

All eyes are on Canada in early 2010



RINGING IN THE NEW YEAR: Canada will have the weight of the world on its shoulders in the first two months of 2010. The U20 national team kicks things off when they go for their sixth straight title in front of an eager audience in Saskatoon and Regina, Canada. Then in February, what is being billed as potentially the greatest hockey Olympic tournament ever, will begin in Vancouver. Both the men's and women's team are facing high expectations -- and high pressure -- from their loyal fans.



Only a couple of years ago we called the IIHF World U20 Championship "the best kept secret" of international hockey. With a phenomenal attendance record last year and nine million TV-viewers watching the last part of the gold medal game, we can delete the 'secret'. It's simply the best.

RENÉ FASEL EDITORIAL

■ To refresh everyone's memory; the 31 games of the 2009 'World Juniors' in Ottawa drew 453,282 fans for an average of 14,622 spectators per game. This is a number which is higher than what we have at the IIHF World Championship and at the Olympics.

I don't know which figure that is more impressive, the one above or the nine million Canadian TV viewers (almost 30 percent of the country's population) that watched the third period of the Canada vs. Sweden final.

■ In any case, the U20 Worlds have become one of the biggest annual winter championships, all sports included. Just look at the development of this event as illustrated on page 8 in this edition of *Ice Times*. We have come a long way since 1977.

Due to lesser capacity arenas in Saskatoon (14,600) and Regina (6,600), it will be the first time that there won't be a new attendance record set when going to Canada, but the enthusiasm in the rinks and among fans coast-to-coast will be second to none.

■ In late November, the IIHF reinforced its position on the current hot topic in Canada - hits to the head. It was very important for us to once again clarify our posi-

tion with both the World U20 and the Olympics taking part in the country.

In light of the debate, we feel very comfortable and confident with our policy which is very simple and can not be misunderstood; "There is no such thing as a clean hit to the head."

■ This unwavering position which will be strongly implemented in Saskatoon/Regina and Vancouver is based upon a very straightforward ideology - protection of our most valuable asset, the players.

With this 'zero-tolerance' rule we assume a responsible position regarding players' safety during our events and their lives after retirement. We know after acquiring scientific evidence that hits to the head are cumulative. This means that once concussed, a lesser hit each next time can bring on another concussion.

The biggest misconception in this debate is that the IIHF position hits to the head would take away from the aggressive aspect of the game. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is nothing aggressive or courageous about hitting someone's most vital part. It's simply wrong and cowardly.

When watching the two events, you will be hard pressed to say that the games were lacking in competitiveness, hits or excitement.

■ Let me take the opportunity to wish you all in the international hockey family a prosperous year 2010.

René Fasel
IIHF President

Infront granted mandate for CHL re-launch

■ The IIHF, the Top-7 European national associations and leagues decided to mandate Infront Sports & Media AG to facilitate a re-launch of the Champions Hockey League for the 2010-2011 season.

It was decided by all stakeholders to use the time until the start of the 2010 Olympics to find the best competition format and business model for the CHL.

Marketing agent Infront Sports & Media AG was exclusively mandated to develop a potential solution for a re-launch of the Pan-European league, which held its inaugural campaign in 2008-2009 but cancelled for the 2009-2010 due to the world-wide financial situation.

Infront Sports & Media AG is the IIHF's marketing partner for the IIHF World Championship and has been an IIHF associate since the mid-80s.

"After the pullout of some investors last week which led to the discontinuing of former CHL marketing partner Ovation Sports, this meeting was an important step forward," said IIHF President René Fasel. "We now have the commitment and mandate from the national federations and their leagues to pursue a new path towards a re-launch."

"Infront is an established player in winter sports and with our combined experience we are optimistic that we can together find a new structure and business model for the Champions Hockey League."

The latest development follows a series of ups-and-downs regarding the re-launch of the league.

■ **October 21:** The IIHF and the Hockey Europe (Union of the professional leagues from the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland.) reached a settlement which paved the way towards a joint effort to re-launch the CHL for 2010-11.

■ **October 21** The IIHF issued the CHL Tender Document, which was made available for potential investors. The tender period ended Nov. 13 with one bona-fide bid.

■ **Mid-November:** As negotiations were about to start, the two investors behind the bid pulled out.

■ **November 25:** With the anticipated financial investment definitely gone, Ovation Sports - the IIHF's marketing partner of the CHL - discontinued its efforts to facilitate the re-launch and terminated its operations.

NEWS & NOTES FROM THE HOCKEY WORLD

■ **GERMANY:** German national team player **Florian Busch** is eligible to return to international competition. Busch was suspended after the 2008 World Championship by WADA for refusing an out-of-competition test. The circumstances of case were unique and Busch appealed to the Court of Arbitration in Sport (CAS), which also found in WADA's favor. However a last appeal to a Swiss Federal Court found in favor of Busch and ruled that he was not guilty of non-compliance.

■ **UNITED STATES:** Former NHL Player's Association Executive Director **Paul Kelly** is the new Executive Director of College Hockey, Inc., a new marketing initiative for America's NCAA Division I ice hockey programs. The new entity will serve as the marketing and informational arm for NCAA Division I men's ice hockey. Kelly will begin his duties immediately.

■ **SERBIA:** **Mark Pederson** will coach the Serbian national team at the 2010 IIHF World Championship Division I, Group A after signing two-year contract with the Serbian Ice Hockey Association. The Canadian is also the head coach of the Tilburg Trappers in the Netherlands.

■ **CANADA:** **Brendan Shanahan** announced his retirement. He helped to lead the Detroit Red Wings to three Stanley Cups (1997, 1998 and 2002) and won the 2002 Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City.

■ **BELARUS:** American-Canadian coach **Glen Hanlon** announced his resignation as the head coach of the Belarus national team with just over three months left until the Olympics.

■ **RUSSIA:** **Igor Vyazmikin** passed away on October 30 after a long illness. Born in 1966 in Moscow, Vyazmikin was seen as a huge talent in his early years. He was in the All-Star team of the 1986 World U20 Championship, which was won by the Soviets. In 1989-90 he scored almost a point per game for Khimik Voskresensk and in the Super Series before he moved to the Edmonton Oilers.

■ **UKRAINE:** **Mikhail Zakharov** is the new head coach for Ukraine's national team. He was a unanimous choice of the federation's board and signed a one-year contract with an option for an additional year. He takes over for **Oleksandr Seukand**.

■ **CANADA:** Hockey Canada announced that its national junior team will wear green jerseys during the 2010 IIHF World U20 Championship. The move is to honor host city Saskatchewan's love affair with the Regina-based football team the Saskatchewan Roughriders and as a salute to the province. Both have green as their official colors. The team will wear the jerseys twice, once in an exhibition game and once during the championship.

■ **SWITZERLAND:** Switzerland named Canadian **Sean Simpson** its new men's national team coach. Simpson replaces 13-year veteran Ralph Krueger, who will step down either following the 2010 Olympics or the 2010 World Championship. Simpson was previously the head coach for the ZSC Zurich Lions, which won the Champions Hockey League and Victoria Cup.

■ **CANADA:** The organizing committee of the upcoming Olympic Games unveiled the medals that the winners will receive in Vancouver. The dramatic form is inspired by the ocean waves, drifting snow and mountainous landscape found in the Games region. They weigh a hefty 500 to 576 grams depending on the medal and are 100 millimeters in diameter and about six mm thick. They are among the heaviest medals in Olympic history. Each of the medals has a unique hand-cropped section of the abstract art, making every medal one-of-a-kind.



What to do about the Swine Flu

■ With the start of hockey season also comes the start of the flu season. As most people know, this flu season is expected to be especially challenging with the emergence of the H1N1 Virus, better known as the Swine Flu. Due to the extent of the spread of the Swine Flu, the IIHF Medical Committee discussed preventative measures that both host nations and normal club teams can make to help prevent the spread of the virus during an event or game.

The following recommendations apply to both Swine Flu and any other contagious viruses that may occur during the course of an event. These are only recommendations and are not mandatory for any host organizer to pursue.

Each host nation is advised to take the following measures before and during the event:

- Regular consultation of the World Health Organization (WHO) website – www.who.int – on the possibility and risk of infection during the event.
- Be in contact with the Public Health authorities of the country to determine risk of infection.
- Advise participating countries on the necessary vaccines for the Championship and travel.
- Institute preventive measures to control infection during the Championship (i.e. presence of alcohol based washing gels or hand sanitizers, masks for infections, isolation of players with infections).
- Encourage the use of flu vaccines for all participating players in IIHF Championships.
- Have anti-viral medications available (i.e. tamiflu) in case of an outbreak.
- Use the IIHF Illness Reporting System on a daily basis to establish the presence or absence of a contagious illness. Report to the IIHF on the presence of a virus.

In case of an outbreak, the following additional measures may need to be considered:

- Individual towels or removal of towels on the bench.
- Individual water bottles for each player.
- No handshakes after the game.
- Use of gloves for washing of equipment.

If you have any questions regarding further preventative measures, please visit the WHO website. IIHF.com also has the complete list of recommendations.

World Junior Media Guide

■ The IIHF has produced a media guide for the World U20 Championship. The guide includes a complete history and player register from the annual event. In addition, for the first time ever, the IIHF has compiled a complete history from the U18 World Championship, which can be found as an annex to the guide. If you are interested in receiving a copy, please send an email to wiedeke@iihf.com. Please be advised that the media guide supplies are limited and all requests may not be fulfilled.



