

The Columbus Checkers, organized in 1966, was the first professional hockey team in Columbus. The team played its first game at the Ohio Expo Center Coliseum as part of the International Hockey League (IHL). Due to poor attendance, the team disbanded. In 1971, the Columbus Seals was formed, but was sold in 1973 and became the Columbus Owls. That team moved to Dayton in 1977, because Columbus lacked adequate facilities. Thirteen years later, the Columbus Chill brought professional hockey back to Columbus. In 1997 the National Hockey League (NHL) awarded Columbus an expansion team, which became the Columbus Blue Jackets. The team built a new hockey facility at Nationwide Arena and was officially admitted into the NHL in 2000.