







From the IIHF President

New beginnings

By Luc Tardif

In my first editorial for Ice Times as the new President of the IIHF, I wish our members good health and good luck in their preparations for this upcoming season.

You, the IIHF members, elected me based on the platform that I presented to you in St. Petersburg. I was the last candidate to declare for the IIHF Presidency, and I did so because I believed that I was the right person for the job to succeed President Fasel.

During the summer of 2021, I held dozens of individual video conferences and phone conversations with our members, identifying what the IIHF was doing well, where it had to improve, and how it could help our members grow. This was a very informative and probably the most essential part of my campaign, and I am thankful to all of our members for their valuable input and advice. Together with the new IIHF Council, we will work for you and will not let you down.

We are heading into a new IIHF season, and we are doing so with optimism that we will be able to successfully operate as many of our events as possible, and to return to a sense of normalcy within the international ice hockey environment.

It won't be easy, the nature of our competitions involves significant travel and movement of personnel and players, things that were impacted and continue to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nevertheless, we are determined to support all participating teams and tournament organizers in their goal to host an IIHF Championship. We will do our best when we have to, but also we need to be realistic if a situation calls for it. However, with our COVID-19 compliance guidelines - based on valuable learnings from last season – we feel that we have the blueprint we need to host events safely.

The opening months of my presidency has been dedicated to meeting with ice hockey's main stakeholders, visiting with MNAs, and supporting development projects. You can read more about this on page 10.

We have not been resting since the election, the IIHF Council has held three meetings over the fall season, and we are in the process of developing a Strategic Plan for 2022-2026.

We believe that a Strategic Plan is necessary in order to develop a focus, results-based approach to this Council Term. We want to deliver real, tangible benefits to the IIHF that we can show to our membership by the end of our term. The Council and I were chosen by you to deliver actual results and actual benefits for you - our members - and this we pledge to do.

I have also authorized the creation of Presidential Task Force groups. Each group will be assigned to act as a "think-tank", focusing on assigned topics that fall outside Committee mandates and formed the basis for my election platform.

The groups will be structured to ensure bilateral representation from specific groups of IIHF Committees and external organizations. Together, it is my intent that they will work with the IIHF Committees, the IIHF Council, and the IIHF Office to execute the president's vision for 2021-2026.

In closing, I would like to thank René Fasel for his guidance and leadership of the IIHF through 27 years. It is an honour and a serious responsibility to assume the role of IIHF President, and I am ready to take the torch and lead the IIHF into new beginnings and onwards to a bright future.







News and Notes

OLYMPICS

Following the conclusion of the Men's and Women's Final Olympic Qualification tournaments, a record number of 22 ice hockey teams will play at the next Olympics.

MEN'S EVENT WOMEN'S EVENT



Ice hockey at the Olympics will start one day before the opening ceremony with the Olympic Women's Ice Hockey Tournament that will run from 3 to 17 February 2022. Operating in the two-tiered system, all five Group A teams and the top-3 Group B teams will advance out of the preliminary round.

The Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Tournament will run from 9 to 20 February. The 12-team tournament in three groups will be played according to the format of the previous Olympic Men's ice hockey tournaments.

The preliminary round will be played from 9 to 13 February with three games for each team. For the final round, the 12 teams will be seeded according to their preliminaryround records with the top-four teams (group winners and the best second-place team) automatically qualified for the quarter-finals on 16 February while the other eight teams will play a qualification playoff game on 15 February for a spot in the quarter-finals.

2022 IIHF ICE HOCKEY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Tampere's new Deck Arena was officially opened on 3 December with its first hockey game. The arena was sold out to watch local teams Tappara and Ilves face each other in a game of Finland's top league, Liiga. The capacity of the arena for a hockey game is around 13,000 spectators.

The brand-new Tampere Deck Arena will co-host the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship played from 13 to 29 May 2022 in Tampere and Helsinki, Finland.

A ticket purchase rights draw for the World Championship was held for the first time. The draw proved to be very popular, with more than 1,600,000 tickets applied for the games through the draw. All games played in Tampere are fully booked. Tickets for the games played in Helsinki and a limited number of VIP packages are still available.

IIHF CONTINENTAL CUP FINAL

Due to changes in the current COVID-19 situation within the host country, and following discussions with participating teams, the decision has been made to postpone the Continental Cup Final from its original date to the alternative date from 7 to 9 January 2022 to 4 to 6 March 2022. The hosting rights for Alborg Pirates remain the same.

The host club Aalborg Pirates, the current leader of Denmark's Metal Ligaen, had recently advanced to the final round along with Kazakh champion Saryarka Karaganda, HK Gomel from Belarus and Cracovia Krakow from Poland.

The Pirates planned to host the tournament at Gigantium, which is one of the country's biggest indoor arenas with a capacity for 5,000 spectators. Aalborg in the North Jutland Region is Denmark's fourth-largest city.

Aalborg had previously hosted one of the preliminary-round groups and was chosen based on the bid, the facilities but also the

COVID-19 situation and travel restrictions in the candidate countries.

FINLAND

After the return of Jukka Jalonen as head coach of the Finnish men's national team, another Jalonen comes back to the Finnish national team program as well. Kari



Jalonen signed as head coach of the Finnish U20 national team for the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 seasons.

The 61-year-old was already Finland's head coach at the 2001 World Juniors, earning a silver medal, and assistant coach the year before. For two years he was the head coach of the men's national team at the 2015 and 2016 Worlds winning silver in the latter tournament. Afterwards he worked as head coach in Switzerland for SC Bern for four seasons winning two championships in addition to seven Finnish championships he won as a coach with TPS Turku, Karpat Oulu and Helsinki IFK.

At the Finnish U20 national team, he will succeed Antti Pennanen, who will lead the team to the upcoming 2022 IIHF World Junior Championship before his contract expires after two seasons with the team.

I Welcome I Bulletin I IIHF I Competition I Results I Gallery I Interview I Û I ⊠



RUSSIA

Former Olympic champion and Stanley Cup winner Sergei Zubov was named new head coach of the Russian U20 national team with one month to go until



the 2022 IIHF World Junior Championship.

Originally Oleg Bratash was planned to coach the U20 national team and succeed Igor Larionov, however it was instead Zubov who was named head coach. Bratash will remain in the coaching staff along with assistant coaches Alexander Titov and Vladimir Filatov.

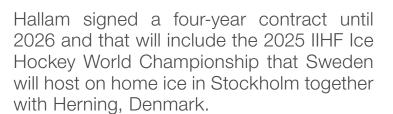
Zubov is familiar with the World Juniors of another era, having won gold with the Soviet Union in 1989 and silver in 1990. Later in his career the long-time NHL defenceman won Olympic gold in 1992 and the Stanley Cup with the New York Rangers in 1994 and with the Dallas Stars 1999.

After 12 years with the stars he returned to Russia to play his last season with SKA St. Petersburg in 2009/2010 being the topscoring defenceman of the KHL. There he started his coaching career as an assistant coach and had his debut as head coach in 2015/2016. Later he coached league rivals

HK Sochi and most recently Dinamo Riga where he resigned one month ago. Earlier this month he served as men's national team head coach at the Karjala Tournament in Finland.

SWEDEN

Sam Hallam will succeed Johan Garpenlov as head coach of the Swedish men's national team as of the 2022/2023 season.



Hallam played in the second tier of Swedish ice hockey before retiring at Bofors IK and starting his coaching career at a young age. After several years with the club he was hired by the Vaxjo Lakers of the Swedish Hockey League where he's in his tenth season as head coach. During this time the 42-year-old has led the club to three Swedish championships in 2015, 2018 and 2021.

Until then Hallam will have a shot at another championship with the Vaxio Lakers that are also competing for the Champions Hockey League title.

TUNISIA

The International Ice Hockey Federation grew to 82 member nations with the admission of **Tunisia** as associate member by the 2021 IIHF Semi-Annual Congress in St. Petersburg, Russia.