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The Hockey Hall of Fame finds a new home



WHAT MAKES A HOUSE A HOME? For the Hockey Hall of Fame a state-of-the-art resource center finally became a reality when they recently opened its doors. The facility is already home to thousands of hockey most important artifacts – including a slew of sticks (right) that Phil Pritchard proudly shows off as part of the grand opening.

PHOTOS: HHoF & SEVA KUKUSHKIN



The Hockey Hall of Fame is still based at the corner of Yonge & Front in downtown Toronto, but its Resource Centre has moved some kilometers west into a wonderful and spacious facility. The IIHF Historical Committee paid the new centre a visit during the recent HHoF Induction Ceremony weekend.

Named in honor of the late Daryl K. (Doc) Seaman, one of the founding owners of the Calgary Flames who passed away in January 2009 at age 86, the 18,000 square foot facility is now the new home of the Hockey Hall of Fame's vast artifact and archival collections and will serve as the focal point for research into the history of ice hockey.

■ ■ This is the first time the Hockey Hall of Fame expands since moving down town in 1993, to the old Bank of Montreal building from 1885.

In addition, Hockey Canada will occupy a portion of the Hall's premises together with the NHL's Toronto Maple Leafs and their AHL affiliate, the Toronto Marlies sharing the brand new four-pad arena complex, including one of international size.

"The new resource centre will provide facilities to expand the Hall's commitment to research and education, as well as the application of digital technology for archiving, distribution and promotional purposes," said Phil Pritchard, Vice-President and Curator of the Hockey Hall of Fame. "It also allows us to consolidate our collections into a single satellite operation to better serve our principal museum attraction which continues to flourish at Brookfield Place."

BY THE NUMBERS

Facts and figures about the new Hockey Hall of Fame Resource Centre that boggle the mind

■ Home to approximately 1.5 million original photographs.

■ Include 25,000 publications in addition to 20,000 thematic hockey information files.

■ Has close to 10,000 artifacts and hundreds and thousands of video and audio hockey files.

■ Has 7,500 sq ft of artifact and archival high density storage.

■ Includes 3,500 sq ft of working/lecture space, research carrels, cold rooms for digital and video archives, a digital image centre and offices for the Hall of Fame staff.

Pritchard, by many hockey fans known as "the guy who carries the Stanley Cup", is also member of the IIHF Historical Committee.

"This is an absolutely fantastic facility," said Phil. "Here we have all the space we didn't have at Brookfield Place. And if you need a dose of real hockey you can just step outside of our office and watch the Leafs or Marlies practice."

■ ■ Funded, in part, by contributions from the Seaman Hotchkiss Hockey Foundation, International Ice Hockey Federation, Department of Canadian Heritage and a group of ten individual donors forming the "HRCA Founders Committee", the 4 million dollar resource centre is the most comprehensive archive and research facility in the world dedicated to collecting and preserving resource materials related to the history of hockey.

The Hockey Hall of Fame Resource Centre has an incredibly impressive collection of hockey sticks, jerseys, programs, photographs, books, pucks and odd trophies.

■ ■ In addition to serving thousands of correspondents, media, administrators, teams, players, fans, students, teachers, museums and libraries each year, the Resource Centre plays an integral role in the planning and development of the Hockey Hall of Fame's exhibition, outreach, fundraising and charitable activities.

A one man show

Sauer named to disciplinary post

■ ■ At its last Congress, a new initiative was passed to have all major disciplinary decisions made by a one-man judge instead of by the directorate members.



In December, the plan will be put into effect. Jeff Sauer, former University of Wisconsin head coach has been named the 'One Man Disciplinary Judge' at the upcoming World U20 Championship in Canada.

■ ■ The idea for a one-man judge was brought to the Congress by the Event Committee, which wanted to alleviate the standing directorate members from having to make disciplinary decisions which could benefit or harm their teams. At every World Championship, the Tournament Directorate is made up of one representative of each participating nation in addition to a Championship Chairman.

By bringing in an independent and neutral one-man judge instead of having the Directorate members rule on difficult cases, the IIHF is minimizing the risk that politics will play a factor in such decisions.

■ ■ The World U20 Championship will be the testing ground for the proposal and if it is a positive development, it will be used at all major IIHF events.

Hosts to face fines for non-compliance

■ ■ A new statute (20.3 Non-fulfillment of Hosting Obligations) was recently added to the IIHF Statute and Bylaws and following the latest Council meeting in November, the statute comes with some hefty consequences for non compliance.

The IIHF hosts between 25-35 events each season, and while the majority of host nations do an excellent job of organizing the championship events, there continue to be a few cases of minor or major infractions by hosts that are detrimental to the organization of the event.

After the IIHF received complaints from participating teams and feedback from the countries of how to improve the host nation standards, it was decided that the inability to meet the host contract obligations needs to be met with a fine system.

■ ■ The penalty system takes into account that a fixed pricelist cannot fairly address the level of infractions at the various levels. It was also recognized that the system had to have enough flexibility to cover the respective local circumstances.

A moderate penalty of CHF 500 will be imposed as a warning at the first report in a Directorate meeting. In addition, the host organizing committee has to immediately correct the reported infraction. Failure to correct the problem will result in an increased fine.

■ ■ In addition, the Championship Chairman may use his judgment to determine if the damage was recoverable or irrecoverable and adjust the fine accordingly.

Rivalries shift at U20s, but Canada stays

By Lucas Aykroyd

The Canadians will shoot for a record-setting sixth straight gold medal in Regina and Saskatoon at the upcoming 2010 World Juniors. Their biggest challenges will come from two nations that they've defeated in recent gold medal games--Russia (2005-07) and Sweden (2008-09)--and their historic cross-border rival, the United States, which almost always manages to underachieve at this tournament despite icing talented rosters.

■ ■ Let's take a look back at how these key rivalries have evolved over the years and what it means in terms of who might dethrone Canada, as the World Juniors return to the province of Saskatchewan for the first time since 1991.

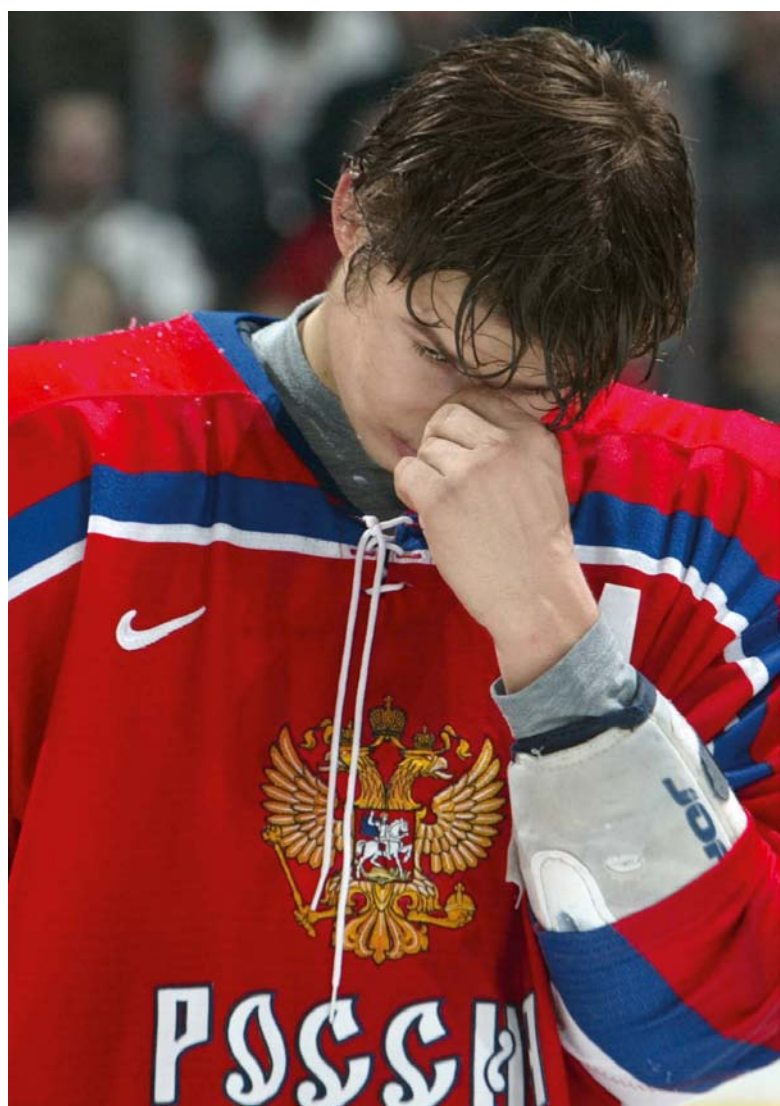
Particularly since the late 1980's, Canada has entered virtually every IIHF World U20 Championship as a top gold medal contender, more so than any other nation. But the identity of Canada's main rivals has changed over the years.

CANADA vs. RUSSIA

■ ■ Currently, the Russians are enduring a gold medal drought that stretches back to 2003. Even with superstars like Alexander Ovechkin and Evgeni Malkin in the lineup, they were unable to match Canada's physical play and scoring in the three consecutive finals they played this decade. Last year, in perhaps the most thrilling see-saw battle ever staged at the World Juniors, Russia fell 6-5 to Canada in a semi-final shootout after leading 5-4 with less than six seconds left in regulation. The name of Jordan Eberle will long be cursed by Russian fans, as the Regina native scored the unlikely tying goal and added the shootout winner.

It wasn't always like this. Back when the World Juniors started, the Russians were Canada's nemesis, winning four straight golds between 1977 and 1980. Particularly galling was their 1978 triumph in Montreal, spoiling tournament scoring leader Wayne Gretzky's lone U20 appearance. That year also marked the only instance in which Canada has failed to make the final in any major international tournament its hosted (Worlds, World Juniors, Canada Cups, World Cups, and World Women's Championships).

