



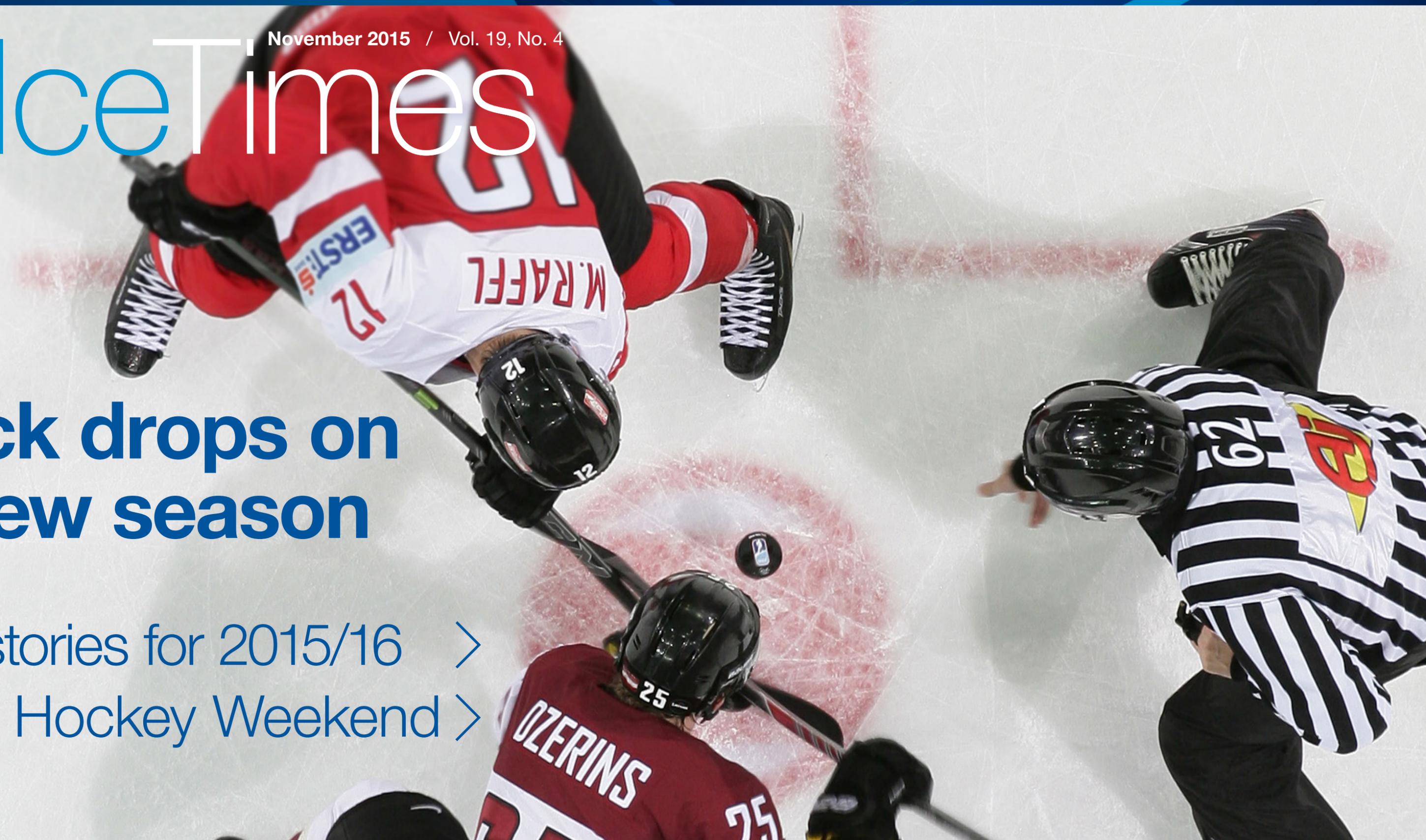
IceTimes

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Puck drops on a new season

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From the IIHF President

New season, new challenges

By René Fasel

We are going into a new season, which means it's time to pick up the sticks and hit the ice once more.

The start of a new international hockey season is always a fun time, and we at the IIHF are preparing for what should be another great year for international tournaments. A new season brings new objectives, new partners, but also new challenges.

To help smooth things over, the IIHF has been working through the last few years to develop a comprehensive knowledge-transfer program, designed to take the lessons learned from previous World Championships and pass them on to the next tournament organizers.

We closed out our most recent knowledge transfer seminar at the 2015 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship, which was coincidentally one of our most successful tournaments ever. You can read more about the program on **Page 7**.

We are one year removed now from Sochi 2014, and already we are starting to get into preparations for the next Olympic Games.

We know that for the 2018 Olympic men's ice hockey tournament the top-8 nations of the 2015 IIHF Men's World Ranking will be automatically qualified and seeded according to the ranking.

The three remaining spots will be determined in the three stages of the Olympic Qualification starting in the 2015/2016 season. I wish good luck to all the participants and look forward to seeing who will join the top-8 and hosts Korea in PyeongChang 2018.

In other Olympic news, we welcome the return of the Youth Olympic Games. Dedicated entirely to young athletes, the inaugural Winter YOG in Innsbruck did an excellent job combining sports, culture, and education.

As the YOG vision is to inspire young people around the world to participate in sport and live by the Olympic values, I can see no better follow up than Lillehammer, host of the 1994 Olympics and a true winter sports paradise.

With 1,100 young athletes from 70 nations gathering for 10 days of sports, education and celebration in Lillehammer, we look forward to organizing our men's and women's ice hockey

tournaments, as well as the unique Skills Competition event.

In September we wrapped up our Semi-Annual Congress, where we confirmed all participants and venues for the 2015/2016 IIHF Championship Program. You can view the full event calendar on the IIHF.com website. We wish good luck to all the teams and the organizers in their preparations.

In October we also saw the staging of one of the IIHF's most comprehensive and far-reaching development initiatives: the World Girls' Ice Hockey Weekend.

I am happy to say that this is our fifth annual weekend, and we have grown every year to the point that we now involve thousands of girls in over 30 countries. We also for the first time ever held a Global Girls' Game, about which you can read on **Page 9**. Events like these are so important to expanding ice hockey's popularity to new horizons.

With that in mind, we have a tremendous opportunity with the next two Olympic Winter Games scheduled to be held in Korea and China, and I hope that we will be able to offer the chance for boys and girls around the world to pick up a hockey stick and hit the ice.



News and Notes

IIHF

The IIHF has named 449 on-ice officials – referees and linesmen, female and male – for its international tournaments during the 2015/2016 ice hockey season.

The assignments were done for 28 tournaments of the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship program, six men’s Olympic Qualification events that will take place this season, the 2016 Winter Youth Olympic Games in Lillehammer and the first three tournaments of the Continental Cup.

On-ice officials were named for all tournaments except for the 2016 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship. The final selection for the Worlds will be done in February.

[Click here for a list of the assignments](#)

A new IIHF Officiating Standards video has also been released for the 2015/ 2016 season.

[Click here to see the video](#)

ARMENIA

After careful review the IIHF Council decided that the Armenia suspension should be lifted.

