

Press Release

2010 IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP – Media Service | Betzenweg 34 | D-81247 Munich | Phone +49 89 818218 | Fax +49 89 818219
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Big Bang: 2010 IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP opens in Schalke - Aiming for Visitor World Record

The deal is done: the 2010 IIHF World Championship comes up with an event that has never been taking place in Ice Hockey before. The opening game of the World Championship on May 7th, 2010 will be organized in the Veltins-Arena of Gelsenkirchen, home of the football (soccer) Bundesliga club of FC Schalke 04. The stadium will be transferred to a giant Ice Hockey arena with an overall capacity to be enhanced to 75.976 places. A full stadium would represent a new spectator world record for Ice Hockey games, something, which the organizing committee is clearly aiming for. "At the opening game of the 2001 IIHF World Championship we had to leave far too many of the almost 80.000 ticket requests unfulfilled. The Veltins-Arena with its unique technical infrastructure now offers the chance to respond to the expected tremendous interest of the fans", explains **Uwe Harnos** (48), President of the Organizing Committee, one of the main reasons for choosing this spectacular venue.

Project officially announced

While rumours were already spread over the last weeks after Russian Goalie Legend Vladislav Tretyak had mentioned the still confidential plans in an interview with a Russian newspaper, the plan was now officially confirmed and announced. During a press conference, the concept was introduced jointly by those parties, which are driving the project as partners: the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF), their long-standing marketing partner Infront Sports & Media, the World Championship Organizing Committee and the FC Schalke 04-Stadion-Betriebsgesellschaft as operator of the Veltins-Arena.

Three Years of Planning

First thoughts of addressing a largest possible crowd started assuming shape at Infront and the German Ice Hockey Federation (DEB) already shortly after the World Championship was designated to the DEB in the year 2005. Thereafter, the Swiss based corporation Nussli, one of the world's most renowned planners and constructors of temporary grandstand systems, was charged with a feasibility study. In the beginning of 2008, the talks among the partners were concreted. In September 2008, the project was introduced in detail to the IIHF semi-annual congress in Montreux and then approved by the IIHF as well as by the federations of the nations participating in the 2010 IIHF World Championship. As the IIHF Championship Regulations do intend for only a maximum of two Championship venues, a special permission by the IIHF congress had to be granted. Thus, the planning could go into detail.

Team Germany opening the World Championship

In any case, Team Germany will be one of the contenders in the opening game. Possible opponents are the teams of Canada, Russia, Sweden, Finland or Czech Republic, all belonging to the very top of world's Ice Hockey. "It was critical for us to obtain approval from all possible opponents before making our final decision", stresses **Franz Reindl** (54), General Secretary of the Organizing Committee, "because even long-standing NHL players don't play for such a giant crowd every day. However, this was just a formality as the excitement was overwhelming everywhere and we all agreed that the entire sport of Ice Hockey can set a huge exclamation mark with this game", describes Reindl the reactions. **Uwe Krupp** (43), Headcoach of Team Germany, is also looking forward to the event: "It's the dream of any Ice Hockey player to play for such a crowd, even more so if it is at a World Championship and in front of your own fans. This is a one-time-opportunity in a player's career. This gives everyone on ice an additional push of motivation."

Ideal Conditions in Veltins-Arena – Big logistic Challenge

Essential condition for the opening game on Schalke ground is the closable roof of the Veltins-Arena, as IIHF World Championships are only staged in indoor venues in order to be independent from weather conditions and TV illumination requirements. A further significant technical advantage of the Veltins-Arena is the completely retractable football pitch. In the centre of an event surface below the

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football pitch, a complete IIHF-homologated ice rink in the size of app. 60 x 30 meters will be installed. Thus, the ice surface lies some 135 cm lower than the football pitch, which allows a more favourable climbing rate for the additional grandstands to be built close towards the ice rink. The Austrian provider AST, which has delivered ice- and advertising-board-technique to several IIHF World Championships, will be taking care of the perfect ice. The additional 14.500 seats will be planned and erected by Swiss specialist Nüssli. All in all, some 25 semitrailer trucks will carry app. 450 tons of material to the arena. The financial expenditure for the opening game will sum up to app. 1.2 million Euros.

Applied for GUINNESS WORLD RECORD™

The intended spectator world record in the category "Most Spectators for an Ice Hockey game" was officially applied for at GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS™ (GWR). It would be reached at exactly 74.555 spectators. GWR is world-wide acknowledged as *the* institution for the verification and certification of world records. A fact is only acknowledged as a record, if it is "clear, verified, provable and standing beyond any doubts", say the rules of GWR. The currently existing – not officially registered – all-time-high names 74.554 spectators, which followed the college game between the Michigan State Spartans and the Wolverines of the University of Michigan in an open (American) football venue in Lansing/Michigan in October 2001. The highest number of spectators in the North American NHL is registered with 71.217 people. "Of course the world record is a challenge for German sports, especially for the German Ice Hockey and for the Organizing Committee, but it is also an immense enticement for every spectator", emphasizes General Secretary **Franz Reindl**, "because participating actively in a world record and be part of making history is something, you don't experience everyday. Those are the things you will still tell your grandchildren and we promise together with our partners from Schalke that every spectator will carry home a nice souvenir from that game."