After Canada instituted its Program of Excellence in 1982, selecting national junior all-star teams instead of merely designating a club to represent the nation, the balance of power evened out considerably in the 1980's. Then the Russians waned in the post-Soviet era, while Canada marched to five straight golds between 1993 and 1997.



THE HIT LIST: In the last decade, Canada has reigned supreme at the World Junior Championships in 2008 and 2009. And one can't help but to throw the Americans in the rivalry mix, after

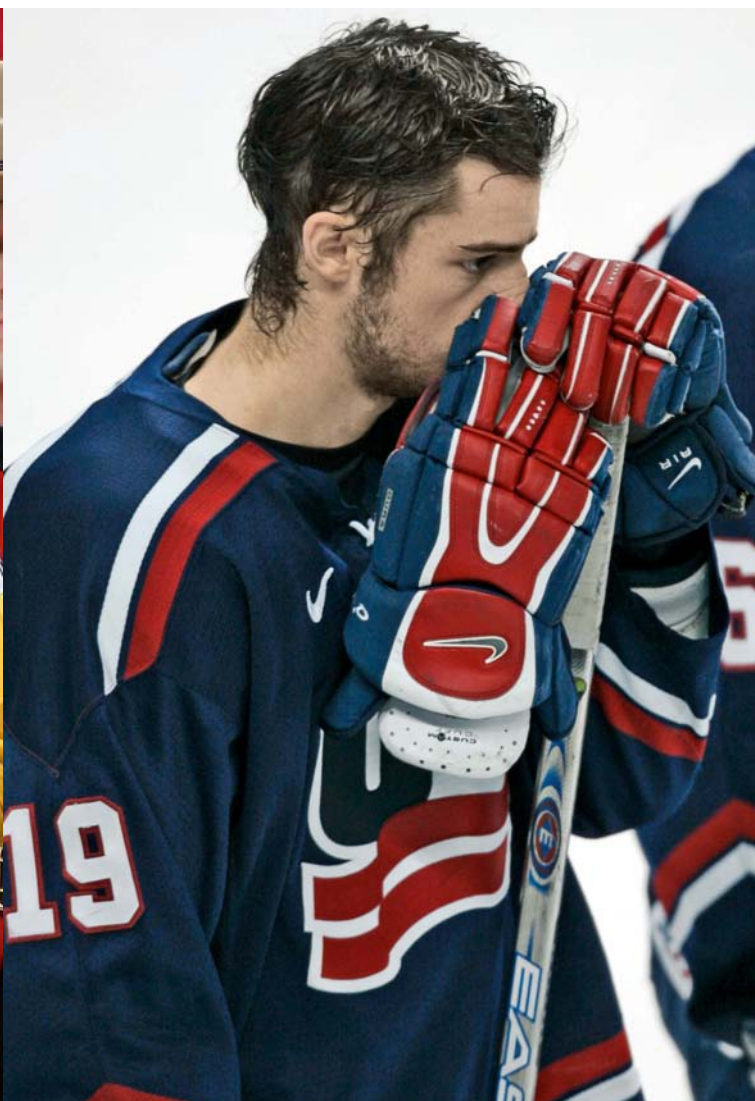
Although Russia beat Canada in three finals (1999, 2002, 2003) at one point, the red Maple Leaf has held a decisive advantage since 2005. The lopsided Canadian triumph in the 2007 Super Series (seven wins, one tie), not to mention the annual losing record Russian squads post in the Canada/Russia Challenge (this year dubbed the Subway Super Series, has done little to boost Russia's confidence.

CANADA vs. SWEDEN

■ ■ Heading into this year's tournament, the Swedes are probably Canada's top rival. After losing 3-2 in OT in 2008 and 5-1 in 2009 in the finals, they've learned a lot about what it'll take to compete physically and emotionally with the champions in a hostile, North American-sized rink. In 2008, the Swedes ended Canada's record-setting 20-game win streak with a 4-3 round-robin victory. There should be plenty of returning faces in the Swedish lineup this year, including star goalie Jacob Markstrom, defencemen David Rundblad, and Tim Erixon, and forwards Magnus Svensson-Paajarvi, Marcus Johansson, and Mattias Tedenby.

This isn't the first time Sweden has emerged as the team to beat for Canada. Members of the so-called "Golden Generation" helped Tre Kronor earn silver medals at four out of five World Juniors between 1992 and 1996, plus a bronze in 1995.

Certainly, the most formidable lineup the Swedes ever iced was in 1993, when a line with future NHL stars Markus Naslund, Peter Forsberg, and Niklas Sundstrom paced the attack. Naslund scored a tournament record 13 goals, while Forsberg set the bar even higher with his points total of



hip no matter which nation was the rivalry du jour. Canada beat the Russians three times for the gold medal in 2005, 2006 and 2007. Meanwhile, the Swedes fell victim in the gold medal errall, the two nations normally provide the New Year's Eve fireworks every season.

31 (seven goals and 24 assists), a mark unlikely to ever be exceeded. However, Forsberg famously questioned Canada's skating ability before the two sides clashed on December 27, and calling out the Canadians publicly is almost always a mistake. Sweden lost 5-4 in what proved to be the decisive game in the old round-robin format, despite a four-point outing by Forsberg.

In 1994, Canada won the crucial game 6-4 despite allowing Sweden to pepper goalie Jamie Storr with 49 shots. With a stacked roster during the first NHL lockout in 1995, the Canadians had already clinched the gold when they beat third-place Sweden 4-3 to conclude the tournament. And by 1996, Sweden's talent had fallen off: despite claiming silver again, they only placed Mattias Ohlund on the tournament all-star team, and fell 4-1 to Canada.

Psychologically, what does all this portend for 2010? While the Swedes have showed they can push Canada hard at this level, they haven't developed the winning mindset that, say, the senior national team did with its history-making double gold at the Olympics and Worlds in 2006. In fact, the Swedes only have one U20 gold to their credit all-time (1981). Hearing the anthem, "Du gamla, du fria," after the final game in Saskatoon would be the biggest moment in Swedish junior hockey history.

CANADA vs. USA

■ Perception is often at odds with reality, and there's no better illustration of that than the Canada-USA rivalry at the World Juniors. In the late 1980's and early 1990's, Canada perennially beat American squads featuring future greats like Mike Modano, Jeremy Roenick, and John

LeClair. The two teams have only met twice in the gold medal game. The first time was 1997, a rather dull 2-0 Canadian win highlighted by a 35-save shutout for Marc Denis. The 2004 final, marking the only American title in World Junior history, is best-remembered for a notorious Canadian goaltending gaffe, as Marc-Andre Fleury's failed clearing attempt bounced off teammate Braydon Coburn and into his own net for the winning American goal, credited to Patrick O'Sullivan. Netminder Al Montoya and sniper Zach Parise were named tournament all-stars.

Many times since 1997, the Americans have been touted as Canada's main competition, loaded with first-round NHL picks. The likes of Phil Kessel (2006) and James van Riemsdyk (2008) have topped the points parade. But a lack of internal cohesion has usually cost the team at key moments. Last year, nobody foresaw an American loss in the quarterfinals to Slovakia, which has just one U20 bronze to its credit. But it happened anyway.

Canadian fans get riled up about the cross-border rivalry and the prospect of extra-physical hockey. A Canada-USA round-robin game on New Year's Eve is a guaranteed sellout on this side of the Atlantic: memorable recent moments include the pseudo-elbow of American blueliner Jack Johnson on Steve Downie on December 31, 2005, and Canada's rally to win 7-4 after trailing 3-0 early last year.

However, their one gold medal notwithstanding, the Americans have a long way to go before they shake their label as habitual pretenders and truly stand up as Canada's main rivals. Can they close the credibility gap in Saskatchewan?

DIRECTORATE AWARDS 1977-1993

1977

Goalkeeper Jan Hrabak (TCH)
 Defenseman Vyacheslav Fetisov (URS)
 Forward Dale McCourt (CAN)

1978

Goalkeeper Alexander Tyzhnyh (URS)
 Defenseman Vyacheslav Fetisov (URS)
 Forward Wayne Gretzky (CAN)

1979

Goalkeeper Pelle Lindbergh (SWE)
 Defenseman Alexei Kasatonov (URS)
 Forward Vladimir Krutov (URS)

1980

Goalkeeper Jari Paavola (FIN)
 Defenseman Reijo Ruotsalainen (FIN)
 Forward Vladimir Krutov (URS)

1981

Goalkeeper Lars Eriksson (SWE)
 Defenseman Miloslav Horava (CSR)
 Forward Patrik Sundstrom (SWE)

1982

Goalkeeper Mike Moffat (CAN)
 Defenseman Gord Kluzak (CAN)
 Forward Petri Skriko (FIN)

1983

Goalkeeper Dominik Hasek (TCH)
 Defenseman Ilya Biakin (URS)
 Forward Tomas Sandstrom (SWE)

1984

Goalkeeper Alan Perry (USA)
 Defenseman Alexei Gusarov (URS)
 Forward Raimo Helminen (FIN)

1985

Goalkeeper Craig Billington (CAN)
 Defenseman Vesa Salo (FIN)
 Forward Michal Pivonka (TCH)

1986

Goalkeeper Evgeni Belosheikin (URS)
 Defenseman Mikhail Tatarinov (URS)
 Forward Jim Sandlak (CAN)

1987

Goalkeeper Markus Ketterer (FIN)
 Defenseman Calle Johansson (SWE)
 Forward Robert Kron (TCH)

1988

Goalkeeper Jimmy Waite (CAN)
 Defenseman Teppo Numminen (FIN)
 Forward Alexander Mogilny (URS)

1989

Goalkeeper Alexei Ivashkin (URS)
 Defenseman Rickard Persson (SWE)
 Forward Pavel Bure (URS)

1990

Goalkeeper Stephane Fiset (CAN)
 Defenseman Alexander Godnyuk (URS)
 Forward Robert Reichel (TCH)

1991

Goalkeeper Pauli Jaks (SUI)
 Defenseman Jiri Slegr (TCH)
 Forward Eric Lindros (CAN)

1992

Goalkeeper Mike Dunham (USA)
 Defenseman Darius Kasparaitis (RUS)
 Forward Michael Nylander (SWE)

1993

Goalkeeper Manny Legace (CAN)
 Defenseman Janne Gronvall (FIN)
 Forward Peter Forsberg (SWE)

It's no secret that the World Junior Championship is the best place to get a glimpse of hockey's future. But what has become of the top stars from the last six seasons? The IIHF takes a look at the Directorate and All-Star teams from 2004-2009 to see who has become a hit and who is a miss.

