

News Release



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Photo: Jani Rajamäki, Eurphoto

YOU MAKE YOUR OWN LUCK: *It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. In a single moment, two team's fates were determined on a fluke play. To the left Canadian goaltender Marc-Andre Fleury laments his clearing pass that hit his defenseman Braydon Coburn and bounced into the net. On the right, Patrick O'Sullivan, Patrick Eaves and Drew Stafford celebrate the goal, which made the game, 4-3, and gave Team USA the gold medal -- it's first-ever at the U20 Championship. U.S. Coach Mike Eaves said of the ill-timed play after the game, "the harder you work, the luckier you get." While the Americans ended their 28-year drought, the Canadians extended their goldless streak to seven years.*

USA's investment pays off - now and for future

The United States is the ice hockey nation that has made the biggest overall progress in the last decade. Its victory in the IIHF World U20 Championship in Finland has proved that the national teams coming out of USA Hockey's doors can win at every IIHF level.

■ ■ We know that the U.S. is very competitive in both the men's and women's Olympic ice hockey tournaments. Two years ago, their U18 team won the gold medal for the first time at that level and now, virtually the same team, grabbed the U20 World Championship gold, also for the first time.

RENÉ FASEL EDITORIAL

When development occurs slowly and systematically, it is sometimes difficult to acknowledge the changes and give due praise. But it wasn't so many years ago when the different USA teams in the IIHF World Championship were bouncing between the old A and B pools, and their junior teams were easy prey for teams like the Soviet Union/Russia, Sweden and Canada.

■ ■ This is definitely a thing of the past. USA is finally performing up to its vast potential in hockey. The only place where the remaining discrepancy between USA Hockey's potential and its results can still be found, is in the IIHF World Championship,

which Team USA has not won since 1933.

The recent success of USA's National Team Development Program will hopefully make the players more committed to participate in the international game when called upon by USA Hockey. The players will know that the NTDP contributed immense time and money to their professional careers and will hopefully be willing to answer the favour when asked.

■ ■ Exactly one year ago, I wrote about "village mentality" as the biggest obstacle in creating a European top competition for club teams. After working diligently with the top seven European national associations, their leagues and our marketing partner Infront Sports & Media AG for a year, we are closing in on finalizing the agreement which would see the IIHF Super Six club championship launched in 2005.

We should be able to reach a final agreement later this spring and present it officially at the 2004 IIHF World Championship in the Czech Republic.

■ ■ Speaking of Prague: the ticket sales for the upcoming 68th World Championship in Prague and Ostrava are, according to reports, on course to beat the existing IIHF World Championship record from Finland 1997, where 526.000 tickets were sold.

Continued on next page

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■ The prognosis for Czech Republic 2004 points to 600,000 tickets. The local organizers had to temporarily halt the internet ticket sales on January 11 due to the overwhelming demand in order to secure availability for those without internet access. The Czech organizers received 170,000 tickets requests for the Czech Republic - Germany game on April 28 only. (See the related story just to the right).

That's ten times more than the capacity of the Sazka Arena, which will be the most modern sports facility in Europe when it opens its doors on April 24.

■ Let the countdown to a great IIHF World Championship begin.

René Fasel
IIHF President

Canada chooses Vancouver to host 2006 U20 Championship

■ For the city of Vancouver, the good news keeps coming. Late last year, the city in the province of British Columbia was awarded the 2010 Olympic games, and on Thursday, it found out that it was chosen by Hockey Canada to host the 2006 IIHF World U20 Championship.

Hockey Canada and the Canadian Hockey League made the announcement Thursday at GM Place, where the gold-medal game of the world under-20 championship will be held. Vancouver was chosen over finalists Ottawa, Saskatoon, Quebec City and a joint bid from London and Kitchener, Ont.

■ The 2006 IIHF World U20 Championship will take place from late December, 2005 to early January, 2006, in Vancouver, BC, with satellite centers in Kelowna and Kamloops, BC. The locations and game schedule will be subject to IIHF approval and will be released at a later date.

Bids from London/Kitchener, Ottawa, Quebec City, Saskatoon and Vancouver were the five finalists. Originally, a total of eleven groups had expressed interest in hosting the 2006 IIHF World Junior Championship, including six that were formally eliminated from contention on January 12, 2004: Edmonton, Halifax, Hamilton, Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg.

It will mark the seventh time that the World U20 Championship has been staged in Canada and the first time it will be held in British Columbia. Other years in which Canada hosted this Championship were in 2003 (Halifax), in 1999 (Winnipeg), in 1995 (Red Deer), in 1991 (Saskatoon), in 1986 (Hamilton), and in 1978 (Montreal).



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Ticket sales for Czech Republic 2004 on course for a new IIHF World Championship record

■ The first round of ticket sales on the internet for the 2004 IIHF World Championship (in Prague and Ostrava, Czech Republic, April 24 - May 9), which started on December 22, 2003, had to be stopped on January 11, 2004 - seven days before the planned closing term. The demand for tickets was so overwhelming that a continued selling would dramatically decrease the possibility for fans without internet access to obtain tickets.

■ The organizing committee and the Sazka Arena company wanted to avoid a situation where all the attractive tickets would have been sold to internet buyers, leaving others with little or no chance to buy tickets for games in the Sazka Arena in Prague and in the CEZ Arena in Ostrava.

Therefore, a traditional sale of tickets through phone order or direct purchase, was halted and resumed on January 26. The purchase means are through the call centre of the Sazka company and through more than 7,000 of Sazka's terminals.

■ The number to call: +420 266 121 122



Photo: SAZKA Co.

READY FOR RECORD: The new 17,000-seat Sazka Arena in Prague will be a busy place between April 24 and May 9.

A third round of ticket sales will start on March 15 and it will be accessible to the general public.

■ The ticket sales commencing on January 26, featured all attractive tickets packages which were reserved during the first round of sales, but not paid for in due time.

Due to certain commitments of the local orga-

nizers, a substantial amount of tickets are "blocked" and thus unavailable so far. When the third round of ticket sales begins on March 15, all remaining tickets, including those that were previously "blocked", will be made available to the public.

■ The organizing committee is confident that the above described ticket purchase opportunities will give a chance to all hockey fans to obtain tickets to world championship games in Prague or Ostrava and furthermore set a new IIHF World Championship record of more than 600,000 tickets sold.

The IIHF World Championship record so far stems from the 1997 tournament in Finland where 526,000 tickets were sold.

Gray eminence Kukulowicz receives Paul Loicq Award



■ Canadian Aggie Kukulowicz is the sixth recipient of the IIHF's Paul Loicq Award, presented to a person who has made significant contributions to the IIHF.

Kukulowicz, born on April 2, 1933 in Winnipeg, Canada, played a key role within the IIHF community through his duties and contributions to the Canada Cup tournaments, 1976-1991.

■ He used his language skills; he spoke English, Russian, French, German, Polish, and Ukrainian, to translate the negotiations between Russia and Canada for the 1972 Summit Series. From there he assisted IIHF, Canadian and Soviet official during various Canada Cup tournaments and finally managed to intermediate between all parties involved to bring Canada back to the IIHF World Championship in 1977 after a seven year absence.

■ Aggie Kukulowicz's playing career extended from 1950 to 1965 with a myriad of teams including four games in the NHL with the New York Rangers from 1952 to 1954. Kukulowicz's career was defined in the WHL and the IHL where he spent most of his time as a player.

■ Today, Aggie Kukulowicz lives in British Columbia, Canada. He will be presented with the award at the IIHF Hall of Fame presentation during the 2004 World Championship in Prague.

IIHF Association News

■ The Ice Hockey Federation of Serbia and Montenegro elected Mr. **Nastas Andric** as its new President. Andric replaces Mr. Dragoslav Pajic who stepped down due to personal reasons. Nastas Andric, born in Subotica, Yugoslavia, is 60 years old and is a civil construction engineer by profession.



■ Both men who led Canada's Olympic gold medal team in 1948 in St. Moritz past away in December 2003.

Frank Boucher, who coached the RCAF Flyers died on December 11 of pneumonia in Osgoode, Ont., outside of Ottawa. **Sandy Watson**, who was the team manager of the Flyers, died on December 28. He was also a resident of Ottawa. Boucher, 86, was the son of Hockey Hall of Famer George "Buck" Boucher and the nephew of namesake Rangers star and Hall of Famer Frank Boucher.

