

Will the goal-diggers strike gold again?



GREAT IN '08? Two big reasons for Canada's 2007 success in Moscow, was the performance of captain Doan (left) who had 10 points, and MVP Nash who had 11 points nine games. Will Canada be able to duplicate the success on home ice?

100 years after its start, international hockey returns to its homeland



Finally. After 100 years of existence and 71 World Championships the IIHF is going to Canada for its marquee event. The tradition that started in the small Swiss alpine village of Les Avants in 1910, will reach its highest peak yet in Quebec City on May 18, 2008.

RENÉ FASEL EDITORIAL

■ The IIHF was founded in 1908 in Paris and two years later the first official international tournament was organized in Les Avants. The European Championship was the precursor to the World Championship.

Only once during all those years, has the IIHF ventured outside Europe with the men's flagship tournament. It was in Colorado Springs, USA in 1962. Eight years later the IIHF allocated the championship to Canada for the first time as Montreal and Winnipeg assumed the hosting of the 1970 World Championship.

Instead of this opening a new era, 1970 was the start of the darkest period in the history of the IIHF. Not wanting to compromise on Olympic amateur rules, the IIHF congress voted against the Canadian request to dress a number of professionals for the championship. Canada responded by pulling out of international hockey altogether and didn't return until 1977. The 1970 tournament had to be moved to Stockholm, Sweden.

■ All this is behind us and the relations between the IIHF and Canadian hockey have never been better. For me, going to Canada with the World Championship in the centennial year of our organization is a symbol of final reconciliation between the world governing body of the sport and Canadian hockey.

In earlier years, international hockey was of marginal interest to Canadians. Today, all the fans from the Maritimes to British Columbia take pride in their national team, whether it's the men's team at the Olympics or World Championships, the World Juniors entry or the women's squad.

■ Going to Halifax and Quebec City, Team Canada has a record 24 IIHF World Championship titles, the last one won in Moscow one year ago. Going for 25, the Canadians will be skating against all odds. No home team has managed to win the gold medal on home ice since the Soviet Union did it in 1986. This is a 22-year curse. Furthermore, no team has successfully defended its World title at home since 1979. Also this feat was achieved by the Big Red Machine.

But the competition will be stiff, just like in the other categories of the IIHF's World Championship program. In the recently-concluded World Women's Championship in China, Canada's domination was stopped by the Americans who defeated Team Canada twice in the same tournament. This has not happened since the 1998 Olympics in Nagano.

■ This was a historic tournament since it broke many of the cemented structures in the women's game. Switzerland defeated Olympic silver medalist Sweden for the first time ever and reached the bronze medal game. Finland scored an equally historic win against the United States in the preliminaries and displaced the Swedes from the medal podium. Team USA eventually shook off the disappointment and won gold.

Will the unpredictable also happen in Halifax and Quebec City?

René Fasel
IIHF President

Ushering in a new hockey era at IIHF General Congress

■ If you think that the action in Canada will be limited to the ice, think again. After the conclusion of the 2008 IIHF World Championship, delegates will move onto Montreal for the IIHF Annual and General Congresses.

The 2008 IIHF Annual and General Congress will be held in the city which is commonly credited with being the cradle of organized hockey. The General Congress is the IIHF's highest legislative body as it, among other things, elects the IIHF President, the Vice-Presidents and the council, which is the IIHF's highest executive body.

The congress will begin two days after the conclusion of the 2008 IIHF World Championship and the highlight of the General Congress will be the election on May 21. The council will be elected for the next four-year period.

The program is full for the congress which will be held at Montreal's Queen Elisabeth Hotel, daily highlights include:

□ Monday, May 19: Delegates will arrive from Quebec City by train and register for the congress.

□ Tuesday, May 20: The Annual Congress will officially open with the calendar meeting followed by the 2009 Championship allocation for those events that still need to be allocated.

□ Wed, May 21: The General Congress will officially open with the highlight of the week-long activities, the general election. Also on the slate for the first day of the General Congress is a workshop for the changes to the Statutes & Bylaws.

□ Thursday, May 22: The General Congress continues with the Victoria Rink Commemoration at the Bell Centre highlighting the day's activities (see article on this page for more information on the commemoration).

□ Friday, May 23: The IIHF and Infront will host a farewell reception for the General Congress.

□ Saturday, May 24: If there are any issues to be resolved, they will be settled in the morning, and afterwards the delegates will depart for their home nations.



■ With the approach of the IIHF General Congress, the hockey world prepares to elect a new IIHF Council.

Below is the complete election list as of April 25. Please note that this list can change between now and the General Congress. All individuals currently holding the position for which they are running are denoted with a *. The candidates have been nominated and are, in accordance with IIHF Statute 28, supported by their national associations. They are listed in alphabetical order.

■ President:

*René Fasel (SUI)

■ Vice President, Americas:

*Murray Costello (CAN)

■ Vice President, Oceania:

*Shoichi Tomita (JPN)

Gap-Chul Park (KOR)

■ Vice President, Europe:

*Kalervo Kummola (FIN)

Alexander Steblin (LTU)

Alexander Medvedev (RUS)

■ Council:

*Ernest Aljancic (SLO)

Christer Englund (SWE)

*Frank Gonzales (ESP)

*Beate Grupp (GER)

Kalervo Kummola (FIN)

*Frederick Meredith (GBR)

*Juraj Sirkoy (SVK)

*Alexander Steblin (LTU)

Vidar Gardarsson (ISL)

Dieter Kalt (AUT)

Zbynek Kusy (CZE)

Kirovs Lipmans (LAT)

Alexander Medvedev (RUS)

Henrik Bach Nielsen (DEN)

Toni Rossi (USA)

Ferenc Studniczky (HUN)

■ Auditors:

*Johnny Baumann (SUI)

Hans Dobida (AUT)

*Kai Hietarinta (FIN)

IIHF to commemorate Creighton and Victoria Rink

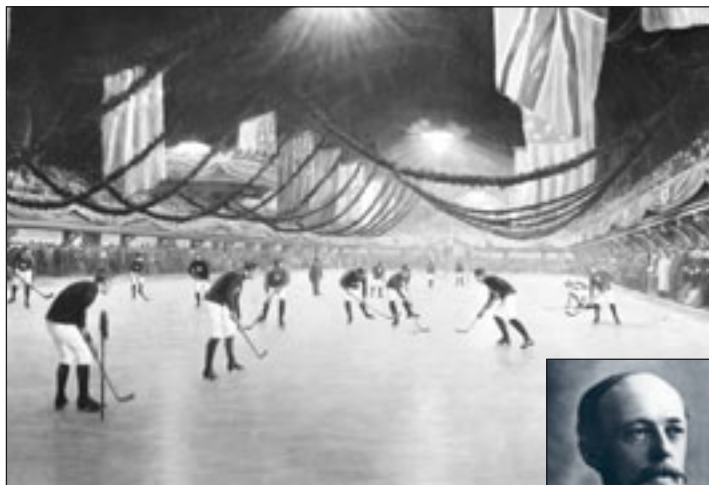
■ Back in 2002, the IIHF officially recognized the Victoria Skating Rink in Montreal as the birthplace of organized hockey and the site, which gave the sport its existing rink size. As the IIHF now celebrates its 100 Year Anniversary, it will together with the government of Canada commemorate the site and the "founding father" of the game, James Creighton, with unveiling a commemorative plaque.

■ The ceremony will take place on May 22, 2008, during the IIHF General Congress in Montreal.

In light of the request from the IIHF, the Historic

Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) was convened on an exceptional basis in late February 2008 to consider the IIHF's proposal to recognize James G.A. Creighton as the "father" of organized hockey and furthermore to recognize the historic significance of Montreal's Victoria Skating Rink, the site of the first organized hockey game on March 3, 1875.

■ James George Aylwin Creighton (1850-1930) organized and brought together all the key elements of the modern game of ice hockey. He is widely believed



James Creighton (insert) was behind the first hockey games played at the Victoria Skating Rink in Montreal in 1875. He captained the McGill team which played in the first recorded game on March 3 that year. Above is game action at the Victoria Rink.

to have been behind the earliest codification of the game's rules, and thus laid the foundation for its emergence as an organized sport. In March 1875 he organized indoor matches in the old Victoria Skating Rink in Montreal and promoted them to the public. He earlier had obtained sticks from Halifax, employed a puck instead of a ball, and used goals, all of which characterize the modern game.

In addition to being a developer and popularizer of organized ice hockey, he was the captain of the McGill University team, the first regular hockey club to be formed in Canada, in 1877.

■ The HSMBC, will on May 22, together with the IIHF, Hockey Canada, the City of Montreal and the Montreal Canadiens unveil a commemorative plaque honouring James Creighton as a national historic person at the Bell Centre in Montreal (home of the Montreal Canadiens) as this location is now closely associated with the game of ice hockey and is only about 150 meters away from the site where the old Victoria Skating Rink once stood.

The HSMBC's plaques are cast, installed and maintained in perpetuity by the Parks Canada Agency.

CENTENNIAL GALA

■ One of the most exciting events during the 2008 IIHF World Championship will be the Centennial Gala Evening, on the day of the bronze medal game, May 17th.

The IIHF will combine two major events during this evening: The final Top-10 countdown of the 100 Top Stories in the history of ice hockey and the presentation of the IIHF Centennial All-Star Team. (One goalie, two defensemen, three forwards)

■ The Centennial All-Star Team is a key IIHF initiative during its anniversary year. The panel voting for this unique team consists of ice hockey experts from 16 countries and includes people who have worked in the game for an extended period and whose opinions are universally respected. The six players who have been elected to this team due to their tremendous impact on international ice hockey will be honoured and their, until then, secret identities will be revealed during this special evening.

The IIHF will also reveal the last ten of its 100 Top Stories in 100 Years of International Ice Hockey in a final countdown. The countdown which started in October 2007 on IIHF.com with the story No. 100 will culminate with the announcement of the Top Story of the Century.

The Centennial Gala Evening will take place at the Quebec City Convention Centre.

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Top Division welcomes Hungary after 70 years

Austrians also back among the elite 16 after just a one-year absence

■ ■ Before World War I, Austria-Hungary was Europe's biggest empire. Today, neither Austria nor Hungary has any imperialistic claims. They simply want to excel in hockey. Both countries were promoted to the top division of the IIHF World Championship after posting perfect Division I records.