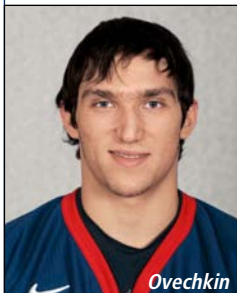
2004



Forward: Zach Parise (USA) - Is the face of the New Jersey Devils and one of Team USA's biggest hopes for the future. The first round pick (17th overall) had 94 points last season and ranked third in the league with 45 goals.

Forward: Valtteri Filppula (FIN) - Like his Finnish teammate, it took a little longer for Filppula to reach the NHL. After staying in Finland until 2005, the third rounder moved to the NHL, where he played his first full season with Detroit in 2006. He is the first Finnish-born Red Wing player and won the Stanley Cup in 2008.

2005



Goalie: Marek Schwarz (CZE) - Schwarz never hit full stride in North America, playing just six NHL games over the last three seasons. The first round pick played for six clubs after moving to North America in 2006, but went back to his native Czech Republic this season with Mlada Boleslav.

Defense: Dion Phaneuf (CAN) - Did we mention that he was named to the NHL All-Rookie Team in 2006 and was on the NHL First All-Star Team in 2008? He also played in the NHL All-Star Game in 2007 and 2008.

Defense: Ryan Suter (USA) - The seventh overall pick in 2003 has proven to be a coup for Nashville. Suter spent just one year in the AHL before becoming a mainstay on the Nashville blueline in 2005, where he averages close to 80 games per season.

Forward: Patrice Bergeron (CAN) - A solid second round draft pick, Bergeron has been a steady presence on the Boston line-up since 2005. Despite being only 24 years-old, he is in his seventh professional season.

Forward: Jeff Carter (CAN) - Carter is nearing the 300-point mark in the NHL and as of press time had played in more than 225 consecutive games for the Flyers.

Forward: Alexander Ovechkin (RUS) - Just how good is he? We'll let the awards do the talking... Olympic Tournament All-Star Team (2006) NHL All-Rookie Team (2006) NHL First All-Star Team (2006, 2007, 2008) Calder Memorial Trophy (2006) Maurice Richard Trophy (2008) Art Ross Trophy (2008) Lester B. Pearson Trophy (2008) Hart Trophy (2008). Enough said.

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Where are

See how the top stars from the recent



BOY TO MAN: Alexander Ovechkin, from U18s, to U20s and most recent

2006



This year, he has spot in the line-up with Tampa Bay.

Forward: Evgeni Malkin (RUS) - Provides a one-two punch with Sidney Crosby on the Pittsburgh Penguins line-up. Won the Stanley Cup last year and has had two 100+ point NHL seasons.

Forward: Lauri Tukonen (FIN) - The first-round pick of the L.A. Kings spent three seasons toiling in the AHL before heading back home to Finland where he now plays for Lukko Rauma.

Goalie: Tuukka Rask (FIN) - Another first round goaltender pick that has been a relative bust, playing just five games for Boston, while spending the majority of his two NHL seasons in the minor leagues. Stayed in Finland with Ilves until 2007.

Defense: Luc Bourdon (CAN) - A tragic motorcycle crash cut Bourdon's life short in 2008. At the time of his death, the 10th overall selection had made his way onto the Vancouver roster for 27 games after playing in the minor leagues.

Defense: Jack Johnson (USA) - The third-overall draft pick joined the L.A. Kings line-up mid-season in 2006-07. When healthy, he is a key to the Kings' defense. Missed half the season last year, but is back in the line-up again.

Forward: Steve Downie (CAN) - Has had a bouncing ball career between the AHL and the NHL. The late first-rounder maxed out with 32 games in the NHL with Philadelphia in 2007.

they now?

ant World U20 Championships are doing

2007

Goalie: Carey Price (CAN) - Price is starting to fulfill the first-round, fifth-overall Montreal draft prophesy. In 2007 he played 41 games for Montreal, while last season, that number went up to 52. He was named to the NHL All-Rookie Team in 2008 his first full season with Montreal.

Defense: Erik Johnson (USA) - In 2006, Johnson was made the number-one overall draft pick by St. Louis. He played one year of college in Minnesota before turning pro. His first NHL season he played close to 70 games and had a solid 33 points.

Defense: Kristopher Letang (CAN) - Went in the third round to Pittsburgh in 2005 and split his first two seasons between the NHL and AHL. Last year was his first full NHL season where he played 74 games and added 33 points.

Forward: Jonathan Toews (CAN) - Is the captain of the Chicago Blackhawks, one of the youngest in the league and was their first round selection, third overall in 2006. Left the University of North Dakota in 2007 and went immediately onto the Blackhawks' roster.

Forward: Alexei Cherepanov (RUS) - Tragedy also struck Cherepanov, who died in 2008 during a game in Russia due to an undetected heart condition. Before his death, he was becoming a star for Russian league team Avangard Omsk with nearly 30 points per season.

Forward: Patrick Kane (USA) - A teammate with Toews in Chicago. The first overall draft selection from 2007 had 142 points in his first two NHL seasons and is on track this year to keep up the pace. Was on the NHL All-Rookie team in 2008.

SOURCES: HOCKEYDB.COM, NHL.COM



Kane



Cherepanov has moved up through the IIHF ranks, from the AHL to the NHL, and is currently winning gold with the Russian men's national team.

2008

Goalie: Steve Mason (CAN) - Maybe its better not to be drafted in the first round as a goalie. The third-round pick Mason joined NHL's Columbus from the OHL in 2008 and played in 61 games in his first season with a solid 2.29 GAA.

Defense: Drew Doughty (CAN) - Doughty was the second overall pick in the 2008 draft and has wasted no time getting down to business. He played 81 games for L.A. in his first NHL season and was named to the NHL All-Rookie team. He already has more than 20 games this year.

Defense: Victor Hedman (SWE) - Named to the all-star team as an under-age player, Hedman was the second overall draft pick in 2009 and is currently in his first NHL season with Tampa with 15 games already under his belt. Keep in mind, if Tampa has the Christmas spirit, Hedman could be in Saskatoon for a third trip to the World Juniors.

Forward: Patrik Berglund (SWE) - A late first-round pick by St. Louis in 2006, Berglund stayed in Sweden for two seasons after the draft before moving to St. Louis. He had a solid rookie outing in 2008-09 with 47 points in 76 games.

Forward: Viktor Tikhonov (RUS) - Tikhonov was drafted late in the first round by Phoenix in 2008 and joined the team the same season, playing in 61 games. This season he was loaned back to CSKA Moscow, but could return to the NHL with more experience.

Forward: James van Riemsdyk (USA) - After being selected #2 overall in the 2007 NHL draft, van Riemsdyk played University hockey for another two seasons. He is currently in his first NHL season with Philadelphia.

2009

Goalie: Jaroslav Janus (SVK) - The stunning performance by the Slovak goalie put him on the NHL radar. Tampa Bay snapped up the relative unknown in the sixth round. He is currently with the OHL's Erie Otters awaiting his next move.

Defense: Erik Karlsson (SWE) - Karlsson was taken in the first round by Ottawa and played his first NHL games with the team this season. Karlsson is still eligible to return to Team Sweden for this year's U20s.

Defense: P.K. Subban (CAN) - The second round selection of Montreal graduated from the OHL to the AHL this year and is currently skating with the Hamilton Bulldogs.

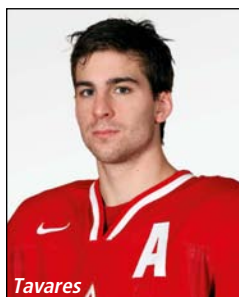
Forward: Nikita Filatov (RUS) - After going #6 overall in the 2008 NHL draft, Filatov moved immediately to North America. He skated mostly in the AHL his first season and has since been loaned back to CSKA Moscow.

Forward: Cody Hodgson (CAN) - Hodgson was taken in the first round (10th overall) by Vancouver, but has thus far remained in the OHL with Brampton. He is eligible to play in this year's World Juniors.

Forward: John Tavares (CAN) - Tavares could make his third appearance at World Juniors, but it seems like a long shot considering the 2009 #1 draft pick has played 20 games with the New York Islanders this year and is a key part of their line-up.