■ Canada's team that won gold at the 2003 IIHF World Championship was named Canada's Team of the Year in 2003 by the Canadian Press news agency.

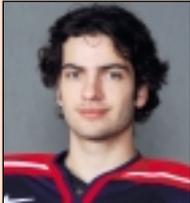
■ The Swedish Ice Hockey Association named NHL veteran **Ulf Dahlen** the assistant coach for the 2004 World Cup of Hockey. Dahlen will also serve as the assistant coach during the 2004 IIHF World Championship in the Czech Republic.

■ IIHF Council member and Slovak Ice Hockey President, **Juraj Siroky**, celebrated his 50th birthday on December 29. Siroky has been the leading personality of Slovak ice hockey since 1998.

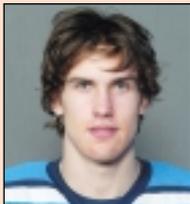




U20 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYER AWARDS



AL MONTOYA- USA
Best goaltender & All-Star Team



SAMI LEPISTO- FIN
Best defenseman & All-Star Team



DION PHANEUF- CAN
All-Star Team (D)



ZACH PARISE- USA
Best forward & All-Star Team & MVP



JEFF CARTER- CAN
All-Star Team (F)



VALTERI FILPPULA- FIN
All-Star Team (F)

USA's victory had everything - except perfect timing

■ There is only one thing that wasn't perfect with USA's first ever IIHF World U20 Gold Medal - the timing. The historic victory came one year before the championship moves to the U.S. and Grand Forks, North Dakota home ice of Team USA's captain Zach Parise, who plays for University of North Dakota there.

But when the 2005 IIHF World U20 Championship gets underway in Grand Forks' impressive Ralph Engelstad Arena, Parise, who led the 2003 U20 Championship in scoring and was also named tournament Most Valuable Player, will be too old for the U20 competition. Parise will be sorely missed by the fans who have seen him perform for the North Dakota Fighting Sioux for the last three years.

■ The same goes for 13 other gold medallists from Helsinki, which means that USA Hockey's National Team Development Program (see more on NTDP on page 7) will have to fork up a virtually new team.

The good news is that forward Patrick O'Sullivan, a two-goal scorer in the Gold Medal game, Al Montoya, named Best Goaltender in Helsinki, and excellent defenseman Ryan Suter, are still under the age limit and will most likely make up the core of the 2005 team.

■ Silver medallist Canada will be in a totally different position than their Yankee neighbours. The Canadians had 13 players who were born in 1985 or later on this year's roster, which means that they can go south of the border with nearly the same team that played in Finland. Young phenomenon Sidney Crosby is almost guaranteed to be there at the age of 17 since the earliest he can sign a pro contract is the summer of 2005.

■ The Russians are known for quick returns to the medal podium after sub-par performances, so look for them to improve from their fifth-place finish in Finland, just as they won gold in 2002 after ending a disappointing seventh in Moscow in 2001. There is a big question mark over Alexander Ovechkin, who will be eligible age-wise, but many expect that he will sign a NHL-contract following the 2004 Entry Draft. Stunning centre, Evgeni Malkin (born 1986), should be back.

■ The Finns have been the European bastion of stability in junior hockey the last couple of years. Their



FAMILIAR WOES: Switzerland could be in for more of these in USA 2005. Here Antti Nokelainen scores in Finland's 2-0 win against the Swiss.

final finishes since 2001 are: 2-3-3-3. They now face the same challenge as the U.S. - 15 players from the Bronze Medal team will not return for 2005.

■ The Czech Republic grabbed a respectable fourth place in Finland, but the team management and especially coach Alois Hadamczik expressed displeasure with his North American contingent. Eight of the Czechs play junior hockey in Canada or minor league hockey in the U.S.

The team also drew some criticism from media and junior hockey aficionados for playing a very strict defensive game, something, which is not in the soul of junior hockey.

It remains to be seen if the Czechs will change their policy regarding style and recruiting, but the team will nevertheless have some very good talent eligible for return. Goaltender Marek Schwarz, defenseman Ladislav Smid and forwards Jakub Sindel, Rostislav Olesz, Vojtech Polak and Lukas Kaspar could all be going to the 2005 tournament.

■ While the Slovaks should improve on their sixth-place finish with exactly half of the team as potential returnees, there are no real signs of improvement for Sweden and Switzerland.

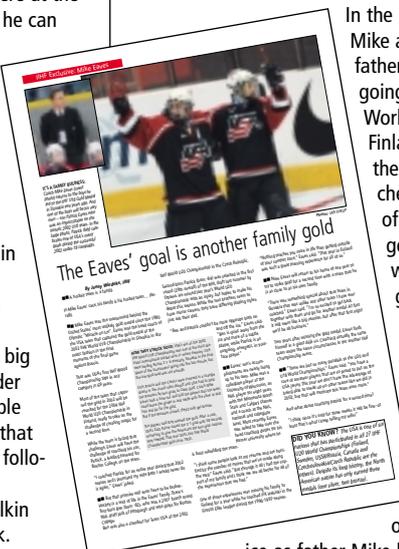
The Swedes, who have produced some of the finest hockey talent there is in the last 10 years, have slipped considerably and they have not won a medal since grabbing silver in 1996. Their five last U20 championship rankings are a disappointing: 5-4-6-8-7.

■ One year ago, Switzerland was relegated to the Division I-level of the IIHF U18 World Championship program with players born 1985-1986. That same group will now be the core of the 2005 U20 team, something which is sure to be weighing heavily on the minds of Swiss hockey officials.

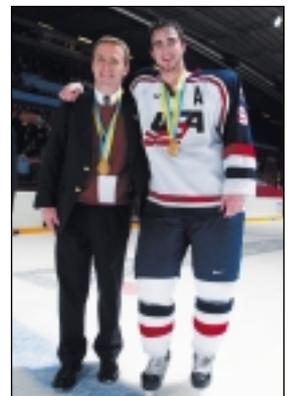
Next year's U20 championship could be the first where the promoted teams, Belarus and Germany, could seriously threaten the top pool status of Sweden and Switzerland, who have hung on to seventh and eighth place for the last two years.

■ Belarus is predicted to be exceptionally strong. The leaders on the team, which swept through this year's Division I championship in Briancon, France, are all in the right 85-86 age bracket. Look out for the forward quartet of Konstantin Zakharov, Vadzim Karaha and the Kastsitsyn brothers, Andrei and Sergei. They scored 45 points between themselves in that championship.

Golden Eaves' - you read it here first



In the December issue of the IIHF News Release, we profiled Mike and Patrick Eaves, a father and son who were going for gold at the U20 World Championship in Finland. Both achieved their goal, as Mike coached Patrick and the rest of the U.S. team to the gold medal on Jan. 5. It was the second IIHF gold medal the pair have won together -- they also earned the gold at the U18 World Championship in 2002. With their golden ambitions behind them, the duo now return to opposite sides of the



GOLDEN FAMILY Mike and Patrick Eaves wear their gold medals with pride after defeating Canada at the U20 World Championship in Finland.

ice as father Mike heads back to the University of Wisconsin to coach, while Patrick returns to Boston College to play with his brother, Ben. The family could be reunited on the ice, only this time as foes, as they go against each other in the NCAA National Championship.



Gomel are local heroes , but Slovan spoils party

■ ■ ■ GOMEL: The 2004 IIHF Continental Cup Super Final in Belarus had everything you would want from a hockey tournament: sell-out crowds, big upsets and an overachieving home team.

Slovak champion Slovan Bratislava defeated host HC Gomel 6-2 in the Gold Medal game on January 11, but the 3,700 fans in the Gomel Ice Palace gave their team a standing ovation following the post-game ceremonies. No one predicted that the home favourites could make it so far, but they did by virtue of a highly surprising 3-2 victory over Swiss champion HC Lugano in the group final.

■ ■ ■ This Super Final showed that European club ice hockey has more depth than what most observers and fans generally envision. Lugano is a team with world-class performers and national team players and a team, which should be competitive against any European club champion, but Gomel beat Lugano fair and square.

It was the biggest triumph of Belarus ice hockey since the national team defeated Sweden in the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City.

■ ■ ■ Slovakia and its national league also took the opportunity to boost its prestige as Slovan Bratislava somewhat surprisingly dumped Russia's Severstal Cherepovets in the other group final. Slovan scored four unanswered goals en route to a 5-3 victory. The Russian PHL-league has for some seasons now been widely regarded as the best in Europe, while the Slovak championship has not been considered to be among the top six leagues in Europe.

