

The IIHF expands its boundaries CHL bridges gap between club and national team events



Photos: NHL IMAGES & EUROPHOTO

THERE ARE TWO SIDES TO EVERY STORY: Swedish goaltender Henrik Lundqvist is one of the best known players on both sides of the Atlantic. As the goaltender for the NHL's New York Rangers, Lundqvist is the starter on one of the highest profile teams in the league. And as the 2006 Olympic gold medal goaltender for the Tre Kronor, Lundqvist is revered in his native Sweden. Now both those worlds will come together as the netminder will play in Europe with the New York Rangers at the first-ever Victoria Cup.

In the 100th year of existence, the IIHF is not only celebrating its past but we are also looking ahead to the future with a repositioning that involves substantial commitment to international club events.

■ ■ This is how we look the world of international ice hockey: The national team competitions are well established. We have the annual IIHF World Championship, the Olympics every four years and once in while, there is the World Cup.



RENÉ FASEL EDITORIAL

For many years the IIHF has nourished the ambition to expand its activities into international club competitions involving the best clubs in Europe, a champions' soccer league style tournament between October and January where teams play parallel with their national league schedule.

As the ultimate match-up we envisioned to reward the winner of this competition with a game against a top-quality NHL team in late autumn. We presented those plans during the 2007 World Championship in Moscow last year and eight months later we are able to announce the concrete plans.

The Champions Hockey League will start on October 8, 2008 with the 12 best European teams as described on page 5 in this issue. The Victoria Cup - what we

want to develop to an annual summit meeting between the European club champion and an NHL challenger will be played on October 1.

The ECC champion Metallurg Magnitogorsk and the New York Rangers are the historic first pair playing for the newly introduced trophy, named after the Victoria Skating Rink, the place where organized hockey was born in 1875.

With this, the IIHF has taken a major step towards this repositioning, where we look to venture into unknown territory without neglecting what has been our core business since 1908, national team competitions.

To reach the stage where we can officially announce our plans included a lot of work, but we really haven't accomplished anything yet. So far things look great on paper, but the games must be played on ice.

The only way we can succeed if we can get a 100 percent commitment from all parties involved, the member national associations, the leagues, the clubs and the players. The CHL is financially secured for three seasons, until 2010-2011. Our ambition is to go far beyond that.

René Fasel
IIHF President

NEWS & NOTES

■ The Canada-Sweden World U20 hockey final on January 5 was the fourth most-watched program ever aired by Canadian broadcaster TSN. The game also set a new all-time record for the Swedish TV-station. The game had an average audience of 2.22 million viewers. The ratings were up 23 percent from last year's gold-medal game. At the same time, 995,000 Swedes watched on SVT24, a new all-time record for the channel. TSN's coverage of Canada's seven tournament games averaged 950,000 viewers, making it the most successful world junior tournament for TSN taking place in Europe, surpassing the previous high of 933,000 in 2007 in Sweden.

■ Belarus named **Glen Hanlon** as its assistant coach at the 2008 World Championship in Canada. In 2006, Hanlon coached Belarus to sixth place, the best result ever for the nation. **Curt Frazer** will return as the head coach of the squad.

■ Vancouver Canucks captain **Markus Naslund** became the seventh Swede to play 1000 NHL regular season games. Naslund had 362 goals and 443 assists (805 points) in the thousand games.

■ Canadian national team player **Danielle Goyette** announced her retirement after 172 games, eight world championship titles and two Olympic golds. She will remain close to hockey as a coach, where she is currently the head coach of the University of Calgary women's team. Goyette was also a part of the coaching staff of World Women's U18 Championship.

IIHF STAFF APPOINTMENTS



■ **Melissa Fritschi** will work as a Coordinator for the Administration Department. The Swiss speaks German, English and French and some Spanish. Melissa will give administrative support to President René Fasel and assist with legal, HR and insurance tasks. She comes to the IIHF from Pioneer Investments in Zurich.



■ **Nicole Bosshardt** is the new assistant for General Secretary Horst Lichtner. The Swiss native comes to the IIHF from Novartis. She speaks fluent German, English and French as well as Spanish and Italian. Nicole has over 10 years of experience as an assistant in sports (FIFA, UEFA, SV Werder Bremen).



■ **Aku Nieminen** is the new Sports Department Coordinator. In his new role with the IIHF, Aku will be responsible for player transfers and work with statistics. The Finnish native recently graduated from the Degree Programme of Sports in Vierumäki, Finland and has previously worked as an IIHF results manager in addition to helping with the IIHF Development Camp and Coaching Symposium.

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'08 Hall of Fame class features first females



■ *The barrier is broken. Cammi Granato, Angela James and Geraldine Heaney became the three first women to be inducted to the IIHF Hall of Fame's player's category. They will be joined by Mario Lemieux, Igor Larionov, Philippe Bozon and builder Art Berglund. The induction will take place in Quebec City on May 15.*

**Cammi Granato, United States**

Born: March 25, 1971

Granato is the all-time leading scorer in international competition and was the player who defined U.S. women's program during her 15-year career. She played in every World Women's Championship and Olympics from the inaugural championship in 1990 until 2005. Granato was instrumental in USA's gold medal at the 1998 Olympics, the first time women's hockey was a medal sport. In official events, Granato played 54 games, scoring 54 goals and 96 points, both records for women's hockey.

**Geraldine Heaney, Canada**

Born: October 1, 1967

Heaney became the first player to win seven straight IIHF World Championships and capped her career with a gold medal at the 2002 Olympics, after which she announced her retirement. She also won the Olympic silver in Nagano in 1998. Heaney represented Team Canada as an anchor on defense for 125 games. Her 27 goals, 66 assists and 93 career points left her as the all-time leader in scoring for defensemen, ranking her 5th overall. Her 125 games is the benchmark for the Canadian women's national team.

**Angela James, Canada**

Born: December 22, 1964

James is considered the first superstar of modern women's hockey. She played for Canada in the first four official IIHF World Women's Championships and led Canada to a gold medal in all four championships, most notably at the inaugural event on home ice in Ottawa in 1990 when she scored a record eleven goals in five games. In total, she scored 22 goals and 34 points in just 20 career games at the World Women's Championship.

**Philippe Bozon, France**

Born: November 30, 1966

Bozon participated in four Olympic tournaments and another 12 IIHF World Championships, where he averaged just over one point per game. In the 90s, Bozon broke down a major barrier, when he became the first Frenchman to play in the NHL. He played 163 games with St. Louis from 1992-95. In the French League, Bozon was named the best player in 1989 and the rookie of the year in 1984. He won three French Championships in 1984, 1988 and 1991.

**Igor Larionov, Russia**

Born: Dec. 3, 1960

Igor Larionov will be remembered as the pivot on what many say is the best five-man unit in hockey. In total, Larionov won two Olympic gold medals (1984, 88), four IIHF World Championship golds, one Canada Cup title (1981) and one IIHF U20 gold (1980). At the age of 41, Larionov captained Team Russia to Olympic bronze and also represented his country in the 1984 and 1987 Canada Cups and the 1996 World Cup of Hockey. In his 27-year professional career (13 in Europe, 14 in the NHL), Larionov played 1378 games, scoring 373 goals and 705 assists for a total of 1078 points.

**Mario Lemieux, Canada**

Born: October 5, 1965

Lemieux was a world class player in all of his international appearances. It started at the 1983 IIHF World U20 Championship where he had 10 points in seven games. As a 19-year-old, he scored 10 points at the 1985 World Championship. At the 1987 Canada Cup, he amassed an unbeatable 18 points. As a 37 year-old, Lemieux won the Olympic gold medal in 2002, leading Canada to its first Olympic hockey gold in 50 years. He scored over 1700 points as a member of Pittsburgh Penguins and won two Stanley Cups and six NHL scoring titles.

**Builder's Category:****Art Berglund, United States**

Born: September 4, 1940

Art Berglund's career spans portions of five decades, during which time he managed or served on the administrative staff of more than 30 U.S. teams in a variety of tournaments worldwide. Berglund served as USA Hockey's director of national teams and international activities for 11 years before being named senior director of international administration in 1996. He received the NHL's Lester Patrick Award in 1992 for outstanding contributions to the hockey in the U.S.

**Paul Loicq Award****Juraj Okolicany, Slovakia**

Born: March 28, 1943

Okolicany has a career in officiating dating back to 1962 and he was an active referee for a quarter of a century before he retired in 1986. Between 1973 and 1985 he was an IIHF licensed referee, working four IIHF World U20 Championships and two B-pool men's World Championships. Okolicany has worked 10 IIHF World Championships, two Olympic Winter Games and around 45 minor IIHF championships as a supervisor. Okolicany has been a member of the IIHF Referee Committee since 1998 and he was with the IIHF Junior Committee between 1993 and 1998.

RETRO MEDALS UNVEILED FOR 2008 WORLDS

■ The winners of the 2008 World Championship will forever remember that they won the gold medal in the centennial year as the IIHF has commissioned retro-gold medals for this year's champions. The face side portrays an old image of a goaltender, wearing a cap, and doing a poke check. This image was used on IIHF World Championship medals from 1947 through 1955 and again from 1963 - 1975. The flipside depicts the IIHF 100 Year Anniversary logo. The medals also have a 100-year ribbon. Also going back in time for the 2008 IIHF World Championship will be the team jerseys, which were selected by each nation to represent an important year in hockey history (see page 4 for more details on the retro jersey program).

