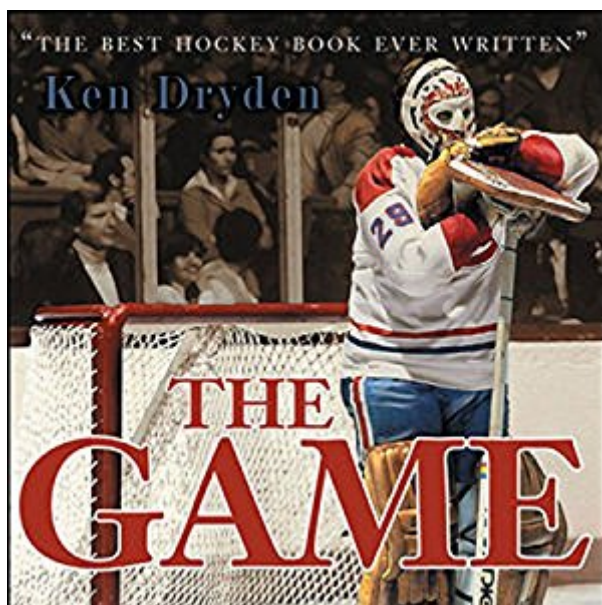


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# The Game: 20th Anniversary Edition



## Synopsis

Widely acknowledged as the best hockey book ever written and lauded by Sports Illustrated as one of the Top 10 Sports Books of All Time, *The Game* is a reflective and thought-provoking look at a life in hockey. Intelligent and insightful, former Montreal Canadiens goalie and former President of the Toronto Maple Leafs, Ken Dryden captures the essence of the sport and what it means to all hockey fans. He gives us vivid and affectionate portraits of the characters - Guy Lafleur, Larry Robinson, Guy Lapointe, Serge Savard, and coach Scotty Bowman among them - that made the Canadiens of the 1970s one of the greatest hockey teams in history. But beyond that, Dryden reflects on life on the road, in the spotlight, and on the ice, offering up a rare inside look at the game of hockey and an incredible personal memoir. This commemorative edition marks the 20th anniversary of *The Game*'s original publication. It includes black and white photography from the Hockey Hall of Fame and a new chapter from the author. Take a journey to the heart and soul of the game with this timeless hockey classic.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Best Sellers Rank: #25 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Sports & Outdoors > Hockey  
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## Customer Reviews

There are two well-received sports books that I've read and thought "Boy, this is overrated." One is Daniel Okrent's "Nine Innings." The other is this one. Dryden is all over the place, talking about a game, then a player, then something else, then the player again. It's kind of a mess. Plus the amount of words in italics is so ridiculous it becomes mind-numbing. Sorry folks, I just don't get the big deal. If you're looking for a great hockey book, pick up Wayne Coffey's "The Boys of Winter." Unless you're a Canadiens fan, it isn't essential.

Ken Dryden is perhaps best known to the casual U.S. sports fan as the color commentator for hockey during the 1980 Winter Olympics. Only the hockey enthusiasts realize that he also authored "The Game", which achieved rarified air in the sports book genre. Not only did it almost instantly become the best hockey book of all time, it is one of the most erudite, intellectual books in the entire sports genre that has been written. Mr. Dryden, star goalie for the vaunted Montreal Canadiens, is widely regarded as one of the best at his position to ever play. He is also widely regarded as one who retired at least a few seasons too early. It is from this foundation that "The Game" builds from. The book essentially charts Mr. Dryden's decision to retire from the game based on a fading lack of drive and interest in playing at that level (he was studying for a degree in law at the time), and then follows he and the Canadiens' routine through a portion of a season. He provides the reader a very unique look at the travel, the routine of practice, the struggle to maintain team performance at a championship-caliber level, the games themselves, and the game of hockey in general. In the case of the Canadiens teams he played on, he doesn't convey a sense that there was a raucous, salacious environment. Even though he does hint at the struggle to satisfy the individual egos, Mr. Dryden doesn't linger on it too long, choosing instead to put the reader inside his mind - in a manner of speaking - as he observes, prepares, and plays the game. If there is a drawback to "The Game", it is that its focus on hockey - although Mr. Dryden wisely avoids getting into too much technical detail about the game - and intellectual tone may not be for a wide audience. Those that take the time to read it will take away a lot of very interesting observations on the mindset of a professional athlete, regardless of sport. "The Game" is indeed worthy of the high praise it has acquired since its publication, and it is still relevant after all these years.

"The Game" is a contemplative account of a unique player's life spent with hockey. Much of the book is about Dryden's Canadiens teammates, life on the road, dealing with Scotty Bowman, and other aspects of being a professional hockey player in the 1970s. The individual portraits are thoughtfully and honestly written. Younger readers will not recognize every name, but will still appreciate the team dynamic Dryden is able to convey. The book is intensely personal. There are poems, superstitions, and odd reflections ("Even now, watching TV or reading a newspaper, I like to have a ball in my hands, fingering its laces, its seams, its nubby surface, until my fingertips are so alive and alert that the ball and I seem drawn to each other (p. 133)). The candor is appealing, if a bit over the top at times. There are frequent digressions into non-hockey topics, but these are short and not insufferable. I really enjoyed Dryden's outline of the history of the sport: how the rules

evolved over time, what it means to Canada's identity, and how commercialization and the way youth play the game today have changed the sport. Dryden is a gifted writer, and this book is a must read for hockey fans.

Outstanding book. This book isn't just for goalies, it's for anyone who plays hockey and longs for the days when money and "systems" hadn't corrupted the sport. Dryden is equally as good at describing the game as he was at playing the game.

Intelligent book about hockey and the Canadian/Canadiens tradition during the 70s as compared to now. Not really for goon hockey or gossip fanatics but for hockey purists who want to know about what it was like as a pro not only on the ice but the downtime off the ice. Great stories like how Dryden and his teammates started playing in backyards on lakes, rivers, backyard rinks and how much fun hockey was to them. Nothing better than having a job that you loved playing as a kid. I'm now a born again Bruins fan but I grew up as a Canadiens fan in New England and it was great to hear about the players on the Canadiens and how they prepared and spent their time on and off the ice in the locker rooms, travelling and what they were like as teammates. We all saw Guy Lapointe as a serious clutch player on the ice but who knew he was the jokester who kept things loose. I also read Phil Esposito's book and the Canadiens seem mild compared to the crazy antics of the Bruins. Brought back memories of getting to the old Boston Garden early with my father and yelling over the glass to Cournoyer and Richard in French to come over, they seemed like good guys.

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