

News Release

FAIR PLAY
AND RESPECT



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The Olympic dance commences

As the world's attention turns from Athens and the Summer Olympics, the IIHF starts its Olympic cycle this coming autumn with the qualifications for Turin 2006. Altogether nine different qualifying tournaments will determine the final line-up at the Olympic Winter Games.

■ ■ ■ When the twelve men's teams and the eight women's teams square off in Turin, very few will remember that the participating teams were not selected by invitation, but determined by the IIHF World Ranking and the qualification process. (See page 11 for all qualification groups and dates)

RENÉ FASEL EDITORIAL

21 men's teams and 11 women's teams will go through the qualifications in November 2004 and in February 2005 to fill the six vacant spots. It is worth reminding that ice hockey, together with figure skating, are the only Olympic winter sports that are older than the Olympic Winter Games themselves. Ice Hockey was introduced in the 1920 Olympic Summer Games in Antwerp, four years before the first winter Olympics were staged in Chamonix.

While our sport was a humble Olympic event in those days, one cannot envision the Winter Games without ice hockey now. According to numbers from 2002, two-thirds of all tickets sold during the Salt Lake City games were to hockey games.

■ ■ ■ If the Olympics is the caviar, the IIHF World Championship is the bread and butter of international hockey. By extending the marketing agreement with Infront Sports & Media until 2011 (see more on page 2), the IIHF secured the framework for the future growth of our sport for the next seven years. In today's rapidly changing world, this is almost an eternity.

With the numbers from Czech Republic 2004 now in, we can once again confirm that the IIHF World Championship remains the single largest annual winter sports event in the world. The 2004 event was broadcast to a cumulative audience of more than



Photos: DAVE SANDFORD

OLYMPIC FIGURES: Switzerland's Marcel Jenni and France's Richard Aimonetto waltz the night away in Salt Lake City 2002. It was Jenni who got dipped in this performance. These two countries will again try to qualify to the Olympic Winter Games, this time in Turin 2006. France begins the qualifying in November 2004 while Switzerland enters the final qualifying stage in February 2005 as both countries host the respective groups. For all qualifying groups see page 11.

700 million in 26 countries, including approximately 1,700 hours of programming on 159 stations.

■ ■ ■ The IIHF will open new frontiers this season with the introduction of the European Champions Cup for both men and women. These tournaments will determine which are the best club teams in Europe. This effort will definitely contribute to increase the interest in international hockey. When we officially introduced the European Champions Cup in St. Petersburg on July 29, we could already sense what great curiosity and passion there is around international club hockey.

■ ■ ■ We will kick off this season with the second World Cup of Hockey, a tournament organized by our partners, the NHL and the NHLPA, in co-operation with the IIHF. The final game is in Toronto on September 14. At midnight following the game, the present Collective Bargaining Agreement between the National Hockey League and the NHL Player's Association will expire.

The conflict is by no means an IIHF issue. But, if the parties don't reach an agreement and there is an owner's lockout as speculated, many players have announced that they will come overseas to play. Some marquee players have already signed "lockout contracts" with European teams and during the summer the IIHF has received many questions about our approach in case of a vast "lockout exodus" to IIHF-related leagues.

Continued on next page

Continued from page one:

■ Basically, the IIHF does not interfere in internal league matters, i.e. how many foreigners each league or each club can have. But in meetings with national association and national league officials, we have pointed out the potential risk when clubs pay too much attention to a temporary scenario which could come out of an owner's lockout in NHL.

We have heard alarming reports where some teams base their 04-05 planning more on wishful thinking than reality. Some clubs have launched campaigns to sell season tickets based on players which might arrive, while others seem to have more focus on how to accommodate lockout-players than on how to bring in own prospects from their junior program.

■ This is short-sighted, irresponsible and will surely result in a severe backlash, once the labour conflict - if it ever occurs - is over.

To sign five or six foreign lockout-mercenaries is to downgrade the prestige of your club and it is also a financial hazard. What do you tell your fans when the players suddenly disappear overnight once there is a new CBA in place? Was it worth the money?

■ On the other hand, if a team signs one or two players who have developed through that club's system before they left for the NHL, I can see nothing wrong with that. This is a situation which the European clubs must handle with care. It requires common sense.

René Fasel
IIHF President

Latvia 2006 on schedule

■ The main site of the 2006 IIHF World Championship in Riga, Latvia will be ready in late autumn of 2005, five to six months prior to the championship.

This was reported to the IIHF in a meeting on August 4 by the Estonian building entrepreneur Merks and the Canadian arena consultants SCI, the two main bodies behind the venture.

The Riga Arena could hold up to 12,000 fans for the IIHF World Championship with seating for 10,000. The arena will feature all modern facilities with club seating, private suites, restaurants and bars.

"We are very pleased with what we were shown", said IIHF General Secretary Jan-Ake Edvinsson. "The building in Riga will be a state-of-the-art arena with everything you need to organize a world championship. We are especially happy with the time schedule. The general contractor has guaranteed that the construction will begin this September and that it will take between twelve and fourteen months to complete."

■ On July 1, the IIHF confirmed the 2006 event to Latvia after a period of uncertainty and concerns about delays with the arena construction in Riga.



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IIHF and Infront extend partnership until 2011

■ The International Ice Hockey Federation and Infront Sports & Media AG signed an exclusive agreement on July 16 in Zurich, extending their long-term marketing partnership until 2011.

Under the agreement, Infront is responsible for both television and marketing rights for the IIHF.

The contract extension was the next natural step in a successful relationship, which started in 1981.

"Extending our contract with Infront was the best way for the IIHF to make sure that we continue to move forward in the promotion of our sport," IIHF President René Fasel said. "Infront has been an excellent partner, which has tirelessly worked to promote ice hockey for us for the last several years. We look forward to an even brighter future for the next seven years under this contract."

The partnership between Infront and the IIHF has contributed considerably to the successful development of the top IIHF events, including the IIHF Men's World Championship, which will be held for the first time ever in Canada in 2008 in conjunction with the 100-year anniversary of the IIHF. Infront has also been responsible for bringing in high-profile partners such as Skoda.

■ The IIHF Men's World Championship television and attendance numbers have continually increased since the IIHF and Infront teamed up. According to initial overviews received from broadcasters, over 700 million television viewers in 26 countries followed the event, which provided a total 1,708 hours of programming on 159 stations. The gold medal game was broadcast worldwide.

The official website of the IIHF World Championships (www.iihwc.net), which was developed by Infront in

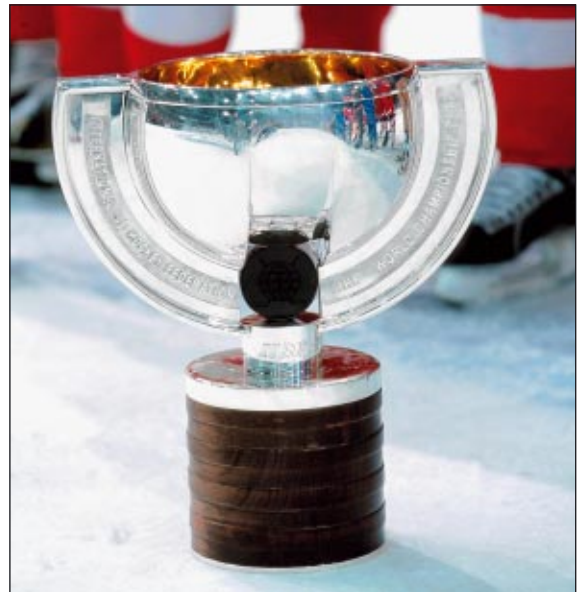


Photo: City Press Berlin

LONG TERM RIGHTS: The new agreement gives long time partner Infront Sports & Media exclusive TV and marketing rights to the IIHF World Championships until 2011.

conjunction with the IIHF, has continued to set records with each passing World Championship, both in terms of site visitors and hours spent on the site.