The Council requested the IIHF Semi-Annual Congress to support its judgement and lift the Armenia suspension. Armenia was suspended indefinitely due to eligibility issues with their men’s national team that participated in the 2010 IIHF World Championship Division III Group B in Yerevan, Armenia. The member was on probation due to eligibility issues in the past.

CANADA

Hockey Canada has named **Mike Babcock** (below) as head coach of the men’s national team for the 2016 World Cup of Hockey.

Babcock has coached Canada in four tournaments, winning gold each time. He won World Junior gold in 1997, a World Championship gold in 2004, and Olympic gold twice, in 2010 and 2014.



He also won a Stanley Cup with the Detroit Red Wings in 2008. His first Olympic gold in Vancouver gave Babcock the distinction of becoming the first ever coach to join the IIHF Triple Gold Club. Claude Julien, Barry Trotz, Joel Quenneville, and Bill Peters will be working with Babcock as assistant coaches.

Todd McLellan, who led Canada to gold at the 2015 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship with a 10-0 record, was named head coach for Team North America at the 2016 World Cup of Hockey. McLellan is currently coaching the Edmonton Oilers.

FINLAND

Lauri Marjamaki will serve as head coach of the Finnish men’s national team as of the 2016/2017 season. He has served as assistant to current national coach Kari Jalonen for the past two seasons. Marjamaki’s first big event as head coach will be the 2016 World Cup of Hockey in September and his contract runs until the 2018 Worlds.

Since moving from the Espoo Blues to Kärpät Oulu in 2013, Marjamaki has led the club from Northern Finland to back-to-back championships in 2014 and 2015. He was also Finland’s head coach at the 2011 IIHF World Junior Championship.



GERMANY

The German Ice Hockey Association (DEB) named **Marco Sturm** (above) as new General Manager and Head Coach of the German men’s national team.

The former German national team winger played 54 international games (14 goals) including three Olympic Winter Games, four IIHF Ice Hockey World Championships (three in the top division) and the 2004 World Cup of Hockey. He also represented his country in two World Junior Championships and three U18 European Championships. After his playing career he started his coaching education and career in the United States.

Christian Kunast will take over as new head coach of the U20 national team.

News and Notes

LATVIA

Leonids Beresnevs will take over the Latvian U20 national team that was coached last season by Girts Ankimans.

For the 57-year-old it's not the first stint with the U20 national team. He already coached the team in 1996, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2007 and most recently in 2011 when he led it to the top division. He was also coaching the U18 national team during two seasons and he was the head coach of the men's national team from 1995 to 1999 and from 2005 to 2006.

LITHUANIA

Former Latvian national player Aigars Cipruss will continue to coach the U20 national team for the third year. He will be assisted by rookie coach Mindaugas Kieras and goalie coach Arunas Aleinikovas. Kieras was the captain of the Lithuanian national team last season and is now working in kids hockey in Vilnius at the Hockey Punks Academy.

American-Irish coach James Tibbets, who led the French national team at the 1998 Olympic Winter Games, will coach the Lithuanian U18

national team. Tibbets, who was also the head coach of the Irish national team for many years, will be assisted by long-time NCAA coach Damian DiGiulian whose grandfather was Lithuanian.

SLOVAKIA

Zdeno Ciger (below) was named new head coach of the Slovak national team. He will replace Vladimir Vujtek and will be the first Slovak coaching the national team since Jan Filc in 2010.



The 45-year-old represented Slovakia and Czechoslovakia in eight IIHF Ice Hockey World Championships and also played at the 1998 Olympic Winter Games, the 1991 Canada Cup and the 1996 World Cup of Hockey. He split his career between playing for Slovak teams Dukla Trencin in the Czechoslovak league and lat-



er for Slovan Bratislava in the Slovak league. In the NHL he wore the jerseys of the New Jersey Devils, Edmonton Oilers, New York Rangers and Tampa Bay Lightning during seven years. He also coached Slovan Bratislava for several years, winning two championships as a head coach.

SWEDEN

The Swedish Ice Hockey Association named Rikard Gronborg (above) as head coach, and Johan Garpenlov and Peter Popovic as assistant coaches for the 2016/2017 season including the 2016 World Cup of Hockey and the 2017 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship.

Rikard Gronborg served as an assistant coach on the men's national team during four seasons, 2011/2012-2014/2015 and earlier served as the team's scouting coach during four seasons. In 2015/2016 he will be the head coach of the U20

national team for the third season with the 2016 IIHF World Junior Championship.

USA

USA Hockey has announced that John Tortorella (below) will be the head coach of the United States for the 2016 World Cup of Hockey. The Team USA job will be Tortorella's second international head coaching assignment after leading Team USA at the 2008 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship.

Previously he also served as an assistant coach at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, winning the silver medal, and the 2005 IIHF Worlds in Vienna and Innsbruck, Austria. Tortorella, first in all-time NHL wins among American-born head coaches. He is currently the head coach of the Columbus Blue Jackets.



Photo: Matthew Murnaghan / IIHF-Images

Photo: Matthew Murnaghan / IIHF-Images

Photo: Jukka Rautio / IIHF-Images

IIHF Semi-Annual Congress

By Martin Merk

The IIHF Semi-Annual Congress ran from the 24 to 26 of September in Dubrovnik, Croatia. Here are some of the main notes from the Congress:

Katowice new host for Division IA:

The 2015/16 IIHF Calendar is set with the confirmation of Katowice, Poland, as the host of the 2016 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division I Group A that will be held 23-29 April 2016. The tournament was initially set to take place in Krakow where the competition had already taken place last April, however, over the summer the IIHF was notified by the Polish Ice Hockey Federation about a proposed venue change, receiving approval for the venue switch from Congress after no concerns were raised from the participating teams.

At the event Austria, Slovenia, Poland, Japan, Italy and Korea will battle for promotion to the top division for the 2017 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship in Cologne, Germany, and Paris, France.



The 2015 IIHF Semi-Annual Congress confirmed all the dates and locations for the IIHF World Championship program.

Team Europe takes shape:

The 2016 World Cup of Hockey will feature a Team Europe composed of NHL stars coming from European countries other than the Czech Republic, Finland, Russia and Sweden, who will have national teams in the event.

With the team structure officially settled, the real work begins for the Team Europe staff, led by

Team President Franz Reindl, President of the German Ice Hockey Association, General Manager and Slovak hockey legend Miroslav Satan, and German-Canadian head coach Ralph Krueger.

A meeting with delegates from the potential countries, IIHF, the NHLPA's Rob Zamuner as well as NHL Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly connected in a video conference was held on

Thursday in Dubrovnik, Croatia, during the 2015 IIHF Semi-Annual Congress to share information.

“We will be representing 12 or 14 countries, which means about 200 million inhabitants or more,” Reindl noted at a press conference held in Toronto earlier this month. “This is an important responsibility. Coach Krueger will take the best players regardless what country they are from. There are no shut doors. Whether the player is from a big nation or small, NHL or not, we will choose the best players.”

