

News Release



IIHF

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March 2005 - Vol 9 - No 1

The heart of winter brings hearty hockey



Photos: COURTESY OF SWISS & AUSTRIAN ICE HOCKEY ASSOCIATIONS
PACKING THEIR BAGS FOR TURIN: *The February international break brought good fortune for three national teams as Switzerland, Kazakhstan and Latvia earned berths to the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin after winning their Qualification Tournaments. To the left, the Swiss men's national team gathers to celebrate its Olympic trip, while the home fans in Klotten proudly display their red and white. Above, Kazakhstan was overjoyed to be the only underdog to win its qualification tournament. Kazakhstan entered as the 17th ranked team in the world, but will go to Turin as the 11th-seeded squad.*

The introduction of two new club championships to the IIHF's annual program proved to be a huge success. The men's and women's European Champions Cup are here to stay.

RENÉ FASEL EDITORIAL

■ ■ After watching Canada's impressive display in the gold medal game of the IIHF World U20 Championship in Grand Forks, USA, I travelled to St. Petersburg, Russia to witness the launch of Europe's prime club competition, the IIHF European Champions Cup. For the first time in five seasons we were able to crown a legitimate club champion from the old continent.

Russian champion Avangard Omsk defeated Finland's Kärpät Oulu in the final game in what surely must have been the best game between two European clubs for many years, in front of over 10,000 fans. Finals in championships are usually high calibre entertainment, so this was not really a surprise. What was even more satisfying was that everyone seemed to agree that the format – with the six best national team champions playing over a long-weekend – is perfect.

We will, possibly with some fine-tuning here and there, stick to this format and establish it.

■ ■ A few weeks earlier, the inaugural IIHF European Women Champions Cup was

held in Stockholm, Sweden with the top four club teams in Europe. The players themselves showed emphatically that women's hockey is ready for a championship like this. Before the last day of the tournament there was only a two-point difference between the first and last team, and three teams still had a chance to win it all.

AIK Stockholm became the first winners in championship, which should make European women's hockey better in the long-term. The upcoming IIHF World Women Championship in Sweden will be yet another test of international balance in the women's game. In order to make the world women championship an unpredictable affair, the European and Asian teams must continue improving.

Hayley Wickenheiser, who is featured on the last page in this issue, badly wants her sixth and Canada's ninth consecutive women's world championship, but she does not want a free bye to the gold medal game. Having said that, we must be reasonable in our expectations. Just look at the men's game when hockey started in the beginning of the century. It took many nations 20-30 years to catch Canada, and women's hockey on international level started in 1990.

■ ■ When this is written, we are one year away from the XX Olympic Winter Games in Turin. I am happy to report that everything in the northern Italian city, including the construction of the arenas, is on schedule.

We have just concluded the Final Olympic qualifications and I congratulate Switzerland, Latvia and Kazakhstan on earning the three last spots in the men's Olympic tournament.

Continued on next page

Continued from page one:

■ I witnessed the qualifying tournament in Klotten and received reports that there was excellent hockey as well being played in both Riga and Klagenfurt. One can just imagine what tournament we will have in Turin, when teams ranked between nine and eleven in the world were able put on such a great show.

During my recent travels in North America, media members constantly approached me with questions about the Olympics and the NHL participation. My answers were always the same: We will leave the door open for as long as it takes. As a matter of fact, we don't really need to know what players the teams plan to put into their jerseys until late October 2005, when the IOC wants extended preliminary rosters, so called long-lists.

I have also reiterated that the hockey world, fans and all the national associations, would appreciate if the NHL made their players available for the greatest sports show on earth. I feel that everyone, including the NHL, will be a winner if the players from the league will be able to represent their countries.

■ That doesn't mean that we will be losers if they don't take part. The great thing about the Olympics is that they are bigger than the athletes. With the expansion and development of international hockey, we have such a deep player pool that there is enough talent in the world to make this a great tournament with whoever is selected to represent their country.

The Olympics is about the jersey, not the name on the back of it.

René Fasel
IIHF President

Gustafsson after Nilsson

■ Sweden named IIHF Hall of Famer Bengt-Ake Gustafsson the new coach of its national team on Tuesday, January 24, filling a vacancy left open since Hardy Nilsson was fired in September following an early exit at the World Cup.

Gustafsson takes over a program which is number two in the IIHF World Ranking, but the Tre Kronor haven't won the World Championship since 1998. The two-year contract started February 14.

"It's a great honour to get to lead the Tre Kronor, Sweden's most beloved national team," Gustafsson said. "It's a great responsibility, I see it as the next step in my development."

He was the assistant coach for Switzerland between 1997 and 2001 as well as head coach of Swiss club SCL Tigers Langnau in the top league. Gustafsson has been coaching Färjestad of the Swedish Elite League since 2002.

He was inducted to the IIHF Hall of Fame in 2003.



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Seventh straight World Championship for Sindler



■ Referees Vladimir Sindler and Hannu Henriksson, who have worked the last two Gold Medal games of the IIHF World Championship, will be back in Austria 2005.

Photo: JUKKA RAUTIO, Europhoto

OFFICIALLY IN: Hannu Henriksson is one of ten IIHF referees who will work the games of the 2005 IIHF World Championship in Austria. Last year, Hannu led the Gold Medal game between Canada and Sweden.

The IIHF has nominated the following ten referees for the 69th IIHF World Championship in Vienna & Innsbruck, April 30 - May 15, 2005:



Thomas Andersson (SWE), Vyacheslav Bulanov (RUS), Hannu Henriksson (FIN), Rudolf Lauff (SVK), Rick Looker (USA), Rob Matsuoka (CAN), Milan Minar (CZE), Brent Reiber (SUI), Richard Schuetz (GER), Vladimir Sindler (CZE)

The IIHF has nominated the following 16 linesmen: Petr Blumel (CZE), Gregor Brodnicki (GER), Derek Doucette (CAN), Peter Feola (USA), Stefan Fonselius (FIN), Miroslav Halecky (SVK), Antti Hamalainen (FIN), Joacim Karlsson (SWE), Lars Kronborg (SWE), Dean Laschowski (CAN), Ales Lesnjak (SLO), Karol Popovic (SUI), Roman Pouzar (CZE), Sergei Shelyanin (RUS), Leo Takula (SWE) and Andrej Vasko (BLR).

■ Vladimir Sindler - who will be doing his seventh consecutive world championship - was assigned the final game of the 2003 IIHF World Championship in Helsinki, Finland between Sweden and Canada while Hannu Henriksson led the Sweden vs Canada final in Prague's Sazka Arena last spring. Vladimir Sindler has been selected for all men's senior IIHF World Championships since 1999. Vyacheslav Bulanov and Milan Minar officiated at the 2005 IIHF World U20 Championship in the USA.

Hannu Henriksson is the only one of the referees who also has IIHF World Championship participation as a player in his resume. Henriksson, a defenseman, played for Finland in the 1990 and the 1991 championships.

Looker and Schuetz are also returnees from Czech Republic 2004.

■ The Canadian-born (Lloydminster, Alberta) Reiber, Minar, Lauff and Bulanov will be doing their first top pool world championship as referees. Bulanov and Lauff had participated in the top pool earlier, but as linesmen. Rudolf Lauff was also a linesman at the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake.

Obituaries

Ken Farmer

Ken Farmer, a former president of the Canadian Olympic Association (1953-61) and member of Canada's silver-medal team at the 1936 Olympics in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, died in Montreal on January 12, 2005. The forward was also a star with the McGill University team and was later inducted into that institution's Sports Hall of Fame. He was, at age 92, the oldest surviving member of McGill University hockey teams. Farmer also played senior hockey for the Montreal Victorias. At Garmisch 1936, he had 10+4=14 in eight games.

Pavel Mracek

The long time IIHF Supplier Pool member Gufex Ceska Republika suffered a great loss when the founder and managing director Pavel Mracek passed away suddenly on December 13 at the age of 59 in his home in Ratibor near the city of Vsetin, Czech Republic. Pavel Mracek with his company Gufex joined the IIHF Supplier Pool in 1997 and was the official supplier of IIHF World Championship pucks ever since. He also was contracted by 1998 and 2002 Olympic Winter Games' Organising Committees in Nagano and Salt Lake City to supply the game pucks for men's and womens tournaments. Pavel Mracek is survived by his wife, daughter and grandchildren.



Pavel was Mr. Pucks

Frank Dempster

The British Ice Hockey community lost one of its elder statesman, Frank Dempster, on Christmas Eve at Ayr Hospital, Great Britain, after a brave and lengthy battle against illness. He was 67. Frank was a leading figure in the sport in Great Britain, wearing a multitude of hats for many years, and was highly respected both within those shores and at international level. Dempster was for many years the British delegate to the IIHF congresses.

Three more teams pack their bags for Turin

■ ■ Switzerland, Latvia and Kazakhstan won their respective Final Olympic Qualification groups and became the final three teams to earn berths to the XX Olympic Winter Games in Turin 2006.

It was a winner-take-all weekend for the 12 teams that were competing for the final three places in the 2006 Olympics. The three top-seeded teams played host to the Olympic Qualification Tournaments, which had four teams at each site, during the February international break. Only Austria failed to please its home fans after falling short in the Group C qualifier.

