

IN MEMORIAM 7/9/2011

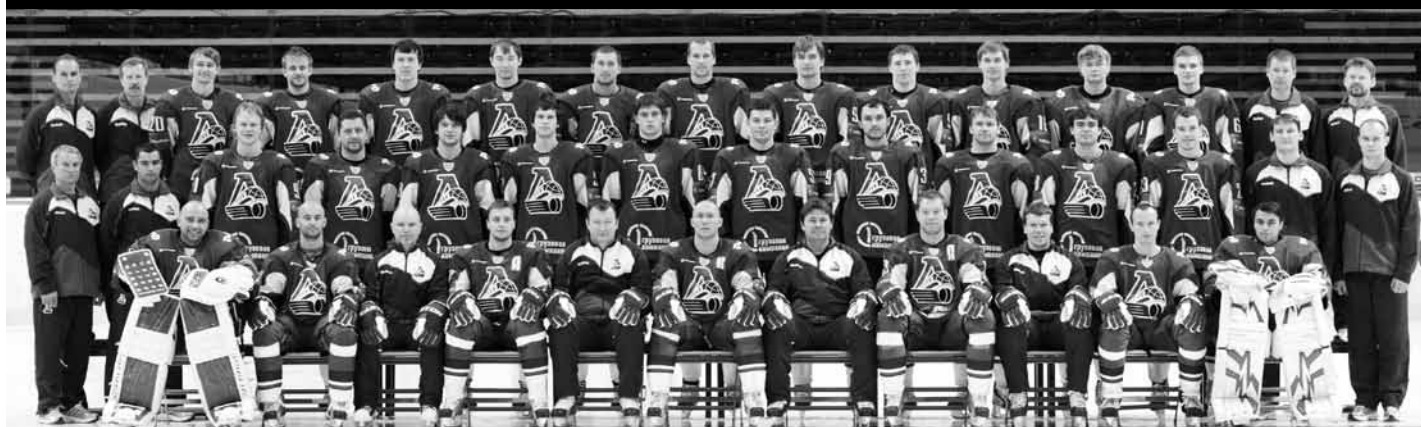


Photo: Lokomotiv Yaroslavl



Photo: Michal Dolezal / CTK



Photo: Martins Pulvins / delfly



Photo: Vladimir Bezubov, Yuri Kuzmin / KHL



Photo: Ivan Uralski / goals.by

NEWS & NOTES

■ **AUSTRIA:** The Austrian Ice Hockey Association has signed a three-year deal with Emanuel Viveiros to be the new head coach of the Austrian national team. He will be assisted by Rob Daum and Christian Weber. Viveiros spent 17 years in Europe as a player, 13 in Austria. He won four Austrian championships as a player and led Klagenfurt to the league title in 2009.

■ **BELARUS:** The Belarusian Ice Hockey Association has hired Kari Heikkilä as new head coach for the men's national team. The Finn signed a three-year contract in August. Heikkilä will lead the team to the next three IIHF Ice Hockey World Championships including the 2014 Worlds on home ice in Minsk.

■ **CANADA:** Hockey Canada announced that Olympic gold medalist and two-time world champion Gillian Ferrari, who has been a member of Canada's National Women's Team since 2000-01, has retired from international competition. The Thornhill, Ontario, native won nine gold medals with Canada's National Women's Team.

■ **CANADA:** This past summer, Hayley Wickenheiser was awarded the Order of Canada in recognition for her achievements as an athlete and for her contributions to the growth of women's hockey. She has competed at the last four Winter Olympics, winning three gold medals and one silver.

■ **ESTONIA:** Jaan Mölder has taken over the presidency of the Estonian Ice Hockey Association. He replaces Priit Vilba, who will remain with the association as a board member.

■ **ISRAEL:** Eran Aharonovitz will serve as President of the Ice Hockey Federation of Israel, with Evgeny Gussin taking over as Vice-President. The announcements were made during the IHFI General Meeting in September.

■ **JAPAN:** Jiroshi Harada has been named the new General Secretary of the Japan Ice Hockey Federation.

■ **LATVIA:** Former NHL Coach of the Year Ted Nolan will be hired as Latvia's national team coach for the upcoming season. The 53-year-old will succeed Olegs Znaroks, whose

contract was not renewed after five years following Latvia's 13th-place finish at the 2011 IIHF World Championship.

■ **NETHERLANDS:** The Ice Hockey Association of The Netherlands announced that the American coach Larry Suarez has signed a three-year deal to lead the national team. The 47-year-old Suarez replaces Tom Hartogs.

■ **RUSSIA:** Zinetula Bilyaletdinov is the new head coach of the Russian national team, taking over from Vyacheslav Bykov, who was released following the 2011 Worlds. Bilyaletdinov has been with Ak Bars Kazan since 2005 winning the Russian championship in 2006, 2009 and 2010, the European Champions Cup in 2007 and the Continental Cup in 2008. He was head coach of the Russian national team at the 2004 World Cup of Hockey, and an assistant coach at the 1998 and 2002 Olympic Winter Games and the 2000 IIHF World Championship.

■ **SOUTH AFRICA:** The South African Ice Hockey Association has made changes to its executive committee, naming Jerry Stevens as President and Hannes Botha as Vice President.

■ **SLOVAKIA:** The Slovak Ice Hockey Federation has elected Igor Nemecek as President and Otto Sykora as General Secretary. The Federation also announced that Vladimir Vujtek will be the new national team coach. Vujtek has coached in both the Czech Republic and in Russia, where he won back to back championships with Lokomotiv Yaroslavl in 2002 and 2003.

■ **SWITZERLAND:** The Swiss Ice Hockey Federation has announced that Manuele Celio will coach the U20 national team. He was behind the bench of the Swiss team at the last three U18 World Championships.

■ **UNITED STATES:** Don Granato, with 15 seasons of coaching experience at multiple levels, has been named head coach at USA Hockey's National Team Development Program in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Granato, as one of two head coaches at the NTDP, will guide the U.S. National Under-17 Team during the 2011-12 season.

IIHF STAFF NOTES

■ ■ **Harald Springfield** has joined the IIHF as Asian Sport Development Manager as of 1st October. This position was created two years ago to help develop hockey in Asia.

Springfield replaces Jukka Tiikkaja, who has returned to Finland to continue his position at the Vierumäki Sport Institute. The 33-year-old, who played as a forward for Innsbruck in Austria's top league, brings with him vast experience from his work as a Sport Manager at the Austrian Ice Hockey Federation since 2005. He was also part of the organizing committee in Innsbruck for the 2005 IIHF World Championship in Vienna and Innsbruck, Austria.



■ **Eric Trinkler** has joined the IIHF's Event Department as of 15 September 2011 as an Event Assistant.

Eric recently completed the Tourism Management School in Samedan. He has also gathered marketing and event experience with EM Event Marketing AG – Good News Group where he worked for one year.



Aside from general administrative support and project-based work, Eric will also assist in the administration and maintenance of the IIHF Championship Program. He will act as a contact and reference person within the IIHF for the organizing committees of various IIHF-sanctioned events and coordinate event-relevant information.

■ **Kira Ebel** will start to work for the IIHF as Marketing and Communications Assistant as of October 3, 2011.

Kira finished her business studies with a focus in marketing in 2009 and also gathered marketing experience through working as a marketing coordinator, event manager and promotion and public relations assistant.