■ Infront has already concluded agreements with numerous television, radio and sponsor partners in preparation for the 2005 IIHF World Championship next May in Vienna and Innsbruck, Austria.



Infront's Chief Executive Officer, Oscar Frei, said: "Infront is pleased to extend its partnership with the IIHF. It is a trusted partnership that shares common objectives for the growth of international ice hockey. Together, we are excited about the sport's future and look forward to raising the profile and success of the IIHF World Championships to an even higher level."

Nabokov eligible to play for Russia in IIHF competitions

■ The IIHF Executive Committee approved a request by the Ice Hockey Federation of Russia to make Kazakhstan-born goaltender Evgeni Nabokov, 29, eligible to play for Russia in IIHF competitions. Nabokov, of the NHL San José Sharks, was born in 1975 in Ust-Kamenogorsk, in the Kazakhstan republic of the former Soviet Union.

Nabokov represented Kazakhstan in the 1994 IIHF World Championship (C-Pool) at the age of 18 and therefore became, under the old IIHF Statutes & Bylaws, ineligible to play for any other country. During the 2003 General Congress, the IIHF adopted a new eligibility rule which says that a player can change his national eligibility, providing he has played for at least four consecutive years in the national competition of his new country where he is a citizen.

■ Nabokov became, due to political circumstances out of his control, a border-case having played two years in Ust-Kamenogorsk while it belonged to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) before

transferring to Dynamo Moscow of the Russian league where he played for three seasons. After being drafted by the San José Sharks, Nabokov left Russia in 1997 to play for the Sharks' organisation in the American Hockey League.

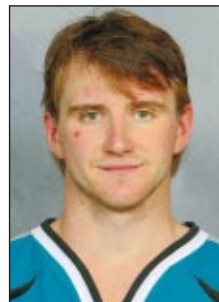


Photo: San José Sharks
NABOKOV: A Russian now.

"We took on a flexible attitude towards the request of the player and the Russian federation to switch the player's national eligibility," said IIHF General Secretary Jan-Ake Edvinsson. "It became very clear that Mr. Nabokov was a victim of historic circumstances which were totally out of his control and that it would be unfair to him not to approve the request."

■ The decision means that Evgeni Nabokov is eligible to represent Russia in the 2005 IIHF World Championship in Austria and in the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Turin, Italy. Even without the IIHF decision, Nabokov would have been eligible to play for Russia in the upcoming 2004 World Cup of Hockey, which is a NHL-NHLPA governed tournament where IIHF eligibility rules don't apply.

The stage is set for a European club showdown



Photo: KIMMO LEINONEN

RUSSIAN HOSPITALITY: St. Petersburg governor Valentina Matvienko was the ceremonial host as the IIHF introduced the European Champions Cup in the historical city. IIHF President René Fasel and the President of the Russian Ice Hockey Federation, Alexander Steblin, flank Mrs. Matvienko.

■ The General Assembly of the 2005 IIHF European Champions Cup met in St. Petersburg, Russia, on July 29, and determined the playing groups, schedule and the Supervisory Board of the tournament.

Europe's premiere club team competition, featuring six national club champions, will play its inaugural tournament in St. Petersburg January 13-16, 2005. The six top European nations, according to the 2004 IIHF World Ranking, participating in the tournament will represent the Czech Republic (HC Zlin), Finland (Kärpät Oulu), Germany (Frankfurt Lions), Russia (Avangard Omsk),

Slovakia (Dukla Trencin) and Sweden (HV71 Jönköping).

At the General Assembly, the game schedule for the tournament was also decided. The playing format of the championship will be a preliminary round robin, followed by the gold medal game between the group winners. See box below with the tentative ECC schedule.

■ The final order of business was for the General Assembly, chaired by IIHF President Rene Fasel, to nominate the Supervisory Board for the competition. The board consists of the IIHF President, IIHF Council member Alexander Steblin, commercial partner Telesport representative Petr Makarenko, national federation / league representative Gernot Tripcke, and two members representing the participating club teams, Lars Tegner (HV71 Jönköping) and Zdenek Venera (HC Zlin).

"We are pleased with the cooperation from all the leagues," IIHF President Rene Fasel said. "We think that a great future lies ahead for the European Champions Cup. There are high hopes for this competition. It is one of our eventual goals that the winner of the European Champions Cup play the Stanley Cup Champion to determine a World Club Champion."

■ Petr Makarenko, from Telesport echoed Fasel's sentiments:

"I see a good things happening with this event. It is a great tool for promoting international ice hockey and should be a very marketable event in the future. By the

first part of September we hope to announce our host broadcaster and sponsor contracts", said Petr Makarenko.



VISIONARY: Petr Makarenko's Telesport is the IIHF's commercial partner for the European Champions Cup.

2005 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS CUP

at St. Petersburg, Russia

Group A

HC Zlin (CZE)
Kärpät Oulu (FIN)
Frankfurt Lions (GER)

Group B

Avangard Omsk (RUS)
Dukla Trencin (SVK)
HV 71 Jönköping (SWE)

January 13

HC Zlin vs. Frankfurt Lions (A)
Dukla Trencin vs. Avangard Omsk (B)

January 14

Kärpät Oulu vs. HC Zlin (A)
HV71 Jönköping vs. Dukla Trencin (B)

January 15

Frankfurt Lions vs. Kärpät Oulu (A)
Avangard Omsk vs. HV71 Jönköping (B)

January 16

Winner of each group in a championship game

Subject to change

... and Asian countries follow example

■ A new multi-national ice hockey league in Asia is ready to begin its inaugural season. The groundbreaking Asian Hockey League, which was unveiled at a press conference in Beijing, in July, will include teams from Japan, Korea, China and Russia.

Overall there will be eight teams in the new league, which will play 42 games each. The teams will play a round-robin schedule, facing each other six times throughout the season, three times at home and three on the road. At the end of the regular season, the top four teams will qualify for the playoffs.

Already, the league is attracting media attention and big names. Five-time Stanley Cup winner Esa Tikkanen has signed on to play for the Korean team Halla Winia.

■ The seeds for the league were planted last year 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.

"In the beginning, the Korean teams had problems competing with the teams from Japan," said Shoichi Tomita, the IIHF Vice President from Japan and the

main force behind the Asian League. "But by the end of last season, they had at least one win against each team. Their improvement was a great thing to see."

■ This season, the league will be made up of four teams from Japan (Nikko Ice Bucks, Nippon Paper

Cranes, Oji Paper and Japanese champion Kokudo Tokyo), two teams 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. Their developmental team will represent Amur, which plays in the Russian Professional Hockey League.

The primary goal of the new Asian League is make the Asian teams more competitive on the international stage.

"The success of this league would mean a great deal to the development of ice hockey in far-east Asia," said Tomita. "We would like to see all of these nations play at least the Division I level at the IIHF World Championships."

■ Tomita says that the 2004-05 Asian League has plans to expand in the future to include more than eight teams and hopes to find a major sponsor to help alleviate some of the costs of travel.



"TIKI" GOES KOREA: Finnish star Esa Tikkanen - a five time Stanley Cup champion - will bring star appeal to the Korean champion Halla Winia and the new Asian Hockey League.



The Year at a Glance: IIHF Annual Report now available

■ 565, 600 minutes. A lot can happen in a year. Which is one reason why the IIHF publishes its Annual Report. The 2003-2004 IIHF Annual Report will be available in early September.

