
Times Facts

This is Tom's third stint with the *St. Petersburg Times*. He worked as a part-timer in the sports department in the late 1980s. He then worked at the *Times* from 1996 to 2000 in sports and rejoined the staff in 2003. He has written about a variety of sports for the *Times*, including the NFL, the NBA and boxing and covered the Tampa Bay Devil Rays and Major League Baseball during the 2003 season. Primarily, he has covered hockey. He was the Tampa Bay Lightning beat reporter from 1996 through 2000 and took over the Lightning beat again for the 2005 season, his 14th year covering the NHL. In 2006, with the redesign of the paper, Tom took over as writer and editor of Page Two in Sports.

Talking Points

- Tampa Bay Lightning and the National Hockey League
- Sports Journalism
- Major League Baseball.

Tom is a regular contributor on various out-of-town radio and television shows and also to *The Hockey News*. He was a regular guest on Minnesota Public Radio's local edition of *All Things Considered*, discussing hockey and sports in the Twin Cities, and served as a hockey analyst during Minnesota Wild pre-game shows.

Education

Born and raised in a working-class neighborhood just outside of Pittsburgh, Tom graduated from South Allegheny High School in 1982 before moving to Florida and attending the University of South Florida, where he majored in English.

Background

Tom began his journalism career at the old *Evening Independent* in 1986. He joined the *Times* when the newspapers merged in 1987 and remained there until taking a job with *The Tampa Tribune* in 1990. He covered preps before moving on to the National Hockey League for the Lightning's inaugural season in 1992. He returned to the *Times* in 1996 and covered the Lightning until 2000 when he took a job covering the NHL for the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*. After three years of braving the snow and cold, Tom and his family (wife Patty and sons Sam and Andy) returned to St. Petersburg. His most rewarding writing experience was traveling to Russia in March of 2005 to chronicle the adventures of hockey star Vinny Lecavalier. While he enjoys all sports and considers the 2002 Winter Olympics and 2003 American League Championship Series between the Yankees and Red Sox as the most exciting events he has ever covered, he prefers hockey over all sports because of the players, who are the most cooperative, down-to-earth, sincere athletes in the world.

Awards

In 1998, Tom's story from Austria about Lightning player John Cullen's return to the ice after cancer was chosen as one of the Top 10 game stories in the country by the Associated Press Sports Editors. In 2002, his profile of United States Olympic hockey coach Herb Brooks was selected as the year's top feature story by the Minnesota Associated Press Sports Association. He also has won several State writing awards in both Florida and Minnesota. Following the Lightning's Stanley Cup victory in 2004, several of Tom's pieces were published in a commemorative book celebrating the team's championship season.

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