

Celtics on Ice

The Boston Celtics Midnight Game in 1952

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On Thursday evening, February 21, 1952, the Fort Wayne Pistons were in Boston preparing to take on the Boston Celtics. Both teams were riding one game losing streaks, each having dropped a road contest two days earlier. The Celtics were in second place in the Eastern Division; the Pistons were a distant fourth in the West. It was just another night in the early days of the NBA – except that the Pistons-Celtics game would start at midnight, a first in the history of the league. The story behind why the game was held at that late hour illustrates the willingness of the NBA’s early promoters to try unusual ideas in order to sell tickets.

In 1952, the NBA was in just its third season of existence. Formed in 1949 when the BAA and NBL merged, the league originally had 17 members, but by the fall of 1951 only 11 remained, and many of those franchises were on shaky financial ground. College basketball remained more popular, though it had been weakened by a series of betting scandals, and the most talented college players in the country viewed the NBA as just one option for a post-collegiate career. Many chose to pursue a *real* career with a corporation, such as Phillips Petroleum, that sponsored a “pseudo-amateur” AAU team on the side. Even the best African-American players, who were largely excluded from the NBA (there were only six black athletes on NBA rosters in 1952), could find more lucrative basketball jobs playing for the Harlem Globetrotters and other barnstorming teams.

Fan support for the NBA was hardly stellar compared with other pro sports, such as the National Hockey League or Major League Baseball. During the 1950-51 season, the NBA reportedly drew a total of 1.2 million fans to its 349 games, an average of 3,576 per contest. Meanwhile, NHL teams averaged 11,252 fans per game; the Boston Bruins average of 8,819 was the lowest in the league. In baseball, even the hapless St. Louis Browns, the worst-drawing team in the American League, averaged 3,815 fans in 1951, while five teams (Yankees, Indians, Red Sox, White Sox, and Dodgers) each outdrew the entire NBA while playing just 77 home games apiece.¹

Money was always on the minds of NBA owners, and Walter Brown of the Celtics was no exception. Brown had founded the team in 1946 as a charter member of the BAA, and ran both the Boston Garden and the Boston Arena. Brown frequently blew off steam about lack of fan support for his Celtics to the press. As recently as early December 1951, Brown had reacted to a crowd of 2,520 (during a successful 6-1 stretch for the team at home) by telling reporters, “I’ll throw the whole works out of the Garden ... if something doesn’t happen soon in the way of improved attendances. ... I thought that when I gave them a good club they would come out. But I guess Boston fans just don’t want basketball.”²

Brown’s Celtics had posted losing records during their first four seasons, but the arrival of Bob Cousy, Ed Macauley, and Red Auerbach in 1950 changed their fortunes immediately. The team finished 39-30 and set a new club attendance record, drawing over a thousand more fans per game than their previous high-water mark in 1948-49. Still, according to figures collected by author David George Surdam, in his book, *The Rise of the National Basketball Association*, Brown had reason to complain. In 1951-52 the

Celtics payroll was the highest in the league, while their home gate receipts ran 20 to 30 percent behind their rivals in New York, Minneapolis, and Syracuse.³

Brown and his fellow owners would leverage the popularity of individual players wherever possible. Ads for Celtics games, especially in the late 1940's, frequently listed the college affiliations of key players, since the general public was more familiar with the college game. The addition of Cousy, a former star at Holy Cross in nearby Worcester, Massachusetts, had helped boost Celtics attendance, but the lack of professional-quality players from New England schools put the Celtics at a disadvantage compared to teams such as the New York Knicks and Philadelphia Warriors who stocked up to half of their clubs with local talent.⁴

Creative ticket promotions were common across the league. In the fall of 1947 and 1948 the Celtics placed ads in the *Boston Globe* asking fans to "Be An Original Celtic!" by signing up for a booster club. The first 5,000 fans to return the coupon to the Garden would be eligible to buy one ticket for each Celtics regular season home game, regularly priced at \$1.25, for just 75 cents (the best seats in the house, priced at \$1.80, were excluded from the promotion).⁵ Students were usually let in for 60 cents, no coupons or club membership required, but by the early 1950's Brown offered additional discounts to those who joined the "Junior Boston Celtics Booster" club.⁶ Two days before Christmas 1951 the Celtics unveiled another gimmick: Dollar Day, in which all tickets were sold for a dollar, general admission, even for the seats on the floor (which had risen in price to \$2.40 by 1950). The promotion was successful enough to be repeated several times later that season. These discounts do not seem significant today, but at the time you could buy a box of Corn Flakes for 29 cents and sirloin steak for a dollar a pound.⁷