■ The medals were unveiled on Wednesday, January 23rd, which marked 100 days until the opening faceoff of the 72nd IIHF World Championship in Canada (Quebec City & Halifax, May 1-18, 2008). The IIHF has started an official countdown clock on the homepage of iihf.com.



It's official - Four-man system to be used in Canada

■ ■ After extensive testing, the IIHF announced that it would implement the four-man officiating system, with two referees and two linesmen on the ice. The system will be used at all the top-level IIHF events.

The decision to use the four-man system at the 2008 IIHF World Championship in Canada (Quebec City and Halifax, May 2-18) was made by the IIHF Council after receiving the recommendation from the IIHF Referee Committee. While the system was used most recently at the U20 World Championship in the Czech Republic, the World Championship in Canada will mark the first official event with full implementation of the system.

"Our test events showed the overwhelming superiority of this system, so there was no doubt that we should implement this for Canada 2008," said IIHF President René Fasel.

The IIHF made the decision last season to test the four-man system in the opening events of the 2007-2008 season. Altogether 74 IIHF-organised games provided the testing base for the evaluation of the new system.

Continental Cup – 36 games
European Champions Cup – 7 games
2008 IIHF World U20 Championship – 31 games

To prepare for the numerous testing events, the IIHF held a Top Referee Camp this summer in conjunction with the IIHF Development Camp in Vierumaki, Finland. While there, the main emphasis for the 40-plus officials was the four-man system.

"Our officials responded very well to the challenge and it became very clear that the referee committee would recommend to the council to stay with the four-man system also for Canada 2008," said Konstantin Komissarov, the IIHF's Manager of officiating.

number of linesmen that will work the 72nd IIHF World Championship, the first ever to be held in Canada.

The IIHF follows in the footsteps of the NHL, which has been used since the 2000-2001 season. Other European leagues have started to follow suit, most notably, the Swedish top league, which is currently testing the system.

The use of four officials means several more referees were assigned to work the World Championship. In conjunction with the announcement of the four-man system, the IIHF also announced the 2008 World Championship officials, which can be found in the box below. Swiss Danny Kurmann is the dean of the 2008 IIHF referees. The event in Quebec City and Halifax will be his seventh men's World Championship. Kurmann has also officiated in two Olympic Games.



TOO MANY MEN ON THE ICE? NAH: There will be an extra set of stripes on the ice at the 2008 IIHF World Championship. After a successful test at the U20s, the IIHF decided to go with the extra official in Canada.

The referee fraternity praised the decision.

"Once you have tried this, there is no going back," says Swedish referee Markus Vinnerborg, who was part of the testing phase during the European Champions Cup. "With the game being so fast and with so many outlet passes over two zones, there is no way one referee can alone cover all the bases. With this system you can be sure that you only call what you see, you are very seldom in a position where you have to guess. Also, this system keeps you fresh and focused for the entire game."

Vinnerborg, who called the ECC final as well the gold medal game of the World Championship in Moscow last year, is one of 16 referees, which is the same

2008 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP OFFICIALS

Referees:

Pellerin Guy (CAN)
Savage Chris (CAN)
Minar Milan (CZE)
Partanen Sami (FIN)
Ronn Jyri (FIN)
Piechaczek Daniel (GER)
Schuetz Richard (GER)
Bulanov Vyacheslav (RUS)
Polyakov Alexander (RUS)
Kurmann Danny (SUI)
Reiber Brent (SUI)
Orszag Peter (SVK)
Larking Christer (SWE),
Vinnerborg Markus (SWE)
Looker Rick (USA)
Sterns Tom (USA)

Linesmen:

Kasper Christian (AUT)
Dedioulia Ivan (BLR)
Losier Sylvain (CAN)
De Haan Chris (CAN)
Kalivoda Frantisek (CZE)
Semionov Anton (EST)
Fonselius Stefan (FIN)
Schroeter Lars (GER)
Eglitis Ansis (LAT)
Gienke Thomas (NOR)
Oskirko Yuriy (RUS)
Wehrli Tobias (SUI)
Novak Milan (SVK)
Ulriksson Fredrik (SWE)
Kicha Andriy (UKR)
Ross Joseph (USA)

DUMP & CHASE

■ ■ The deadline to apply for the Coaching Degree Program is quickly approaching. The program is offered at the Vierumaki Institute in Finland and provides a unique opportunity for young coaches interested in an educational approach to ice hockey coaching. Students study in a 3.5-year full-time undergraduate degree program focusing on sport instruction and specializing in ice hockey coaching. The first two years of the program include intensive studying, after which the student has a chance to utilize the information obtained in real-life working environment during the final 1.5 years of the practicum. Language of instruction is English. The deadline to apply is February 22.

■ ■ The IIHF will organize its second-ever Women's Development Camp this summer in Finland. The camp will follow the popular model of the men's version and will include participants aged 15-17. An impressive 32 nations have signed up to take part in this year's camp, which is more than the number of nations that currently participate in the IIHF Championship program. The camp will be held August 10-17 in Vierumaki.

■ ■ Hockey Canada will host a 2008 Coaching Conference in conjunction with the 2008 IIHF World Championship. The conference will be held from Friday May 2 – Monday, May 5, 2008 at the Campus of Laval University in Quebec City.

Ice hockey coaching from A to Z

■ ■ For the IIHF, the development of coaches is equally important as that of players or officials. After all, it is the coaches that are responsible for setting the right example for generations of hockey players to follow.

As part of the IIHF's dedication to coaching development, all of the official IIHF Coaching manuals have been re-edited and published. The manuals include nearly every level of coaching certification as Levels I through III each have new manuals in addition to a new and improved Learn to Play and Introduction to Coaching manuals.

■ ■ Rookie coaches can turn to the Introduction to Coaching and Level I manuals to learn about basic offensive and defensive systems including drill ideas and teaching good fundamental drill techniques. For the more experienced coaches, there are the upper level manuals that go more in depth into tactics and strategies that

can be used in both game and practice situations. The Learn to Play manual is perfect for the coach that has players that are at square one.

"The manuals are a great resource tool for coaches of all levels," says Darryl Easson, IIHF Coach Development Manager. "It is important that coaches have somewhere they can turn to find answers to their questions, or just update their knowledge a bit. The coaching manuals ensure that coaches from all around the globe receive uniform instruction and can build on the knowledge base in a logical way."



■ ■ The Introduction to coaching, Level I, Level II and Learn to Play manuals are available at the IIHF website in the coaching section. All manuals are in a PDF format. Meanwhile, the Level III manual is available only upon request. To receive information on getting one of the manuals, contact the IIHF Sport Department at easson@iihf.com.

2008 Worlds go retro

Old is new as teams celebrate 100 years

■ ■ As the IIHF celebrates its 100-year anniversary at the upcoming 2008 World Championship in Canada, 15 out of the 16 participating teams are getting into the act as they will wear jerseys from seasons past. Each nation selected the sweaters from what they considered to be a significant year for their national team programs. Below are the 'new-old' looks and the year they represent.



AUSTRIA: To commemorate Austria's silver medal at the European Championship in Berlin and the country's most successful era in hockey.



FRANCE: The rooster is a proud and noble animal in France as they pay homage to the national animal with their 1968 jerseys.



RUSSIA: The Russians had many successful years to choose from but went for their 1956 Soviet roots when the team won its first Olympic gold.



SLOVAKIA: The 1946 jersey reflects the era when Slovakia had an independent hockey program before the Czechoslovak times.



BELARUS: Even though they have no retro jersey to speak of, Belarus got in the act by putting the national animal, the Bison, on its 100-year jersey.



GERMANY: This jersey was worn in 1932 when Germany won Olympic bronze in Lake Placid and hosted the last separate European Championship in Berlin that year.



SWEDEN: Some things never change, like the three crowns on the Swedish jersey, shown here in 1957 when the team won World Championship gold in Moscow.



CANADA: The split-leaf jersey from 1976 commemorates the inaugural Canada Cup that year, one of international hockey's defining moments.



ITALY: Looks like hockey jerseys from 1933 were the inspiration for the Italian men's soccer team, who wear a very similar model today.



SWISS: The Swiss chose this classic uniform from an era when they were the best team in Europe (1926) and won the Olympic bronze (1928) on home ice in St. Moritz.



CZECH REPUBLIC: Honoring the great Czechoslovak post-war teams that won World Championship gold in 1947 and 1949.



LATVIA: Before the Soviet times, independent Latvia introduced this V-neck jersey in international hockey in the mid-30s.



USA: It was the first miracle on ice -- and the often forgotten one -- when the Americans won the Olympic gold on home ice in 1960.



FINLAND This is how the Finns were dressed as they hosted the World Championship in 1965, in Tampere.



NORWAY: Many Scandinavian teams went for the N.Y. Rangers look in the mid-60s, so did the Norwegians.