Group A:

Much to Switzerland's delight, the A group provided the least drama of the three qualification tournaments as the Swiss easily cruised to a 3-0-0 record and the Olympic berth on home ice in Kloten.

Sure there were some tense moments along the road for the Swiss, but nothing compared to the stomach-churning moments in Riga and Klagenfurt.

■ ■ Much of the drama was deflated after the first game when Denmark, expected to be Switzerland's biggest road block to the Olympics, faltered badly against Norway in its opening game, losing 4-0. Denmark's lackluster performance in its first game, including going 0-4 with the two-man advantage, made it clear that the Olympic berth was Switzerland's to lose.

The Swiss came out and dominated Japan in their first game, out-shooting the Japanese 54-10 and cruising to a 5-1 win. Switzerland was the only team to truly dominate the winless Japan squad. Denmark had to rely on two goals in the last five minutes to pull away for a 5-2 win, while Norway netted its game winner against the Japanese late in the third period in its tight 4-3 win.

■ ■ While Denmark was the disappointment of the Group A qualification, Norway was the pleasant surprise, easily playing well above their 21st IIHF World Ranking position.

Both Norway and Denmark were able to challenge Switzerland in the first half of their games. Each team was tied with the Swiss at the midway mark of their games. But ultimately, Switzerland, buoyed by its home crowd, was able to pull away in the latter parts of both games and earn the ninth-place seed at the 2006 Olympics. Switzerland topped both teams by two goals (3-1 vs. Norway and 4-2 vs. Denmark).

Switzerland will join its women's national team in Turin. The women's team also had to go through the qualification process in November and upset host China for their spot in the Olympics.

Group B:

After 360 minutes of hockey, the Olympic Qualification Tournament in Riga came down to the final five minutes, which saw host Latvia score an unprecedented three goals against Belarus in a span of 2:20 to earn a 5-4 win and a trip to the 2006 Olympics.

■ ■ The infamous game has earned the nickname "Miracle in Riga". Belarus was leading 4-2 with five minutes left, when Latvia exploded with their three goals, stunning Belarus into silence and whipping the crowd in Latvia into a frenzy.

Even though Latvia was the higher seeded team and the host going into the tournament, many expected Belarus to walk away with the trip to Turin. After all, it was

Belarus that provided one of the biggest upsets in recent Olympic history with their 4-3 win against Sweden in the quarterfinals at the 2002 Games in Salt Lake City. Observers anticipated Belarus to be able to provide similar magic in Riga. But instead it was the Latvian's turn to have their magical moment.

The B Group was the only one in which the team's final placement matched their World Ranking entering the tournament. Despite finishing in last place, 20th-ranked Poland competed well, losing two of its games by one goal and the third by only two. Slovenia can also walk away from the Qualification Tournament with its head held high.

Like Poland, the 16th-ranked Slovenians also suffered two one-goal losses, but had a slight meltdown against Belarus, falling 7-2. However, the future looks bright for the 16th-ranked Slovenian national team, as the squad has one of the brightest prospects of any non-Olympic team in 17-year-old sensation Anze Kopitar. As an under-aged player, Kopitar finished with a goal and an assist.

But the much-anticipated showdown came on the final day between Latvia and Belarus. While the comeback was dramatic, there were signs throughout the game that Latvia could pull out a win. The Latvians out-shot Belarus, 40-24, and Belarus was relying heavily on its power play, scoring three of its four goals with the extra man. But no one could have predicted the Latvian burst at the end of the game that proved to be the difference.

Group C:

■ ■ Austria was the only hosting nation of an Olympic qualifying tournament to fall short of a trip to Turin, but no one can say the Austrian's didn't have ample opportunity to earn the qualification.

On the second day of action, 12th-ranked Austria could have become the first team to earn the Olympic berth with a win against France, but instead the Austrian's struggled to score against standout French goaltender Cristobal Huet and managed to score just once, late in the game, to save the 1-1 tie.

The following day, the Austrians still could have sealed a tournament title with a convincing win against Ukraine, which held a 0-0-2 record. But again, the Austrians fell short, this time falling in a 4-3 loss against the eventual last-place finishers. Ukraine netted the game winner with less than seven minutes left in the contest.

■ ■ While all eyes were on Austria's self-destruction, 17th-ranked Kazakhstan was quietly making its way through the tournament and putting itself in position to earn the berth on the final day. Virtually everyone counted the Kazakhs out when they fell 4-0 against Austria on the opening day of action. But after earning a 2-1 win against Ukraine and following the tie between France and Austria, the door was opened for Kazakhstan to sneak through.

Despite being the lowest seeded team at the tournament, many thought it would be 18th-ranked France to earn the trip to the 2006 Olympics after Austria was out of contention. But France was in a winner-takes-all scenario against Kazakhstan in the final game, and despite playing valiantly could not muster any offense in a 1-0 loss. It was ultimately a first-period goal that did the French in, as Kazakhstan lunged to its precious 1-0 lead for the remaining 40 minutes and earned the third and final qualification spot.



Men's Olympic schedule Preliminary Round

Group A: CAN (1), CZE (4), FIN (5), GER (8), SUI (9), ITA (12)

Group B: SWE (2), SVK (3), USA (6), RUS (7), LAT (10), KAZ (11)

| Day | Date | Time | Score | Team 1 | Team 2 | Team 3 | Team 4 |
|-----------|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Wednesday | Feb 15 | 11:30 | 1 | KAZ | - | SWE | B |
| | | 13:00 | 2 | ITA | - | CAN | A |
| | | 15:30 | 3 | SUI | - | FIN | A |
| | | 17:00 | 4 | GER | - | CZE | A |
| | | 20:00 | 5 | RUS | - | SVK | B |
| Thursday | Feb 16 | 21:00 | 6 | LAT | - | USA | B |
| | | 12:00 | 7 | FIN | - | ITA | A |
| | | 13:00 | 8 | CZE | - | SUI | A |
| | | 16:00 | 9 | SWE | - | RUS | B |
| | | 17:00 | 10 | SVK | - | LAT | B |
| Saturday | Feb 18 | 20:00 | 11 | CAN | - | GER | A |
| | | 21:00 | 12 | USA | - | KAZ | B |
| | | 11:30 | 13 | KAZ | - | RUS | B |
| | | 13:00 | 14 | ITA | - | GER | A |
| | | 15:30 | 15 | CAN | - | SUI | A |
| Sunday | Feb 19 | 17:00 | 16 | SWE | - | LAT | B |
| | | 20:00 | 17 | SVK | - | USA | B |
| | | 21:00 | 18 | CZE | - | FIN | A |
| | | 12:00 | 19 | GER | - | SUI | A |
| | | 13:00 | 20 | RUS | - | LAT | B |
| Tuesday | Feb 21 | 16:00 | 21 | SVK | - | KAZ | B |
| | | 17:00 | 22 | USA | - | SWE | B |
| | | 20:00 | 23 | CZE | - | ITA | A |
| | | 21:00 | 24 | FIN | - | CAN | A |
| | | 11:30 | 25 | LAT | - | KAZ | B |
| Wednesday | Feb 22 | 12:30 | 26 | SUI | - | ITA | A |
| | | 15:30 | 27 | FIN | - | GER | A |
| | | 16:30 | 28 | CAN | - | CZE | A |
| | | 20:00 | 29 | SWE | - | SVK | B |
| | | 20:30 | 30 | USA | - | RUS | B |

Playoff Round

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|--------|-------|----|-------------------|---|------------|
| Wednesday | Feb 22 | 16:30 | 31 | QF A1 | - | B4* |
| | | 17:30 | 32 | QF A2 | - | B3* |
| | | 20:30 | 33 | QF B2 | - | A3* |
| | | 21:30 | 34 | QF B1 | - | A4* |
| Friday | Feb 24 | 16:30 | 35 | SF W (A1-B4) | - | W (B2-A3)* |
| | | 21:00 | 36 | SF W (B1-A4) | - | W (A2-B3)* |
| Saturday | Feb 25 | 20:30 | 37 | Bronze Medal Game | | |
| Sunday | Feb 26 | 14:00 | 38 | Gold Medal Game* | | |

QF and SF dates and venues subject to change. Pairings are set according to IIHF Sport Regulations.

Mission Accomplished: Canada

By Jenny Wiedeke

■ ■ ■ With 12 veterans and 11 first round NHL draft picks, Canada's mandate was clear, put an end to a seven-year drought and bring the U20 World Championship gold medal back home. And Canada did just that, overpowering every team it met en route to one of the most commanding performances in World Junior Championship history.

To say that Canada was good would be like saying North Dakota's 35-below temperatures were mild. Canada was better than good and North Dakota was beyond cold.

■ ■ ■ Many say it was the best Canadian U20 team ever assembled, which is quite a feat when looking at the nation's illustrious history at the tournament. The Canadians have earned 11 gold medals and 21 overall medals in the championship's 29-year history.

Consider that at this year's championship, Canada had three players reach the double-digit mark in points (Patrice Bergeron 13, Ryan Getzlaf 12, Jeff Carter 10). Or think about how Canada out-scored its opponents 41-6 and led in nearly every statistical category.