The overall success of the Bratislava team was a timely reminder that the Slovak league wants to be considered as one of the best when the "experts" sit down to rank the qualities of the European national leagues.

■ ■ ■ The hosting club Gomel could have sold 100,000 tickets for the Gold Medal game, but the brand new Gomel Ice Palace was only built to accommodate 3,700 fans. The arena was packed to over-capacity for the Slovan-Gomel match-up, but the home town boys had given their all in the thrilling win against Lugano, 20 hours earlier.

Slovan played the role of party spoilers as they jumped to a 4-0 lead after two periods. Gomel replied with two quick goals in the third, but that was as close as the Slovaks would let the Belarus champs get.

The Continental Cup Super Final closed a very good winter spell for Belarus hockey, as the country's juniors regained the status of top division team by winning the IIHF World U20 Championship Division I in Briancon, France to win promotion to the 2005 U20 Championship in the USA.

Belarus' second participant in the Super Final, Keramin Minsk, finished fifth after a 5-0-win over French champion Rouen Dragons in the 5-6 placing game.

■ ■ ■ Yuri Dobryshkin (Severstal) 4+1, Tibor Visnovsky (Slovan) 2+3 and Alexei Kaliuzhny (Severstal) 1+4 led the tournament in scoring with five points each.



Photo: PRESSBALL, Minsk

VICTORY CIGER: Veteran and team captain Zdeno Ciger proudly hoists the Continental Cup Trophy following Slovan Bratislava's convincing 6-2 win over hosting club HC Gomel the Gold Medal game of the 2004 Super Final. Slovan made it to the final by defeating Russia's Severstal Cherepovets 5-3 in the Semi-final the day before.



PETR THE GREAT: Slovan Bratislava's forward Petr Pavlas was the prime party spoiler in the Gold Medal game as he scored a hat-trick en route to the 6-2 win. In the left photo Pavlas fires one of his three goals past Gomel goaltender Vitali Trigubov as defenseman Denys Isayenko is too late. After the game the entire Slovan team showed off their gold medals and the Continental Cup Trophy.



Photos: PRESSBALL, Minsk

2004 CONTINENTAL CUP SUPER FINAL

Group N

Keramin Minsk-Slovan Bratislava	2-3
Severstal Cherepovets-Keramin Minsk	8-2
Slovan Bratislava-Severstal Cherepovets	5-3

Slovan Bratislava	SVK	2	2	0	0	8-5	4
Severstal Ch'povets	RUS	2	1	0	1	11-7	2
Keramin Minsk	BLR	2	0	0	2	4-11	0

Group M

Rouen Dragons-HC Gomel	2-6
HC Lugano-Rouen Dragons	7-1
HC Gomel-HC Lugano	3-2.

HC Gomel	BLR	2	2	0	0	9-4	4
HC Lugano	SUI	2	1	0	1	9-4	2
Rouen Dragons	FRA	2	0	0	2	3-13	0

Placing Game 5-6: Keramin Minsk-Rouen Dragons 5-0

Bronze Medal Game: HC Lugano-Severstal Cherepovets 2-1 OT

Gold Medal Game: HC Gomel-Slovan Bratislava 2-6



LUGANO? NO!: Gomel goalie Vitali Trigubov makes the save on Mike Maneluk's breakaway chance which could have tied the game and sent Lugano to the Gold Medal game. Gomel won 3-2.

Winners of the IIHF Continental Cup:

- 1998 Kosice, SVK
- 1999 Ambri-Piotta, SUI
- 2000 Ambri Piotta, SUI
- 2001 ZSC Zurich Lions, SUI
- 2002 ZSC Zurich Lions, SUI
- 2003 Jokerit Helsinki, FIN
- 2004 Slovan Bratislava, SVK



The Girls are back in town



After a two year hiatus, gold is up for grabs again at the women's championship

■ If patience is a virtue, then the 2004 IIHF World Women's Championship will have the most virtuous players to ever grace the ice.

It has been three years since the last IIHF World Women's Championship, nearly a full Olympic cycle. Due to the SARS outbreak last year, China was unable to host the championship and it was therefore cancelled. The previous year featured one of the most exciting Olympic finishes ever as Canada at long last claimed the only gold medal that had eluded its women's team - an Olympic gold.

A lot can happen in three years. During the span several of the sport's top stars have contemplated retirement, and many young replacements have moved up the ranks to represent their national teams. Nations that have traditionally struggled are starting to strengthen their national programs and a new IIHF World Ranking System has been introduced to determine the 2006 Olympic participants in Torino.

With so many changes and such a long layoff, there are several questions on the mind's of women's hockey followers everywhere.

Can you explain the new Women's World Championship tournament format?

The teams will start in three groups made up of three teams and will play a round robin format in these preliminary round groups. According to their finish in those groups, teams will be seeded into three new round robin groups for the qualifying round. Group D consists of the top finishers from the preliminary round, Group E has the second-place finishers, while Group F has the third-place finishers. After another round robin in the D-E-F groups, the teams will be qualified for the medal round. The bronze medal game will feature the third-place finisher from Group D and the first-place finisher from Group F. The gold-medal game will be a match-up between the first and second-place finishers from Group D. For a complete schedule of this year's championship, please visit www.iihf.com/hockey/tournament/tournaments.



A TRUE TEST: The 2004 IIHF World Women's Championship will be a big event for all nations involved, but none as much as Sweden and Russia, which are neck-in-neck in the new IIHF World Women's Ranking. Their final placement in March could determine their 2006 Olympic fate

WORLD WOMEN'S RANKING

Pos	Country	Total
1	CAN	1800
2	USA	1740
3	FIN	1655
4	SWE	1625
-----top four qualify directly for 06 Olympics-----		
5	RUS	1620
6	GER	1565
7	CHN	1545
8	KAZ	1490
9	SUI	1435
10	JPN	1425
11	CZE	670
12	FRA	660
13	PRK	650
14	NOR	650
15	LAT	645
16	DEN	635
17	SVK	595
18	ITA	585
19	NED	570
20	GBR	560
21	BEL	535
22	AUS	530
23	RSA	505
24	HUN	505
25	ROM	320
26	SLO	310

How will the IIHF World Ranking System affect the 2004 World Women's Championship?

The Women's World Ranking system follows the exact same formula as the men's and will be critical in determining team's berths into the Olympics. With the women's ranking, the top four teams are automatically qualified. Meaning if the Olympics were held tomorrow, Canada, USA, Finland and Sweden would all secure automatic berths. Of great interest is the race between Sweden and Russia for the fourth and final spot. Only five points separate the two teams, putting the last spot up for grabs. A strong performance by any of the teams could greatly affect their Olympic position as there is a 20 to 40 point difference between each place. Overall there will be eight women's

teams in the 2006 Olympics. Italy, the host nation, has a automatic berth. The remaining three spots will be determined through a qualification tournament.

How will women's hockey deal with the aging of its first group of stars?

All good things must come to an end. And unfortunately, several of the players that helped put women's hockey on the map are finding themselves on the verge of retirement. This year's World Championship and next year's Olympics could be the last hurrah for several big names in the sport. Two of the biggest stars - Cammie Granato from the United States, and Haley Wickenheiser from Canada - have signed on for another tour of duty, however, it will most likely be their last. However, the pioneers of the sport have done an outstanding job of recruiting new talent and serving as role models for the next generation of women's hockey stars. Sweden has 17-year old goaltending sensation Kim Martin, while more and more women are playing either in men's leagues or in the Canadian Women's League.

Who are the favourites at this year's World Championship?

One needs to look no further than any team that has red and white in its uniform. Canada and the United States have dominated the Women's field thus far and still look poised to do the same in the near future. However, the other nations are starting to catch up as evidenced in tighter scores at various Four Nations Tournaments and shown by the close race for the final two spots at the 2006 Olympics. Canada has thus far won every IIHF Women's World Championship - a streak that Team USA would like to put to an end. Canada is also hosting the event, and you can always count on the Canadian fans to give their players an extra boost. But the United States will look to get even for its home-ice loss at the Olympics, setting up another classic confrontation between the nations. Also with the new ranking system comes the potential for the other games to be heated as teams vie for precious points and look for the big upset against the Big Two.

Did You Know?

Canada has never lost a single game at an IIHF World Women's Championship.

Will there be good fan support at the 2004 World Women's Championship?