Kira will provide administrative support to the department, with duties including general clerical and project-based work. She will also be on hand to assist in the execution of marketing and communications activities during IIHF events.

OBITUARIES

Peter Jaks – Long-time Swiss national team forward passed away on October 5th at age 45. He represented Switzerland in 149 international games, scoring 45 goals and notching 44 assists and 89 points, and appeared in two Olympic Winter Games (1988, 1992).

Jaroslav Jirik – died in a sport aircraft accident on July 11. Jirik played in 7 IIHF World Championships and 3 Olympic Winter Games and he became the first Czechoslovak player to play in the NHL, with the St. Louis Blues in 1969-70. He was 71.

Jürg Jäggi – former Swiss national team goalkeeper died after a long illness on July 26. He represented Switzerland in two IIHF World Championships and led SC Bern to four national championships. During the 2009 IIHF World Championship in Bern, he worked as a volunteer, leading the security staff. He was 64.

Anatoli Khorozov – long-time President of the Ice Hockey Federation of Ukraine, passed away at age 86 on September 27 in Kyiv. Considered to be the father of ice hockey in Ukraine, Khorozov worked to revive the nation's hockey program after it nearly disappeared from the Ukrainian sports landscape. He was at the helm as President when the federation was founded in 1965, and has been instrumental in starting numerous hockey schools throughout the country.



Oldrich Machac – an outstanding defenceman who won three IIHF World Championship gold medals, passed away after a long illness on August 10. Machac played in 293 national teams games for Czechoslovakia and took part in 11 IIHF World Championships and three Olympics from 1967 to 1978. He was 67.



Freddy Schweers – the former IIHF Council Member passed away at the age of 95 on July 31. Schweers was the President of the Ice Hockey Federation of the Netherlands from 1967 to 1987 and was an IIHF Council Member from 1972 until 1988. During the time of his leadership ice hockey grew rapidly in his country, the sport got more publicity and the national team of the Netherlands was promoted to the A-Pool in 1979.



Sven Tumba – passed away October 1st in Stockholm at age 80. The three-time world champion who scored 186 goals in 245 national team games was voted the best player in the history of Swedish hockey in 1999. He still holds the record for most goals with Team Sweden, 186 in 245 games between 1950 and 1966. Tumba also participated in four Olympics, and was the top goalscorer at the 1964 Winter Olympics.



A list of the team members who died in the Yaroslavl plane crash, along with a message from President René Fasel can be found on pages 4-5.

Since that terrible day, a grassroots initiative called Love for Lokomotiv has been launched to help the families of all those affected by the plane crash. More information can be found on IIHF.com.



SEMI-ANNUAL CONGRESS NOTES

Four countries vying to host 2017 IIHF Worlds

■ ■ It was announced at the 2011 IIHF Semi-Annual Congress in Istanbul that Denmark (Copenhagen, Herning), France, Germany, and Latvia (Riga) are applicants for the 2017 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship. The Congress furthermore decided that the allocation voting for the 2017 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship will be postponed to the 2013 Annual Congress in Stockholm, Sweden.

The Congress approved the proposal from the Council to first evaluate the two co-hosted World Championships 2012 (Finland/Sweden) and 2013 (Sweden/Finland) before deciding whether any of the successful 2017 applicants can apply a co-hosting format. The three World Championships after 2013 will be hosted in Belarus (2014, Minsk), the Czech Republic (2015, Prague & Ostrava) and Russia (2016, Moscow & St. Petersburg).

Committee news

■ **Competition committee:** The committee will look into and evaluate the inaugural Junior Club World Cup which took place in Omsk, Russia in August/September. The invitational tournament had an "observer status" within the IIHF and the committee will discuss whether it is feasible and recommendable to make the Junior Club World Cup an official or endorsed IIHF event.

■ **Co-ordination committee:** One of the tasks of the committee is to co-ordinate issues between the IIHF, the national associations and the leagues. Prompted by a proposal by Hockey Europe, the committee will look into the current international transfer deadline (January 31) and evaluate whether the date needs to be adjusted.



IIHF President René Fasel addressing the Congress in Istanbul.

Photo: Tuula Pajuri

■ **Legal committee:** Currently, only NHL players have a special IIHF organized insurance for the two top men's World Championship divisions. The others are insured through their respective national associations. The committee is currently working on a proposal which would provide all players with a centralized insurance coverage.

Legal committee: On behalf of the committee, IIHF's Legal Manager Ashley Ehler presented the Player Agent Label Guidelines for immediate implementation. The IIHF will provide its Members National Associations with labels and it will be up to the respective MNAs to create their own regulations which are compliant with national law and custom (see interview below).

Agent guidelines: Putting an end to unethical practices

During the Congress in Istanbul, MNAs were presented with the IIHF's Ice Hockey Player Agent Guidelines. Ice Times caught up with IIHF Legal Manager Ashley Ehler, who elaborated on this new measure.

What is the objective behind these guidelines?

The main objective is to improve transparency within all aspects of the transfer market and to decrease the current problems (contract or otherwise) between players, clubs and agents. With an efficient monitoring and disciplinary system, along with strict standards and examination criteria that must be satisfied before anyone can become an Ice Hockey Player Agent, players will be protected from unethical business practices.

Why has the IIHF initiated these guidelines?

Unregulated player agent activity is detrimental to the sport and its integrity. The lack of oversight in the player-agent relationship recently led to a request from the European Union for international sports federations to initiate regulatory guidelines. The IIHF has initiated these guidelines for ice hockey as it is the only body in a position to regulate player agent activity in this sport.

What flaws exist under the current system?

At this time there is no international system of regulation. The IIHF and European Union has received numerous reports of unethical practices, such as agents taking payment of secret commissions in connection with player transfers, engaging in illegal activities and/or involvement with organized crime, and placing themselves in a conflict-

of-interest situation by representing both the player and the club in negotiations. Some nations do have national systems, but the IIHF Guidelines will establish international standards that will help control international activity. The guidelines will in essence bring all agent activity in all countries up to the same level.

Considering the differences in regulations between nations, how will these guidelines be implemented within each of the MNAs?

Each MNA will create Agent Regulations in compliance with the IIHF Ice Hockey Player Agent Guidelines, taking into consideration national laws governing any prior relationships the MNA has with certain groups already working with agents, e.g. player associations. However, the guidelines must meet the IIHF standards, so as to create a standardized international level of control over Player Agents, only deviating where necessary to comply with national laws.

So the control rests largely within the MNAs?

The control of the agent activity rest primarily with the MNAs, with the IIHF only getting involved when requested to do so by the MNA or if the issue has an international dimension. The Agent Program would operate in a manner very similar to the Transfer Program, where the IIHF only has jurisdiction when the issue is international in nature.

How do the MNAs benefit?

MNAs will be able to select player agents who demonstrate proper ethical business practices and ensure the best

Additional notes

Philippe Blatter, the CEO of IIHF Marketing Partner Infront Sports & Media, addressed the congress about the purchase of Infront's 100 percent share by the British equity firm Bridgepoint. Infront owns the marketing and broadcast rights to the men's IIHF Ice Hockey World Championships and the current contract is until 2017.

Blatter ensured the congress that the new ownership (still subject to approval by the European anti-trust authorities) will not entail any changes in the IIHF-Infront relationship.