Hungary is back after 70 years

Hungary winning the World Championship, Division I, Group B in Sapporo, Japan was a success of historic proportions. When they come to play with the big boys in Switzerland 2009, it will be exactly 70 years since the last time they were in this company.

Hungary hasn't played a top division World Championship since 1939, when they finished seventh in Switzerland, where the last World Championship was played before World War II. In London in 1937, they had their best finish of fifth place.

But in those days there was only one division and all nations that applied for participation in the IIHF World Championship came to play. In 1939, only 14 nations participated in the entire IIHF program and all were invited to the last pre-World War II event.

■ ■ Hungary's last participation in an elite tournament was the 1964 Olympics in Innsbruck, Austria, where they lost all seven games and finished 16th, or last.

It is a new generation of Hungarian players, with very few links to the past. A group led by the Italian-Canadian spiritual leader and tactician Pat Cortina, who patiently worked with and improved the national team despite several setbacks in the last years.

Despite the 5-0-record, the tournament was no cakewalk for the Hungarians. They peaked at the right moments. Last-place Estonia was defeated only 5-3, Croatia was a struggle, 3-0 and the only 'easy' game was a 6-0 decision against Lithuania.

■ ■ The important games were a fortunate 4-2 win over host Japan, but the key was a 4-2 finale against favorite Ukraine. In this game, Hungary jumped to a 3-0 lead only to have Ukraine climb back to 3-2 before Marton Vas secured promotion with a short-hander with 31 seconds remaining.

Outlook for 2009: This is a team that will have a tough time scoring goals in Switzerland as the offensive talent is limited. Goalie Levente Szuper will be a key performer.

One problem is also that basically every key player is around 30 years of age or older. There are few younger players behind impact veterans Balazs Ladanyi (33), Gabor Ocskay (34), Krisztian Palkovics (33) and Marton Vas (29). The capable Csaba Kovacs is 25.



Austria returns after one year

■ ■ There is no question that Austria is over-qualified for the division I level. For the second time in as many tries, the Austrians secured promotion to the elite pool with a perfect 5-0 record. They did the same in Estonia in 2006.

Contrary to the Hungarians, Austria had four games on home ice in Innsbruck which they won with relative ease, and only one where they had to give it all - the emotional 4-3 victory over Kazakhstan in the fourth round. What was meant as the 'gold medal game' on paper became a waltz on ice, a 7-3 drubbing of Poland which came into the championship second-ranked.

■ ■ Forward Christoph Brandner was the hero of the Kazakhstan game when he broke the 3-3 tie and scored the winner with just over three minutes remaining in regulation. Swedish coach Lars Bergstrom decided prior to the championship to put his three most reliable and skillful forwards on the same line and the move paid off.

NHL star Tomas Vanek had ten points in five games, veteran Dieter Kalt recorded eleven and Thomas Koch added nine.

■ ■ Austria has probably more skill and depth than Hungary and of the two 2009 newcomers it is likely Austria which has the bigger chance of Top-16 survival.

Outlook for 2009: Coach Bergstrom and the Austrian fans will be praying that the Buffalo Sabres will again miss the Stanley Cup playoffs next year, or at least that they won't make it past the first round. Any team could use a force like Tomas Vanek and for Austria he could be the difference between another relegation or staying in the top division.

If there is one thing Austria has, it's experience. Defenseman Martin Ulrich played his 17th World Championship in Innsbruck, while it was No. 16 for Dieter Kalt. Defenseman Gerhard Unterluggauer and forward Oliver Setzinger are other veterans that will carry a lot of responsibility next year.

MOVIN' ON UP: Hungary, pictured left and Austria, pictured above will join the elite nations at next year's World Championship in Switzerland. The Austrians hope to stop bouncing between divisions, while the Hungarians are eager to prove their worth.

Canada cruises to U18 gold medal

■ ■ The U18 gold medal meeting between Canada and Russia had all the makings of a classic match-up. There was the revenge factor as Canada was looking to atone for a preliminary round loss. There was the crowd factor - a sure sellout of 10,000, and, of course, the fact that the two teams were evenly matched in virtually every statistical category.

But things don't always follow the script, as the Russians learned the hard way. Canada essentially secured its second-ever gold medal at the U18 World Championship in a 20-minute span, scoring five goals in the first period alone. The Russian fans, and bench, could only watch in disbelief as Canada lit up both Russian goaltenders, scoring five goals on just 10 shots in the first-period surge.

Trailing 5-0, the Russians had no hope of staging a comeback and eventually ceded the most lopsided defeat in U18 medal game history, falling 8-0. The game highlights that when it comes to junior hockey, specifically U18 hockey, any outcome is possible on any given day.

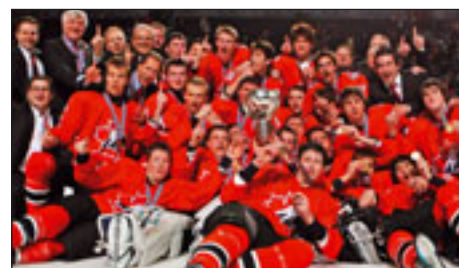
Of course, there are powerhouses at the U18 championship, those teams that seem to naturally gravitate towards the medal podium. The Americans and Russians have become mainstays on the medal list. Russia's silver was the nation's seventh overall medal at the event. Meanwhile the Americans took home their fifth-straight medal with a 6-3 win against Sweden in the bronze medal game.

■ ■ But for most U18 observers, the gold medal was a surprise as Canada does not have the same dominance at U18s as it does at U20s, primarily because the nation can't always gettop players released from the Major Junior playoffs.

Most people would say the difference between a medal and no medal at this year's event came down to one

simple factor: Goaltending. It was no mistake that the MVP was Canadian goaltender Jake Allen, who finished the championship as the top goaltender statistically, earning two shutouts and an impressively low .948 saves percentage. In a year where goaltending was not the greatest, Allen stood and ultimately was the difference in the gold medal game.

■ ■ Now Allen and his teammates can start looking forward to the U20 World Championship as many players on this year's roster are sure to be in Ottawa in December.



2008 IIHF WORLD WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP RECAP

A wild ride at Women's Worlds

Harbin, China, April 8, 2008. A day that will go down in women's hockey history as the day that barriers were finally broken. In an amazing eight-hour period, Finland won its first-ever game against the United States, while Switzerland also pulled off an upset of monumental proportions against Sweden. And this was just the beginning of the World Women's Championship that everyone has been waiting for. At last, people could expect the unexpected as the favorites were no longer safe. Join the IIHF in a look back at the championship that had everyone wondering 'what will happen next'.

PHOTOS: Phillip MacCallum HHOF Imgaes



CHAMPIONS! The United States stunned Canada, and most of the women's hockey world, when they defeated nemesis Canada not once, but twice during the championship, including in the gold medal game. Few would have expected the U.S. to be golden favorites after the team had to battle to even make it to the final game. It is only the second world championship gold for the U.S. and also only the second time the nation has defeated Canada twice in one event.



CINDERELLA: The Swiss women's team became the darlings of the championship when they beat Sweden in the qualification round and then earned a spot in the bronze medal game by defeating Russia. It was the first-ever appearance by a non 'Big Four' team in a world championship medal game. Unfortunately for the Swiss, midnight struck in the bronze game as Finland took home the hardware. Nevertheless, there were over 400 fans to greet the team upon their arrival at the Zurich airport.



COMEBACK: Things were looking bleak for host nation China as they needed to beat Germany by two goals to secure its spot in next year's top division. Down by one with 2:02 left in the game, the Chinese women staged one of the most improbable comebacks in women's hockey history, netting three goals in a 1:22 span to save their place in the elite division and send Germany down.

CRASH: After winning three consecutive medals at women's events, including the silver at the 2006 Olympics, the Swedish women's team came crashing down to Earth as they missed the medal round for the first time in the nation's history. Early mis-cues cost the Swede's as they finished a disappointing fifth.



CONSOLATION: It was a bittersweet championship for Finland, which made headlines in the qualification round after beating the United States. Sadly for the Finns, the U.S. pulled off the win against Canada and Finland missed its chance to skate in its first-ever gold medal game. The silver lining, turned out to be bronze, as Finland earned its first medal since 2004 and sent notice to the North American nations that the Nordic teams are not to be taken lightly.



CONTINUATION: Newly promoted Japan had an outstanding relegation round and will return to the top division after finishing in 7th place. A huge step for the Asian nation.

2008 IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PREVIEW

The 10 Greatest Canadian Teams of All-Time

How do you pick the best 10 teams from one of the finest dynasties in hockey? Not very easily. But in honor of the IIHF World Championship debut in Canada, IIHF.com's Andrew Podnieks did his best to select the best 10 teams in the history of the maple leaf nation. See if your favorite made the list.

10 2003 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

The 2003 team at the World Championship was spectacular for many reasons. First, they earned eight wins and a tie in nine games. Second, the roster was impressive. Andy Murray was the coach, and his players included Dany Heatley, Jay Bouwmeester, and Roberto Luongo. Murray's incredible skill in getting the team to buy into a system was the key. Canada was not without a bit of good fortune. The quarterfinal against Germany wasn't decided until overtime. Canada hammered the Czech Republic 8-4 in a the semi-final, and the finals turned into a classic. Sweden pulled ahead 2-0 only to see Canada tie the game in the third period. In the overtime, Anson Carter scored a goal on a wraparound which was verified by video review. After a wait of ten minutes, the goal counted. This win started a run of three gold medals in a five-year span for Canada.



Anson Carter and his 2003 World Championship gold

9 1984 CANADA CUP

Lost among the great Canada Cups was the 1984 edition, largely because it was an overmatched Swedish team that faced Canada in the best-of-three finals. The best game came in the semi-final when Canada beat the Soviets 3-2 in overtime. The Soviets scored twice in the third to take the lead. Doug Wilson tied the game later in the period to send the game into overtime, and Mike Bossy was the hero when he scored to give Canada a 3-2 win. In game one of the finals, Canada easily beat Sweden, 5-2. In the second game, the score was closer but the result the same. Canada coasted to a 5-4 win, the score close only because the Canadians let up late in the game. Nonetheless, the team, led by Wayne Gretzky, Paul Coffey, and Michel Goulet, got stronger as the tournament progressed.