The 23 players can be called from various countries other than the previously-mentioned top-four European nations. Last season European representation in the NHL from these potential countries was led by Slovakia (13 players), Switzerland (13), Germany (10) and Denmark (8).

U18 Women's category grows:

Due to the high interest in participation a new format was approved for the 2016 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's World Championship Division I Qualification. It will now consist of eight teams playing in two groups and will be hosted by Austria in Spittal an der Drau and Radenthein, 7-11 January 2016. Group A includes Austria, Kazakhstan, China and Romania; Group B Italy, Poland, Australia and Great Britain.

Photo: Irina Strakhova

2015 Worlds among best yet

A cumulative TV audience of over 1 billion, a spectator crowd totaling 741,690 and a strong digital initiative made this year's IIHF World Championship one of the most successful in history.

Infront Sports & Media, the exclusive media and marketing partner of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) for the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship, has announced that the 2015 event - held in the Czech Republic, between 1 and 17 May - surpassed all previous audience and spectator benchmarks. Details were presented at the IIHF Semi-Annual Congress.

The event secured a total cumulative TV audience of over 1 billion, as compared to 945 million in 2014. Overall, it was aired to 165 territories worldwide - receiving a total of 5,381 hours of coverage. New or expanded contracts ensured additional coverage in Italy, the Netherlands, Thailand, Myanmar, Indonesia, and Malaysia besides others.

In terms of onsite attendance, this year's tournament also achieved a new record with



A cumulative audience of over 1 billion people around the globe watched the 2015 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship.

741,690 eager spectators, over 100,000 more than the previous event in Belarus. Adding to this, there were a further 250,000 additional fans in the dedicated fan villages outside the arenas in the cities of Prague and Ostrava.

Social media records smashed

The strategic approach for a significantly broader social media presence this year focused on video content, created to go socially

viral, spread on YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and the official event app presented by Skoda.

This resulted in a total of 11.6 million video views during the tournament. On YouTube, watch time increased by factor 41 up to 448,000 hours as compared to 2014.

“The IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship is a trademark for top-level ice hockey, and the

2015 event has proven its worldwide appeal and growing demand once more,” said IIHF President René Fasel.

“We are proud to announce, together with Infront, the incredible pinnacle of 1 billion in audience reach and at the same time, the highest spectator attendance ever recorded for the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship. The atmosphere at the venues in Ostrava and Prague was inspiring, whilst our broadcast partners, our valued marketing partners, and the fans themselves on social media platforms carried the enthusiasm to the world.”

Bruno Marty, Executive Director Winter Sports at Infront, added: “There are three pillars that make our partnership with the IIHF so successful: First of all our focus on the overall growth and reach of the tournament, proven by these unparalleled audience numbers.”

“Further, our investment into the sport's future which is demonstrated by the introduction of the new team jackpot, as well as by the strong partnerships we have built with many loyal broadcasters and sponsors. And thirdly, our commitment to boost the event brand and its fan engagement across all platforms. We look forward to soon take the IIHF digital initiative, integrated into our successful media and marketing efforts, to the next level.”

Photo: Andre Ringuette / IIHF-IIHF Images

Passing the puck to PyeongChang

By Adam Steiss

For IIHF staff preparing to tackle a new season, the organization of an international ice hockey tournament can sometimes feel like déjà-vu.

But this isn't the case for the Local Organizing Committee (LOC). Tasked with delivering an IIHF World Championship, often for the first time, an LOC typically begins preparations three years in advance and won't stop until the first puck drop.

Usually the same problems and issues facing LOCs reappear, just in a new setting. So in order to help assist in the planning and execution of hockey tournaments, the IIHF has developed a comprehensive Transfer of Knowledge (TOK) program, designed to pass on the lessons learned from previous events onto the next hosts.

The program, initiated by IIHF General Secretary Horst Lichtner, has been around since 2011, but recently has picked up steam thanks to a successful run of World Championships in the last few years. Drawing from the success



The IIHF, IOC, and PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games Organizing Committee held the first meeting of the Transfer of Knowledge program in Korea, designed to instruct POCOG on organizing a top-level international ice hockey tournament.

of the last two Worlds in particular, which set back-to-back attendance records, IIHF Transfer of Knowledge Director Cornelia Ljungberg is tasked with keeping the momentum going into 2016 and beyond.

“The TOK program calls on a coordination of all IIHF departments to collect and provide guidelines, regulations, and examples for hosts in all areas: event management, information technology, media organization, medical support, sport organization, and television production to name a few,” she said.

Ljungberg has worked with IIHF Ice Hockey World Championships dating back to Stockholm 1989, and has been at the forefront of the TOK project.

“Every organizing committee reinvents the wheel,” said Lichtner. “Instead of doing the same things again trying to reinvent everything we thought ‘why don’t we integrate a knowledge resource centre that can be transferred from Championship to Championship?’”

The TOK process also puts past and future

hosts in touch with each other to share ideas and provide guidance if needed. In Prague 2015 there was the usual IIHF Observer Program - a guided tour of the World Championship facilities coupled with presentations and workshops - that has been run for several years and covers all tournament management areas. In attendance were the hosts for the next three World Championships: Russia, Germany/France, and Denmark.

The program is now a model example for sports-specific knowledge transfer in major sporting events. In fact, the IIHF will now run TOK for the ice hockey events of the Olympic Winter Games, and has partnered with IOC in preparation for the 2018 Olympics in PyeongChang, Korea. Compared to Canada and Russia, the last two Winter Olympic hosts and two countries that sit among the elite of the international hockey world, Korea is not as experienced in preparing and hosting a top-level ice hockey tournament.

So on what is the secret to success?

“I think it is in the “soft factors,” which can be hard to explain,” says Ljungberg. “You need clear channels of communication, a common and mutual understanding of the goal, a mixture of ice hockey people and event people brought in, and the willingness to do something good and make the event a great success.”

The IOC-IIHF joint TOK project is the first of its kind to be initiated at the Olympic level, and could serve as a benchmark for other sports federations to initiate their own TOK programs in preparation of the next Games.

“This cooperation was triggered by a presentation I got from the IOC, where they spoke about the challenges of organizing the Winter Olympics every four years,” said Lichtner, who added that transfer of knowledge is not meant to take away from the unique experience and cultural flavour that each host brings to an event.

“Of course you have the cultural and environmental differences, but the principles are the same. An organizer first needs to understand the principles, then later they can put their cultural input into it. The key though is to stick to the principles so that the event is always delivered to the same high standard.”

For their part, the IOC is looking forward to using the IIHF example educating the PyeongChang Organizing Committee for the 2018 Olympic Games & Paralympic Winter Games (POCOG) through this pilot cooperation with an International Federation on a sport-specific TOK project.