Want to know who won every IIHF World Championship? Which players were named to the All Star Teams? Need to know what happened at all of the IIHF Congresses? Or are you curious to learn more about the 63 member associations?

The IIHF Annual Report has it all. In this colourful 100-page report, you will find results and statistics from every IIHF senior, women, U20 and U18 championship. It is an indispensable document for media covering the international game and people in the hockey business.

■ If you are currently not on the IIHF mailing list, you can request a copy of the Report by e-mailing media@iihf.com

Fourth time's a charm for USA InLine Team



RED, WHITE & GOLD: The United States strikes a pose after winning its first gold medal in the last four years at the InLine Hockey Championship. Overall, the United States has taken home the gold medal four times.

Top Division:

■ The U.S. team got its golden touch back when it won its first gold medal in four years at the IIHF World InLine Championship. Team USA got back to the top by beating defending champion, Finland, in the final game.

The U.S., which dominated the championship in its early years, had struggled in recent seasons, while its gold medal game opponent, Finland had flourished during that time.

The final game was a battle between the two powers of InLine hockey. Both teams had three gold medals to their credit going into the game, but ultimately, Finland could not overcome the massive 5-0 advantage that the United States held at the end of the first quarter.

Finland started to comeback in the second quarter, powered by two goals from Mikko Liukkonen, who got a sprawling goal at the 2:49 mark, and a rebound less than two minutes later. The effort brought the Finns to within three.

The teams spent much of the next two quarters in a back-and-forth battle, but Finland could not make up any distance.

■ In the bronze medal game, Sweden edged out Germany in a 3-2 decision. Host Germany just barely missed the medal podium after a rocky start to the championship. Sweden was at the other end of the bronze spectrum. The Swedes started the championship well, but fell to Finland in the semi-final round. Both teams put up a good fight in the bronze game, but ultimately, Sweden's skills won out.

For the United States, the win marked its eighth medal in nine world championships and its fourth overall gold. Finland, which has also medalled eight times, now has three gold, three bronze and two silver medals to its credit.

Division I:

■ Great Britain won its first-ever IIHF World InLine Championship gold medal after beating Brazil, 3-2, in overtime in a hard-fought game.

Brazil and Great Britain were the teams to beat throughout the Division I Championship as both cruised through their preliminary round games unbeaten. While Brazil was last year's silver medalists, Great Britain came from out of nowhere to claim the gold medal.

The gold medal game between the two dominating teams held many thrills. Great Britain didn't hold the lead the entire game until Simon Hehir fired in a shot from the point on the power play 2:38 into overtime to lift his team to the 3-2 win.

■ Defending champion, Japan, had to settle for a bronze medal finish against Hungary. Japan surged ahead in the third quarter with four goals in its 7-5 win.

For complete results from the 2004 IIHF World InLine Hockey Championship, please see page 11.

IIHF World Championship Directorate Awards:

Top Division:

Best Goalkeeper: Ari Luostarinen (FIN)
Best Defenseman: Ernie Hartlieb (USA)
Best Forward: Dejan Matejic (SWE)

World Championship Division I:

Best Goalkeeper: Rodrigo Santos (BRA)
Best Defenseman: Mark Thomas (GBR)
Best Forward: John Dolan (GBR)

2004 IIHF World InLine Hockey Championship Final Standings

Top Division

1. USA
2. Finland
3. Sweden
4. Germany
5. Slovakia
6. Czech Republic
7. Austria
8. Slovenia

Division I

1. Great Britain
2. Brazil
3. Japan
4. Hungary
5. Australia
6. New Zealand
7. Belgium
8. Argentina



IT'S GOOD TO BE ON TOP: Of both the world, and the celebration pile as Great Britain enthusiastically creates its own mountain in Germany after winning DI gold.

We are the champions of the World

All national (men's) champions from IIHF member associations:

Armenia:	Dinamo Yerevan
Australia:	Newcastle Northstars
Austria:	Klagenfurter AC
Belarus:	Yunost Minsk
Belgium:	Olympia Heist op dem Berg
Bosnia & Herzegov:	No competition
Bulgaria:	Slavia Sofia
Canada:	Calgary Flames (highest Canadian NHL finisher) Kelowna Rockets (Memorial Cup)
China:	Qiqihar
Chinese Taipei:	No competition
Croatia:	KHL Medvescak, Zagreb
Czech Republic:	HC Zlin
Denmark:	Esbjerg IK
DPR Korea:	Phyongchang Choldo
Estonia:	HC Panter/Hansa Sport, Tallinn
Finland:	Kärpät Oulu
France:	Gothiques Amiens
Germany:	Frankfurt Lions
Great Britain:	Sheffield Steelers
Hong-Kong:	Sunday (inofficial)
Hungary:	Alba-Volan, Szekesfehervar
Iceland:	Skautafelag Akureyrar
Ireland:	No competition
Israel:	HC Maccabi Amos Lod
Italy:	Milano Vipere
Japan:	Kokudo Tokyo
Kazakistan:	Kazzinc Torpedo, Ust-Kamenogorsk
Korea:	Halla Winia
Latvia:	HC Riga 2000
Lithuania:	Energija Elektrėnai
Luxembourg:	No competition
Mexico:	Lomas Verdes 1
Mongolia:	Baganuur
Netherlands:	Amsterdam Bulldogs
New Zealand:	Auckland Whalers
Norway:	Storhamar Dragons
Poland:	Unia Oswiecim
Portugal:	No competition
Romania:	SC Miercurea Ciuc
Russia:	Avangard Omsk
Serbia & Montenegro:	Vojvodina Novi Sad
Singapore:	Brewerkz Bruins (inofficial)
Slovakia:	Dukla Trencin
Slovenia:	Olimpija Ljubljana
South Africa:	Krugersdorp Wildcats
Spain:	CHH Jaca NyE
Sweden:	HV71, Jönköping
Switzerland:	SC Bern
Thailand:	No competition
Turkey:	Polis Akademisi, Ankara
Ukraine:	Sokol Kiev
United Arab Emirates:	No competition
USA:	NHL - Tampa Bay Lightning NCAA - University of Denver



AUSTRIA: It's Klagenfurt again, and again... and again.



DENMARK: Esbjerg let the gold go to its head.



CROATIA: Eighth consecutive championship for Medvescak.



FINLAND: Kärpät kicked aside the competition in Suomi.



SWEDEN: HV71 - for the first time since 1995.

■ USA had its strongest season ever on the international stage. The U.S. was the only nation to earn a medal at every IIHF Championship level during the 2003-2004 season. The U20 team won the nation's first-ever gold medal in December, which was followed up by silver medal performances by the U18 and women's teams. The men's national team took home a bronze medal at the IIHF World Championship and the year ended with a gold medal at the InLine World Championship. It is the first time the U.S. has accomplished this feat.

IIHF News & Appointments

Sofia Chatzis joined the IIHF Administration Department as the Assistant to Hannes Ederer, Deputy General Secretary, on 1 July 2004. She comes to the IIHF after teaching English at a public school in Zurich. She is responsible for all IIHF administrative tasks as well as taking care of all personnel matters.



Peggy Arnold joined the IIHF Sport Department as an Assistant on July 15. She will be responsible for the administrative, organizational and promotional aspects of the department's educational events. Arnold, from Halle, Germany, joins the IIHF after many years of experience with sport event management, familiar with the IIHF family having worked with the Skoda sponsorship at the IIHF World Championships since 2001.