Tunisia becomes the fourth African country after South Africa and two countries in the neighbourhood, Morocco and Algeria, and the eighth Arab country in the IIHF.

With no full-size ice rink available to play in Tunisia, the hockey movement is led by Tunisians abroad, in particular by President Ihab Ayed, who played for Français Volants Paris and the Courbevoie Cogs in the fourth tier of French hockey.

It was in the Paris suburb where Ayed organized his Tunisian team's first game on 14 June 2014 that ended with a 6-5 win for Courbevoie.

The Tunisian Ice Hockey Association (ATHG) was formally founded in 2013 and worked on recognition within the Tunisian sport authorities after the first game and started to play in tournaments in the Arab region.

The Carthage Eagles, a team of players from the Tunisian diaspora in Europe and North America, won the 2016 African Cup for ice hockey club teams in Morocco in a tight gold-medal game against the host club Rabat Capitals. Read More.

The team also participated in the 2018 Arab Clubs Ice Hockey Championship in Abu Dhabi where it finished in third place behind the Abu Dhabi Storms (UAE) and Team Lebanon after beating the Pharaohs (Egypt) for third place. Adrien Sebag, who normally plays for French third-tier team Meudon Cometes, was named MVP of the tournament.

Click here for the member page of Tunisia.

The congress also approved the change of membership of Singapore to Full Member status.









IIHF OFFICE

The IIHF added four new staff members. who will work within three departments at the IIHF headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland.

The IIHF Sport Department has hired Joel Hansson to work in the newly-created position of Officiating Development Manager. Hansson has previously served as Refereein-Chief for the Swedish



Ice Hockey Association since 2015.

Joel brings a wealth of officiating experience to the IIHF, and will act as the primary facilitator between the IIHF and its MNAs in officiating development. He is responsible for assisting the IIHF Sport Director, the IIHF Officiating Manager and the Sport Department in coordinating and assisting the operation of the IIHF Championship Program (e.g., Officiating), the IIHF Officiating Development projects and any other related IIHF projects as necessary.

He has also served as Referee-in-Chief for the Norwegian Ice Hockey Association, Sport Manager for the Erste Bank Eishockey Liga in Austria, and as an Officiating Coordinator for the Swedish Ice Hockey Association.

The IIHF Event Department will be joined by **Malin Vestin**, who will work within the department as an Event Coordinator.

Malin is Swedish, with several years of experience in marketing, event, hospitality,

andtravel planning. She also just completed her FIFA Master's diploma in Sport Management.

She will assist in the planning, organization and implementation of the IIHF Congresses and improvement of the services for participating delegates of the Member National Associations and other parties involved.

She will also assist in the planning, organization and implementation of IIHF Competitions as needed.

The IIHF Marketing & Communications Department has added new staff to fill two vacant positions within the department.

Andrea Candrian was hired as the IIHF's new Marketing Manager.

Andrea is Swiss and grew up in the Engadin region



next to the ice rink and has been playing ice hockey since he was four-years-old.

He holds a Bachelor's degree in tourism with a major in sports management. He previously worked as a Marketing Assistant at the Local Organizing Committee of the Ski World Championships 2017 in St. Moritz.

After that, he did his Master's degree in BA with a major in marketing and started working at the sponsorship team of Credit Suisse in Zurich.

In his role as Marketing Manager, Andrea will assist the Marketing Director in the planning and implementation of marketing activities, including but not limited to fan data marketing, promotion plans, digital/new media measures, esports and social media campaigns

Among other duties, he will also provide assistance with the organization and coordination of marketing & communications activities during IIHF events and championships including onsite venue roles.

Also joining the department Marketing new Communications Coordinator is Estelle Kruegel.

Estelle comes from Western Switzerland and took part to the 2019 Winter Universiade in Krasnoyarsk with the Swiss women's university ice hockey team.

She graduated in 2020 with a Bachelor's degree in tourism management and worked as Project manager in communications for the sport department of the City of Yverdon-les-Bains.

Estelle will assist the Marketing & Communications team in the implementation of department activities including but not limited to: event approvals, promotion plans, digital/ new media measures as well as social media campaigns. She will also provide assistance in the organization and coordination of marketing & communications activities during IIHF events and championships.

Estelle will also be responsible for IIHF Sponsors, IIHF Partners and Supplier Pool Member account management, including accreditation & ticket requests, invoicing, and the IIHF Equipment Support Program.

She will also be involved in joint project management together with the Marketing Manager around the organization and coordination of various events (IIHF Hall of Fame induction ceremony, Supplier Pool/Sponsor meetings, Marketing workshops, etc.).



Obituaries

JOHAN BOLLUE

The international ice hockey family was shocked and saddened to hear of the sudden passing of Johan Bollue, Sports Development Director for the



Royal Belgian Ice Hockey Federation and a key figure in the IIHF and ice hockey development. Bollue passed away on 28 October at age 57.

One of the most prolific and dedicated ice hockey officials to work within the IIHF and in Belgian ice hockey, Bollue's boundless contributions to ice hockey development have made a positive impact for dozens of ice hockey nations worldwide.

"Johan Bollue exemplified the very best characteristics of our ice hockey family...the willingness to go out and help others, to work tirelessly to pass on knowledge and share ideas...all for the growth of the game," said IIHF President Luc Tardif. "He will be deeply missed by the IIHF and all of our members that were positively impacted by his actions, but we can take comfort that the shining example that he set will inspire all of our coaches, players and officials for years to come."

Born on 18 August 1964 in Leuven, Belgium, Bollue's life was characterized by a self-starting, entrepreneurial approach as well as a dynamic drive and dedication to any project he was involved with. As a teenager he enlisted was a glider pilot from 1980-1983 with the Belgian Air Cadets, and then served his country as a paratrooper and Sergeant Instructor in the Belgian Air Force. He was also involved for ten years in the restaurant industry as a partner with NV Socoma restaurant group and with his own Bollue Concept trading company.

Bollue's gift for teaching manifested itself later through ice hockey, starting in 1994 when he began to organize ice hockey camps around Belgium as part of the All Star Hockey School initiative, which still operates today. He joined the Royal Belgian Ice Hockey Federation in 2007 as a U8/U10 coordinator and Coach Developer, and then moved up to be a long time GM of the Belgium National team, guiding them through 15 IIHF World Championships in different categories between 2008-2014.

In 2009 Bollue was appointed as RBIHF Vice-President and Sports Development Director, positions he continued to hold up to the time of his passing.

Bollue's work with the RBIHF exemplified his dedication to the game and his commitment to its growth. As all positions within the federation are volunteer-based, he dedicated countless hours of time and effort to overseeing ice hockey's growth and development in his country. His aptitude for identifying new and innovative ways to reach out to new players and introduce kids to the sport manifested itself in the founding of the HelloHockey.be online community, as well as his efforts to grow the game through recruitment and promotion via social media...which in true Bollue fashion he then taught other ice hockey nations how to use effectively.

His aptitude for ice hockey development also led him to become closely involved with the II-HF's Sport Department. He served as a Mentor Coach in various Regional Development Camps held in several countries - including India, Malaysia, Turkey, and China, to name a few - and was a Coach developer for Coach Development programs held across Europe, helping to pass on the skills he learned as an ice hockey coach to others in the service of growing the game.

He was always one of the first to take part in the IIHF's annual Hockey Development Camps in Vierumaki, Finland, and was a Learn To Play Coach Developer from 2007-2021. He was also present in support of ice hockey at all three Youth Olympic Winter Games, first helping to organize the Skills Challenge event in Innsbruck and Lillehammer 2016 and then coaching a team composed of mixed-NOC players

at the inaugural 3-on-3 tournament in Lausanne 2020. He was also a key contributor to the development of the IIHF Development Hub and was regularly present in the Skills4All sport development webinar series.