“We’re very excited about it,” said Irina Gladkikh, Head of Winter Sports and IF Relations for the IOC. “The IIHF has experience organizing World

Three soft factors for a successful ice hockey tournament organizer

1) People: “Regardless of experience, when you have a group of people in an organizing committee that have a unified vision and the drive to put on a great event, there’s nothing they can’t accomplish.”
-IIHF President René Fasel

2) Direction: “It’s important not to count the dollar, try to do the best and the dollar will follow. Focus on delivering a proper atmosphere and experience and the fans will come.”
-IIHF General Secretary Horst Lichtner

3) Attitude: “Just working with a smile, from the volunteers to the president of the organizing committee, can go such a long way.”
-IIHF Transfer of Knowledge Director Cornelia Ljungberg



Championships, we have the methodology and know how to work with OCOGs (Olympic Games Organizing Committee). Working with an OCOG is a little different than working with a World Championship organizer.”



“We all have the same goal: a successful delivery of the ice hockey event and ultimately successful delivery of the Olympic Games,” said Ana-Marija Garcevic, Observation & Experience Services Manager for the IOC.

“So we have to educate our POCOG people, prepare them for this delivery. Usually we train them through our events, the Olympic Games, the Test Events, but we never went into a sport-specific training, which in any case is not possible without a partnership with an IF, and a proactive one for that matter. Now, in partnership with IIHF, we can run a sort of “Transfer of Knowledge boot camp” where we can team the sport-specific knowledge with Olympic experience and create a holistic approach where learning is done through theory (such as workshop we just conducted in October) and also practice (such as the Observer Program during the 2016 IIHF World Championship in May 2016).”

The project has now evolved into a four-module program, beginning with a meeting in Korea with POCOG in late October. There the IIHF and IOC held an introductory session with POCOG, which included a team-building experience.

The next module will be a visit by the POCOG team to Moscow in May, where they along with the IOC and IIHF TOK teams will have a two-day tour of all facilities and departments of the 2016 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

If all goes well, come the first puck drop in February 2018, PyeongChang will be ready to host the world.

Girls' Game goes Global

By Martin Merk



The 2015 IIHF World Girls' Ice Hockey Weekend was a hit, with more participants and the addition of the all-new Global Girls' Game.

ARGENTINA: BARILOCHE

Two events took place at the Pista Uno ice rink in the Rio Negro province. 27 girls from the age of 4 to 21 took part. After a free skate they played games like the hockey stance, glide and snow plow before carrying the puck and shooting.

"The people and parents who were watching asked to sign their sons in our activities too because they felt children were getting fun in a really cool sport and they didn't know that girls can practice too. We had some figure skating girls that want to play ice hockey too because they love hockey skates and the possibility of playing on a team," said Guajardo Baruzzi, the head coach for the Club Pista Uno hockey team which organized the event.



One of the 29 Global Girls' Game stages between Team Blue and Team White took place in Astana, Kazakhstan.

AUSTRALIA: BRISBANE

Dozens of girls and women from the age of 6 to 45 came to Brisbane, one of the Australian venues during the World Girls' Ice Hockey Weekend. Ice Hockey Queensland together with the Brisbane Goannas and Southern Stars organized the event and after outfitting the girls they had one hour on ice being coached by team members.

"The girls were extremely favourable, asking when and how to sign up with local clubs. The new girls were directed to the Southern Stars Club Come and Try Program. We will definitely see an increase in girls playing hockey locally," said Jad Daley, Brisbane Goannas President and Ice Hockey Queensland Women's Director.

BULGARIA: SOFIA

It was a busy day at the Winter Palace in Sofia. Not only did the men's national team play a game against Georgia to advance to the Olympic Qualification Preliminary Round, there was also the Global Girls' Game and also a try-hockey session with 34 participants between the age of 8 and 30.

The girls were introduced to ice hockey and its rules in the classroom, then went on to on and off-ice practices. IIHF referee supervisor Freddy Reichen came to Sofia for the Bulgaria vs. Georgia game and congratulated the girls for trying out ice hockey. On the ice in Sofia was also multiple taekwan-do world champion Amalia Koleva, who is also on the Bulgarian women's national team in ice hockey.

DENMARK: COPENHAGEN, HERNING

In Denmark, a team of hockey players from Odense got onto a bus and traveled two hours east, towards Copenhagen, the nation's capital, to celebrate women's hockey, and to play a friendly game.

"All in all, we had 24 players, ranging from 11 years old to 41-year-olds," says Christine Russell, Team Manager of the Gentofte Lady Stars who hosted the game.

"The girls hockey weekend is a brilliant idea and a lot of fun. Everybody here enjoyed our


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event, including the spectators and the referees,” she adds.

40 new girls and women from the age of 2 to 40 were on the ice in another event in Herning. They were joined by players to help them during the one-hour ice session that followed after getting the equipment.



FINLAND: TAMPERE, KIRKKONUMMI

Ilves Tampere organized a Girls Hockey Day with 39 participants on the ice of which 20 were new. The club from Tampere arguably had a record with five-month old Sara on the ice.

“Every one had lots of fun and I hope that we will also have new members in our girls team,” said Satu-Maria Kuittinen, GM of the girls’ team.

Being prepared is half the battle, and that’s why the girls that showed up at the Varuboden arena in Kirkkonummi, Finland - a half hour’s drive from Helsinki - hit the gym with the mothers, before getting on the ice. A 30-minute warmup at the gym got them ready for a 45-minute skate on the ice.

“There were eight new players, all between four and six years of age,” says Katariina Nousiainen, Kirkkonummi Salamat’s GHD coordinator.

“We had guests from Espoo Ice Hockey Team (EKS) on the ice with new girls while the more advanced players scrimmaged at the other end of the rink. We also had a female referee on the ice as a guest,” she says.

GREECE: ATHENS

Greece hosted its first World Girls’ Ice Hockey Weekend ever and 60 girls from 4 to 36 years of age came to the two sessions held on Saturday and Sunday.

“We believe it will have a great impact as many new players



already showed interest in playing Ice Hockey,” said Georgia Proimou, the General Secretary of the Hellenic Ice Sports Federation. “In our country ice hockey is not a popular sport, so activities that invite people to learn and love the sport are crucial. We are very happy with the participation and the outcome of the event, and we are looking forward to seeing all these girls in action”

Proimou hopes that the event will help recruit more girls. Increasing the number of hockey players and getting an international-size ice rink are right now the top priorities in Greek ice hockey.

Read our feature on the event in Athens.

KOREA: SEOUL

The Korea Ice Hockey Association held the World Girls’ Ice Hockey Weekend at the Taerung ice rink, which is in the Korea Olympic Training



Center in Seoul. 30 girls born 2004 or later came to the event where they were taught by players and coaches from the women’s national team.

There were different drills and games and after the 90-minute program, participants were able to remain on the ice to skate with the national team players before they got their special T-shirts signed by their favourite players.

“The World Girls’ Ice Hockey Weekend is a great event and I am glad that here in Korea we were also able to participate. In Korea the pool for female hockey players is very small and there are no female youth programs. It was great to give the young players a great time playing games and participating in drills, and the Korean national team players had fun interacting and coaching the young players. We hope through more events like this we can continue to grow and develop the passion for female hockey,” said national team coach Sarah Murray.