Andy Ecker joins the IIHF as Event Manager on September 15 as part of IIHF's Sport Department. He will assist the Director of Event Management by being a contact-service person for member national associations and event organizing committees to ensure an efficient co-operation and communication between the IIHF and the organisers. He has earlier been performing Results Manager duties for the IIHF and he has also been involved in similar capacity for the ZSC Lions, Zurich.



IIHF Association News

■ **AUSTRIA:** Christian Hartl assumed the position of General Secretary of the Austrian Ice Hockey Association, replacing Rita Hrbacek.

■ **BELGIUM:** Chris Clement was re-elected as president of the Royal Belgian Ice Hockey Federation on June 26. Clement has been president of the RBIHF since 1991.

■ **CZECH REPUBLIC:** Vratislav Kulhanek was elected as new president of the Czech Ice Hockey Association on June 26. Kulhanek succeeded Karel Gut, 76, who stepped down after ten years at the helm of the CIHA.

■ **POLAND:** Zenon Hajduga was re-elected for a second term as president of the Polish Ice Hockey Association on June 26. Mr. Hajduga won the election with an overwhelming majority. Wieslaw Wojas became the only new member on the board of the PZHL. Belarussian Andrey Sidorenko was appointed as the new head coach of the Polish national team.

■ **SWEDEN:** Christer Englund was elected as new



president of the Swedish Ice Hockey Association on June 12. Englund, 56, succeeded Kjell Nilsson who stepped down after a two-year stint.

ENGLUND

Obituaries

■ Former President of the German Ice Hockey Association and IIHF Auditor Otto Wanner died on July 27 in Kaufbeuren, Germany at the age of 85. Very few people could show for such a long-time involvement in ice hockey as Otto Wanner, who was born on June 26, 1919 in Kempten, Germany. He was the President of the German association DEB for 28 years (1964 - 1992) and Honorary President since 1996. Wanner was the team leader of Team Germany at 24 IIHF



World Championships and seven Olympic Winter Games.

During his involvement in EV Füssen, the club team won the German championship 16 times. During his tenure at the helm of the DEB, the number of clubs increased from 125 to 300 and the number indoor ice rinks rose from ten to over 200. In the Wanner-era, the amount of licensed player

increased by 300 percent. Otto Wanner was also IIHF Auditor in the 80s.

■ Rudolf Novak, who devoted most of life to ice hockey in Austria and spent 40 years in various functions at the Austrian Ice Hockey Association, died on July 27, 2004 at the age 74 following a lengthy period of illness. Novak, who was born on March 16, 1931, was a

member of the Austrian delegation to IIHF Congresses since 1997. He was a member of the Klagenfurt AC hockey club since the early 50s, as player, coach, manager and member of the board. Rudolf Novak was laid to rest in his home town of Klagenfurt on July 30.



Girls just wanna have fun... and

200 players. 27 nations. 8 teams. 7 days. 1 sport. The unique group that converged upon Vierumäki, Finland in the beginning of July, did so with a clear mission: to learn to be the best possible hockey players and have a great time learning about people from other cultures.

The participants came from every corner of the world to develop their hockey goals and make international connections. Included in the camp were players born from 1986-1988, coaches, managers and game officials.

■ ■ The camp was the first-ever of its kind for women, but not the first that the IIHF and the Finnish Association have collaborated on. Last year, the two groups worked together to host a similar men's development camp. But while the two camps had the same-structure, they were different in many ways.

"There was something that was so refreshing about female camp," IIHF Sport Director Dave Fitzpatrick said. "The participants brought such an enthusiasm and an eagerness to learn. You really got the feeling that everyone had a hunger to improve the women's game."

The players from all across the globe were divided into eight teams when they arrived. The player's experience ranged from being Olympic medallists to modest beginners, but that didn't impede the learning process.

"They really adapted to each other's styles. If you had a more skilled player, she took on the role of a mentor, while the players that were learning just absorbed everything like a sponge."

■ ■ In fact, one of the primary goals of the IIHF Development Camp was that the participants would take what they learned while in Finland back to their nations and become the teachers.

"This was a great experience for everyone involved," Camp Director Arto Seippi said. "These girls will be the messengers and the leaders in their own countries building women's hockey. Overall the week really showed the potential of women's hockey."



OUTDOOR GAME: All of the participants at the 2004 IIHF Women's Hockey Development Camp take a break from the indoor rink in Vierumäki.

The week wasn't only about hockey.

There were plenty of opportunities for campers to learn all about different cultures, especially the

**"This camp is fantastic!
There is no better place to make
friends, develop international
relations and learn about the
game of hockey than this camp."**

Kalervo Kummola, IIHF Vice President

unique Finnish culture. Participants were introduced to the land of 1,000 lakes by going into hot saunas, cold lakes, eating hot and cold fish of all varieties and watching the sun set at midnight.

The participants were also introduced to several new cultures through their teammates. On any team, there could be more than 10 countries represented, which meant 10 native languages, 10 hometowns and, of course 10 different kinds of food preferences.

"I think when these players come home they are so appreciative of differences in cultures," IIHF Sport Manager Darin Easson said. "Not only do they come home with more knowledge in hockey, but they also will tell friends and family about people from all over the world."

■ ■ Players weren't the only ones at the camp that were learning valuable lessons. Included in the line up were also team leaders, coaches, equipment managers and game officials. For most participants, it was their first time in an international hockey setting.

and play hockey in Vierumäki



...ki, Finland, to create a giant outdoor game, complete with fans, referees, players and nets.

Throughout the camp, the IIHF's concept of Fair Play & Respect was integrated, but it was just one of the many lessons that the participants took home with them.

Perhaps the entire week was best summed up by IIHF Vice President Kalervo Kummola when he said, "This camp is fantastic! There is no better place to make friends, develop international relations and learn about the game of hockey than this camp. It is the best idea that the IIHF has come up with in a long time."

Over 200 females would heartily agree with Kummola and after 2004 IIHF Women's Hockey Development Camp, as everyone involved could proudly say at the end of the week: Mission accomplished.

A TEACHER AND A STUDENT: Sweden's Olympic bronze medallist Kim Martin was one of the participants at the IIHF Women's Development Camp in Finland.



To be the best, players learn from the best

Story by: Tuula Puputti

There were great role models coaching at the IIHF Women's Development Camp, but there were also national level players skating and practicing with the Camp Teams as well.

One of those standout players was Kim Martin, the goalie for the Swedish Olympic Bronze Medal Team 2002, who was guarding the net for Team Black.

"It has been so much fun at this camp. To practice and compete with the players of same age, you do not get to do that a lot in women's hockey," Martin said.

Kim had a chance to live her dream in the Olympics. "I could not believe when I was there and it still feels unreal. It was great experience competing with so many good players," she said.

Dreams are what keep people going. And through Kim the players at the camp were able to see what it takes to make their Olympic dreams come true by witnessing how an Olympic level athlete trains.

At the goalie practice Kim's actions were followed closely. Czech goalie Eri Kiribuchi playing for Team Yellow and Japanese Kumiko Okada playing for Team White were two of the goalies that shared the ice with Kim in goalie practices.

When asked about their dreams as hockey players it doesn't take a lot of time for Kumiko to answer. "To play for Team Japan," she said. Eri, who was born in Japan, dreams about playing in North-America. "I want to be like the NHL-goalie Dominik Hasek," she said.

It is the NHL that Kim also dreamed about when she was younger. "First I just played for fun, but the Olympics and the NHL were the two big dreams I had," she said.

Even though the NHL is not at the top of the list anymore and Kim has won an Olympic Bronze she is still pushing her self to be a better athlete. "I want to be the best goalie in the world. To reach that level I need to practise a lot, do my best everyday."