"The entire Infront staff, which for many years has worked closely together with the IIHF, are all staying on board, there will be no operational changes and our focus is going forward with all the commitments we have beginning with successfully delivering the 2012 and 2013 World Championships."

Blatter also informed Congress about the commercial success of the 2011 IIHF World Championship in Slovakia.

"We set new benchmark figures with an accumulated TV audience of 800 million viewers, 70 broadcasters who provided 3,000 broadcast numbers and it is our ambition to top these numbers in the upcoming championships."

Council: The IIHF Council approved guidelines for a new In-Arena Video Board Policy. The new policy will be implemented as of the 2011-2012 season.



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THE DARKEST DAY IN THE HISTORY OF HOCKEY

"This has been a heartbreaking off-season for the hockey family around the world. On September 7, in Yaroslavl, Russia there was a catastrophe which every one of us feared, but hoped would never occur.

A plane carrying the entire Lokomotiv Yaroslavl team, coaching staff, and officials, who were on their way to Minsk for their KHL season opener, crashed shortly after take-off. On the plane were 26 players, 3 coaches and 8 team officials. All but one died immediately. The surviving player, Alexander Galimov, succumbed to his severe injuries and died in hospital five days later.

Ice hockey has been largely spared from airplane accidents, despite extensive travel schedules on both sides of the Atlantic and also between. But only until now. This accident, which claimed the lives of 37 members of the hockey family and also the flight crew, is the biggest tragedy that has hit our sport.

This – the darkest day in the history of our sport – is a disaster which involved many of our member nations. The victims were from Russia, Belarus, Latvia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, Slovakia and Sweden – altogether 10 countries. Many of the players and coaches had made outstanding contributions to the international game. Among the 37 were Olympic and World Champions, Stanley Cup champions and outstanding contributors to national teams and clubs.

Others still had bright futures before them. The youngest victim, Maxim Shuvalov, was only 18.

I was in Yaroslavl for the memorial services on September 10th and I cannot describe in words the emotions you feel when seeing more than 20 caskets in a hockey arena. Just a few days earlier they were hopeful and enthusiastic to finally start the regular season, and in one single moment everything was crushed and taken away.

Let us not forget about the families who miss their loved ones and all the victims' friends.

This has also been a summer of tragedies in North America, where three young Canadian men all died in tragic circumstances; Wade Belak, Derek Boogaard and Rick Rypien.

We are still not entirely sure about the reasons and backgrounds and to what degree their deaths were linked to hockey, but it is clear that everyone who deals with our sport, federations, associations and leagues must pay more attention to life outside of the game and also to the difficult and underappreciated challenges that face players after retirement."

René Fasel
IIHF President

IIHF President René Fasel at the Yaroslavl memorial (below: right, left).



Photo: Kristina Koch



Photo: Vladimir Bezubov, Yury Kuzmin / KHL



Czech victims are honoured at a memorial in Prague.

Photo: imago sportfotodienst / CTK



Belarusian forward Ruslan Salei was remembered in Minsk.

Photo: Evgeny Hatskevich / Interfax.by



Photos of Swedish goaltender Stefan Liv in Jönköping.

Photo: Daniel Wengel / HV71



A memorial to Pavol Demitra was held in Trencin, Slovakia.

Photo: Radoven Stoklasa

PLAYERS

Vitali Anikeenko, RUS, 24
Mikhail Balandin, RUS, 31
Gennadi Churilov, RUS, 24
Pavol Demitra, SVK, 36
Robert Dietrich, GER/KAZ, 25
Alexander Galimov, RUS, 26
Marat Kalimulin, RUS, 23
Alexander Kalyanin, RUS, 23
Andrei Kiryukhin, RUS, 24
Nikita Klyukin, RUS, 21
Stefan Liv, SWE, 30
Jan Marek, CZE, 31
Sergei Ostapchuk, BLR/RUS, 21
Karel Rachunek, CZE, 32
Ruslan Salei, BLR, 36
Maxim Shuvalov, RUS, 18
Karlis Skrastins, LAT, 37
Pavel Snurnitsyn, RUS, 19
Danil Sobchenko, RUS/UKR, 20
Ivan Tkachenko, RUS, 31
Pavel Trakhanov, RUS, 33
Yuri Urychev, RUS, 20
Josef Vasicek, CZE, 30
Alexander Vasyunov, RUS, 23
Olexander Vyukhin, UKR, 38
Artyom Yarchuk, RUS, 21

COACHES

Brad McCrimmon, head coach, CAN, 52
Alexander Karpovtsev, assistant coach, RUS, 41
Igor Korolyov, assistant coach, RUS, 41

TEAM STAFF

Yuri Bakhvalov, RUS, video coach
Alexander Belyayev, RUS, equipment manager
Nikolai Krivonosov, BLR, trainer
Yevgeni Kunov, RUS, masseur
Vyacheslav Kuznetsov, RUS, masseur
Vladimir Piskunov, RUS, administrator
Yevgeni Sidorov, RUS, tactic analyst
Andrei Zimin, RUS, team doctor



Memorial candles in Prague's Old Town Square.

Photo: Michal Kamaryt / CTK



40,000 mourners walked past the caskets in Yaroslavl.

Photo: Vladimir Bezubov, Yury Kuzmin / KHL



Russian Federation President Vladislav Tretiak and Fasel.

Photo: Russian Ice Hockey Federation



Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in Yaroslavl.

Photo: Vladimir Bezubov, Yury Kuzmin / KHL



The Yaroslavl memorial service.

Photo: Vladimir Bezubov, Yury Kuzmin / KHL

Optimism and sore muscles in Bratislava

High Performance camp, mentorship programs headline women's hockey initiatives

By Paul Romanuk

BRATISLAVA — One year ago, coming out of the World Hockey Summit that was held in Toronto, Canada, the International Ice Hockey Federation reacted to calls from leading figures in women's hockey, including four-time Canadian Olympian Haley Wickenheiser, for the federation to do more to help advance the women's game further around the world.



Hayley Wickenheiser made an impassioned speech at the World Hockey Summit in 2010, supporting further development of women's hockey around the world.

In December of 2010 Tanya Foley was hired as the IIHF's first ever Women's Program Manager. Last April, in Zurich during the Women's World Championship, the IIHF held the first ever international women's coaching symposium. Then came the first IIHF Women's High Performance Camp in Bratislava, Slovakia from July 5-12. Just prior to the opening of the camp, Foley also announced the most comprehensive IIHF women's hockey development initiative ever - The Ambassador and Mentor Program.

It was smiling faces and aching muscles all around at the Bratislava camp, which drew 204 athletes from 17 nations (one half comprised of senior players and the other half elite under-18 players), as well as 48 team staff (coaches, strength and conditioning coaches, athletic therapists and so on) as well as 27 coach mentors and athlete ambassadors.

It's that last group that could ultimately have the greatest short-term impact on the improvement of the women's game. Those mentors and athlete ambassadors represent

some of the greatest coaches and players in the history of the sport. The point of having them involved is to tap into their enthusiasm and brain power - assembled from decades of involvement in the sport at all levels - to improve the skill level and development of players all over the hockey world.

"There might be ten doors we have to break down because of societal issues or how people perceive women in the game," says IIHF Coach Mentor Coordinator Melody Davidson. "And in Canada, the US, Sweden and Finland we may have knocked down five doors. But some of the other countries are only knocking down that first door. We can help them get through some of those doors a little bit faster, but there are some doors we're all just going to have to push through together."