LATVIA: RIGA

It was a busy weekend for Latvian women's hockey with the Global Girls' Game, the World Girls' Ice Hockey Weekend and then another Global Girls' Game in neighbouring Lithuania where a women's team was formed for the first time to play against a Latvian team. The try-hockey event was organized by the two Riga clubs Saga and Laima. The girls had off-ice outdoor training for approximately one hour helped by players before they joined with the organizers and parents for tea and cookies and got their diploma.

"We think this event promotes and builds a positive image of women's hockey. It helps to recruit more girls already at a young age to grow the women's hockey family," said Inara Zvidre.

MOROCCO: RABAT

Among the countries to host a World Girls' Ice



Hockey Weekend event for the first time this year was Morocco. Two sessions took place at the Mega Mall ice rink in the capital of Rabat. We spoke with the organizers in our **featured story**.



MALAYSIA: PETALING JAYA

Malaysia has another successful World Girls' Ice Hockey Weekend in the books. Two separate 90-minute sessions took place at Sunway Pyramid Ice located in the Sunway Pyramid Mall in Petaling Jaya. The first took place on Saturday with 20 girls aged 7 to 22, the second sessions will be staged on Sunday. Saturday was also the first ever "Hari Sukan Malaysia", the Malaysian Sports Day with many sporting activities held across the country.

Eight female coaches and volunteers, all ice hockey players themselves, demonstrated and

guided the participants through basic skills and drills. The participants also had the opportunity to play a variety of fun on-ice games.

"It was a great event to participate in on the Malaysia Sports Day and I hope to join the Malaysian Ice Hockey Federation one day when I am a great skater. It was so much fun!" commented Nur Mahirah binti Brahim, one of the participants.

In the last few years the initiative has been used as a first step to bring girls to the skating and hockey classes and often the participants are later joined by other girls and also boys after a first great experience.

The organizers were joined by Minnesotan goalie coach Tanya Sletten. Her presence and especially her efforts to communicate in Bahasa Malaysia were appreciated by the crowd. Language is no barrier in sharing the love for hockey.

SWITZERLAND: KLOTEN

Swiss national team goaltender and Olympic bronze medallist Florence Schelling hosted 60 Girls between the age of 4 and 12 years at the Swiss Arena in Kloten, Switzerland. An advanced group went for off-ice training first for approximately 45 min, while the beginner group was on the ice for an hour before switching up.



The event concluded with an autograph session by Florence Schelling (pictured, above), Julia & Stefanie Marty and Sara Benz, all girls from the Sochi 2014 Swiss Olympic Bronze Team.

"One girl that was the youngest girl at last year's event barely stand on the skates or even skate back then," said Schelling. "She came up to me this year and told me that she loved it so much last year that she started playing hockey and thanked me so much for having given her this opportunity."

"The Girls' Hockey Weekend is a great event and brings together women's hockey across the world," she added. "It's great to see what other countries are doing to develop women's hockey, and then to get to do something for the development in my own country is a privilege!"

2015 World Girls' Ice Hockey Weekend and Global Girls' Game Map



Montreal, Canada
 The Global Girls' Game ended where hockey began: in Montreal. Team Blue beat Team White 4-2 to extend the aggregate score to 106-83. This is the final score as the first Global Girls' Game came to an end 42 hours after the start in New Zealand.



San Jose, USA
 Over 70 girls convened for free sessions hosted by the San Jose Jr. Sharks Girls. Players and coaches held skills clinics for over 130 California girls for a true festival of girls and women's hockey in Northern California.

Mexico City, Mexico

"We had players from 4 to 35 years. The moms were very excited and also the youngest players because they had the opportunity to play with national team players and those helped the youngest player to improve their game. This activity was very fun and productive for Mexican hockey. We hope that next year we can have more girls."
 -WGIHW Mexico operations manager Daniela Montes de Oca



Buenos Aires & Bariloche, Argentina
 "The people and parents who were watching asked to sign their sons in our activities too because they felt children were getting fun in a really cool sport and they didn't know that girls can practice too."
 -Club Pista Uno coach Darío Exequiel Guajardo Baruzzi



Pretoria, South Africa
 End of Day 1 Global Girls' Game



Dunedin, New Zealand
 27 players of all ages participated in the first Global Girls' Game stage held in Dunedin. New Zealand held its own nationwide version with two more games in Christchurch and Auckland.



Maaseik, Netherlands
 122 participants from 9 to 32 years old came to Maaseik for the World Girls' Ice Hockey Weekend.