But Bollue's record of contributions to ice hockey do not do enough to underline the positive impact he had in ice hockey growth around the world. By instilling the love of the game and love of teaching the game into so many young players, referees, coaches, and officials, his influence will be felt at all levels within the ice hockey world for generations to come.

"Johan was an exceptional member of the IIHF family," said Petr Briza, IIHF Senior Vice-President and Chairman of the Youth and Junior Development Committee, for which Bollue served on for nearly 10 years. "He was the kind of person that was open to work with anyone who needed help anytime and was always ready to offer his knowledge and experience to assist others with ice hockey development. He had so much to give to our sport, and coming from a smaller ice hockey nations knew how to relate to and guide other nations grow their programs.

"The IIHF family lost a person whose dedication to the game and passion for teaching others was truly incredible. Our hearts and prayers go out to his family."

I Welcome I Bulletin I IIHF I Competition I Results I Gallery I Interview I Û I ⊠



VALENTIN DIMOV

Valentin Dimov, the former captain of Bulgaria, has died. The former Bulgarian national forward, team captain and sports journalist Valentin Di-



mov passed away on 25th November at age 61.

Valentin Dimov was born on October 14. 1960 in Bezmer, Bulgaria, where his father was deputy commander of a military air base. His training and work brought him to the Former Soviet Union, where Valentin started to play hockey in his childhood. He started playing on the streets, on frozen yards and lakes, and developed a very good foundation to play organized hockey. Quickly he was able to impress coaches with his skating and instincts. Domestically, he played for CSKA (Sofia) and Levski Spartak and was named national champion multiple times.

He made guite a debut for the Men's National Team at the 1981 World Championships, Group C, in Beijing with 4 goals and 3 assists in 7 games played. Next year, in Jaca (Spain), he had even better production: 5 goals and 4 assists. Valentin played in 10 world championships and was the team captain in 1987 and in 1989. His last international event as a player was the 1993 World Championships, Group B, in Eindhoven (Netherlands). At that time Dimov was already working as a sports journalist. The following year he was in Lillehammer covering ice hockey and other events at the 1994 Winter Olympics.

The next chapter of his life included a business venture with bamboo products, which took him to Thailand, where he had shops and lived for a while. He later returned to sports media and commented on NHL games that were broadcasted in Bulgaria in 2008-09.

In 2014, he was put in a medically induced coma after a severe stroke, but miraculously returned to normal life, a testament to his exceptional physical and mental strength.

But this was not the last obstacle for the great forward. After two more strokes, Valentin Dimov (nicknamed Valyaka) had restricted movements on one side and some speech problems, but continued to be positive and never complained about his situation. He was full of life despite all the negative things that he had to go through.

Family members, friends, colleagues and teammates said their last goodbye to Valyaka in a church ceremony held on 5 December. Valentin Dimov is survived by his son Dimo and daughter Yana.

MATTI "MOLLI" KEINONEN

Matti "Molli" Keinonen, one of Finland's greatest hockey players from the 1960s and early '70s, died Saturday, 27 November, in Uusikaupunki, Finland,



after a battle with lymph node cancer. He was 80 years old, and died peacefully, surrounded by his family. He had also been battling Alzhei-

Keinonen played in two Olympic Winter Games (1968, 1972) and nine World Championships between 1962 and 1973 and was inducted into the IIHF Hall of Fame in 2002. He was also inducted into the Finnish Hockey Hall of Fame in 1987 as Lion #50, and his number 7 was retired by his club team Lukko Rauma, for whom he won the league championship in 1963. Four years later, he won another Finnish title, with RU-38.

One of the reasons Keinonen was so popular was because he often played his best against the nation's greatest rivals, Sweden. Indeed, he was nicknamed "Swedish killer" by Finnish media, but he was also known for his friendly demeanour, love of the game, and charismatic personality, both on and off the ice.

Born in Tampere, Keinonen first played for his country at the 1962 IIHF Ice Hockey World

Championship in Colorado Springs, USA, but he rose to prominence a year later when the tournament was played in Stockholm. He scored four goals in an 11-3 win over the United States and also scored against both Canada and the Soviets, leading the team with six goals and nine points.

At the 1965 Worlds, he scored only two goals, but both came in a 2-2 tie against the Swedes, only the second time ever the Finns had managed as much as a tie against their bitter rivals. In 1969, he scored three goals, all against the top nations - Sweden, Canada, Czechoslovakia.

Keinonen scored the opening goal against Canada at the 1968 Olympics in a 5-2 win, Suomi's first ever win against the superpower. Later, he scored the winning goal against East Germany. Four years later, in Sapporo, he scored the tying goal in a 4-3 win over Sweden, the first time Tre Kronor had lost at the Olympics to Finland.

Although Keinonen was known for his Finnish league play with Lukko Rauma, starting in 1960, he also skated for RU-38, HJK, TPS, and Jokerit. He wasn't the biggest player or the fastest, but he was an inspiration and leader who brought a professional approach to every game he played. After retiring as a player in 1978, he turned to coaching, standing behind the bench of several teams in the SM-Liiga for a decade.





A new direction

New President, IIHF Council elected

By Martin Merk



Luc Tardif has been elected as new IIHF President succeeding René Fasel, who held the position for 27 years and didn't stand for re-election.

Tardif becomes the 14th IIHF President and the second from France after founding President Louis Magnus.

Petr Briza was elected as Senior Vice-President, and the Regional Vice-Presidents elected are Bob Nicholson (Americas), Aivaz Omorkanov (Asia & Oceania) and Henrik Bach Nielsen (Europe & Africa).

Zsuzsanna Kolbenheyer and Marta Zawadzka were re-elected as female Council members. In the first round for the remaining positions Heikki Hietanen, Anders Larsson, Pavel Bure, Raeto Raffainer and Andrea Gios were elected with a majority with two positions open for a second round. Franz Reindl was elected in the second round and Viesturs Koziols in the third round.



Luc Tardif celebrates moments after René Fasel annouced him as the next president of the IIHF.

"Thank you very much. René [Fasel] asked me eight years ago to be Treasurer. But I'm still a hockey guy and I know I can offer more. I only have my determination, my crazy passion for this sport, my sense of team work, my respect for the people and my honesty to offer."

"Believe me, I will do everything to be at the level of your expectation. I'm committed to open up our beautiful sport, to promote it, to defend it, to prepare it for the future but above all to respect it with dignity,"

Tardif, who has citizenship of France and Canada, was elected to the IIHF Council in 2012 where he served as Treasurer.

He played junior hockey in Canada and professional hockey in Belgium and France where he started his hockey career off the ice with Rouen's youth program. He was the head of the ice hockey department at the French Ice Sports Federation from 2000 to 2006.

In 2006, he was elected as first President of the newly created French Ice Hockey Federation, a position he was re-elected for in 2010, 2014 and 2018. He was also Chef de Mission of the French Olympic delegation at the 2014 and 2018 Olympics. He has worked as member of the IIHF Competition Committee (2008-2012) and as chairman of the IIHF Finance Committee (since 2016).

In his presentation the day before, Tardif underlined the importance of development and bouncing back after the COVID-19 crisis that hit hockey in many countries with a successful restart of the usual activities.

He also presented an idea for a larger IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division I by merging the two groups, for a "Flying Coaches" program to bring word-class coaches to countries for seminars and wants to further develop 3-on-3 hockey.

He underlined that a President should listen and try to understand the needs of the member national associations. And that's what he did with individual sessions with almost all member countries during summer. A "Virtual World Tour" or "Co-Construction Process" as he called it during 90 hours.





"Alone we go faster, but together we go farther"-Luc Tardif



"The best way to move forward for our sport...is to listen to each other"-Henrik Bach Nielsen



I have a dream that Asian ice hockey teams will rise up and play against the top ice hockey nations."-Aivaz Omorkanov

IIHF Council 2021 - 2026

PRESIDENT



SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT



REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENTS





COUNCIL MEMBERS



Zawadzka

















René Fasel received a golden referee whistle and was voted by Congress to receive the honour of IIHF Life President.