Still not convinced that this was arguably the best Canadian team ever? Just look at Canada's roster, which featured the 11 first-round NHL draft selections, and only two undrafted players, one of which has been billed as the next Wayne Gretzky (Sidney Crosby).

■ ■ ■ Looking back it seems almost foolish that people ever doubted this team's ability to get its silver monkey off its back and return Canada to the top of junior hockey world.

In its golden game, Canada not only took home its much-anticipated prize, but also earned some redemption after dominating Russia, a team that bested Canada in the gold medal twice in the last three years, 6-1.



PHOTOS: DAVE SANFORD

ROLE REVERSAL: After three straight years of silver heartbreak, Canada was finally all smiles after the gold medal game. It was the third time in four years that Canada and Russia met in the golden game. Above, Team Canada poses with their golden prize. Right, Russian the 2004 number two overall draft pick, Evgeni Malkin, and two of his Russian teammates, look on in despair as the Canadians earned bragging rights in the on-going rivalry.



MEDAL WORTHY: It took overtime, but the Czech Republic got its first medal in three years after dowing USA for bronze

■ ■ ■ Canada will have to wait until next year in Vancouver to try to exact revenge on the Americans, which edged Canada last year for the gold. The teams didn't meet this year as the American squad fell short of expectations, and their second consecutive medal, with a fourth-place showing on home ice. The teams are in the same preliminary round group in 2006.

Leading the Canadians was the one-two punch of Bergeron and young-sensation, Crosby. The pair was on the same line, along with Corey Perry, which combined for an overwhelming 29 points.

■ ■ ■ While at times the tournament felt predictable because of Canada's dominance, the remaining nine teams were actually equally matched, with no team coming out as a driving force.

There were the Americans beating Russia by one goal in the opening game, only to lose in the semi-final rematch by five. The same American team was stunned by newly promoted Belarus, 5-2. But soon after, Belarus lost against winless Germany, 3-4, in the Relegation Round.

■ ■ ■ Then there were the entertaining match-ups between Sweden and Finland, which even the best odds

maker in Las Vegas would have trouble predicting. In the Preliminary Round meeting, Sweden was in control, only to give up four, third-period goals, in a 5-4 devastation. Round two was the 5-6 placement game, which again went to the Finns in a 4-3 overtime decision.

And finally there were the Czechs, which earned their first medal since claiming back-to-back golds in 2000 and 2001. The win seemed unlikely after the U.S. tied the bronze game at two in the third period, sending the game into overtime, much to the delight of the pro-American crowd.

The Americans peppered Czech goaltender Marek Schwarz with shots in the extra period, only to have the Czechs score the game-winner on a breakaway, and their only shot of the overtime.

In a tournament that is normally headlined by goaltenders, Schwarz was the only netminder that stood out from pack. He was named to the directorate team along with Russian forward Alexander Ovechkin and Canadian defenseman Dion Phaneuf.

As good as Canada was this year, the team will have tough road next year when it hosts the championship in Vancouver. Canada will only be able to return a tournament-low, two players to its roster. And traditionally

Canadian Dream Team Conquers U20s



All-Time U20 Medal Standings

| Nat. | G | S | B | Tot. |
|------|----|---|---|------|
| RUS | 12 | 7 | 5 | 24 |
| CAN | 11 | 6 | 4 | 21 |
| CZE | 2 | 5 | 7 | 14 |
| FIN | 2 | 4 | 5 | 11 |
| SWE | 1 | 6 | 4 | 11 |
| USA | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| SVK | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| SUI | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |

This year's three medalists at the 2005 IIHF World U20 Championship are the three most dominant teams in the tournament's history.

Russia, Canada and the Czech Republic have earned 57 combined medals. Russia leads with 12 gold medals, but Canada is nipping at their heels with 11. Meanwhile, the Czechs' bronze this year was their seventh third-place finish. Getting to the medal podium is no easy task at the U20s, in the 28-year history, only eight nations have earned a medal.



after a team wins gold, there is a let-down year as the country must replenish its stock. Just ask Canada, which after winning the gold in 1997, slipped to eighth the next year.

But for at least the next 365 days, the Canadian team, and its entire junior hockey-crazed nation can bask in the glory of a job well done -- make that a job perfectly done.

Just how much does Canada love Junior Hockey?

■ ■ Canada's gold-medal win over Russia was watched by an average audience of 3.23 million viewers on TSN, the second highest rating in the channel's 20-year history. Canada's six games averaging 1.6 million viewers. The 2003 tourney had 1.5 million.

■ ■ Canadians made up a good portion of the crowd in Grand Forks. Most made a hearty drive from Winnipeg to watch the games, many times on snowy roads. During one of the Canadian games, it was announced that the main highway back into Canada had been closed due to poor conditions. The Canadian crowd reaction when they found out they were stranded in North Dakota for the night due to a snow story was none other than a hearty cheer.

■ ■ Organizers of next year's IIHF World U20 Championship in Vancouver are already expecting to have sell out crowds for nearly every game. Round Robin games will be also be played in Kamloops, Kelowna.

**U20 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
PLAYER AWARDS**



Marek Schwarz - CZE
Best goaltender & All-Star

Schwarz was the standout goaltender of the tournament, with a championship best .925 saves percentage and one shutout. Thanks to Schwarz, only Canada allowed fewer goals per game.



Dion Phaneuf - CAN
Best defenseman & All-Star

On a loaded Canadian team, Phaneuf emerged as the heart of a defense that allowed only seven goals in six games. Phaneuf was also an offensive threat, totaling six points for the Canadians.



Ryan Suter - USA
Defensive All-Star

Although the Americans failed to get a medal, Suter was solid in his third U20 appearance. The U.S. captain closed his junior career with eight points, which led all defensemen in scoring.



Alexander Ovechkin - RUS
Best forward & All-Star

Ovechkin lived up to his number-one draft status providing the offensive punch for the silver medalists. He scored seven of his team's 29 goals and finished as the third-overall point getter.



Patrice Bergeron - CAN
Forward All-Star & MVP

Bergeron's line was unstoppable at the championship and was one reason why the Canadians scored 41 goals in six games. Bergeron led the tournament in scoring with five goals and eight assists.



Jeff Carter - CAN
Forward All-Star

While Bergeron led the tournament in points, it was Carter that paced the Canadians with seven goals. Carter closed out his U20 career with 10 points in the gold-medal effort.



Europe stands on guard



SUDDEN DEATH - AND VICTORY: Czech star Jaromir Jagr scores the European Champions Cup winning goal (2-1) for Avangard Omsk at 14:38 of overtime. Kärpät Oulu's excellent goaltender Mikko Lehtonen is the sulking Kärpät defenseman as he was in no position to stop the pass from Maxim Sushinsky, the tournament MVP. Jagr, who also assisted on the 1-1-goal, can now

For the first time since 2000, a Russian team can claim European club supremacy as Avangard Omsk didn't disappoint the fans in St. Petersburg.

■ Five years ago, Metallurg Magnitogorsk became the last winner of the now defunct European Hockey League and on January 16, 2005, Avangard Omsk won the gold medal at the inaugural IIHF European Champions Cup,

10,002 fans at the Ice Palace in St. Petersburg, Russia saw the best game between two European clubs for a long time as Avangard Omsk defeated the Finnish champion Kärpät Oulu after a final which left many spectators breathless.

Big players often decide the outcome of big games and Jaromir Jagr again proved that theory by assisting to Avangard's equalizer nine minutes before the end and eventually scoring the winning goal at 14:38 of overtime. After the game, Jagr credited the goal to teammate Maxim Sushinsky who gave Jagr the perfect pass for the one-timer.

■ Maxim Sushinsky, who must rank among the top three skaters in the world, was the undisputed Most Valuable Player of the first-ever IIHF European Champions Cup. Sushinsky scored three goals and added four assists in the three games that Avangard played. His performance against HV71 Jönköping one day earlier will not be forgotten anytime soon. The speedy winger had three goals and two assists when Avangard destroyed the Swedish champion, 9-0.

Although Avangard Omsk was the best and most exciting team of the championship, Kärpät Oulu was the

biggest surprise. Few knew where to rank the Finnish champion among the top six clubs of Europe, but Kärpät proved to be an extremely well-organized team. They actually could have run away from St. Petersburg with an upset victory had Eero Somervuori, the reliable scorer, converted on a great chance from close range only two minutes before Jagr pulled down the curtain.

■ The European Champions Cup may prove to have been an international coming out party for at least three fairly unknown Kärpät players. Goaltender Niklas Bäckström had a superb final game, defenseman Josef Boumedienne earned an All Star nomination and Best Defenseman honours while 21-year old forward Jussi Jokinen also had a very strong tournament with two goals and two assists. Jokinen also earned enough media votes to make the All Star team, joining Sushinsky and Andrei Kovalenko on the forward line.

Especially Boumedienne, who holds both Swedish and Finnish passports, impressed with logging serious ice time while rarely making a mistake.

Kärpät's key game in the group was against Czech Republic's HC Hame Zlin, a duel they won with surprising ease, 4-1. They clinched the final spot after another impressive workmanlike effort, a 6-3 decision against the Frankfurt Lions.