8 1920 OLYMPICS

The first truly international hockey tournament was in April 1920 when teams played at the Summer Olympics. Canada won easily and was opposed only to any degree by the U.S., but the fact the tournament even occurred was of historic note. The public was so impressed by the refereeing of William Hewitt that Canadian rules were adopted. Canada played with such a skill and it was the first taste of North American hockey and the beginning of the end for bandy, the popular form of hockey in Europe. Canada played only three games beating the Czechs 15-0, Sweden 12-1, and USA, 2-0 count. Canada's remarkable superiority helped lead to the establishing of an Olympic Winter Games four years later.



The 1955 Penticton Vees represented Canada

7 1961 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

After the Trail Smoke Eaters won gold for Canada in 1961, the country didn't win for another 33 years for many reasons. The 60s were a time when Father Bauer's national team, composed of university students, played against the Soviet pros. The 70s was a time of non-participation for Canada, and later the NHLers who played in the Worlds didn't really want to be there. The Smoke Eaters wanted to be there, in Switzerland and dominated. They had one blemish, a 1-1 tie with Czechoslovakia. All other games were wins, including a 5-1 victory on against the Soviets. Canada and the Czechs finished in first with 13 points, but Canada had the better goal differential and claimed gold.

6 1976 CANADA CUP

The inaugural Canada Cup was the result of the success of the Summit Series and continued withdrawal from international hockey by Canada. The 1976 Canada Cup ended with a best-of-three showdown between Czechoslovakia and Canada. The Canadians were led by Phil Esposito, Darryl Sittler, Bobby Hull, and Bobby Orr who, on one good leg, was named MVP. In the first game of the finals, Orr scored twice and had one assist in a 6-0 game. Game two was different as Canada led 2-0 and 3-2. But the Czechs led 4-3 late in the third until a Bill Barber goal sent the game into overtime. At that point, Darryl Sittler became the newest Canadian hero scoring on famed goaltender Valdimir Dzurilla.

4 1924 OLYMPICS

The Toronto Granites were so far superior to their opponents that to even compare them is not fair. Canada defeated Czechoslovakia, Sweden, and Switzerland by scores of 30-0, 22-0, and 33-0, respectively. In the final round they beat Great Britain 19-2 and USA 6-1 to win the gold. This magnificent team was led by Harry Watson who scored 36 goals in five games, including a record 13 against Switzerland and eleven against the Czechs. Bert McCaffery averaged four goals a game and Hooley Smith and Dunc Munro better than three a game. All except Watson went on to great NHL careers. Watson refused to give up his amateur status and today remains the greatest amateur of all time.

Mario Lemieux and his 2002 gold medal

**2** 2002 OLYMPICS

Canada was the favourite going into the tournament, but after the first game the team seemed in disarray. Sweden easily dismantled the Canadians, 5-2, and the vaunted roster on paper looked vulnerable on ice. Coach Pat Quinn made a goaltending change, taking Curtis Joseph out and inserting Martin Brodeur, and Brodeur played the rest of the way. Canada eked out a close 3-2 win over Germany and earned an exciting 3-3 tie with the Czechs, and in the playoffs the team grew stronger and stronger. A 2-1 quarterfinal win over Finland led to an easy 7-1 win over Belarus and a gold medal showdown with host USA. The final game saw many heroes emerge. Captain Mario Lemieux was magnificent; Jarome Iginla scored twice; Steve Yzerman played with incredible pain in one knee; and, Brodeur was terrific in goal. The result was Canada's first Olympic gold in half a century.

3 1987 CANADA CUP

Some say among them Soviet coach Viktor Tikhonov that the 1987 Canada Cup was simply the best hockey ever played. Of course, these comments are reserved exclusively for the best-of-three finals between Canada and the Soviets. Each game was won by a 6-5 score, and each game was close right down to the final goal. Canada became a "team" late in the training camp when captain Wayne Gretzky called Mario Lemieux's desire into question, making clear Mario could be so much greater a player than he was to this point. Lemieux responded, leading the tournament in goals and teaming with Gretzky on the decisive marker. Game one went to overtime and was won by the Soviets. Game two went to double overtime before Lemieux scored the winning goal. Gretzky had five assist and later called this his best international game of all time. Game three was tied as overtime loomed, but numbers 66 and 99 broke up ice and Gretzky made a simple drop pass to Lemieux at the top of the circle. His pinpoint wrist shot beat goalie Sergei Mylnikov at 18:34 of the third period, and Canada held on to win the game and series.

1 1972 SUMMIT SERIES

The most important series in international hockey, the 1972 Summit Series, pitted the NHL pros against the best from the Soviet Union in an eight-game showdown. Canada was led by Phil Esposito and Yvan Cournoyer. But the hero in the end was Paul Henderson who scored the game-winning goal in each of the final three games. In the first four games, the Soviets surprised the Canadians. They flew home to Moscow having lost only one game. The misery for Canada began after it built a quick 2-0 lead in the first game in Montreal. By the end of the night, they left the ice, being humiliated 7-3. They recovered to win a crucial game two in Toronto, tied in Winnipeg, and were again embarrassed in Vancouver as the fans booed the team off the ice. The Soviets continued their dominance, winning game five by a 5-4 score. Then, Henderson took control, and his decisive score at 19:26 broke a 5-5 tie and gave Canada a historic 6-5 win in the game and 4-1-3 record in the series.



A Tale of Two Cities: Quebec

By Lucas Aykroyd

■ ■ *It's no secret that for the first time ever, the IIHF World Championship will be played in Canada. But the two hockey cities that Canada selected to host the world are perhaps the finest hidden jewels of the hockey world. Ice Times uncovers Quebec City and Halifax*

QUEBEC CITY

When the 2008 IIHF World Championship gold medal is awarded in Quebec City on May 18, it will be the biggest hockey event in civic history. It will cap off the first-ever Worlds held in Canada, mark the high point of the IIHF's 100th-anniversary celebration, and add sizzle to the commemoration of Quebec City's 400th anniversary, not to mention finalizing the seeding for the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver. Although the picturesque walled town of 530,000 is renowned for tourist attractions like the Chateau Frontenac hotel, the Plains of Abraham battlefield, and the world's biggest Winter Carnival, its hockey history is equally rich and colourful. Here are seven examples of what made Quebec City great before 2008.



1953: BELIVEAU THE SCORING KING

Today, an annual salary of \$20,000 sounds low for a superstar prospect. But that's how much Jean Beliveau earned in the 1950's with the Quebec Aces of the Quebec Senior Hockey League, and at the time, it was considered a princely sum. Nicknamed "Le Gros Bill," the centre was a huge fan favourite in the provincial capital. In 1953, a year after his club won the league championship, Beliveau captured the scoring title at age 21 with 50 goals and 39 assists in 57 games.

The Montreal Canadiens held Beliveau's NHL rights, and convinced him to make the leap. His legacy in Montreal as the longest-serving captain in franchise history became legendary: 10 Stanley Cups, plus Hart, Art Ross, and Conn Smythe Trophies. But how about in Quebec City? During the 2008 IIHF World Championship, thousands will literally be sitting in it. The 15,000-capacity Colisée Pepsi has been nicknamed "The House that Beliveau Built".

1962-64: LAFLEUR SHOWS PEE-WEE POWER

Guy Lafleur emerged as the next great Montreal Canadiens forward, and in the second half of the 1970's, nobody could touch him. However, the blonde right winger first garnered attention when he played at the Quebec International Pee-Wee Hockey Tournament. The competition started in 1960, and Lafleur was just 10 years old when he broke in. The Thurso native terrified opposing netminders at the Colisée with his slapshot, racking up 64 goals over the three years he competed.

1977: NORDIQUES TAKE WHA CROWN, ROCK RUSSIANS

The Quebec Nordiques lost in the Wales Conference finals twice (1982, 1985. But as a member of the World Hockey Association (WHA), they were impressive. The Nordiques won their only Avco Cup, ousting the Winnipeg Jets with an 8-2 shellacking to climax the seven-game series in Quebec City on May 26, 1977. Right wing Serge Bernier led the charge with 36 playoff points, and was assisted amply by snipers like Real Cloutier, Marc Tardif, and the Bordeleau brothers, Christian and Paulin. Diminutive goalie Richard Brodeur recorded 12 wins en route to the title. The Nordiques made their presence felt internationally in 1977. They beat the Soviet national team 6-1 on January 8. It was the last meeting in an eight-game WHA tour for Vladislav Tretiak, Valeri Kharlamov, whose only other defeat came against the New England Whalers (5-2).

1981: STASTNY'S CALDER TROPHY CAMPAIGN

When Peter Stastny defected from Czechoslovakia to join the Nordiques, he spoke six languages: Slovak, Czech, English, Russian, German, and French. The centre proved he was equally fluent at goal-scoring and play-making. Joined by his brother Anton, Stastny had 39 goals and 70 assists en route to the Calder Trophy. His 109 points remained the NHL's rookie record until Teemu Selanne's 132-points in 1992-93. With Quebec, Stastny became the second-leading points-getter in the NHL behind Wayne Gretzky in the 1980's. And he loved playing at the Colisée. "Quebec has become as much of a home to me as Slovakia," Stastny told the New York Times years later.



1982-86: GOULET GETS 50, OVER AND OVER

No current NHL sniper has recorded three consecutive 50-goal seasons, not even whizzes like Alexander Ovechkin, Ilya Kovalchuk, or Dany Heatley. Nobody has achieved that feat since Brett Hull did it five times in a row (1990-94). So what Michel Goulet accomplished in the mid-1980's with the Nordiques is worth acknowledging. The left winger from Peribonka, Quebec scored 57, 56, 55, and 53 goals between 1981-82 and 1985-86. Goulet modestly said that "it had a lot to do with the people [he] was playing with—Dale Hunter and Peter Stastny and the rest of the team."

1987: RENDEZ-VOUS '87 A TRIUMPH

In 1987, at the prompting of Nordiques owner Marcel Aubut, the NHL shelved its traditional Campbell-versus-Wales-All-Star game in favor of a different East-West contest: the NHL All-Stars versus the Soviet National Team. A cultural festival accompanied Quebec City's Winter Carnival that year. The hockey was nearly as exciting as the games that would be played during the classic Canada Cup that fall. In the first game, Dave Poulin's goal with 1:15 remaining gave the NHLers a 4-3 victory. But the Soviets rallied for a 5-3 win in Game Two, keyed by a three-point performance from Valeri Kamensky. He received a new stereo for his Soviet MVP performance, while Wayne Gretzky took home a Chrysler as NHL MVP. Also on the quirky side, USSR captain Slava Fetisov breached protocol by giving Canadian Governor-General Jeanne Sauvé a kiss on the cheek while accepting a team trophy from her afterwards.