Hockey and Canada go hand-in-hand. It was less than two years ago that Halifax, the site of this year's Women's Championship, hosted the most successful World U20 Championship ever. While women's hockey has struggled to attract attention in several traditional hockey nations, it has thrived in Canada and even features a professional league for women. Look for Canada to set a high standard for future hosts to follow.

Well worth the wait

The United States strikes gold at the U20 World Championship for the first time in 28 years.

■ It was a rendition of the Star Spangled Banner that was 28 years in the making. Sure, it wasn't the best the song had sounded with 22 U.S. hockey players belting it out, but it was music to the nation's ears.

Standing on the blueline, listening to the anthem was a group of history making American-born hockey players, who brought home its country's first-ever gold medal at the IIHF U20 World Championship. While the team was dubbed a favourite publicly going into the tournament, many observers wondered if the U.S. had what it took to bring home the gold. Six wins and 10 days later, Team USA proved it had the right stuff.

The U.S. ascent to the top of the world was led by the one-two punch of forward Zach Parise, who was named the Most Valuable Player of the championship, and goaltender Alvaro Montoya, who was named the Directorate's Best Goaltender and surprised many with his calm performance under pressure.

"Never give up, that's the kind of team we had this year" Montoya said after the golden game. And they never did, even when down by two goals in the third period of the final game against rival Canada.

■ Much of the U.S. can-do attitude can be attributed to U.S. coach Mike Eaves, who struck gold for the second time in two years with a U.S. squad (the first was at the 2002 World U18 Championships, which 15 members of this year's team were a part of).

Eaves has become USA Hockey's newest miracle maker giving the country its only two IIHF gold medals in the last 70 years.

Throughout the early stages of the championship, it was clear that Canada and the United States were heading for a showdown. Canada rolled through the B Group in its preliminary round with a 4-0-0 record, outscoring opponents 28-4 along the way. The Canadians had NHL goaltender Marc-Andre Fleury and a supporting cast of large, skillful skaters, who were punishing their preliminary round opponents.

All three of the championship's top scorers hailed from North America. Nigel Dawes led the charge with six goals and five assists. While Anthony Stewart and Parise each finished with five goals and six assists.

The United States was also having its way with the A Group teams and silenced many doubters when it earned a convincing 4-1 win over a Russian team, which after getting two straight gold medals, struggled throughout the championship and finished a disappointing fifth. The U.S. also earned a perfect 4-0-0 record during the preliminary round, with its toughest test coming against Sweden in a one-goal win.



Both Canada and the U.S. were rewarded for the preliminary round performances with a crucial quarterfinal bye. Each team entered the semi-finals well rested and earned victories in those games--although Team USA's nail-biter 2-1 win over host Finland was far less convincing and much more draining than Canada's 7-1 semi-final romp over the Czechs.

■ The wins set up the first all North-American final since 1997, the last time Canada earned a gold medal at the championship.

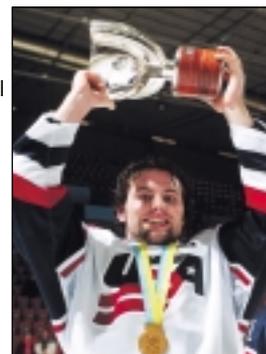
The match-up did not disappoint the sell-out crowd in Helsinki, nor the numerous North American viewers. The teams were even through much of the first period and Canada surged ahead, 3-1, in the second. After the second intermission, the U.S. came out fired up and netted three unanswered goals in the third period to earn its first gold medal.

"We haven't won this championship in 28 years," U.S. coach Mike Eaves said. "We had to beat the best to get it done. It's not easy to win six games in 11 days. It drains you mentally, physically and emotionally. But this team will be a band of brothers because of what they went through together."

For Canada, the loss marked the third straight year of silver frustration--a position several countries would be happy to achieve, but in hockey-crazed Canada a disappointment.

"We can still say that we're the second-best team in the world and that's something to be proud of," Canadian Nigel Dawes said after the game. Dawes had two goals in the loss.

For the United States, it's a chance to give its hockey program a little momentum and a chance to savour the national anthem, which has never sounded better than it did on the ice in Finland.



OH CAPTAIN MY CAPTAIN: U.S. skipper Mark Stuart hoists the championship trophy

"We haven't won this championship in 28 years and we had to beat the best to get it done."

-Mike Eaves, U.S. coach



U20 Photos: EUROPHOTO

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A GOAL MAKES: Above, team USA celebrates its first-ever win at the U20 World Championship after a come-from-behind victory that left Team Canada (below) stunned. But things are already looking up for Canada, as it should return more than half of this year's team to the 2005 tournament in the USA.



ALL-TIME U20 MEDAL STANDINGS				
Country	G	S	B	Total
Russia	12	6	5	23
Canada	10	6	4	20
Czech R.	2	5	6	13
Sweden	1	6	4	11
Finland	2	4	5	11
USA	1	1	2	4
Slovakia	0	1	2	1
Switzerland	0	0	1	1

SONG OF JOY: Members of the U.S. team sing their national anthem after winning the gold medal. Pictured from left to right are James Wisniewski, Drew Stafford, Jeff Likens and Mark Stuart.



Worth its weight in gold

Unique program gives the U.S. an added edge

Some may think that the U.S. gold medal-winning goal at the U20 World Championship was just luck. But many will argue it was a goal that was eight years in the making.

It was eight years ago that USA Hockey opened the National Team Development Program. A trail-blazing venture that brought together the 46 of the best 16 and 17 year-old players to live and train in an intense environment. The goal of the program was not only to improve the talent base of American hockey, but also to start bringing home medals at major international championships. It was the first-ever program of its kind anywhere in the world and one that other hockey nations were eager observe.

The program took its lumps in the first five years, with critics saying it was too much money (approximately 1.5 million annual budget) to spend on too few players. In those early years, Team USA experienced little success on the international stage. However, USA Hockey's patience and faith in the program paid off in 2002 when Mike Eaves led the United States to a gold medal at the U18 World Championship.

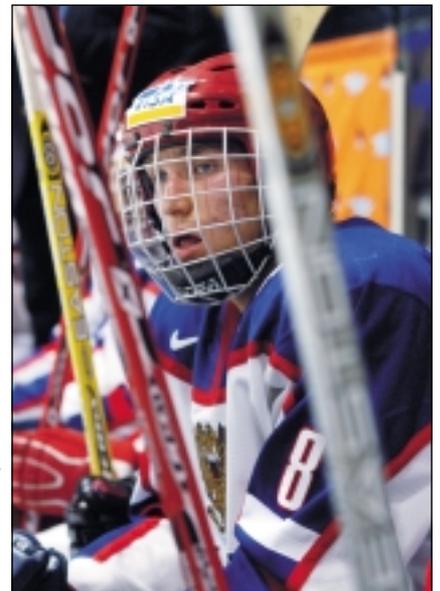
Since that gold medal win, the United States has contended for a medal at every U18 and U20 World Championship, not finishing below fourth place. But the crowning achievement came when Patrick O'Sullivan (or Marc-Andre Fleury depending on whom you ask) scored the game-winning goal in Finland.

"By winning this medal, it's a real big boost for American hockey, and especially for the program in Ann Arbor," U.S. Coach Mike Eaves said. "I think it gives that program validity. I mean, there's always people poking holes at it. But it's done what it was supposed to do. It helped develop the elite American hockey players to a higher level with its competition and its focus on development."

Today, the program continues to work with the 16 and 17-year old players and develops some of the top American-born players (76 have been drafted by NHL teams- an average of over 15 players each year). And now the players that go through the program can see the natural progression and can hope to bring home more gold medals for the red, white and blue.



NO THREE-PEAT: Finland's Valtteri Filppula scores with 13 seconds left of the quarterfinal against two-time defending world champion Russia as the soft shot somehow eludes the glove of goaltender Konstantin Barulin. Finland won 4-3 and Russia had to settle with 5th place.



HIGH EXPECTATIONS: Junior super-star Alexander Ovechkin did not entirely live up to the hype, but observers and scouts claim that his status as the leading junior in the world is not disputed.



FINNISH FINISH: Petri Kontiola is the lucky one to be on top of this human pile as Finland celebrates the 2-1-win in the Bronze Medal game against the Czech Republic. It was Finland's third consecutive U20 bronze medal.