Petaling Jaya, Malaysia



Abu Dhabi, UAE

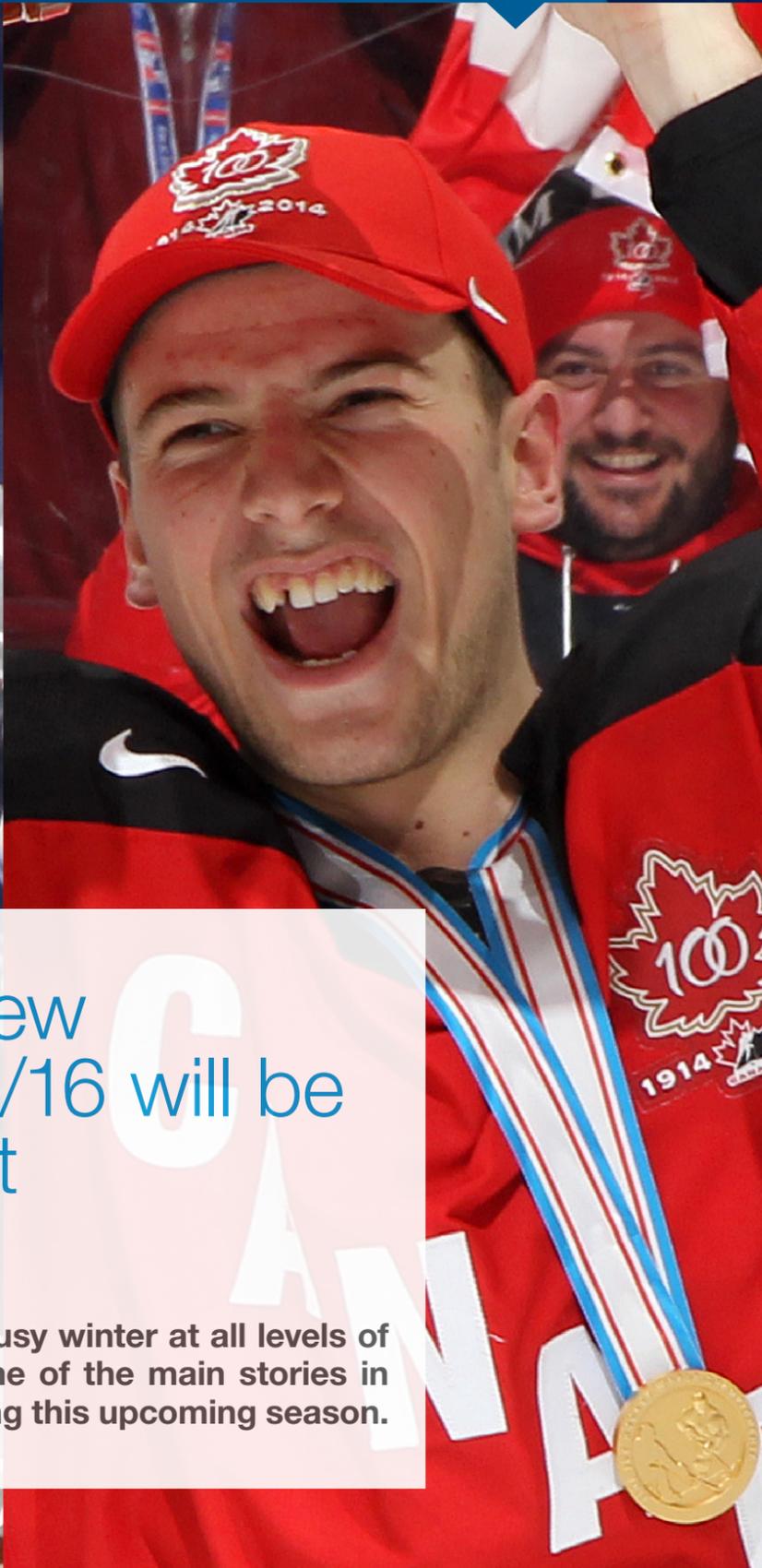
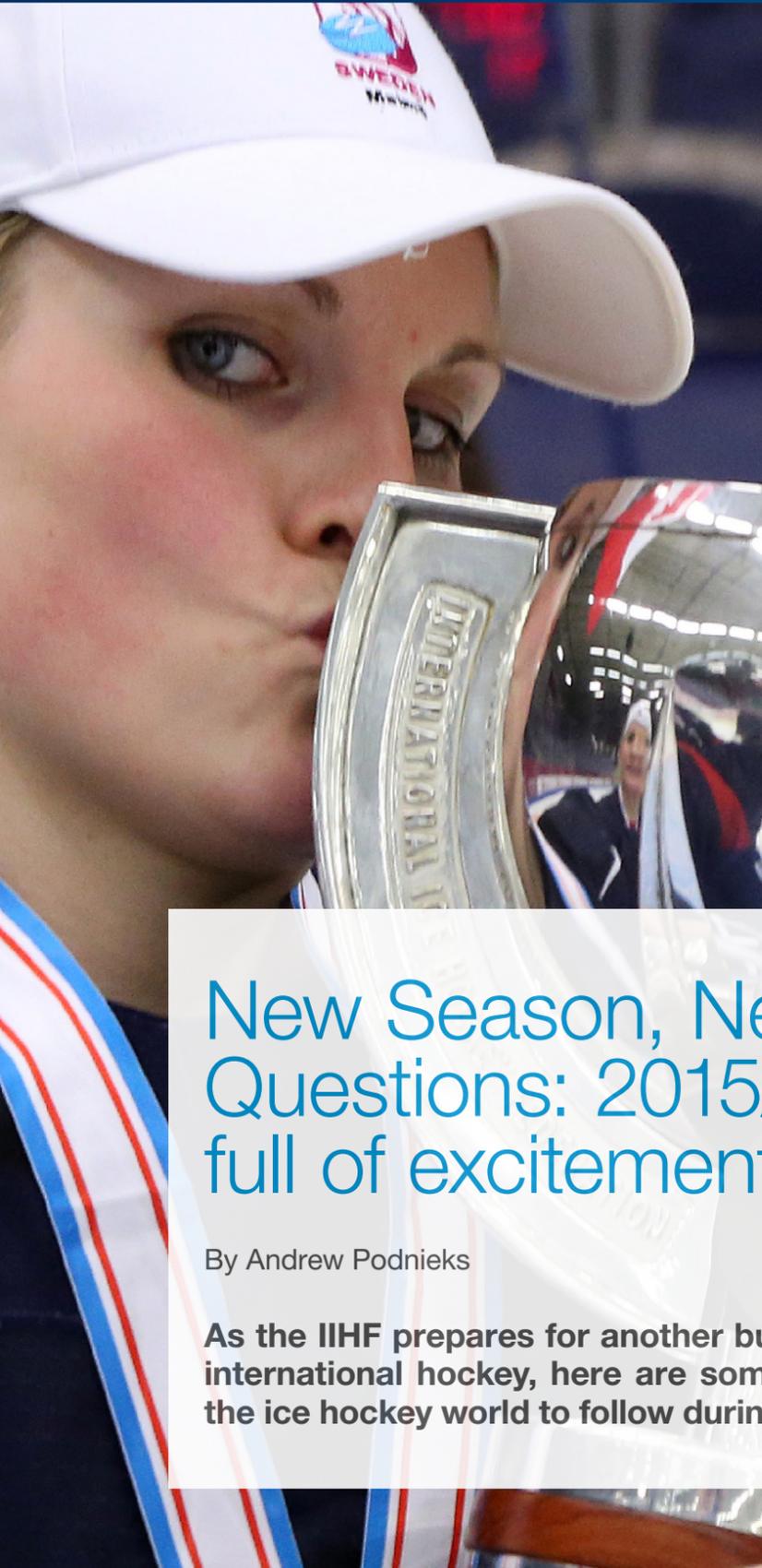


Hong Kong, Hong Kong
 Over 60 girls came out to join the event hosted by the Hong Kong Ice Hockey Association and try ice hockey as a new sport. Most of the girls were between the ages of 5 and 14. Their youngest participant was 3 years old.

80 events in Finland

144 events in USA





New Season, New Questions: 2015/16 will be full of excitement

By Andrew Podnieks

As the IIHF prepares for another busy winter at all levels of international hockey, here are some of the main stories in the ice hockey world to follow during this upcoming season.



Photo: Andre Ringuette / HHOF-IIHF Images



Photo: Andre Ringuette / HHOF-IIHF Images



Photo: Matthew Zamborini / HHOF-IIHF Images



Photo: Andre Ringuette / HHOF-IIHF Images

Q: Can Europe strike back?

A: The 2014-15 IIHF season produced the unprecedented result which saw North America lay claim to every title.

Canada, which re-claimed the men's number one World Ranking, is currently champion in the Olympics (men and women), World Championship, and World Junior Championship while the United States holds the gold in U18 (men and women) and Women's Worlds.

Europe was left out in the cold as far as the top division World Championships were concerned. But with the World Junior Championship taking place in Helsinki and the World Championship to be held in Moscow and St. Petersburg, it will be interesting to see if any trophies cross back over the Atlantic in 2016.

Q: Who will automatically qualify for PyeongChang 2018?

A: The 2016 Women's Worlds is a key event for the 2018 Olympics. The top-five teams of the World Ranking released after that event automatically qualify for the Games in Korea, as well as the host nation.

Given that Canada and the United States are essentially locks to qualify, that leaves three spots for five teams. Finland has to be a good bet as well, but Sweden will get stiff competition from Russia, the Swiss, and perhaps even the Japanese and Czechs.

Those teams that don't qualify at the WW will have to try again through Olympic qualification tournaments scheduled for the 2016/17 season.

Q: Is Auston Matthews for real?

