



IceTimes

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Looking back to Beijing

Finland set for IIHF Worlds

Olympic tournament recaps



From the IIHF President

Actions, not words

By Luc Tardif

As we near the completion of the first IIHF season under the new Council term, there is much to look back on, and much more to look forward to.

With the Finnish cities of Tampere and Helsinki preparing to host the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship, we take a moment to review what has been an eventful season.

While we had the objective of playing all events in the IIHF Championship program, the COVID-19 Omicron variant forced us to cancel several tournaments, including the 2022 IIHF World Junior Championship after ten games, and the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's World Championship. These were difficult decisions to make but looking back were absolutely necessary to ensure the health and safety of our players.

It was a sobering fact to face, but immediately after these events were cancelled we launched into efforts to find a way to reschedule these events. I commend the hard work and commit-

ment of the participating teams and the tournament hosts, who stepped up to find new dates to give these players the opportunity to get back on the ice. At this time, we have succeeded in rescheduling all cancelled events.

In February we turned our attention to the Olympic Games. While we faced pandemic-related challenges, we were able to pull through thanks to our great cooperation between the IIHF Office and our participating teams. Whatever issue came up, we stayed in constant communication and managed to find a solution that enabled us to play two very entertaining and successful men's and women's events, and close Beijing 2022 with ice hockey again as the centrepiece. I would also like to congratulate China on two well-organized ice hockey venues, and special congratulations to the Chinese men's and women's teams who distinguished themselves with capable performances. We hope that their example will inspire a new generation to lace up skates and hit the ice.

Throughout all these events and challenges, the IIHF Council has been hard at work, canvassing our MNAs, leagues, clubs, and partners in their work towards developing the Strategic Plan 2022-26. We look forward to the IIHF Annual Congress where the Plan will be shown to our membership. In addition, we have had many meetings with leagues around the world, and

the work of our Presidential Task Force Groups has begun. I am satisfied that we have done a good job of listening to our stakeholders needs and we have the information to chart a course forward into the coming seasons.

Last but not least, we acknowledge with a heavy heart the tragic events unfolding in Ukraine.

The ice hockey family and the world has been impacted by the conflict. As a sport federation, our ability to make a positive impact in these events is limited, but that does not mean there is nothing we can do. The IIHF organized a special support group in order to coordinate release efforts to the Ice Hockey Federation of Ukraine. This group has been hard at work to assist the Ukrainian men's and men's U18 national teams, and their families. We have also seen many of our MNAs step up and offer support to their Ukrainian colleagues. Whether finding homes for U18 players and their families, providing financial support to the Ukraine federation, or setting up practice time for the teams in ice rinks around Europe, the ice hockey family once again proved why it is deserving of that name. Actions proved louder than words, and we are proud to have so many great people and organizations within the family willing to offer support.

Luc Tardif
IIHF President



News and Notes

IIHF

The IIHF has announced that **Matti Nurminen** will become the federation's next General Secretary. He will assume his new duties with the IIHF starting in summer 2022.



Nurminen brings extensive international ice hockey experience. His association with the IIHF initially grew through his work with several organizing committees of various IIHF World Championship tournaments. In 2012 Nurminen was also selected to serve as a member of the IIHF Competition Committee, a position he has held ever since.

In 2010, Nurminen became CEO of the Finnish Ice Hockey Association, responsible for all FIHA organizations and activities. Under his leadership the FIHA took significant strides forward and set new organization standards for budget, sponsorship, and on-ice success.

With Nurminen as CEO, Finnish ice hockey collected a total of 17 IIHF World Championship medals, crossing all age categories. Nurminen also oversaw three Olympic bronze medals from the Finnish national women's team, as well as the first-ever Olympic gold medal in men's ice hockey at the Beijing 2022 Olympic Games to go with bronze in Vancouver 2010 and Sochi 2014.

Nurminen has also been closely involved as a board member for the Vierumäki Sport Institute in Finland, which has played host to the annual IIHF Development and High Performance Camps. [READ MORE](#)

Born on 9 January 1973 in Helsinki, Finland, Nurminen studied at the Helsinki School of Economics and Business Administration, graduating with a Master of Science degree in Economics on 1998.

He has been actively involved in sport throughout much of his personal and professional life. He has served for several years in multiple boards of the Finnish Olympic Committee and has been a Board Member of the Finnish Hockey League since 2010.



2022 IIHF GLOBAL GIRLS' GAME

From 5-6 March 2022, the IIHF Global Girls' Game took place in hockey arenas around the world. The annual IIHF event saw a 2-day game between Team Blue and Team White where the puck was passed around the world through 37 countries

The weekend-long game between the Team Blue and Team White players starts with a prologu in Singapore and then on early Saturday in New Zealand before reaching Asia, Europe and eventually the last puck drop on Sunday evening in Canada.

[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE GGG TRACKER](#)

IIHF COACHING SYMPOSIUM

The Finnish Ice Hockey Association would like to invite you to the 2022 IIHF International Coaching Symposium to not only improve your skills but also to take the game we all love to next level! During the symposium, we will dive into leadership from various aspects in order to develop the great sport of Ice Hockey.

Confirmed speakers include Columbus Blue Jackets' General Manager **Jarmo Kekäläinen**, longtime Captain of Finnish National Team and World Champion **Lasse Kukkonen**, and Red Bull Academy's director of youth development **Niklas Hede**. More speakers are still to be announced.

The symposium will be hosted by one of the leading coach development professionals in the world Prof. Sergio Lara-Bercial from Leeds Beckett University. Sergio is also the Vice President of the International Council for Coaching Excellence.

The event takes place in Tampere Hall, Tampere during the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship 2022. The exacts dates are 22nd-23rd of May, Sunday to Monday. Registration starts on 23.2.2022.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

CANADA

Hockey Canada named the management group and coaching staff that will lead Canada at the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship in Tampere and Helsinki, Finland.



Shane Doan will lead the Canadian contingent as general manager, joined on the management staff by assistant general manager Rick Nash and senior vice-president of hockey operations and assistant general manager Scott Salmond.

Behind the bench, Claude Julien will take the reins as head coach, alongside assistants D.J. Smith and André Tourigny.

Julien recently served as head coach of Canada's Men's Olympic Team at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games, and was the head coach of Canada's National Men's Team at the 2021 Channel One Cup. He was previously behind the Team Canada bench as an assistant at the 2016 World Cup of Hockey, helping Canada win the championship. He won an Olympic gold medal as an assistant coach in 2014 and has twice been an assistant with Canada's National Junior Team at the IIHF World Junior Championship, winning silver in 1999 and bronze in 2000.

CZECHIA

The Czech Ice Hockey Association has named **Carla MacLeod** as new head coach of the women's national team. She will succeed Tomas Pacina, who was coaching the team for the past two seasons.



The 39-year-old won gold at the 2006 and 2010 Olympic Winter Games and the 2007 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship as a player.

She turned to coaching after Vancouver 2010, on the international stage as an assistant coach of the Canadian U18 women's national team and for three years with the Japanese women's national team.

This season she has worked as head coach of the University of Calgary women's hockey team, a position she will continue.

MacLeod will join the Czech women's national team at competitions and camps with the next big event being the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship from 25 August to 4 September in Denmark.



ESPORTS

The IIHF together with EA SPORTS have officially introduced playable women's teams and full rosters to NHL 22 for the very first time with the inclusion of international women's teams and the IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship in the latest patch update for the popular ice hockey video game.

Starting today, players can take the ice with female icons such as Team Canada's Marie-Philip Poulin, Team USA's Hilary Knight, Finland's Jenni Hiirikoski, Japan's Akane Hosomayada, Switzerland's Lara Stalder, and many more across a number of modes.

The IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship is also now playable as part of this latest update. Sixteen international men's teams and ten international women's teams have been added to NHL 22, each of which is playable in a variety of game modes. More countries are expected to be added in the upcoming seasons.