Photos: Jani Rajamäki & Mikko Järvinen, Europhoto, Tampere, FIN



SO FAR, SO GOOD: Canada (left) looked like they would break their Gold Medal game jinx after Nigel Dawes (front) scored his second goal to give Canada a 3-1 lead in the final game. But the Canadians apparently forgot to talk to the fat lady.



SPELL OF JOY: Sweden's Alexander Steen scores on USA's Al Montoya in one of the few good moments for the team. But the Swedes lost both that game and also the crucial one against Slovakia, which sent them to the relegation round and out of the top six. Steen (second from left) and his teammates sulk following the loss against the Slovaks.

IIHF to host first-ever Women's Development Camp

Finland's Vierumaki Sports Institute invites the world to play & learn

After hosting its most successful and largest Hockey Development Camp last July in Vierumaki, for male participants, the IIHF is returning to Finland this summer for its first ever IIHF Women's Development Camp.

"We've had such great success with the men's camps, that we thought it was high time that we did the same for the women-after all it is one of fastest developing segments of the sport," said Darryl Easson IIHF Sport Development Manager of Youth Hockey.

The main purpose of the camp is to bring together women's players from all over the globe for a week-long camp to not only improve their hockey skills and knowledge, but also to interact in an international environment that promotes fair play and respect.

■ All IIHF member associations were invited to nominate participants in three areas: player development, game official development and coaching development. The IIHF expects approximately 200 participants overall. The camps emphasize a hands-on approach to education with the hopes that all the participants will take their lessons learned back to their native lands.

"We hope that this program will create a domino effect," Easson said. "While we will only have direct contact with 200 people, we hope it has a much farther-reaching implications as they students become the teachers when they return home."

Players born between 1986-1988 are eligible to participate in the camp. The participants are nominated by their member national associations based not only on their on-ice skill, but their off-ice leadership qualities as well. Each nation will be represented



WE ARE THE WORLD: The IIHF will host women's players, coaches and officials from all over the globe in Finland this summer.

by between two and five players.

Upon arrival in Finland, the players will be split on to eight teams. The coaches and officials will be selected through a similar process. The coaches will be assigned to lead one of the eight teams at the camp, while the game-officials will receive both classroom and on-ice lessons. Each nation will have up to one coach represented along with one referee or linesman.

"It's amazing how quickly the international barriers can be broken and teams can come together," Easson said.

This is the first time that the IIHF has taken on the challenge of hosting a Women's Development Camp and something the organizers are eager to start.

■ "This Women's Development Camp is a chance to reach a whole new group of players, coaches and referees that we've never had contact with," Easson said. "We've already done this a handful of times with the men, so it will be interesting to see what similarities and differences there will be. In the end, if it helps promote hockey, it's a good thing."

The camp will run from July 5-10 in Finland.



Calling all Coaches IIHF coaching symposium set for Prague

Just as players must keep their skills sharp to be at their best for every game, coaches must also stay sharp and up-to-date with their knowledge, which is why the IIHF presents its coaching symposium in conjunction with the IIHF World Championship every year.

This year's IIHF International Coaching Symposium will be held in Prague, the capital city of the Czech Republic, from April 30 to May 3, 2004.

The IIHF International Coaching Symposium will be held at the same time as the 2004 IIHF World Championship, which allows the participants to take part in lectures and to also attend World Championship games in Prague.

This IIHF coaching symposium is operated by the IIHF Coaching Committee, together with the local championship organizer and the Czech Ice Hockey Association and the Research Committee.

Under the title 'Practice & Science & Games', the program incorporates individual and team performance, technical and tactical preparation, fitness and conditioning, as well as psychological preparation.

Every year, the IIHF aims to get a good combination of coaches for the symposium from all areas of hockey including the NHL, junior and various international professional leagues.

In past year's people such as Dave King, George Kingston, Vladimir Yurzinov, Dr. Marc Aubrey, Ueli Schwarz and Ludec Bukac have taken part in the symposium.

This three-day symposium is designed to provide elite coaches, physicians, physiotherapists, managers and scientists from all sporting disciplines, with the latest technical and motivational information to get the most out of their players and teams.

All of the lectures will take place at the centrally located Hotel Pyramida in Prague at the Congress Hall, where the participants will be accommodated during the entire IIHF Coaching Symposium.

Go to www.iihf.com/education/coach.htm for more information and how to sign up for the symposium.

New league in Asia to include four different nations

■ A new multi-national ice hockey league is unfolding in Asia. Japan, Korea, China and Russia are slated to play in the league, which will begin in 2004-05 season.

The project started before this season on a smaller scale as teams from Japan and Korea were the forerunners forming a five-team league. Korean champion Halla Winia joined the Asian League together with Japanese teams Nikko Ice Bucks, Nippon Paper Cranes, Oji Paper and the Japanese champion Kokudo Tokyo.

"This was a big success and after seeing what we accomplished more teams want to join", says Shoichi Tomita, the IIHF Vice President from Japan and the main force behind the Asian League.

■ Officials from the four potential stake holders of the new league have already held two meetings and the

third one is planned for the Olympic city of Nagano, Japan in February.

■ Tomita says that the 2004-05 Asian League has plans to expand to eight teams: four from Japan, two from China (Harbin and Qiqihar) and one each from Korea (Halla Winia) and Russia. The Russian team will be Amur from Khabarovsk which is in the same time zone as Tokyo. Amur, whose first team plays in the Russian Professional Hockey League, will be represented by their developmental team.

It's planned that the teams will play at least a double round-robin, (14 games each), from October to February.

"If we succeed with this league, it would mean a great deal to the development of ice hockey in far-east Asia" said Tomita.

IIHF World U20 Championship

Helsinki, Hameenlinna, FINLAND, 26 Dec. 2003 - 05 Jan. 2004

Preliminary Round**Group A** (in Hameenlinna)

Slovakia - Russia	2 - 2	(0-1, 1-0, 1-1)
Austria - USA	0 - 8	(0-2, 0-3, 0-3)
Sweden - Austria	7 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 5-0)
USA - Slovakia	5 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 3-0)
Russia - Sweden	5 - 3	(2-0, 0-2, 3-1)
Austria - Russia	1 - 3	(0-1, 1-1, 0-1)
USA - Sweden	4 - 3	(2-0, 1-2, 1-1)
Slovakia - Austria	6 - 0	(1-0, 4-0, 1-0)
Russia - USA	1 - 4	(0-3, 0-1, 1-0)

USA	4	4	0	0	21 - 4	8
Slovakia	4	2	1	1	9 - 7	5
Russia	4	2	1	1	11 - 10	5
Sweden	4	1	0	3	13 - 10	2
Austria	4	0	0	4	1 - 24	0

USA qualified directly to semi-final.

Group B (in Helsinki)

Czech Republic - Ukraine	8 - 0	(4-0, 4-0, 0-0)
Canada - Finland	3 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 1-0)
Switzerland - Ukraine	11 - 0	(3-0, 5-0, 3-0)
Canada - Switzerland	7 - 2	(3-1, 1-0, 3-1)
Russia - Sweden	5 - 3	(2-0, 0-2, 3-1)
Finland - Czech Republic	3 - 2	(0-2, 1-0, 2-0)
Ukraine - Canada	0 - 10	(0-3, 0-6, 0-1)
Switzerland - Czech Republic	1 - 2	(1-1, 0-0, 0-1)
Ukraine - Finland	1 - 14	(0-4, 1-4, 0-6)
Czech Republic - Canada	2 - 5	(0-3, 1-2, 1-0)
Finland - Switzerland	2 - 0	(1-0, 0-0, 1-0)

Canada	4	4	0	0	21 - 4	8
Finland	4	3	0	1	19 - 6	6
Czech Republic	4	2	0	2	14 - 9	4
Switzerland	4	1	0	3	14 - 11	2
Ukraine	4	0	0	4	1 - 43	0

Canada qualified directly to semi-final.