Editor's Notes:

- The jerseys will be worn for only one game during the 2008 World Championship.
- There is only one design for each nation as they could choose between the home or away jersey.
- The Belarus jersey is not actually a 'vintage' jersey that was worn by a past team as the nation only has a brief hockey history. It is only a tentative design.
- Denmark is the only nation from the 16 at the World Championship without a retro design jersey.

IIHF 100-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Slick skills send young skaters to Canada

■ ■ As the IIHF 100-year anniversary season rolls on, the planned activities are quickly becoming a reality. One of the highlights of the celebration is the on-going IIHF Skills Challenge, a unique project for youth hockey players around the globe. The concept is simple, youth players can test their skills in their own nation and then the two best will represent their country in Canada for a global competition at the 2008 IIHF World Championship.

Eligible for this once-in-a-lifetime project are kids born in 1993 or earlier. The IIHF is looking for the most skilled boy and girl in every member nation. So far more than 2,000 participants have taken part.

To find the top talent, the IIHF has created a series of on-ice skills challenges that test everything from agility, to speed to shooting accuracy. The IIHF sent the tools to all nations to help implement the Skills Challenge around the globe and to help keep the results uniform in the various cities and towns.

For the top two players from each nation, an unforgettable experience awaits as the winners will go on a journey to the 2008 World Championship in Canada. They will be at the event from May 1-5, not only attending World Championship games, but also going to the Pepsi Coliseum and on a tour of Quebec City. Of course the highlight will come when the international final of the Skills Challenge takes place as the participants will find out how they stack up against the rest of the world.

Not only skaters will be in on the Skills Challenge action. Goaltenders can also show off their skills. The participating nations will hold a separate goaltender Skills Challenge and will send all test results into the IIHF. After compiling all of the results, the 10 best male along

with the 10 top female goaltenders will also be invited to Canada to take part in the final Skills Challenge.

It's not too late to get involved with the IIHF Skills Challenge if your country has registered as a participating nation, (see list in box) you and your club can still take part. To get involved, contact your national association who will instruct you how to conduct the tests and then enter the results into the official database. The national associations will manage the database and then organize a national Skills Challenge final in their country in February. Each country is free to choose the format of their national final. All of the national finals must be completed by March 1, when the individual nations will give the IIHF the names of the representatives that will go to Canada for the World Championship and Skills Challenge final.

To see how you might stack up against the rest of the world, you can go to the official Skills Challenge website at: <http://skillschallenge.iihf.com>. All global scores and results are gathered and recorded on this site. Additionally, the online platform offers all information on the competition, the latest rankings as well as many downloads such as test videos and animations for coaches.

The website will still be running after the competition, and the results and data entered by coaches worldwide



AND THEY'RE OFF Will these players, taking part in the IIHF Skills Challenge, make it to Canada? Tune in on March 1 to find out.

will also be available after May 2008. This ensures that all member nations have the opportunity to use this website as a tool to retrieve international reference values and compare their junior programs to other parts of the hockey world.

Participating Nations

Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Chinese Taipei, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, USA (as of Feb. 1)

VICTORIA CUP UPDATE

■ ■ It's official. European club champion Metallurg Magnitogorsk (Russia) will play the New York Rangers, in the inaugural Victoria Cup on Wednesday, October 1, 2008 in the Swiss capital of Bern.

The one-game Victoria Cup will be played at Berne's 16,789-capacity PostFinance-Arena, also the main venue for the 2009 IIHF World Championship. The winner will receive the Victoria Cup, a trophy to be awarded annually to the winner of game between Europe's top team and an NHL challenger. The introduction of the Victoria Cup was announced at the 2007 IIHF World Championship in Moscow as one of the highlight events celebrating the 100 Year Anniversary of the IIHF. The cup is named after the Victoria Skating Rink in Montreal where the first organised hockey game was played on March 3, 1875.

■ ■ The Victoria Cup will be preceded by an exhibition game on Tuesday, September 30, between host SC Bern and the New York Rangers. It marks the first time a Swiss club will play an NHL team.

"This is a milestone for international hockey and for the relationship between the IIHF and the National Hockey League," said IIHF President René Fasel. "Ever since the historic game between the Montreal Canadiens and CSKA Moscow on New Year's Eve 1975, hockey fans around the world have been longing for games between NHL clubs and European teams. There have been several games since then, but this is the first time we will have a summit meeting, a one-off final, for a trophy which we hope will be part of the annual international calendar for years to come."

The games will be played on an international ice surface with IIHF rules. "But we are in the process of discussing with the NHL to integrate a few NHL rules specifically for the Victoria Cup, as well as having both games officiated jointly by both IIHF and NHL referees," said René Fasel.

100 Top Stories hits midway mark

The 100 Top International hockey stories rolls on and is at the halfway point. Below are the 25 headlines that have been revealed on IIHF.com since the last edition of Ice Times.

- 74 At only 18, Sidney Crosby wins the scoring crown at the 2006 World Championship
- 73 Star-studded Russia finishes in 11th place on home ice in 2000
- 72 In Nagano, reporter reveals that Sweden's Samuelsson is not actually a Swede
- 71 World Championship final played in front of 50,000 fans in a soccer stadium
- 70 Swede Ulf Sterner becomes the first European to play in the NHL
- 69 Andy Murray wins a third gold medal and joins the coaching legends
- 68 The Victoria Cup is introduced as NHL teams will face their European counterparts
- 67 The perfect game against the best team: CSSR-USSR 7-2
- 66 Trail Smoke Eaters' gold medal ends hockey's amateur era
- 65 Igor Larionov openly revolts against old-era coaching system
- 64 Moravec's overtime winner cements Czech dominance on the international stage
- 63 Alexander Mogilny becomes the first Soviet to defect to the NHL
- 62 Soviets get revenge for 1980 Lake Placid with 13-1 win against Sweden
- 61 Sweden stages the biggest IIHF World Championship comeback in 2003
- 60 Mats Sundin becomes the first top NHL draft pick from Europe
- 59 Team with no name, CIS, wins Olympic Gold Medal
- 58 Finland's Raimo Helminen dresses for a sixth Olympics
- 57 Sweden's 1962 win over Canada becomes a legendary story
- 56 With one bad knee Bobby Orr strikes gold at 1976 Canada Cup
- 55 Vladislav Tretiak is the first European player inducted into the Hall of Fame
- 54 Pelle Lindbergh dies in car crash after winning Vezina Trophy
- 53 Harry Watson rips 1928 Olympics apart with scoring exploits
- 52 USA's women stop Canada's quest for a nine-in-a-row at 2005 Worlds
- 51 The First non-North Americans win Stanley Cup in 1981
- 50 IIHF (then called the LIHG) formed in Paris in 1908 by four original member nations

Fourth straight World Junior jubilee

■ ■ ■ PARDUBICE, Czech Republic - It's getting to be a familiar sight at the IIHF World U20 Championship. The Canadian team lined up on blue line singing along to their national anthem 'Oh, Canada'. But while the outcome was the same at this year's edition, the road was the rockiest yet for the maple leaf nation. *By Jenny Wiedeke*

So close, yet so far.

That must be what Sweden was thinking after the 2008 U20 gold medal game against Canada. After falling behind 2-0 in the first period, the Swedes did what very few teams in recent years have been able to do -- comeback against Canada. Sweden mounted its comeback in the third period, where they dominated play for the final 20 minutes. The lead was cut in half just 5:13 into the period, but then the Swedish offense stalled.

■ ■ ■ But with 38 seconds left in the game, Sweden pulled a rabbit out of their hat and got the game tying goal. The bench erupted as the Swedes skated out the remaining time on the clock and went into their locker rooms to prepare for the overtime period.

As the teams came off the ice, the Swedes were filled with excitement. But as Canada came off the ice, there was something on the faces that is virtually never seen on a Canadian U20 player's face: uncertainty.

It seemed the tide had changed and Sweden was, for the second time in the same tournament, in prime position to upend the Canadians.

■ ■ ■ But something happened in the Canadian locker room during the 15-minute intermission, something that will forever remain one of the great mysteries of junior hockey. The Canadian team re-entered the ice with their trademark confidence as Matthew Halischuk scored the game winner just 3:36 into the extra time.

So what caused the complete turnaround?

■ ■ ■ It is a mystery that other nations have been trying to solve at World Juniors for the last four years. What is it that has made the Canadians inherently superior at the U20s as they rattled off four consecutive titles.

Surely it's not simply about talent. Canada came to this U20 championship with one of its most inexperienced rosters in recent years. And while analysts were fretting over this squad's chance to go for the four-peat, the team itself had the collective Canadian 'cool' that surrounds the mythic World Junior program.

■ ■ ■ Even when the doubters reared their heads after Canada's 20-game winning streak was snapped by Sweden in the preliminary round, the team stayed poised. In fact, the squad rose to the challenge of playing in its first quarterfinal game since the IIHF adopted the automatic semi-final round berth for the preliminary round group winner. But even that was a battle as Finland fought the Canadians for the full 60 minutes.

But again the intangible Canada confidence struck and held off the Finns in a 4-2 decision. Canada had to dig deep again against the Americans in the semi-final game as the game was close through the first two periods until Canada put the game away in the 4-1 win and a spot in the gold medal game.