The IIHF Men's and Women's teams follow the introduction of the prestigious IIHF World Junior Championship, which was added last month alongside various federations, logos and uniforms being available in Ultimate Team and World of Chel.

This joint project with EA Sports is a further step towards the IIHF's vision to raise the women's game in terms of participation, awareness, and professionalism. The IIHF continues to work with all stakeholders to take concrete actions, to empower and develop girls and women in ice hockey, and to unleash the passion for the women's game at all levels, whether on the ice or virtually.

TOURNAMENT UPDATES

The IIHF has updated several tournament dates due to a reduction of teams after the restructuring of several divisions last week.

The 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship in Ljubljana, Slovenia has 3-8 May 2022 as new dates, the Division I Group B in Tychy, Poland will be played from 26 April to 1 May. Both groups will be played with five teams.

The dates of the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship Division II Group B in Zagreb, Croatia have been confirmed. The tournament will be played from 17 to 22 May.

Obituaries

MICHELLE BOLOGNINI

The Italian Ice Sports Federation and the international ice hockey family mourns the death of Michele Bolognini, a wonderful person, unforgettable friend and exemplary professional.



Bolognini passed away on 19th February at age 46 following a two-year fight with cancer. He served as head of the press office of the Italian ice hockey national teams and deputy editor of the press office of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano.

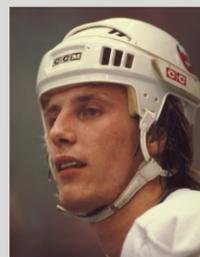
Michele inherited his infinite passion for ice sports and in particular for hockey from his father Giancarlo - president of the Italian Ice Sport Federation from 1997 to 2014 and who passed away in 2019. It was a love that he cultivated since he was a child and that accompanied him throughout his life and his entire professional career.

Michele is well-known to Italian ice hockey fans as the voice of HC Bolzano, providing commentary on Video Bolzano 33 for many years. He developed into one of the most famous ice

hockey journalists at the national level, distinguishing himself for clarity, seriousness, competence and authority.

MIKE BOSSY

Michel “Mike” Bossy, perhaps the purest goalscorer hockey has even known, died at his home in Montreal on 15 April after a lengthy battle with lung cancer. He was 65 years old.



Born in Montreal, Bossy was a standout with the Laval Titan in the QMJHL, scoring an unprecedented 309 goals in 264 games between 1973 and 1977. Despite these extraordinary numbers, he was regarded by some as a midling prospect because he wasn't particularly big, and he shunned physical play, refusing to fight the way so many other players of his generation embraced. He also wasn't known for his defensive work. As a result, Bossy wasn't selected until number 15 at the 1977 NHL Amateur Draft, the New York Islanders' general manager Bill Torrey believing his scoring ability trumped all perceived weaknesses.

No one could have predicted just how right the Torrey and the Islanders were. Bossy scored 53 goals as a rookie with the up-and-coming Islanders in his rookie season, 1977-78, incurring only three minor penalties the entire season and win-

ning the Calder Trophy as the league's best rookie. It was the start of nine consecutive seasons of 50 or more goals, the only player before or since to perform so consistently in an NHL career.

In his second season, Bossy scored 69 goals, and his 100th career marker came in just his 129th game, the fastest ever to hit 100 to this day. In his third season, he had 51 goals and helped the Islanders win their first of what would be four straight Stanley Cup championships. But on January 4, 1981, in a game against Quebec, Bossy tied a record for scoring that had been solely owned by Maurice Richard for some 36 years—the vaunted achievement of scoring 50 goals in 50 games.

Bossy entered his 50th goal of the season with 48 goals, and as the game progressed, he remained off the scoresheet and the possibilities looked bleak. But then he got number 49 with less than five minutes remaining and got number 50 with 1:29 left on the clock. He finished the year with 68 goals, including a record nine hat tricks. In the playoffs, he had 17 goals and 35 points in 18 games, leading the team to a second Cup victory.

In his fourth season, he scored 64 times and was named Conn Smythe Trophy winner for his outstanding playoffs, climaxed by a third Cup. But Bossy's most amazing playoff performance came in the Wales Conference finals against

Boston. He scored nine goals in the series including a record four game-winning goals), and the team rolled to its fourth straight title to earn the designation of dynasty.

In 1986-87, Bossy was limited to 68 games and scored just 38 goals. He had been beset by back problems, and over the summer nothing improved. He retired at age 30, but he had scored 573 goals and 1,126 points in 752 games.

Because the Islanders made the playoffs every year of his too-brief career, Bossy never played at the World Championship, but he did represent Canada at the 1981 and 1984 Canada Cup tournaments. In 15 games, he scored 13 times, helping Canada win in 1984 in large part thanks to his overtime winning goal against the Soviets in the semi-finals of a 3-2 win.

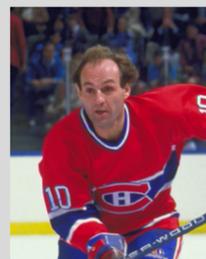
Bossy was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1991, and his number 22 was retired by the Islanders a year later.

In addition to his incredible skills as a scorer, Bossy was an advocate of fair play and violence-free hockey. He won the Lady Byng Trophy three times and never engaged in a one-on-one fight in his career. Later in life, he teamed with Cassie Campbell and Bobby Orr for many years with Hockey Canada's Safe & Fun Hockey initiative, preaching the fun and joy of the game.

Obituaries

GUY LAFLEUR

Guy Lafleur, one of the most loved and admired members of the Montreal Canadiens, passed away on 22 April in Montreal from lung cancer. He was 70.



Nicknamed “Le Demon Blond” in French or “The Flower” in English, Lafleur didn’t just score goals and win Stanley Cups; he did that and more with grace and elegance and a flair few before or since could equal.

Lafleur rose to prominence in the late 1960s as a member of the Quebec Remparts in the QMJHL, and after leading the team to a Memorial Cup in 1971 he was drafted first overall by the Canadiens. In his final season of junior, he scored 130 goals and 209 points in 62 games, and in the playoffs he had 43 points in 14 games. There was no greater junior in all of Canada. How Montreal had acquired that first overall selection is a story for the ages, as GM Sam Pollock first swindled Oakland out of the choice and then traded Ralph Backstrom to the struggling Los Angeles Kings to ensure they finished ahead of the Seals in the standings.

When Lafleur arrived for his first training camp he was offered number 4, the same number worn by the just-retired legend Jean Beliveau. “Guy” declined the honour and said he wanted to make a number of his own famous. He was given 10, and the rest is history. As a rookie, Lafleur continued to wear a helmet as he had in junior, and he scored an impressive 29 goals. But his production stagnated over the next couple of seasons, even as the Habs were winning the Cup in 1973.

But starting in 1974-75, he went on a scoring spree that at the time was unprecedented. He scored 53 goals and 119 points, and over the next six consecutive seasons he eclipsed the 50-goal and 100-point plateaus each time, the first player ever to do so. Not coincidentally, the Habs won four straight Cups between 1976 and 1979, and the screams of “Guy! Guy!” whenever he roared up ice were thrilling sounds every Saturday night at the Forum.

Lafleur was part of Team Canada at the inaugural Canada Cup in 1976. He scored his only goal in the series during a 6-0 win over Czechoslovakia in game one of the finals, and he was a member again five years later for the 1981 Canada Cup, scoring against Sweden and the Soviets in the round robin. His only other international experience came during the 1981 World Championship in Stockholm,

Sweden. Teammates included Larry Robinson and Lanny McDonald, and Canada was coached by Don Cherry. The team finished fourth, and Lafleur had one goal in seven games, that coming in a round-robin game against the Soviets.