Avangard soldiered on in their group with even more impressive results: 6-1 against Dukla Trencin from Slovakia and the 9-0 rout of HV71.

■ After many trials and errors, the IIHF, together with the national associations and the respective leagues, seems to have found what everyone agrees is the per-

fect format for a European club championship. The format is simple and holds high prestige. The champions from the six top European nations spend a long-weekend in a major city to determine which is the best club team on the continent.

The compact format of the ECC fits nicely with the top leagues and their heavy schedules. All the best Euro leagues today work a 50-60 game schedule and there are simply no dates for an on-going league-style championship.

■ As IIHF President René Fasel has earlier expressed, there is now only one international title left to be determined: the one for global club supremacy. A match-up which would satisfy the curiosity of hockey fans from all over the world -- how would the winners of the European Champions Cup do against the Stanley Cup Champions?

Media All Star Team

- Goaltender:** Norm Maracle, Avangard
- Defenseman:** Oleg Tverdovsky, Avangard
- Defenseman:** Josef Boumedienne, Kärpät
- Forward:** Maxim Sushinsky, Avangard
- Forward:** Andrei Kovalenko, Avangard
- Forward:** Jussi Jokinen, Kärpät
- MVP::** Maxim Sushinsky, Avangard

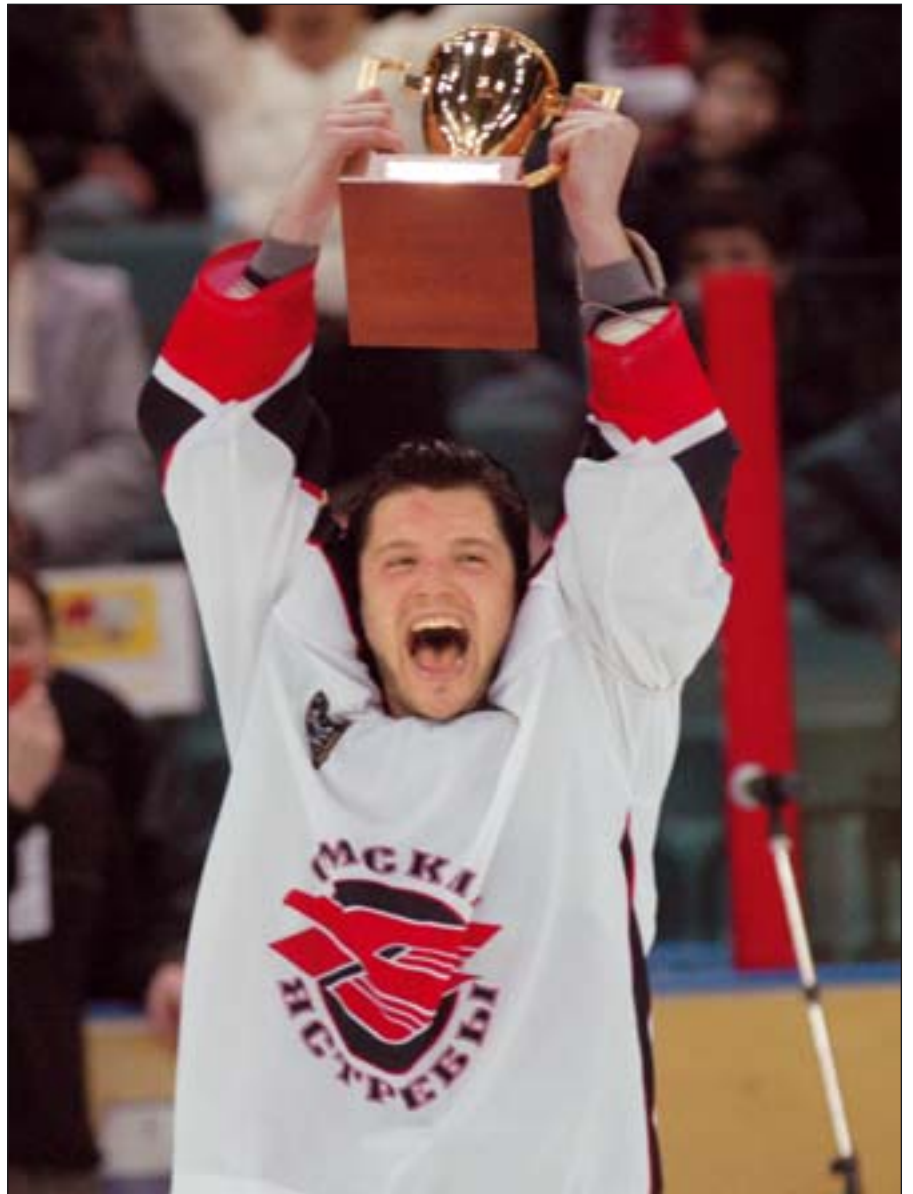
Directorate Awards

- Best Goaltender:** Norm Maracle, Avangard
- Best Defenseman:** Josef Boumedienne, Kärpät
- Best Forward:** Maxim Sushinsky, Avangard

for the champs of Avangard



ECC Photos: VYACHESLAV EVDOKIMOV
Goalie Niklas Bäckström had no chance on the low drive from the slot. He added the ECC title to his vast prize collection.



OLEG KNOWS WINNING: Oleg Tverdovsky, the captain of Avangard Omsk, hoists the ECC trophy following the overtime thriller against Kärpät. Tverdovsky, who also won the Stanley Cup in 2003 with the New Jersey Devils, is now a club champion on both sides of the Atlantic. Below, the traditional winners' team shot.

Observers' ideas about Euro leagues confirmed at ECC

■ The final standing in the IIHF European Champions Cup corresponds almost exactly with the general perception among hockey observers about the strength of the European leagues. Given the growing prestige of the Russian league, and also home-ice advantage in St. Petersburg, it was not exactly a shocker that Avangard won the gold medal. The Finnish teams have always been strong in European club competitions so Kärpät's second-place finish in the ECC is also in line with expectations.

■ A fourth place finish for HV71 of the Swedish league is somewhat lower compared with the common belief of the strength of the Elitserien. But HV's 9-0 loss to Avangard should be attributed more to the struggles of that particular club which was in ninth spot in the 12-team league at the time of the ECC. HV71 also missed six regulars in St. Petersburg, including their two Canadian imports.

■ HC Hame Zlin from Czech Republic was third, the Frankfurt Lions of the German DEL came in fifth while Dukla Trencin, Slovakia, was sixth.

IIHF European Champions Cup, Final standing

1. Avangard Omsk (RUS)
2. Kärpät Oulu (FIN)
3. HC Hame Zlin (CZE)
4. HV71 Jönköping (SWE)
5. Frankfurt Lions (GER)
6. Dukla Trencin (SVK)



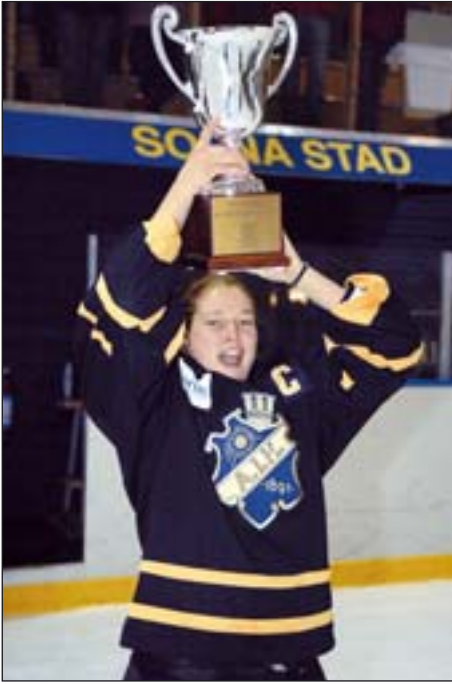


Photo: OVE LINDSTRÖM

TOP OF EUROPE: AIK Stockholm team captain Emelie Berggren hoists proof of her team's supremacy. Now, the girls are the most successful team within the AIK club.

Stockholm's AIK are historic champions

■ While the AIK men's team is going through some hard times in the lower echelons of the Swedish league system, the women of the proud Stockholm club can call themselves Champions of Europe. AIK won the "Final Four" of the inaugural 2005 IIHF European Women Champions Cup by defeating Finland's Espoo Blues and the Swiss champion EV Zug and playing Russia's SKIF Moscow to draw.

■ The four-team round robin championship took place just before Christmas in Ritorps Ishall, outside of Stockholm, Sweden. It was the first time an official European club competition for women was played which makes AIK historic champions.

day not in position to win it all, finished second. This says something about the parity of this championship.

At the end, AIK was the convincing winner as the only team without any loss and the 2-2 tie against the Russian club as the only "hiccup". The Swedish girls also dominated the individual awards. 15-year old forward Pernilla Winberg was led all players in scoring with six goals and two assists for eight points in three games, while teammate Danijela Rundqvist (second in scoring with four goals and one assist) earned the Best Forward award.

AIK goaltender Kim Martin was named Best Goaltender with a 93.83 SVS percentage. The trio are all core players of the Swedish national team and they will of course try to carry this success over to the upcoming 2005 IIHF World Women Championship which will be played in Linköping and Norrköping, Sweden (April 2-9).

