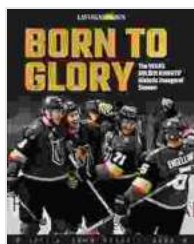


# The Vegas Golden Knights' Historic Inaugural Season: A Tale of Underdogs and Triumph

In the annals of sports history, the story of the Vegas Golden Knights stands as a testament to the power of determination, resilience, and the indomitable spirit of competition. As the first National Hockey League (NHL) team in Las Vegas, the Golden Knights defied all expectations by capturing the hearts of fans and becoming a true Cinderella story in their inaugural season.

## Building the Team: A Risky Bet That Paid Off



### Born to Glory: The Vegas Golden Knights' Historic Inaugural Season

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 12962 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 128 pages  
Lending : Enabled



The creation of the Vegas Golden Knights was a bold experiment in professional hockey. In 2016, the NHL announced the expansion of the league, and Las Vegas was awarded one of two new franchises. The expansion draft rules allowed the Golden Knights to select unprotected

players from the existing 30 NHL teams, effectively building a team from scratch.



**EXPANSION DRAFT** **VEGAS GOLDEN KNIGHTS**

<b>FORWARDS (14)</b>	<b>DEFENSE (13)</b>	<b>GOALIES (3)</b>
PIERRE-EDOUARD BELLEMAIRE	ALEXEI EMELIN	JEAN-FRANCOIS BERUBE
CONNOR BRICKLEY	DERYK ENGELLAND	MARC-ANDRE FLEURY
WILLIAM CARRIER	JASON GARRISON	CALVIN PICKARD
CODY EAKIN	BRAYDEN MCNABB	
ERIK HAULA	JON MERRILL	
WILLIAM KARLSSON	MARC METHOT	
BRENDAN LEIPSIC	COLIN MILLER	
OSCAR LINDBERG	GRIFFIN REINHART	
JONATHAN MARCHESSAULT	LUCA SBISA	
JAMES NEAL	DAVID SCHLENKO	
TOMAS NOSEK	NATE SCHMIDT	
DAVID PERRON	CLAYTON STONER	
TEEMU PULKKINEN	TREVOR VAN RIEMSDYK	
CHRIS THORBURN		

**ACQUIRED VIA TRADE**

- SHEA THEODORE (D)
- DAVID CLARKSON (F)
- REILLY SMITH (F)
- ALEX TUCH (F)
- MIKHAIL GRABOVSKI (F)
- JAKE BISCHOFF (D)
- NIKITA GUSEV (F)

10 DRAFT PICKS

Many questioned the wisdom of putting a new team in a non-traditional hockey market like Las Vegas, known more for its casinos and entertainment than its ice rinks. However, general manager George McPhee and his staff meticulously crafted a roster that blend of talented young prospects, seasoned veterans, and players with a chip on their shoulder.

### **A Magical Regular Season: Surpassing Expectations**

The Golden Knights took the ice for their inaugural game on October 10, 2017, facing the Dallas Stars. Despite facing a team with far more experience, the Knights pulled off a stunning 2-1 victory, setting the tone for a truly unforgettable season.



As the season progressed, the Golden Knights continued to surprise. They won 13 of their first 18 games, establishing themselves as a legitimate contender in the Pacific Division. Led by the scoring prowess of William Karlsson, and the solid goaltending of Marc-André Fleury, the Knights quickly became a fan favorite.

The team's success was not without its share of adversity. In November, they lost key players such as Shea Theodore and Nate Schmidt to injuries. However, they never wavered, demonstrating incredible depth and resilience. The Knights finished the regular season with a record of 51-24-7, earning the second-seed in the Western Conference playoffs.

### **A Playoff Run for the Ages: Defying the Odds**

The Golden Knights' playoff journey was equally remarkable. They opened the playoffs with a sweep of the Los Angeles Kings, then stunned the San Jose Sharks in the second round, coming back from a 3-1 series deficit. In the Western Conference Finals, they faced the Winnipeg Jets, who were considered the favorites.



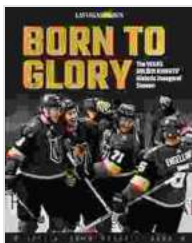
Once again, the Golden Knights defied the odds, winning the series in five games. The victory sent them to the Stanley Cup Final, where they faced the Washington Capitals. The Capitals, led by superstar Alex Ovechkin, were heavily favored. However, the Golden Knights refused to be intimidated.

The Stanley Cup Final was a back-and-forth affair, with each team trading wins. The Knights were within one game of hoisting the Stanley Cup, but ultimately fell to the Capitals in five games. Despite the heartbreaking loss, the Golden Knights had etched their name in hockey history.

## A Lasting Legacy: Inspiring a City and Beyond

The Vegas Golden Knights' inaugural season was truly unforgettable, not only for the team and its fans but also for the city of Las Vegas itself. The Knights brought a sense of unity and pride to a city known for its transient population. They became a symbol of hope and inspiration, proving that anything is possible with hard work, determination, and a belief in oneself.

Today, the Vegas Golden Knights remain one of the most popular and successful teams in the NHL. Their inaugural season will forever be remembered as a time of unwavering belief, incredible success, and a lasting legacy that continues to inspire both hockey fans and people around the world.



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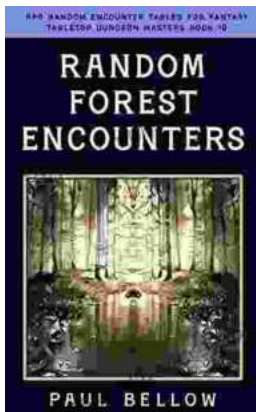






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