■ ■ ■ Canada's mission was clear, even though it had been a rocky path to the golden game, the nation was once again in position to bring home gold -- and avenge its only loss in the last four years -- against what many said was the best team at the championship, Sweden.

Even though Sweden was on the ice, the favorite team, Canada still skated like the favorite. And with thousands of Canada fans serving as the sixth man, there was a clear feeling that Canada would not be denied the four-peat. And win it they did, becoming the first team since the quarterfinal round bye was implemented to skate in seven games and win the gold -- against all odds -- perhaps the Canadian mantra.



SILVER LINING: Even though the Swedes fell short of gold, the silver medal was still a big improvement for the northern nation.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS: For the fourth straight time, the Canadian team won the IIHF World U20 Championship. The only moment of doubt for the players came when Sweden tied the game in the third period.

For many the Canada win was written in stone before the championship had even started. In fact, when the semi-finals were set and it featured the same four teams that were last year's medal games, there was a sigh of 'here we go

again.' But even though the top prize went to the same team, the runners-up provided the tournament with a much-needed jolt of change.

■ ■ ■ The first surprise came at the hands of the Swedes again, who topped Russia in overtime in the semi-final game, 2-1. The win ensured that, after the last three years with the same two finalists, something would be new on gold medal day. For the Russians the semi-final was a blow, but one that they quickly rebounded from after easily topping the Americans for bronze.

The Americans were the surprise of the medal round. After cruising through the preliminary round it looked like the U.S. would surely earn a medal at the 2008 championship, but after moving from Liberec to Pardubice for the round, the Americans never found their rhythm.

■ ■ ■ Of course, the biggest eye-opener of the tournament was the performance of the Swedes. Until just the last few years, the Swedish junior program had been suffering and missing the podium at both U18s and U20s. In fact the gold medal game was only the nation's third appearance at U20s in the final. It was clear before the championship started that the Swedes would have a solid team with many talented players, but few predicted that the squad would be the one to end Canada's 20-game winning streak and then take the Canadians to the edge in the gold medal game. It was one of the most welcome upsets at the recent U20s.

for golden Canadians



Photos: Mikael Frizton/HHOF-IIHF Images

an national junior team gathered around the top U20 prize after the gold medal game at the 2008 edition of the IIHF World U20 when they had to decide whether to display one finger, four fingers or simply their gold medal.

There were also the other six teams that weren't in the medal hunt that pulled a few upsets during the tournament. From the non-medalists, the biggest shock was the success of newly-promoted Kazakhstan.

The Kazakhs opened the tournament with a well-played game, albeit a loss, against the U.S., and never looked back. Generally it is tough for a newly-promoted team to stay among the elite ranks, but an upset win against Switzerland (see box below) and another victory against

Denmark ensured that the Kazakhs will be back for another year.

■ And who knows what awaits the 10 teams at next year's World Juniors in Ottawa. If this year is any indication, the U20 landscape is gradually changing -- but the teams will have to find a hole in the Canadian armor if they want the ultimate prize -- something which has not been found in the last four years...and counting.



STUNNING SWISS RELEGATION

■ For years the Swiss U20 team had been the vision of stability. While not wowing their opponents with medal finishes, the Swiss seemed perfectly stable with 6th to 8th-place finishes. Of course, when you're consistently finishing in the lower half of the standings, it leaves very little wiggle room when relegation is on the line. So it seemed like a kind of inevitable surprise when Switzerland finished in ninth place and was sent down to Division I.

The problems started in the preliminary round when Switzerland got off to a slow start against Kazakhstan and ended up losing, 3-1, against the newly-promoted nation. The loss sent the Swiss into the relegation round with no points, where another slow start, this time against Slovakia, sealed their fate in the lowest division.

Ultimately, what the Swiss learned is that while boasting a respectable roster, the line between relegation and staying in the top division is razor thin and not something that can be taken for granted.

■ Just ask the Czech Republic's U18 squad, which went from winning the bronze medal at the 2006 World U18 Championship to being relegated at the 2007 event. It was the first sign since the IIHF adopted the new promotion relegation system, that no team can take any game at a championship lightly.

Now Switzerland, along with the Czechs, have a long road ahead to earn their way back into the top 10 as both squads must win their respective Division I groups. If they manage to do so, they will enter the top division as the decided underdogs. A role neither nation thought they would ever be in.

Across the Pond: U20s heads to North America for four years

□ Ask any player that has had the opportunity to compete at a World U20 Championship in Canada and he will tell you that it was an unforgettable experience.

It's no secret that the 'World Junior's' is king in Canada with December 26th traditionally kicking off a 10-day period that sees an entire nation glued to their television sets with their happiness dependent on 22, junior-aged hockey players.

It is also no secret that when World Juniors is played in Canada, arenas are sure to be full -- whether the beloved Team Canada is on the ice, or not.

□ So when Hockey Canada approached the IIHF about the possibility of bringing the annual U20 championship to Canada on a more regular basis, it seemed like a natural fit. And the IIHF Congress agreed when, at the 2005 Annual Congress in Vienna, Austria, they voted unanimously to allocate the 2009 and 2012 events to the homeland of hockey.

At the time, it seemed that despite Canada hosting the 2009 and 2012 events, the U20 would still have many other host nations in the upcoming years. But with no nation interested in hosting the 2010 event, the Canadians jumped at the chance to host back-to-back seasons. Meanwhile, the Americans were awarded the rights to host the U20s in 2011, making it an unprecedented four-year stay for the World Junior Championship in North America.

□ The quadruple host is unprecedented in U20 history. In fact the longest that the championship has been held consecutively on either side of the Atlantic is three years. And while some are grumbling that the move gives the already dominant Canadians an unfair advantage, others are excited about the prospect of four years of full arenas and unparalleled excitement around the event.

On one hand the argument that Canada will be strong on home ice is a valid one. The nation has won a medal every time that it was hosted the World Juniors. However, in the seven times that Canada has played host, the country has won gold just three times, proving that the crowd can only help so much when it comes down to the golden game.

□ Canadian fans have also gotten to the point that it doesn't matter where the championship is held, they will create a home-team environment for their team. Take for example 2005, when the event was in Grand Forks, North Dakota, USA as thousands of Canadian fans showed up to support their team. And this year with the event overseas in Czech Republic, again there were thousands of Canadian faithful in the stands.

For many of the players at the World U20 Championship, it is a once-in-a-lifetime experience to play in an NHL building with an even better atmosphere than an average NHL game. For those that will make it to the NHL it is a great preview for what awaits them in the future. And consider that when the games are held in Canada, it is not just the Canada games that the hockey hungry fans are eager to attend. Like in Vancouver in 2006 when more than 8,000 showed up for a late New Year's Eve game between Switzerland and Finland. In comparison, the last two years in Europe the gold medal game hasn't drawn 8,000 fans.

□ While it may be unprecedented to send the tournament overseas for four years -- it cannot be denied that great things await U20s in the 'North American Era'.



Metallurg bids ECC farewell complete

■ ST. PETERSBURG - The last European Champions Cup ended like the three previous ones - with the Russian team winning. The only difference to the established 'protocol' was the absence of a Finnish team in the final. Sparta Prague was the 2008 finalist but the Czech champion couldn't stop Metallurg Magnitogorsk in the gold medal game.

By Szymon Szemberg

Consider that the last four year's of the ECC results reads like a who's who of the Russian Superliga. Avangard Omsk got the tradition started in 2005, winning the inaugural ECC title. In 2006, Dynamo Moscow took the top honors, followed by Ak Bars Kazan in 2007.

■ With this, there is no doubt that the Russian league must be considered the strongest in Europe, especially given the fact that four different teams from the 'Superliga' claimed the Silver Stone trophy.

Of course, critics claim that the Russian teams had home-ice advantage in those four ECC tournaments (all were played in St. Petersburg) and that the results would have looked different had the ECC rotated to different European cities.

It is a claim that can not be disregarded, although it may be meaningless to discuss 'what if'. In all fairness, it should be added that although the Russian feat must be considered a confirmation of its league's superiority in Europe, three of the four wins did not come easy.

■ In 2005, Avangard Omsk and NHL lockout player Jaromir Jagr had to dig deep to defeat Finland's Kärpät Oulu in the gold medal game overtime. In 2006, Dynamo Moscow needed a shootout in the final as Kärpät again did their best to defy the home team.

This year, for the first time, the Russian gold medal game appearance was in jeopardy as pesky Slovan Bratislava came close to being party spoilers in the group final. The Slovak champion held Metallurg to a 1-1 draw in regulation and overtime and an extended shootout was needed to determine the winner.

Alexei Kaigorodov was the 'MM' savior, preventing an upset with his goal in Metallurg's last shot in the first round of the shootout. Kaigorodov also scored with his first attempt of the second round and when Slovan's Martin Huisa missed the next opportunity, Metallurg let out a sigh of relief.

■ Sparta Prague put up an impressive fight in the gold medal game and the Czechs held on to a 2-2 tie midway through the game when Jiri Vykoukal scored with a two-man advantage. But two goals from Igor Mirnov and an insurance marker from Alexei Kaigorodov gave the fans in the St. Petersburg Ice Palace a familiar ending.