After the camp both Kumiko and Eri had a great deal of new information about goaltending to use in practises at home. The experience of the camp, and being around players like Kim, will be carried with them to their countries.

Referees ready to go across borders

■ The first step in the IIHF Referee Exchange Program was taken following the IIHF Women's Hockey Development Camp when participants in the groundbreaking program had their first meeting in Vierumäki.

At the meeting were 14 referees and seven referee supervisors from the seven nations that will take part in the exchange program. Each participating nation, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland, will have two referees and one referee supervisor represented in the first year of the program.

■ The national leagues will choose 20 regular season games for the assignments. The goal of the program is to standardize officiating throughout Europe and get both the officials and players better acquainted with the differing styles of hockey in different nations and leagues.

During their time in Vierumäki the referees and the supervisors met and let the group know what can be expected in the various nations. In addition, the logistics of the first-ever Referee Exchange Program were discussed.

The referees will work with local linesmen and will be evaluated by a chosen referee supervisors at the end of each game. The supervisors will play a critical role in the program as it is their job to evaluate each official in terms of their nation's standards.

■ The Referee Exchange Program will begin this fall with the start of the 2004-05 season.

The officials for the first year of the program are:

Referees:

Milan Minar, CZE
Tomas Turcan, CZE
Timo Favorin, FIN
Hannu Hanriksson, FIN
Thomas Schurr, GER
Richard Schuetz, GER
Vyacheslav Bulanov, RUS
Sergey Karabanov, RUS
Peter Jonak, SVK
Rudolf Lauff, SVK
Tomas Andersson, SWE
Ulf Rönmark, SWE
Danny Kurmann, SUI
Brent Reiber, SUI

Referee Supervisors:

Pavel Halas, CZE
Arto Jarvela, FIN
Stefan Trainer, GER
Anatoliy Barinov, RUS
Juraj Okolicany, SVK
Roger Oberg, SWE
Freddy Reichen, SUI



A QUICK CHAT: Officials involved in the IIHF Referee Exchange Program will be exposed to a variety of languages as they travel around Europe.

Fewer headaches with big rinks

■ Playing hockey on IIHF-sized ice surfaces reduces the number of concussions, says a study in the August issue of the Canadian Journal of Neurological Sciences.

Dr. Richard Wennberg, a neurologist at Toronto Western Hospital, analysed video from the 2001 and 2002 Stanley Cup finals played on ice surfaces smaller than the IIHF-sized rinks, World U20 Championships and 2002 Winter Games.

■ All impacts were counted as collisions. Total collisions per game on average on the NHL-sized surfaces were 264, compared to 170 per game on the international surfaces.

Factors such as no centre red-line, no-touch icing and fast faceoff rules used in international hockey might have contributed to collision rate differences, said Wennberg. As well, the best-of-seven NHL playoff format might be more conducive to aggressive play, he added.

"However, if the findings of this study are replicable, it would suggest that a change to uniform usage of the larger international ice surface, with no rule changes or other alterations in the game, could provide direct primary prevention to reduce the number of collisions and, by extension, concussions that occur in the sport," said Wennberg.

■ The IIHF-sized rinks are 60m x 30m (200ft x 98ft) while NHL-rinks measure the traditional North American 200m x 26m (200ft x 85ft). - *From Canadian Press*

In related news, the IIHF, along with FIFA and the International Olympic Committee will host the second Concussion in Sport Symposium in November in Prague. The symposium will consider the latest research on head injuries with an emphasis first on rehabilitation, recovery and return to play, and secondly on guidelines to establish an effective concussion management program. For additional information on the Concussion in Sport Symposium, please visit www.iihf.com.



THE BIGGER THE BETTER: A recent study showed that IIHF-sized ice surfaces decreases the number of concussions.

On a mission to Taipei: Bring back six nations to the world championships

■ The IIHF continues to target the Far East as one of its priorities in developing ice hockey worldwide. The second Asian Development Camp was held in Taipei City in Chinese Taipei on August 9 - 14 with participants from Chinese Taipei, Thailand, Hong-Kong, Singapore and India and Mongolia.

The camp had 140 participants, including players, Learn To Play instructors, coach instructors and referee instructors.

"A camp in such a unusual ice hockey environment is a truly unique experience," said Darryl Easson, the IIHF's Sport Development Manager for Youth Hockey who also served as Camp Director in Taipei City. "For example, the rink is situated below a shopping mall."

■ This camp caters specially to these six Asian nations who are IIHF members, but who don't participate in the IIHF World Championship program.

"The long-term objective of the Asian Development Camps is to make these nations join the world championship program within five years, preferably by joining the U18 world championship and building from there," said Easson.

The players in the camp are between the ages of 12-18.

"The participants showed exceptional enthusiasm and they were extremely thankful for the experience," said Darryl Easson. "I am convinced that we will see these emerging hockey nations participating in the IIHF world championships soon."

Europe will crown a 2004-05 Women's Club Champion

The IIHF is aiming to take women's hockey to a new level with the start of the IIHF European Women's Champions Cup.

The new tournament will feature club teams from the top ten European nations, according to the IIHF World Ranking system, vying for bragging rights in Europe. The IIHF has been looking for a way to promote and improve the women's game across the globe and decided to focus its efforts on European nations.

"When the Women's Committee made a five-year plan, it's goal was to improve the quality of the women's game in the existing nations," Rob Van Rijswijk, IIHF Event Director said. "We hope that in time we can expand the focus to include the Asian nations and eventually have a big club championship that includes the winner from North America."

The 2004-05 European Women's Champions Cup will begin with a preliminary round made up of two groups of four teams on Oct. 14-17. Group A will be hosted by HC Laima in Latvia, while Group B will in Bolzano, Italy.

The winner from the two preliminary round groups will qualify for the Final round where Blues Espoo (FIN) and AIK Solna (SWE) will await the winners on December 16-19. Both the preliminary and final rounds will be played in a round robin format.

"This championship is an important first step in starting to level the playing field in women's hockey," Van Rijswijk said. "This will provide the opportunity for the European nations to measure themselves against each other and be exposed to international competition more than just once a year at the IIHF World Championship."

Preliminary Round: October 14-17, 2004

Group A	Group B
SKIF Moscow (RUS)	EV Zug - Seewen (SUI)
HC Laima (LAT)	HC Cergy (FRA)
DSNK Almaty (KAZ)	Herlev Eagles (DEN)
Club Martin (SVK)	HC Bolzano (ITA)

Final Round: December 16-19, 2004

Blues Espoo (FIN)
AIK Solna (SWE)
Winner Group A
Winner Group B



Facing Off Again: Sari Fisk of Blues Espoo and Elin Holmlöv of AIK Solna will meet in the final round of the European Women's Champions Cup. Above, the two face-off at the 2004 IIHF World Women's Championship..

In Turin, our house is your house

With the close of the Summer Olympics in Athens, comes the world's attention to the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy, where hockey is sure to be a headline sport.

To help promote ice hockey at the Olympics, the IIHF is, for the first time ever, hosting a 'House of Hockey'. The house will be used as a home base for the hockey family to gather throughout the games in Turin.

The house will serve as a gathering point for IIHF member associations and their guests, athletes, sponsors, press and other guests. Among other things, it will have television coverage of all games, a venue for dinners and other special functions and plenty of memorabilia.

In addition, there will be an outdoor portion of the House of Hockey that will be open to the general public to help promote the sport. That area will have a street hockey rink, beer garden, big screen, outdoor televisions and an entertainment and performance stage.

Located in the heart of the Olympic venues, opposite the Olympic Stadium and next to the Palasport Hockey, the House of Hockey will be a convenient meeting place for all guests, both public and private.

