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PROFESSIONAL HOCKEY RETURNING TO MAINE'S LARGEST CITY

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) Professional hockey is returning to Maine's largest city, with the relocation of an Eastern Coast Hockey League franchise from Alaska.

Comcast Spectacor, which owns the Philadelphia Flyers, announced Thursday the purchase of the Alaska Aces franchise. The ECHL franchise will assume a new name and play 36 home games starting in fall 2018 at the Cross Insurance Arena in Portland.

The Portland Press Herald reports that the Flyers will run all business and hockey operations, with Danny Briere, a former Flyers player, overseeing day-to-day operations.

Flyers president Paul Holmgren said the outfit is "excited to re-ignite the hockey tradition in Portland."

Portland has been without minor league hockey since the Portland Pirates of the American Hockey League were sold in May 2016 and moved to Springfield, Massachusetts.