

**Often referred to as “Fossils Nation”,** Fossils Hockey started in the early 90’s as a way for hockey parents to keep up with their kids. One of the long-term members, Dave, shares, “All these guys were playing because their kids were playing, and they wanted to learn the game.” Yet, what started as a way to learn more about the sport, developed into a beloved Sunday league that grew in following. It’s no longer just about the kids, it’s for the love of the game, and the group they play it with. With some of the oldest members trailing into their 80’s, and the youngest, some of whom are their sons, playing in their teens.

**While they may be old in age, they are young in spirit.** Each year, they draft their teams rather like grade-school gym class. Team captains are picked, and a draft system is established. “The No.1 Draft Pick”, Bob, often leads as a team captain. In an effort to keep the game adaptable to the wide array of players, they’ve adjusted a few rules. Such as, every two minutes of skating time, a buzzer alerts them to switch with fresh players on the bench. As well, there is no intentional checking, no penalties, and a few more acquired rules.







With rules like this, the game is kept friendly and accommodating to all players, leaving out the “gloves are off” part of hockey. The only fight recorded in Fossils Hockey history was between two team members on the same team. Dave chuckled, telling the story. “It was because his teammate was telling him what to do. He didn’t like being told what to do.”

To get them in shape for this rigorous season and the occasional fights, they created a little something called dry-land training. However, on the contrary, they say, “it’s anything but dry because you’re required to drink beer.” The hockey, beer, and comradery aren’t the only things that keep The Fossils coming back though. Each year, the winner gets to take a picture with the trophy, which is a rubber chicken that says “Winner, Winner, Chicken Dinner” on it. “It’s somewhat for fun,” but as some have said, “now that the rubber chicken is on the line” multiple Fossils chimed in, “we want to win.”

Yet, Fossils Hockey isn’t just all fun and games, they also raise money for good causes, and in support of each other. As they shared, one of their members’ children had multiple sclerosis, and they raised money in support. Over the years, they’ve become one big family, on and off the ice.





**I CAN SEE THE FUTURE**  
**I CAN SEE THE FUTURE**  
**I CAN SEE THE FUTURE**









# Dubuque: The City That Fought To Keep The Saints Alive



**P**resident of Business Operations, and long-time Fighting Saints fan, Casey Weitz, shares his experience with the history of The Dubuque Fighting Saints. Casey Weitz, and his family have been involved as fans, billet families, and now working in the establishment of The Dubuque Fighting Saints. Over the past fifty years, The Saints have had their ups and downs, but the one thing that has stayed constant is the support of their fans.

## Weitz highlights the importance of the fan base.

“Since the inception back in 1980, without the support of the fan base, it would not have lasted. There have been a lot of people in the last 50 years that have invested a lot of their lives into this team.”

## The love and commitment these players have for the sport is one of a kind.

“Every other high school sport, you don’t have to up and move your life to play. We have some of the best athletes from all over the world, right here in Dubuque, that’s pretty special.” The United States Hockey League (USHL) is a unique league in itself, bringing in young players with potential and helping them grow. Therefore, some players leave the league and go to Division 1 Universities, while others go straight to The National Hockey League (NHL).

**In the past year, The Fighting Saints broke a record with nine total NHL Draft picks.** Nine players were drafted in the 2024 NHL Draft, going to a total of eight different NHL teams. Yet, it’s about more than just success for The Fighting Saints, it’s also about tradition and honor.

**The roots of history run deep,** since the founding of the team in the 80’s, to today. The Fighting Saint’s Program lives by the phrase, “Saint for Life”. This phrase has created a family-like culture that always supports their players, even after they depart from Dubuque.

**Coach Jim Montgomery coined the phrase, “Saint for Life.”** This phrase especially came true after the team moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma in the mid 1990’s, which brought a new team called the Thunderbirds, al-

*“This ice rink was built seat by seat, brick by brick, from the very own hands of our fans.”*

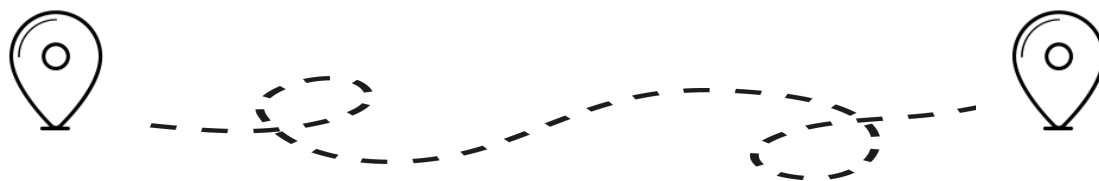
lowing Dubuque to keep hockey in town. It wasn’t till 2010 that The Fighting Saints became The Dubuque Fighting Saints again and returned. It was a joyous return of the team, soon followed by a new team that would make history. Johnny Gaudreau, played for The Fighting Saints that year and left his positive legacy on Dubuque.

**“They put Dubuque on the map”**, said Weitz. The year Johnny Gaudreau came to Dubuque really built the program to what it is today, putting Dubuque, Iowa on the map as a destination for hockey. This past year, The Dubuque Fighting Saints remembered Gaudreau with his family and retired his number in his honor.



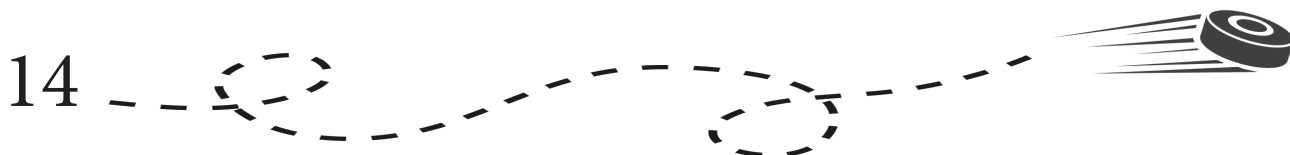


## *Putting Dubuque on the map*



“The team wouldn’t be here without the backing from the community.  
It’s hard to put a price tag on that.”

Credit: Dubuque Fighting Saints



# **TOP SHELF TAKES**

Where you can find the hottest stories on hockey, with  
only the top takes.