Relegation Round

Switzerland - Ukraine	11 - 0	(3-0, 5-0, 3-0)
Sweden - Austria	7 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 5-0)
Sweden - Ukraine	4 - 0	(0-0, 3-0, 1-0)
Switzerland - Austria	6 - 2	(3-1, 3-1, 0-0)
Austria - Ukraine	2 - 2	(1-1, 0-1, 0-1)
Sweden - Switzerland	4 - 3	(0-1, 2-2, 2-0)

Sweden	3	3	0	0	15 - 3	6
Switzerland	3	2	0	1	20 - 6	4
Austria	3	0	1	2	4 - 15	1
Ukraine	3	0	1	2	2 - 17	1

Play-off Round

Slovakia - Czech R.	2 - 4	(1-1, 1-3, 0-0)	Quarterfinal
Finland - Russia	4 - 3	(1-1, 1-1, 2-1)	Quarterfinal
Canada - Czech R.	7 - 1	(2-1, 1-0, 4-0)	Semi Final
USA - Finland	2 - 1	(1-0, 0-0, 1-1)	Semi Final
Russia - Slovakia	3 - 2	(0-0, 2-1, 1-1)	Placing 5-6
Czech R. - Finland	1 - 2	(0-0, 1-0, 0-2)	Bronze Medal
Canada - USA	3 - 4	(1-1, 2-0, 0-3)	Gold Medal

Individual scoring

1. DAWES, Nigel	CAN	6	6	5	11
2. PARISE, Zach	USA	6	5	6	11
2. STEWART, Anthony	CAN	6	5	6	11
4. FILPPULA, Valtteri	FIN	7	4	5	9
5. LEPISO, Sami	FIN	7	4	4	8
6. BARTSCHI, Patrick	SUI	6	3	5	8
7. ANSHANKOV, Sergei	RUS	6	5	2	7
7. CARTER, Jeff	CAN	6	5	2	7
7. EHRENSPERGER, Gianni	SUI	6	5	2	7
7. OVECHKIN, Alexander	RUS	6	5	2	7
11. NILSSON, Robert	SWE	5	2	5	7
12. GETZLAF, Ryan	CAN	6	3	3	6
12. GUGGISBERG, Peter	SUI	5	3	3	6
12. RUZICKA, Stefan	SVK	6	3	3	6
15. EAVES, Patrick	USA	6	1	5	6
16. BURNS, Brent	CAN	6	0	6	6

2005 IIHF World U20 Championship Groups:

Group A:	Group B:
USA	Canada
Czech Republic	Finland
Russia	Slovakia
Switzerland	Sweden
Belarus	Germany

Championship All Star Team**Goalkeeper:** Alvaro Montoya (USA)**Defense:** Sami Lepisto (FIN) and Dion Phaneuf (CAN)**Forwards:** Zach Parise (USA), Jeff Carter (CAN), Valtteri Filppula (FIN)**Championship MVP:** Zach Parise (USA)**IIHF Directorate Awards****Best Goalkeeper:** Alvaro Montoya (USA)**Best Defenseman:** Sami Lepisto (FIN)**Best Forward:** Zach Parise (USA)**Final Ranking:** 1. USA, 2. CAN, 3. FIN, 4. CZE, 5. RUS, 6. SVK, 7. SWE, 8. SUI, 9. AUT, 10. UKR.

■ Austria and Ukraine relegated to the 2004 IIHF World U20 Division I. They will be replaced by Germany and Belarus for the 2005 IIHF World U20 Championship in Grand Forks, USA.

World U20 Championship, Div I, Gr. A

Berlin, GERMANY 14-20 Dec. 2003

Denmark - Slovenia	5 - 3	(1-1, 1-2, 3-0)
Latvia - Kazakhstan	4 - 4	(1-1, 2-0, 1-3)
Hungary - Germany	1 - 9	(0-2, 0-6, 1-1)
Kazakhstan - Denmark	1 - 3	(1-0, 0-1, 0-2)
Slovenia - Hungary	5 - 0	(3-0, 2-0, 0-0)
Germany - Latvia	4 - 4	(1-0, 2-4, 1-0)
Hungary - Latvia	2 - 15	(1-4, 0-5, 1-6)
Kazakhstan - Slovenia	2 - 3	(0-1, 1-0, 1-2)
Germany - Denmark	2 - 2	(1-2, 1-0, 0-0)
Kazakhstan - Hungary	7 - 3	(3-0, 1-0, 3-3)
Latvia - Denmark	8 - 3	(2-0, 2-2, 3-0)
Slovenia - Germany	1 - 8	(0-1, 0-1, 1-6)
Denmark - Hungary	10 - 2	(4-1, 4-1, 2-0)
Slovenia - Latvia	6 - 4	(2-2, 4-1, 0-1)
Germany - Kazakhstan	6 - 2	(2-0, 3-1, 1-1)

Germany	5	3	2	0	29 - 10	8
Denmark	5	3	1	1	23 - 16	7
Slovenia	5	3	0	2	18 - 19	6
Latvia	5	2	1	3	35 - 19	6
Kazakhstan	5	1	1	3	16 - 19	3
Hungary	5	0	0	5	8 - 46	0

■ Germany promoted to the 2005 IIHF World U20

Championship in USA. Hungary relegated to 2005 Div. II.

Individual scoring

1. KARSUMS Martins	LAT	5	7	6	13
2. SCHMIDT NIELSEN Frans	DEN	5	8	3	11
3. KINK Marcus	GER	5	5	6	11
4. UNDELIS Renars	LAT	5	6	4	10
4. DARZINS Lauris	LAT	5	6	4	10
6. DZERINS Guntis	LAT	5	2	7	9
6. SULZER Alexander	GER	5	2	7	9
6. MAURER Ulrich	GER	5	2	7	9
9. CARCIOLA Fabio	GER	5	3	5	8
10. REDLIHS Mikelis	LAT	5	4	3	7

IIHF Directorate Awards**Best Goalkeeper:** Patrick Ehelechner (GER)**Best Defenseman:** Alexander Sulzer (GER)**Best Forward:** Martins Karsums (LAT)**World U20 Championship, Div I, Gr. B**

Briancon, FRANCE 13 - 19 Dec. 2003

Italy - Norway	0 - 7	(0-3, 0-2, 0-2)
Estonia - Belarus	1 - 9	(0-2, 1-4, 0-3)
France - Japan	4 - 1	(1-0, 1-0, 2-1)
Norway - Estonia	7 - 1	(4-0, 1-0, 2-1)
Japan - Italy	1 - 3	(0-1, 1-1, 0-1)
Belarus - France	7 - 2	(1-0, 4-1, 2-1)
Japan - Norway	1 - 5	(1-2, 0-3, 0-0)
Belarus - Italy	5 - 2	(1-2, 2-0, 2-0)
Estonia - France	2 - 11	(0-3, 0-4, 2-4)
Norway - Belarus	1 - 6	(1-2, 0-3, 0-1)
Japan - Estonia	1 - 3	(1-1, 0-2, 0-0)
France - Italy	3 - 5	(2-0, 1-3, 0-2)
Italy - Estonia	5 - 2	(1-0, 1-1, 3-1)
Belarus - Japan	7 - 5	(2-1, 2-3, 3-1)
Norway - France	1 - 2	(0-1, 0-1, 1-0)

Belarus	5	5	0	0	34 - 11	10
Norway	5	3	0	2	21 - 10	6
France	5	3	0	2	22 - 16	6
Italy	5	3	0	2	15 - 18	6
Estonia	5	1	0	4	9 - 33	2
Japan	5	0	0	5	9 - 22	0

■ Belarus promoted to the 2005 IIHF World U20 Championship in USA. Japan is relegated to 2005 Div. II.

Individual scoring

1. ZAKHAROV Konstantin	BLR	5	4	10	14
2. KARAHA Vadzim	BLR	5	7	6	13
3. KASTSITSYN Andrei	BLR	5	5	5	10
4. GRABOVSKI, Mikhail	BLR	5	4	5	9
5. HOLTET, Marius	NOR	5	5	3	8
6. KASTSITSYN Sjarhei	BLR	5	4	4	8
7. BESCH Nicolas	FRA	5	0	7	7
8. SPETS Lars Erik	NOR	5	3	3	6
9. VOLKAU Arsiom	BLR	5	2	4	6
9. OLIMB Mathis	NOR	5	2	4	6

IIHF Directorate Awards**Goalkeeper:** Matthias Gundersen (NOR)**Defense:** Nicolas Besch (FRA)**Forward:** Konstantin Zakharov (BLR)**World U20 Championship, Div II, Gr. A**