2006: REMPARTS ROLL TO MEMORIAL CUP

Hockey Hall of Famer Patrick Roy now serves as the head coach of the QMJHL's Quebec Remparts, and led the Remparts to their first Memorial Cup in 35 years in 2006, despite the fact that the coach engaged in some trash-talking about opposing netminders. After an opening 3-2 loss to the Peterborough Petes, Quebec registered back-to-back wins over the Vancouver Giants and the host Moncton Wildcats to earn a bye into the final. There, Alexander Radulov's five-point performance paced the Remparts in a 6-2 triumph over the Wildcats, and the gifted Russian sniper was named tournament MVP.

City & Halifax ready for action



WELCOME TO HOCKEY COUNTRY:

While the action is sure to be in the arenas during the 2008 IIHF World Championship, there will be no shortage of activities away from the ice to keep fans, media and participants busy. Below are the views that will await those traveling to the World Championship. Left is an aerial view of Halifax. Featured prominently in the photo is the Citadel. Below is the aerial view of Quebec City at sunset. A sight not too many hockey fans will get to see as they will be cheering on their teams.



HALIFAX

Beautiful, historic port cities have witnessed some of the most memorable IIHF World Championship hockey. Gothenburg, Sweden in 2002, where Slovakia earned its first-ever IIHF gold medal? Riga, Latvia in 2006, where Sweden was the first team to win World and Olympic gold the same year? Get ready to add Halifax to that list of peerless ports.

HOCKEY TOWN

It's no surprise that this windswept city of 380,000 was chosen as a co-host. Halifax has an amazing track record when it comes to international hockey. In 2003, the Nova Scotia capital hosted the World U20 Championship, and although Canadian fans were disappointed their team lost 3-2 to Russia in the gold medal game, the tournament set new benchmarks in total attendance (242,173), profits (\$3.6 million), and TV audience (3.45 million viewers for the final).

The exuberant fans also made those World Juniors special. "I remember the hair standing up on the back of my neck, because the building was so loud," said Scott Ferguson about the Canada-USA semi-final that year.

Ferguson, currently the Halifax chair of the 2008 Worlds, recalls the lengths to which he and his colleagues went to ensure his city's '03 World Junior bid would win: "Leading into the bid, we had a two-week campaign to sell the event out. We were on TV every morning at 6 am, with a 'thermometer' to show how many tickets had been sold."

The 2004 IIHF World Women's Championship also established a new attendance record of 94,001 as huge crowds are the norm.

Fred MacGillivray, who chairs the tournament organising committee, said: "I think that the fact that the tournament is taking place for the first time in Canada and just the second time in North America will make a lot of Canadian and American players want to come here as a point of pride, and for the European players who don't have to go back across the Atlantic, they'll want to play for their teams too. And that all spurs ticket sales. It's not just Team Canada. It's Team USA, Team Slovakia, Team Finland."

A group of 600 local volunteers is ready to care for the needs of players and tournament officials, as well as the 500 media that will descend upon Halifax. Up to 5,000 fans from Canada, the U.S., and Europe are expected to celebrate in the city's compact downtown.

HISTORIC TOWN

The Pier 21 museum on the Halifax waterfront was Canada's maritime immigration gateway from 1928-1971, and fittingly, about 1,200 of the fans coming to Halifax are expected to be European. Wherever they hail from, fans will enjoy seeing tournament banners and signage in their own language, showing attention to detail. Hockey lovers will be everywhere in Halifax May 2-14. The World Oldtimers Hockey tournament will take place from the 5th-10th. You're sure to find Finnish fans belting out songs at traditional pubs like The Lower Deck, and German supporters tucking into fish and roasties at The Wooden Monkey.

A unique taste of hockey culture will be found at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, which is organising a special exhibit called Arena: The Art of Hockey. More than 50 artists will be showcased. Signature pieces will include a full-sized Zamboni carved out of foam, and a replica of the Stanley Cup cast in bronze atop a washing machine. A hockey film festival will take place in the Art Gallery's 80-seat theatre.

MAKING HOCKEY HISTORY

But ultimately, the main focus will be on the ice. Which goalie will elevate his game in the quarterfinals and prove as impregnable as the Halifax Citadel? Which contending team's gold medal hopes are as doomed as the Titanic? It'll all be unforgettable.

Halifax organisers also hope a successful tournament will increase their odds of landing the World Juniors again in either 2010 or 2012. "This certainly increases our place on the international map," said MacGillivray. "We want to be known as a great city for international events. This region will adopt the IIHF World Championship as its own, and nothing else of significance will take place while it's on. The whole focus will be on the tournament."

2008 IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PREVIEW

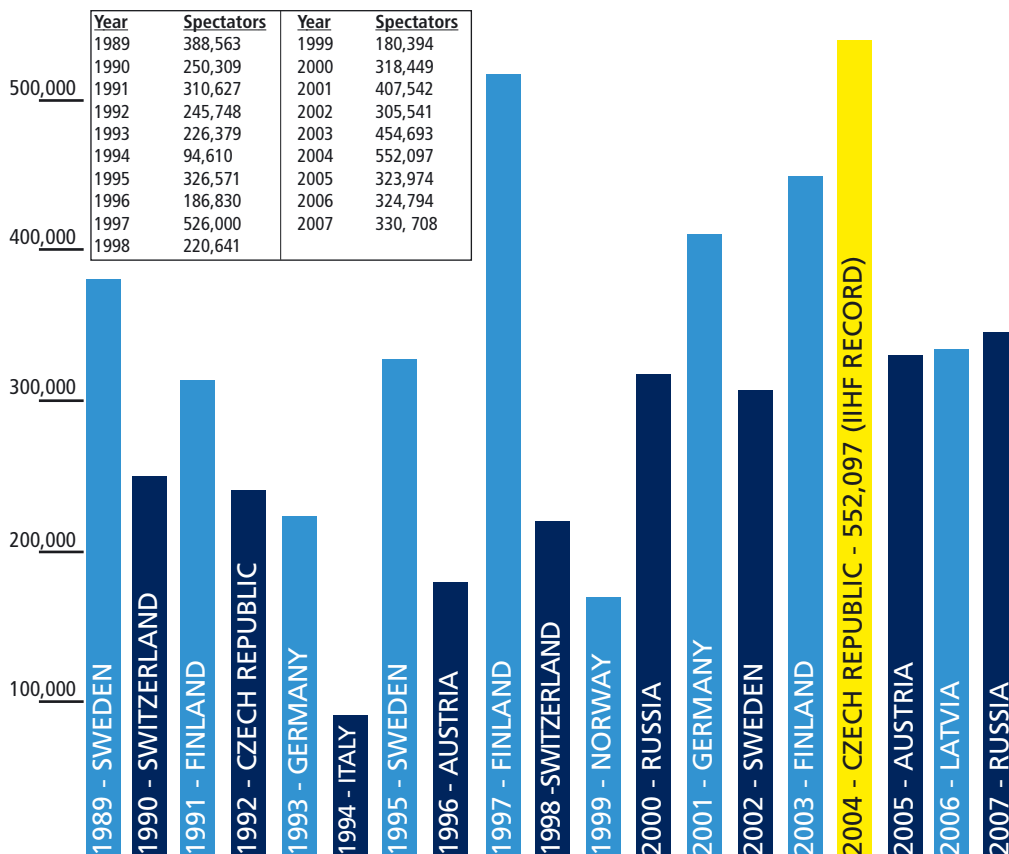
The top of the peak: IIHF World Championship record book

ALL-TIME IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

Top Division Sorted by Points

Country	Years	Games	Wins	Ties	Losses	Points	Goals for	Goals against	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
TCH/CZE	67	535	346	47	142	743	2447	1220	11	13	19	43
CAN	61	468	330	31	107	692	2538	994	24	11	9	44
SWE	66	533	312	55	168	684	2265	1414	9	18	14	40
URS/RUS	50	412	320	31	61	679	2406	789	23	8	7	38
USA	59	447	204	39	204	451	1738	1677	2	9	5	16
FIN	54	447	185	52	210	428	1516	1693	1	6	2	10
FRG/GER	53	400	120	42	238	285	1029	1751	0	1	2	3
SUI	42	279	99	24	156	223	902	1186	0	1	8	9
POL	30	218	45	16	157	106	495	1226	0	0	0	0
SVK	12	89	47	11	31	109	301	212	1	1	1	3
AUT	29	171	46	16	109	108	415	745	0	0	0	2
ITA	25	150	39	22	90	101	346	729	0	0	0	0
GBR	15	91	44	4	43	92	298	360	1	2	2	5
NOR	26	160	36	10	114	84	384	790	0	0	0	0
LAT	16	92	33	9	50	77	237	301	0	0	0	0
GDR	14	119	27	10	82	64	277	653	0	0	0	0
FRA	21	103	24	3	76	51	189	472	0	0	0	0
BLR	8	49	21	2	26	45	124	141	0	0	0	0
HUN	11	62	16	7	39	39	113	176	0	0	0	0
ROM	10	60	13	1	46	27	125	372	0	0	0	0
JPN	13	65	10	7	48	27	176	419	0	0	0	0
UKR	9	51	11	4	36	27	93	206	0	0	0	0
DEN	6	33	8	2	23	20	71	210	0	0	0	0
YUG	3	19	8	2	9	18	68	131	0	0	0	0
BEL	12	43	6	1	36	13	83	418	0	0	0	0
SLO	4	18	5	3	16	13	53	121	0	0	0	0
KAZ	4	21	4	1	16	9	37	79	0	0	0	0
NED	4	22	2	0	20	4	34	156	0	0	0	0
LIT	1	4	1	0	3	0	3	33	0	0	0	0
AUS	1	6	0	0	6	0	10	87	0	0	0	0

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ATTENDANCE (since 1989)



IIHF World Championship

All-time Record Book

Most World Championships (top pool)

1. Jiri Holik	14	TCH	1964-77
1. Sven Tumba	14	SWE	1952-77
3. Lasse Oksanen	13	FIN	1964-77
3. Dieter Hegen	13	FRG	1982-98
3. Ronald Pettersson	13	SWE	1955-67
3. Vladislav Tretiak	13	URS	1970-83
3. Udo Kiessling	13	FRG	1973-91
3. Petteri Nummelin	13	FIN	1995-07

Most World Championship Games

1. Jiri Holik	CZE	123 games
2. Lasse Oksanen	FIN	117 games
2. Vladislav Tretiak	URS	117 games
4. Oldrich Machac	TCH	113 games
5. Udo Kiessling	FRG	109 games

Most World Championship Points

1. Boris Mikhailov	URS	169 points
2. Valeri Kharlamov	URS	159 points
3. Alexander Maltsev	URS	156 points
4. Vladimir Petrov	URS	154 points
5. Sven Tumba	SWE	127 points

Most World Championship Medals

1. Vladislav Tretiak	URS	13	10G, 2S, 1B
2. Alexander Ragulin	URS	12	10G, 1S, 1B
3. Alexander Maltsev	URS	12	9G, 2S, 1B
3. Vladimir Petrov	URS	12	9G, 2S, 1B
5. Vitaly Davydov	URS	10	9G, 1S
5. Vyacheslav Starshinov	URS	10	9G, 1B

2008 IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PREVIEW

2010 Olympic spots are up for grabs in Canada

■ The stage will be set for nine teams to go to the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver at the conclusion of the World Championship in Canada.

