

"All the News  
That's Fit to Print"

# The New York Times

**New England Edition**  
Today, partly to mostly cloudy, hi 34. Tonight, snow, windy, low 27. Tomorrow, snow ending, total 6-inches, clearing later, windy, high 33. Weather map is on Page A20

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**'This is not necessarily about hockey. It's about a community.'**

CHRIS BROWN, an organizer of the first 1883 Black Ice Pond Hockey Championship to be played this weekend in Concord, N.H.



ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL ARCHIVES, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Lower School Pond at St. Paul's School in the late 1800s. It is said to be the site of the first organized hockey game in the U.S.

## On Frozen Pond: Playing Up a Hockey Legacy

By BRION O'CONNOR

CONCORD, N.H. — When Chris Brown, 40, laces up his skates and pulls on his Concord Budmen jersey on Friday, he will be re-connecting with the hockey gods who have smiled on New Hampshire's capital for almost 130 years. The Budmen are among 50 teams, more than 30 of them from this city of 42,000, that will participate in the first 1883 Black Ice Pond Hockey Championship, a celebration of Concord's singular ties to hockey played in the elements.

"When I was growing up in Concord, there used to be areas flooded in most of the parks," Brown, a tournament organizer, said. "Then, over the years, those just slowly went away, whether it was lack of interest or the city not having the funds to do it."

The tournament at White Park, just up the road from the Capitol, is a fund-raiser to give new life to outdoor hockey in the city. For players and spectators, it promises a tableau resembling what many hockey historians think was the first organized game played in the United States, on Nov. 17, 1883.

It happened two miles away, on Lower School Pond on the campus of St. Paul's, a boarding school whose students have included Astors and Vanderbilts, future United States senators and at least one N.H.L. player-to-be, Don Sweeney, the former Boston Bruin and now the team's assistant general manager.

The term black ice was coined at St. Paul's, in reference to the smooth-as-glass surface that set when temperatures first plummeted, leading to "black ice holidays," when classes would be canceled so students could skate. According to the school's archives, hockey was played on campus as early as the 1860s, the modern game taking hold in the 1880s with the arrival of two Canadian students — George Perley of Ottawa and Arthur Whitney of Montreal.

"When I was a student here, there were eight rinks on that pond," said the school's rector, Bill Matthews, a former player and coach at St. Paul's. "Every afternoon, you'd hear the pucks banging against the boards."

St. Paul's is also where Hobey Baker

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ABOVE, JIM COLE/ASSOCIATED PRESS; ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL

More than a century later, students are still playing hockey on the Lower School Pond. The annual award for college hockey's best player is named after Hobey Baker, who played at St. Paul's in the early 1900s.