Hedman



Tavares

DIRECTORATE AWARDS 1994-2009

1994

Goalkeeper: Jamie Storr (CAN)
Defenseman: Kenny Jonsson (SWE)
Forward: Niklas Sundstrom (SWE)

1995

Goalkeeper: Evgeni Tarasov (RUS)
Defenseman: Bryan McCabe (CAN)
Forward: Marty Murray (CAN)

1996

Goalkeeper: Jose Theodore (CAN)
Defenseman: Mattias Ohlund (SWE)
Forward: Jarome Iginla (CAN)

1997

Goalkeeper: Marc Denis (CAN)
Defenseman: Joe Corvo (USA)
Forward: Alexei Morozov (RUS)

1998

Goalkeeper: David Aebischer (SUI)
Defenseman: Pavel Skrbek (CZE)
Forward: Olli Jokinen (FIN)

1999

Goalkeeper: Roberto Luongo (CAN)
Defenseman: Vitali Vishnevski (RUS)
Forward: Maxim Afinogenov (RUS)

2000

Goalkeeper: Rick DiPietro (USA)
Defenseman: Alexander Riazantsev (RUS)
Forward: Milan Kraft (CZE)

2001

Goalkeeper: Tomas Duba (CZE)
Defenseman: Rostislav Klesla (CZE)
Forward: Pavel Brendl (CZE)

2002

Goalkeeper: Kari Lehtonen (FIN)
Defenseman: Igor Knyazev (RUS)
Forward: Mike Cammalleri (CAN)

2003

Goalkeeper: Marc-Andre Fleury (CAN)
Defenseman: Joni Pitkanen (FIN)
Forward: Igor Grigorenko (RUS)

2004

Goalkeeper: Al Montoya (USA)
Defenseman: Sami Lepisto (FIN)
Forward: Zach Parise (USA)

2005

Goalkeeper: Marek Schwarz (CZE)
Defenseman: Dion Phaneuf (CAN)
Forward: Alexander Ovechkin (RUS)
MVP: Patrice Bergeron (CAN)

2006

Goalkeeper: Tuukka Rask (FIN)
Defenseman: Marc Staal (CAN)
Forward: Evgeni Malkin (RUS)
MVP: Evgeni Malkin (RUS)

2007

Goalkeeper: Carey Price (CAN)
Defenseman: Erik Johnson (USA)
Forward: Alexei Cherepanov (RUS)
MVP: Carey Price (CAN)

2008

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

2009

Goalkeeper: Jacob Markstrom (SWE)
Defenseman: Erik Karlsson (SWE)
Forward: John Tavares (CAN)
MVP: John Tavares (CAN)

2010 IIHF TOP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON PREVIEW

Crowning the 2010 champions: Who will rule the roost?

■ In an Olympic year most other events tend to live in the shadow of the Games. This season, beyond Vancouver, there are four top-level World Championships that will be staged with four new World Champions to be crowned. Who has the best shot to win the medals? The IIHF looks into its crystal ball and tries to predict who will have a happy 2010.

Men's World Championship:



Participating Teams:

Group A: Russia, Belarus, Slovakia, Kazakhstan
Group B: Canada, Switzerland, Latvia, Italy
Group C: Sweden, Czech Republic, Norway, France
Group D: Finland, USA, Germany, Denmark

2009 Medalists: Gold - Russia, Silver - Canada, Bronze - Sweden

Background: Who can challenge Canada and Russia? For the last three years the resounding answer to that question has been - not many teams. Canada especially has enjoyed a recent renaissance at the World Championship, taking home medals six of the last seven years. With a field of 16 teams, this is no easy feat. Almost as consistent have been the Nordic nations of Finland and Sweden, with one or the other making the medal podium all but one year since the turn of the century. In the past decade, these four nations have made the argument that they are consistently the best hockey nations at the World Championship.

Contenders: This year there is one major factor that could upset the balance: The Olympics. The only time that Canada missed the medal podium in the last seven years was in 2006, when they arrived in Riga with a depleted team after using their A-listers in Torino. It has always been tough for the North American teams to recruit a World Championship squad in an Olympic year, but these days, the problem is also spreading to Europe, where players are less likely to play in both Vancouver and Germany. The good news, in Olympic years, the field is wide open, making for an unpredictable event.

The Rest of the Pack: This is the chance for the teams that are normally quarterfinalists to make a push for a medal. The top nations will be weary, making the next tier of teams ripe for an upset. Belarus, Switzerland, USA, and Czech Republic are the four countries that spring to mind when thinking of potential surprise medal winners. It will also be key year for relegation round bubble teams, Germany, Norway, Denmark and Slovakia to step up to the plate and step up their performance.

Bottom Line: A familiar face will top the standings, but silver and bronze will go to an unexpected underdog.



World U20 Championship:

Participating Teams:

Group A: Canada, Slovakia, USA, Latvia Switzerland
Group B: Sweden Russia, Czech Republic, Finland, Austria

2009 Medalists: Gold - Canada, Silver - Sweden, Bronze - Russia

Background: It's been Canada and no one else to top the standings at the World Junior Championship for the last five years. With the event on North American soil for the next three seasons, the Canadians could threaten to break the longest title streak of seven in-a-row if they keep up their current pace. During the five year dominance, Canada has faced only two different nations in the golden game, dispatching Russia in 2005, 06 and 07, and then downing Sweden in 2008 and 2009.

The Contenders: Clearly all eyes are on Canada to see if the streak can be extended to six. It will be the usual suspects putting the pressure on the host nation as both Sweden and Russia look strong again. Also able to make a case will be the Americans, who have underachieved in recent years, but should take advantage of a relatively light preliminary round group. In Regina, it will be extremely competitive to make the playoff round as one of the perennial top hockey nations Sweden, Russia, Czech Republic and Finland will be sent to the relegation round.

The Rest of the Pack: Two strong teams, Switzerland and Austria, were promoted last season making the fight to stay in the top division almost as interesting as the battle for a medal. Normal relegation round team, Slovakia, stunned everyone last year with a fourth-place finish, giving them a strong seed for the first time in recent history. Latvia was also a surprise last season, staying among the elite nations. But putting the pressure on will be the Swiss, who until recently were U20 mainstays and would like to regain their permanent place among the world's elite.

Bottom Line: It could be another cakewalk for Canada. They will cruise through the preliminary round and then will begin their real championship in the playoffs. There are only a few nations that on their best night will be able to pull off a gold medal upset.

World U18 Championship:



Participating Teams:

Group A: USA, Canada, Sweden, Switzerland, Belarus
Group B: Russia, Finland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia

2009 Medalists: Gold - USA, Silver - Russia, Bronze - Finland

Background: Predicting the U18 World Championship result is like trying to guess the weather in April. Sure you can count on a few things, but you never know what will strike when. A few of the consistencies at U18s are the Americans reaching the medal podium, which they have done the last six years. Russia is also a solid presence with a gold and two silvers in the last three outings. But beyond those two, the U18s is filled with surprises. One year the Finns fly, the next they flop. Swedes are sensational, then they sink. Canada can and then they can't. It's what makes U18s one of the best events on the calendar, fresh batch of players providing a fresh batch of outcomes.

Contenders: The Americans are always a favorite at this event since their U18 team plays together the entire season. However, U.S. teams do not do well in Russian-speaking nations, where they have yet to win gold. On the other hand the Russians won one of their three gold medals in Belarus in 2004. Sweden's juniors have enjoyed a surge at the U20s recently, but in the last two years have been shut out of a podium finish. Canada's fate all depends on who gets knocked out of the playoffs early enough to join the U18 team - making them a true wild card.

The Rest of the Pack: The best battles at the U18 championship will be in the first week as the teams fight to avoid the relegation round. This is one of the toughest years to 'stay safe' and among the elite 10. According to seeding, Switzerland, Latvia, Slovakia, Belarus are the bottom four teams. It's hard to imagine that two will be in Division I next season.

It's a crowded field and there will be no free passes.

Bottom Line: It's been a USA-Russia final two of the last three years. While they might not meet in the golden game, it would be a shock if they aren't in the top three. Who will take the other spot among the top three is anyone's guess.



GOLDEN: USA celebrates a goal against Russia at U18s

World Women's U18 Championship:



Participating:

Group A: USA, Czech Republic, Finland, Japan
Group B: Canada, Sweden, Germany, Russia

2009 Medalists: Gold - USA, Silver - Canada, Bronze - Sweden

Background: This championship is still in its infancy, yet is paving the way for future women's national teams. Just like in the senior event, it is the usual suspects that have topped the standings. The Americans have two golds, while Canada has a pair of silvers. But behind the North Americans, the Czech Republic has made a surprise appearance in the bronze medal game twice, while Sweden has surged ahead of Nordic rival Finland.

Contenders: The Americans and Canadians are miles ahead of the rest of the world in female hockey development and at no other event is this clearer than the Women's U18s. The rest of the world has a long way to come to compete with these two nations on a regular basis. That is not to say that on any given day, a second-tier team could upset one of the Big Two, but day-in and day-out, Canada and USA are simply the deepest, strongest and most qualified teams at this championship.

The Rest of the Pack: This is where the U18 Women's gets interesting. There are nations that on the senior level are taking a nose dive, while on the junior level are showing promise. The Czech Republic has yet to play in a top division at the women's championship, while they have played twice for bronze at U18s. The Czechs, along with Germany and Russia can only hope that continued success, or even presence of their U18 teams at the top level, can translate into future success at World Women's.

Bottom Line: The Americans have done everything right in the last two years, but the Canadians are quickly closing the gap. Much like their senior counterparts, you could flip a coin to determine who will win gold in Chicago.

SPORT REPORT

IIHF takes a stand against doping

The Green Puck becomes the face of educating junior players

■ ■ The IIHF has taken the problem of doping in sport very seriously for the last several years. Now, along with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), the IIHF is taking the next step in battling doping.