Sosnowiec, POLAND 28-Dec. 2003 - 03 Jan. 2004

Iceland - Romania	0 - 22	(0-8 0-4, 0-10)
Spain - Netherlands	2 - 9	(0-3, 1-2, 1-4)
Belgium - Poland	0 - 8	(0-3, 0-1, 0-4)
Netherlands - Iceland	12 - 1	(5-1, 3-0, 4-0)
Romania - Belgium	7 - 4	(2-1, 2-3, 3-0)
Poland - Spain	13 - 0	(2-0, 4-0, 7-0)
Belgium - Spain	1 - 5	(1-1, 0-1, 0-3)
Netherlands - Romania	2 - 9	(1-3, 0-5, 1-1)
Poland - Iceland	26 - 1	(13-0, 4-1, 9-0)
Netherlands - Belgium	8 - 1	(4-0, 3-1, 1-0)
Spain - Iceland	10 - 5	(2-1, 3-0, 5-4)
Romania - Poland	2 - 6	(2-2, 0-1, 0-3)
Iceland - Belgium	3 - 10	(1-2, 1-3, 1-5)
Romania - Spain	4 - 4	(0-2, 2-1, 2-1)
Poland - Netherlands	6 - 1	(3-1, 1-0, 2-0)

Poland	5	5	0	0	59 - 4	10
Romania	5	3	1	1	44 - 16	7
Netherlands	5	3	0	2	32 - 19	6
Spain	5	2	1	2	21 - 32	5
Belgium	5	1	0	4	16 - 31	2
Iceland	5	0	0	5	10 - 80	0

■ Poland promoted to the 2005 IIHF World U20 Championship

Division I. Iceland relegated to 2005 Div. III.

Individual scoring

1. KOLUSZ Marcin	POL	5	8	10	18
2. KOWALOWKA Sebastian	POL	5	8	9	17
3. ZUBEK Michal	POL	5	8	7	15
4. MARMUROWICZ A.	POL	5	2	12	14
5. DUTKA Rafal	POL	5	1	13	14

World U20 Championship, Div II, Gr. B

Elektrėnai & Kaunas, LITHUANIA 05-11 Jan. 2004

South Africa - Serbia & Mont.	2 - 9	(0-3, 2-3, 0-3)
Korea - Croatia	7 - 2	(1-0, 4-2, 2-0)
Lithuania - Great Britain	3 - 7	(0-2, 2-3, 1-2)
Great Britain - South Africa	14 - 0	(3-0, 6-0, 5-0)
Serbia & Mont. - Korea	1 - 9	(0-3, 0-3, 1-3)
Croatia - Lithuania	3 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 1-0)
Great Britain - Serbia & Mont.	7 - 1	(1-0, 2-0, 3-1)
Korea - Lithuania	13 - 1	(6-0, 4-1, 3-0)
Croatia - South Africa	11 - 0	(0-0, 5-0, 6-0)
Serbia & Mont. - Croatia	3 - 1	(2-0, 0-1, 1-0)
Great Britain - Korea	2 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 0-0)
Lithuania - South Africa	6 - 1	(4-0, 1-0, 1-1)
South Africa - Korea	1 - 16	(0-9, 1-4, 0-3)
Croatia - Great Britain	1 - 8	(0-1, 1-3, 0-4)
Serbia & Mont. - Lithuania	1 - 2	(0-0, 1-2, 0-0)

Great Britain	5	5	0	0	38 - 5	10
Korea	5	4	0	1	45 - 7	8
Croatia	5	2	0	3	18 - 18	4
Serbia & Mont.	5	2	0	3	15 - 21	4
Lithuania	5	2	0	3	12 - 25	4
South Africa	5	0	0	5	4 - 56	0

■ Great Britain promoted to the 2005 IIHF World U20 Championship Division I. South Africa relegated to Div. III.

Individual scoring

1. LEE Seung Jun	KOR	5	9	7	16
2. WALLACE Steve	GBR	5	12	3	15
3. KIM Geun Ho	KOR	5	8	7	15
4. KWON Sang Hyun	KOR	5	6	8	14
5. KIM Eun Jun	KOR	5	7	3	10

RESULTS SUMMARY

IIHF World U20 Championship, Div III

Sofia, BULAGRIA 05-11 Jan., 2004

China - Mexico	4 - 2	(3-0, 1-1, 0-1)
Australia - Bulgaria	10 - 4	(3-1, 4-1, 3-2)
New Zealand - Turkey	3 - 2	(1-1, 2-0, 0-1)
Mexico - Australia	2 - 6	(1-2, 0-2, 1-2)
Bulgaria - New Zealand	4 - 1	(3-1, 0-0, 1-0)
Turkey - China	2 - 12	(0-8, 1-2, 1-2)
Mexico - New Zealand	4 - 3	(1-1, 1-1, 2-1)
Bulgaria - Turkey	2 - 5	(1-1, 1-4, 0-0)
China - Australia	3 - 6	(1-1, 1-2, 1-3)
Turkey - Mexico	0 - 11	(0-7, 0-2, 0-2)
Bulgaria - China	0 - 12	(0-3, 0-5, 0-4)
Australia - New Zealand	10 - 3	(5-0, 2-3, 3-0)
Turkey - Australia	1 - 10	(0-1, 0-4, 1-5)
Mexico - Bulgaria	6 - 3	(4-4, 1-1, 1-0)
New Zealand - China	0 - 10	(0-2, 0-4, 0-4)

Australia	5	5	0	0	42 - 13	10
China	5	4	0	1	41 - 20	8
Mexico	5	3	0	2	25 - 16	6
Turkey	5	1	0	4	10 - 38	2
Bulgaria	5	1	0	4	13 - 34	2
New Zealand	5	1	0	4	10 - 30	2

■ Australia & China are promoted to the 2005 IIHF World U20 Championship Division II.

Individual scoring

1. KEANE James	AUS	5	11	6	17
2. DJAMIRZE Alex	AUS	5	9	5	14
3. POWELL Thomas	AUS	5	7	3	10
4. WU Qiong	CHN	5	5	5	10
5. CUI Zhinan	CHN	5	4	6	10

IIHF 2004 Continental Cup Super Final

Gomel, BELARUS 8 - 11 January, 2004

Group N:

Keramin Minsk - Slovan Bratislava	2 - 3	(0-1, 1-0, 1-2)
Severstal Cher. - Keramin Minsk	8 - 2	(3-2, 3-0, 2-0)
Slovan Bratislava - Severstal Cher.	5 - 3	(1-2, 4-0, 0-1)

Group M:

Rouen Dragons - HC Gomel	2 - 6	(0-1, 2-1, 0-4)
Lugano - Rouen Dragons	7 - 1	(0-0, 5-0, 2-1)
HC Gomel - HC Lugano	3 - 2	(0-1, 2-1, 1-0)

Placement game:

Keramin Minsk - Rouen Dragons	5 - 0	(1-0, 2-0, 2-0)
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Bronze Medal Game:

Lugano - Severstal Cherepovets	2 - 1	(1-0, 0-0, 0-1, 1-0)
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Gold Medal Game

HC Gomel - Slovan Bratislava	2 - 6	(0-2, 0-2, 2-2)
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Final Ranking:

1. Slovan Bratislava	SVK
2. HC Gomel	BLR
3. HC Lugano	SUI
4. Severstal Cherepovets	RUS
5. Keramin Minsk	BLR
6. Rouen Dragons	FRA

Individual scoring

1. DOBRYSHKIN Yuri	SCH	3	4	1	5
2. VISNOVSKY Tibor	BRA	3	2	3	5
3. KALIUZHNY Alexei	SCH	3	1	4	5
4. PAVLAS Petr	BRA	3	4	0	4
4. VALUI Vitali	GOM	3	4	0	4
6. PELTONEN Ville	HCL	3	3	1	4
7. JANOS Branislav	BRA	3	1	3	4
8. MANELUK Mike	HCL	3	2	1	3
8. KULHA Martin	BRA	3	2	1	3
8. TRUBACHA Yuri	SCH	3	2	1	3

Referee assignments 2004 tournaments

IIHF World Championship

Referees:

Dutil, Nicolas	CAN
Hansen, Ole Stian	NOR
Hanson, Moray	GBR
Henriksson, Hannu	FIN
Kurmann, Danny	SUI
Larking, Christer	SWE
Looker, Rick	USA
Poliakov, Alexander	RUS
Schuetz, Richard	GER
Sindler, Vladimir	CZE

Linesmen

Blumel, Petr	CZE
Coenen, Marco	NED
Feola, Peter	USA
Folka, Matthew	GBR
Gemeinhardt, Thomas	GER
Kautto, Juha	FIN
Kronborg, Lars	NOR
Laschowski, Dean	CAN
Lesnjak, Ales	SLO
Makarov, Pavel	RUS
Masik, Milan	SVK
Meszynski, Pawel	POL
Popovic, Karol	SUI
Pouzar, Roman	CZE
Semionov, Anton	EST
Takula, Leo	SWE