More information on the IIHF House of Hockey will become available as the 2006 Olympics approach.



There's no place like home... Or at the IIHF's home away from home in Turin at the 2006 Winter Olympic Games

USA relies on same old bunch

■ It has been eight long years since the last World Cup of Hockey - but it seems for some participating nations, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

A quick look at a comparison between the rosters for the 2004 World Cup of Hockey with the selections from the previous 1996 tournament and also with the 1998 and the 2002 Olympic Winter Games shows that the USA, the winners of the 1996 World Cup, has the most returning players, with the Czech Republic a close second. See box below.

Virtually the same core of 12-13 players has carried the U.S. through the three events, over a six-year span. Furthermore, a total of eight U.S. players have been called into duty for all the four mentioned tournaments, spanning over eight years.

■ The comparison shows two things, a stable core of players, but also a poor influx of new faces into the national team. This problem was acknowledged by the late Herb Brooks prior to Salt Lake City 2002, when the Olympic coach realized that he could virtually only rely on seasoned veterans when selecting the olympic squad.

When Brooks was asked in November 2001 whether the ageing of the U.S. stars was a concern for him and for USA Hockey he replied, "I would say that the team from the 1996 World Cup had their peak in Nagano 1998 and I agree that USA Hockey should have had a new wave after that, but we haven't. We are trying to broaden the base of our talent pool and to develop young talent... yes, it is a major concern for us."

■ Since then USA Hockey has fully taken advantage of National Team Development Program in Ann Arbor, Michigan, but it will take at least two or three years before the "big" national team can start harvesting from the U20 team, which grabbed gold in Helsinki 2004.

While USA Hockey waits for the Ann Arbor grads to ripen, they will have to rely on: Chris Chelios, 42, Tony Amonte, 34, Bill Guerin 34, Brett Hull 40, Mike Modano 34, Keith Tkachuk 32, Dough Weight 33, Mathieu Schneider 35, and Brian Leetch 36.

It can be considered a little ironic that a group of players who were all inspired to pursue hockey careers after watching Herb Brooks and his collegians pull out the "Miracle on Ice" in the 1980 Lake Placid Olympics, is the core on which Team USA still relies so heavily on today.

■ The Czechs are in a similar situation with eight players who played in 1996, 1998, 2002 and who were selected to the 2004 World Cup. Just like the U.S., the Czechs have nearly no impact players under the age of 25.

The Czechs continue to cling onto their 'golden generation' with Jiri Slegr 33, Jiri Dopita 36, Jaromir Jagr 32, Robert Reichel 33, Martin Rucinsky 33, Roman Cechmanek 33, Martin Straka 32 and Robert Lang 34.



GOLDEN OLDIE: Chris Chelios with the '96 World Cup trophy.

■ In terms of bringing forth young players, Canada has been on the cutting edge in international competition. The Canadian team has a bevy of young stars (born late 70s and early 80s) who are not only on the World Cup roster, but will also be expected to make an impact; Roberto Luongo 25, Eric Brewer 25, Scott Hannan 25, Simon Gagne 24, Dany Heatley 23, Jarome Iginla 26, Brad Richards 24, Joe Thornton 25 and Vincent Lecavalier 24.

Granted, Canada's rather positive age profile was boosted by the pullouts of veterans Ed Belfour 39, Rob Blake 35 and Steve Yzerman 39. But it seems that Canada will be the team that will be forced do the least re-loading when Torino 2006 arrives. **SZYMON SZEMBERG**

Number of 2004 World Cup players* who played in the 1996 World Cup and in the 1998 and 2002 Olympics.

	1996	1998	2002
CAN	7	6	14
CZE	10	11	15
FIN	7	8	12
GER	5	6	15
SWE	8	10	14
SVK	7	2	13
RUS	9	6	15
USA	13	12	13

*Based on originally selected rosters

IIHF CALENDAR OF EVENTS

IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP		
2005	AUSTRIA, Vienna & Innsbruck	30.04 - 15.05.05
2006	LATVIA, Riga	TBA
2007	RUSSIA, Moscow & St Petersburg	TBA
2008	CANADA, Halifax & Quebec City	TBA
2009	SWITZERLAND, Zurich & Bern	TBA
2010	APPLICANTS: BLR, GER, SWE	

IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group A		
2005	HUNGARY, Budapest	17-23.04.05

IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group B		
2005	NETHERLANDS, Eindhoven	17-23.04.05

IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group A		
2005	CROATIA, Zagreb	10-16.04.05

IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group B		
2005	SERBIA & MONTENEGRO, Belgrade	04-10.04.05

IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION III		
2005	MEXICO, Mexico City	07-13.03.05

IIHF WORLD WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP		
2005	SWEDEN, Linköping & Norrköping	02-09.04.05

IIHF WORLD WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I		
2005	SWITZERLAND, Romanshorn	27.03-02.04.05

IIHF WORLD WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II		
2005	ITALY, Vipiteno	13-19.03.05

IIHF WORLD WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION III		
2005	SOUTH AFRICA, Cape Town	03-09.03.05

IIHF WORLD WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION IV		
2005	NEW ZEALAND, Dunedin	01-04.04.05

IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP		
2005	USA, Grand Forks & Thief River Falls	25.12.04-04.01.05
2006	CANADA, Vancouver, Kelowna & Kamloops	26.12.05-05.01.06
2007	SWEDEN	TBA
2008	APPLICANTS: BLR, SUI	

IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group A		
2005	GREAT BRITAIN, Sheffield	13-19.12.04

IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group B		
2005	ESTONIA, Narva	13-19.12.04

IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group A		
2005	ROMANIA, Bucharest	03-09.01.05

IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group B		
2005	SPAIN, Puigcerda	13-19.12.04

IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION III		
2005	MEXICO, Mexico City	10-16.01.05

IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP		
2005	CZECH REPUBLIC, Ceske Budejovice & Plzen	14-24.04.05
2006	SWEDEN	TBA

IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group A		
2005	SLOVENIA, Bled or Lubljana	03-09.04.05

IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group B		
2005	POLAND, Sosnowiec	02-08.04.05

IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group A		
2005	ESTONIA, Kohtla-Järve	14-20.03.05

IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group B		
2005	ROMANIA, Bucharest	21-27.03.05

IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION III		
2005	BULGARIA, Sofia	07-13.03.05

IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION III QUALIFICATION		
2005	TURKEY, Ankara	18-20.02.05

OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION PROGRAM

MEN'S FINAL OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION TOURNAMENT - GROUP A		
2005	SWITZERLAND, Kloten	10-13.02.05

MEN'S FINAL OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION TOURNAMENT - GROUP B		
2005	LATVIA, Riga	10-13.02.05

MEN'S FINAL OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION TOURNAMENT - GROUP C		
2005	AUSTRIA, Klagenfurt	10-13.02.05

MEN'S OLYMPIC PRE-QUALIFICATION TOURNAMENT - GROUP D		
2005	FRANCE, Briançon	11-14.11.04

MEN'S OLYMPIC PRE-QUALIFICATION TOURNAMENT - GROUP E		
2005	POLAND, Krynica	11-14.11.04

MEN'S OLYMPIC PRE-QUALIFICATION TOURNAMENT - GROUP F		
2005	NORWAY	11-14.11.04

WOMEN'S FINAL OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION TOURNAMENT - GROUP A		
2005	RUSSIA, Podolsk	11-14.11.04

WOMEN'S FINAL OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION TOURNAMENT - GROUP B		
2005	GERMANY, Bad Tölz	11-14.11.04