The anti-doping awareness campaign is directed primarily to junior-aged players that are just beginning to take their hockey careers seriously and could be lured into using illegal drugs to enhance performance or for recreational use.

■ ■ The aim of the campaign is to promote good decision making and give tools to naturally improve overall health. Rather than taking a negative approach to doping, the campaign aims to inform rather than forbid.

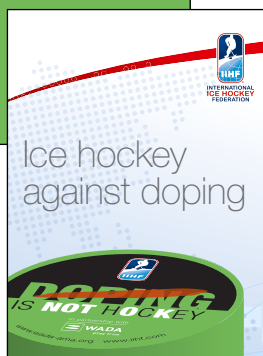
The first test run of the campaign was at the Hockey Development Camp in Vierumäki. Each camper there (aged 14-16) was given a green puck, which is the primary symbol of WADA and the IIHF's fight against doping. In addition, there was a WADA representative there to give a seminar to the players about the perils of doping and why certain drugs are on the banned list.



Since the Vierumäki experiment was so well-received, the program has been expanded to include a brochure, posters and other promotional and education material. All of the material is available in three languages: English, German and Russian.

The campaign will be launched in its entirety this spring at the men's and women's U18 World Championships in Belarus and USA, respectively. All material will also be made available at the men's World Championship in Germany.

The campaign will also be featured on IIHF.com with future promotional clips and its own featured section.



Currently, all of the promotional material will be made available first at the junior world championship events and then at senior level. If you, or your organization is interested in receiving samples and will not be in

attendance at any of this spring's IIHF events, please contact Anna Eskola at the IIHF office to receive a sample. Eskola@iihf.com.

QUICK HITS

■ ■ The IIHF, in conjunction with the German Ice Hockey Federation, will hold two Coaching Symposiums during the 2010 World Championship. A symposium involving the top hockey minds from Germany and the rest of the world will be held May 14-16, in Cologne. In addition, this year's program will have a Minor hockey Coaches Symposium in Heidelberg and Mannheim May 7-9. This event will concentrate on the coaching of U16 players and will feature presentations from top hockey nations. If you are interested in attending the symposium or would like more information, please email Darryl Easson. Easson@iihf.com.

■ ■ This summer the IIHF is pleased to hold a Hockey Development Camp for female players. The camp includes players from all around the globe. This year, the camp will be open for female players aged 16 to 17. If you are interested in finding out how a player from your country can attend the camp, please contact your member national association, which has been informed of all deadlines for submitting applications. This year's camp dates will be July 3-11.

■ ■ The IIHF's Referee Exchange Program is alive, well and thriving in the 2009-2010 season. This year the program includes seven European nations: Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland. Three officials from each country have been selected to participate. Once a part of the program, the officials travel to their neighboring countries to call games in the top leagues. The goal of the program is to promote more consistent officiating at the World Championship. All games that are part of the Referee

Exchange Program are called using the Four Man System.

■ ■ The deadlines for nations to nominate their men's national teams for the Vancouver Olympics have been announced. Most countries will announce their rosters on a different date. The earliest roster decision will come from Belarus, which will kick the Olympic process off on December 23. The Americans will pull up the tail end, naming their Olympians on January 1 as part of the NHL Winter Classic Game. The rosters that the teams announce are provisional. Below are the deadlines listed by nation.

Belarus	December 23
Canada	December 31
Czech Republic	December 30
Finland	December 30
Germany	December 30
Latvia	December 29
Russia	December 25
Switzerland	December 30
Slovakia	December 29
Sweden	December 27
United States	January 1

■ ■ As an extension to the IIHF Audit completed in Asia a year ago, member national associations were visited during the fall to help define the key activities for both short and long-term development of the sport domestically. Emphasis was placed on the possibility to increase the level of participation, knowledge and skills of the Asian leaders in addition to aligning their efforts with the IIHF Asian Office.

2009-2010 on-ice officials

■ ■ The IIHF has made its on-ice official assignments for the upcoming season. Below are the men and women that will be whistling the top IIHF events.

Men's World Championship

Referees

Baluska, Vladimir (SVK)
Hansen, Ole Stian (NOR)
Kadyrov, Rafael (RUS)
Konc, Daniel (SVK)
Laaksonen, Tom (FIN)
Levonen, Jari (FIN)
Looker, Rick (USA)
Minar, Milan (CZE)
Muylaert, Marc (CAN)
Olenin, Konstantin (RUS)
Persson, Soren (SWE)
Piechaczek, Daniel (GER)
Savage, Chris (CAN)
Sindler, Vladimir (CZE)
Sjoberg, Patrik (SWE)
Sterns, Thomas (USA)

Linesmen

Arm, Roger (SUI)
Bechard, Daniel (CAN)
Bouguin, Eric (FRA)
Brown, David (USA)
Dedioulia, Ivan (BLR)
Eglitis, Ansis (LAT)
Gemeinhart, Thomas (GER)
Gordenko, Konstantin (RUS)
Kalivoda, Frantisek (CZE)
Kaspar, Christian (AUT)
Kowert, Andreas (GER)
Sabelstrom, Peter (SWE)
Semjonov, Anton (EST)
Terho, Jussi (FIN)
Valach, Miroslav (SVK)
Wehrli, Tobias (SUI)

World U20 Championship

Baluska, Vladimir (SVK)
Burchell, Darcy (CAN)
Jerabek, Antonin (CZE)
Johansson, Morgan (SWE)
Kaval, Keith (USA)
Laaksonen, Tom (FIN)
Larking, Christer (SWE)
Olenin, Konstantin (RUS)
Piechaczek, Daniel (GER)
Ravodin, Alexei (RUS)
Sindler, Vladimir (CZE)
Zalaski, Derek (CAN)

Carnathan, Paul (USA)
De Haan, Chris (CAN)
Jobson, Jeff (CAN)
Lederer, Vit (CZE)
Schulz, Sirko (GER)
Shikhanov, Roman (RUS)
Suominen, Sakari (FIN)
Tillerkivist, Christian (SWE)
Tvrdon, Jozef (SVK)
Wirth, Daniel (SUI)

World U18 Championship

Bauer, Stephan (GER)
Bokal, Scott (USA)
Boman, Antti (FIN)
Claesson, Pehr (SWE)
Frano, Martin (CZE)
Gashilov, Viktor (RUS)
Kubus, Jozef (SVK)
Odins, Eduards (LAT)
Partanen, Sami (FIN)
Sidorenko, Maxim (BLR)
Smith, Pat (CAN)
Solem, Per Gustav (NOR)

Carlson, Chris (CAN)
Dehaen, Pierre (FRA)
Fluri, Nicolas (SUI)
Gebauer, Jiri (CZE)
Golyak, Dmitri (BLR)
Orelma, Antti (FIN)
Orolin, Tomas (SVK)
Ross, Joseph (USA)
Tomilov, Viktor (RUS)
Winge, Daniel (SWE)

World Women's U18 Championship

Bordeleau-Gagne, Melanie (CAN)
Kiefer, Michaela (GER)
Laurila, Paivi (FIN)
Leighton, Tara (USA)
Picavet, Marie (FRA)
Ruzickova, Radka (CZE)
Bjorkman, Therese (SWE)
Hanrahan, Alicia (USA)
Kudelova, Michaela (SVK)
Loretan, Evelyne (SUI)
Novotna, Ilona (CZE)
Roy, Helene (CAN)
Stenzel, Veronika (GER)
Tauriainen, Johanna (FIN)
Weissman, Andrea (USA)

Olympic Games - Women's Tournament

Gage, Mary Anne (CAN)
Hertrich, Nicole (GER)
Hove, Aina (NOR)
Sipila, Ulla (FIN)
Tottman, Joy (GBR)
Wrazidlo, Leah (USA)
Arazimova, Zuzana (CZE)
Floeden, Annica (SWE)
Hishmeh, Meghan (USA)
Majapuro, Anna (FIN)
Nakayama, Miyuki (JPN)
Richardson, Heather (CAN)
Rolstad, Kelli M. (USA)
Rumble, Kerri (CAN)
Skovbakke, Malene (DEN)

Please note: As of press time, the assignments for the men's Olympic Tournament had yet to be finalized.