"It's tremendous. I can honestly say that this is the first program the IIHF has done for women's hockey that I think will be significant," said Wickenheiser between on-ice sessions as a coach and mentor. "It may not have a major impact during this Olympic cycle, but for 2018 I think we'll see a lot of benefits from the young players who are here right now. It's a good start and I think this is a really smart way they're doing it."

The camp was an intensive one - featuring on-ice sessions and games as well as nutrition and strength and conditioning seminars.

"Strength and conditioning and nutrition together are definitely the difference between the top teams and the bottom teams," observed US Women's National Team Strength Coach Teena Murray. "What we're trying to do here is to make the players and coaches from other countries understand a little of what has to be done in terms of conditioning that will allow their players to compete at a higher level."

There was also a "Hot Stove" panel discussion, where players had the chance to fire questions at some of the major figures associated with women's hockey.

"My advice to you guys is: Don't leave your goals and your dreams and your aspirations up to chance," two-time Canadian Olympic gold medalist Gina Kingsbury told the Hot



The participants undertook rigorous on and off-ice exercises, designed to maximize their athleticism and hockey skills.



Experienced coaches, trainers, and officials were on hand to instruct and guide the players throughout the camp. On left: Canadian goaltending instructor Andy Nowicki.

Stove audience. "Take ownership. Do it for yourself. Focus on the process that will help you to achieve your goals."

The thread that ran through the Hot Stove, and the entire camp, was one of optimism.

"The best part has been meeting all these new people from all of the different hockey countries," smiled Sweden's Anna Borgfeldt. "And the worst part is the soreness in my legs!"

"I think it's important for me and it's important for all of the other nations that are here," said USA veteran defenceman Molly Engstrom. "I wasn't sure what to expect when I came in - but for our sport, I think it's great that we're all here... players from all the different hockey nations and not just the big ones."



The first-ever IIHF Women's High Performance Camp assembled a number of top female players from under-18 to senior level.

The hockey world goes pink for a day

World Girls' Hockey day celebrated across four continents, 20 countries

■ ■ On Sunday, 2nd October, the first ever World Girls' Hockey Day took place, and was a resounding success with over 160 events in 20 countries. With women's hockey now one of the fastest growing sports in the world, the World Girls' Hockey Day was devised in order to create an opportunity for girls of all ages to try ice hockey.

National Federations, leagues, clubs, teams, and any group with a passion for sharing the great sport of ice hockey with the next generation of female hockey players were eligible to register as hosts. With support from the IIHF, hosts from all over the world came forward to offer a variety of on and off-ice activities for girls.

The events varied in nature, but typically girls were offered an introduction to basic hockey skills, taught about opportunities in ice hockey in their community, and learned about fair play, sportsmanship, and teamwork. Many met and worked with senior female hockey players with top-level experience.

As the sun rose on October 1st, the first events took place in Australia and Asian nations such as Japan and Kazakhstan, before moving over to Europe and later all the way to North America's Pacific coast. Here are a few snippets from some of the events:

AUSTRALIA

Girls Day Programs will be organized in all member states of Ice Hockey Australia. The first one was run by Ice Hockey Queensland in the northeast part of the country that includes cities like Brisbane and Gold Coast.

Girls Day Programs will be conducted in the five remaining member states over the ensuing months, including on 16th October in Melbourne and on 13th November in Adelaide.



One of the World Girls' Hockey Day's youngest participants at an event held in Lohja, Finland: Elli (centre), born in 2009.

BELGIUM

42 participants came for Belgium's event of the World Girls' Hockey Day in Deurne at the Ice Rink Rugeveld. It was the third time Belgium hosted an event like this.

"It's the best way to promote ice hockey for girls," said John Bollue, the Sports League Director of the Royal Belgian Ice Hockey Federation. "It's great when girls can play among girls. There's a load of objections by the clubs to run girls' programs, but a day like this helps them change their mind."

There were two groups for the younger girls between 4 and 12 years of age, and a second group for women aged 12 to 46, complete with skills challenges and games. The Belgian women's national team was also present to organize a small exhibition on women's hockey in Belgium.

BELARUS

In Belarus' Girls Hockey Day, the country's first, the women's hockey team Pantera Minsk was introduced to 14,000 people during an intermission of Dynamo Minsk's KHL game against Atlant Mytishi, held in Minsk.

"Such events will attract people to women's hockey. We hope that the example of the fans will motivate girls who want to try to play hockey," said Yulia Romanyuk of the Ice Hockey Association of Belarus.



Hockey Manitoba's World Girls' Hockey Day in Winnipeg led by former Team Canada player Fiona Smith-Bell.

CANADA

Hockey Manitoba held its first ever Girls Hockey Day at the MTS Iceplex in Winnipeg, the practice facility of the NHL's Winnipeg Jets. The demand was so huge that a draw had to be held in order to determine the 60 lucky girls that could enter the event.

SWITZERLAND

The "Just for Girls" event in Geneva was Switzerland's only World Girls' Hockey Day event, but it was a full success for the organizer, Association Genève Futur Hockey.

50 participants between the age of 3 and 19 years came to the Les Vernets rink where the top men's league team Genève-Servette plays its games. The girls first had skating lessons before practicing some hockey skills and playing games in a mini-tournament where each team was helped by one of Servette's professional players.

"All comments were very positive and most parents expressed their strong will to get involved with our organization in order to develop women's ice hockey in our region," said Ksenia Fliguil of Genève Futur Hockey. "We strongly believe that this event will give a strong boost for the community and our development."



The Japan Ice Hockey Federation held an event at the Higashi Yamato Skate Center in Tokyo.

JAPAN

One of the WGHD events was held in Sendai. The earthquake and tsunami last spring heavily hit the city, and the Korean team that came to Japan for the Asia League final has just left Sendai airport, which was completely destroyed, before the natural disaster.

Therefore, it was especially heartening to see pictures of 30 girls and ladies, who came to enjoy a day of hockey with 160 more persons in attendance at the Sendai ice rink, which re-opened after having been inoperable for four months due to the earthquake.

It was a great day for hockey people in the city as many athletes were not able to conduct ice sports in the last few months. The event was organized by Kato Corporation in cooperation with the Miyagi Ice Hockey Federation.

NETHERLANDS

A Girls Only day was organized by the Ice Hockey Associations of the Netherlands (NIJB) and the Smoke Eaters Geleen at the Glanerbrook ice rink already two weeks prior to the WGHD. It was a busy weekend with no less than 143 participants aged between 9 and 48 years.



About 165 events took place in 20 countries and four continents.

"Most of the participants were surprised at the amount of female hockey players in the Netherlands, they were just not aware of it," said Marlies Goessens, one of the organizers.

KAZAKHSTAN

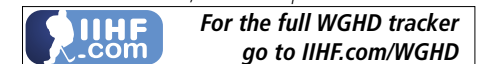
The nation's leading women's hockey club Aisulu Almaty organized Kazakhstan's World Girls' Hockey Day event in Almaty, the country's former capital. The 70 participants were split between two age groups for girls between the age of 12 and 14 years, and for 14/15-year-olds.

The girls practiced skating, stick-handling, passing and - the most exciting part for them - shooting.

"In the beginning the girls were very careful on the ice, but then they had so many positive impressions and the environment became real fun," said Yekaterina Skobelkina, Aisulu's Assistant to the Director. "There were instructors on the ice, some of them national team players. The parents were talking with coaches and trying to find out more about opportunities to play hockey."