"Council must have ambition to start a structured (rink) program."



Developing nations...we gotta get our workboots on to help you." -Bob Nicholson



Around the (hockey) world in 80 days

Busy opening months for new IIHF President

By Andrew Podnieks

Since becoming IIHF president, Luc Tardif has been on a tour around the hockey world. The goal? To meet, listen, understand, and work with the hockey family.

This includes a whirlwind tour of Europe and North America to kick-start an important and ambitious five-year term. Herein is a quick summary of Tardif's travels to date, along with some comments from the president as to why each trip was important.



It was my first official meeting as president, and it was important for the IIHF to be there for many reasons. First, we cannot coordinate schedules and player participation without talking to the clubs. The players are not machines. We have to consult them and the clubs to make sure that our expectations for the players are reasonable.

I strongly believe it is my job to be a diplomat between the clubs, the IIHF, the national associations, and all our shareholders. We need to have a common goal and be able to optimize the leagues, but in order to do that we need to bring everyone to the same table and have discussions. And that's what we're going to do.

Our first meeting will be January 14, and it will include representatives from the seven top leagues, which is 98 club teams, and all the national associations, to discuss the future.





Tardif opened his term with a series of key meetings in Switzerland, including a visit with IOC President Thomas Bach.



 Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) General Assembly 23-25 October Lausanne, Switzerland

This was a meeting that allowed me to renew many acquaintances, but within the context of my new responsibilities. I knew many people at the Assembly through my time at the French federation as well as when I was Chef De Mission at the Olympics in Sochi and PyeongChang. They gave me a warm welcome and made me feel like family right away.





One of the top priorities was to set a face-to-face IIHF Council meeting as soon as possible following the election, to get everyone in a room for a few days and determine our plan of action for the start of the Council term. We were briefed on all IIHF Office operations and had productive



meetings with IIHF Directors and other staff members. One of the biggest achievements of this first meeting was the agreement from Council to commit to the development of Strategic Plan 2022-26. This plan would be developed both internally and with consultation with sports industry experts and our members, to create a plan of action that will govern the IIHF strategy through to 2026.

Lastly, we were fortunate to be invited to tour the construction site of Swiss Life Arena, the future home of the Swiss National League's Zurich Lions (pictured above). The arena already looks spectacular and we look forward to seeing it in action.



International Federations Winter Sports Forum & IOC Coordination Commission 5 November Lausanne. Switzerland

This was an important gathering because we represent the international community for all winter sports. There was a lot of new energy. Many questions were asked, but I felt we quickly came together with common goals and a common purpose.

We talked about new sports and old, looking to future Olympic games. And this carried over to my meeting with the IOC. We had some honest discussions about the future of the Winter Olympics and the various events, and we made it clear we want to be treated with the same respect as the Summer Olympics, which I don't think has always been the case.



Meeting with Thomas Bach / Association of International Olympic Winter **Sports Federations (IAOWF) General Assembly**

8 November

Lausanne. Switzerland

This was a memorable moment for me. I felt like the newcomer coming to the big stage at the highest level of the Olympics, so at first I observed more than I talked. But I requested to meet with Thomas Bach because I wanted to talk to him about the Olympic participation of NHL players in Beijing and about the inclusion of the Chinese team in the men's and women's tournaments. We had an open conversation and spoke to the point. I wanted to organize a test event for the Chinese team, to ensure that they could play at the Olympic level. I know this was unusual, but I think it was important, and Thomas was very supportive.



Official MNA visit to Finland Ice Hockey Association (FIHA)

11-13 November. Helsinki, Finland

I made it a priority to visit early with the FIHA, who were very supportive of my bid to become president. I also met with members of the Russian Federation, but what was also important to me was watching the Canada-Finland exhibition game for the women as they prepared for the Olympics.

Women's hockey has always been significant to me, and this was a time I could show my support. I wanted to watch, and it was a great game with a high level of skill that was followed up

With FIHA President Harri Nummela, IIHF Council Member and FIHA General Secretary Heikki Hietanen, and former FIHA President and IIHF VP Kalle Kummola.

later with the Karjala Cup that evening. I was with IIHF Senior Vice-President Petr Briza, and Regional Vice-President for Europe Henrik Bach Nielsen. We wanted to be there together to present ourselves as a team. I'm not just the president on my own. I am part of a group, and we work together.

















Official MNA visit to Estonia / meeting with Estonian NOC **President, Minister of Culture, Mayor of Tallinn**

14 November, Tallinn. Estonia

The Estonian Federation was trying to convince the City of Tallinn to build another ice rink. So we went there as sellers, so to speak. For me, I know from my many years in France that you cannot develop ice hockey unless you build more places to play. You need ice, especially if you want to grow the women's game as well. went there to help convince officials to approve this project.

I have promised all along that I will visit any country that needs help to build an arena. If they set up meetings with the appropriate officials, I will go there and help convince them. We were there only one day, but it was a very long day. We met with the Minister of Culture, the president of their Olympic Committee, the Mayor of Tallinn, and the Prime Minister. This is the kind of relationship I want between the IIHF and our Member National Associations.



Hockey Hall of Fame Induction/meeting with NHL **Commissioner Gary Bettman & Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly** 15 November,

Toronto, Canada

The IIHF are partners with the Hockey Hall of Fame, so it was a pleasure to be there and meet many people. Petr Briza and I met Gary Bettman (pictured on right) and Bill Daly, and although we didn't really come with an agenda I was really happy with their interest in developing an international bond and promoting the NHL across the world. There were common goals, and, of course, we know we can work with the NHL because our world is international.

We have the experience in 82 countries to promote ice hockey, especially in Asia, where the last two Olympics have been. We can help each other. We discussed the Men's U18 tournament, which is an important tournament for everyone in the NHL because none of the players have been drafted yet. It is my conviction that this tournament should be on the same level as the World Junior Championship. Right now, it isn't. They agreed, and this will be an important initiative for us both moving forward.



Meeting with Quebec Minister of Education and Sport

19 November, Montreal, Canada

There is a great deal of reflection in Quebec these days because there are fewer top players in the NHL and some people worry about the sport losing its importance in the culture of the province. But what is important is that this soul-searching is coming from the government, where support is so critical, so I met the minister, whom I also knew from being Chef De Mission at the Olympics. She wanted advice about forming a group to discuss how to increase participation in hockey. I told her the most important factor is to work with Hockey Canada, since they oversee the game right across the country. They know what they are doing. But the fact that the Quebec government cares is the most important thing.



Meeting with Donald Fehr, opening of New York Islanders new UBS Arena

21 November New York, USA

The NHLPA invited us to attend the opening game of the New York Islanders in the new UBS arena. It's a beautiful arena, and I met with Donald Fehr and laid the groundwork for future discussions about how we can work together. There are many common goals, like the World Cup, which he would like to see start up again and become part of the international calendar.







2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship site visit, opening of new arena 3 December.

Tampere & Helsinki, Finland

I feel like I've been opening a lot of arenas! But that's a good sign. First, we had meetings in preparation for next year's World Championship in Helsinki and Tampere, and did site visits for the various areas for next year. Tampere is not a big city, but this new arena is a cathedral. You can see it from everywhere. This will be my first World Championship as president, and I couldn't ask for anything better than to be in a country like Finland where ice hockey is so important to the culture of the people. The organization is first rate, and the Fan Zone they have planned looks amazing. I'm really looking forward to it.



IIHF Council Meeting

5-7 December, Zurich, Switzerland

This was a very intensive meeting and the best we have had so far in the short time the new IIHF Council has been together. All of the members of the new Council participated actively and we had some great discussions on many agenda points that needed to be covered ahead of the beginning of the IIHF Championship season 2021/22.



Council held its third meeting in Zurich.