The Lafleur-Cherry connection was forged forever at the 1979 playoffs. In the semi-finals, Boston, coached by Cherry, was leading Montreal, 4-3, in game seven, at the Forum. Late in the game, however, the Bruins took a penalty for too many men, and Lafleur scored perhaps his most famous goal on the ensuing power play. Getting the puck inside his own blue line, he quickly skated up ice and passed ahead to Jacques Lemaire coming over the Bruins’ line. Lemaire dropped it to Lafleur whose blistering one-timer beat Gilles Gilbert, who famously fell backwards, flailing arms and stick akimbo. Yvon Lambert then scored in overtime, and the Habs went on to defeat the New York Rangers in five games to win their fourth straight Cup.

Lafleur had 13 straight seasons of 20 or more goals with Montreal, and he had 30 in 1983-84, his last full season with the team. By this time his former linemate Lemaire was now the team’s coach, and the two didn’t get along well because Lemaire’s defence-first coaching didn’t mesh with Lafleur’s offence-first skills. Early in the 1984-85 season, Lafleur re-

tired. By this time, he had scored 518 goals and 1,246 points with the Habs. His number 10 was retired by the team early in 1985, and in 1988 he was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

But his passion for the game had not waned, and he came out of retirement to play for the New York Rangers. Now 37, he still managed to score 18 goals in 67 games, including two goals in what remains perhaps the greatest ovation ever given a visiting player. On 4 February 1989, Lafleur returned to the Forum for the first time as an opponent, now wearing the colours of the Blueshirts.

He scored two goals as fans chanted “Guy! Guy!” all night long, just as they had for 14 years. Lafleur later played two more years with the arch-rivals Quebec Nordiques, but no matter the sweater he was still cheered whenever he returned to play. He retired for good in 1991, his legend not tarnished in the least by his passionate late-career play.

Players just don’t play like Lafleur anymore. A glorious skater with power and a blazing shot, his legend was enhanced by playing under the booming thrill of Danny Gallivan’s voice, rising excitedly every time Guy got the puck in his own end and saw open ice. Gone too soon in life, he will forever be remembered for what he did on ice so very, very well.

Travels with Tardif

Many meetings for new IIHF President

By Andrew Podnieks

The IIHF is about to embark on its busiest summer in the federation's 114-year history.

Thanks to the dangers of the COVID-19 Omicron variant, several tournaments scheduled to take place in January 2022 were cancelled, but true to his word, IIHF president Luc Tardif is making ambitious plans to ensure the full 2022 program is played to completion.

That means tournaments in June (WW18) and August (WM20, WW), months usually reserved for a little rest and recuperation. Tardif was the target of criticism for cancelling tournaments and not providing alternate plans. "Don't judge me now," he said. "Judge me at the end."

Tardif's winter, however, was ambitiously busy all the same as he went from one city to another, one meeting room to another, working out many details for the IIHF's future. Here is a summary of his most recent efforts:

MEETING WITH EUROPEAN LEAGUES & CLUBS

13 January
Zurich, Switzerland

Tardif met with a new group of stakeholders whose job it will be to work together and find ways to optimize the European hockey schedule. Among the topics were the international calendar, officiating with the new Unified Rule Book, the referee exchange program, and the upcoming Olympic Winter Games.

"The meeting was the kickoff to a new group including MNAs, European clubs, and the IIHF," Tardif explained. "In recent times we have had a lot of meetings like this but outside of the IIHF, so this was a chance to start coordinating these groups through an official task force inside the IIHF. We started to define how we will work together, how we will coordinate a schedule and deal with sport politics, and create an agreement between us."

The leagues represent the seven top leagues in Europe—Peter Zahner, Martin Bauman, Peter Luthi and Jorgen Lindgren from the European Alliance were from that group. There were also four representatives from MNAs—Matti Nurminen from Finland, Anders Larsson (Sweden), Andy French (Great Britain), Lars Weibel (Switzerland). And then from the IIHF was me, Petr Briza, and Henrik Bach Nielsen."

"This meeting came soon after the NHL withdrew from the Olympics, so our first priority was to decide how the groups would work in Beijing, what players would be coming, how the covid testing of everyone would work. That was our first practical task, and I think it was a success. We also talked about having the NHL and KHL join our group to work on coordinating the world hockey schedule, because I think that is one of our most important functions." [READ MORE](#)



Tardif with IOC Athlete Committee Chair Emma Terho at the Men's Olympic Medal Ceremony.

MNA CALL ON STRATEGIC PLAN

19 January
Zurich, Switzerland

"We haven't had a strategic plan, and we need one," Tardif emphasized. "With a new council and a new president, I felt it was important to get organized before going off in all sorts of different directions. It's important to talk to the staff, to the MNAs of big countries and small countries, people working around us, marketing partners, fans, sponsors, everyone, to figure out where we want to go and how we are going to get there. This was a very important first step."

SPORTACCORD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

20 January

“The IOC asked me to join the board of SportAccord, which brings together all the sports federations. [IOC President] Thomas Bach wanted to make some changes, and so he asked me to come on board. It’s a huge Congress that deals more with the economics and technical aspects of sports, looking, for instance, at different types of surfaces that might be used for tennis. But it’s all part of bringing the IOC and IIHF closer together.”

HUNGARIAN HOCKEY DAY

22 January

Budapest, Hungary

“It was a sunny day, and there were so many hockey games that day!” Tardif enthused of his mid-winter trip to a smaller, but devoted, hockey nation.

“People came from everywhere. It started with young kids playing early in the morning, right in the middle of Budapest. There were celebrations at the Hungarian Hockey Hall of Fame.”



Tardif drops the puck to kick off Hungary Hockey Day.

“As the new president, I have had so many days of the business of the sport, but this was my first day of breathing ice hockey, celebrating the federation and watching games. It was a wonderful experience.”

AIOWF MEETING

1 February

Lausanne, Switzerland

“This is a group that represents the seven major winter sports, so this meeting was an important lead-in to the Olympics. We learned about the things we have in common, and we had discussions with the IOC about how we can improve relations. There are several new members in this group.”

WADA COORDINATION MEETING

7 February

Lausanne, Switzerland

“This meeting came at the start of the Olympics, with Ashley Ehlert, our Legal Director. We met WADA because part of my campaign when I was running for president was to promise to change the politics around anti-doping.”

“I feel this is a priority. We also met with ITA (International Testing Agency), which is an independent company that will conduct all of the doping tests for the IOC during the Olympics. I plan by the start of next year’s hockey season to have an updated agreement with WADA moving forward.”

MEETING WITH IOC PRESIDENT

17 February

Beijing, China

One of the most enjoyable and fruitful days of Tardif’s tenure to date came on the day of the women’s gold-medal game in Beijing.

“Thomas Bach and I watched the whole game of the women’s finals together,” Tardif recalled fondly. “We talked about how our preparations and the IOC’s preparations were working at the Games under a hard protocol, which was the price to pay to hold the Olympics at all. I think we were all happy with how things worked out. At the start, we were nervous, but we adapted and things worked out. By the end we were sleeping well! It wasn’t easy. Every day that passed successfully was a victory. I believe now that the partnership between the IIHF and the IOC has never been stronger. That’s important. We are happy to work together, and Thomas Bach and I are really happy to be working together. It’s a very good relationship. I’m confident for our mutual future. I later met with him again at the IOC office, and we are comfortable in each other’s company.”



IOC President Thomas Bach with Finland's women's team.

"It is my goal over the next five years while I am president to visit every IIHF Member National Association"

-Luc Tardif

PRESIDENT INFORMATION SESSION

21 February
Zurich, Switzerland

"I am a firm believer that communication is essential to a strong organization," Tardif continued, "and I promised all of our staff and MNAs that we would keep everyone informed with these kinds of updates every two or three months. For this meeting, we wanted to give everyone an update on COVID-19 and understand when we might safely return to normal business activities."