2010 IIHF WORLD U20 RECORD BOOK

IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIPS

Year	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Venue
1974*	Soviet Union	Finland	Canada	Leningrad
1975*	Soviet Union	Canada	Sweden	Winnipeg/Brandon
1976*	Soviet Union	Canada	Czechoslovakia	Turku
1977	Soviet Union	Canada	Czechoslovakia	B. Bystrica/Zvolen
1978	Soviet Union	Sweden	Canada	Montreal
1979	Soviet Union	Czechoslovakia	Sweden	Karlstad
1980	Soviet Union	Finland	Sweden	Helsinki
1981	Sweden	Finland	Soviet Union	Fussen
1982	Canada	Czechoslovakia	Finland	Minnesota
1983	Soviet Union	Czechoslovakia	Canada	Leningrad
1984	Soviet Union	Finland	Czechoslovakia	Norrkoping/Nykoping
1985	Canada	Czechoslovakia	Soviet Union	Helsinki/Turku
1986	Soviet Union	Canada	USA	Hamilton
1987	Finland	Czechoslovakia	Sweden	Piestany
1988	Canada	Soviet Union	Finland	Moscow
1989	Soviet Union	Sweden	Czechoslovakia	Anchorage
1990	Canada	Soviet Union	Czechoslovakia	Helsinki/Turku
1991	Canada	Soviet Union	Czechoslovakia	Saskatoon
1992	Soviet Union	Sweden	USA	Fussen/Kaufbeuren
1993	Canada	Sweden	Czechoslovakia	Gavle
1994	Canada	Sweden	Russia	Ostrava/Frydek Mistek
1995	Canada	Russia	Sweden	Alberta
1996	Canada	Sweden	Russia	Boston
1997	Canada	USA	Russia	Geneva/Morges
1998	Finland	Russia	Switzerland	Helsinki/Hameenlinna
1999	Russia	Canada	Slovakia	Winnipeg
2000	Czech Republic	Russia	Canada	Skelleftea/Umea
2001	Czech Republic	Finland	Canada	Moscow/Podolsk
2002	Russia	Canada	Finland	Pardubice/Hradec Kral.
2003	Russia	Canada	Finland	Halifax/Sydney
2004	USA	Canada	Finland	Helsinki/Hameenlinna
2005	Canada	Russia	Czech Republic	Grand Forks/Thief River Falls
2006	Canada	Russia	Finland	Vancouver/Kamloops/Kelowna
2007	Canada	Russia	United States	Mora/Leksand
2008	Canada	Sweden	Russia	Pardubice/Liberec
2009	Canada	Sweden	Russia	Ottawa

*denotes unofficial tournament

SCORING RECORDS

MOST GAMES PLAYED

26	Bjorn Christen, SUI (1997-2000)
26	Jochen Hecht, GER (1994-97)
25	Michael Frolik, CZE (2005-08)
25	Michel Riesen, SUI (1996-99)
25	Robert Sterflinger, FRG (1981-84)

MOST POINTS, CAREER

42	Peter Forsberg, SWE (10+32=42)
40	Robert Reichel, TCH (18+22=40)
39	Pavel Bure, URS (27+12=39)
35	Alexander Mogilny, URS (19+16=35)
35	Esa Tikkanen, FIN (17+18=35)
34	Vladimir Ruzicka, TCH (25+9=34)
34	Markus Naslund, SWE (21+13=34)

MOST POINTS, ONE U20 CHAMPIONSHIP

31	Peter Forsberg, SWE (1993-7+24=31)
24	Markus Naslund, SWE (1993-13+11=24)
22	Raimo Helminen, FIN (1984-11+11=22)
21	Robert Reichel, TCH (1990-11+10=21)
20	Vladimir Ruzicka, TCH (1983-12+8=20)
20	Esa Keskinen, FIN (1985-6+14=20)

MOST GOALS, U20 CAREER

27	Pavel Bure, URS (1989-91)
25	Vladimir Ruzicka, TCH (1981-83)
21	Markus Naslund, SWE (1992-93)
19	Alexander Mogilny, URS (1987-89)

MOST GOALS, ONE U20 CHAMPIONSHIP

13	Markus Naslund, SWE (1993)
12	Pavel Bure, URS (1991)
12	Vladimir Ruzicka, TCH (1983)

MOST ASSISTS, U20 CAREER

32	Peter Forsberg, SWE (1992-93)
22	Robert Reichel, TCH (1988-90)
19	Eric Lindros, CAN (1990-92)
19	Henrik Sedin, SWE (1998-2000)

MOST ASSISTS, ONE U20 CHAMPIONSHIP

24	Peter Forsberg, SWE (1993)
14	Esa Keskinen, FIN (1985)
14	Doug Weight, USA (1991)
13	Jaromir Jagr, TCH (1990)

PLAYERS THAT HAVE WON BOTH U20 & U18 GOLD

NAME	U18	U20	Nation
Andrei Medvedev	2001	2002, 03	Russia
Kirill Koltsov	2001	2003	Russia
Vladimir Kornusov	2001	2002	Russia
Denis Grebeshkov	2001	2002, 03	Russia
Fedor Tyutin	2001	2002	Russia
Alexei Kaigorodov	2001	2003	Russia
Yuri Trubachev	2001	2002, 03	Russia
Andrei Taratukhin	2001	2003	Russia
Alexander Polushin	2001	2003	Russia
Timofei Shishkanov	2001	2003	Russia
Igor Grigorenko	2001	2002, 03	Russia
Evgenii Artyukhin	2001	2003	Russia
Alexander Perezhogin	2001	2002, 03	Russia
Mark Stuart	2002	2004	USA
Ryan Suter	2002	2004	USA
Matt Carle	2002	2004	USA
David Booth	2002	2004	USA
Patrick Eaves	2002	2004	USA
Greg Moore	2002	2004	USA
Corey Potter	2002	2004	USA
Steve Werner	2002	2004	USA
Zach Parise	2002	2004	USA
Ryan Kesler	2002	2004	USA
Patrick O'Sullivan	2002	2004	USA
James Wisniewski	2002	2004	USA
Brett Sterling	2002	2004	USA
Rejean Beauchemin	2003	2005	Canada
Braydon Coburn	2003	2005	Canada
Shawn Belle	2003	2005	Canada
Brent Seabrook	2003	2005	Canada
Anthony Stewart	2003	2005	Canada
Stephen Dixon	2003	2005	Canada
Ryan Getzlaf	2003	2005	Canada
Jeff Carter	2003	2005	Canada
Jeremy Colliton	2003	2005	Canada
Jordan Eberle	2008	2009	Canada
Ryan Ellis	2008	2009	Canada
Cody Hodgson	2008	2009	Canada
Tyler Myers	2008	2009	Canada
Colten Teubert	2008	2009	Canada

WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP ATTENDANCE (since 1997)

YEAR	SPECTATORS	LOCATION
1997	31,336	Geneva/Morges, Switzerland
1998	139,680	Helsinki/Hameenlinna, Finland
1999	173,453	Various Cities, Canada
2000	41,693	Skelleftea/Umea, Sweden
2001	84,100	Moscow/Podolsk, Russia
2002	111,128	Pardubice, Hradec Kravlove, Czech Rep.
2003	242,173	Halifax/Sydney, Canada
2004	116,556	Helsinki/Hameenlinna, Finland
2005	193,256	Grand Forks/Thief River Falls, USA
2006	325,138	Vancouver, Kamloops, Kelowna, Canada
2007	63,493	Mora/Leksand, Sweden
2008	103,179	Pardubice/Liberec, Czech Rep.
2009	453,282	Ottawa, Canada

WORLD U20 SINGLE GAME ATTENDANCE RECORDS

20,380	CAN-SWE (Jan. 5, 2009)
20,223	CAN-USA (Dec. 31, 2008)
19,847	USA-CZE (Dec. 28, 2008)
19,622	CAN-CZE (Dec. 26, 2008)
19,465	CAN-CZE (Dec. 30, 1994)
19,327	CAN-RUS (Jan. 3, 2009)
19,326	GER-CAN (Dec. 29, 2008)
19,176	KAZ-CAN (Dec. 28, 2008)
18,795	GER-USA (Dec. 26, 2008)
18,763	RUS-SVK (Jan. 5, 2009)
18,753	RUS-CZE (Jan. 2, 2009)
18,630	SWE-FIN (Jan. 2, 2006)
18,630	CAN-FIN (Jan. 3, 2006)
18,630	RUS-USA (Jan. 3, 2006)
18,630	CAN-RUS (Jan. 5, 2006)
18,305	KAZ-SWE (Dec. 27, 2008)
18,288	USA-KAZ (Dec. 30, 2008)
18,112	SWE-SVK (Jan. 3, 2009)
18,042	USA-SVK (Jan. 2, 2009)
17,976	CZE-GER (Dec. 30, 2008)

RESULTS SUMMARY

Continental Cup Second Round**Group B - Miercurea Ciuc, Romania Oct. 23-25**

Ujpest Budapest - FC Barcelona	9 - 3	(3-0, 3-2, 3-1)
The Hague - Miercurea Ciuc	4 - 3	(3-1, 1-1, 0-1)
Ujpest Budapest - The Hague	2 - 6	(1-1, 1-1, 0-4)
Miercurea Ciuc - FC Barcelona	11-2	(4-0, 8-1, 2-1)
FC Barcelona - The Hague	1 - 9	(0-3, 0-1, 1-5)
Miercurea Ciuc - Ujpest Budapest	5 - 0	(0-0, 5-0, 0-0)

The Hague	3	3	0	0	0	19 - 6	9
Miercurea Ciuc	3	2	0	0	1	19 - 6	6
Ujpest Budapest	3	1	0	0	2	11-14	3
FC Barcelona	3	0	0	0	3	6 - 29	0

The Hague (NED) is qualified for the CC third round.

Group C - Krakow, Poland Oct. 23-25

Elektrenai - Tartu Kalev-Valk	2 - 3	(0-0, 0-0, 2-2) OT
Cracovia Krakow - Karaganda	3 - 2	(1-1, 1-0, 1-1)
Karaganda - Elektrenai	4 - 1	(1-0, 2-0, 1-1)
Tartu Kalev Valk - Cracovia Krakow	3 - 9	(1-4, 1-3, 1-2)
Karaganda - Tartu Kalev Valk	8 - 0	(4-0, 3-0, 1-0)
Cracovia Krakow - Elektrenai	7 - 5	(4-0, 2-3, 1-2)

Cracovia Krakow	3	3	0	0	0	19-10	9
Karaganda	3	2	0	0	1	14 - 4	6
Tartu Kalev Valk	3	0	1	0	2	6 - 19	2
Elektrenai	3	0	0	1	2	8 - 14	1

Cracovia Krakow (POL) is qualified for the CC third round.