■ The surprise team of the "Final Four" was Swiss EV Zug who, in the very first game of the tournament, defeated Espoo Blues, 3-2. A major upset considering that Finland is ranked number three in the world behind Canada and the U.S., while Switzerland is not even among the top ten nations participating in the world women's championship later this spring. Still, this has been a very successful winter for Swiss women's hockey with the qualification to the 2006 Olympics in Turin and Zug's bronze medal in Stockholm.

Espoo Blues likely expected more than the fourth place, but a consolation was Päivi Halonen being named tournament's Best Defenseman.



■ The 2005 IIHF European Women Champions Cup included national champion teams from ten European countries. SKIF Moscow and EV Zug qualified through the eight-team Preliminary Round in October, while Espoo Blues and AIK were seeded directly to the Final Round, because of their nations' position in the IIHF World Ranking.

"The plan for 2006 is to expand with three more national champion teams which will give us twelve teams divided in three preliminary groups", says Rob van Rijswijk. "The defending champion AIK will be seeded directly to the Final Round and they will be joined by the group winners from the preliminaries."

See all results on pages 10-11.

Rob van Rijswijk, IIHF's Director of Events and also in charge of IIHF's women's program, was very satisfied with the first-ever women's ECC. "The enthusiasm of the participating clubs was unparalleled as they were pioneers," said van Rijswijk. "The tournament itself was a success as virtually every game was competitive. Usually, when something is played for the first time you get lopsided scores as some teams are far ahead of the others. This wasn't the case in Stockholm."

■ Indeed. Before the final round of games on the last day, three teams (AIK, Espoo and Zug) had a chance for the gold medal. SKIF Moscow, the only team before the last

For Slovaks the Continental Cup is a matter of pride

■ When it comes to the IIHF Continental Cup, few do it better than the teams from the Slovak league. HKm Zvolen became the third Slovak team (after Kosice in 1998 and Slovan Bratislava in 2004) to capture the gigantic Continental Cup plate. And they did by defeating what many observers say is the best team in Europe right now, Dynamo Moscow from Russia, 2-1.

The final game in the "Final Four", which also included Hungarian champion and host Alba Volan and Italian champion Milano Vipers, carried extra importance since both Zvolen and Dynamo were comfortably leading their respective national leagues as they travelled to friendly Szekesfehervar in Hungary for the Continental Cup.



Photo: ANDRAS WIRTH

CONTINENTAL KINGS: Few believed that HKm Zvolen could upset mighty Dynamo Moscow in the Continental Cup in Szekesfehervar, Hungary. But this picture proves that they did.

two timely goals at the end of each of the two first periods.

Handzus scored goals at 19:46 of the first period and at 19:51 of the second and the Dynamos could not recover from the one-two punch. A second period goal by Vadim Shakhrychuk was all that Dynamo could muster. Although the Russian team was hurt by the absence of teen-age star Alexander Ovechkin, who was hurt during the U20 final in Grand Forks, and by the no-show of

among others, three locked-out NHLers, Rob di Maio, Craig Adams and Swede Niklas Sundström.

Although the lower-ranked hockey nations are catching up, the Continental Cup showed that there is still a considerable gap between the clubs from top seven European leagues and the rest. Zvolen defeated Milano 6-1 and Alba Volan 2-1, while Dynamo scored 5-3 and 8-0 wins against the same teams.



Czech start Martin Havlat, who decided to return to the Czech Republic just one day earlier.

Besides Handzus, the other Zvolen hero was goalie Karol Krizan who stopped 22 out of 23 shots.

■ The game for the bronze also ended with a minor surprise as host club Alba Volan edged the Milano Vipers 2-1. The club from Szekesfehervar is in many part synonymous with the Hungarian national team, but the Italian champion had,

IIHF Plugging away at Hydra computer system

■ At last year's World Championship, the IIHF Hydra computer statistics system made its grand debut. One year later, the system has been incorporated into every IIHF World Championship event, and all eyes are looking forward to the program's biggest test yet—the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Torino.

Providing the official computer statistics system for the Olympics is no easy task, and it is the first time that the IIHF is providing the software to the Torino Organizing Committee (TOROC). Continual testing has been underway through much of the winter to ensure that many of the new features, including time on ice of each player at the Olympics, in Hydra will be ready when the World's best athletes converge on Italy in one year.

■ Helping the IIHF make the Hydra System ready are two newly appointed result managers, Tassos Koutsogiannis and Corrado Barbero. The pair are wor-

king with the IIHF and TOROC around the clock as the games approach to ensure the ice hockey computer system runs smoothly through both the Women's and Men's hockey games.

Koutsogiannis worked with the Athens 2004 Olympics as a Results Manager. He and Barbero will be working in a result room that contains the computer systems of virtually every other sport at the Olympic Games.

■ But until all the sports are up and running, the IIHF and its result managers will be busy getting ahead of the game. From February 4-9, there was a Virtual Test Event that included 60 games. The test simulated what the system will face during the Olympics and gave the system operators a good idea of the strengths and necessary improvements that need to be made in the next 12 months. November 7-12 is a date the results managers are eyeing carefully as this is the test event dates for TOROC.

Of course, the Hydra System will continue to be used at all upcoming IIHF World Championship events, and will continue to incorporate more capabilities as Torino approaches.



Men & Machines: New IIHF result managers Tassos Koutsogiannis and Corrado Barbero will be responsible for all the ice hockey results in Torino. Above is a glimpse of their computer room in Italy.



DUMP & CHASE FROM THE WORLD OF HOCKEY

■ The German Ice Hockey Museum Hall of Fame in Augsburg has opened a separate Olympic section. The showcase of the Olympic exhibition is the bronze medal won by Germany in Lake Placid in 1932 and the medal won by West Germany in Innsbruck in 1976. Also on display are artefacts from the private collection of the former general secretary of the German Ice Hockey Association Walter Hussmann as well as game worn jerseys of various German Olympic teams and pucks from ten Olympic hockey tournaments.

The museum in Augsburg has to carry its own costs. It is supported by the city of Augsburg, which rents the facilities for free. The museum is run as a non-profit society, chaired by the journalist and hockey historian Mr. Horst Eckert.

The website of the museum is: www.eishockeymuseum.de and the e-mail: Eishockeymuseum@t-online.de

■ Russia defended its Winter Universiade title in

ice hockey in Innsbruck at the 22nd Winter Universiade Games. The Russians faced-off against the Czech Republic in the gold medal game and came away with a 4-1 win. Meanwhile, Finland walked away with the bronze medal after surviving a late comeback from host Austria in a 5-4 overtime win.

■ Canadian hockey pioneer Judge Joe Kane passed away on January 11. His contributions to the sport in Canada and internationally were far reaching - from coaching house league to becoming the President of the Central Pro League and onto being a Director with Hockey Canada and eventually Arbitrator with the NHL.

In addition to his many domestic hockey accomplishments (as a coach, player and director) Joe had a significant history of international hockey accomplishments. He was a part of the 1976, 1981, 1984 and 1987 Canada Cups, the 1984 - Olympic Winter Games, Sarajevo and 1988 - Olympic Winter Games, Calgary, and the 1983-1989 World Hockey Championships.

Coaches, start your engines

This spring, coaches from around the world will have the chance to be coached.

■ The International Ice Hockey Federation has two Coaching Symposiums on its schedule, one, which will be held in conjunction with the 2005 IIHF Women's World Championship, and another, which will be held with the 2005 IIHF Men's World Championship.

The International Women's Coaching Symposium will be held in Linköping, Sweden April 7-9. The symposium will include lectures, panel discussions and a dialogue conducted by a moderator. The Swedish organizers have already had strong interest from international coaches. For registration information and additional details about the symposium, please email haraldsson@swe-hockey.se

The IIHF Men's International Coaching Symposium has become one of the most popular coaching events of the year. This year, the symposium will be held from May 5-8 in Vienna, and will take place at the same time as the Men's World Championship. Participants will take part in lectures and attend World Championship games in Vienna. The symposium will give international coaches the latest technical, practical and motivational information to help them get the most out of their athletes. New on this year's agenda is a Game Analysis focus. For more information on the symposium, please email: stucki@iihf.com for registration details.

■ Both upcoming IIHF Coaching symposiums are operated by the IIHF Coaching Committee, together with the local championship organizer.

Every year, the IIHF aims to get a good combination of coaches its men's symposium from all areas of hockey including the NHL, junior and various international pre-professional leagues. The women's symposium will follow a similar curriculum, with an emphasis on details that are specific and unique to the women's game.

■ A third International Coaching Symposium was recently completed in North Dakota as part of the IIHF World U20 Championship. The organizers were pleased with the success of the symposium, which had 70 coaches in attendance. Several top hockey minds delivered lectures to the participants, including NHL head coaches Ed Olczyk, Mike Sullivan and Barry Smith, former NHL coach Bryan Trottier and international coaches Ludek Bukac and Tommy Boustedt.