The four ECC competitions gave some interesting indications which furthermore fuelled the eternal question: Which is best league in Europe?

■ One indicator that must be factored is the list of wins that the various nation's earned at the ECC when facing the champions from the other European Leagues. As the following list shows, Russia lives up to the hype, followed by Finland the the Czechs.

RUS - 12	(four ECC appearances)	SUI - 2	(three ECC appearances)
FIN - 7	(four ECC appearances)	SWE - 1	(four ECC appearances)
CZE - 4	(four ECC appearances)	GER - 0	(one ECC appearance)
SVK - 2	(four ECC appearances)		

Although Kärpät Oulu missed the final for the first time in their third ECC appearance, Finland must still get the nod as the second best leagues in Europe with three gold medal game appearances and seven game wins.

■ For the Finns there was something to be said for stability in the league standings, as Karpät Oulu made its own mark on the ECC as the only three-time ECC participant. Twice the squad made it to the final game, while this year, Sparta beat them to the golden game. For Sparta it was the second appearance at the ECC.

The Czech, Slovak and Swiss clubs performed as expected, finishing in the middle of the pack most seasons. But there is no doubt that the teams of the Swedish Elitserien



underperformed at the ECC compared to the perceived level of their professional league. The last four years the national champions HV71, Frölunda, Färjestad and MODO managed a paltry one win between them, HV's 4-1 win over Slovak Dukla Trencin in the inaugural 2005 ECC. After that the Swedish teams have gone 0-7.

■ The Swedish clubs will have something to prove as all eyes turn to the Champions Hockey League next year. The expanded field of 12 teams will put Germany back into the mix as the nation only participated in the ECC once because of its place in the World Ranking. The expanded field and the longer duration of the event will give teams a chance to really see hockey they compare against their European brethren. But until then, the Russians can enjoy their ECC dynasty.

ECC INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

Directorate Best Player Awards

Best Goaltender: Sasu Hovi, Slovan Bratislava
 Best Defenseman: Vitali Atyushov, Metallurg Magnitogorsk
 Best Forward: Tomas Netik, Sparta Prague
 MVP: Vitali Atyushov, Metallurg Magnitogorsk

Media All-Star Team

Goaltender: Sasu Hovi, Slovan Bratislava
 Defenseman: Jiri Vykoukal, Sparta Prague
 Defenseman: Vitali Atyushov, Metallurg Magnitogorsk
 Forward: Tomas Netik, Sparta Prague
 Forward: Alexei Kaigorodov, Metallurg Magnitogorsk
 Forward: Peter Ton, Sparta Prague

ing the Russian sweep



THE CHAMPIONS OF RUSSIA & EUROPE: Metallurg (far left) joins the Russian ECC champions from the three previous seasons, including (from left to right) Avangard Omsk in 2005, Dynamo Moscow in 2006 and Ak Bars Kazan in 2007.

CONTINENTAL CUP RECAP

RIGA, LATVIA: Ak Bars Kazan became the first team to claim both the European Champions Cup and the Continental Cup. The Russian club won all three games in the Continental Cup Super Final.

Most hockey fans remember Ak Bars' splendid performance at the 2007 ECC when they defeated Finland's HPK Hameenlinna 6-0 in the final. Despite being the best team in Europe, Ak Bars was not able to defend its national title in the spring of 2007, meaning that the team was not eligible to play at this year's ECC.

But the door was open to the Continental Cup and Ak Bars jumped at the opportunity. Despite the win, the event showed that the European leagues below the top seven are making progress. Despite a star-studded lineup with both Russian and international stars, the team from Kazan had to give it 100 percent to preserve a 2-1 win over Kazzinc Torpedo from Kazakhstan in the opening game.

Ak Bars completed the sweep with wins over Aalborg (Denmark) 4-1 and the home team Riga 2000 (Latvia) 6-2. But it seems the days when teams from the top leagues could just waltz through any opposition are over.

The teams below Ak Bars all defeated each other, which saw Aalborg, Kazzinc and Riga 2000 all finish with three points. Riga's Girts Ankipans shared the top-scorer's honors with Ak Bars' Sergei Zinoviev (both one goal and four assists).

Ak Bars' American Robert Esche was named best goaltender, the best defenseman recognition went to Ilya Nikulin (Ak Bars) while Riga's Czech Tomas Chlubna was the best forward.

Ak Bars Kazan became the second Russian club to win the Continental Cup after Lada Togliatti won in 2006. *See complete results on page 11.*

The new CHL: You've got questions. We've got answers.

□□ The IIHF announced the formation of the Champions Hockey League at a press conference in St. Petersburg on January 13. Many questions have been asked regarding the format and how many clubs from each that country will get a chance to participate.

Ice Times listened to your questions and now has the answers to the most frequently asked questions about Europe's new club competition.

Q: Who will participate?

Directly qualified to the Champions Hockey League will be two teams each from the Czech Republic, Finland, Russia and Sweden, while Germany, Slovakia and Switzerland are guaranteed one team each. The 12th team will be determined through a three-team qualification tournament.

Q: How will the qualification be played?

It will be played by the regular season winners from Germany, Slovakia and Switzerland. The date and venue will be determined when the participating clubs are known after the conclusion of the regular seasons in the countries. The winner of the three-team, three-day, single round robin tournament will be the 12th CHL team.

Q: What about the format for the 12-team CHL?

The CHL will start in October with the group stage, four groups with three teams each (6 rounds total, 2 home and 2 away games per team). The dates are: October 8, 22, 29, November 12, 19 and December 3, 2008. The four group winners will advance to the semi-finals (pairings to be determined by a draw), which will be played on December 10, 2008, and January 7, 2009 (home and away). The home and away games for the final are scheduled for January 21 and 28, 2009.

Q: Which teams will earn participation in the CHL?

The national champion (playoff winner) and the regular season winner will represent the countries that have two teams in the CHL. NOTE: If the national champion and the regular season winner is the same, then the second team in the regular season standings will earn a spot in the CHL.

Q: There will be some exceptions to that in the first year, correct?

Yes. There will be two exceptions from the above formula in the inaugural 2008-2009 CHL season. Finland will be represented by the two finalists in the 2008 Finnish SM-Liiga playoffs, while Russia's Metallurg Magnitogorsk is directly qualified to the 2008-2009 CHL as the reigning European club champion (winner of the 2008 European Champions Cup). The second Russian club will either be the national champion or the regular season winner. Both countries' leagues will comply with the principle representation rules starting in 2009-2010.

Q: What can be said about the Victoria Cup?

The new competition will feature a matchup between the European club champion (Metallurg) and an NHL-challenger. *See page 5 for more information.*

What is the prize money involved?

It is planned for next season each team will receive a 300,000 appearance fee and 50,000 for each win in the group stage. Teams will get 200,000 for a semi-final appearance and 1,000,000 will go to the CHL winner with 500,000 for the other finalist. Each participating-league receives 300,000 and 100,000 will go to each participating national association. (All money in Euros)

USA is the first WW18 champion

Canada and USA rivalry carries over to the newest IIHF event

■ ■ *The first-ever Women's U18 Championship lived up to expectations as Canada and the U.S. proved the mantra that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Like their older role models at the World Women's Championship, the two North American nations showed the junior hockey world that they were the teams to beat at the newest addition to the IIHF Championship calendar.*

■ ■ The fact that the eight-team tournament became a reality was a huge step forward for the development of women's hockey - and it was clear that each of the squads was eager to be a part of history. From the surprise Czech Republic team that stunned the field with their semi-final appearance to the plucky Swedish squad that played tough, but went home empty handed, these ladies not only wanted to be a part of history, they wanted to rewrite it.

But in the end, the tradition and development programs of the U.S. and Canada proved to be superior as both squads made their way into the gold medal game. Similar to how the Americans won the first-ever Olympic gold medal for women's hockey in 1998 in Nagano, the next generation was able to earn bragging rights at the first-ever U18 event, skating to the 5-2 win on Canadian ice.

A quick start by the U.S. was the difference in the win as a 2-0 first period advantage was too much for the Canadians to overcome. Two of the Americans' biggest stars, Amanda Kessel and Brooke Ammerman scored in the gold medal game, which was a total team effort for both teams as seven different players scored the seven goals in the game.

History in the making

■ ■ But nearly as important as the medals, was the fact that the U18 women's championship is now on the IIHF calendar of events. It has long been argued that women's hockey, like it's men counterparts, needs to focus on junior development if it hopes to take the next step forward.

"The earlier you can get the players into international competition, the better it is for every nation," said IIHF Vice President Walter Bush. "It is important for the nations to identify their top players and start to develop them at a younger age. And for the players, the opportunity to play in a World Championship is always a positive experience."

Developing the Best

■ ■ The subject of development is always a delicate one, as the debate over how time and money can best be used is often heated. When it was first proposed to start the Women's U18 championship, there was some opposition that thought that the women's game needed to focus on developing its senior teams before expanding.

"Every nation's future lies in its youth," counters Bush. "If you don't give opportunities to players at a younger age, they might move onto another sport, or never develop to their full potential."