■ The top nine teams in the IIHF World Ranking, which will be established immediately following Canada 2008, will earn automatic entry to Vancouver 2010. The teams ranked ten and below will have to go through Olympic qualification tournaments (in autumn 2008 and/or February 2009) to secure any of the three remaining spots in the men's Olympic tournament. The men's Olympic tournament in Vancouver will have 12 teams.

For clarity: teams that right now are around the magical ninth spot, can not afford to have a poor showing in Canada 2008 if their ambition is to secure automatic qualification for the Vancouver Olympics. Otherwise they will run the risk of going through the qualification tournament process.



The qualification tournaments will take place in a two-part phase. First will be three pre-qualification tournaments, made up of four teams each, that will feature teams ranked 19-27, assuming all teams in that range express a desire to go through the Olympic qualification process.

The three winners of the November events will then move onto the February Final Olympic qualification tournaments. There will also be three tournaments with four teams. The teams ranked 10-18 in the IIHF World Ranking will be automatically qualified to the final tournaments, and will be joined by the three winners from the November pre-qualifiers.

■ Currently the biggest drama for the Olympic qualification process features the race between Belarus, Latvia and Germany. Only 85 points separates the nations, which are always unpredictable in their World Championship final placement. Switzerland, while not entirely safe, is in the best position of the bubble teams with a 115-point jump on ninth-placed Belarus.

Generally, 20 points separate the various positions when the World Ranking points are awarded following a championship. However, there are jumps as great as 40 points meaning it won't take a big swing for the positions of the bubble teams to shift.

■ The race is also interesting at the top of the pile too, as the top three teams are fighting for first place. Only 50 points separates first-place Sweden and third-place Canada. With an 80 point swing between a gold medal finish and a bronze medal finish, the top spot is certainly up for grabs in Quebec City.

Ultimately, the Championship Report to the right is the best gauge of what exactly the 16 teams in Moscow must do to climb, or hold onto their current spot, in the ranking. The points in the right column represent what the ranking looked like at the end of the 2007 season, following Russia 2007. The 2008 Pre-Championship Report has already had the points for the 2004 World Championship dropped from its total, while the points from the 2007 World Championship, the 2006 World Championships and Olympics and the 2005 Worlds have been devalued by 25 percent.

Example: Value of the gold medal

Year 1: 100% value -- 1200 points

Year 2: 75% value -- 900 points

Year 3: 50% value -- 600 points

Year 4: 25% value -- 300 points

Year 5: 0% value -- 0 points

■ To tally a team's final ranking after the 2008 IIHF World Championship, add the points they receive for their finish in Canada to the 2008 Pre-Championship report.

In the '08 Pre-Championship Report the values of the 2007, 2006 and 2005 championships are already reduced by 25% and the 2004 Championship has been dropped. The right column, shows the values the teams had after Moscow 2007 before all the values were adjusted for the Pre-Championship Report. To get the 2008 final ranking, simply add the points from the Canada finish to the value in the team's '08 Pre-Championship Report.

2008 IIHF PRE-CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT

Rank	Country	Pre Canada '08	After Russia '07
1	SWE	2300	3740
2	FIN	2265	3640
3	CAN	2250	3670
4	CZE	2205	3595
5	RUS	2200	3535
6	SVK	2075	3390
7	USA	2065	3375
8	SUI	2000	3250
9	BLR	1885	3025
-----OLYMPIC CUT-----			
10	LAT	1820	2995
11	GER	1800	2925
12	DEN	1760	2855
13	ITA	1760	2815
14	NOR	1735	2780
15	UKR	1675	2740
16	KAZ	1665	2740
17	AUT	1645	2695
18	SLO	1620	2640
19	FRA	1550	2525
20	POL	1475	2395
21	HUN	1440	2320
22	JPN	1400	2305
23	EST	1330	2165
24	NED	1315	2155
25	LTU	1310	2105
26	ROU	1210	1970
27	CHN	1150	1860
28	CRO	1150	1850
29	GBR	965	1605
30	SRB	945	1555
31	BUL	925	1500
32	KOR	785	1320
33	ISR	770	1260
34	AUS	760	1260
35	BEL	710	1200
36	ESP	660	1090
37	MEX	570	915
38	ISL	565	920
39	NZL	530	900
40	TUR	505	830
41	RSA	455	770
42	IRL	435	710
43	LUX	415	710
44	PRK	325	660
45	ARM	200	390
46	MGL	195	260
47	BIH	0	0
48	GRE	0	0

POINTS EARNED

Top Division	
1	1200
2	1160
3	1120
4	1100
5	1060
6	1040
7	1020
8	1000
9	960
10	940
11	920
12	900
13	880
14	860
15	840
16	820
Division I	
17	800
18	780
19	760
20	740
21	720
22	700
23	680
24	660
25	640
26	620
27	600
28	580
Division II	
29	560
30	540
31	520
32	500
33	480
34	460
35	440
36	420
37	400
38	380
39	360
40	340
Division III	
41	320
42	300
43	280
44	260
45	240
46	220

RESULTS SUMMARY

IIHF World Championship, Div. I, Grp. A

Innsbruck, AUSTRIA April 13-19

Netherlands - Kazakhstan	3 - 6	(1-3, 1-0, 1-3)
Great Britain - Poland	1 - 2	(0-1, 1-0, 0-0) PS
Korea - Austria	0 - 8	(0-3, 0-4, 0-1)
Poland - Netherlands	6 - 4	(2-2, 1-1, 3-1)
Kazakhstan - Korea	5 - 1	(2-0, 1-0, 2-1)
Austria - Great Britain	10-5	(4-3, 3-0, 3-2)
Korea - Great Britain	1 - 4	(0-1, 0-1, 1-2)
Poland - Kazakhstan	3 - 4	(0-1,0-1, 3-1) PS
Austria - Netherlands	5 - 1	(0-0, 1-1, 4-0)
Great Britain - Netherlands	8 - 1	(2-0, 4-0, 2-1)
Poland - Korea	4 - 1	(0-0, 2-1, 2-0)
Kazakhstan - Austria	3 - 4	(1-1, 1-2, 1-1)
Netherlands - Korea	6 - 5	(2-1, 2-3, 1-1) OT
Kazakhstan - Great Britain	3 - 1	(1-1, 0-0, 2-0)
Austria - Poland	7 - 3	(1-1, 5-0, 1-2)

Austria	5	5	0	0	0	34-12	15
Kazakhstan	5	3	1	0	1	21-12	11
Poland	5	2	1	1	1	18-17	9
Great Britain	5	2	0	1	2	19-17	7
Netherlands	5	0	1	0	4	15-30	2
Korea	5	0	0	1	4	8-27	1

Austria is promoted to 2009 World Championship in Switzerland
Korea is relegated to 2009 World Championship, Div. II

IIHF World Championship, Div. I, Grp. B

Sapporo, JAPAN April 13-19

Croatia - Ukraine	0 - 4	(0-1, 0-1, 0-2)
Estonia - Hungary	3 - 5	(1-2, 2-1, 0-2)
Lithuania - Japan	0 - 5	(0-4, 0-0, 0-1)
Ukraine - Estonia	3 - 1	(0-0, 2-1, 1-0)
Hungary - Lithuania	6 - 0	(2-0, 2-0, 2-0)
Japan - Croatia	3 - 0	(1-0, 0-0, 2-0)
Croatia - Estonia	2 - 1	(0-1, 1-0, 0-0) PS
Ukraine - Lithuania	6 - 1	(4-1, 1-1, 1-0)
Hungary - Japan	4 - 2	(0-0, 3-1, 1-1)
Estonia - Lithuania	1 - 4	(0-1, 1-1, 0-2)
Hungary - Croatia	3 - 0	(0-0, 1-0, 2-0)
Japan - Ukraine	2 - 3	(0-0, 2-2, 0-0) PS
Lithuania - Croatia	4 - 3	(0-2, 1-0, 3-1)
Japan - Estonia	7 - 3	(4-2, 1-0, 2-1)
Ukraine - Hungary	2 - 4	(0-2, 2-1, 0-1)

Hungary	5	5	0	0	0	22-7	15
Ukraine	5	3	1	0	1	18-8	11
Japan	5	3	0	1	1	19-10	10
Lithuania	5	2	0	0	3	9-21	6
Croatia	5	0	1	0	4	5-15	2
Estonia	5	0	0	1	4	9-21	1

Hungary is promoted to 2009 World Championship in Switzerland
Estonia is relegated to 2009 World Championship, Div. II

IIHF World Championship, Div. II, Grp. A

Miercurea Ciuc, ROMANIA April 7-13

Ireland - Serbia	1-13	(1-2, 0-3, 0-8)
Belgium - Bulgaria	8 - 1	(4-0, 1-1, 3-0)
Israel - Romania	0-13	(0-4, 0-5, 0-4)
Bulgaria - Ireland	7 - 4	(2-1, 1-1, 4-2)
Romania - Serbia	10-0	(3-0, 4-0, 3-0)
Belgium - Israel	6 - 3	(2-2, 3-1, 1-0)
Belgium - Ireland	9 - 1	(3-0, 4-1, 2-0)
Israel - Serbia	1 - 4	(1-0, 0-3, 0-1)
Romania - Bulgaria	16-0	(7-0, 4-0, 5-0)
Serbia - Belgium	4 - 5	(3-1, 1-3, 0-1) PS
Bulgaria - Israel	4 - 5	(1-2, 1-0, 2-2) OT
Ireland - Romania	1-21	(0-7, 1-5, 0-9)
Serbia - Bulgaria	11-2	(6-0, 5-0, 0-2)
Israel - Ireland	7 - 1	(2-0, 4-1, 1-0)
Romania - Belgium	5 - 1	(2-1, 1-0, 2-0)