Brown also left no stone unturned when it came to packing in extra attractions on game day. Like most of his fellow owners, Brown would book a preliminary game (or two) before as many Celtics games as possible, and throw in a halftime attraction as well. Contests featuring high school or semi-pro teams such as a new edition of the Boston Whirlwinds were a staple, and were promoted alongside the Celtics game in ads in the *Boston Globe* and other local newspapers. [See "CelticsPromotions.xlsx" for a detailed list.] Brown also tried games between YMCA teams, wheelchair games featuring disabled military veterans, and local junior college teams. Beginning in February 1951, Brown occasionally scheduled Boston Olympics hockey games against various Eastern Hockey League foes immediately after Celtics games. "Pics" season ticket holders could purchase tickets for these doubleheaders at a discount, while the rest of the public were charged the normal rate for a Celtics game, thereby getting to watch the hockey game for free. Fans also got to watch the Garden's bull gang remove the basketball floor and convert the arena into a hockey rink between games.⁸

On February 3, 1950, the Garden hosted its first NBA doubleheader, featuring the Chicago Stags and the Baltimore Bullets in the opener and the Anderson Packers against the Celtics in the nightcap.⁹ NBA doubleheaders would become quite frequent in later years, but were still somewhat of a novelty. Only 4,878 fans showed up at the Garden that night, and Brown did not try to host another twin bill until January 16, 1952; that doubleheader would be postponed when a snowstorm forced the Baltimore Bullets to pull out of the opening game against the Knicks. Instead, the two teams squared off in Boston as part of a doubleheader in March.¹⁰

Season	Overall	@Boston	Season	Overall	@Boston
1948-49	16	0	1960-61	51	8
1949-50	23	1	1961-62	53	8
1950-51	4	0	1962-63	33	8
1951-52	13	1	1963-64	19	5

1952-53	51	10	1964-65	25	5
1953-54	51 ¹¹	8	1965-66	24	4
1954-55	38	7	1966-67	19	4
1955-56	44	8	1967-68	27	4
1956-57	46	11	1968-69	19	4
1957-58	46	5	1969-70	11	3
1958-59	42	5	1970-71	10	2
1959-60	41	5	1971-72	2	0
			TOTAL	708	116

Figure 1: NBA Doubleheaders, and NBA Doubleheaders Held in Boston, Per Season

The later proliferation of doubleheaders led to teams playing a large percentage of their games at neutral sites, though in some cases a neutral site was used even for a single game in an attempt to boost attendance. The Celtics would take full advantage of playing away from home when they could, though not significantly out of proportion when compared with the rest of the NBA.