It might not be an accident that the two top teams at U18 women's championship are also the two with the most established development programs for women.

In fact, Canada's head coach was Melody Davidson, who is the long-serving national team coach, while its assistant coach was newly-retired national team player Danielle Goyette. By giving the players the chance to learn first-hand from the multiple gold medalists the Canadians set a tone for the future as the 22 players surely have their eye on the national team.

For the Americans, the gold medal is what they hope is a new era for a new generation of players. After the national women's team has long lived in the shadow of Canada, this younger group of Americans hopes that they have set a new tone for rivalry.

■ ■ On the other end of the spectrum was the performance of Finland, which was equally shocking as the Czechs, but for all the wrong reasons. When Finland lost against Germany, 4-2, in the opening game, it sent a murmur of surprise through the tournament. But it was the stunning 5-3 loss against the Czechs that really amazed the onlookers, followed by a humiliating 17-goal shutout loss against host Canada. In fact, the Finns managed just one win through the entire championship, in the placement round against Switzerland. It was enough to give the normally strong nation a somewhat respectable sixth-place finish.

But for all the ups and downs, one thing was clear in Calgary as the championship came to a close: There's a new generation of women's hockey players on the horizon and anything is possible as the playing field starts to level out.



FIRST TIMERS: USA celebrates winning the first-ever gold medal at the women's U18 Championship as captain Amanda Kessel holds the trophy.

Up and Comers

■ ■ Like the Americans, most of the young players

in Calgary, came into the event with very few preconceived notions about where their team should place. It was a group of players that was far removed from the formula of the 'Top Four' with USA, Canada, Finland and Sweden dominating the standings.

Instead, the teams came in with an empty slate, which propelled some to unexpected heights and dropped others to unexpected depths. The Czech Republic was by far the biggest surprise at the championship. It was a nation, which had to qualify at a tournament last winter, and whose women's team has never played in the elite division.

Needless so say, the expectations were low for the under-developed women's hockey nation. But a 5-3 win against Finland, gave the Czechs the momentum that they desperately needed as they went onto edge Germany, 3-2, for an unexpected spot in the semi-finals. Once there, the Czechs didn't ease up. After losing the semi-final game against the eventual gold medalists, the Czech rebounded and took home their first-ever medal at a top women's event with a 4-2 win against Sweden.

EWCC CROWNS '08 CHAMPION

Like peanut butter and jelly, some things just seem to naturally go together. For example, AIK Solna and the European Women's Champions Cup.

The Swedish Club champion demonstrated its dominance at the annual event yet again, skating to a perfect 4-0-0 record and taking home its fourth-straight EWCC crown. It is a particularly impressive feat when considering that the event itself is only four years old and that AIK has gone undefeated throughout the championship's history.

This year, it was Pernilla Winberg who set the pace for the Swedes. She had seven goals and two assists and closed the tournament as the top scorer and was named the Best Forward. Teammate Katarina Timglas was close behind with eight points.

But it was the toughest road to gold yet for AIK. The team had only one true blowout victory, a 10-2 decision against Lugano. Two of the squad's games were decided by one goal and the third was a two-goal difference. Still the gap between the Swedes and the other nations remained too large to overcome as the AIK dominance of women's club hockey was extended for yet another season.

RESULTS SUMMARY

IIHF World U20 Championship

Pardubice & Liberec, CZECH REPUBLIC Dec. 26 - Jan. 5

Preliminary Round - Group A

Sweden - Slovakia	4 - 3	(2-1, 0-0, 2-2)
Czech Republic - Canada	0 - 3	(0-0, 0-1, 0-2)
Slovakia - Canada	0 - 2	(0-0, 0-1, 0-1)
Czech Republic - Denmark	5 - 2	(3-0, 1-2, 1-0)
Denmark - Sweden	1-10	(1-2, 0-4, 0-4)
Slovakia - Czech Republic	2 - 5	(0-2, 1-2, 1-1)
Canada - Sweden	3 - 4	(1-0, 1-1, 1-2)
Denmark - Slovakia	3 - 4	(0-1, 0-2, 3-1)
Sweden - Czech Republic	4 - 2	(1-0, 2-0, 1-2)
Canada - Denmark	4 - 1	(2-0, 1-0, 1-1)

Sweden*	4	4	0	0	0	22	: 9	12
Canada	4	3	0	0	1	12	: 5	9
Czech Republic	4	2	0	0	2	12	: 11	6
Slovakia	4	1	0	0	3	9	: 14	3
Denmark	4	0	0	0	4	7	: 23	0

*Sweden qualified directly to semi-final

Preliminary Round - Group B

United States - Kazakhstan	5 - 1	(1-1, 2-0, 2-0)
Finland - Russia	4 - 7	(2-1, 0-4, 2-2)
Kazakhstan - Russia	4 - 5	(2-0, 1-4, 1-1)
Finland - Switzerland	4 - 3 ps	(1-2, 1-0, 1-1)
Switzerland - United States	2 - 4	(0-1, 1-1, 1-2)
Kazakhstan - Finland	0 - 5	(0-1, 0-2, 0-2)
Russia - United States	2 - 3	(0-1, 1-0, 1-2)
Switzerland - Kazakhstan	1 - 3	(0-1, 0-1, 1-1)
Russia - Switzerland	4 - 3	(1-1, 2-1, 1-1)
United States - Finland	5 - 3	(2-0, 3-0, 0-3)

United States*	4	4	0	0	0	17	: 8	12
Russia	4	3	0	0	1	18	: 14	9
Finland	4	1	1	0	2	16	: 15	5
Kazakhstan	4	1	0	0	3	8	: 16	3
Switzerland	4	0	0	1	3	9	: 15	1

*United States qualified directly to semi-final

Relegation Round

Denmark - Slovakia	3 - 4	(0-1, 0-2, 3-1)
Switzerland - Kazakhstan	1 - 3	(0-1, 0-1, 1-1)
Slovakia - Switzerland	5 - 2	(1-0, 2-0, 2-2)
Kazakhstan - Denmark	6 - 3	(1-0, 2-2, 3-1)
Switzerland - Denmark	5 - 2	(1-1, 2-1, 2-0)
Slovakia - Kazakhstan	8 - 0	(4-0, 3-0, 1-0)

Slovakia	3	3	0	0	0	17	: 5	9
Kazakhstan	3	2	0	0	1	9	: 12	6
Switzerland	3	1	0	0	2	8	: 10	3
Denmark	3	0	0	0	3	8	: 15	0

Switzerland & Denmark relegated to 2009 Division I U20 Championship

Playoff Round

Canada - Finland	4 - 2	(0-1, 1-0, 3-1) QF
Russia - Czech Republic	4 - 1	(0-0, 3-1, 1-0) QF
Sweden - Russia	2 - 1 OT	(0-0, 0-1, 1-0) SF
United States - Canada	1 - 4	(0-0, 0-2, 1-2) SF
Czech Republic - Finland	5 - 1	(0-1, 3-0, 2-0) 5th place
United States - Russia	2 - 4	(0-3, 1-1, 1-0) bronze
Sweden - Canada	2 - 3 OT	(0-2, 0-0, 2-0) gold

Final Ranking

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

Tournament Directorate Awards

Best Goaltender: Steve Mason (CAN)
 Best Defenseman: Drew Doughty (CAN)
 Best Forward: Viktor Tikhonov (RUS)
 MVP: Steve Mason (CAN)

Tournament Media All-Star Team

Goaltender: Steve Mason (CAN)
 Defenseman: Drew Doughty (CAN), Victor Hedman (SWE)
 Best Forwards: Patrik Berglund (SWE), Viktor Tikhonov (RUS), James van Rimesdyk (USA)

Individual Scoring

1 VAN RIMESDYK, James USA	6	5	6	11
2 FILATOV, Nikita RUS	7	4	5	9
3 SLOVAK, Marek SVK	6	2	7	9
4 TURRIS, Kyle CAN	7	4	4	8
5 JACQUEMET, Arnaud SUI	6	2	6	8
5 SKOKAN, David SVK	6	2	6	8
7 SCHROEDER, Jordan USA	6	1	7	8
8 RYMAREV, Yevgeni KAZ	6	6	1	7
8 WILSON, Colin USA	6	6	1	7
10 FIGREN, Robin SWE	6	5	2	7
10 TIKHONOV, Viktor RUS	6	5	2	7

IIHF World U20 Championship Div. I Gr. A

Bad Tolz, GERMANY December 9-15

Norway - Ukraine	3 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 1-0)
Lithuania - Germany	1 - 7	(1-3, 0-0, 0-4)
Poland - Austria	1 - 6	(0-2, 0-1, 1-3)
Ukraine - Lithuania	3 - 4 ps	(2-2, 1-1, 0-0)
Austria - Norway	5 - 0	(1-0, 4-0, 0-0)
Germany - Poland	11-0	(5-0, 3-0, 3-0)
Lithuania - Poland	1 - 3	(1-1, 0-3, 0-0)
Austria - Ukraine	7 - 4	(1-1, 0-3, 6-0)
Germany - Norway	7 - 1	(1-0, 3-0, 3-1)
Austria - Lithuania	15-0	(3-0, 8-0, 4-0)
Poland - Norway	2 - 4	(1-2, 1-1, 0-1)
Ukraine - Germany	1-11	(1-0, 0-3, 0-8)
Norway - Lithuania	11-2	(4-0, 3-2, 4-0)
Ukraine - Poland	2 - 1 ps	(1-0, 0-1, 0-0)
Germany - Austria	6 - 3	(2-0, 1-0, 3-3)