Among the agenda topics we discussed were the preparation of the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games men's and women's ice hockey competitions. We also had very productive conversations concerning the structure and makeup of the new IIHF Committees, and after many discussions we settled on the selection of chairpersons and committee members. We also made concrete progress towards the development of the IIHF Council Strategic Plan 2022-2026, which I look forward to sharing more details about in the new year.

Council also confirmed the establishment of all-new Presidential Task Force Groups to focus on special-assigned topics that fall outside Committee mandates. READ MORE



Official MNA Visit to Ukraine Ice Hockey **Federation**

13 December, Kyiv, Ukraine

I met with representatives of the Ice Hockey Federation of Ukraine and the Ministry of Sport. Among the topics discussed were the country's plans to build 25 additional ice rinks in the country, a potential bid for the 2030 Olympic Winter Games, and current issues within Ukraine ice hockey.



Tardif visiting the Ukraine MNA offices.



MNA Visit to Russian Ice Hockey Federation / World Hockey Forum/ Meeting with KHL

16-18 December Moscow, Russia

I have been very impressed with the evolution of the World Hockey Forum, which held its latest edition alongside the Channel One Cup. These and other forums like the EHC Business Forum can be great contributors to ice hockey growth.



Meeting with KHL representatives in Moscow

Senior Vice-President Petr Briza and I had positive meetings with the Russian Ice Hockey Federation, concerning closer

cooperation in hockey development. The RIHF agreed to offer assistance with the IIHF's "Flying Coaches" program, and will support the feasibility study of the U18 World Championship that will form the topic of a Presidential Task Force Group.

We also were extremely pleased to have the opportunity to meet with Kontinental Hockey League President Alexei Morozov and Vice-President Sergey Dobrokhvalov (pictured), to discuss collaboration opportunities. Looking back on my first engagement as IIHF President with the European Hockey Club Alliance, I believe that we need to set a higher standard of cooperation between ice hockey federations and ice hockey leagues, and KHL needs to be a part of this.





The excitement and anticipation returns to Alberta this time with fans in attendance - as the 2022 World Junior Championship gets set to kick off.

GROUP A (EDMONTON)

CANADA

2021 Finish: Silver medal



Key Questions:

-Who will earn the big minutes and coveted PP spots on this stacked host team?

-Can coach Dave Cameron get redemption after his shocking 5-3 gold medal game loss to Russia in 2011?

Players to Watch:

Cole Perfetti (F), Owen Power (D), Shane Wright (F)

FINLAND

2021 Finish: Bronze medal



Key Questions:

-Could Finland top the podium again for the fourth time in nine years?

-Who can step up to replace 2021 captain Anton Lundell's two-way excellence and clutch ability?



Canada gets another shot win gold on home ice in Edmonton as the country hosts its second straight World Juniors.

Players to Watch: Joakim Kemell (F), Topi Niemela (D), Aatu Raty (F)

GERMANY

2021 Finish: 6th place



Kev Questions:

-Can coach Christian Kunast get enough offence with top forwards like Tim Stutzle, JJ Peterka, and Lukas Reichel not returning?

-Will the team show the same fighting spirit as the 2021 roster did while undermanned due to COVID-19 protocols?

Players to Watch: Florian Bugl (G), Florian Elias (F), Luca Munzenberger (D)

CZECHIA

2021 Finish: 7th place



Key Questions:

-Can Czechia win a quarter-final for just the



fourth time since 2004?

-Is any Czech netminder capable of reprising Petr Mrazek's World Junior heroics (2012 Best Goalie and tournament all-star) in Alberta?

Players to Watch: David Jiricek (D), Jan Mysak (F), Stanislav Svozil (D)

AUSTRIA

2021 Finish: Tenth



Key Questions:

-Austria's back since there was no relegation in 2021, but can it possibly stay up this year?

-Will the Austrians do a better job of protecting their goalies after allowing a whopping 249 shots on net in four games last year?

Players to Watch: Marco Kasper (F), Senna Peeters (F), Sebastian Wraneschitz (G)

GROUP B (RED DEER)

USA

2021 Finish: Gold medal



Key Questions:

- -Loaded with NHL first-round picks, are the defending champs poised to become the first nation to win consecutive World Junior titles since Canada (2005-09)?
- -Can any USA goalie fill Spencer Knight's big skates?

Players to Watch: Matty Beniers (F), Luke Hughes (D), Jake Sanderson (D)

RUSSIA

2021 Finish: 4th place



Key Questions:

- -What will the late addition of Hockey Hall of Famer Sergei Zubov as head coach mean?
- -With four silver medals and four bronze medals in their last 10 tournaments, will the Russians kick their consistency up a notch to make golden memories in Edmonton?

Players to Watch: Yaroslav Askarov (G), Nikita Chibrikov (F), Matvei Michkov (F)



SWEDEN

2021 Finish: 5th place



Kev Questions:

-ls 2022 the year for longtime coach Tomas Monten - unable to fly to Alberta last year with other staff and players due to COVID-19 - to finally win gold with this talent-rich squad?

-How will the Juniorkronorna blue line featuring Simon Edvinsson and Emil Andrae stack up against its North American counterparts?

Players to Watch: William Eklund (F), Fabian Lysell (F), Jesper Wallstedt (G)

SLOVAKIA

2021 Finish: 8th place



Key Questions:

-Who will step up in the crucial 30 December

showdown with Switzerland?

-Can Slovakia break its habit of finishing eighth as it's done at six of the last nine World Juniors?

Players to Watch: Martin Chromiak (F), Simon Nemec (D), Juraj Slafkovsky (F)

SWITZERLAND

2021 Finish: 9th place



Key Questions:

-In a tough Group B, what defensive adjustments will second-year bench boss Marco Bayer make to improve on 2021 when Switzerland was outscored 20-5?

Can the Swiss avoid the relegation round?

Players to Watch: Lian Bichsel (D), Lorenzo Canonica (F), Simon Knak (F)





I Welcome I Bulletin I IIHF I Competition I Results I Gallery I Interview I Û I ⊠



December 2021 / Vol. 25, No. 3

U18 ladies are back

Canada, USA favourites, Group B wide open

By Andrew Podnieks



The 14th U18 Women's World Championship will take place in Sweden in early January 2022. We preview all teams competing in the tournament.

After a one-year delay because of COVID-19, the hosts will be two towns, Linkoping and Mjolby, about equidistant from Stockholm and Gothenburg. It will be the second time Sweden has hosted the WW18 (Stockholm, 2011) and the fifth time in row it will be held in Europe or Asia.

Not surprisingly, the United States and Canada remain favourites. They have both appeared in every gold-medal game since the first tournament in 2008, except in 2018, when Canada lost to Sweden in the semis. Overall, the Americans hold an 8-5 edge over their rivals in gold medals.

As with the senior Women's Worlds, the eight-team tournament will feature two vertical groups: the top four nations in Group A, all of which will qualify for the playoff round, and the



The last U18 Women's Worlds finale was a thriller that saw USA's Kiara Zanon score the overtime goal versus Canada.

lower-ranked four in Group B, the top two of which advance. The last two teams in Group B will play a best-of-three relegation series.

GROUP A

USA

Eligible returnees from 2020: Danielle Burgen (F), Kirsten Simms (F)



The final roster for the Americans consists of 2004- and 2005-born players, except two

15-year-old forwards—Margaret Scannell, who is playing at Shattuck-St. Marys, and Josie St. Martin, of Stillwater High School in Minnesota.

The team will be coached by Katie Lachapelle, who has been behind the bench at the NCAA level for more than two decades. The 44-year-old currently is the head coach at Holy Cross. The U.S. has won gold in five of the past six seasons, including 2019, so Lachapelle knows what is expected of her.

CANADA

Eligible returnees from 2020: none



Howie Draper will be behind the bench for the third straight tournament. He led the Women's U18 team to gold in 2019 and silver a year later.

This time, he will hold an intense training camp for 40 players between Boxing Day and New Year's Eve in St. Catharines, Ontario, after which he will pare the roster down to the reguired 20 skaters and three goaltenders before flying to Sweden.