RESULTS SUMMARY

IIHF World U20 Championship

Grand Forks & Thief River Falls, USA Dec. 25 - Jan. 4, 2005

Preliminary Round

| Group A | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------------|--|
| Belarus - Czech Republic | 2 - 7 | (0-1, 1-2, 1-4) | |
| Russia - United States | 4 - 5 | (3-3, 1-2, 0-0) | |
| Switzerland - Belarus | 5 - 0 | (1-0, 3-0, 1-0) | |
| Czech Republic - Russia | 1 - 4 | (0-2, 1-1, 0-1) | |
| United States - Switzerland | 6 - 4 | (1-0, 1-0, 4-4) | |
| Russia - Belarus | 7 - 2 | (3-0, 1-1, 3-1) | |
| Czech Republic - Switzerland | 5 - 2 | (1-0, 2-1, 2-1) | |
| Belarus - United States | 5 - 3 | (2-1, 3-1, 0-1) | |
| Switzerland - Russia | 1 - 6 | (0-2, 1-2, 0-2) | |
| United States - Czech Rep. | 1 - 3 | (0-1, 1-1, 0-1) | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|---|
| Russia | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 21 | - | 9 | 6 |
| Czech Republic | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 16 | - | 9 | 6 |
| United States | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 15 | - | 16 | 4 |
| Switzerland | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 12 | - | 17 | 2 |
| Belarus | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 9 | - | 22 | 2 |

Russia qualified directly to semi-final

| Group B | | | |
|--------------------|-------|-----------------|--|
| Slovakia - Canada | 3 - 7 | (0-2, 2-3, 1-2) | |
| Germany - Finland | 1 - 4 | (0-1, 0-2, 1-1) | |
| Sweden - Germany | 6 - 0 | (1-0, 1-0, 4-0) | |
| Canada - Sweden | 8 - 1 | (1-1, 4-0, 3-0) | |
| Finland - Slovakia | 0 - 2 | (0-0, 0-1, 0-1) | |
| Germany - Canada | 0 - 9 | (0-4, 0-2, 0-3) | |
| Finland - Sweden | 5 - 4 | (0-2, 1-2, 4-0) | |
| Slovakia - Germany | 5 - 0 | (3-0, 0-0, 2-0) | |
| Canada - Finland | 8 - 1 | (2-0, 5-0, 1-1) | |
| Sweden - Slovakia | 3 - 0 | (1-0, 2-0, 0-0) | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|---|
| Canada | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 32 | - | 5 | 8 |
| Sweden | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 14 | - | 13 | 4 |
| Finland | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 10 | - | 15 | 4 |
| Slovakia | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 10 | - | 10 | 4 |
| Germany | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | - | 24 | 0 |

Canada qualified directly to semi-final

Relegation Round

| | | |
|------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Switzerland - Belarus | 5 - 0 | (1-0, 3-0, 1-0) |
| Slovakia - Germany | 5 - 0 | (3-0, 0-0, 2-0) |
| Switzerland - Germany | 5 - 0 | (0-0, 3-0, 2-0) |
| Slovakia - Belarus | 2 - 1 | (0-0, 0-1, 2-0) |
| Belarus - Germany | 3 - 4 | (2-1, 1-1, 0-2) |
| Slovakia - Switzerland | 3 - 2 | (2-0, 0-1, 1-1) |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|---|
| Slovakia | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 10 | - | 3 | 6 |
| Switzerland | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 12 | - | 3 | 4 |
| Germany | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 | - | 13 | 2 |
| Belarus | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | - | 11 | 0 |

Germany and Belarus relegated to 2006 Division I U20 Championship

Playoff Round

| | | | |
|----------------------|-------|-------------------------------|--------|
| Czech Rep. - Finland | 3 - 0 | (0-0, 1-0, 2-0) | QF |
| Sweden - USA | 2 - 8 | (1-1, 1-2, 0-5) | QF |
| Canada - Czech Rep. | 3 - 1 | (1-0, 2-0, 0-1) | SF |
| USA - Russia | 2 - 7 | (2-3, 0-0, 0-4) | SF |
| Sweden - Finland | 3 - 4 | (1-1, 1-0, 1-2, 0-1)5/6 place | |
| Czech Rep. - USA | 3 - 2 | (1-1, 1-1, 0-0, 1-0) | Bronze |
| Canada - Russia | 6 - 1 | (2-1, 4-0, 0-0) | Gold |

Individual Scoring

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. BERGERON, Patrice | CAN | 6 | 5 | 8 | 13 |
| 2. GETZLAF, Ryan | CAN | 6 | 3 | 9 | 12 |
| 3. OVECHKIN, Alexander | RUS | 6 | 7 | 4 | 11 |
| 4. CARTER, Jeff | CAN | 6 | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| 6. OLESZ, Rostislav | CZE | 7 | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| 6. MALKIN, Evgeni | RUS | 6 | 3 | 7 | 10 |
| 7. CROSBY, Sidney | CAN | 6 | 6 | 3 | 9 |
| 8. STAFFORD, Drew | USA | 7 | 5 | 4 | 9 |
| 9. SALMONSSON, Johannes | SWE | 6 | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| 9. VRANA, Petr | CZE | 6 | 5 | 3 | 8 |

Final Ranking

1. CAN, 2. RUS, 3. CZE, 4. USA, 5. FIN, 6. SWE, 7. SVK, 8. SUI, 9. GER, 10. GER

2006 IIHF World U20 Championship Groups

| Group A | Group B |
|---------------|----------------|
| Canada | Russia |
| United States | Czech Republic |
| Finland | Sweden |
| Switzerland | Slovakia |
| Norway | Latvia |

Directorate Awards

Best Goaltender: Marek Schwarz, CZE
 Best Defenseman: Dion Phaneuf, CAN
 Best Forward: Alexander Ovechkin, RUS
 MVP: Patrice Bergeron, CAN

Media All-Star Team:

Goaltender: Marek Schwarz, CZE
 Defenseman: Ryan Suter, USA
 Defenseman: Dion Phaneuf, CAN
 Forward: Jeff Carter, CAN
 Forward: Patrice Bergeron, CAN
 Forward: Alexander Ovechkin, RUS

IIHF World U20 Championship Div. I, Gr. A

Sheffield, Great Britain Dec. 13-19, 2004

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Kazakhstan - France | 5 - 3 | (0-0, 2-2, 3-1) |
| Italy - Norway | 2 - 4 | (1-2, 1-2, 0-0) |
| Great Britain - Austria | 0 - 1 | (0-0, 0-0, 0-1) |
| Norway - Kazakhstan | 5 - 3 | (4-1, 0-1, 1-1) |
| Austria - Italy | 5 - 1 | (2-0, 1-0, 2-1) |
| France - Great Britain | 5 - 3 | (3-1, 0-1, 2-1) |
| Austria - Kazakhstan | 3 - 8 | (1-5, 0-2, 2-1) |
| Norway - France | 5 - 4 | (2-0, 2-3, 1-1) |
| Great Britain - Italy | 0 - 3 | (0-2, 0-0, 0-1) |
| France - Austria | 2 - 3 | (0-2, 1-1, 1-0) |
| Italy - Kazakhstan | 2 - 3 | (1-0, 1-1, 0-2) |
| Norway - Great Britain | 10 - 3 | (4-1, 2-1, 4-1) |
| France - Italy | 4 - 3 | (1-2, 1-1, 2-0) |
| Austria - Norway | 0 - 5 | (0-3, 0-1, 0-1) |
| Kazakhstan - Great Britain | 10 - 2 | (1-0, 6-0, 3-2) |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|----|
| Norway | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 29 | - | 12 | 10 |
| Kazakhstan | 5 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 29 | - | 15 | 8 |
| Austria | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 12 | - | 16 | 6 |
| France | 5 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 18 | - | 19 | 4 |
| Italy | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 11 | - | 16 | 2 |
| Great Britain | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 8 | - | 29 | 0 |

Norway promoted to 2006 IIHF World U20 Championship
 Great Britain Relegated to 2006 IIHF World U20 Championship Div. II

IIHF World U20 Championship Div. I, Gr. B

Narva, Estonia Dec. 13-19, 2004

| | | |
|--------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Latvia - Denmark | 4 - 2 | (0-0, 3-1, 1-1) |
| Poland - Ukraine | 2 - 2 | (0-1, 1-1, 1-0) |
| Estonia - Slovenia | 0 - 9 | (0-0, 0-5, 0-4) |
| Slovenia - Poland | 4 - 1 | (2-0, 1-0, 1-1) |
| Ukraine - Latvia | 1 - 2 | (0-0, 1-1, 0-1) |
| Denmark - Estonia | 8 - 1 | (1-1, 2-0, 5-0) |
| Poland - Latvia | 2 - 2 | (1-1, 0-1, 1-0) |
| Denmark - Slovenia | 3 - 2 | (1-0, 2-1, 0-1) |
| Ukraine - Estonia | 5 - 1 | (2-0, 1-1, 2-0) |
| Slovenia - Ukraine | 8 - 2 | (3-0, 4-0, 1-2) |
| Denmark - Poland | 3 - 5 | (1-1, 1-1, 1-3) |
| Latvia - Estonia | 14 - 2 | (7-1, 3-1, 4-0) |
| Ukraine - Denmark | 1 - 6 | (1-3, 0-0, 0-3) |
| Slovenia - Latvia | 5 - 6 | (0-2, 3-1, 2-3) |
| Estonia - Poland | 2 - 5 | (0-1, 2-1, 0-3) |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|---|
| Latvia | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 28 | - | 12 | 8 |
| Slovenia | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 28 | - | 12 | 6 |
| Denmark | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 22 | - | 13 | 6 |
| Poland | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 15 | - | 13 | 6 |
| Ukraine | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 11 | - | 19 | 3 |
| Estonia | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 6 | - | 41 | 0 |