A: A 17-year-old American (pictured, above) has decided to forgo NCAA hockey in the U.S. and Major Junior hockey in Canada to play in the top Swiss National League A during his pre-draft year.

This bridge year is a gamble, but Matthews has been off to a flying start with ZSC Lions Zurich. His development might well be akin to Wayne Gretzky's year with the WHA prior to playing in the NHL, and if Matthews does well, who's to say others won't follow?

Q: How will Juniors fare in Finland?

A: This is a big year for the U20 in Finland. Helsinki last hosted the event in 2004, and the next three U20s are all in North America.

The Europeans had tremendous events in Ufa and Malmo, culminating in the Finnish Young Lions taking the gold. It falls now to Helsinki 2016, which will be aiming to keep the event trending upwards in Europe.

Q: What will happen with Jaromir Jagr?

A: Two years ago, number 68 announced his retirement from the Czech national team. Last year in Prague, he played, was named MVP, and declared he wanted to play until he was 50!

He's playing for a Florida team that finished out of the NHL playoffs last season. This season he will turn 44, but don't be surprised if he's in Russia next May or on the Czech team for the World Cup.



Photo: Andre Ringuette / HHOF-IIHF Images



Photo: Riku Laukkainen/Riku Exposures



Photo: Richard Wolowicz / HHOF-IIHF Images



Photo: Andre Ringuette / HHOF-IIHF Images

Q: Who will be on the World Cup rosters?

A: All eight teams have to announce 16 players by March 1, 2016. The U23 team will almost certainly have Connor McDavid (pictured, above) and Jack Eichel on it, foes becoming teammates, but for many senior-aged players, the first few months of the NHL season is also a tryout for the most prestigious event since the Sochi Olympics.

Q: Can the CHL establish a foothold?

A: Europe's new Champions Hockey League is a critical asset to the hockey world, and in its second year has expanded from 44 teams to 48.

It is the aim of the CHL in Year 2 to continue to get hockey fans to embrace the concept

and organizers need to help them appreciate and understand the excitement a champions league can create. This season is critical on both counts.

At press time the quarter-finals were about to begin. It will be interesting to see who will raise the European crown this year, and whether the league can take the next major step forward.

Q: Will hockey return to Quebec City?

A: Hands down the best hockey city in North American without a team, Quebec City seems to be paired with its opposite—a newbie to the hockey world—Las Vegas for expansion possibilities in time for the NHL's centennial.

Quebec City has a new arena (pictured,

second from right), a fan base culturally entrenched in the game for nearly a century and a half, and owners with deep pockets. The Nordiques look to be on their way back.

Q: Will USA triumph as U18 hosts?

A: Despite winning gold in six of the last seven U18 men's events, the United States has hosted the tournament only once.

Next April the world's best pre-draft players will descend on Ralph Englestad Arena (pictured, on right) in Grand Forks, North Dakota. Grand Forks was a mammoth success for the 2005 U20, in large measure because of Manitobans making the border crossing. A U.S. college crowd and frenzied Canadians should combine to make for a lively U18.

Q: What does 3-on-3 mean?

A: The AHL experimented with 3-on-3 in overtime last year to try to cut down on the number of shootouts. It worked, and the NHL has now adopted the bold initiative for this season.

In the exhibition schedule, more than three quarters of games were decided by a goal rather than a penalty-shot shootout. It has also had mixed reactions from players, although unsurprisingly most of the those who have come up against it include defencemen like Dustin Byfuglien.

It will be interesting to see the number of games that the new format will affect throughout the year, and whether or not this format might be viable in an international competition.

Olympic Qualification begins

By Martin Merk

Estonia, Serbia advance to second round of preliminary qualification.

The 2018 Olympic Winter Games will take place in PyeongChang, Korea, 9-25 February 2018. The men's and women's ice hockey tournaments are scheduled to take place at venues in the city of Gangneung, Korea as the host nation will be qualified for both the men's and women's tournaments.

With Korea granted automatic entry as the host nation, three qualifiers will be determined in the three stages of the Olympic Qualification starting in the 2015/2016 season. The qualification phase began on 5 November with Estonia advancing from Group K in Tallinn, and Serbia defeating Spain in Valdemoro on the final day of the Group L round robin to move on to the second preliminary qualification round.

Women's qualification starts August 2016

For the 2018 Olympic women's ice hockey tournament the top-5 nations of the 2016 IIHF



Slovenia (centre) qualified for its first Olympics in 2014. Other nations like Denmark and Japan will try to follow in 2018.

Women's World Ranking will be automatically qualified and seeded according to the ranking. The two qualifiers will be determined in the three stages of the Olympic Qualification during the 2016/2017 season.

The 2018 Olympic women's ice hockey tournament will be played according to the same format used in Sochi 2014 with two groups of four teams each. The four teams from Group A and the top two teams from Group B will advance to the final round with the top two teams of Group A set for the semi-finals.

2018 Women's Olympic Qualification Schedule

25-28 August 2016
Women's Olympic Qualification Preliminary Round 1

03-06 November 2016:
Women's Olympic Qualification Preliminary Round 2

09-12 February 2017 - Women's Final Olympic Qualification



MEN'S ICE HOCKEY TOURNAMENT (9-25 FEBRUARY 2018)

Group D	Group E	Group F
Canada (1)	Russia (2)	Sweden (3)
Czech Rep. (6)	USA (5)	Finland (4)
Switzerland (7)	Slovakia (8)	Qualifier 1
Korea (12)	Qualifier 3	Qualifier 2

FINAL OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION ROUND (1-4 SEPTEMBER 2016)

Group D	Group E	Group F
Belarus	Latvia	Norway
Slovenia	Germany	France
Denmark	Austria	Kazakhstan
Q6	Q5	Q4

OLYMPIC PRELIM. QUALIFICATION ROUND 2 (11-14 FEBRUARY 2016)

Group G	Group H	Group J
Italy	Hungary	Japan
Great Britain	Poland	Ukraine
Netherlands	Lithuania	Croatia
Serbia	Estonia	Romania

OLYMPIC PRELIM. QUALIFICATION ROUND 1

Group K	Group L
Estonia (winner)	Serbia (winner)
Mexico	Spain
Israel	Iceland
Bulgaria	China

Mogo Riga, GKS Tychy move on



By Szabolcs Zavodsky and Adam Steiss

The 2015/2016 IIHF Continental Cup kicked off in October, with the first and second rounds concluded.

GROUP B

HK Mogo Riga ran the table and won all three of its games to advance from Group B. The tournament took place in Miskolc, Hungary and included Acroni Jesenice, C.H. Jaca and the host team Miskolci Jegesmedvek..

“We really deserved the win and we were the better team, I have to thank the team for a great third period,” said Riga head coach Olegs Sorokin after his team won their third game in three days with a 4-1 win over Jesenice.

On the final day if Jesenice beat Riga, then it would all come down to the Miskolc-Jaca match, but Riga took care of business and the home team put on a goal festival for their fans as they beat Jaca 10-2.



GKS Tychy's 26-0 romp over Partizan Belgrade was the highest single-game goal tally for a team in Continental Cup history.

