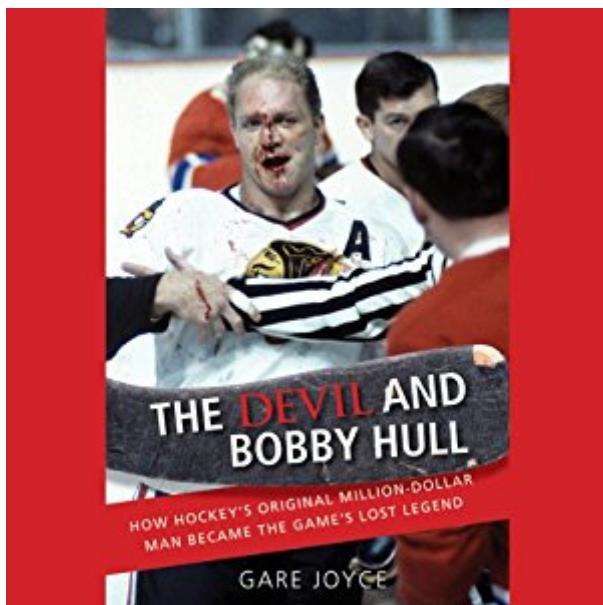


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# The Devil And Bobby Hull: How Hockey's Original Million-Dollar Man Became The Game's Lost Legend



## Synopsis

An award-winning writer sets the record straight on hockey's forgotten golden boy - Bobby Hull.... In his prime, few could dispute Bobby Hull's athletic brilliance - the first to have five fifty-goal seasons, the highest scorer on the 1976 Canada Cup team, the first to use the slap shot as a scoring weapon, and the first hockey player to sign a million-dollar contract. With his body-builder torso and his 100 mph volleys across a rink, the world of hockey glory was his to lose. And he did. With his publicized marital troubles and his defection from the NHL to the WHA, Hull's star began to fall, leaving him broke and in exile from the game. In *The Devil and Bobby Hull*, this once great hockey player and pioneer is finally given his due. Not only are Hull's remarkable on-ice achievements finally put in perspective, so, too, are his achievements off the rink - including endorsements for a wide array of products (rare for an NHL player) and his appearance on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* a record four times. And the book details how Hull's battle with the owners of the Chicago Blackhawks - challenging the reserve clause in his contract, a move that enabled him to move to the WHA - helped other players follow him. The author places Hull squarely in the pantheon of other hockey greats, including Gordie Howe, Bobby Orr, and Wayne Gretzky - and makes the case that he is the game's most influential and important player. This full, unauthorized story of Hull's life - that doesn't sidestep the controversies (including the domestic violence tainting his private life) - details Hull's recent reconciliation with the Chicago Blackhawks. A candid look at one of hockey's most gifted and controversial figures, *The Devil and Bobby Hull* tells the story of his extraordinary career and life - and why this remarkable man has not faded into oblivion.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The author was a little rough on Hull, but I found out things that I previously didn't know about the man. Good, bad or indifferent, he's still a hero to me.

I like anything about the Blackhawks and Bobby Hull...this book is not so much "devil" but it has offered some stories I did not know about....a good read....

I'm a very big fan of Gare Joyce and his writing style, ever since I read "Future Greats and Heartbreaks," in addition to his draft articles on ESPN.com. This book was written beautifully, flowed perfectly, and was extremely interesting to read. Unfortunately, it does seem to portray Bobby Hull in a bit of a dark light, but, like any book, if you read with a bit of skepticism and question certain pieces of it, you really can get a lot out of it. I got some interesting tidbits out of this book, and would recommend it to any hockey fan that have a love of the game. It is not quite a five-star book, but once again, it is still extremely interesting and worthwhile to pick up.

I grew up in the Chicago area during the 60's and idolized Robert Marvin Hull like everybody else. This book is perplexing to me. I don't know why it was written. The author does not paint a pretty picture of Bobby. Maybe a pretty picture could not be painted. But, again, why was the book written. Bobby never killed anybody so I don't understand why someone would take the time to write such a negative book about a guy who retired 30 years ago. This book is anything but flattering to Bobby. If you like him don't buy the book. It seemed to me the author went out of his way to criticize Bobby at every turn. You get a sense when reading books as to whether the author is trying to be fair and when he is simply trying to make every event conform to the authors biased opinions. This book is not fair and is downright nasty. I was very displeased with this book. Don't buy it.

With the utmost respect, please consider this review to be a dissenting opinion from some of the previous written reviews of this book. I grew up in Chicago following all the sports teams in the late 1960's and 1970's, and although the Cubs sported a host of future Hall of Famers, the Bears had Gale Sayers and Dick Butkus and the White Sox had Luis Aparicio and Hoyt Wilhelm, Bobby Hull was the most charismatic of all. He was the show. And, true to the book, he was an ambassador. When my Dad took me to a game when I was still in single digits, sitting behind the penalty box, Bobby Hull skated right up, without being asked, grabbed a pen and asked for my program. He was larger than life. This book plumbs through Bobby's career and his life. Like the life of any real life

hero, it is flawed. He has acted venal at times. He has skeletons in his closet. He has abused and been abused. It is not always comfortable to read. If one reads a thorough biography of FDR, one sees his warts, his pettiness at times, his lapses of character and misguided decisions that go hand in hand with his greatness and triumphs. So it is with Bobby Hull. Arguably the greatest player of his generation, almost certainly the most influential and the most courageous, today, from the distance of 40 years, it looks like the NHL has abandoned its' greatest leader. For a simple farmer without a college education, Hull tried to be a businessman. He did well for awhile, and fell on hard times. So have many people with MBA's. He had foresight in seeing the talent of the European hockey players and bringing them to North America, where they changed the complexion of hockey. He personally took it upon himself to promote the WHA, and will the league to succeed. His divorce brought scandal upon himself, a measure of depression, and damage to his reputation. It is part of his story. Less the scandal, millions who have undergone divorce have felt the same debilitation. I found this to be a highly readable, interesting and worthwhile account of one of my boyhood heroes. Does it diminish his legacy for me? Not at all. Maybe his flaws, like his hockey career, are larger than life. So be it. I would highly recommend this book.

I must admit, having grown up when Bobby Hull was still playing in the NHL and WHA leagues, I was intrigued by the title. I also have met Bobby Hull personally and my impression of him is that he is genuine individual, with a love for the game, but also a human being with failings and flaws. The book hinges on Hull and his ascent as the first millionaire face of the WHA (World Hockey Association) just following its inception. The first few chapters are a historical look at his playing life in the early '60s with the Black Hawks, without much relevance to the "Devil" in his life as referred to in the title. I am not sure why the author has spent so much time in giving readers a play by play of specific games in Hull's early career, I expected that this book would have delved into his personal struggles and the demons that plagued him during and after his playing life. I found that this was not really a book about this, but rather a historical version of the ups and downs in his career. Unfortunately, I think the title is misleading, and personally I didn't find it to be an engaging read. I had difficulty in staying motivated to finish it, as it was heavily directed at educating the reader about the World Hockey Association, and the effect that Hull had on joining it. He had a much similar impact as Wayne Gretzky or Gordie Howe on joining the WHA, so other than the fact he signed a million dollar contract, this was a story that could have been told about other high profile players. If you are expecting a juicy read about a man who took advantage of the excesses available to professional athletes, you won't find it in this book. It was very evident the author was

picking his words carefully, as well as writing a significant amount of filler, much of which can be found in many accounts of Hull's playing career. Too bad.

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