In the Heart of the "Ice Hockey Republic of Germany"

The geographical situation of the Veltins-Arena also provides the best possible prerequisites for a full stadium. It is situated in the heart of the "Ice Hockey Republic of Germany". Five first-division (DEL)-clubs (Duisburg, Düsseldorf, Iserlohn, Cologne and Krefeld) as well as Herne from the third division have their homes in the vicinity. Some 20 million people are living in the entire Rhine/Ruhr-region. Gelsenkirchen is easily accessible by plane via the international airports of Düsseldorf, Dortmund and Münster/Osnabrück. Driving time to the Lanxess Arena of Cologne, the main venue of the 2010 IIHF World Championship, where the opening game opponents will play their further preliminary round games and the majority of the foreign fans will be lodging, is merely one hour.

A memorable day at reasonable prices

The opening game of the World Championship on May 7, 2010 shall be remembered by all people involved as a memorable day. The day is planned to include an attractive show-programme, the official World Championship opening ceremony, a hopefully great and thrilling Ice Hockey game with participation of Team Germany as well as the certification of the world record by GWR. Tickets for the opening game are available already at 19 € (standing), the lowest priced seating ticket is 29 €. All prices include the entire programme of the day as well as all fees and the use of public transport. All of those entitled to a reduction will receive discounts of up to 20% on all prices and ticket types. Tickets for the opening game can be obtained as single game tickets as well as in combination packages together with other games of the World Championship. The ticket sales for the opening game as well as for other by then available ticket types including Cologne and Mannheim start on Friday, January 30, 2009 at 9.00 am.

The 2010 IIHF World Championship takes place between May 7 and May 23, 2010 in the Lanxess Arena in Cologne, the SAP Arena in Mannheim and the Veltins-Arena in Gelsenkirchen. The Organizing Committee headed by President Uwe Harnos and General Secretary Franz Reindl, is awaiting 500.000 spectators at 56 World Championship games of the world's 16 best Ice Hockey nations. App. 1.000 accredited journalists as well as around 190 involved TV stations will broadcast from Germany into more than 100 countries. Some 800 million viewers worldwide will follow the 2010 IIHF World Championship on TV.

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René Fasel, President of the IIHF: "This should be a showcase event, which will bring together everything we have learned about staging the IIHF World Championship in a perfect setting. Together with the 2010 Organising Committee and our long-standing marketing partner Infront we will create a landmark for our sport."

Horst Lichtner, General Secretary of the IIHF: "A World Championship game in front of such a crowd has never happened so far. This is going to be fantastic for the fans and the teams and it will make the 2010 IIHF World Championship unforgettable for everyone. This event will be a blueprint for the future and it will be a real benchmark for the actual potential of Ice Hockey in Germany and in Europe."

Uwe Harnos: President of the Organizing Committee "The opening game plays a very special role as a kick-off for the entire 2010 IIHF World Championship with a total of 56 games in Cologne, Mannheim and Gelsenkirchen and it shall create a wave of enthusiasm, which carries us through the whole World Championship. The game in this fantastic arena is a special offer to the numerous Ice Hockey fans in Germany, but it is also a perfect opportunity for bringing our fascinating sport closer to those that so far had little or no contact with Ice Hockey."

Philippe Blatter, President & CEO of Infront Sports & Media: "We are excited about this world record attempt. During the past three years, Infront could make perfect use of its partnership with the DEB and the Veltins-Arena in order to bring this joint project on its way. Adapting and using this state-of-the-art football stadium as venue for the IIHF World Championship is another example of Infront's capacity for innovation in sports marketing."

Peter Peters, Managing Director of the Veltins-Arena and Board Member of Schalke 04: "Around 76.000 people at an Ice Hockey game: a fascinating vision, which immediately thrilled me. This world record is our aim for the opening game of the World Championship. Together with enthusiastic fans, we want to make this a memorable happening - participating in this event is a must! For us, this game is a big challenge and I am sure that the arena offers the best possible conditions for it, because its multi-functionality, which also in sports lets seem nothing to be impossible, is truly unique. We are very proud to be one of the hosts of the 2010 IIHF World Championships in Germany."

Jaroslav Cerný, Corporate Spokesman of Official Main Sponsor Škoda Auto: "In our long history as Official Main Sponsor of IIHF World Championships, we have contributed to bringing Ice Hockey and the World Championships to today's high level. The opening game 2010 in an arena for 76.000 spectators is now a step into an entirely new dimension and we are proud to be part of this outstanding event."

R. Bernd Assenmacher, Managing Director of the Lanxess Arena in Cologne and Head of the LOC Cologne: "I am still getting goosebumps when I think of the opening game of the 2001 IIHF World Championship in our arena, which was then filled completely up to capacity. Of course, every World Championship venue would like to host such a game also in 2010, but we supported the idea of the game in Schalke from the very beginning, because this is priceless advertising for the whole World Championship and thus also for the many wonderful games in Cologne."

Daniel Hopp, Managing Director of SAP Arena Mannheim and Head of the LOC Mannheim: "There is nothing better that could happen to us. The game in Schalke will direct huge interest of public and media to the World Championship as a whole and this is also good for Mannheim as a World Championship venue."

Munich/Gelsenkirchen - December 15, 2008