"On ice, that means looking at the tournaments we have planned for the end of this season—in March and April and May—as well as in the summer when we will make up those tournaments lost during the regular course of the season. It was a positive message to deliver because we will fulfill our promises to play all cancelled events. We will have another information session just before Congress because by that time we will have a new General Secretary, and there are a lot of things that will happen at Congress that people should know about."

CHL FINAL

1 March
Angelholm, Sweden

"This was the first time the IIHF president went to the final of the CHL! We are shareholders in the CHL, so it only makes sense to me that I should be there. It makes for a good spirit of cooperation."

2022 IIHF ICE HOCKEY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION IV

3 March
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

"This tournament marked the start of the revival of our activities, after the Olympics," Tardif explained. "This was also the first time Kyrgyzstan hosted a World Championship event. The president of Kyrgyzstan extended an invitation for me to come, and while I was there, I helped install the cornerstone of a new 2,500-seat arena that is being constructed."

"I also met the Sport Minister, and they gave me an honour. I am now the President of the Academy of Sport of Bishkek! This was an important trip for me. It's not a promise I have made public, but it is my goal over the next five years while I am president to visit every MNA. I think any time you can visit



Kyrgyz president Sadyr Japarov met with Tardif and awarded him with the Kyrgyz order of friendship 'Dostuk'.

a place, things can be accomplished. You meet people; you help with the politics; you can encourage support. It's not about watching hockey games; it can be so much more."

COMPETITION AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE

9 March
Zurich, Switzerland

"This was the second meeting to define how we're going to work. We want to work with the NHL and NHLPA on a global agreement that includes a joint venture for the under-18 men's tournament and hopefully the World Cup. They have agreed to join this group, which will be beneficial to everyone. We discussed qualification possibilities for the World Cup and made a presentation for them to see how a partnership for the World Cup might work. We had a follow-up video call with them in early April, and we have set up two other meetings. The idea is to build a proper and committed program for

the next ten years, including the Olympics and then World Cups in 2024, '28, and '32. Let's see. There is still a lot of work to be done, but the most important thing is that we are now working together."

TASK FORCE GROUPS

10 March
Zurich, Switzerland

"This was the first step in establishing a 3-on-3 hockey tournament for the Olympics, as well as looking at the practical aspects and costs and benefits of combining the men's Division I-A and I-B tournaments. For 3-on-3, there are many things to discuss about how it will work—the referees, the rules, how the game will look and be played. It might sound like a good idea, but before you go into competition you have many factors to consider. The details matter. I can see after the meetings of these two task forces that everyone in both groups is ready to work."

IIHF COUNCIL MEETING

18 March
Paris, France

"This meeting had a long agenda, but one important item was the discussion about the process for hiring a new General Secretary. We also finalized dates for tournaments for the 2023 season, and we went into depth on the budget because there has been so much uncertainty over the last two years. Right now, we are taking a prudent approach until things return to normal. We also did a de-briefing of the Olympics as well as preparing for the upcoming Congress. These are busy days!"

MEETING WITH NHL/NHLPA

21 March
Paris, France

"We have started to discuss how a global agreement might work. They wanted to work with the MNAs directly about the World Cup, but I exp-

lained to them that we have a task force for exactly this kind of reason. I think now they understand that when they come to Europe, they can meet with us because we have the coordination and partnership to make things easier for them."

"They're listening, and we're talking together. I'll have another meeting with Gary Bettman and Donald Fehr (*pictured on right: Tardif visiting the NHL offices in April with Bill Daly and Gary Bettman*), and we'll get into more details when they come to the World Championship again. Our goal is to have an agreement in principle prepared in time for Congress. If possible. But I also explained that for the next Olympics, we need to know their answer by February of 2024, if they are coming. We can't do things again the way we did this year. But our relationship with the NHL is strong."

UKRAINE COORDINATION GROUP

Ongoing
Zurich, Switzerland

Tardif has a voice in virtually every aspect of the IIHF, but over the last few months, despite these important meetings and ambitious efforts, there has been one ongoing effort that has superseded all of the above.

"On January 20, I was in Kyiv because we had a problem with (ice hockey club) Donbass Donetsk, but the situation has changed completely and more important we have been working with everyone we know to help the Ukrainians," Tardif began. "There are more than 700 young hockey players from Ukraine playing across Europe, and we had to help them find safety, equipment, transport, everything. It was a huge task."

"Our MNAs across Europe have also been doing everything they can, these efforts make me proud to be part of the ice hockey family."

[READ MORE](#)





Finland ready for Worlds

Expect thrills at men's Worlds in Finland

By Lucas Aykroyd



The 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship is all set to kick off in Finland, and predicting who will win the gold medal is only the start of the fun.

From the brand-new, 13,455-capacity Nokia Arena in Tampere to the classic, 8,400-capacity Jaahalli in Helsinki, fans are eager to pack the stands again as 16 nations compete on the ice from May 13 to 29 for global hockey supremacy.

Finland was just named the world's happiest country for the fifth straight year. Expect an exuberant vibe at the venues, from the official mascot Miracle's antics to the food, music, and giant video screens in the Official Fan Zones.

The Finns, who last hosted this tournament in 2013, are aiming to become just the second country ever to win the Olympic gold medal and the World Championship gold medal in the same year, following in Sweden's footsteps (2006). Under legendary head coach Jukka Jalonen, Finland has a good shot at "doing the double" on home ice, which would be unprecedented.

With a total commitment to two-way hockey and rock-solid goaltending, Finland edged the ROC team 2-1 in February's gold medal game



On the heels of an Olympic gold from their men's team, Finland gets to hold the IIHF Worlds on home ice in Tampere and Helsinki

in Beijing. All-star forward Sakari Manninen had a team-high four goals and seven points. Regardless of who suits up in Tampere, the overall recipe for blue-and-white success will be the same.

Canada, the defending World Champions, could pose a roadblock for Jalonen's men. The Canadians lost 3-1 to Finland in the 2019 final in Bratislava, but took revenge with a 3-2 win in Riga in 2021 on Nick Paul's thrilling overtime goal.

The last time Canada won back-to-back world titles was 2015 and 2016.

The motherland of hockey's unrivalled depth means you can never count it out. That lesson was reinforced last year when then-coach Gerard Gallant's squad dropped its first three games to Latvia, the U.S. and Germany, but rallied to triumph with stars ranging from tournament MVP Andrew Mangiapane, a veteran Calgary Flames forward, to defenceman Owen Power, the 2021 #1 overall pick of the Buffalo Sabres.



Canada's southern neighbours are overdue for gold. Stuningly, the U.S – despite icing superstars like Auston Matthews, Johnny Gaudreau, and Patrick Kane at recent Worlds – hasn't won a World Championship tournament since 1933.

To put that drought in perspective, the NHL's winningest coach, 88-year-old Scotty Bowman, wasn't even born then. So the Americans, who captured the bronze medal in Riga for the fourth time in the last nine years, are eager to script a new narrative with their young aces.

Hockey-mad Slovakia celebrated wildly after garnering an historic bronze in Beijing. It's still hard to believe power forward Juraj Slafkovsky led the Olympics with seven goals and was named MVP at age 17. All-star goalie Patrik Rybar also dazzled with his 0.86 GAA and 96.6 save percentage.

Andrea Cardini / HOF-IIHF Images

Gutsy and underrated, the Slovaks have fresh hope that they can claim their first Worlds medal since 2012's silver in Helsinki and perhaps even their first gold since their lone title in 2002 in Gothenburg.

The Czechs, meanwhile, are eager to outshine their Slovak brothers. Their last gold medal came in 2010 (Cologne) with a 38-year-old Jaromir Jagr. A return to their IIHF glory years of 1998 to 2001, when they topped the podium annually, seems unlikely.