Germany	5	5	0	0	0	42	: 6	15
Austria	5	4	0	0	1	36	: 11	12
Norway	5	3	0	0	2	19	: 16	9
Poland	5	1	0	1	3	7	: 24	4
Ukraine	5	0	1	1	3	10	: 26	3
Lithuania	5	0	1	0	4	8	: 39	2

Germany promoted to 2009 IIHF World U20 Championship
 Lithuania relegated to 2009 IIHF World Championship, Division II

IIHF World U20 Championship Div. I Gr. B

Riga, LATVIA December 12-18

Slovenia - Great Britain	4 - 3 ps	(1-0, 1-3, 1-0)
Hungary - Belarus	2 - 3	(1-2, 0-0, 1-1)
France - Latvia	3 - 9	(2-1, 0-5, 1-3)
Great Britain - Hungary	2 - 5	(1-0, 1-3, 0-2)
Belarus - France	6 - 1	(1-0, 3-1, 2-0)
Latvia - Slovenia	2 - 3	(0-0, 2-2, 0-1)
Hungary - France	7 - 4	(0-1, 2-0, 5-3)
Belarus - Slovenia	2 - 1	(0-0, 1-0, 1-1)
Latvia - Great Britain	6 - 0	(2-0, 3-0, 1-0)
France - Slovenia	0 - 5	(0-2, 0-3, 0-0)
Great Britain - Belarus	1 - 9	(0-0, 0-8, 1-1)
Latvia - Hungary	8 - 2	(2-1, 2-0, 4-1)
Slovenia - Hungary	4 - 1	(0-1, 3-0, 1-0)
Great Britain - France	2 - 6	(1-3, 1-1, 0-2)
Belarus - Latvia	1 - 3	(0-0, 1-1, 0-2)

Latvia	5	4	0	0	1	29	: 9	12
Belarus	5	4	0	0	1	21	: 8	12
Slovenia	5	3	1	0	1	17	: 8	11
Hungary	5	2	0	0	3	17	: 21	6
France	5	1	0	0	4	14	: 29	3
Great Britain	5	0	0	1	4	8	: 30	1

Latvia promoted to 2009 IIHF World U20 Championship
 Great Britain relegated to 2009 IIHF World Championship, Division II

IIHF World U20 Championship Div. II Gr. A

Canazei, ITALY December 9-15

Romania - Iceland	6 - 4	(0-1, 3-1, 3-2)
Belgium - Korea	0 - 3	(0-0, 0-0, 0-3)
Japan - Italy	1 - 5	(0-2, 1-2, 0-1)
Iceland - Belgium	1 - 5	(1-2, 0-1, 0-2)
Romania - Japan	0 - 6	(0-3, 0-0, 0-3)
Italy - Korea	4 - 3	(1-0, 2-1, 1-2)
Romania - Belgium	4 - 5 ps	(1-1, 3-3, 0-0)
Japan - Korea	5 - 1	(0-0, 2-1, 3-0)
Italy - Iceland	11-1	(2-0, 2-0, 7-1)
Iceland - Japan	1-17	(0-5, 0-3, 1-9)
Korea - Romania	3 - 2	(1-1, 1-1, 1-0)
Belgium - Italy	2 - 5	(0-2, 1-2, 1-1)
Japan - Belgium	8 - 0	(1-0, 5-0, 2-0)
Korea - Iceland	8 - 0	(3-0, 2-0, 3-0)
Italy - Romania	12-1	(0-0, 4-0, 8-1)

Italy	5	5	0	0	0	37	: 8	15
Japan	5	4	0	0	1	37	: 7	12
Korea	5	3	0	0	2	18	: 11	9
Belgium	5	1	1	0	3	12	: 21	5
Romania	5	1	0	1	3	13	: 30	4
Iceland	5	0	0	0	5	7	: 47	0

Italy promoted to 2009 IIHF World U20 Championship, Division I
 Iceland relegated to 2009 IIHF World Championship, Division III

IIHF World U20 Championship Div. II Gr. B

Tallinn, ESTONIA December 10-16

China - Spain	3 - 9	(0-2, 2-4, 1-3)
Netherlands - Mexico	7 - 0	(3-0, 4-0, 0-0)
Croatia - Estonia	2 - 5	(1-1, 1-2, 0-2)
Mexico - China	4 - 1	(0-0, 3-0, 1-1)
Netherlands - Croatia	8 - 0	(3-0, 3-0, 2-0)

Estonia - Spain	13-2	(4-0, 5-0, 4-2)
Netherlands - China	14-1	(6-0, 6-1, 2-0)
Croatia - Spain	5 - 2	(1-0, 4-1, 0-1)
Estonia - Mexico	4 - 1	(1-0, 2-0, 1-1)
Mexico - Croatia	2 - 5	(0-1, 0-1, 2-3)
Spain - Netherlands	1 - 5	(1-2, 0-1, 0-2)
China - Estonia	1-10	(0-2, 0-4, 1-4)
Spain - Mexico	10-1	(4-0, 3-1, 3-0)
Croatia - China	12-2	(1-0, 4-1, 7-1)
Estonia - Netherlands	3 - 2	(1-0, 1-1, 0-1) ps

Estonia	5	4	1	0	0	35	: 8	14
Netherlands	5	4	0	1	0	36	: 5	13
Croatia	5	3	0	0	2	24	: 19	9
Spain	5	2	0	0	3	24	: 27	6
Mexico	5	1	0	0	4	8	: 27	3
China	5	0	0	0	5	8	: 49	0

Estonia promoted to 2009 IIHF World U20 Championship, Division I
 China relegated to 2009 IIHF World Championship, Division III

IIHF World U20 Championship Div. III

Belgrade, SERBIA January 16-24

Australia - Turkey	5 - 3	(1-1, 1-0, 3-2)
Armenia - South Africa	13-1	(4-0, 4-0, 5-1)
Serbia - Bulgaria	16-0	(6-0, 5-0, 5-0)
New Zealand - Bulgaria	19-1	(4-0, 8-0, 7-1)
Australia - South Africa	16-2	(7-0, 5-1, 4-1)
Armenia - Turkey	13-1	(4-0, 4-1, 4-1)
Bulgaria - Australia	0-16	(0-5, 0-7, 0-4)
Turkey - New Zealand	1-20	(0-7, 1-7, 0-6)
Serbia - South Africa	10-1	(3-1, 2-0, 5-0)
Turkey - Bulgaria	9 - 4	(4-1, 3-3, 2-0)
New Zealand - Armenia	8 - 4	(4-2, 2-1, 2-1)
Serbia - Australia	5 - 0	(3-0, 2-0, 0-0)
Bulgaria - South Africa	3-13	(1-4, 2-4, 0-5)
Armenia - Australia	6 - 5	(2-3, 3-0, 1-2)
New Zealand - Serbia	5 - 4	(1-1, 2-1, 2-2)
South Africa - New Zealand	3 - 7	(0-3, 2-3, 1-1)
Bulgaria - Armenia	2-11	(1-4, 0-3, 1-4)
Turkey - Serbia	1-14	(0-5, 0-5, 1-4)

New Zealand	6	6	0	0	0	66	: 15	18
Serbia	6	5	0	0	1	55	: 7	15
Armenia	6	4	0	0	2	47	: 23	12
Australia	6	3	0	0	3	44	: 23	9
South Africa	6	2	0	0	4	26	: 52	6
Turkey	6	1	0	0	5	18	: 62	3
Bulgaria	6	0	0	0	6	10	: 84	0

New Zealand & Serbia promoted to 2008 IIHF World U20 Championship, Div. II

IIHF European Champions Cup

St. Petersburg, RUSSIA January 10-12

Ivan Hlinka Division

Karpat - Sparta	3 - 5	(0-2, 1-2, 2-1)
Sparta - Davos	6 - 4	(1-2, 3-1, 2-1)
Davos - Karpat	1 - 6	(0-1, 1-3, 0-2)

Sparta Prague (CZE)	2	2	0	0	0	11	: 7	6
Karpat Oulu (FIN)	2	1	0	0	1	9	: 6	3
HC Davos (SUI)	2	0	0	0	2	5	: 12	0

Alexander Ragulin Division

Metallurg - MODO	3 - 0	(2-0, 1-0, 0-0)
MODO - Slovan	1 - 4	(1-0, 0-3, 0-1)
Slovan - Metallurg	1 - 2	(1-0, 0-0, 0-1) ps

Metallurg Mag. (RUS)	2	1	1	0	0	5	: 1	5
Slovan Bratislava (SVK)	2	1	0	1	0	5	: 3	4
MODO Ornskoldsvik (SWE)	2	0	0	0	2	1	: 7	0