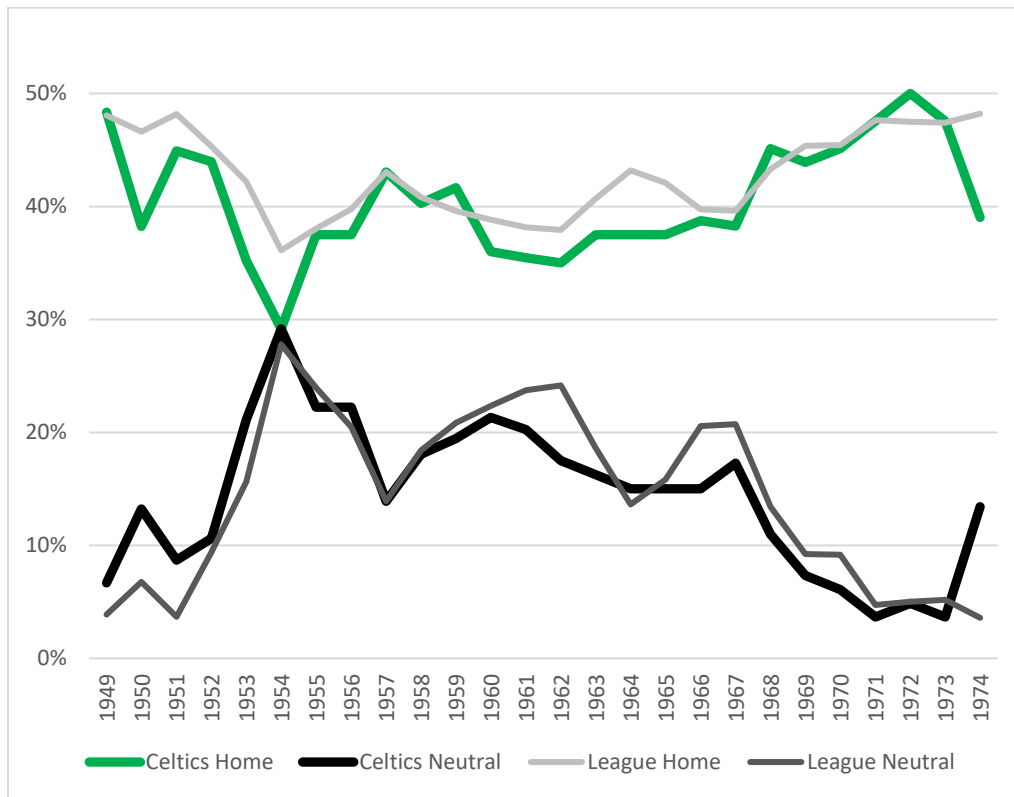


Figure 2: Percentage of NBA Games Played at Home and Neutral Sites

Brown and his fellow owners had much better luck when they paired an NBA contest with a Harlem Globetrotters game. For example, the Celtics averaged 5,500 fans a game during the 1951-52 season, but topped the 10,000 mark four times. Two of those coincided with a doubleheader featuring a Globetrotters game, and in one those cases, the Celtics had the added advantage of playing George Mikan and the Minneapolis Lakers, who also drew well. A second game against the Lakers, scheduled on the same night as the aborted doubleheader in January, and a rare Sunday night doubleheader against the Knicks followed by a Boston Olympics game, rounded out the list of five-figure crowds. The Celtics averaged

11,890 fans for these four games, compared to an average of just 4,400 fans in their other 24 home games. This pattern repeated itself throughout the league. For example, in 1951-52 the Philadelphia Warriors drew their three largest crowds of the season on nights when the Globetrotters were on the bill (that season, the Warriors usually booked a semi-pro "Main Line League" game as a preliminary contest, featuring local players such as [future NBA coach] Jack Ramsay and [future NBA referee] Earl Strom).¹²

The Celtics poor attendance also caused them to occasionally get bumped from the Garden to the older Boston Arena when more popular events were in town. In 1946, the first home game in team history was relocated due to the Gene Autry Rodeo being in town; the Celtics home openers in 1948 and 1951 were moved for the same reason. On November 4, 1951, the finals of the rodeo roped in a capacity crowd of 13,909 at the Garden while the Celtics drew just 3,012 fans to the Arena for their game against the Indianapolis Olympians.

In October 1951 the Garden-Arena Corporation purchased a controlling interest in the Boston Bruins hockey team, which gave Brown control of his primary tenants.¹³ The Bruins drew nearly sellout crowds at the Garden in the years after World War II, and even in 1951-52, when the Bruins suffered through their worst attendance since the Depression, they still averaged 7,000 fans a game, far more than the 5,973-seat Boston Arena could accommodate. (And by 1955 the Bruins average attendance would be back over 10,000.) Meanwhile, Celtics games without a strong drawing card partner would rarely break the 5,000 mark. As a result, while the Celtics would sporadically play at the Arena through at least October 1959, the Bruins, who had moved from the Arena to the Garden upon the latter's opening in 1928, would not play in the Arena again, except for two games in 1952 due to an accident at the Garden. (A train platform collapse at the adjacent North Station damaged the Garden's ice making equipment on February 25, 1952, three days after the Celtics Midnight Game.)¹⁴