WOMEN'S FINAL OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION TOURNAMENT - GROUP C		
2005	CHINA	11-14.11.04

OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES

2006	ITALY, Turin	10-26.02.06
2010	CANADA, Vancouver	February 2010

IIHF IN-LINE CHAMPIONSHIPS

IIHF IN-LINE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP		
2005	TBA	TBA

IIHF CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

2005 IIHF CONTINENTAL CUP		
	First Round (ROM & CRO):	24-26.09.04
	Second Round (LAT, FRA, GBR & POL):	15-17.10.04
	Third Round (NOR):	19-21.11.04
	Final (HUN):	07-09.01.05

2005 IIHF EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS CUP		
2005	RUSSIA, St Petersburg	13-16.01.05

NATIONAL TEAM BREAKS

2004/2005 Season		
	1st International Break	- Aug. 30 - Sept. 5, 2004
	2nd International Break	- Nov. 8 - 14, 2004
	3rd International Break	- Dec. 13 - 19, 2004
	4th International Break	- Feb. 7 - 13, 2005
2005/2006 Season		
	1st International Break	- Aug. 29 - Sept. 4, 2005
	2nd International Break	- Nov. 7 - 13, 2005
	3rd International Break	- Dec. 12 - 18, 2005
	4th International Break	- Feb. 6 - 12, 2006

OTHER INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

IIHF WORLD OLDTIMERS FESTIVAL		
2005	SLOVENIA	TBA

WINTER UNIVERSIADE		
2005	AUSTRIA, Innsbruck & Seefeld	12-22.01.05

EUROPEAN YOUTH OLYMPIC WINTER FESTIVAL		
2005	SWITZERLAND, Monthey & Champéry	22-29.01.05

CONGRESSES

IIHF SEMI-ANNUAL CONGRESS		
2004	TURKEY, Belek	30.09-02.10.04

IIHF ANNUAL CONGRESS		
2005	AUSTRIA, Vienna	12-15.05.05

IIHF ANNUAL & GENERAL CONGRESS		
2008	FRANCE, Paris	June 2008



REPEAT AT HOME?: Patrick O'Sullivan celebrates USA's gold medal winning goal at the 2004 IIHF World U20 Championship in Helsinki, Finland. This coming season the Americans will have the opportunity to defend the World Junior title in Grand Forks, North Dakota and Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

2006 Olympic Qualification Groups



Hockey teams around the globe will begin the Olympic Qualification process this fall when the tournaments begin in November. The highest-seeded team in each group had the first option to host the qualification tournament. The seedings were determined by the IIHF World Ranking following the 2004 Championship season. The top team from the preliminary tournaments will move into the final qualification tournaments and the winner of each group in the final qualification tournament will be eligible to play in the 2006 Olympics.

Men's Final Olympic Qualification Groups February 10-13, 2005

Group A:	Group B	Group C
<i>Kloten, Switzerland</i>	<i>Riga, Latvia</i>	<i>Klagenfurt, Austria</i>
Switzerland	Latvia	Austria
Denmark	Belarus	Ukraine
Japan	Slovenia	Kazakhstan
Qualifier	Qualifier	Qualifier

Men's Preliminary Olympic Qualification Groups November 11-14, 2004

Group A:	Group B	Group C
<i>Briançon, France</i>	<i>Krynica, Poland</i>	<i>TBD, Norway</i>
France	Poland	Norway
Estonia	Netherlands	Hungary
Romania	Lithuania	China
Bulgaria	Croatia	Serbia & Montenegro

Women's Preliminary Olympic Qualification Groups November 11-14, 2004

Group A:	Group B	Group C
<i>Podolsk, Russia</i>	<i>Bad Tölz, Germany</i>	<i>TBD, China</i>
Russia	Germany	China
Japan	Kazakhstan	Switzerland
Czech Republic	Latvia	France
	Slovenia	Norway

Continental Cup ready for 2005

The city of Szekesfehervar, Hungary and its national champion Alba Volan will host the final round of the 2005 IIHF Continental Cup on January 7-9.

The Hungarian champion will be joined by the Russian league powerhouse Dynamo Moscow and HKM Zvolen. The third round winner will be the fourth team in the 2005 Super Final.

Participation in the Continental Cup is limited to one team per country, namely the champion of the countries not invited to take part in the IIHF European Champions Cup and a club from the top league of the national associations joining the IIHF European Champions Cup

Dynamo Moscow, HKM Zvolen and Great Britain's Nottingham Panthers are Continental Cup teams which are not champions in their countries.

The Continental Cup will be played in three rounds prior to the final in Hungary.

First round (24 - 26 September)

Group A:
Miercurea Ciuc, ROM (organizer)
Slavia Sofia, BUL
Maccabi Amos Lod, ISR

Group B:
Medvescak Zagreb, CRO (organizer)
Vojvodina Novi Sad, SCG
CH Jaca, ESP
Energija Elektrenai, LTU

Second round (15 - 17 October)

Group C:
HC Riga 2000, LAT
Kazzinc Torpedo, KAZ
Junost Minsk, BLR
Winner A

Group D:
HC Amiens, FRA (organizer)
Nottingham Panthers, GBR
HC Milano, ITA
HDD Olimpija, SLO

Group E:
Unia Oswiecim, POL (organizer)
Sokol Kiev, UKR
Esbjerg IK, DEN
Winner B

Third Round (19 - 21 November)

Group F:
Storhamar Dragons, NOR (organizer)
Winner C
Winner D
Winner E

Final (7 - 9 January, 2005)

at Szekesfehervar, Hungary

Group G:
Alba Volan, HUN
Dynamo Moscow, RUS
HKM Zvolen, SVK
Winner F



RESULTS SUMMARY

IIHF World InLine Championship

Bad Tölz, GERMANY, 10-17 July 2004

Group A

Germany - Finland	3 - 5	(0-1, 1-2, 0-0, 2-2)
Germany - Czech Republic	6 - 7	(2-0, 1-2, 2-1, 1-4)
Finland - Austria	9 - 3	(1-0, 2-1, 3-0, 3-2)
Czech Republic - Austria	2 - 3	(1-2, 0-0, 0-0, 1-1)
Finland - Czech Republic	10-4	(5-1, 0-1, 4-1, 1-1)
Austria - Germany	2 - 5	(0-1, 0-0, 2-3, 0-1)

Finland	3	3	0	0	24 : 10	9
Germany	3	1	0	2	14 : 14	3
Czech Rep.	3	1	0	2	13 : 19	3
Austria	3	1	0	2	8 : 16	3

Group B

USA - Slovakia	7 - 3	(2-0, 2-0, 1-3, 2-0)
Sweden - Slovenia	13-2	(4-1, 3-0, 3-1, 3-0)
USA - Slovenia	6 - 3	(1-0, 2-0, 2-3, 1-0)
Slovakia - Sweden	1 - 9	(0-2, 0-2, 0-2, 1-3)
Slovenia - Slovakia	4 - 5	(1-0, 2-2, 0-0, 0-2)
Sweden - USA	4 - 5	(1-0, 0-2, 2-1, 1-1)

USA	3	2	1/0	0	18 : 10	8
Sweden	3	2	0/1	0	26 : 8	7
Slovakia	3	1	1/0	2	9 : 20	3
Slovenia	3	0	0/1	2	9 : 24	2

Group C

Hungary - Great Britain	3 - 9	(1-5, 0-3, 0-0, 2-1)
Japan - Belgium	16-3	(5-1, 2-0, 5-0, 4-2)
Hungary - Belgium	9 - 4	(1-1, 3-1, 5-2, 0-0)
Great Britain - Japan	7 - 4	(0-1, 2-1, 3-0, 2-2)
Belgium - Great Britain	1-15	(0-4, 1-3, 0-5, 0-3)
Japan - Hungary	3 - 4	(0-1, 0-1, 1-2, 2-0)