All the events taking place around the world were tracked on IIHF.com, which turned pink for the occasion.



Top division referee assignments for 2012 season

2012 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship

Referees		Linesmen	
Dave Lewis	CAN	Manuel Hollenstein	AUT
Antonin Jerabek	CZE	Ivan Dedyulya	BLR
Martin Frano	CZE	Jesse Wilmot	CAN
Jari Levonen	FIN	Francois Dussureault	CAN
Antti Boman	FIN	Petr Blumel	CZE
Georg Jablukow	GER	Anton Semjonov	EST
Lars Bruggemann	GER	Masi Puolakka	FIN
Vyacheslav Bulanov	RUS	Sakari Suominen	FIN
Konstantin Olenin	RUS	Pierre Dehaen	FRA
Danny Kurmann	SUI	Sirko Schultz	GER
Brent Reiber	SUI	Jon Kilian	NOR
Vladimir Baluska	SVK	Sergei Shelyanin	RUS
Christer Larking	SWE	Roger Arm	SUI
Morgan Johansson	SWE	Miroslav Valach	SVK
Steve Patafie	USA	Jimmy Dahmen	SWE
Keith Kaval	USA	Johnathan Morrison	USA



2012 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship

Maxim Sidorenko	BLR	Justin Hull	CAN
Pascal St-Jacques	CAN	Vit Lederer	CZE
Jan Hribik	CZE	Tomas Pesek	CZE
Ansi Salonen	FIN	Kristian Vikman	FIN
Florian Zehetleitner	GER	Scott Dalgleish	GBR
Peter Gebei	HUN	Nikolaj Ponomarjow	GER
Roman Gofman	RUS	Roman Shikhanov	RUS
Igor Dremelj	SLO	Andreas Kohler	SUI
Andreas Koch	SUI	Emil Yletyinen	SWE
Daniel Konc	SVK	Tommy George	USA
Mikael Sjoqvist	SWE		
Harry Dumas	USA		



2012 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship

Melanie Bordeleau	CAN	Denise Caughey	CAN
Marie Picavet	FRA	Zuzana Arazimova	CZE
Joy Tottman	GBR	Johanna Tauriainen	FIN
Nicole Hertrich	GER	Anne Sophie Boniface	FRA
Aina Hove	NOR	Judith Adler	GER
Tara Leighton	USA	Michaela Kudelova	SVK
		Therese Bjorkman	SWE
		Laura Jonhson	USA
		Alicia Hanrahan	USA



2012 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's World Championship

Mary Anne Gage	CAN	Stephanie Gagnon	CAN
Ludmila Nelibova	CZE	Michaela Stefkova	CZE
Ulla Sipilä	FIN	Barbora Bednarova	CZE
Kyoko Ugajin	JPN	Maria Raabye Fuchsel	DEN
Malin Axelsson	SWE	Anna Majapuro-Hirvonen	FIN
Diana Allen	USA	Bianca Schipper-Poeteray	NED
		Olga Steinberg	RUS
		Magdalena Cerhitova	SVK
		Kate Connolly	USA



2012 IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship

Devin Klein	CAN	Chris Carlson	CAN
Derek Zalaski	CAN	Kiel Murchison	CAN
Vladimir Sindler	CZE	Jiri Gebauer	CZE
Jyri Ronn	FIN	Hannu Sormunen	FIN
Tom Laaksonen	FIN	Andre Schrader	GER
Daniel Piechaczek	GER	Dmitry Sivov	RUS
Vyacheslav Bulanov	RUS	Nicolas Fluri	SUI
Brent Reiber	SUI	Milan Novak	SVK
Soren Persson	SWE	Johannes Kack	SWE
Mikael Nord	SWE	Chris Woodworth	USA
Thomas Sterns	USA		
Ian Croft	USA		



*Note: Subject to confirmation by the national associations. A full list including lower divisions will be published on IIHF.com.

NHL - European Transfers

EUROPEANS TO NHL (FIRST TIME SIGNINGS)

CZECH REPUBLIC			
Adam Polasek	D	CZE	Vitkovice Ostrava
Andrej Nestrasil	F	CZE	Slavia Prague
Roman Horak	F	CZE	Ceske Budejovice

DENMARK			
Oliver H. Lauridsen	D	DEN	Linköping (SWE)

FINLAND			
Joni Ortio	G	FIN	Turku
Rasmus Rissanen	D	FIN	KalPa Kuopio
Iiro Tarkki	G	FIN	Kärpät Oulu
Niko Hovinen*	G	FIN	Lahti
Joonas Nättinen	F	FIN	Espoo
Sami Vatanen*	D	FIN	Jyväskylä
Tommi Kivistö*	D	FIN	Jokerit Helsinki
Lennart Petrell	F	FIN	HIFK Helsinki
Antti Tyrväinen	F	FIN	Lahti
Juuso Puustinen	F	FIN	Hämeenlinna

FRANCE			
Stéphane Da Costa	F	FRA	Amiens

GERMANY			
Dennis Endras	G	GER	Augsburg
Tom Kühnhackl	F	GER	Landshut
Justin Krueger	D	GER	Bern (SUI)
Marc Noebels	F	GER	Krefeld

RUSSIA			
Alexei Yemelin	D	RUS	Ak Bars Kazan
Roman Derlyuk	D	RUS	Dynamo Moscow
Kirill Kabanov	F	RUS	Spartak Moscow
Ivan Telegin	F	RUS	Novokuznetsk
Stanislav Galiev	F	RUS	Dynamo Moscow

SLOVAKIA			
Martin Marincin	D	SVK	Kosice
Richard Panik	F	SVK	Trinec (CZE)

SWEDEN			
Anton Blomqvist	D	SWE	Malmö
Gustav Nyquist	F	SWE	Malmö
André Petersson	F	SWE	HV71
Carl Hagelin	F	SWE	Södertälje
Sebastian Erixon	D	SWE	Timrå
Patrik Nemeth*	D	SWE	AIK Stockholm
Anton Lander	F	SWE	Timrå
Mark Owuya	G	SWE	Djurgården
Mattias Ekholm	D	SWE	Brynäs
John Klingberg*	D	SWE	Frölunda
Johan Larsson*	F	SWE	Brynäs
Anders Nilsson	G	SWE	Luleå
Adam Almqvist*	D	SWE	HV71
Jakob Silfverberg*	F	SWE	Brynäs
Mattias Lindström*	F	SWE	Skellefteå
Tim Erixon	D	SWE	Skellefteå
Mattias Sjögren	F	SWE	Färjestad
Sebastian Wännström*	F	SWE	Brynäs
D	SWE	Färjestad	
Jonas Zibanejad	F	SWE	Djurgården
Adam Larsson	D	SWE	Skellefteå
Gabriel Landeskog	F	SWE	Djurgården

SWITZERLAND			
Alain Berger	F	SUI	Bern
Raphael Diaz	D	SUI	Zug
Sven Bärtschi	F	SUI	Langenthal

NHL RETURNEES FROM EUROPE			
Yevgeni Nabokov	G	RUS	St. Petersburg (RUS)
Petteri Nokelainen	F	FIN	Jokerit (FIN)
Victor Bartley	D	CAN	Rögle (SWE)