Latvia promoted to 2006 IIHF World U20 Championship
 Estonia Relegated to 2006 IIHF World U20 Championship Div. II

IIHF World U20 Championship Div. II, Gr. A

Bucharest, Romania Jan. 3-9, 2005

| | | |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Lithuania - Netherlands | 2 - 7 | (2-3, 0-2, 0-2) |
| China - Japan | 0 - 5 | (0-1, 0-2, 0-2) |
| Serbia & Mont. - Romania | 3 - 6 | (1-0, 1-3, 1-3) |
| Netherlands - China | 3 - 2 | (2-1, 0-1, 1-0) |
| Japan - Serbia & Mont. | 12 - 1 | (3-0, 5-0, 4-1) |
| Romania - Lithuania | 9 - 1 | (5-0, 1-0, 3-1) |
| Japan - Lithuania | 9 - 0 | (2-0, 5-0, 2-0) |
| China - Serbia & Mont. | 4 - 3 | (1-0, 2-1, 1-2) |
| Romania - Netherlands | 5 - 4 | (3-0, 2-1, 0-3) |
| Serbia & Mont. - Lithuania | 4 - 1 | (1-0, 2-0, 1-1) |
| Netherlands - Japan | 2 - 5 | (1-1, 1-2, 0-2) |
| Romania - China | 2 - 4 | (1-1, 0-1, 1-2) |
| Lithuania - China | 1 - 6 | (1-2, 0-2, 0-2) |
| Netherlands - Serbia & Mont. | 13 - 0 | (5-0, 5-0, 3-0) |
| Japan - Romania | 1 - 1 | (1-0, 0-0, 0-1) |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|---|
| Japan | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 32 | - | 4 | 9 |
| Romania | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 23 | - | 13 | 7 |
| Netherlands | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 29 | - | 14 | 6 |
| China | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 16 | - | 14 | 6 |
| Serbia & Mont. | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 11 | - | 36 | 2 |
| Lithuania | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 5 | - | 25 | 0 |

Japan promoted to 2006 IIHF World U20 Championship Div. I
 Lithuania Relegated to 2006 IIHF World U20 Championship Div. III

IIHF World U20 Championship Div. II, Gr. B

Puigcerda, Spain Dec. 13-19, 2004

| | | |
|---------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Australia - Hungary | 4 - 14 | (2-8, 1-1, 1-5) |
| Belgium - Croatia | 2 - 9 | (1-2, 1-5, 0-2) |
| Spain - Korea | 1 - 15 | (0-6, 0-5, 1-4) |
| Korea - Belgium | 10 - 5 | (4-2, 3-2, 3-1) |
| Croatia - Australia | 8 - 5 | (4-1, 2-3, 2-1) |
| Hungary - Spain | 7 - 2 | (2-2, 1-0, 4-0) |
| Korea - Croatia | 9 - 1 | (2-1, 3-0, 4-0) |
| Hungary - Belgium | 11 - 0 | (4-0, 6-0, 1-0) |
| Australia - Spain | 2 - 4 | (0-2, 1-1, 1-1) |
| Croatia - Hungary | 3 - 4 | (2-1, 0-1, 1-2) |
| Korea - Australia | 11 - 0 | (1-0, 7-0, 3-0) |
| Spain - Belgium | 6 - 2 | (0-0, 4-0, 2-2) |
| Hungary - Korea | 5 - 1 | (1-0, 3-1, 1-0) |
| Belgium - Australia | 3 - 5 | (1-2, 1-0, 1-3) |
| Croatia - Spain | 6 - 1 | (3-0, 1-1, 2-0) |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|----|
| Hungary | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 41 | - | 10 | 10 |
| Korea | 5 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 46 | - | 12 | 8 |
| Croatia | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 27 | - | 21 | 6 |
| Spain | 5 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 14 | - | 32 | 4 |
| Australia | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 16 | - | 40 | 2 |
| Belgium | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 12 | - | 41 | 0 |

Hungary promoted to 2006 IIHF World U20 Championship Div. I
 Belgium Relegated to 2006 IIHF World U20 Championship Div. III

IIHF World U20 Championship Div. III

Mexico City, Mexico Jan. 10-16, 2005

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------------|
| New Zealand - South Africa | 3 - 3 | (0-0, 1-1, 2-2) |
| Turkey - Israel | 2 - 7 | (0-1, 1-4, 1-2) |
| Bulgaria - Mexico | 0 - 10 | (0-0, 0-4, 0-6) |
| South Africa - Turkey | 4 - 3 | (0-0, 2-2, 2-1) |
| Israel - Bulgaria | 8 - 1 | (4-0, 1-0, 3-1) |
| Mexico - New Zealand | 7 - 0 | (2-0, 1-0, 4-0) |
| New Zealand - Turkey | 9 - 0 | (0-0, 5-0, 4-0) |
| South Africa - Bulgaria | 6 - 4 | (2-1, 2-1, 2-2) |
| Israel - Mexico | 4 - 10 | (1-5, 2-3, 1-2) |
| Turkey - Bulgaria | 4 - 3 | (2-0, 0-1, 2-2) |
| Israel - New Zealand | 3 - 5 | (0-1, 1-1, 2-3) |
| Mexico - South Africa | 6 - 1 | (2-0, 1-1, 3-0) |
| Bulgaria - New Zealand | 2 - 11 | (0-3, 1-7, 1-1) |
| Mexico - Turkey | 4 - 1 | (0-1, 2-0, 2-0) |
| South Africa - Israel | 1 - 8 | (0-3, 1-1, 0-4) |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|----|
| Mexico | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 36 | - | 6 | 10 |
| New Zealand | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 28 | - | 15 | 7 |
| Israel | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 30 | - | 19 | 6 |
| South Africa | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 15 | - | 24 | 5 |
| Turkey | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 10 | - | 27 | 2 |
| Bulgaria | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 10 | - | 39 | 0 |

Mexico promoted to 2006 IIHF World U20 Championship Div. II

IIHF European Champions Cup

St. Petersburg, Russia Jan. 13-16, 2005

| Group A | | | |
|--------------------|-------|-----------------|--|
| Zlin - Frankfurt | 4 - 3 | (2-2, 0-1, 2-0) | |
| Kärpät - Zlin | 4 - 1 | (1-0, 2-1, 1-0) | |
| Frankfurt - Kärpät | 3 - 6 | (1-3, 0-2, 2-1) | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|---|
| Kärpät | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 10 | - | 4 | 4 |
| Zlin | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 | - | 7 | 2 |
| Frankfurt | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | - | 10 | 0 |

RESULTS SUMMARY

IIHF European Women's Champions Cup

Sweden Dec. 17-19, 2004

| | | |
|---------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Blues Espoo - EV Zug | 2 - 3 | (0-1, 1-0, 1-2) |
| AIK Solna - Skif Moscow | 2 - 2 | (1-1, 1-1, 0-0) |
| Blues Espoo - Skif Moscow | 2 - 1 | (1-0, 1-0, 0-1) |
| EV Zug - AIK Solna | 2 - 7 | (0-1, 1-5, 1-1) |
| Skif Moscow - EV Zug | 4 - 1 | (1-0, 1-0, 2-1) |
| AIK Solna - Blues Espoo | 5 - 3 | (3-0, 2-1, 0-2) |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|--------|---|
| AIK Solna | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 14 - 7 | 5 |
| Skif Moscow | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 - 5 | 3 |
| EV Zug | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 6 - 13 | 2 |
| Blues Espoo | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 7 - 9 | 2 |

IIHF Continental Cup Super Final

Szekesfehervar, Hungary Jan. 7-9, 2005

| | | |
|---------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Zvolen - Milano | 6 - 1 | (2-0, 2-0, 2-1) |
| Alba Volan - Dynamo | 0 - 8 | (0-0, 0-4, 0-4) |
| Milano - Dynamo | 3 - 5 | (1-1, 0-2, 2-2) |
| Zvolen - Alba Volan | 2 - 1 | (1-0, 1-1, 0-0) |
| Alba Volan - Milano | 2 - 1 | (0-0, 0-0, 2-1) |
| Dynamo - Zvolen | 1 - 2 | (0-1, 1-1, 0-0) |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|--------|---|
| HKm Zvolen | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 10 - 3 | 6 |
| Dynamo Moscow | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 14 - 5 | 4 |
| Alba Volan | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 - 11 | 2 |
| Milano Vipers | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 5 - 13 | 0 |

