

Hat Trick!

Three Hockey Stories

Irene Punt

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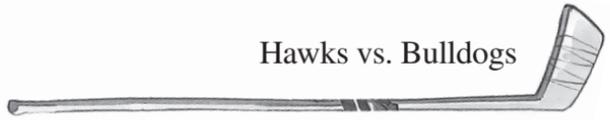
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Hawks vs. Bulldogs

Tom's heart raced as the team filed out of the dressing room. He looked up when they reached the ice. The stands were full. He could see his grandma and grandpa. They waved.

The gates opened and the players stepped onto the ice. They skated in circles and



warmed up with quick starts and stops. The clock counted down. At the whistle, the team gathered around their goalie and cheered loud and strong, “HAWKS! HAWKS! HAWKS!” Tom’s line took their places on the ice while the rest of the players headed for the box.

Tom set up at centre. He looked quickly at the opposing player. His Northland Bulldogs jersey was tucked into the right side of his pants. This was exactly how Tom wore his own jersey, which was exactly how Wayne Gretzky had worn his. Tom looked at the



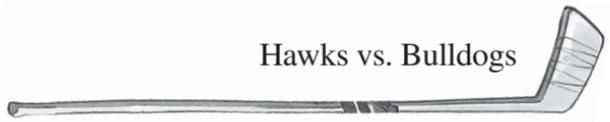
player's face. He could see some red hair poking out of the helmet. "Harty?" he asked.

A smile spread across his face. "Is that you?"

"Tom?" replied Harty. His smile was wider.

The ref dropped the puck. Tom took the





faceoff and raced down the ice. He passed the puck to Mark. Mark passed it back to Tom. A Bulldog blocked him. Harty grabbed the puck and shot it along the boards. Tom and Harty raced for the puck, only to be stopped by the whistle the instant Harty touched it.

“Number fifteen Northland — two minutes for tripping,” shouted the ref.

A Bulldog headed for the penalty box as both coaches waved their players off the ice. The lines changed.

Tom gulped back some water, watching



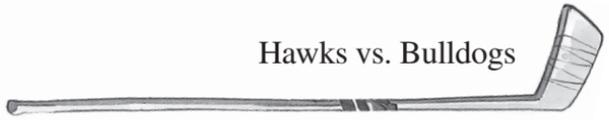
The Wicked Slapshot

the game and waiting for his next shift. The puck criss-crossed the ice end to end, again and again.



C'mon, Hawks! Tom willed a power play goal. C'mon! C'mon! There are only four Bulldogs out there!

Mark dug the puck out of the corner. He passed it to Stuart. Stuart took a shot, aiming for the five-hole. The Bulldogs' goalie blocked it, rebounding the puck to Mark. Mark took a shot. Tom looked at the

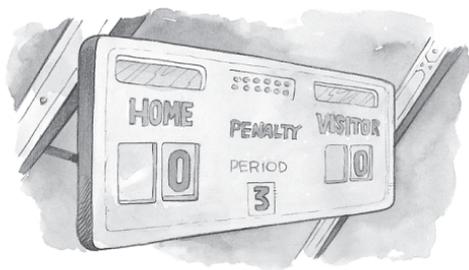


clock. Two minutes were up. A new Bulldog launched onto the ice.

Coach Howie smiled. “This is a great game. These Bulldogs are good. We can’t let up. It’s going to take everything we have to win this tournament.”

Tom moved along the bench. He kept his eyes on #66 of the Bulldogs.

“Go Hawks, go!” Tom cheered with his team, banging his stick on the boards.



Breakaway

Near the end of the third period, the score was still 0–0.

A Bulldog iced the puck. The whistle blew. The lines changed.

Tom set up at the faceoff, facing Harty. Their eyes focused on the ice as the linesman dropped the puck. Tom won the faceoff and dropped it back to Stuart. Stuart handled



the puck as though it were glued to his stick. A Bulldog player was bearing down on him so he passed the puck over to Mark. The pass was perfect, but a Bulldog winger stole the puck and passed it to Harty.

Suddenly Harty had a breakaway! He roared down the ice, his head up and his eyes on Jordan. Mark and Tom chased after him, but Harty had the jump on them. He wound up and let it fly with a wicked slapshot. The puck whizzed through the air, hitting the back of the net “top shelf” — where Momma hides the cookies.



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The ref's whistle blew as he signalled.

“Goal!”

The Bulldog bench screamed and the crowd went crazy.

Tom looked at Harty, who was bending over to catch his breath. For a split second, he saw the number 66 upside-down on the back of his jersey. It looked like . . . 99!

Tom felt bad for Jordan. His shutout record was blown.





He felt bad for their defence. And with three seconds left in the game, he felt bad for his team, about to lose and be no longer “undefeated.” But Tom felt good about something.

He and Harty set up for the last faceoff. As the ref held up the puck between them, Tom flipped his stick around and tapped the butt end twice.

The teams and the spectators looked puzzled.

Harty smiled at Tom. “Thanks.”

The puck dropped. The clock counted

The Wicked Slapshot



down 3 . . . 2 . . . 1 . . . *Buzzzzzzzzzz.*

The Bulldogs circled around Harty, cheering and celebrating.

As the Zamboni's engine revved, the



teams skated into lines and shook hands.

When Tom and Harty met, they both flipped their sticks around and tapped the butt ends twice.

Tom's team filed back to their dressing room and slumped on the benches, still in shock.

"What was *that*?" asked Jordan.

"One wicked slapshot," said Tom. "One wicked slapshot!"

"I didn't even see it coming," sighed Jordan.