In Group D Mogo Riga will be playing Herning Blue Fox from Denmark, Yertis Pavlodar from Kazakhstan, along with the host team Asiago in Italy on the weekend of November 20-22.

GROUP C

Although they needed a third period comeback

on the final day to win it all, the host team GKS Tychy dominated the ice, scoring an incredible 35 goals in just three games to move on.

A goal from Tychy forward Radoslaw Galant gave the team the key 3-2 win over tournament runners-up the Coventry Blaze from the British Elite Ice Hockey League.

Playing in the deciding game on Sunday, the Blaze watched an early 2-0 lead in the third period evaporate as Tychy's offence woke up. First it was defenceman Mateusz Bryk scoring his first goal of the tournament, making it a key one as he cut the lead to 2-1 just over five minutes into the third period.

Tychy managed to kill off two consecutive penalties, and with the momentum on their side tied the game with ten minutes to go thanks to a score from Jakub Witecki.

The goal set up Galant's late-game heroics, as the Polish international capped off the comeback with the go-ahead goal with 5:36 remaining on the clock. Tychy held off Coventry the rest of the way to capture top spot in Group C and move on to the third round of the Continental Cup.

The Polish club opened its Continental Cup campaign with a 26-0 drubbing of Partizan Belgrade. The score is the highest single game goal tally for a team in Continental Cup history, eclipsing the previous mark of 16 goals scored by White Caps Turnhout of Belgium against the Turkish club Baskent Yildizlari Ankara back in 2011.

Tychy will move on to the third round that will be played on 20-22 November in Rouen, France.

Photo: Michal Rus

Gallery



Photo: Jose Antonio Gallego

Estonia celebrates after a win against Israel in Round 1 of the Olympic Qualification in Tallinn. The team went undefeated against Mexico, Israel, and Bulgaria.



Photo: Michal Rus



Photo: Frank Raymond / Brampton Beast

Top: IIHF Council member Frank Gonzalez with Frederik Di Sei of CH Jaca and Mogo Riga's Edgars Lipsbergs at the Continental Cup Second Round Group B. Bottom: The Indian men's national ice hockey team and the Brampton Beast players pose for a joint team photo after the Canadian club hosted the team in October.



Frolunda Gothenburg eliminated ERC Ingolstadt in a wild comeback win in the Champions Hockey League Round of 32. Following the Round of 16 there are four Finnish clubs, three Swedish, and one Swiss club left in the competition.

Photo: Tommy Hall / Alloverpress



The International Paralympic Committee held its first-ever sledge hockey youth development camp last month in Germany.

Photo: IPC



On top of the World Girls' Ice Hockey Weekend event held in Brisbane and the Global Girls' Game in Melbourne, Australia also ran a Come and Try Ice Hockey event in Melbourne designed to introduce the game to girls for the first time.

Austria's first lineswoman

Bettina Angerer becomes first woman in history to officiate in Austria's top men's league

by Martin Merk

On 2 October international linesman Bettina Angerer wrote history in Austria as the first woman to officiate in the top men's league of her country, EBEL.

The game between the Graz 99ers and Olimpija Ljubljana wasn't the last EBEL encounter for Angerer, who does her job at a higher level of play than her colleagues in Europe.

"She's an up and coming young official," Lyle Seitz, EBEL Director of Hockey Operations, said about her.

"She's a strong skater, has a good presence and is very mature on the ice. The thing that cut my eye is that she did all the basic things right. That's the start for any official.

"We have a whole trainee program so she came up from. Part of the trainee program is to have



Bettina Angerer working as a lineswoman in the EBEL game between the Vienna Capitals and BC Bolzano.

a game and if they do well at this level they get another game and for some it becomes a professional job. It's like a hockey player. If they do well, they get more ice time."

Ice Times spoke with the 24-year-old pioneer who represented Austria as a player in the 2009 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship Division I.

That first game must have been quite special for you.

Yes, I was nervous at the first game. It was the first time a woman was officiating and it was even at my hometown in Graz, so I was indeed nervous. Many people I know were watching. There were also many spectators in attendance.

What would you call your career highlights so far?

My first EBEL game. Then the Women's World Championship last year in Malmo and three years ago my first IIHF tournament, the Women's World Championship Division I Group B in Strasbourg.

Did you imagine at that time that you'd officiate in an EBEL game some day?

No, I could never have imagined officiating a game in the EBEL. Normally there are only male officials.

How did you get involved in ice hockey and officiating?

I played ice hockey myself and I still play when I have time. Through a friend of mine I started to play when I was eight. I started to play with boys and when I became 15 in women's hockey. I thought that my chances to make it to the Olympics as an official were higher than as a player and since then I've been focussing on my career as an official.

When did you start to officiate in men's hockey?

I officiated in men's hockey since ever I had started officiating and I'm mostly officiating men's games. Four years ago I reached the second league (INL) and then it was my goal to get more games there.

Photo: Andreas Robanser

How did you find out that you would be getting your first EBEL assignment?

I got a phone call and he told me that. It came as a surprise, I didn't expect that. I was first thinking there was a mistake and called back and then I was really happy. I only told the closest people about it, I didn't want it to become public.

How different was it to work a game at that level?

Everything was a bit faster. It was also in the four-man officiating system, which was a change for me. The speed, the shots, the strategy, everything was much more professional.

You talked about your Olympic ambitions and you certainly dream about Pyeong-Chang 2018. What do you do to climb up the ladder and make it there?

I'm working on my dream. My summer training has become more intense. I work out more to improve my fitness and I can notice it during the games.

Some weeks ago you were also invited to an IIHF officiating camp in Switzerland.

Yes. I was earlier at a Development Camp and a High-Performance Camp but at this camp it was the first time. It was a great experience with teambuilding as the focal point.



Photo: EBEL

Angerer with her officiating crew after her first EBEL game. She will travel to Canada next year for the U18 Women's Worlds.

This season you got an assignment for the 2016 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's World Championship in Canada. How do you feel about that?

It has always been my wish to go to Canada for a tournament one day and soon it will come true. I will also go to Canada in November for the Level V Camp in Moncton. It will be my first time in Canada.

What are your goals and wishes for this season?

I want to continue to get it going and get more games in the EBEL. That would be great. Otherwise I will get it going in the INL and U20 games. And then I want to commend myself in the U18 Women's World Championship to earn another assignment for the Women's World Championship.



Photo: Andreas Robarsner



Coming up

IIHF Continental Cup Third Round

Group D
ITALY, Asiago
20-22.11.2015

Group E
FRANCE, Rouen
20-22.11.2015

**IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World
Championship Division I Group A**
AUSTRIA, Vienna
13-19.12.2015

**IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World
Championship Division I Group D**
FRANCE, Megeve
12-18.12.2015

**IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World
Championship Division I Group A**
LITHUANIA, Elektrenai
13-19.12.2015

**IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World
Championship Division II Group B
Qualification**
BULGARIA, Sofia
07-10.12.2015



China, host of the 2022 Winter Olympics, will compete in Group L of the 2018 Men's Olympic Qualification Preliminary Round 1.



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