Portland Rosebuds

The Rosebuds, Portland's first professional ice hockey team, was the first United States-based franchise to compete for the Stanley Cup. A member of the Pacific Coast Hockey Association (PCHA), the Rosebuds began as the New Westminster (B.C.) Royals and moved to Portland in 1914 in pursuit of a bigger arena. They played their home games at the Ice Hippodrome, located between Northwest 20th and Northwest Marshall.

After a mediocre first season that saw the team finish out of the playoffs, the Rosebuds won the PCHA title the next year. In that era, the competition for the Stanley Cup pitted the PCHA champion against the National Hockey Association (NHA) champion. In 1916, the NHA champion was the Montreal Canadiens, who had yet to win any of their record twenty-four cup championships. The rules aided their cause, however, as the best of five series was to be played entirely in one locale—a cost-cutting maneuver that made the NHA representative the only home team. That meant that the Rosebuds had to make the cross-continent trek to play in front of a hostile Montreal crowd for each contest.

Portland won the first game 2-1 before dropping the next two. They tied the series by winning game four. In game five, the Canadiens, backstopped by George Vezina (for whom the annual award for best professional goaltender is currently named), stymied the Rosebuds. While a goal by center Tommy Dunderdale (inducted into the NHL Hall of Fame in 1974) gave Portland some hope, Montreal held on to win 2-1, clinching the series.

As was common practice at the time, the Rosebuds had already engraved "Portland Ore./PCHA Champions/1915-16" on the Stanley Cup, making them the first U.S. team etched on the trophy. That inscription remains to this day on what is known as the 1909 Base Ring, although Montreal added "Defeated Portland" after the Rosebuds' name.

The Rosebuds suffered through two losing seasons before relocating to Victoria, B.C., where they became the Aristocrats. The name "Rosebuds" was resurrected for a 1925 Western Hockey League team and a 1946 West Coast Baseball Association franchise and is the current moniker for the dance troupe that leads cheers for the Portland Winterhawks junior hockey team.

Written by Shawn Daley

Further Reading:

"Fans and Players Scrap in Last Game: Final Play of World's Title Series is Marked by Many Fist Fights." *Morning Oregonian*, April 1, 1916, 12.

Mancuso, Jim and Scott Peterson. *Hockey in Portland.* Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2007.

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