Still, if the Czechs can play with the same enthusiasm their fans show (the Central European nation set the single-tournament attendance record with 741,700 in Prague and Ostrava in 2015), anything is possible this year. They've added an experienced head coach in Kari Jalonen, whose IIHF peak was guiding Finland to Worlds silver in Moscow in 2016.

And how about Sweden? Under head coach Johan Garpenlov, Tre Kronor has struggled of late. They shockingly finished ninth at the 2021 Worlds – matching their worst result from 1937 – and got blanked 4-0 by Slovakia in the bronze medal game in Beijing.

Bouncing back on Finnish ice to win gold would be sweet vindication for this Nordic powerhouse. Sweden took top spot thrice in the 2010's,



including the 2013 victory in Stockholm that ended the 27-year-old World Championship "home ice curse" and the consecutive gold-medal shootout triumphs over Canada in 2017 and over Switzerland in 2018.

2018 was also special for Germany, which peaked with an Olympic silver medal in PyeongChang. This hard-working crew, whose memorable run in Riga saw them finish fourth, would love to win Germany's first Worlds medal since 1953's silver on Finnish head coach Toni Soderholm's home soil. From NHL superstars like Leon Draisaitl to European-based talents like Dominik Kahun, the Germans have more offensive options than ever to complement their staunch defence.

Switzerland would love to give its fans reasons to cheer again. It's been a tough run lately with a 2019 eighth-place finish, the 2020 pandemic-re-

lated cancellation of the Worlds in Zurich and Lausanne, and a 2021 sixth-place finish. Yet in a year where Roman Josi and Timo Meier have set new Swiss NHL highs for points and goals respectively, optimism is on the rise.

There are many intriguing storylines to follow. Denmark is eager to build on a remarkable seventh-place finish in its Olympic debut this year. Latvia yearns for new heroes following the national team retirements of veteran leaders Lauris Darzins and Kaspars Daugavins.

France and Austria want to prove they belong here after getting unexpectedly promoted due to the expulsion of Russia and Belarus for invading Ukraine. And Kazakhstan and Great Britain will vie for their first Worlds quarter-final berths ever against other plucky underdogs like Norway and Italy.

With so many competitive teams, predicting the winner could be as tough as outrunning a reindeer in Lapland.

One thing is for sure: 2022 marks the latest a World Championship has ever taken place in Finland. On the final day of 29 May, sunset in Tampere is at 20:42 local time. Those who attend this tournament will bring home memories that shine as brightly as the Nordic midnight sun.



U18s back to Bavaria

Previewing eight-team tournament

By Derek O'Brien



The first official IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship was held back in 1999 in Fussen and Kaufbeuren, Germany.

Now, 23 years later, the tournament returns to its Bavarian roots with Landshut's Fanatec Arena stepping in as the host of Group A, two quarter-finals and all of the final four.

Kaufbeuren's Erdgas Schwaben Arena will host Group B and two quarter-final games. The tournament starts on 23 April and finishes with the medal games on 1 May.

Due to the suspensions of Russia and Belarus, this year's event has been reduced from 10 teams to eight. Group A in Landshut features defending champion Canada, the USA, Czechia and host Germany. Group B in Kaufbeuren has Sweden, Finland, Switzerland and Latvia.



One of the highest-rated NHL draft prospects out there, Connor Bedard won U18 gold with Canada in 2021.

GROUP A CANADA



Last year presented a rare opportunity for Canada to ice its best possible lineup for a U18 World Championship due to the pandemic-related league conditions, and the result was a dominant team that won just Canada's fourth gold medal all-time. Most years, their lineup is composed of players that miss their junior-league playoffs, and that will be the case this year. As a result, Nolan Baumgartner's team this team should be competitive, but otherwise

hard to predict. Notably, the Regina Pats' Connor Bedard, who had 14 points in seven games last year as a 15-year-old, will be available.

USA



Last year was a bit of a disappointment for the Americans, who saw their 16-year medal streak at this event end on home ice with a quarter-final loss. No team has dominated the U18 like the USA, which has won gold 10 times thanks to its National Development Program team that plays together all season.

Logan Cooley, Frank Nazar, Isaac Howard and Seamus Casey are just a few of the top prospects that should lead this year's team back to the medal chase.

CZECHIA



Last season the Czechs were unfortunate not to capitalize on a solid core of defencemen and finished a disappointing seventh. A silver in 2014 is the only U18 medal the Czechs have won since 2006 and they're not likely to add to that total this year unless Jakub Petr and his staff can get the most out of this group. Jiri Kulich and defenceman Tomas Hamala lead a small group of returnees while 2005-born Eduard Sale has had an impressive season and should draw some interest in his IIHF debut.

GERMANY



The Germans have never made the semi-finals at the U18s, with fifth-place finishes in 2001 and 2008 being their best showings, and they'll be hard-pressed to do so this year even with the home fans behind them. The German talent pool might not be as deep as it was in recent years but Julian Lutz of Red Bull Munich, who missed most of the season with an injury, is a notable exception. Polish-born defenceman Rayan Bettahar might be available too if his Swift Current Broncos miss the WHL playoffs.



**GROUP B
SWEDEN**



The Swedes have been one of the best teams at this event in recent years, winning their first-ever gold in 2019 and should be one of the strongest contenders to regain the title this year.

As always, they possess a deep crop of prospects, led by a trio of Djurgarden players, Johathan Lekkerimaki, Liam Ohgren and Calle Odelius, although Lekkerimaki currently has mononucleosis and his status for the tournament is unclear. Centre Leo Carlsson, who won't be eligible until the 2023 NHL Draft, is already an SHL regular with Orebo HK.

FINLAND



Similar to the USA, Canada and neighbour Sweden, Finland has been one of the most dominant teams in this event's history, with four golds and 11 medals overall.

The Finns also feature a deep roster of prospects, led by right winger Joakim Kemmel, who is coming off a brilliant rookie Liiga season with JYP Jyvaskyla and should be one of the top players to watch this tournament. Jani Nyman, Aleksanteri Kaskimaki, and defenceman Otto Salin are among the other Finns to watch.

SWITZERLAND



Switzerland won a silver medal way back in 2001, but since then has done no better than a fourth-place finish in 2015. As usual, the Swiss should play a solid team game, be tough to score on, and be a team that nobody wants to meet in the quarter-finals.

This team is somewhat thin on top-end talent though, and will depend on huge defenceman Lian Bichsel, captain and returnee, who is coming off a solid rookie SHL season in Leksand. In the event the Drummondville Voltigeurs miss the QMJHL playoffs, winger Julien Rod could become available.

LATVIA



Prior to this year, Latvia's best-ever U18 finish was eighth in 2019 and, due to this being an eight-team tournament this year, they will at least equal that. Last year, Latvia was strong defensively under coach Olegs Sorokins but struggled to score, and this year might be more of the same. Nils Fenenko of the QMJHL's Baie-Comeau Drakkar would be a big help on defence, and forwards Sandis Vilmanis and Dans Locmelis from Lulea in Sweden could help on offence.

As the tournament will return to 10 teams in 2023, no teams will be relegated from this event. Slovakia and Norway have already earned promotions to next year's U18 World Championship.





Finns reach new heights

10 things we learned from the Men's Olympic tournament

By Andrew Podnieks



The 27th Winter Olympic Games went off with nary a hitch, and the men's tournament was highlighted by Finland's first ever gold medal.

Along the way there were many highlights to remember Beijing by as we look forward to Milano in 2026.

1—Youth will be served

One of the enduring images of these Olympics was the ever-present smile on the face of 17-year-old Slovak Juraj Slafkovsky.

He came into the tournament as a bit player hoping to gain some experience for future Olympiads. He promptly scored the only goals in the team's first two games, added another in game three, and finished the tournament with seven goals to lead all scorers. He is the youngest player ever to lead the Olympics in goals, and in the process improved his status for the upcoming NHL draft.