IIHF Division I Group A

Referees:

Bulanov, Vyacheslav	RUS
Lauff, Rudolf	SVK
Reiber, Brent	SUI
Savage, Chris	CAN

Linesmen

Bratsberg, Tom Gunnar	NOR
Garsjo, Pal	NOR
Jakobsen, Ronni	DEN
Karlsson, Joacim	SWE
Linde, Indrek	EST
Novak, Milan	SVK
Schroeter, Lars	GER
Zatta, Luca	ITA

IIHF Division I Group B

Referees:

Bergman, Sven	NED
Levonen, Jari	FIN
Mandion, Nadir	SUI
Thul, Brian	USA

Linesmen

Darnell, Tom	GBR
Deweerd, Chris	BEL
Dzieciolowski, Grzegorz	POL
Eglitis, Ansis	LAT
Hamalainen, Antti	FIN
Mandler, Christian	AUT
Nyeste, Gabor	HUN
Radzik, Tomasz	POL

IIHF World Women's Championship

Referees:

Henderson, Sarah	USA
Hirvonen, Anu	FIN
Hove, Aina	NOR
Ivicova, Katerina	CZE
Normand, Stephanie	CAN
Reddy, Janet	CAN

Linesmen:

Haapanen, Eeva	FIN
Konstantinova, Marina	RUS
O-Brian, Kelli M.	USA
Pellerin, Christine	CAN
Robben, Ilse	NED
Robichaud, Kim	CAN
Suban, Johanna	FIN
Zitkova, Jana	CZE

IIHF World U18 Championship

Referees:

Hansen, David	USA
Hobor, Terry	CAN
Laaksonen, Tom	FIN
Minar, Milan	CZE
Schurr, Thomas	GER
Vinnerborg, Marcus	SWE
Zakharov, Anatoli	RUS

Linesmen:

Blaha, Jaromir	CZE
De Haan, Chris	CAN
Gashilov, Viktor	RUS
Gotsoula, Valeri	BLR
Karlberg, Anders	SWE
Kekäläinen, Mikko	FIN
Ross, Joseph	USA
Valach, Miroslav	SVK
Vasko, Andrei	BLR
Wehrli, Tobias	SUI

All assignments are subject to change.



WHISTLE BLOWERS: The IIHF announced the referee assignments for the 2004 tournament season. The referees are nominated by their member associations and then placed into the various championship events.

Referees will soon be crossing borders in exchange program

■ The IIHF, along with the representatives of the top seven European national leagues and associations, has approved the IIHF Referee Exchange Program.

Starting with the 2004-2005 season, top referees from the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland will travel to any of these countries to officiate games in their respective top leagues.

■ According to the plan, each national association

will name a maximum of two top referees to participate in the program. Each national league will choose 20 regular season games for the assignments. The national associations and leagues have until May 31 to nominate the referees for the Exchange Program.

"We are pleased that all of the seven national associations and leagues have approved this and are committed to make this a long-term project", said Konstantin Komissarov, IIHF Sport Development Manager, Officiating.

"This program has the potential to improve the overall level of officiating in the European leagues and eventually in the IIHF World Championships" said Komissarov.

■ The Referee Exchange Program will be led by a working group, with referee-in-chiefs and directors of officiating from the seven countries. The proposed action plan is over five seasons and it also sees an exchange between IIHF and NHL game officials during pre-season games in the fourth year of the plan.

Igor the Magician is pulling his last tricks

By Szymon Szemberg, IIHF

■ ■ There is a story that goes like this:

The first time a North American reporter was told about this sensational playmaking kid Larionov from the Soviet Union, the reporter quipped:

"Who? Larry Onov?"

When the oldest player in the NHL retires after this season at the age of 43, there won't be any questions about his name nor his accomplishments. After 27 professional years, Igor Larionov will go down in hockey history as arguably the finest playmaker that the European game has ever produced.

Soviet and Russian coaching legend Viktor Tikhonov was never known for his praising, but when he was once asked to comment on Larionov's passing skills, Tikhonov said: "I am an atheist, but I am ready to acknowledge that Igor Larionov is a divine playmaker."

So exquisite was his "sixth sense" skill that the only comparison that springs to mind is Wayne Gretzky.

"To create the play on which my teammate could score always gave me the most satisfaction", said Larionov when the IIHF interviewed him from his home in New Jersey, the last stop in his amazing pro career which started with Khimik Voskresensk in 1977.

"My instincts have always been to see the ice and see a situation develop three or four moves before it actually happens. I have always liked chess and chess has helped me develop this skill on ice, to think several moves ahead."

■ ■ An old sports cliché says that a good player is one who makes his teammates better. Very often Larionov made his wingers look like much better players than they really were. He made his NHL debut at the age of 29, but still managed - with his best years behind him - to amass 465 assists, going into this season. He is on pace to finish his NHL career with around 485 assists.

Larionov also dished out approximately another 400 assists in the Soviet years, when official scorers very rarely recorded a second assist.

The Russian veteran says he can remember every big international game he has played in and the score, but he hesitates to call any major victory bigger than the other. "It's difficult to separate great wins from each other", he says.



Photos: DAVE SANDFORD, Hockey Hall of Fame

FAREWELL. Igor Larionov will definitely see more of these when he retires after this season. Here, Larionov has just received his bronze medal and flowers following the 3rd place game against Belarus in the 2002 Olympic Winter Games. This was his last international accomplishment in a splendid career.

The Larionov File

Born: December 3, 1960 in Voskresensk, USSR.

■ Started his professional career with Khimik Voskresensk in 1977-78.

■ Played eight seasons with CSKA Moscow (1981-89) before he left for the NHL and the Vancouver Canucks in 1989.

■ Played for six NHL teams and won three Stanley Cups with Detroit 1997, 1998 and 2002.

■ Won two Olympic gold medals in 1984 and 1988 and a bronze in Salt Lake City 2002.

■ Won four IIHF World Championship gold medals, 1982, 1983, 1986 and 1989.

■ Won the 1981 Canada Cup.

■ Played in the 1996 World Cup of Hockey.

■ Will have played over 900 NHL games when he retires after this season and his totals will be around 650 points.

■ Played 457 games in the Soviet league, totalling 434 points and winning eight national championships.

■ One of only twelve players to win Olympic gold, IIHF World Championships and the Stanley Cup.

But:

"I remember when I won my first World Junior Championship in 1979, I will never forget the 1981 Canada Cup final when we beat Team Canada 8-1 at the Montreal Forum and there has probably never been a better three game series than the 1987 Canada Cup final between Team Canada and the Soviet Union", says Igor. "We lost that series, but hockey was the true winner. That's the way hockey should be played."

■ ■ Igor Larionov will take "one full year off" when he retires. He will spend quality time with his family and will indulge in some pet projects. Already this coming March, Igor will release his own wine label "IL Triple Overtime", a thousand bottles of Australian wine.

"I developed the taste for wine when I spent one season (1992-93) in Lugano in the Swiss league", tells Igor.

Other plans include launching ABBA's Mama Mia musical in Moscow in 2005 and to support his daughters Alyonka, 17, and Diana, 13, in their singing career.

"They are a really good duet and we hope to make a recording in New York", says Igor proudly.



FINAL CHECK OUT: An artist leaves ice.

■ ■ Larionov also reveals for the IIHF News Release that he plans to organize his own farewell game in Moscow sometime in 2004. "It will be a game between my North American teammates from Detroit and New Jersey and a team of Russian players whom I have played with. The game will be played at the Luzhniki Arena."

During his first season without hockey, Igor will contemplate his future options in the game. He says that he will never go into coaching, not even if someone offers him to be the head coach of the Russian national team, but he doesn't exclude other positions.

■ ■ He knows for sure that he would like to contribute to make the game better, to bring it back to how it was played during the 1987 Canada Cup finals.

"We must bring back the attention to puck control, skating and thinking", says Larionov. "There is so little creativity in the game today. All emphasis is on playing the trap and it really takes the excitement away for both players and fans."

"All young players today are asked to 'keep it simple' and after keeping it simple for some years they forget how to play and by then it's too late to open it up. We must let the kids have fun and encourage them to be creative."

It sounds like head coach Igor Larionov has spoken.