Another form of entertainment that chased the Celtics away from the Garden were ice shows, featuring a cast of male and female figure skaters who blended skating skills with comedy and music into "big musical extravaganzas."¹⁵ The "Ice Follies" had humble beginnings. Founded in November 1936 by brothers Eddie and Roy Shipstad along with Oscar Johnson, a \$3,800 budget had reportedly covered all of the costs that first year.¹⁶ But the program for the 1952 edition of the "Shipstads & Johnson Ice Follies" listed a cast of over 75 skaters, and boasted that the show required a "16-car Special Train" to haul the cast and equipment, including over 700 costumes, from city to city throughout the entire year. The total cost for the tour was estimated at over \$500,000.¹⁷ Meanwhile, John Harris, Walter Brown, and members of the Arena Managers Association of America began their own version of a skating spectacular in 1940 when they created the "Ice Capades," and for a few years, even cooperated with the Shipstads & Johnson team to form a *third* group, the "Ice Cycles," to meet the demand from arena owners around the country (and Canada and Europe) for such shows.¹⁸ The Ice Follies and the Ice Capades each stopped at the Garden for approximately a two-week stay each year; the Capades would arrive shortly after Christmas and stay into the New Year, while the Follies's visit was timed to coincide with February school vacation week and Washington's Birthday.

While an ice show was in town, they would usually put on a performance every night plus matinees on weekends and holidays. That meant that the Bruins and Celtics had to vacate the premises. The Bruins would usually leave Boston for a road trip during these weeks, but the NBA schedule-maker was either less accommodating or Brown was less influential when it came to scheduling the Celtics. From 1947 through 1956 when the Ice Follies were in town, the Bruins played no games in Boston, while the Celtics would play 17 games at the Boston Arena, plus a handful in Providence and Worcester.¹⁹ The only time

the Celtics appeared at the Garden was in 1952, when Brown decided to schedule the Celtics game against the Pistons so it started *after* an 8:30 p.m. Ice Follies performance. Game time would be at midnight.

February 21, 1952 was a cold and snowy day across New England. A storm earlier in the week had dropped nine inches of snow in Boston and two feet or more in northern New England; the latest event proved less significant as four to six inches fell in the Boston metro area. The storm had threatened to postpone the first air raid test in the city of Boston since World War II, but the test went off without a hitch as the citizens of Boston cleared the streets and sought shelter when sirens began blaring at precisely 10:10a.m.²⁰ By 11 p.m., “26-degree temperatures had turned slush on the highways into ice, causing extremely dangerous driving and walking conditions all over Massachusetts” in the words of the *Boston Globe*.²¹ It was in these conditions that 2,368 Celtics fans made their way to the Boston Garden for the first midnight game in team history.

There was no local radio coverage of the game (though WKJG from Ft. Wayne was on hand) and no television cameras present. The late starting time also forced the Massachusetts Transportation Authority (MTA) to provide bus service past their usual shutdown time, and the Boston & Maine railroad planned to run special trains from North Station at 2:15 and 2:30 a.m. along their Fitchburg and Haverhill lines.²² After the Ice Follies performance ended around 11 p.m., the Garden workers installed the basketball floor over the ice with seconds to spare before Midnight, but the game did not begin until 12:19am.²³

The Pistons scored the first four points of the game, but the Celtics took control with a 21-8 run and never trailed after that. The highlight of the early morning action came with two minutes remaining in the first half, when the Pistons’ Fred Schaus hit the Celtics’ Bob Brannum in the face with an elbow while trying to control the basketball near the Celtics basket.²⁴ Jim Cariofiles of the *Boston Herald* reported what happened next: “Bob retaliated with a chop to the ribs that floored the visitor.”²⁵ Brannum was ejected by referee Riley Pitkoff, who spent the next six minutes arguing with Red Auerbach and Pistons coach Polly Birch about the incident (Auerbach wanted Brannum reinstated, and a foul called on Schaus).²⁶

At halftime, with the Celtics leading 39-30, members of the Ice Follies (both male and female) split into two squads, dubbed the “Shipstads” and the “Johnsons,” and played a brief basketball game to entertain the crowd.²⁷ Boston then pulled away in the third quarter and went on to win the game 88-67. The game ended at 2:25 a.m. Bob Cousy led the Celtics with 24 points while Frankie Brian scored 21 for the Pistons.