2—Five x five rings

He may have been the oldest player on the team, but Swiss forward Andres Ambuhl proved he still has plenty to give.



Marko Anttila celebrates after Finland scored the go-ahead goal in the third period of the Olympic gold medal game.

The 38-year-old was playing in his record-tying fifth Olympics in hockey, but he also led his team in goalscoring with two. A modest total, to be sure, but the team finished a disappointing 8th and he still contributed.

3—Never give up the dream

Denmark joined the IIHF in 1946. After suffering a humiliating 47-0 loss to Canada at the 1949 World Championship, the team didn't make it back to the top level again until 2003.

But even over the course of the next two decades, their WM success didn't translate to anything at the Olympics—until this year. For the first time ever they qualified for the five-ring circus, finishing an impressive 7th overall.

4—Not unlimited depth

The Swedes have become the top contributor of NHL talent from Europe, but without NHLers in Beijing their talent pool wasn't quite up to snuff. Yes, they made it to the bronze-medal

game, where they lost to an inspired Slovakia, 4-0, but in six total games they scored a mere 13 goals. More shocking, Lucas Wallmark had five goals and Anton Lander four, and the other 20 skaters combined for a grand total of just four.

5—Anonymous no more

The Finns have created a mini-dynasty with a roster of less-well-known players, winning gold at the 2019 Worlds, silver at the 2021 Worlds, and now Olympic gold. Some 13 players were on two of those teams and five were on all three—captain Marko Anttila, Niko Ojamaki, Petteri Lindbohm, Atte Ohtamaa, and goalie Jussi Olkinuora. Heroes at home, they have earned respect around the world the best way possible—by winning.

6—Always believe

Slovakia was playing in its 8th Games since achieving independence, but until this year it had never won a medal. But thanks to Slafkovsky, and under-stated coach Craig Ramsay, the team gained confidence as the tournament moved on, leading up to a critical quarter-finals date with the young United States. Peter Cehlarik scored the winner in the shootout, and after a loss to the Finns in the semis they bounced back and beat Sweden, 4-0, to claim their first Olympic medal. Dreams sometimes do come true.

Andre Ringuette / IIHF Images



7—Future watch

In the end, the Americans finished 5th with a young, mostly NCAA roster made younger by the early injury to their key veteran, 34-year-old Justin Abdelkader.

They had their moments, until being upset by Slovakia, but time will show this was a pretty special roster with players destined to make an impact—Matty Beniers, Matt Knies, Nick Shore, Drew Comness, Sean Farrell, and Nick Abruzzese are just some of the young names to watch for in the coming years.

8—Happy hosts

Yes, China finished last of 12 teams. But they didn't lose by double-digit scores as many predicted, and they gave the home fans something to cheer for in the marquee team event of the



Olympics. They played above their weight class, that's for sure.

9—Powerful presence

In just 10 months, defender Owen Power went from top prospect to international hockey star. It started at the 2021 World Championship in Riga where he played his way into the number-one blueliner position, helping Canada win gold. A few weeks later, Buffalo drafted him first overall.

He then joined Canada's World Junior team at the ill-fated U20 last December, scoring a hat trick in one of only two games before the tournament was cancelled. And then he played at the Beijing Olympics, leading the team in ice time with 21:38 per game. Less than two months later, he made his NHL debut. All in less than a year.



10—Best score ever

The most thrilling game of the Olympics was Czechia's 6-5 overtime win over ROC. They trailed 1-0, 2-1, and 5-4, and won in OT on a Libor Sulak goal, adding to the long and rich legacy of great 6-5 games.

It started with Canada's 6-5 win over the Soviets in Game 8 of the Summit Series. There was also Canada's 6-5 win over Sweden to capture the 1984 Canada Cup; the three games of the 1987 Canada Cup between the hosts and Soviets, all of which ended 6-5; USA's 6-5 win over Canada in the gold-medal game of the 2010 World Junior Championships; Sweden's 6-5 win over the Americans at the 2009 World Championship; Finland's 6-5 win over the Czechs in the quarter-finals of the 2017 U18's, to name but a few great 6-5 games.





Canada rolls in Beijing

10 things we learned from the Olympic women's tournament

By Lucas Aykroyd



The 2022 Olympics took place in the shadow of the global pandemic, but that didn't stop the world's top women's hockey stars from lighting it up in Beijing.

Let's review 10 key takeaways from the seventh Olympic women's hockey tournament ever.

1—Canada's dominance no accident

Canada entered these Games as the reigning Women's Worlds champions after going unbeaten with a 34-7 goal difference in Calgary in August. Amazingly, they hit even greater heights with a perfect record and a 57-10 goal difference in Beijing.

The Canadians trained relentlessly in their pre-Games centralization bubble at Hockey Canada's Calgary headquarters. They had the right mix of youthful exuberance and veteran savvy. From the opening 12-1 romp over Switzerland to the revenge-laden 3-2 gold-medal win over the archrival U.S., Canada's depth and preparation was unbeatable.

2—Poulin shines among Canadian legends

For captain Marie-Philip Poulin to lead Canada to its fifth all-time Olympic gold medal was no



Canada was in top form in Beijing, outscoring their opponents nearly 6-to-1 and going unbeaten in seven games.

surprise. "Pou" burnished her legend by becoming the only player – male or female – to score in four Olympic finals. Her second-period winner was her second goal of the game, marking the third time she's had a two-goal Olympic final.

Yet the Quebec ace wasn't alone in shining. Sarah Nurse's assist on that winner gave the two-time Olympian 18 points, surpassing Hayley Wickenheiser's single-tournament record (17 points, 2006). Rookie Claire Thompson also set a Winter Games record for defenders with 13 points, while the ever-intense Brienne Jenner finally got her due as Olympic MVP. Throw in dazzling performances by rookie Sarah Fillier – already acclaimed as Poulin 2.0 – and veteran

Natalie Spooner, and you've got the greatest Canadian Olympic women's team ever.

3—The right coach means so much

Less than a year ago, Canada hadn't won a Women's Worlds title since 2012 or an Olympic title since 2014. Promoting longtime assistant coach Troy Ryan to the top job was a game-changer.

The Nova Scotia native unleashed his players' speed and creativity without sacrificing defence. Ryan fostered a fun, purposeful vibe that wasn't always apparent under predecessors Laura Schuler and Perry Pearn. Right now, there's no better women's hockey coach.

4—U.S. may have questions to answer

Silver is the saddest colour for the Americans, the former reigning Olympic and five-time world champions. Beijing raised innumerable questions.

Why wasn't there a replacement on hand when superstar Brianna Decker got injured in the opener? Why did promising youngsters like forward Grace Zumwinkle and defender Caroline Harvey get so little ice time? Why did goalie Alex Cavallini play in the final despite having a torn MCL? Going forward, can future Hall-of-Fame veterans like captain Kendall Coyne Schofield and top gun Hilary Knight once again outplay their Canadian counterparts? If USA Hockey's braintrust can't provide fresh solutions, their team may remain second-best.

5—Finns growing through adversity

Realistically, few expected a repeat of the 2019 "Miracle in Espoo" where Finland achieved its first Women's Worlds silver medal. Still, the Finns – third in the IIHF World Rankings – claimed their fourth Olympic bronze despite some obstacles.

Not only did coach Pasi Mustonen spark controversy by leaving all-time great goalie Noora Raty off the roster, but he also had to leave Bei-

Andre Ringuette / HOF-IIHF Images



jing early due to a family health situation. Yet led by captain Jenni Hiirikoski, the Finns persevered with 13 Olympic first-timers. They bounced back from their opening 11-1 loss to Canada to blank Switzerland 4-0 on the final day. There's reason for optimism as Suomi builds toward 2026.