The 40 players at camp are all 2004- and 2005-born, half of whom are from the Canadian province of Ontario.

RUSSIA

Eligible returnees from 2020: Yulia Volkova (G), Anna Sviridova (D)



Russia has won three bronze medals in the last six years, including 2020 when they beat Finland. 5-1.

Yulia Volkova was the backup two years ago on that team, playing in two of the team's six games (both losses). Anna Sviridova has had a strong showing with Ufa in the Russian women's league and scored once in that bronze-medal game.





FINLAND

Eligible returnees from 2020: Siiri Yrjola (D), Anna-Kaisa Antti-Roiko (F), Oona Havana (F), Tilli Keranen (F), Sanni Vanhanen (F), Paulina Salonen (F)

Although the Finns are clearly the third best women's nation in the world at the senior level, they have struggled at the Women's U18 level, earning only three bronze medals in 13 years.

Mira Kusima will be back behind the bench for a third straight year, which only makes sense because she also coaches Team Kuortane, the Suomi equivalent to the USNDTP. She has the possibility of using six players from 2020, which would make Finland the most experienced team in Sweden.

GROUP B

SWEDEN

Eligible returnees from 2020: Tuva Kandell (D), Ida Karlsson (D), Mira Markstrom (D), Nicole Hall (F), Ebba Svensson Traff (G)

Historically the Swedes have been the best European team in Women's U18 play, winning five bronze medals and that one incredible silver in 2019. They finished 5th the last two tournaments, however, and find themselves in Group B.

Their coach will be Madeleine Ostling, the coach of Linkoping in the domestic women's league, and Pernilla Winberg as her assistant. The team won only one of three games in Kuortane last month in a tournament and in December they will host a 3 Nations Cup as final preparation for the U18. The roster for the November games was entirely 2004 and '05-born players playing in the Swedish women's league.

CZECHIA

Eliaible returnees from 2020: Barbora Bartakova (F), Lucie Gruntova (F)



The Czechs have won only two medals in Women's 18 history (bronze in 2008 and again in 2014), but the team will be on a high after the senior roster qualified for the Beijing Olympics last month, giving a huge boost to the women's program.

Pavel Zuziak will be back for a fourth year as coach and will likely lean on Bartakova and Gruntova, neither of whom was a huge factor two years ago but are now in their final year of eligibility and the senior members of the team.

SWITZERLAND

Eligible returnees from 2020: Annic Buchi (F), Alina Marti (D), Jade Surdez (F), Alessia Baechler (D)



The Swiss have two 2004-born players who are eligible to play in 2022—forward Jade Surdez and defender Lisa Poletti. Surdez played at the 2019 and 2020 WW18 and is currently in Canada for two years playing at Rink Hockey Academy in Kelowna, British Columbia.

Poletti played at the 2019 U18s and remains in the Swiss women's league, where she has played for several years. Buchi is still only 16 and plays in the Swiss women's league. The Swiss have finished as high as 6th only once (2019).

GERMANY

Eligible returnees from 2020: Svenja Voigt (F), Celine Mayer (F)



The Germans are back in the top pool after four years. They won Division I-A in 2020 and have waited patiently for a chance to play against the best once again.

The other two are forwards Svenja Voigt and Celine Mayer. Voigt will likely be the only player at the 2022 WW18 who also played at the most recent senior Women's Worlds in Calgary. She has played at Stanstead College in Quebec the last three years and might be the best European on the ice in Sweden. They might be new to the top pool, but expect them to compete for a playoff spot rather than think only about avoiding relegation.





Despite playing in unusual circumstances, the long-anticipated return of the Women's World Championship in 2021 was a classic...especially for the host nation.

Here are 10 things we learned from from the summer tournament that took place in Calgary.

1—Canada is back

For captain Marie-Philip Poulin to score the 3-2 final overtime winner against the archrival Americans was the perfect climax for Canada. The 30-year-old legend, who also notched the 2010 and 2014 Olympic gold-medal winners, shot so quickly that video review was required to confirm her celebration.

It's Canada's first Women's Worlds gold medal since 2012 and first title since Sochi. The hosts stumbled slightly in their 5-3 opening win over Finland, but powered to glory with a total team game, demolishing the U.S. 5-1 to complete Group A. Tournament MVP Melodie Daoust joined Natalie Spooner and Erin Ambrose on the all-star team.

Looking rejuvenated, coach Troy Ryan's troops go to the 2022 Beijing Olympics as 1A instead of 1B favourites.



Four months after the tournament was postponed and moved from Halifax, Team Canada hoisted the trophy in Calgary.

2-U.S. must reassess

By their lofty standards, the silver-medallist Americans had a so-so tournament.

With all due respect, veteran all-star blueliner Lee Stecklein should not lead this stacked squad with 7 points. For rookie Grace Zumwinkle (4+2=6) to match the production of superstar Hilary Knight, who surpassed Cammi Granato for all-time tournament goals (47) and U.S. points (80), suggests the 22-year-old forward merited more than 9:18 of ice time in the final. Never mind other key youngsters, from Cayla Barnes (17:33) to Abby Roque (0:00).

Coach Joel Johnson's team never quite fired on all cylinders, averaging 4 goals per game rather than the 5.85 they posted in 2019. Outshot and outplayed in their two Canada clashes, the Americans must determine how much to tweak their tactics and personnel before Beijing.

3— Finns are within striking range

Getting outscored 11-3 on aggregate by the North Americans and earning bronze for the 13th time ever doesn't imply much Finnish progress. Yet despite no Espoo-style miracle, Finland, captained by all-time Women's Worlds games leader Jenni Hiirikoski (75), overachieved with eight tournament rookies.

With Noora Raty home in Minnesota, newcomer Anni Keisala (1.43 GAA, 94.5 save percentage) won Best Goalie honours, forming a strong tandem with Meeri Raisanen.

The Finns were tops on the penalty kill, allowing zero goals on 17 disadvantages. Even when outshot, they were in every game till the end and had enough chances to win. To make another final, Suomi needs more secondary scoring besides the line of all-star Petra Nieminen, Susanna Tapani, and Michelle Karvinen, which produced nine of the team's 17 goals.

4—Power plays aren't always powerful

Coach Pasi Mustonen noted that Finland's power play (15.3 percent) was normally a bigger weapon. He wasn't alone in his woes. The Americans sagged (12.5 percent), with zero PP goals from their elite trio of Knight, Brianna Decker, and Kendall Coyne Schofield. Even victorious Canada didn't dazzle with the woman advantage (14.8 percent).

Instead, it was Group B contenders exploiting power plays. Tournament-leading Czechia (20.8 percent) fell 3-2 to second-ranked Japan (19.2 percent) in placement action, with PP goals by Hanae Kubo and Rui Ukita. Overall, these weak power plays reflect pandemic-driven rustiness. Come Beijing, with more practice, it'll be better.

☐ I Welcome I Bulletin I IIHF I Competition I Results I Gallery I Interview I ① I 🖂





5—Goalie question marks abound

In net, Canada looks set with starter Ann-Renee Desbiens. For the U.S., Nicole Hensley may have stolen Alex Cavallini's thunder in Calgary. But could the unused 2021 Patty Kazmaier Award winner Aerin Frankel or injured 2018 Olympic heroine Maddie Rooney still emerge as the Beijing starter?

Who does Finland start if Noora Raty returns in February? Even though Switzerland's Andrea Braendli recorded a tournament-high 181 saves (mostly against medal-winning teams), could bronze-medal starter Saskia Maurer's stellar numbers (1.96 GAA, 94.6 save percentage) potentially put her in the driver's seat? What's next for 34-year-old veteran Jenny Harss after the coaches picked Franziska Albl as one of Germany's top three players?

6—For Swiss, timing is everything

Scoring just one goal in four preliminary-round games, Switzerland looked doomed, especially after a leg injury against the ROC team sidelined sniper Alina Muller.