Alexander Salak	G	CZE	Färjestad (SWE)
Joakim Lindström	F	SWE	Skellefteå (SWE)
Brett McLean	C	CAN	Bern (SUI)
Jaromir Jagr	F	CZE	Avangard Omsk (RUS)
Michel Ouellet	F	CAN	Hamburg (GER)
Chris Bourque	F	USA	Lugano (SUI)
Yann Danis	G	CAN	Amur Khabarovsk (RUS)
Brock Trotter	F	CAN	Dinamo Riga (LAT)
Josh Hennessy	F	USA	Lugano (SUI)
Jordan Henry	D	CAN	Dynamo Minsk (BLR)
Martin St. Pierre	F	CAN	Salzburg (AUT)
Mark Bell	F	CAN	Kloten (SUI)
Stéphane Veilleux	F	CAN	Ambri-Piotta (SUI)
Brendan Bell	D	CAN	Biel (SUI)
Richard Park	F	USA	Genève-Servette (SUI)

FROM NHL TO EUROPE			
Johan Harju	F	SWE	Tampa Bay
Alexander Frolov	F	RUS	NY Rangers
Oscar Möller	F	SWE	Los Angeles
Liam Reddix	F	CAN	Edmonton
Dustin Boyd	F	CAN	Montreal
Nigel Dawes	F	CAN	Montreal
Niclas Wallin	D	SWE	San Jose
Freddy Meyer	D	USA	Atlanta
Jesse Joensuu	F	FIN	New York Islanders
Rob Niedermayer	F	CAN	Buffalo
Jeff Tambellini	F	CAN	Vancouver
Anssi Salmela	D	FIN	New Jersey
Jassen Cullimore	D	CAN	Chicago
Brent Sopel	D	CAN	Montreal
Alexei Kovalyov	F	RUS	Pittsburgh
Fredrik Sjöström	F	SWE	Toronto
Nikolai Zherdev	F	RUS	Philadelphia
Rob Schremp	F	USA	Atlanta
Antti Miettinen	F	FIN	Minnesota
Jarkko Ruutu	F	FIN	Anaheim

Czechs win first InLine gold in Pardubice

Beat USA 3-2 in championship game, Canadians claim bronze, Brits promoted

By Martin Merk

■ ■ The fifth time's the charm. After three silver medals and a bronze, the Czechs finally triumphed as the host nation of the 2011 IIHF InLine Hockey World Championship in Pardubice with a 3-2 win over the Americans.

■ It was a final game of the extremes before 6,000 fans. On one side the reigning champion USA, with players who fully focus on inline hockey including many from California, and on the other side the Czechs with a couple of well-known ice hockey players who switch to inline skates as a summer practice.

The Czech roster included Petr Tenkrat and the late Karel Rachunek, who had played in the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship in Bratislava only the month before, and KHL player Tomas Mojzis, but also some great inline performers who are less known in ice hockey, such as the tournament's top defenceman Tomas Demel and Czech leading scorer Ludek Broz.



The Czech team gets together for a group shot after winning gold.

■ The Czechs needed a great performance to overcome a pesky U.S. team in a final-worthy clash. The home squad went to a 3-1 lead, but the game remained a nail-biter until the last second when the Czechs sealed a 3-2 win.

"It was not just a bunch of individuals, but a great team that won the gold medal. I'm happy with the way my team

played, and Roman Handl gave us much confidence in the net," said head coach and Pardubice native Petr Hemsky.

■ Handl was one reason behind the Czech triumph. The former ice hockey goalie turned into an inline hockey pro in Spain, where U.S. forwards Jose "Junior" Cadiz and Itan Chavira were his teammates.

"It's the greatest day in my life," Handl said. "To win the gold medal in a World Championship, especially in our own country, is just fantastic. The crowd was our fifth skater here."

"In the end two good teams came together, but one team had to lose," USA head coach Robert Chornomud said. "They deserve the win. They're probably the best European country. They acclimated to inline hockey with an ice hockey influence."

■ While Canada won the bronze against Sweden, Slovakia lost all games and was relegated to Division I. They will be replaced by Great Britain, which won the Division I gold for the first time after defeating Hungary 3-2.

From the arena to the boardroom

26-year-old Petras Nauseda accepts a big challenge on and off the ice

In hockey circles Petras Nauseda has mostly been known as a defenceman on the Lithuanian national team. Since last year however, the 26-year-old is now at the forefront of Lithuanian hockey, heading the Lithuanian Ice Hockey Federation as President.

Born in Elektrenai, where players like Darius Kasparaitis and Dainius Zubrus hail from, Nauseda wore the colours of Energija Elektrenai, the Lithuanian team that participates in the Latvian league, and of the national team. He represented Lithuanian national teams in 15 IIHF events, including eight with the men's national team.

Later he led Energija Elektrenai as a president and general director, before being elected president of the Lithuanian Ice Hockey Federation (LIHF) in 2010, succeeding long-time president Rolandas Bucys.

In this position he wants to make ice hockey bigger and more popular in what is a decidedly basketball-crazy country.

How did you decide to step up as a young player and lead the Lithuanian Ice Hockey Federation?

I started working with Energija, which is the basic club for all our national teams, and I did a lot of work in sport management while I was playing. I was studying at two universities at the same time, sport management and law. I got a lot of theoretical experience as well as practical experience.

IIHF Supplier Spotlight:

- Headquarters in Örebro, Sweden.
- IIHF Supplier Pool member since 1999.
- CEO: Peter Geisler
- Company description: "Swedish tradition with an edge"
- Founded by Kent Bengtsson, former Swedish hockey player for Djurgården and Färjestad.
- Bengtsson developed and patented a skate blade with a three glide surface, along with other innovations in hockey equipment geared towards professional players.



Nauseda (left) at the IIHF Congress in Bratislava. Above, right: Playing for Lithuania.

How would you describe the Lithuanian hockey landscape?

The main goal was to organize a regular national championship, which now includes 27 teams in two tiers and three divisions. We have now more than 800 registered senior players and 400 players in youth leagues. We also have Latvian teams and teams from Kaliningrad (Russia) playing here. And it's growing. Our main goal is to make ice hockey a bigger sport in Lithuania and for that we need more teams, players and rinks. The arena in Elektrenai is currently being reconstructed and there will be new multifunctional arenas in Kaunas and Klaipeda.

A new team, HC Baltica from Vilnius, debuted in the Russian junior league MHL-B with a 5-2 win against Zelenograd. What can you say about this new project?

HC Baltica is a new club that will play in the Russian jun-

The 2009 IIHF World Championship Division I Group A in Vilnius was a success for Lithuanian hockey. Will Lithuania host more events in the future?

We are planning to apply in all categories for the 2012-2013 season, but right now the possible venues are still under construction. We will have great new arenas to host events in Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda or Elektrenai.

What are your wishes for the future of Lithuanian ice hockey?

I want to make ice hockey one of the most popular sports in Lithuania. We need time for this and we need infrastructure for this, and people who want to work on our goals. We also get help from our friends from the Latvian and Belarusian federations where our teams play. I wish ice hockey in the future will be as popular as in Belarus or Latvia, then we will have a very strong region.

For the full interview go to IIHF.com/Nauseda

* Signed NHL contract but remaining with European club for 2011-2012

We are the champions of the world!