Romania	5	5	0	0	0	65-2	15
Belgium	5	3	1	0	1	29-14	11
Serbia	5	3	0	1	1	32-19	10
Israel	5	1	1	0	3	16-28	5
Bulgaria	5	1	0	1	3	14-44	4
Ireland	5	0	0	0	5	8-57	0

Romania is promoted to 2009 World Championship, Div. I
Ireland is relegated to 2009 World Championship, Div. III

IIHF World Championship, Div. II, Grp. B

Newcastle, AUSTRALIA April 7-13

Spain - China	4 - 5	(1-0, 2-3, 1-1) PS
New Zealand - Iceland	3 - 6	(1-2, 1-3, 1-1)
Australia - Mexico	7 - 1	(2-0, 3-1, 2-0)
China - Iceland	5 - 4	(2-1, 1-1, 1-2) PS
Mexico - New Zealand	2 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 0-0)
Australia - Spain	5 - 3	(1-1, 1-2, 3-0)
China - Mexico	5 - 3	(1-3, 2-0, 2-0)

Spain - Iceland	4 - 3	(1-0, 3-0, 0-3)
Australia - New Zealand	4 - 2	(1-0, 1-2, 2-0)
Mexico - Spain	2 - 4	(1-1, 1-2, 0-1)
New Zealand - China	2 - 6	(2-1, 0-3, 0-2)
Iceland - Australia	0 - 3	(0-1, 0-1, 0-1)
Iceland - Mexico	4 - 6	(1-4, 3-1, 0-1)
Spain - New Zealand	5 - 4	(1-1, 1-0, 3-3)
China - Australia	0 - 1	(0-1, 0-0, 0-0)

Australia	5	5	0	0	0	20-6	15
China	5	2	2	0	1	21-14	10
Spain	5	3	0	1	1	20-19	10
Mexico	5	2	0	0	3	14-20	6
Iceland	5	1	0	1	3	17-21	4
New Zealand	5	0	0	0	5	11-23	0

Australia is promoted to 2009 World Championship, Div. I

New Zealand is relegated to 2009 World Championship, Div. III

IIHF World Championship, Div. III

Luxembourg City, LUXEMBOURG Mar. 31-Apr. 6

Greece - South Africa	1 - 5	(0-2, 0-0, 1-3)
DRP Korea - Mongolia	17-0	(6-0, 5-0, 6-0)
Luxembourg - Turkey	5 - 4	(2-1, 0-2, 2-1) OT
Mongolia - Greece	4-10	(1-2, 1-5, 2-3)
Turkey - South Africa	1 - 7	(0-1, 1-1, 0-5)
DPR Korea - Luxembourg	2 - 1	(0-0, 0-0, 2-1)
Turkey - Mongolia	11-3	(5-1, 3-2, 3-0)
DPR Korea - Greece	7 - 3	(2-1, 2-0, 3-2)
Luxembourg - South Africa	4 - 5	(1-1, 1-3, 2-1)
South Africa - DPR Korea	0 - 6	(0-3, 0-2, 0-1)
Greece - Turkey	1 - 9	(0-3, 1-3, 0-3)
Mongolia - Luxembourg	0 - 9	(0-1, 0-4, 0-4)
South Africa - Mongolia	12-4	(3-2, 5-1, 4-1)
Turkey - DPR Korea	2 - 8	(1-5, 0-0, 1-3)
Luxembourg - Greece	3 - 2	(0-0, 1-0, 1-2) PS

DPR Korea	5	5	0	0	0	40-6	15
South Africa	5	4	0	0	1	29-16	12
Luxembourg	5	1	2	0	2	22-13	7
Turkey	5	2	0	1	2	27-24	7
Greece	5	1	0	1	3	17-28	4
Mongolia	5	0	0	0	5	11-59	0

DPR Korea & S. Africa are promoted to 2009 World Championship, Div. II

IIHF World Women Championship

Harbin, CHINA, April 4-12

Preliminary Round, Group A

Russia - Canada	1 - 8	(1-2, 0-2, 0-4)					
China - Russia	3 - 5	(1-1, 0-2, 2-2)					
Canada - China	11-0	(4-0, 3-0, 4-0)					
Canada	2	2	0	0	0	19-1	6
Russia	2	1	0	0	1	6-11	3
China	2	0	0	0	2	3-16	0

Preliminary Round, Group B

Germany - United States	1 - 8	(1-1, 0-3, 0-4)					
Switzerland - Germany	3 - 0	(1-0, 2-0, 0-0)					
United States - Switzerland	7 - 1	(1-0, 2-1, 4-0)					
United States	2	0	0	0	2	15-2	6
Switzerland	2	1	0	0	1	4-7	3
Germany	2	0	0	0	2	1-11	0

Preliminary Round, Group C

Japan - Sweden	0 - 5	(0-2, 0-2, 0-1)					
Finland - Japan	6 - 1	(0-0, 2-1, 4-0)					
Sweden - Finland	2 - 3	(1-1, 0-0, 1-1) OT					
Finland	2	1	1	0	0	9-3	5
Sweden	2	1	0	1	0	7-3	4
Japan	2	0	0	0	2	1-11	0

Qualification Round, Group D

United States - Finland	0 - 1	(0-0, 0-0, 0-0) OT					
Finland - Canada	2 - 4	(1-1, 0-3, 1-0)					
Canada - United States	2 - 4	(2-1, 0-1, 0-2)					
United States	2	1	0	1	0	4-3	4
Canada	2	1	0	0	1	6-6	3
Finland	2	0	1	0	1	3-4	2

Qualification Round, Group E

Switzerland - Sweden	4 - 3	(2-1, 1-2, 0-0) PS					
Sweden - Russia	3 - 1	(1-0, 1-0, 1-1)					
Russia - Switzerland	1 - 2	(0-1, 1-1, 0-0)					
Switzerland	2	1	1	0	0	6-4	5
Sweden	2	1	0	1	0	6-5	4
Russia	2	0	0	0	2	2-5	0

Relegation Round

Germany - Japan	2 - 1	(2-1, 0-0, 0-0)
Japan - China	3 - 1	(1-0, 0-0, 2-1)
China - Germany	4 - 2	(1-1, 0-1, 3-0)

Japan	2	1	0	0	1	4-3	3
China	2	1	0	0	1	5-5	3
Germany	2	1	0	0	1	4-5	2

Germany is relegated to 2009 World Women Championship, Div. I

Medal Games

Finland - Switzerland	4 - 1	(0-1, 1-0, 3-0)	Bronze
United States - Canada	4 - 3	(2-1, 2-0, 0-2)	Gold

World Women Championship, Div. I

Ventspils, LATVIA March 10-16

Czech Republic - France	3 - 1	(1-0, 1-0, 1-1)
Slovakia - Kazakhstan	1 - 5	(1-2, 0-2, 0-1)
Norway - Latvia	3 - 1	(0-0, 2-1, 1-0)
France - Slovakia	1 - 5	(1-1, 0-3, 0-1)
Kazakhstan - Norway	3 - 2	(1-0, 1-0, 1-2)
Latvia - Czech Republic	3 - 4	(1-0, 1-0, 1-3)
Slovakia - Norway	3 - 2	(1-1, 1-0, 1-1)
Kazakhstan - Czech Republic	3 - 1	(2-1, 1-0, 0-0)
Latvia - France	0 - 1	(0-0, 0-1, 0-0)
Norway - Czech Republic	2 - 3	(1-0, 0-1, 1-1) PS
France - Kazakhstan	1 - 2	(1-1, 0-0, 0-1)
Latvia - Slovakia	2 - 3	(1-0, 0-1, 1-1)
Czech Republic - Slovakia	1 - 2	(0-1, 0-0, 1-1)
France - Norway	3 - 2	(1-0, 1-0, 1-2)
Kazakhstan - Latvia	1 - 3	(1-0, 0-3, 0-0)

Kazakhstan	5	4	0	0	1	14-8	12
Slovakia	5	3	1	0	1	14-11	11
Czech Republic	5	2	1	0	2	12-11	8
France	5	2	0	0	3	7-12	6
Norway	5	1	0	1	3	11-13	4
Latvia	5	1	0	1	3	9-12	4

Kazakhstan is promoted to 2009 World Women Championship
Latvia is relegated to 2009 World Women Championship, Div. II

World Women Championship, Div. II

Vierumaki, FINLAND March 25-30

DPR Korea - Denmark	1 - 5	(0-2, 0-2, 1-1)
Australia - Austria	2 - 6	(0-2, 2-3, 0-1)
Italy - Netherlands	3 - 2	(1-1, 0-0, 1-1) PS
Denmark - Austria	2 - 3	(0-0, 0-2, 2-1)
Netherlands - Australia	6 - 2	(2-0, 2-0, 2-2)
Italy - DPR Korea	1 - 6	(0-2, 1-1, 0-3)
Denmark - Netherlands	3 - 0	(2-0, 0-0, 1-0)
Italy - Australia	5 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 3-0)
DPR Korea - Austria	0 - 4	(0-2, 0-1, 0-1)
Netherlands - DPR Korea	0 - 4	(0-3, 0-0, 0-1)
Austria - Italy	6 - 4	(3-0, 2-2, 1-2)
Australia - Denmark	1-12	(0-6, 1-4, 0-2)
Austria - Netherlands	3 - 2	(2-0, 0-0, 1-2)
DPR Korea - Australia	10-0	(2-0, 4-0, 4-0)
Denmark - Italy	3 - 2	(0-1, 2-0, 1-1)

Austria	5	5	0	0	0	22-10	15
Denmark	5	4	0	0	1	25-7	12
DPR Korea	5	3	0	0	2	21-10	9
Italy	5	1	1	0	3	15-17	5
Netherlands	5	1	0	1	3	10-15	4
Australia	5	0	0	0	5	5-39	0