However, in the quarter-finals, coach Colin Muller's team rebounded to shock the Russians with a 3-2 overtime win. Their joyful anthem-singing at WinSport Arena was a highlight. Ultimately, going from total disaster to fourth place was a Cinderella story indeed.



7—Czechs just need to meet the moment

This was the strongest Czech Women's Worlds team ever, from dialed-in goalie Klara Peslarova (1.17 GAA, 93.3 save percentage) to the offensive creativity and two-way smarts of captain Alena Mills (5+2=7) and top goal-scoring defender Dominika Laskova (4+0=4).

Yet after losing 1-0 to Finland in the guarter-finals, the Czechs looked deflated. Coach Tomas Pacina's stone-faced displeasure with seventh place was palpable. Still, with a little more finish and mental toughness, these women will play for medals soon.

8—Newcomer nations show promise

Led by captain Fanni Gasparics (4+1=5) and starter Aniko Nemeth (2.67 GAA, 87.8 save percentage, newcomer Hungary improved daily until beating Denmark 5-1. At the Olympic qualifiers (11 to 14 November), coach Lisa Haley's team looks poised to make some noise in Chomutov, Czechia.

The winless Danes, back in the top division for the only time since 1992, had a tougher go with a 3-15 goal difference. Yet under coach Peter Elander, they demonstrated competitiveness versus Japan (1-0) and Germany (3-1), which they can carry into their Fussen, Germany qualifiers.

9—Alberta knows how to host

Taking over hosting duties from Nova Scotia on short notice, Calgary didn't miss a beat. WinSport Arena was a comfortable, practical bubble venue in Alberta's biggest city. Crucially for health and safety, over 3,800 COVID-19 tests on players, staff, officials, and others yielded zero positive results. It also bodes well for the 2022 World Juniors in Edmonton and Red Deer.

10—Beijing should be epic

At the Winter Games, will Canada rule the roost again? Or will the U.S. defend its 2018 title? Is it Finland's time to win it all? Could we see newcomers challenging the ROC team and Switzerland for bronze? And what kind of growth will the seventh Olympic women's hockey tournament spark for this sport worldwide? We can't wait to find out.





Video Highlights: 2021 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship



Click here to view all game highlights from the 2021 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship

All-Star Team/MVP

Anni Keisala, G, FIN

Erin Ambrose D, CAN Lee Stecklein, D, USA

Melodie Daoust, F, CAN Petra Nieminen, F, FIN Natalie Spooner, F, CAN

Directorate Best Forward, MVP



Melodie Daoust



7GP, 6G, 6A, 12P, +13

The 29-year-old Team Canada vet led the way once more in Calgary, finishing first in points scored and acting as an offensive catalyst for the Canadians. She earned her second MVP after also winning the award at the Women's Olympic event in Korea in 2018, and will be looking to get Canada back to the top of the Olympic podium in Beijing.

Directorate Best Defender, All-Star



Lee Stecklein



7GP, 2G, 5A, 7P, +12

Stecklein put her name into consideration as one of the United States' top defenders during her Calgary campaign, averaging a point a game and leading her team in scoring. Boasting a strong shot and a knack for finding her teammates in scoring position, Stecklein is as much an offensive threat as a defensive standout.

Directorate Best Goalkeeper



Anni Keisala



5GP, 3W, 1.43GAA, 94.85SVS%, 2SO

Having big skates to fill with the absence of longtime star goalie Noora Raty, Anni Keisala stepped up and made her countrywoman proud with an excellent leading performance. The 24-year-old Lohja native had only started one Women's World game prior to Calgary but demonstrated that the Finnish net is in good hands.





Bound for Beijing

Olympic qualifiers ready for '22 Games



The Men's and Women's **Final Olympic Qualification** tournaments were heldearly in the season, with three teams each earning a spot in Beijing 2022.

MEN'S OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION

A total of 36 countries took part in the Men's Olympic Qualification. Only 12 of them were left when the Final Olympic Qualification was held in August, competing for the last three tickets to the 2022 Games in Beijing.

Over just three days of hockey, the four teams each of the groups played each other once, with the team left atop the standings earning the right to compete in the Winter Games.

The final day saw just six teams remaining in contention for the last three spots, and when the dust settled it would be Denmark, Latvia, and Slovakia that would be left standing as the men's Olympic qualifiers.



A 2-1 victory over France in the decisive Group E game sent the Baltic nation to Beijing for an impressive fifth Olympic appearance in the last six Games.

Goals from Rihards Bukarts and Miks Indrasis did the damage for Latvia, putting the home team into a 2-0 lead and triggering a party atmosphere in Arena Riga.

But Stephane da Costa scored late for France - the first goal Latvia allowed in the whole tournament - and set up an anxious finale before the final horn ended Les Bleus' Olympic dream.

DENMARK



Denmark joined the IIHF in 1946, and since then has never qualified for the Olympic Games. That time is over after the Danes de-

feated rivals Norway 2-0 in the deciding game of the Final Olympic Qualification Group F tournament, earning their first-ever trip to the pinnacle of international ice hockey.

Forward Frederik Storm scored the game winner and goaltender Sebastian Dahm posted a 26-save shutout against the Norwegians to help drive their team to a historic qualification. Coming into the final game, host Norway and Denmark have been undefeated with the Danes leading the group thanks to their better goal difference.

"It's huge," said Storm after the game. "We have such a good group here and we finally managed to succeed and qualify. I've played in three qualification tournaments and we never made it before, so to do it with this group is amazing."

"I'm just so relieved, we have been chasing this for years," said Dahm.





SLOVAKIA



The 12th and final men's ice hockey berth at the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing went down to the wire between Slovakia and Belarus.

Before a sometimes delirious, often nervous. crowd of 7,105 - the maximum allowed under public health regulations – at Bratislava's Ondrej Nepela Arena, Slovakia won 2-1 to gain the spot.

The Slovaks only needed one point to qualify, and that's essentially what they got, with Libor Hudacek scoring the game-winning goal into an empty net as Belarus went for it all.

"At the last couple World Championships, I think we should have won more games that we did but we found ways to lose close games," said Slovak head coach Craig Ramsay. "This time, in a very tough game, we found a way to win."



WOMEN'S OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION

With the top-6 teams of the IIHF Women's World Ranking already seeded into Group A of the two-tiered womens' preliminary round, there were three spots left to join Japan and China in Group B.

From an initial pool of 21 teams, it would be Sweden, Denmark, and Czechia that booked their tickets to Beijing 2022. The Danish and Czech women's national teams made it to the Olympics for the first time while Sweden has qualified for every Olympic women's ice hockey tournament since the first edition in 1998.

The Final Olympic Qualification was held from 11-14 November in Sweden, Germany, and Czechia.

CZECHIA



It came down to the final day of qualifying. with a deciding game between Czechia and Hungary...two 2-0 teams that had come close



before but had never reached the Olympics.

But the Czechs made it clear right from the get-go that this spot was not up for dispute. They scored three times in the first period before cruising to a 5-1 victory, and punched their tickets to Beijing.

DENMARK



Securing an all-important point in its last game of the Women's Final Olympic Qualification Group D, Denmark's women's national team will compete in the Olympic Games for the first time in history following a 3-2 shootout loss to Germany.

For Danish women's hockey, never has a loss felt so good. The women's qualification means Denmark will ice both a men's and women's Olympic team for the first time ever.



"Yeah definitely," said Danish defender Amalie Andersen. "I was pretty much shaking the whole game but just trying to stay calm, breath and take it one second at a time."

Denmark came into the game needing just a single point to reach the Olympic Games for the first time in history. The Danes were unbeaten in two games in Group D after defeating Italy 4-0 and Austria 1-0.

SWEDEN



The Swedish women's national team will be back at a top-level event after a threeyear absence and has qualified for the 2022 Olympic

Winter Games after beating France 3-2 in a winner-takes-it-all game at the Final Olympic Qualification Group E on home ice in Lulea.