List of national champions from 53 countries

Country	Champion
Armenia	Urartu Yerevan
Australia	Melbourne Ice
Austria	Red Bull Salzburg
Belarus	Yunost Minsk
Belgium	White Caps Turnhout
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Bosna Centar Sarajevo
Bulgaria	Slavia Sofia
Canada (best CAN NHL team)	Vancouver Canucks
Canada (Memorial Cup)	Saint John Sea Dogs
China	Harbin
Chinese Taipei	Sababa Bears Taipei
Croatia	Medvescak Zagreb
Czech Republic	Ocelari Trinec
Denmark	Blue Fox Herning
Estonia	Kalev-Välk Tartu
Finland	HIFK Helsinki
France	Rouen Dragons
Germany	Eisbären Berlin
Great Britain (league champion)	Sheffield Steelers
Great Britain (playoff champion)	Nottingham Panthers
Greece	ARIS Saloniki
Hong Kong	Hongkong Penguins
Hungary	Sapa Fehervar AV19
Iceland	Skautafelag Akureyri
India	Indo Tibetan Border Police (invitational; championship in October)
Israel	HC Metulla
Italy	Asiago Hockey
Japan (Asia League)	Tohoku Free Blades (co-champion)
Japan (National League)	Nippon Cranes Kushiro
Kazakhstan	Beibarys Atyrau
Korea	Anyang Halla (also: co-champion Asia League)
Kyrgyzstan	Gornyak Ak-Tuz
Latvia	Liepajas Metalurgs
Lithuania	Sporto Centras Elektrenai
Malaysia	Asian Tigers Kuala Lumpur
Mexico	Teotihuacan Priests
Mongolia	Baganuur
Netherlands	HYS The Hague
New Zealand	Botany Swarm
Norway	Sparta Sarpsborg
Poland	Cracovia Krakow
Romania	HSC Csikszereda
Russia	Salavat Yulayev Ufa
Serbia	Partizan Belgrade
Slovakia	HC Kosice
Slovenia	Acroni Jesenice
South Africa	Gauteng
Spain	CH Jaca
Sweden	Färjestad Karlstad
Switzerland	HC Davos
Thailand	Pattaya Oilers Bangkok
Turkey	Baskent Yildizlari Ankara
Ukraine	Donbas Donetsk
United Arab Emirates	Abu Dhabi Storm
USA (NHL)	Boston Bruins
USA (NCAA)	University of Minnesota Duluth



HC Kosice, along with a few fans, celebrated their third consecutive league trophy.



Goalkeeper Leonardo Genoni hoists the cup, Davos' 30th Swiss League title.



The 2010-2011 MOL League season championship belongs to SAPA Fehérvár AV 19.



Newest member of the IIHF Triple Gold Club Patrice Bergeron (right) lifted hockey's holy grail in June, while on the other side of the world Joey Hughes of Melbourne Ice (left) claimed Australia's Goodall Cup trophy.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS		
IIHF ICE HOCKEY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP		
2012 IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP Venues: Helsinki (Finland) & Stockholm (Sweden) Dates: 4-20 May 2012	2012 IIHF U18 World Championship Division I Group A Venue: Piestany, Slovakia Dates: 11-17 April 2012	2012 IIHF U18 Women's World Championship Div. I Qual. Venue: Asiago, Italy Dates: 29 November-4 December, 2011
2012 IIHF World Championship Division I Group A Venue: Ljubljana, Slovenia Dates: 15-21 April 2012	2012 IIHF U18 World Championship Division I Group B Venue: Szekesfehervar, Hungary Dates: 11-17 April 2012	IIHF INLINE HOCKEY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
2012 IIHF World Championship Division I Group B Venue: Krynica, Poland Dates: 15-21 April 2012	2012 IIHF U18 World Championship Division II Group A Venue: Heerenveen, Netherlands Dates: 31 March – 6 April 2012	IIHF INLINE HOCKEY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP 2012 IIHF InLine Hockey World Championship Venue: Ingolstadt, Germany Dates: 1-7 June 2012
2012 IIHF World Championship Division II Group A Venue: Reykjavik, Iceland Dates: 12-18 April 2012	2012 IIHF U18 World Championship Division II Group B Venue: Novi Sad, Serbia Dates: 20-26 March 2012	IIHF CLUB TOURNAMENTS
2012 IIHF World Championship Division II Group B Venue: Sofia, Bulgaria Dates: 2-8 April 2012	2012 IIHF U18 World Championship Division III Group A Venue: Sofia, Bulgaria Dates: 12-18 March 2012	2011-2012 IIHF CONTINENTAL CUP First round, 30 September to 2 October 2011 Second round, 21-23 October 2011 Third round, 25-27 November 2011 Super Final, 13-15 January 2012
2012 IIHF World Championship Division III Venue: Erzurum, Turkey Dates: 15-21 April 2012	2012 IIHF U18 World Championship Division III Group B Venue: Erzurum, Turkey Championship to be confirmed	2011-2012 EUROPEAN WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS CUP First round, October 28 to 30, 2011 Second round, December 2 to 4, 2011 Final Tournament, February 24 to 26, 2012
YOUTH OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES		
2012 IIHF U20 World Championship Venue: Calgary & Edmonton, Canada Dates: 26 December 2011 – 5 January 2012	WOMEN'S: 2012 IIHF Women's World Championship Venue: Burlington (Vermont), USA Dates: 7-14 April 2012	
2012 IIHF U20 World Championship Division I Group A Venue: Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany Dates: 11-17 December 2011	2012 IIHF Women's World Championship Division I Group A Venue: Ventspils, Latvia Dates: 25-31 March 2012	2012 YOUTH OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES Venue: Innsbruck & Seefeld, Austria Dates: 12 - 22 January 2012
2012 IIHF U20 World Championship Division I Group B Venue: Tychy, Poland Dates: 12-18 December 2011	2012 IIHF Women's World Championship Division I Group B Venue: Hull, Great Britain Dates: 9-15 April 2012	INTERNATIONAL BREAKS
2012 IIHF U20 World Championship Division II Group A Venue: Donetsk, Ukraine Dates: 12 -18 December 2011	2012 IIHF Women's World Championship Division II Group A Venue: Maribor, Slovenia Dates: 25-31 March 2012	2011-2012 1st: 29 August-4 September 2011 2nd: 7-13 November 2011 3rd: 12-18 December 2011 4th: 6-12 February 2012
2012 IIHF U20 World Championship Division II Group B Venue: Tallinn, Estonia Dates: 10 -16 December 2011	2012 IIHF Women's World Championship Division IIB Venue: Seoul, Korea Dates: 10-16 March 2012	2012-2013 1st: 27 August- 2 September, 2012 2nd: 5-11 November, 2012 3rd: 10-16 December, 2012 4th: 4-10 February, 2013
2012 IIHF U20 World Championship Division III Venue: Dunedin, New Zealand Dates: 16-22 January 2012	2012 IIHF Women's World Championship Division IIB Venue: Seoul, Korea Dates: 10-16 March 2012	CONGRESSES
2012 IIHF U20 World Championship Division III Venue: Brno & Znojmo, Czech Republic Dates: 12-22 April 2012	WOMEN'S UNDER 18: 2012 IIHF U18 Women's World Championship Venue: Zlin & Prerov, Czech Republic Dates: 31 December 2011-7 January 2012	IIHF ANNUAL CONGRESS Venue: Helsinki, Finland Dates: 17-20 May
2012 IIHF U18 World Championship Venue: Brno & Znojmo, Czech Republic Dates: 12-22 April 2012		IIHF GENERAL CONGRESS Venue: Tokyo, Japan Dates: 24-30 September, 2012
2012 IIHF U18 World Championship Division I Venue: Stavanger, Norway Dates: January 2012 (exact dates TBA)		 For updates and groups, visit to IIHF.com/2012

The countdown is on... Innsbruck gears up to host the inaugural Youth Olympic Winter Games

The International Olympic Committee and the IIHF are gearing up for the first ever Winter Youth Olympic Games, to be held in Innsbruck, Austria, from January 12-22, 2012.