Great Britain	3	3	0	0	31 : 8	9
Hungary	3	2	0	1	16 : 16	6
Japan	3	1	0	2	23 : 14	3
Belgium	3	0	0	3	8 : 40	0

Group D

Australia - New Zealand	7 - 6	(4-0, 1-2, 1-0, 1-4)
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Brazil - Argentina	5 - 0	(1-0, 0-0, 1-0, 3-0)
Australia - Argentina	11-4	(3-1, 4-1, 3-1, 1-1)
New Zealand - Brazil	5 - 7	(0-0, 0-1, 2-5, 3-1)
Argentina - New Zealand	1-10	(0-1, 0-3, 1-4, 0-2)
Brazil - Australia	5 - 3	(1-0, 2-1, 2-1, 0-2)

Brazil	3	3	0	0	17 : 8	9
Australia	3	1	0	2	21 : 15	6
New Zealand	3	1	0	2	21 : 15	3
Argentina	3	1	0	2	5 : 26	0

Qualification to Top Division

Slovenia - Brazil	15-0	(4-0, 6-0, 3-0, 2-0)
Austria - Great Britain	11-4	(3-1, 2-2, 3-1, 3-0)

Quarterfinal Round

Australia - Japan	2-10	(0-3, 0-2, 0-1, 2-4)*
Sweden - Czech Republic	9 - 7	(2-0, 4-4, 0-1, 3-2)
Hungary - New Zealand	10-0	(2-0, 4-0, 3-0, 1-0)*
USA - Austria	6 - 5	(1-1, 1-0, 2-0, 1-4)
Brazil - Belgium	8 - 3	(3-0, 3-0, 1-0, 1-3)*
Finland - Slovenia	9-2	(2-1, 2-0, 4-1, 1-0)
Great Britain - Argentina	8 - 3	(0-0, 2-2, 2-0, 4-1)*
Germany - Slovakia	6 - 3	(1-2, 2-0, 1-0, 2-1)

Ranking Games

Australia - New Zealand	8 - 3	(4-0, 2-1, 2-2, 0-0)*
Czech Republic - Slovakia	3 - 4	(2-0, 1-3, 0-0, 0-1)
Austria - Slovenia	4 - 3	(2-2, 1-1, 0-0, 1-0)
Belgium - Argentina	5 - 4	(1-1, 1-1, 2-0, 1-2)*

Semi-Final Games

Brazil - Hungary	5 - 4	(1-0, 0-2, 2-2, 1-0)*
Finland - Sweden	5 - 2	(0-1, 0-2, 1-0, 3-0)
Great Britain - Japan	8 - 5	(2-0, 0-2, 2-2, 4-1)*
USA - Germany	5 - 2	(0-1, 2-1, 0-0, 3-0)

Bronze Medal Games

Hungary - Japan	5 - 7	(3-2, 0-1, 1-4, 1-0)*
Germany - Sweden	2 - 3	(0-0, 1-1, 1-0, 0-1)

Gold Medal Games

Finland - USA	5 - 9	(0-5, 2-0, 3-3, 0-1)
Brazil - Great Britain	2 - 3	(0-0, 1-1, 1-0, 0-1)*

Final Standings Top Division:

1. USA
2. Finland
3. Sweden
4. Germany
5. Slovakia
6. Czech Republic
7. Austria
8. Slovenia

Final Standings Division I:

1. Great Britain
2. Brazil
3. Japan
4. Hungary
5. Australia
6. New Zealand
7. Belgium
8. Argentina

* denotes Division I games in later rounds

■ New Zealand, Belgium & Argentina are relegated and must go through qualification process for future tournaments.



RIVALRY BRAGGING RIGHTS: Sweden and Finland have perhaps the best rivalry in InLine Hockey going. The teams, have met the last two years in the gold medal game, but had to settle for a semi-final matchup this year. As evidenced by the photo above, it was Finland that earned the right to move onto the gold medal game.



ZACH OUT - POSS IN: Hans Zach (seen rejoicing on the ice with his team in the big photo) took the German national team from being ranked 20 in the world to number 8. But the German hockey fans, among the most passionate in the world, want more. Greg Poss (portrait) is the man designated to take them higher.



Photos: City-Press Berlin, Jukka Rautio (right)

Poss prepared for pole position

By Jenny Wiedeke

■ At the last World Championship, U.S. assistant coach Greg Poss had a gut feeling that Andy Roach would be the shootout hero for Team USA, so he convinced head coach Peter Laviolette to put the unknown defenseman in the shootout mix. Two game-winning shots and a bronze medal later, Poss' gut proved to be correct.

Now the German national team is banking on Poss' instincts--and coaching ability--to work similar magic. When former coach and German hockey icon Hans Zach resigned after the same World Championship, Poss got the phone call to take over the national program.

■ The decision to hire an American citizen may have initially surprised observers, but the surprise has turned to enthusiasm as Poss looks to take German ice hockey into a new era.

"I've spent my coaching career in Germany," Poss said between practices with his DEL team, Nurnberg Ice Tigers. "I understand the mentality and I know the players, at the same time I also bring a little from North America. Both have a lot of positives. I like to think it's the best of both worlds."

Poss joins a short list of foreign coaches of national hockey teams at the IIHF World Championship.

"I think that it can work very well," Poss said. "Ralph Kruger in Switzerland is a good example. The bottom line is as long as you're successful people don't mind."

■ After his playing career ended in the early 90s, Poss

headed to Europe where he has been coaching since 1992. For six seasons he was with Germany's Iserlohn Roosters before he was named the head coach of Nurnberg in April 2003, a position he will keep while he is the national coach.

"I think it will be an advantage to be coaching in the league," Poss said. "I'll be able to see almost our entire pool of players and make better selections."

In fact it was Poss' eagle eye and elephant memory that witnessed a spectacular move by Andy Roach during a DEL game, which led to his urging to use him in the now-famous shootouts.

■ Many say that the addition of Poss ushers in a new era for German hockey. While his predecessor, Zach was known for his intense coaching style and defensive play, Poss is expected to bring a new dimension to the German squad.

"Hans Zach did a great job getting the team from the B Pool to where they are today," Poss said. "Now for the program to go further, the players need to take more responsibility and not sit back and let things happen."

While Poss is a more offensive minded coach, he prefers not to dwell on the potential differences between himself and Zach.

"It's not necessarily about the change," Poss said. "Any system will work if the players do it."

While Germany is about on par with rivals, Switzerland, Austria, Latvia and Kazakhstan, Poss hopes to soon gain the advantage and thinks the key to a bright future lies

with the upcoming generation of players.

"We have a strong a competitive league here in Germany," Poss said. "Our players here have to be at their best to be able to play in the DEL. What the German players lack in size they can make up for with speed and tenacity."

■ At the same time, he realizes that Germany fell behind other hockey nations by not focusing on its youth development a decade ago.

"About 8-10 years ago we forgot about our youth programs," Poss said. "But we've made some great progress with our U16, U18 and U20 teams."

Just last year, both the German U18 and U20 teams earned promotions into the top division of the IIHF Championships. Germany has also started a national league for its U16 players.

Germany also made changes in its professional ranks in the last five years, cutting back on the number of imports on each team, hence freeing up more roster space for native Germans.

"When the DEL cut back on imports it created a good half-half balance. I think maybe eight imports would be ideal, but right now the system we have is working."

Ultimately, it is a long, but exciting road that awaits Poss and the German national team.

■ "You can't change everything in 1-2 years. It's a process, but we're on the right track."