The Swedes built up a 2-0 lead after 24 minutes of play and had more energy to take the win home outshooting Les Bleues 40-17. Sweden had to go through the Olympic Qualification for the first time and continues its streak of Olympic participations.

"There were a lot of ups and downs on the ice and also emotionally. It was a rollercoaster ride but we handled it pretty well in the end. It was a lot of emotions." said Swedish defender Johanna Fallman.

"It's huge for women's hockey in Sweden to be back at the top level and play at the Olympics. That's important for the game in Sweden and we're pumped."



Gallery



Canada's Melodie Daoust celebrates after scoring a goal against Switzerland at the 2021 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship.



Germany's Franziska Albl makes the save against Czechia's Sara Cajanova.



Canada's Marie-Philip Poulin scores the golden goal in overtime at the Women's Worlds.



The Danish women's national team is congratulated by local fans in Germany after winning the Flnal Olympic Qualification.



The Czech women's national celebrates with their very own ticket to Beijing after winning a qualifying spot for the Olympics.



Slovakia's bench reacts after the team won its final game to earn the country's eight straight trip to the Olympic Games.





Germany's Jennifer Harss makes a pad save against Hungary's Emma Kreisz at the 2021 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship in Calgary.



Hungary dives for the puck as it crossed the goal line for Czechia's Daniela Pejsova.



Team USA gathers before the start of the 2021 Womens' Worlds gold medal game.





A new Council, and a new vision

Sitting down with new IIHF President

By Andrew Podnieks

One of the guiding principles of Luc Tardif's vision of being IIHF president came from a simple but insightful saying: "Walk alone, you go faster; walk together, you go farther."

Now that he is president, Tardif is eager to put those words to work.

"I have always worked in a team environment," he explained, "and what that means is that everyone is working towards the same goal. If you make decisions on your own, okay. You can do that easily and quickly. But if you work with others, you have to organize your thoughts and consult other people, and the results can be so much greater. I'm not sure where that expression come from, but I'm not shy to use someone else's smart words!"

Since assuming the role of president at the end of September, Tardif has held three Coun-



"We need to figure out where we're going and how to get there, so the Strategic Plan is our first order of business."

cil meetings, two in person, one virtually. He hasn't wasted time in creating a new environment, a new community of trust and respect and action.

"You know, I was elected president, so I didn't get to choose the Council," Tardif continued. "The MNAs chose the Council, but I am lucky, because I have a very good team around me."

"Half of the Council is, you might say, experienced, and half new people, so there is a lot of energy. You have the perfect mix to be able to do good things, to see in new and different ways and to make intelligent decisions."

Tardif sees much work ahead, and he isn't afraid to roll up his sleeves and spend the hours doing what needs to be done. But he is an organizer, a planner, a man who thinks logically.

"I feel as though our Council wants to be involved. They have strong opinions, and our first discussions have been very exciting. We are discussing a new structure for the committees, but in the end we decided first to do a strategy plan because without a strategy plan for the next five years, we will have no guidance. We need to figure out where we're going and how to get there, so the strategic plan is our first order of business. We want it ready for the Congress next May during the World Championship in Finland."

The early signs of Council activity have been positive, which also reflects Tardif's personality. He is a glass-half-full kind of person by nature, an optimist, someone who identifies a goal and believes it can be attained.

"I've been very encouraged by our first Council meetings," he continued. "We have five years in front of us. but I like our start, and I'm confident for the future. But having said that, we're not going to wait for the strategic plan before we start to work! Our first priority is to develop the game in a sustainable way, to help coaches, who can then help young players."

"This will be the task of Petr Briza, my vice president. We need to create the knowledge to help MNA's help kids play the game, love the game, stay in the game. After that, we need facilities. If you want to develop the game, you need more ice rinks. With that comes political work, to help convince mayors and leaders in cities and countries to invest in these projects. Ice hockey is a good sport. It develops good people."

Noble words, to be sure, but augmented by some out-of-the-box thinking that Tardif hopes drive the IIHF into a more entertaining and imaginative future.

"I am very eager to work on a new format for hockey, playing full games 3-on-3," he revealed. "This was tried in the last Youth Olympic Games. Next time, we will play a full competition 3-on-3, and we will amend the rules for this as well. This kind of thing has been done in basketball, and with the rugby 7s. It will create another way to participate in hockey, and we can bring this to the Olympic Games."

"We need new formats to gain popularity with young people. Today, kids don't watch one game; they watch five at the same time. Their attention span is different. Three-on-three is a more dynamic format. You can play two shorter games on the same day. I want to build a



Developing the 3-on-3 concept from the Youth Olympics and creating opportunity for more international events is a priority.

task force to investigate this and other possibilities."

Tardif also looks at the IIHF's annual schedule and sees an undervalued tournament that he hopes to promote with dynamism.

"There is the Under-18 tournament on the men's side. I think we have a jewel here. If we can convince the European teams to make a deal with the NHL. like we did for U20 in Canada, we can have a top, high-level event that we can all be proud of and that can be a worldwide success."

And among the biggest areas of discussion and ambition are thoughts of creating a true international calendar around the Olympics and an annual break in February which the NHL and IIHF could use for a range of possibilities.

"When I met with Gary Bettman and Bill Daly in Toronto," Tardif offered, "I had some things in my head to discuss other than just the Olympics. We know it's every four years, and that there needs to be a general agreement between the NHL and the Player's Association to go, and this involves a lot of negotiating. What I did want to talk about was common goals. I talked about Asia development. I talked about the U18s."

"We also had some very constructive discussions surrounding the NHL's objectives concerning the World Cup of Hockey. In particular, we talked about with how the World Cup could be better integrated into the international calendar together with the Olympics. Overall I think this was a very positive first meeting, Their thoughts are also in line with the NHLPA's and I came away from the meeting feeling encouraged that we can work together to enhance the international game."

A revamped international calendar. Three-onthree tournaments. A ramped-up men's U18. And that's' only three months into Tardif's mandate! These are exciting times for international hockey, and the new IIHF president hopes only to keep the excitement going.





Coming

2021 IIHF World Junior Championship CANADA, Edmonton & Red Deer 26.12.2021-05.01.2022

2022 IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World **Championship Division II, Group B** SERBIA, Belgrade 10.01.2022-15.01.2022

2022 IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World **Championship Division III** MEXICO, Queretaro 08.01.2022-15.01.2022

2022 IIHF U18 Women's **World Championship**

SWEDEN, Linkoping & Mjolby 26.12.2021-05.01.2022

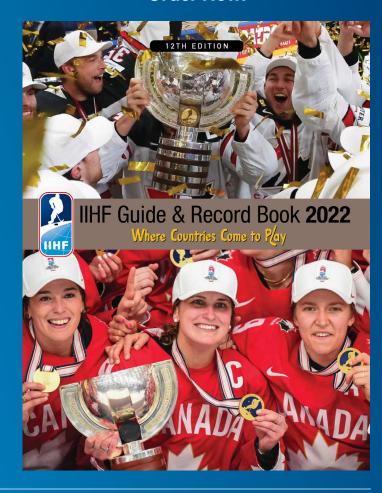
2022 IIHF U18 Women's World Championship Division I Group A HUNGARY, Gyor 09.01.2022-15.01.2022

2022 IIHF U18 Women's **World Championship Division I Group B** AUSTRIA, Radenthein 10.01.2022-15.01.2022

2022 IIHF U18 Women's **World Championship Division II** TURKEY, Istanbul 21.01.2022-27.01.2022

Click here for 2021/22 IIHF tournament list

The 2022 IIHF Guide and Record Book **Order Now!**











Suppliers

Bauer















is a bi-monthly publication by the International Ice Hockey Federation

For information or to subscribe: media@iihf.com www.iihf.com

Editor-in-Chief: Adam Steiss Editors: Martin Merk, Shelby Mull, Andrea Candrian