Innsbruck 2012 will showcase over 1,000 young athletes representing their countries in seven sports: biathlon, bobsleigh, curling, ice hockey, luge, skating and skiing. A total of 200 ice hockey players will participate in the 2012 Winter Youth Olympic Games – 170 in the tournaments (17 per team) and 30 in the skills challenge.

The players that will be eligible for competing are male athletes born in 1996 and female athletes born in 1994.

The participating teams are:
Boys: Canada, Finland, USA, Russia, Austria (host)
Girls: Sweden, Slovakia, Germany, Kazakhstan, Austria (host)



Besides the team tournaments, an individual Skills Challenge for women and men will be held for the very first time at an Olympic Games. In this event, the best 15 female and 15 male athletes from nations other than the ones participating in the tournaments are allowed to compete.

All of the young Olympians will also benefit from the presence of Athlete Role Models, who will attend the competi-

tions, visit the Youth Olympic Village and feature in "Meet the Role Models" forums designed to inspire and educate the participants with personal accounts of their own experiences. The Athlete Role Models chosen for the ice hockey event will be Olympians Jennifer Botterill and Angela Ruggerio.

Botterill, one of only four Canadians to take part in all four Olympic women's hockey tournaments and a three-time Olympic gold medalist, played 184 games in a Team Canada jersey, recording 65 goals and 109 assists for 174 points.

Ruggiero is a three-time World Champion and a leader of the U.S. Women's Hockey National Team. Having played in four Olympics (winning one gold, one silver, and one bronze) and ten World Championships, she currently holds the record as all-time leader in games played for Team USA.

Leading the way after the tragedy

Medvedev: "Everyone's attitude to hockey has changed forever"

By Paul Romanuk

■ ■ Alexander Medvedev is a busy man. Aside from his job on the IIHF Council, he also serves as president of the Kontinental Hockey League (KHL), as well as the Chairman of the Board for SKA St. Petersburg and, as if that wasn't enough, he's the Deputy Chairman of Gazprom, the Russian energy company.

Medvedev, along with everyone else in the hockey world, was broadsided by the Yaroslavl air disaster on September 7, 2011, when a chartered plane crashed during takeoff, killing 44 of 45 people on board, including the entire Lokomotiv Yaroslavl hockey club. Medvedev found out about the crash when he was in Ufa, overseeing the opening game of the season between Salavat Yulayev Ufa and Atlant Mytishi.

During the recent IIHF Congress in Istanbul, Medvedev sat down to speak with Ice Times.

Alexander, how did you hear the awful news?

AM: Ten minutes before the start of the game, we got information about the crash. Then, contradictory information started to come in - including that everyone had survived, and there was a sign of hope. But the game started and then we got official information... that it was a terrible crash. We decided then to stop the game.

What was it like having to tell the players on both teams about what was happening?

AM: Players are strong. When you see young men crying like kids, you understand that it's not just a teammate who they have maybe played with on a national team or someplace that has been lost, but a compatriot. I think everyone's attitude to hockey changed, and changed forever.

It was a horrible tragedy. When you're at the funeral ceremony and you see, instead of young men standing on the bluelines, you see coffins sitting there... your heart is broken... you can't stop crying... it was like this for me and tens of thousands of other people at the funeral, the crash site and at places all over Russia.

People demonstrated their human characters very openly... Unfortunately, very often, only tragedies unite people. But I do hope that life will be different... I do hope that everybody - players, managers, referees - will think in a way that, hockey is a game that we all enjoy and we should put our maximum commitment into it, but also realize that life is short and it could go out at any time.

What thoughts or plans does the KHL have with regards to restoring professional hockey in Yaroslavl? When will Lokomotiv be back in the KHL?

AM: One of the primary goals of the KHL after the tragic demise of Lokomotiv team was the revival of top-level Yaroslavl hockey club from slowing down. Loko, the Yaroslavl junior team, continues to play in the MHL. In December the new Lokomotiv team will start competing in the VHL, our farm league. The team will be formed from juniors, free agents and unprotected KHL and VHL players. Next season Lokomotiv will return to the KHL. Several rules that regulate how the new team will sign and draft players have already been developed and approved with the active role of President Dmitri Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin.

We're into the fourth season of the KHL. Is the goal of the KHL to, one day, provide the opportunity to young Russian players, maybe the best young Russian players, to say to themselves 'I don't have to go and play in the NHL, I can stay here in Russia and play'?

AM: The goal is not to isolate our players from international chances. But everyone should make a choice, depending on his personal attitudes... and the goal of the KHL is to provide the quality of the game and also the infrastructure, which is still not there yet in terms of number of quality arenas that the NHL has... to provide the opportunity for the fans to go to the games in comfort and watch the players demonstrate their mastery, and for the players not to face any organizational problems and to be able to enjoy playing the game - this is our purpose. I don't think we're very far away from that. We know what to do and every year we are making progress. The KHL opened a new page in the history of Russian hockey.



"Unfortunately, very often, only tragedies unite people."

Are people going to the games? Is it expensive?

AM: Our business model could not be like the US or Canada where ticket sales covers a major part of the budget. We can't charge as much for the tickets, plus our arenas are smaller, in general - although we do have new arenas, like in Minsk, that are NHL caliber. Tickets aren't expensive. The average price is around 250 rubles [about \$8 USD]. Because our sport is for everybody, not just for rich people.

The KHL internet site is in English as well as Russian. Why is this?

AM: Because our league is an international league and we want everyone who is interested in hockey to enjoy watching and monitoring KHL games. We have agreements... to distribute the broadcast of our games in Europe; and we are in negotiations with North America to have, not just internet broadcasts but, TV broadcasts of the games. It just shows that we will find the solutions for people to see our games. Russians like to see NHL games, so why wouldn't Americans or Canadians like to see the KHL?



Medvedev at the 2010 World Hockey Summit in Toronto.

Alexander, a year ago at the World Hockey Summit in Toronto you said, in essence, that it would be detrimental if not all the best players would participate in Sochi 2014. Have you spoken recently with the NHL and do you sense that anything in their stance has changed?

AM: I haven't changed my mind about the issue. As I said in Toronto, in a statistical analysis, not by us, but by an American marketing company, irrespective of the place... Torino, Nagano, Vancouver... after Olympic Games the interest in NHL events goes up substantially. So, if you're not going to send the guys to the Olympics, either you will stay at the same level, or maybe [the level of interest] will go down. I've spoken to Gary Bettman about the difficulties of the situation for the NHL and I appreciate what he says and we have agreed to meet and discuss what we could do together.

Answers taken from a longer interview that will appear at a later date on IIHF.com.



Medvedev addressing the crowd at the KHL season-opening game after news broke of the tragedy.

Photo: Oren Mounier

Photo: Vladimir Bezzubov, Yuri Kuzmin / KHL