Men's Olympic Final Qualification - Group A

Kloten, Switzerland Feb. 10-13, 2005

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Denmark - Norway | 0 - 4 | (0-3, 0-1, 0-0) |
| Japan - Switzerland | 1 - 5 | (0-2, 0-2, 1-1) |
| Denmark - Japan | 5 - 2 | (2-1, 1-0, 2-1) |
| Switzerland - Norway | 3 - 1 | (1-1, 1-0, 1-0) |
| Norway - Japan | 4 - 3 | (0-2, 2-0, 2-1) |
| Switzerland - Denmark | 4 - 2 | (1-0, 2-2, 1-0) |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|--------|---|
| Switzerland | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 12 - 4 | 6 |
| Norway | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 9 - 6 | 4 |
| Denmark | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 7 - 10 | 2 |
| Japan | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6 - 14 | 0 |

Switzerland qualified to 2006 Winter Olympic Games

Men's Olympic Final Qualification - Group B

Riga, Latvia Feb. 10-13, 2005

| | | |
|--------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Belarus - Poland | 3 - 2 | (2-0, 0-1, 1-1) |
| Slovenia - Latvia | 1 - 2 | (1-0, 0-2, 0-0) |
| Belarus - Slovenia | 7 - 2 | (0-1, 4-1, 3-0) |
| Latvia - Poland | 3 - 1 | (0-0, 1-1, 2-0) |
| Poland - Slovenia | 3 - 4 | (0-1, 1-1, 2-2) |
| Latvia - Belarus | 5 - 4 | (1-2, 1-1, 3-1) |

| | | | | | | |
|----------|---|---|---|---|--------|---|
| Latvia | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 10 - 6 | 6 |
| Belarus | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 14 - 9 | 4 |
| Slovenia | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 7 - 12 | 2 |
| Poland | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6 - 10 | 0 |

Latvia qualified to 2006 Winter Olympic Games

Men's Olympic Final Qualification - Group C

Klagenfurt, Austria Feb. 10-13, 2005

| | | |
|----------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Ukraine - France | 3 - 4 | (0-1, 2-0, 1-3) |
| Kazakhstan - Austria | 0 - 4 | (0-0, 1-0, 0-3) |
| Ukraine - Kazakhstan | 1 - 2 | (1-1, 0-1, 0-0) |
| Austria - France | 1 - 1 | (0-1, 0-0, 1-0) |
| Austria - Ukraine | 3 - 4 | (1-2, 1-1, 1-1) |
| France - Kazakhstan | 0 - 1 | (0-1, 0-0, 0-0) |

| | | | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|-------|---|
| Kazakhstan | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 3 - 5 | 4 |
| Austria | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 8 - 5 | 3 |
| France | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 - 5 | 3 |
| Ukraine | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 8 - 9 | 2 |

Kazakhstan qualified to 2006 Winter Olympic Games

Final Torino 2006 Teams:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Canada | 7. Russia |
| 2. Sweden | 8. Germany |
| 3. Slovakia | 9. Switzerland |
| 4. Czech Republic | 10. Latvia |
| 5. Finland | 11. Kazakhstan |
| 6. United States | 12. Italy |

PHOTO GALLERY



STAYING GROUNDED: Czech goaltender Marek Schwarz shows that it's not always eye-grabbing acrobatics that makes the difference. Schwarz makes the save on airborne USA forward T.J. Hensick at the U20 World Championship. Schwarz's steadiness helped the Czechs win the game and the bronze.



ONE STEP AHEAD: HKm Zvolen's Vladimir Orszagh stays in front of Dynamo Moscow's Yuri Babnko during the Continental Cup gold medal game. It wasn't the only battle Orszagh won as his team earned a 2-1 win and claimed the Continental Cup trophy.

NO VIP TREATMENT: Alexei Kovalev gets a rough welcome in the crease from Dynamo Moscow's Oleg Orekhovski in the Russian league. Kovalev, playing for AK Bars Kazan, is one of 376 lock-out players in Europe following the NHL labor conflict.



SAVING THE DAY: AIK goaltender Kim Martin makes the save against EV Zug's Tina Schumacher in the IIHF European Women Champions Cup. AIK went on to win the historic event, while Zug was the surprise bronze medallist. Martin will be in goal for Sweden in the upcoming IIHF World Women Championship.

Nine would be just fine for Wickenheiser & Co.

By Szymon Szemberg

■ Hayley Wickenheiser is a member of one of the most successful national team programs in athletic history. Canada's women's national team has won all eight IIHF World Women Championships, one gold and one silver Olympic medal, and the team since 1990 has lost only three official games.

Wickenheiser established herself as the best female hockey player in the world during the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics when she led Canada to the gold medal, while pacing all players in scoring with seven goals and three assists in five games. Hayley, who has five world championships gold medals, one Olympic gold and one silver, was named Olympic tournament MVP in Salt Lake, Best Forward and was named to the All Star team.

■ Wickenheiser is going for her sixth world championship gold when Canada defends its title in the 2005 IIHF World Women Championship in Sweden, April 2-9. The IIHF took a moment to speak with Hayley about her past, present and future plans on the ice.

Hayley, how do you and your team motivate yourself after all these gold medals?

"Personally, I love to play and I love to go to the rink every day, so it's very easy to stay motivated. As far as our team, we are expected to win and we take it very seriously. If you don't stay motivated someone else will take your spot. There are a lot of young players in this country coming up, wanting a place on the team. This keeps you motivated."

Here comes another motivating factor - if Canada wins in Sweden, you will become the second national team to win nine consecutive world championships after the Soviets men's streak 1963-1972. How about that?

"I wasn't aware of this and no one had told us that, but achieving that would really be something special. To be on level with the great Soviet teams of the past would be quite something. We would be in a very nice company."

You were only 15 when you won your first IIHF



Photos: DAVE SANDFORD

THE GIRL WITH A GOLDEN SMILE: Once you have got the taste for the most noble of medals, you don't want to have anything else. Here, Hayley takes a bite on the Olympic medal from Salt Lake City 2002. In Sweden this spring she will be chasing her sixth consecutive IIHF World Championship and Canada's ninth.

World Championship title in 1994. How has the women's game changed during that decade?

Hayley Wickenheiser, forward
Born: August 12, 1978 in Shaunavon, Canada.
IIHF World Champion: 1994, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2004. (Injured in 2001).
Olympics: Gold in 2002, silver in 1998.
Summer Olympian: Represented Canada in softball in Sydney 2000.
Individual: MVP, Best Forward, All-Star and best scorer in women's Olympic hockey tournament in Salt Lake City 2002.

"The game has gotten better, all of the countries have improved. The ranking of the teams has stayed pretty much the same, but the quality of the game is definitely better. We have also gained more respect. Even the male hockey media respects us."

Do you think that women's hockey gaining Olympic status, had something to do with the degree of respect?

"Definitely. The Olympics is the most important sports competition in the world and you have the opportunity to showcase the sport to the world. When we played the gold medal game against the U.S. in Salt Lake City, seven million Canadians were watching, that's huge exposure. Women's hockey is the fastest growing sport in North America, so that must be respected."

Since we are on the Olympic issue - what is your feeling about the men's tournament if the NHL does not commit to Turin 2006?

"That would be a huge step backward for the NHL, given the unique opportunity to promote

the game. For the NHL not to take part would be very disappointing."

The women's Olympic tournament in 2002 was great in terms of parity with Sweden and Finland showing big progress. The 2004 World Championship in Canada seemed to be back to square one with you and U.S. totally dominating again. Are you getting impatient with the apparently inconsistent progress of the other nations?

"After the 2004 world championship, there were questions about the progress of some of the countries. But there were very encouraging signs at the Four Nations tournament in Lake Placid. Sweden had improved dramatically, while Finland was again quite disappointing. In general, federations can do more to develop their women's program. I am very happy that Hockey Canada takes women's hockey very seriously."

One year ago you made headlines as you played for a men's team in the Finnish league system. Looking back, did that experience help you as a player?

"Definitely. I became a better player and it also gave me different perspective to the game, making me appreciate women's hockey more. On the men's team I only got a few scoring chances a game, while in women's hockey they are much more frequent. I am more relaxed in my game now after my time in men's hockey. But that was still my best experience in hockey after the Olympic gold."

How far ahead in your hockey career are you looking at this point?

"I want to be part of the Olympic team for Turin, and ideally to finish my career after the 2010 Olympic in Vancouver. But I have no timeline. It would be great to challenge for 2010 if I stay physically and mentally in shape."

Do you have any post-career plans?

"I would like to stay involved in the game, maybe in a managerial position or administrative. I would like to lead women's hockey on a global base. If not, maybe I'd do something in medicine. I have a bachelor of science."

If you were chairman of the IIHF women's committee, what would you do?

"I would be very relentless in pushing national associations to take women's hockey seriously and ensure that women's hockey gets enough funding. I would also introduce an under-18 and an under-22 world championship and finally a women's professional league, with the best players from all countries."



POWER FORWARD: "WICKENHEISER 22" - that's the sight what many defensemen in women's hockey have got used to see when Hayley paces to the net.

DID YOU KNOW?

Hayley Wickenheiser is among the leaders in gold medals in women's hockey, but there are some active teammates on Canada who have an even more impressive collection.



■ Danielle Goyette 7 WW gold medals, 1 Olympic gold, 1 Olympic silver.

■ Cassie Campbell, Therese Brisson and Vicky Suhonara all have 6 WW gold medals, 1 Olympic gold, 1 Olympic silver.