6—Swiss getting closer

In Beijing, the Swiss recorded their second straight IIHF fourth-place finish, but they looked far more convincing than in Calgary, where they were outscored 26-5 for 2021's worst Women's Worlds goal difference.

Having a healthy Alina Muller (4+6=10) clicking with veteran captain Lara Stalder (5+4=9) elevated the Olympic team. Andrea Braendli also provided valiant netminding, facing an Olympic-high 274 shots.



After upsetting Finland 3-2 in the group stage and beating the Russians in the quarter-finals for the second straight tournament, Switzerland must now find a way to test the North American superpowers.

7—Sweden's still in recovery mode

Until Beijing, Sweden hadn't played a top-level IIHF tournament since its shocking relegation in Espoo three years ago. Opening the Olympics with two 3-1 losses to Japan and Czechia showed that the Damkronorna still have much work to do before going for medals as they did in 2006 (Olympic silver) and 2007 (Women's Worlds bronze). Falling 11-0 to Canada in the quarter-finals sealed their fate.

Still, with emerging stars like 21-year-old defender Maja Nylen-Persson, whose average



ice time led Sweden (20:15), and 24-year-old goalie Emma Soderberg, who stopped 91.2 percent of the 183 shots she faced, there's hope for the country that hosts the ultra-competitive SDHL.

8—Great goaltending is critical

In 2002, Mats Sundin cracked the Olympic all-star team – despite Sweden's quarter-final exit. In 2022, Czech goalie Klara Peslarova achieved the same unusual feat, primarily due to her 55-save performance in a 4-1 quarter-final loss to the Americans. The Olympic newcomer Czechs aspired to greater things than seventh place, but Peslarova's prowess gave this side another reason to believe they can crack the top four soon.

9—Lower-ranked teams can compete

Frankly, nobody was a pushover. Both the Japanese and Czechs are tantalizingly close to a



quarter-final upset. Host China – although heavily reliant on naturalized players in its first Olympics since 2010 – scored nice wins over Denmark and Japan and has the resources to keep developing.

And the newcomer Danes, who made history with a 3-2 shocker over Czechia, improved hugely over their tough Calgary showing.

10—Women's Worlds in Denmark will thrill

It's early to speculate about who'll shine brightest at the 2026 Games in Milano Cortina, but the very first Women's Worlds in an Olympic year is approaching rapidly in Denmark (Herning and Frederikshavn, Aug. 26-Sept. 4).

Based on Beijing, women's hockey fans can expect another classic 10-team showdown. Bring on the fun of summer hockey!

Tournament recaps

IIHF Championship program results

After an initial series of tournament cancellations to start the season, the 2021/22 IIHF World Championship program successfully concluded dozens of events around the world.



2022 IIHF ICE HOCKEY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SOUTH AFRICA Cape Town Division III - Group B

South Africa celebrated victory in the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division III Group B after a nail-biting finish to the three-team tournament in Cape Town.



2022 IIHF ICE HOCKEY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP KYRGYZSTAN Bishkek Division IV

World Championship hockey came to Kyrgyzstan for the first time – and the Central Asian nation rose to the occasion. Bishkek hosted the newly-created 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division IV and the host nation went perfect through its four games, compiling a 64-2 goal difference along the way.

The surprise of the tournament was Iran, which made its IIHF Worlds debut. The Iranians bounced back from an opening loss to win its next three games and claim a silver medal. Following up in the standings was bronze medallists Singapore, 4th-place Malaysia, and 5th place Kuwait.

The national team's games drew full houses to the Gorodskoy Katok in Bishkek, and saw Kyrgyz president Sadyr Japarov perform the ceremonial face-off at the opening game and returned for the tournament finale.



2022 IIHF ICE HOCKEY U18 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SLOVAKIA Piešťany Division I - Group A

Slovakia and Norway settled the promotion question by the fourth day of competition at the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship Division I Group A.

Both teams already earned promotion to the top group for 2023 thanks to a +16 goal differential for Slovakia and a +14 goal differential for Norway compared to the rest of the field. Norway's Martin Johnsen won the scoring race with 14 points (6G+8A).

The Slovaks earned the gold medal after beating Norway 5-2, and will return to the U18 top division after being relegated in 2019.

France won bronze on the final day of competition followed by Kazakhstan, Denmark, and Japan.

2022 IIHF ICE HOCKEY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP LUXEMBOURG Division III - Group A

The United Arab Emirates won their first IIHF tournament after an 8-1 win over host Luxembourg in the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division III Group A.

They finished first in the five-team standings with a perfect 4-0 record after a 10-game round robin in Kockelscheuer. Turkey (2nd), Turkmenistan (3rd), Chinese Taipei (4th) and Luxembourg (5th) rounded out the standings.



The hosts lost to Thailand in a shoot-out in the final game, but that was good enough to secure first place overall. The Rhinos trailed 0-4 early in the second period and were down 1-5 when Thailand got on the power play late in that same stanza – offering the Elephants the chance to claim the four-goal winning margin that would have seen them snatch a dramatic gold medal.

The Division IIIB was initially planned as a four-team event. However, Hong Kong, China had to withdraw leaving South Africa, Thailand and Bosnia & Herzegovina. The organisers and teams agreed to go for a double round robin, with each team playing each other twice.



When it mattered the most, Korea rose magnificently to the occasion to win gold at the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship Division II Group A played in Tallinn, Estonia.

Korea and Estonia both ended the tournament on 12 points, but Korea's last-gasp rally and 2-1 win over Estonia on Friday night proved decisive in separating the teams. The win sees Korea promote to the 2023 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship Division I Group B. It also marks a return to a level they most recently skated at back in 2016.

Great Britain, gold-medal winners at this level at the very same venue back in 2018, had an outside chance for gold ahead of the final round of games. In the end, they had to settle for bronze, followed by Lithuania, Romania, and Serbia.



Croatia went undefeated in three games and triumphed at the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship Division II Group B, which was held in Sofia, Bulgaria.

It is the first title for the country in the U18 World Championship program. 22 years ago, in the capital of Bulgaria as well, Croatia won the European Championships Division II.

After the withdrawal of Australia and China only four teams were left in the group. They played a round-robin tournament in four days with the third one as a rest day.

Spain finished with the silver medal, while bronze went to Netherlands. Tournament hosts Bulgaria finished in fourth place.



Chinese Taipei's youngsters took top spot in the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship Division III Group A in dramatic fashion on the final day.

The victory represents a best-ever result for the country at this level.

A 5-2 win over Iceland in Istanbul turned the medal race upside down, and Chinese Taipei emerged victorious in a three-way tie with the Icelanders (bronze) and the Belgians (silver). That means back-to-back tournament triumphs, with Chinese Taipei promoted to Division IIIA in 2019, the last time events at this level could be staged before the pandemic.

Mexico grabbed a dramatic win on the final day against hosts Turkey in overtime to avoid last place, while Israel finished in fourth.



The Chinese women's national team won the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship Division I Group B, capping off a perfect tournament of five straight regulation victories with a 7-2 triumph of host Poland.

Linemates Qiqi Lin and Ni Lin both finished the tournament with seven goals and 15 points – co-leaders in both categories. After finishing ninth on home ice at the Winter Olympics in Beijing two months ago, China is back in the Division I Group A for the first time since 2011. Previously, China had been in the top division of the Women's World Championships from 1992 until 2009, finishing fourth at the 1994 and 1997 Worlds as well as the 1998 Winter Olympics.

Tournament hosts Poland finished with silver, followed by Italy (bronze), Kazakhstan (4th), Korea (5th), and Slovenia (6th).



Great Britain's women froze out the opposition in Jaca to win the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship Division II Group A.

The Brits allowed just one goal in four games in Spain, wrapping it up with a 4-0 victory over Latvia to take gold. Britain has been in IIA for six seasons, finishing second in the last two tournaments before the pandemic. And you have to go back to 2008 to find the last time a GB women's roster won gold.