Final Game

Sparta - Metallurg	2 - 5	(1-1, 1-2, 0-2)
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IIHF Continental Cup Super Final

Szekesfehervar, HUNGARY January 5-7

Ak Bars Kazan - Kazzinc	2 - 1	(1-0, 1-1, 0-0)
Riga 2000 - Aalborg	7 - 2	(3-1, 3-0, 1-1)
Ak Bars Kazan - Aalborg	4 - 1	(1-0, 2-0, 1-1)
Kazzinc - Riga 2000	4 - 3	(3-0, 1-3, 0-0)
Riga 2000 - Ak Bars Kazan	2 - 6	(2-3, 0-3, 0-0)
Aalborg - Kazzinc	5 - 3	(0-1, 3-2, 2-0)

Ak Bars Kazan (RUS)	3	3	0	0	0	12	: 4	9
HK Riga 2000 (LAT)	3	1	0	0	2	12	: 12	3
Kazzinc Torpedo (KAZ)	3	1	0	0	2	8	: 10	3
AaB Aalborg (DEN)	3							

Priceless: Spending every day with hockey's Holy Grail

By Jenny Wiedeke

■ ■ Phil Pritchard and Craig Campbell have what must be one of the best, if not most interesting jobs in hockey. As curators at the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto, the duo most famously travel the globe with the Stanley Cup as it makes its annual pilgrimage to player's hometowns. But their job is much more than just 'keeping the cup'.

They are responsible for archiving the thousands of hockey artifacts and photographs on display and behind the scenes at the Hall. They, and the rest of the staff at the Hall, make sure that hockey's history is properly chronicled for future generations -- and as the IIHF turns 100 this year -- and hockey's past is in the limelight, it is clear that keeping the history of hockey alive is just as important as keeping the Cup.

You've both seen the NHL's and international hockey's top events, how do they compare?

CC: The international events provide a more festive atmosphere. It helps that the event is planned with a set site. Also the multiple cultures that come together in a friendly way is most unique.

PP: One is so special because they are playing for hockey's ultimate prize, the Stanley Cup, and the other you are wearing the logo of your country. I don't think anything tops that.

Speaking of the Stanley Cup, you both travel with the NHL trophy, tell us about your travels. Any odd experiences?

PP: Every experience is unique regardless if it is in a parade in Saskatoon, an event in Boston or a sauna party in Finland. I think the Cup has travelled to 14 + different countries, each one unique.

CC: I have been asked for a cup of coffee on two separate occasions, as the person asking thought that the Stanley Cup was a coffee urn.

What is the question you are asked the most about the Cup?

CC: The three big questions are - Is this the real Stanley Cup? How much does it weigh? Is it solid silver?

PP: 'Is that the real one?' and 'Can I pick it up?' Answers 'Yes' and 'Yes, if you have won it!'

Most people think of the Hall of Fame as home to the Stanley Cup and NHL artifacts, how do you also promote international hockey?

CC: We showcase international hockey through our permanent *World of Hockey* zone and our external exhibits that also feature historical international hockey artifacts. The interactive Global Game Encounter in the WOH Zone is really interesting.

With thousands of artifacts on display, what is your favorite?

PP: I have two favorites, the first Stanley Cup ring from 1893 and the 1954 Bobrov jersey from the Russian National Team (they were a little blue at the time).

CC: This is tough. Percy LeSeuer's goalie stick, Billy Barlow's 1892-93 Stanley Cup ring, Konrad Johannason's Team Canada sweater, medal and passport from the 1920 Olympics, Cyclone Taylor's hockey stick from 1908 and a Renfrew contract from 1909 and Vsevolod Bobrov's 1954 CCCP sweater... to name a few.

How do you find all of these artifacts?

PP: In a lot of cases we work closely with the players, teams and leagues on gathering jerseys, but every so often a family member contacts us with a great artifact.

CC: It's amazing how the hockey world works together to preserve the history of the game. It all is thanks to special fans and the support of the players and people with teams, leagues and federations. It is a big mandate to preserve hockey's history, but the support of the hockey world makes it possible.

The IIHF is counting down the top 100 international hockey stories of the last 100 years. What do you think should be the story of the century?

CC: There are many more than 100. On a country level - 1972 Team Canada, 1960 and

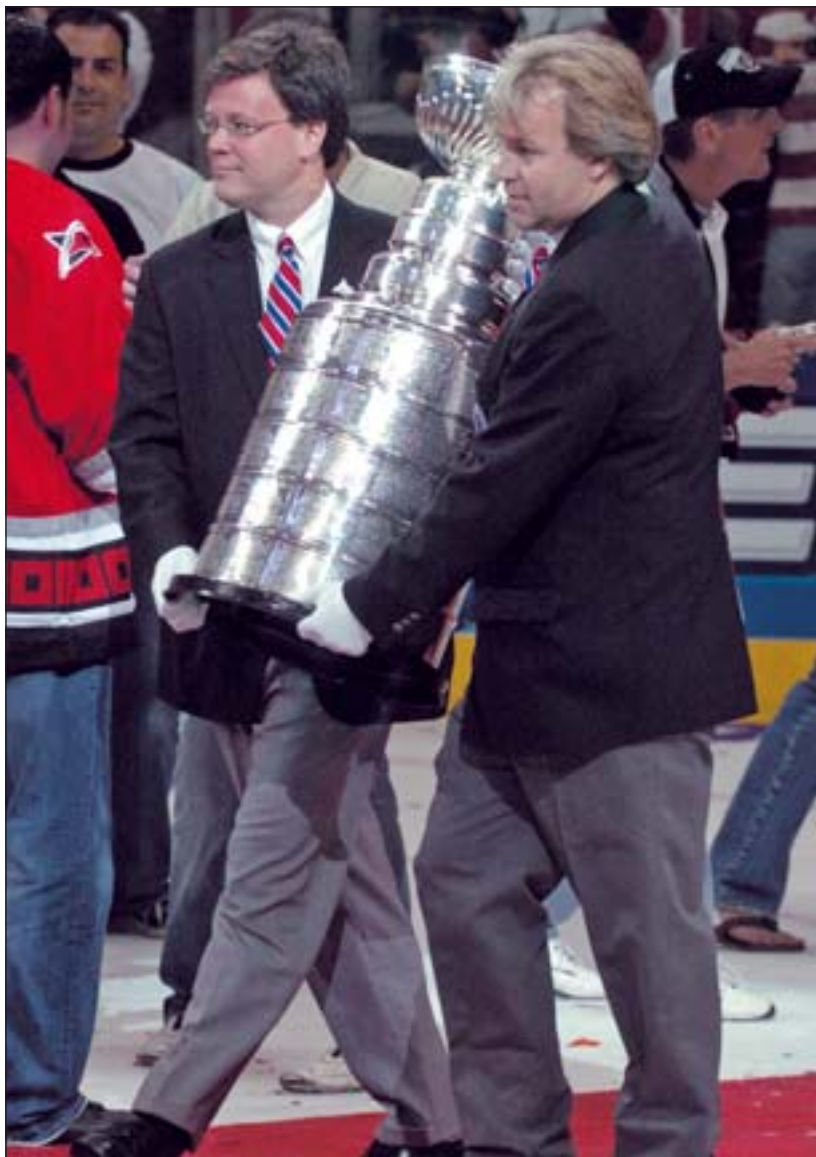


Photo: STAN GILLILAND/HOF

HAVE CUP, WILL TRAVEL : Craig Campbell (left) and Phil Pritchard bring out the guest of honor at the conclusion of the 2006 NHL playoffs as the eager players await their turn with the world famous Stanley Cup. The pair work for the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto.

1980 Team USA, 2002 Team Canada and 2006 Team Sweden. The one that jumps out to me is Peter Stastny and what he went through on a personal level to make it.

PP: I think the top story should be that today there are over 65 countries around the world playing the greatest sport in the world. However there are so many stories that could be first... 2002 Double Gold by Canada, 1st Olympics, USA 1980 Gold, 1972 Series, Soviet dynasty...

Of course, some of the best hockey stories are the ones that no one knows about. What's your favorite 'insider' story?

CC & PP: It has to be the story about the kid from Mongolia that traveled far and wide and even used a camel to get to an IIHF Development Camp.

You have both seen a lot of changes in hockey in the last 20 years, what do you think the next 20 years will bring?

PP: I think as the game grows we will see a lot of changes not only in the amount of countries playing the game but also where it is being played... it is growing so fast now, I believe there will be over 100 countries playing the game within the next 20 years.

About the Stanley Cup

- Every year, upon presentation of the trophy to the championship team, each of the organization's players and staff enjoy 24 hours with the Cup. The names of the winning team and staff are also engraved on the Cup. Below are some of the numbers behind the Cup.
- Number of names engraved on Cup: 2,056
- First Team to Engrave its Roster: 1906-07 Montreal Wanderers
- Most names engraved on Cup (one year): 55 1997-98 Detroit Red Wings
- Most appearances on Cup: 11, Henri Richard (Montreal Canadiens)
- Stanley Cup Dimensions:
Height - 89.54 cm / 35-1/4 inches
Weight - 34-1/2 lbs - 15-1/2 kg