Austria is promoted to 2009 World Women Championship, Div. I
Australia is relegated to 2009 World Women Championship, Div. III

World Women Championship, Div. III

Miskolc, HUNGARY April 6-12

Great Britain - Korea	6 - 0	(3-0, 2-0, 1-0)
Belgium - Slovenia	2 - 5	(0-2, 1-2, 1-1)
Croatia - Hungary	2 - 1	(0-0, 1-1, 1-0)
Great Britain - Belgium	4 - 1	(0-0, 2-1, 2-0)
Korea - Croatia	3 - 2	(1-1, 0-0, 1-1) PS
Slovenia - Hungary	5 - 0	(1-0, 3-0, 1-0)
Slovenia - Korea	8 - 0	(2-0, 3-0, 3-0)
Great Britain - Croatia	8 - 4	(3-1, 3-1, 2-2)
Belgium - Hungary	4 - 1	(1-0, 1-1, 2-0)
Croatia - Slovenia	1 - 7	(0-4, 1-1, 2-0)
Korea - Belgium	3 - 4	(2-1, 1-3, 0-0)
Hungary - Great Britain	0 - 8	(0-3, 0-3, 0-2)
Belgium - Croatia	1 - 3	(0-0, 1-2, 0-1)
Slovenia - Great Britain	2 - 3	(1-0, 0-1, 1-1) PS
Hungary - Korea	2 - 1	(0-0, 0-1, 2-0)

Great Britain	5	4	1	0	0	29 - 7	14
Slovenia	5	4	0	1	0	27 - 6	13
Croatia	5	2	0	1	2	12-20	7
Belgium	5	2	0	0	3	12-16	6
Hungary	5	1	0	0	4	4 - 20	3
Korea	5	0	1	0	4	7 - 22	2

RESULTS SUMMARY

IIHF World Women Championship Div. IV

Miercurea Ciuc, ROMANIA, March 26-April 1

Iceland - New Zealand	0-10	(0-4, 0-2, 0-4)
Estonia - Croatia	0-12	(0-3, 0-6, 0-3)
Romania - Turkey	27-0	(7-0, 9-0, 11-0)
New Zealand - Croatia	3 - 4	(1-4, 1-0, 1-0)
Turkey - Estonia	1-14	(0-6, 0-5, 1-3)
Romania - Iceland	5 - 2	(0-1, 4-0, 1-1)
New Zealand - Turkey	19-0	(9-0, 6-0, 4-0)
Iceland - Croatia	0 - 3	(0-1, 0-2, 0-0)
Romania - Estonia	5 - 3	(4-2, 1-0, 0-1)
Turkey - Iceland	1-12	(0-3, 0-3, 1-6)
Croatia - Romania	3 - 2	(1-0, 1-1, 1-1)
Estonia - New Zealand	0 - 9	(0-4, 0-5, 0-0)
Croatia - Turkey	19-1	(7-0, 4-0, 8-1)
Iceland - Estonia	3 - 4	(1-2, 0-1, 2-0) PS
New Zealand - Romania	4 - 5	(1-2, 2-2, 1-1)

Croatia	5	5	0	0	0	41 - 6	15
Romania	5	4	0	0	1	44-12	12
New Zealand	5	3	0	0	2	45 - 9	9
Estonia	5	1	1	0	3	21-30	5
Iceland	5	1	0	1	3	17-23	4
Turkey	5	0	0	0	5	3 - 91	0

Croatia is promoted to 2008 World Women Championship Div. III

IIHF World U18 Championship

Kazan, RUSSIA, April 13-24**Group A:**

Canada - Germany	9 - 2	(2-0, 4-1, 3-1)
Slovakia - Russia	4 - 6	(1-2, 0-1, 3-3)
Slovakia - Denmark	5 - 2	(0-0, 2-0, 3-2)
Germany - Russia	2 - 6	(1-0, 0-3, 1-3)
Denmark - Canada	1 - 4	(0-1, 1-2, 0-1)
Germany - Slovakia	5 - 4	(2-1, 2-3, 0-0) PS
Russia - Canada	4 - 2	(0-0, 2-2, 2-0)
Denmark - Germany	0 - 4	(0-1, 0-2, 0-1)
Canada - Slovakia	6 - 0	(2-0, 2-0, 2-0)
Russia - Denmark	10-1	(2-0, 3-1, 5-0)

Russia	4	4	0	0	0	26 - 9	12
Canada	4	3	0	0	01	21 - 7	9
Germany	4	1	1	0	2	13-19	5
Slovakia	4	1	0	1	2	13-19	4
Denmark	4	0	0	0	4	4 - 23	0

Group B:

Sweden - Belarus	6 - 2	(1-1, 1-0, 4-1)
Switzerland - United States	2 - 7	(1-1, 0-3, 1-3)
Belarus - United States	2 - 5	(1-2, 0-2, 1-1)
Switzerland - Finland	3 - 5	(0-2, 1-2, 2-1)
Finland - Switzerland	3 - 5	(1-0, 1-3, 1-2)
Belarus - Switzerland	2 - 4	(0-2, 1-1, 1-1)
United States - Sweden	4 - 5	(1-1, 2-2, 1-2)
Finland - Belarus	4 - 3	(1-1, 1-2, 2-0)
Sweden - Switzerland	7 - 0	(2-0, 4-0, 1-0)
United States - Finland	4 - 3	(3-1, 0-1, 1-1)

Sweden	4	4	0	0	0	23 - 9	12
United States	4	3	0	0	1	20-12	9
Finland	4	2	0	0	2	15-15	6
Switzerland	4	1	0	0	3	9 - 21	3
Belarus	4	0	0	0	4	9 - 19	0

Relegation Round:

Slovakia - Denmark	5 - 2	(0-0, 2-0, 3-2)
Belarus - Switzerland	2 - 4	(0-2, 1-1, 1-1)
Belarus - Slovakia	1 - 6	(0-3, 0-2, 1-1)
Switzerland - Denmark	6 - 1	(1-0, 4-1, 1-0)
Denmark - Belarus	2 - 6	(0-2, 1-1, 1-3)
Slovakia - Switzerland	3 - 2	(0-0, 0-1, 3-1)

Slovakia	3	3	0	0	0	14 - 5	9
Switzerland	3	2	0	0	1	12 - 6	6
Belarus	3	1	0	0	2	9-12	3
Denmark	3	0	0	0	3	5-17	0

*Denmark & Belarus are relegated to 2009 World U18 Championship, Div. I***Playoff Round:**

Canada - Finland	2 - 1	(1-0, 1-0, 0-1) QF
United States - Germany	4 - 1	(1-0, 2-1, 1-0) QF
Sweden - Canada	2 - 3	(1-1, 1-1, 0-1) SF
Russia - United States	3 - 1	(1-0, 1-0, 1-1) SF
Finland - Germany	3 - 4	(1-1, 0-2, 2-1) 5th
Sweden - United States	3 - 6	(1-2, 2-3, 0-1) bronze
Canada - Russia	8 - 0	(5-0, 2-0, 1-0) gold

Directorate Awards:

Best Goaltender: Jake Allen (Canada)
 Best Defenseman: Erik Karlsson (Sweden)
 Best Forward: Kirill Petrov (Russia)
 MVP: Jake Allen (Canada)

World U18 Championship Div. I, Grp. A

Torun, POLAND April 2 - 8

Ukraine - Kazakhstan	0 - 2	(0-1, 0-0, 0-1)
Lithuania - Czech Republic	1 - 7	(1-2, 0-2, 0-3)
Poland - Slovenia	0 - 5	(0-2, 0-2, 0-1)
Kazakhstan - Lithuania	9 - 0	(3-0, 4-0, 2-0)
Slovenia - Ukraine	1 - 3	(0-1, 0-2, 1-0)
Czech Republic - Poland	9 - 0	(3-0, 4-0, 2-0)
Slovenia - Kazakhstan	2 - 7	(1-1, 1-4, 0-2)
Lithuania - Poland	2 - 3	(1-1, 0-1, 1-1)
Czech Republic - Ukraine	5 - 2	(1-0, 2-2, 2-0)
Slovenia - Lithuania	5 - 6	(1-2, 4-1, 0-3)
Poland - Ukraine	0 - 1	(0-0, 0-0, 0-1)
Kazakhstan - Czech Republic	0 - 7	(0-0, 0-2, 0-5)
Ukraine - Lithuania	2 - 4	(1-2, 1-0, 0-2)
Czech Republic - Slovenia	8 - 2	(2-0, 5-1, 1-1)
Kazakhstan - Poland	1 - 4	(0-2, 1-2, 0-0)

Czech Republic	5	5	0	0	0	35 - 5	15
Kazakhstan	5	4	0	0	1	19-13	12
Lithuania	5	2	0	0	3	13-26	6
Poland	5	2	0	0	3	7 - 18	6
Ukraine	5	2	0	0	3	8 - 12	6
Slovenia	5	1	0	0	4	15-24	3

*Czech Republic is promoted to 2009 World U18 Championship**Slovenia is relegated to 2009 World U18 Championship, Div. II*

World U18 Championship Div. I, Grp. B

Riga, LATVIA April 2-8

Austria - Norway	1 - 2	(0-0, 1-2, 0-0)
Italy - Japan	4 - 3	(2-0, 1-2, 1-1)
Netherlands - Latvia	0 - 7	(0-3, 0-1, 0-3)
Japan - Austria	1 - 6	(0-2, 0-0, 1-4)
Norway - Netherlands	7 - 0	(2-0, 4-0, 1-0)
Latvia - Italy	3 - 1	(2-0, 0-0, 1-1)
Netherlands - Italy	0-10	(0-2, 0-2, 0-6)
Japan - Norway	1 - 3	(0-0, 0-1, 1-2)
Latvia - Austria	2 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 0-0)
Japan - Netherlands	7 - 4	(3-0, 2-0, 2-4)
Italy - Austria	1 - 2	(0-0, 1-1, 0-0) PS
Norway - Latvia	1 - 0	(0-0, 1-0, 0-0)
Norway - Italy	2 - 1	(2-1, 0-0, 0-0)
Austria - Netherlands	2 - 0	(2-0, 0-0, 0-0)
Latvia - Japan	9 - 0	(1-0, 5-0, 3-0)