Walter Brown never scheduled another Celtics game at midnight, but he continued to be creative with his promotions. Less than a month later, he ordered that the Celtics parquet floor be laid from North to South instead of East to West for their game against the Syracuse Nationals on March 12, 1952. (Brown had tried the same gimmick back in the 1947-48 season.) The promotion, designed to provide more seats on the floor between the baskets, went south when Bob Cousy was late due to a flat tire and the Celtics lost 89-71. Clif Keane of the *Globe* speculated that the change altered the shooting background behind the baskets and robbed the Celtics of their usual home-court advantage, and although Brown floated the idea again in 1958, he never tried it again.²⁸

The Celtics would continue to vacate the Garden during February school vacation week until 1957, when they began a tradition of playing a midweek matinee at the Garden that was combined with either another NBA game, a special Ice Follies performance, or the annual *Boston Globe* basketball clinic that

featured Red Auerbach, selected Celtics players, and some opposing players demonstrating basketball techniques to high school and college players and coaches. The most famous of these matinee games took place in 1959, when the Celtics, playing without an injured Bill Russell, set eight NBA records while defeating the Lakers 173-139. The matinees continued on an almost annual basis through 1974, when the Celtics were able to get road trips scheduled during the Follies visits.

The art of promoting sporting events has continued to evolve over the years, to the point where “in-game promotions” provide a constant barrage of activity during breaks in the action, “luxury” seating options create more revenue opportunities, and computer technology makes it easy for teams to charge a sliding scale of prices for tickets based on the quality of their opponent. But in an era when the NBA’s future was far from certain, few promotions were more unique and unusual than the Celtics Midnight Game in February 1952.

Year	Ice Follies	Celtics Notes	Year	Ice Follies	Celtics Notes
1947	2/18 - 3/2	Sun 2/23, Fri 2/28 at Arena 9pm	1964	2/13 - 2/23	Thu 2/20 in Providence, RI
1948	2/17 - 2/29	Sun 2/22, Sun 2/29 at Arena 9pm	1965	2/18 - 2/28	Thu 2/18 in Providence, RI
1949	2/15 - 2/27	Fri 2/18 at Arena 7:30pm Fri 2/25 at Arena 8:30pm	1966	2/17 - 2/27	Thu 2/24 at Garden 2:30pm
1950	2/14 - 2/26	Fri 2/17, Fri 2/24 at Arena 8:30pm	1967	2/16 - 2/25	Thu 2/23 at Garden 2:30pm; Harlem Magicians game 1pm
1951	2/13 - 2/25	Fri 2/16, Wed 2/21 at Arena 8:30 Sun 2/18, Sun 2/25 at Arena 3pm	1968	2/13 - 2/25	Tue 2/20 at Garden 2:30pm; 16 th <i>Globe</i> clinic at 10:30am ²⁹
1952	2/12 - 2/24	Thu 2/21 at Garden (midnight)	1969	2/12 - 2/23	Tue 2/18 at Garden 2:30pm; 17 th <i>Globe</i> clinic 10am
1953	2/17- 3/1	Sun 2/22 at Arena 2:30pm Wed 2/25 at Arena 9pm	1970	2/14 - 2/23	No home games
1954	2/16 - 2/28	<i>Sun 2/21 in Providence, RI; Mon 2/22 in Worcester, MA</i>	1971	2/10 - 2/21	Tue 2/16 at Garden 2pm
1955	2/15 - 2/27	Sun 2/20 at Arena 2:30pm	1972	2/16 - 2/27	Tue 2/22 at Garden 2pm
1956	2/14 - 2/27	Sun 2/19 and Sun 2/26 at Arena 2:30pm	1973	2/14 - 2/25	Tue 2/20 at Garden 2pm
1957	2/12 - 2/25	Thu 2/21 at Garden 4:15pm (NBA DH); 2/24 in Providence, RI	1974	2/12 - 2/24	Tue 2/19 at Garden 2pm
1958	2/18 - 3/2	Thu 2/20 at Garden 4pm (NBA DH); 2/23 in Providence, RI	1975	2/11 - 2/23	No home games
1959	2/17 - 3/1	Fri 2/27 at Garden 3:15pm; Harlem Magicians game 1:15pm	1976	2/10 - 2/23	No home games
1960	2/16 - 2/28	Fri 2/16 at Garden 1:30pm with Follies after the game	1977	2/15 - 2/27	Tue 2/15 in Hartford, CT ³⁰
1961	2/14 - 2/26	Fri 2/24 at Garden 1:15pm with Follies after the game	1978	2/14 - 2/26	No home games ³¹
1962	2/14 - 2/25	Fri 2/23 at Garden 1:15pm with Follies after the game	1979	2/13 - 2/25	No home games
1963	2/14 - 2/24	Tue 2/19 at Garden 1pm with Follies afterwards; 2/15 in Prov.	1980	2/13 - 2/24	No home games

Figure 3: Scheduling of Boston Celtics Home Games during Ice Follies Appearances in Boston, 1947-1980

Note: Games held at neutral sites in New England listed in *italics*.