Losing 0-2 to Mexico (5th) in the final game cost hosts Spanish second place. Chinese Taipei claimed fourth place, the country's highest placing in women's hockey since its IIHF debut in 2017. The sixth team in this group, DPR Korea, had to withdraw from this year's competition due to Covid-19.



Belgium edged Lithuania on goal difference to finished first at the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship Division III Group A.

The tournament took place in a double-round-robin format with just three teams. Belgium won one out of two games against second-placed Lithuania but with the better goal difference in the head-to-head games.

Originally there were six teams in this group, but Hong Kong, China withdrew because of Covid-19 related issues. Soon after Ukraine had to withdraw due to the Russian invasion of the country. Then the Romanian Ice Hockey Federation informed that their team was withdrawn because it would not be able to fulfill the Covid protocols, which would foresee a quarantine for non-vaccinated players.



Up against three nations making their Women's World Championship debuts – host Serbia, Israel and Bosnia & Herzegovina – Estonia recorded three convincing victories and allowed just one goal.

Host nation Serbia found Estonia too much to cope with in its opening game, losing 4-0. But the team recovered to claim silver after wins over Bosnia & Herzegovina (5-1) and Israel (6-0). Bosnia & Herzegovina took bronze thanks to a 5-1 verdict against the Israelis.

For all the teams, it was a valuable learning experience and a first chance to test their progress against other countries in IIHF-sanctioned games. After a two-year hiatus in the lower divisions of IIHF play, this was a long-awaited debut for all three teams.



The Japanese U18 women's national team pulled off a stunning dominance at the 2022 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's World Championship Division I Group A as they went undefeated and unscored upon in five games in their quest for a return to the top level.

Japan outscored its opponents 26-0 in four games. Hina Shimomukai led the tournament scoring table with five goals and eight assists for a total of 13 points and a tournament leading +12 rating.

The silver medal went to Team France, while Italy took home bronze. Tournament hosts Hungary rolled over Norway 7-1 on the opening day to give it the points needed to avoid last place, while the Norwegians did not get a point and finished fifth.

Gallery



Finland celebrating a historic 2-1 victory against ROC in the Men's Gold Medal Game at the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games.



Team Slovakia clears the bench after winning its first-ever Olympic medal in Beijing.



Denmark's Frans Nielsen scores a penalty shot to upset Czechia at the Olympic Games.

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Finland defeated Switzerland, 4-0 on the final day of competition to win its fourth Olympic bronze medal.

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Le Mi of China celebrates a second period goal against Czechia during Group B action at the Olympic Games.

Andre Ringuette / HHOF-IIHF Images



Chiho Osawa of Japan scores a goal against Denmark at the Beijing 2022 Women's Ice Hockey Tournament

Andrea Cardin / HHOF-IIHF Images



Marie-Philip Poulin had two goals and one assist in the Olympic gold medal game. Not only did the Team Canada captain earn her fourth Olympic gold medal, it was also the fourth Olympic final in which Poulin has scored. No other player – male or female – has equalled that feat.



Czechia's Tereza Vanisova scores against Sweden's Emma Soderberg in Beijing.



China's women's team rose above expectations on home ice, earning two wins in Group B.

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Berteling looks back

Torriani winner set to be inducted into IIHF Hall of Fame

By Andrew Podnieks

It has been a two-year wait because of COVID-19, but finally in late May the IIHF will induct its Class of 2020 in person in a ceremony during the World Championship.

Among those being honoured is Ron Berteling, the long-time Dutch player who will receive the Bibi Torriani Award. He spoke recently with Andrew Podnieks via zoom from his home in Amsterdam to reflect on a career in ice hockey.

When did you first start to skate and play hockey?

I first started skating in 1964. I wanted to become a basketball player because my dad was a pretty good player in those days, but I was only seven, which is too young for basketball. Hockey was just a minor sport in Holland, but a friend of mine in the neighbourhood invited me to a practise and that was it—I fell in love with it right away. I used to practise stickhandling in my



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bedroom, and my bed could lift up, so I'd practise shooting pucks against the underside of the bed! Fifty-seven years later, I'm still involved in hockey. My son played at the highest level in Holland, and now I'm busy with my grandson. I run practises for him with the under-9 team in Amsterdam.

How did you turn your passion for the game into a pro career?

We were never professional players the way we think of it today. We were semi-pro. It was always my job and hockey in combination. But during holidays I was always at the rink. We played two or three games a week and practised

three or four times, but I worked for a company that was subsidized by the City of Amsterdam to maintain parks and provide programs and activities for kids throughout the city like roller hockey, basketball, everything to help kids stay active. There were about 50 playgrounds in all. Later I worked for Foot Locker as the events manager for Europe.

The Netherlands has played in the top level only twice, at the Olympics in 1980 and the World Championship in 1981. What are your fondest memories of those great years?

It started at the World Championship in 1978. It was the C Pool and the tournament was played in the Canary Islands. It was strange. We had to dress in the hotel, and then one of our team members rented an open Jeep to drive us to the arena! So we had full hockey gear on, and we're driving by visitors in their flip flops going to the beach while we went to the hockey rink.

That was in C Pool, and we won that. So in 1979, we went to the B Pool in Romania, in Galati, and won that, which qualified us for the Olympics and then for the A Pool at the World Championship in 1981. So we were going to Lake Placid and then Sweden. It was incredible. That was the peak of hockey history for Dutch ice hockey. I was lucky enough to be members

of those teams. After 1979, our hockey team was named sports team of the year in Holland. That had never happened before.

Did you think you could play with the best of the best or were you overwhelmed?

Later I became a coach and I would ask players if they could play with the team they just played? If they were born in another country, could they make that team? If they think about it and say yes, then I thought they were a good player. And I would say to myself that if I, or some of my teammates, were born in some countries that have a higher level of hockey, I could have played on their team.

I don't mean that to sound snobbish, but the problem was that we had only one rink in Amsterdam and had limited ice time. We might practise 250 hours a year, whereas in Sweden they practised 600 hours a year and the Soviets were more than 1,000 hours. So, of course, we're not going to develop as far as those players. And in total, Holland has only about 4,000 players.

What memories do you have from your World Championship participation?

In 1981, in Sweden, we played Team Canada, and we had a lot of players with dual passports who had moved to Canada at a young age and were now on our team. So for them, it was like me playing an official soccer game against Johan Cruyff. Canada had Guy Lafleur and Larry Robinson, so during the warmup they were just watching him skate around! They were in awe. Looking back, I still get goosebumps, but we had an unreal time. It was so much fun. But we knew it was a one-time thing. We fell back to the B Pool and then C Pool.



At what stage is Dutch hockey today? Can you ever imagine the team making it back to the top division?

It's doable. The top division is 16 countries, and the Dutch Federation is trying hard to achieve this, but you cannot give up. You have to set goals every couple of years. I'm coaching the Dutch under-20 team and a lot of the players are talented, but you have to have a certain mentality. They're all skilful, but what becomes important is what they do on the ice in games. How do they read and react to plays and game situations, and how do they handle those moments? That's more difficult. The big difference, though, is that young kids now travel. They can go places to play more and get more ice time, and that's so important. That's why I say it's doable.



Coming up

2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship
FINLAND, Tampere & Helsinki
13-29.05.2022

2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division I Group A
SLOVENIA, Ljubljana
03-08.05.2022

2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division I Group B
POLAND, Tychy
25.04-01.05.22

2022 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division II Group A
CROATIA, Zagreb
25-30.04.2022

2022 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship
GERMANY, Landshut & Kaufbeuren
23.04-01-05.2022

2022 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship Division I, Group B
ITALY, Asiago
25.04-01-05.2022

2022 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's World Championship
UNITED STATES, Madison & Middleton
06-13.06.22

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