Norway	5	5	0	0	0	15 - 3	15
Latvia	5	4	0	0	1	21 - 2	12
Austria	5	2	1	0	2	11 - 6	8
Italy	5	2	0	1	2	17-10	7
Japan	5	1	0	0	4	12-26	3
Netherlands	5	0	0	0	5	4 - 33	0

*Norway is promoted to 2009 World U18 Championship**Netherlands is relegated to 2009 World U18 Championship, Div. II*

World U18 Championship Div. II, Grp. A

Meribel/Courchevel, FRANCE March 30 - April 5

Korea - Australia	10-0	(2-0, 3-0, 5-0)
China - Belgium	4 - 5	(1-2, 3-2, 0-1)
Croatia - France	1 - 8	(0-2, 1-3, 0-3)
Korea - Croatia	6 - 3	(3-1, 1-1, 2-1)
Australia - China	4 - 5	(0-2, 1-3, 0-3)
France - Belgium	16-0	(5-0, 6-0, 5-0)
Croatia - Belgium	5 - 4	(0-1, 4-1, 1-2)
Korea - China	10-0	(5-0, 4-0, 1-0)
France - Australia	10-2	(2-1, 4-1, 4-0)
Belgium - Korea	3 - 4	(2-2, 1-0, 0-1) OT



Australia - Croatia	1 - 6	(0-3, 1-2, 0-1)
China - France	0-16	(0-4, 0-5, 0-7)
Belgium - Australia	2 - 1	(0-1, 1-0, 1-0)
Croatia - China	17-5	(3-1, 6-2, 8-2)
France - Korea	3 - 1	(1-1, 2-0, 0-0)

France	5	5	0	0	0	53 - 4	15
Korea	5	3	1	0	1	31 - 9	11
Croatia	5	3	0	0	2	32-24	9
Belgium	5	2	0	1	2	14-30	7
China	5	1	0	0	4	14-52	3
Australia	5	0	0	0	5	8 - 33	0

*France is promoted to 2009 World U18 Championship, Div. I**Australia is relegated to 2009 World U18 Championship, Div. III*

World U18 Championship Div. II, Grp. B

Tallinn, ESTONIA, March 23-29

Spain - Romania	1 - 8	(1-2, 0-3, 0-3)
Estonia - Great Britain	3 - 5	(0-0, 3-4, 0-1)
Hungary - Israel	19-1	(5-0, 7-1, 7-0)
Great Britain - Romania	5 - 3	(0-3, 3-0, 2-0)
Israel - Spain	4-12	(1-4, 3-2, 0-6)
Hungary - Estonia	3 - 2	(1-0, 1-1, 1-1)
Great Britain - Israel	12-0	(4-0, 4-0, 4-0)
Hungary - Spain	3 - 4	(2-2, 0-1, 1-1)
Estonia - Romania	3 - 2	(2-0, 1-1, 0-1)
Spain - Great Britain	2 - 4	(2-0, 0-3, 0-1)
Romania - Hungary	4 - 9	(0-4, 2-2, 2-3)
Israel - Estonia	3-10	(0-5, 1-3, 2-2)
Romania - Israel	15-3	(5-0, 4-2, 6-1)
Great Britain - Hungary	1 - 3	(1-1, 0-1, 0-1)
Estonia - Spain	2 - 1	(0-1, 0-0, 2-0)

Hungary	5	4	0	0	1	37-12	12
Great Britain	5	4	0	0	1	27-11	12
Estonia	5	3	0	0	2	20-14	9
Romania	5	2	0	0	3	32-21	6
Spain	5	2	0	0	3	20-21	6
Israel	5	0	0	0	5	11-68	0

*Hungary is promoted to 2009 World U18 Championship, Div. I**Israel is relegated to 2009 World U18 Championship, Div. III*

World U18 Championship Div. III, Grp. A

Mexico City, MEXICO, March 2-8

New Zealand - Mongolia	29-0	(7-0, 10-0, 12-0)
South Africa - Mexico	0 - 5	(Forfeit)
New Zealand - South Africa	10-3	(5-0, 2-2, 3-1)
Mexico - Taipei	10-1	(3-0, 2-0, 5-1)
South Africa - Taipei	3 - 9	(0-3, 2-5, 1-1)
Mexico - Mongolia	10-1	(5-0, 0-1, 5-0)
Mongolia - South Africa	2-12	(1-5, 0-4, 1-3)
Taipei - New Zealand	8 - 6	(2-4, 3-1, 3-1)
Taipei - Mongolia	13-4	(5-0, 5-0, 3-4)
Mexico - New Zealand	7 - 0	(2-0, 4-0, 1-0)

Mexico	4	4	0	0	0	32 - 2	12
Taipei	4	3	0	0	1	31-23	9
New Zealand	4	2	0	0	2	45-18	6
South Africa	4	1	0	0	3	18-26	3
Mongolia	4	0	0	0	1	7 - 64	0

Mexico is promoted to 2009 World U18 Championship, Div. II

World U18 Championship Div. III, Grp. B

Izmit, TURKEY, March 3-9

Bulgaria - Armenia	24-1	(7-0, 6-0, 11-1)
Serbia - Turkey	12-0	(5-0, 3-0, 4-0)
Bulgaria - Serbia	0-13	(0-4, 0-3, 0-6)
Turkey - Iceland	2-12	(1-6, 1-2, 0-4)
Serbia - Iceland	4 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 2-0)
Turkey - Armenia	24-0	(9-0, 8-0, 7-0)
Armenia - Serbia	0-16	(0-8, 0-4, 0-4)
Iceland - Bulgaria	13-1	(2-0, 6-0, 5-1)
Iceland - Armenia	23-0	(8-0, 7-0, 8-0)
Turkey - Bulgaria	8 - 2	(2-1, 1-0, 5-1)

Serbia	4	4	0	0	0	45 - 0	12
Iceland	4	3	0	0	1	48 - 7	9
Turkey	4	2	0	0	2	34-26	6
Bulgaria	4	1	0	0	3	27-35	3
Armenia	4	0	0	0	4	1 - 87	0

Serbia is promoted to 2009 World U18 Championship, Div. II

PROMOTION.. AUSTRALIAN FOR HAPPINESS: Australia had an unprecedented season in 2008 as they earned the promotion to Division I for the first time in decades. The Aussies swept through their Division II group and will join the next level in 2009.

KEN HITCHCOCK

Born: December 17, 1951 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

■ NHL Experience:

Coached the Dallas Stars (1995-2002), Philadelphia Flyers (2002-2007) and Columbus Blue Jackets (2007-present)

■ Stanley Cup History:

Won in 1998-99 with Dallas.

■ Hockey Canada History

Six appearances as either head, associate or assistant coach. Most notably, was behind the bench for the 2002 and 2006 Olympics, the 2004 World Cup of Hockey and the 2002 World Championship.

A TALL ORDER FOR CANADA:

Ken Hitchcock is no stranger to high-pressure situations having served on the coaching staffs of two Canadian Olympic teams. But this is the first major outing on home ice as a head coach, as he will fill in the very large footsteps of three-time gold medalist, Andy Murray. Oh, and don't forget about the home ice curse for host nations at the World Championship. It's all in a day's work for Hitchcock.



Hitchcock ready to lead Canada, in Canada

By Alan Adams

■ Ken Hitchcock - not three-time gold medal coach Andy Murray - was given the job to lead Team Canada in the first ever IIHF World Championship on Canadian ice. *Ice Times* checked in with Hitchcock the day he was appointed by General Manager Steve Yzerman.

□ Given your international experience, what strikes you most at those events?

The experience that you learn in international competitions is how passionately the countries play. Once they are able to wear their country's sweater, there is a whole new level of play and I think I have learned those lessons, starting at the 2002 Olympics and moving forward. Now I have a clear understanding of what it takes to win at this level.

These are our playoffs and I have found these competitions matter as much or more than the NHL playoffs do.

□ How do you want your team to play?

With the difference in the game between North American surface and the surface in Europe, I think we are going to play a lot like in the NHL. I feel comfortable in that atmosphere.

The international game is speed and skill and I think the grittiness that is the North American game is based on the play in the NHL. We will play Canadian hockey, the way we know how to play and I think it will fit well for the ice surface that we will play on.

□ Your thoughts on team building?

The way that Canada's teams were built in the last few years is a great building block to look at. They had energy people at the end of the line-up and they had young players with skill at the front of the

line-up and I think there is a great opportunity to put a great team on the ice right now. And with the World Championship being in North America, and in Canada in particular, I think a lot of players will want to jump at this unique opportunity."

“ He has an extensive history with Hockey Canada and experience at a number of events, at the Olympics, at the World Cup of Hockey and at the national junior level, along with winning a Stanley Cup with the Dallas Stars. I thought with the opportunity being there to give Ken the chance to coach the team was the right decision.”

-Steve Yzerman, Canada GM

□ What about the pressure about representing your country, especially when the World Championship is also a qualifying event for the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver?

The pressure goes with the expectation level and the expectation level in Canada has always been gold or bust. Everybody understands that going in. And we have all learned not only to live in that atmosphere, but over the past 10 years also to thrive in it. We look forward to being the best and regardless of what level it is at, it is a measuring stick for us. Our pride in our game, our pride in our program is very strong and we take these competitions very personally and it is a really big event. It is also magnified because it is in Canada this year.

□ In your mind, what is the obligation or is there an obligation of a Canadian NHL player to play if he is healthy and available? Is playing purely optional and is there any connection to Vancouver 2010?

If you have any aspirations to play in the Olympics, this is an important event. There are so many different dynamics that differ from playing for your NHL club. It is the dynamics of coming together quickly, of playing against teams from different countries and different styles every second night and having to adjust. I think the experience really helps you understand what it is like to play in the Olympics because this is completely different. There are players who can do this and do it well and there are players who struggle with this.

□ The host team has not won the world title since '86. Can you comment on that?

I did not know that, and I don't want to know. We know there will be pressure and stress on everybody and we have to learn to embrace it. The key thing is not to get overwhelmed by it, and if you embrace the pressure that goes with playing at home and high expectations, then you can feed off that energy. If you are overwhelmed by it, it hurts you.

And that was one of the things that as a coaching staff we did not pay enough attention to in '06 (i.e. the Torino Olympics when Canada finished seventh). They were trying to defend a medal that they had not won and they felt that pressure and I do not think we did a good enough job in reading that and taking the pressure off of them. I think the players have enough pressure on them already and it is our job to keep it off them.