By 1981, the Follies had ceased operations as a separate entity, merging with “Holiday on Ice.”

Notes

Third edition: June 2023

¹ Attendance figures from <http://www.apbr.org>, http://www.hockeydb.com/nhl-attendance/att_graph_season.php?lid=NHL1927&sid=1951 and <http://www.baseball-reference.com>.

² Jack Barry, "Small Attendance Hit; 2520 See Celtics Romp," *Boston Globe*, December 3, 1951.

³ Surdam, David George. *The Rise of the National Basketball Association*. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois, 2012, p187, 193. Available via Google Books.

⁴ In 1951-52 the Knicks roster included: Coach Joe Lapchick (former coach at St. John's), Ray Lumpp (NYU), Al McGuire (St. John's), Dick McGuire (St. John's), Herb Scherer (LIU), Max Zaslofsky (St. John's), Ernie Vanderweghe (Colgate and native of Oceanside, NY), George Kaftan (Born in New York City), and Connie Simmons (Born in Flushing, NY). The Warriors featured Paul Arizin (Villanova), Nelson Bobb (Temple), George Senesky (St. Joseph's), and Stan Brown (Born in Philadelphia). The BAA had also instituted a territorial draft rule in 1949 which gave each team the right to select one player who had played college ball in their "territory" before the start of the draft, regardless of their draft position. Teams that exercised the rule forfeited their first round selection. Arizin was a territorial pick in 1950. Other early Territorial draft picks: 1949 Vern Mikkelsen (Minneapolis) and Ed Macauley (St Louis); 1951 Whitey Skoog (Minneapolis).

⁵ Examples of these ads can be found in the *Boston Globe* on November 14, 18, and 21, 1947, and November 9, 1948.

⁶ A 1952-53 version of a "Junior Boston Celtics Booster" club membership ticket was available on eBay in November 2017.

⁷ Food prices: A&P ad in *Boston Globe*, February 21, 1952.

⁸ Jack Barry, "Pic-Celt-ated Doubleheader at Garden Tonight," *Boston Globe*, February 2, 1951; "Court, Hockey Twin Bill Tonight at Boston Garden," *Boston Globe*, December 9, 1951. The conversion process from basketball to hockey could take as little as a half hour. The Pics disbanded after the 1951-52 season. See: <http://www.hockeydb.com/ihdb/stats/leagues/72.html>.

⁹ According to a version of the 1948-49 BAA schedule printed in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on October 26, 1948, a doubleheader was scheduled to be held in Boston on January 4, 1949, with the Chicago Stags playing the Providence Steam Rollers in the first game. But the January 5, 1949, edition of the *Boston Globe* explicitly says that the Chicago-Providence game on January 4 was held in Providence, not Boston.

¹⁰ The Bullets game in Boston in January was supposed to be followed by a game against the Milwaukee Hawks in Moline, Illinois on January 17. Jack Barry wrote in the *Boston Globe* on January 15 that "Flying conditions being very uncertain in the Midwest, the Bullets' management decided against participation in the twin-bill" because the Bullets were unsure they could fly back to Moline in time. See Jack Barry, "Weather Forces Celtics to Drop Twin Bill Plans," *Boston Globe*, January 15, 1952.

¹¹ One of these doubleheaders was unique. On March 8, 1954, the Minneapolis Lakers played two games against the Milwaukee Hawks in Milwaukee. The Hawks won both games, which were shortened to 40 minutes each, by nearly identical scores of 64-54 and 65-54. See Bill Letwin, "Hawks Win Twice From Baltimore Five," *Milwaukee Journal*, March 9, 1954.

¹² Details of Philadelphia Warriors preliminary games and attendance taken from articles in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Also see Surdam, p 194 for an analysis that shows how much the Globetrotters helped boost NBA attendance across the league.

¹³ Herb Ralby, "Garden Buys 60% of Bruins for \$179,520," *Boston Globe*, October 12, 1951.

¹⁴ "500-Foot Platform Roof at No. Station Collapses," *Boston Globe*, February 26, 1952 (banner headline on page 1); Harold Kaese, "Arena Has Sentimental Appeal for Bruins Fans," *Boston Globe*, February 26, 1952. The Bruins played just two games at the Arena (February 26 vs. the Detroit Red Wings and March 2 vs. the Toronto Maple Leafs) before returning to the Garden to face the New York Rangers on March 4.

¹⁵ Quote taken from a 1939 Rhode Island Auditorium program for an Ice Follies appearance, viewed on eBay.

¹⁶ The 1953 Ice Follies program states that the first tour cost just \$3,865.42 to produce.

¹⁷ Facts and figures taken from the "Ice Follies of 1952" program, viewed on eBay. Robert Mcg. Thomas Jr., "Eddie Shipstad, 91, Skater and Founder of Touring Ice Show," *New York Times*, August 28, 1998. Eddie Quigley, "15-Year History of Icers Reflects Sensational Popularity, Growth," *Billboard*, December 22, 1951.

¹⁸ "Harris Bows Out Of Ice Capades," *Pittsburgh Press*, November 9, 1963. Quigley, "15-Year History of Icers Reflects Sensational Popularity, Growth."

¹⁹ Similar arrangements for the Bruins and Celtics were made when the Ice Capades were in Boston.

²⁰ "City Will Halt Today for 1st Postwar Alert," *Boston Globe*, February 21, 1952; "Officials Astonished – Hub Takes Cover Like a Frightened Rabbit," *Boston Globe*, February 22, 1952.

²¹ "Nor'easter Plasters Cape with 9 Inches of Snow," *Boston Globe*, February 22, 1952. Unlike the storm the previous weekend, snow amounts were higher on Cape Cod and only a few inches fell in Maine.

²² Clif Keane, "M.T.A. to Offer Special Service after Celtics Tilt," *Boston Globe*, February 21, 1952.

²³ Leo Monahan, "Celtics Midnight Hoop Experiment Lures 2368," *Boston Daily Record*, February 23, 1952.

²⁴ Clif Keane, "Celtics Win Midnight Game from Fort Worth <sic>, 88-67," *Boston Globe*, February 22, 1952.

²⁵ Jim Cariofiles, "'Cinderella' Celts Win, 88-67," *Boston Herald*, February 22, 1952.

²⁶ Pitkoff also worked the Knicks-Warriors game in Philadelphia that evening. Hal Freeman, "Warriors Crush Knicks, 118-95," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 23, 1952. Pitkoff worked the Midnight Game alone, but teamed with Lou Eisenstein in Philadelphia. Also see AP wire story carried in the *Berkshire Eagle*, "Celtics Win in Basketball and Fist Fight," February 22, 1952.

²⁷ Joe Looney, "Celtics, Pistons Clash Tonight at Midnight," *Boston Herald*, February 21, 1952.

²⁸ Clif Keane, "Irate Brown Weighs Action Against Late-Arriving Cousy," *Boston Globe*, March 13, 1952. Brown later decided against levying a \$1000 fine (which would have been distributed to the other Celtics players in lieu of the NBA's first-place bonus check that the loss had likely cost them) and instead let Auerbach fine Cousy \$10 for being late. See: Clif Keane, "Walter Brown's Aunt Saves Cousy \$1000 Fine," *Boston Globe*, March 17, 1952. The Celtics made 23 of 61 shots from the floor (.377, just .01 below their season average) but Cousy shot 6 for 20 and Ed Macauley was 1 for 13. Jack Barry, "Celts May Shift Court at Garden," *Boston Globe*, December 21, 1958, quotes Brown as saying he would like to switch the court around again for a "lengthy try from the start of a season."

²⁹ At 1pm Hyde Park High School faced off against Jamaica Plain High School.

³⁰ Games that the Celtics played in Hartford, CT beginning in 1975 were officially considered "home" games by the NBA.

³¹ Two Celtics home games originally scheduled for February 10 (vs. New Orleans) and February 12 (vs. Milwaukee) were postponed due to the aftermath of the Blizzard of '78. The storm occurred on February 6-7 but transportation in the New England area was paralyzed for several days as highways and city streets were clogged with abandoned vehicles caught in a snowstorm that deposited 2-4 feet of snow. Combined with the previously scheduled road trip to make way for the Ice Follies, the Celtics played 11 consecutive games on the road from February 7 through March 1. The team went 5-6.