Continental Cup Third Round**Group D - Bolzano, Italy Nov. 27-29**

Sheffield - The Hague	4 - 3	(2-1, 1-2, 1-0)
Maribor - Bolzano	2 - 6	(0-3, 1-2, 1-1)
Maribor - Sheffield	4 - 5	(1-2, 2-1, 1-2)
Bolzano - the Hague	3 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 1-0)
The Hague - Maribor	4 - 1	(1-0, 0-1, 3-0)
Bolzano - Sheffield	3 - 4	(1-2, 2-1, 0-0) PS

Sheffield Steelers	3	2	1	0	0	13-10	8
Bolzano Foxes	3	2	0	1	0	12 - 6	7
HYS The Hague	3	1	0	0	2	7 - 8	3
HDK Maribor	3	0	0	0	3	7 - 15	0

The Sheffield Steelers (GBR) are qualified for the CC Super Final.

Group E - Liepaja, Latvia Nov. 27-29

Salzburg - Sokil Kyiv	6 - 5	(3-1, 2-3, 1-1)
Liepaja - Cracovia	6 - 5	(2-2, 2-1, 2-2)
Cracovia - Sokil Kyiv	2 - 1	(0-0, 1-0, 0-1) PS
Liepaja - Salzburg	3 - 4	(0-1, 1-1, 2-2)
Salzburg - Cracovia	5 - 2	(3-1, 1-0, 1-1)
Sokil Kyiv - Liepaja	5 - 3	(3-0, 1-1, 1-2)

Red Bull Salzburg	3	3	0	0	0	15-10	9
Sokil Kyiv	3	2	0	0	1	10-11	6
Liepaja Metalurgs	3	1	0	0	2	12-13	3
Cracovia Krakow	3	0	0	0	3	9 - 12	0

Red Bull Salzburg (AUT) is qualified for the CC Super Final.

Continental Cup Super Final, January 15-17, 2010:

Group F in Grenoble, France:

Grenoble Brûleurs de Loups (FRA)

Yunost Minsk (BLR)

Sheffield Steelers (GBR, Q)

Red Bull Salzburg (AUT, Q)

EWCC First Round**Group A - Salzburg, Austria Oct. 30 - Nov. 1**

Slavia Sofia - Herlev Hornets	0-18	(0-4, 0-11, 0-3)
OSC Berlin - Salzburg Ravens	3 - 2	(0-1, 1-0, 1-1) PS
Herlev Hornets - OSC Berlin	3 - 6	(2-2, 0-2, 1-2)
Salzburg Ravens - Slavia Sofia	25-0	(5-0, 12-0, 8-0)
OSC Berlin - Slavia Sofia	28-0	(8-0, 9-0, 11-0)
Salzburg Ravens - Herlev Hornets	7 - 2	(4-0, 1-1, 2-1)

OSC Berlin	3	2	1	0	0	37 - 5	8
Salzburg Ravens	3	2	0	1	0	34 - 5	7
Herlev Hornets	3	1	0	0	2	23-13	3
Slavia Sofia	3	0	0	0	3	0 - 71	0

OSC Berlin (GER) is qualified for the EWCC second round.

Group B - Ventspils, Latvia Oct. 30 - Nov. 1

Sheffield - Sarpsborg	0 - 3	(0-1, 0-0, 0-2)
Laima Riga - Valladolid	5 - 0	(2-0, 2-0, 1-0)
Sarpsborg - Valladolid	9 - 2	(1-0, 3-1, 5-1)
Laima Riga - Sheffield	4 - 0	(3-0, 0-0, 1-0)
Sarpsborg - Laima Riga	2 - 3	(0-3, 0-0, 2-0)
Valladolid - Sheffield	2 - 7	(0-5, 1-1, 1-1)

Laima Riga	3	3	0	0	0	12 - 2	9
Sparta Sarpsborg	3	2	0	0	1	14 - 5	6
Sheffield Shadows	3	1	0	0	2	7 - 9	3
Valladolid Panteras	3	0	0	0	3	4 - 21	0

Laima Riga (LAT) is qualified for the EWCC second round.

Group C - Kralupy Nad Vltavou, Czech Rep. Oct. 30 - Nov. 1

MHK Martin - Terme Maribor	0 - 3	(0-0, 0-1, 0-2)
M. Ankara - Slavia Prague	0-16	(0-3, 0-3, 0-10)
Terme Maribor - M. Ankara	9 - 2	(3-1, 1-1, 5-0)
MHK Martin - Slavia Prague	0 - 8	(0-1, 0-5, 0-2)
Slavia Prague - Terme Maribor	7 - 1	(2-0, 3-0, 2-1)
M. Ankara - MHK Martin	3-11	(1-3, 2-5, 0-3)

Slavia Prague	3	3	0	0	0	31 - 1	9
Terme Maribor	3	2	0	0	1	13 - 9	6
MHK Martin	3	1	0	0	2	11-14	3
Milenyum Ankara	3	0	0	0	3	5 - 36	0

Slavia Prague (CZE) is qualified for the EWCC second round.

Group D - Alleghe, Italy Oct. 30 - Nov. 1

Cergy Pontoise - Miercurea Ciuc	10-0	(4-0, 4-0, 2-0)
Agordo - UTE Budapest	9 - 0	(3-0, 2-0, 4-0)
UTE Budapest - Cergy Pontoise	1 - 7	(0-4, 1-2, 0-1)
Miercurea Ciuc - Agordo	1 - 8	(0-5, 0-2, 1-1)
UTE Budapest - Miercurea Ciuc	2 - 1	(1-0, 0-1, 0-0) PS
Agordo - Cergy Pontoise	6 - 1	(1-1, 1-0, 4-0)

Agordo Hockey	3	3	0	0	0	23 - 2	9
Cergy Pontoise	3	2	0	0	1	18 - 7	6
UTE Budapest	3	0	1	0	2	3 - 17	2
Miercurea Ciuc	3	0	0	1	2	2 - 20	1

Agordo Hockey (ITA) is qualified for the EWCC second round.

EWCC Second Round**Group E - Berlin, Germany Dec. 4-6**

Aisulu - Agordo	7 - 1	(3-0, 2-1, 2-0)
Berlin - Espoo	3 - 4	(0-0, 2-3, 1-1)
Agordo - Berlin	2 - 9	(0-4, 1-4, 1-1)
Aisulu - Espoo	3 - 4	(1-2, 2-1, 0-1)
Espoo - Agordo	10-3	(2-1, 2-1, 6-1)
Berlin - Aisulu	2 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 0-0)

Espoo Blues	3	3	0	0	0	18 - 9	9
OSC Berlin	3	2	0	0	1	15 - 6	6
Aisulu Almaty	3	1	0	0	2	10 - 8	3
Agordo Hockey	3	0	0	0	3	6 - 26	0

Espoo Blues and OSC Berlin are qualified for the EWCC Finals.

Group F - Slany, Czech Republic Dec. 4-6

Lugano - Laima Riga	9 - 0	(7-0, 1-0, 1-0)
Tornado Moscow - Slavia Prague	6 - 3	(2-0, 1-1, 3-2)
Slavia Prague - Laima Riga	7 - 1	(1-0, 3-1, 3-0)
Tornado Moscow - Lugano	4 - 3	(0-0, 1-2, 2-1) OT
Lugano - Slavia Prague	4 - 7	(1-3, 1-3, 2-1)
Laima Riga - Tornado Moscow	0 - 6	(0-1, 0-1, 0-4)

Tornado Moscow	3	2	1	0	0	16 - 6	8
Slavia Prague	3	2	0	0	1	17-11	6
HC Lugano	3	1	0	1	1	16-11	4
Laima Riga	3	0	0	0	3	1 - 22	0

Tornado Moscow and Slavia Prague are qualified for the EWCC Finals.

Women's Four Nations Tournament

Various cities, FINLAND November 3-7

Preliminary Round

Sweden - Canada	0-4	(0-1, 0-1, 0-2)
Finland - United States	0-4	(0-1, 0-2, 0-1)
United States - Sweden	3-2	(2-0, 0-1, 1-1)
Finland - Canada	2-4	(1-1, 1-2, 0-1)
Finland - Sweden	1-2	(0-0, 0-1, 1-0) OT
Canada - United States	2-3	(1-2, 1-1, 0-0)

United States	3	3	0	0	0	10-4	9
Canada	3	2	0	0	1	10-5	6
Sweden	3	0	1	0	2	4-8	2
Finland	3	0	0	1	2	3-10	1

Bronze Medal Game

Sweden - Finland	2-1	(1-0, 0-1, 0-0) PS
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Gold Medal Game

United States - Canada	1-5	(1-2, 0-1, 0-2)
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Final Placement

1. Canada	3. Sweden
2. United States	4. Finland

Women's U18 Four Nations Tournament

Dmitrov, RUSSIA November 6-8

Preliminary Round

Sweden - Germany	3-1	(2-0, 0-0, 1-1)
Russia - Finland	4-1	(1-1, 1-0, 2-0)
Finland - Sweden	1-4	(0-0, 1-0, 0-4)
Russia - Germany	1-0	(1-0, 0-0, 0-0)
Germany - Finland	1-4	(0-1, 0-3, 1-0)
Russia - Sweden	0-5	(0-2, 0-2, 0-1)

Sweden	3	3	0	0	0	12-2	9
Russia	3	2	0	0	1	5 - 6	6
Finland	3	1	0	0	2	6 - 9	3
Germany	3	0	0	0	3	2 - 8	0

Euro Hockey Tour - Karjala Cup

Helsinki, FINLAND November 5-8

Preliminary Round

Russia - Finland	4-3	(0-3, 0-1, 2-0) PS
Sweden - Czech Republic	4-3	(1-1, 3-0, 0-2)
Sweden - Russia	1-4	(1-2, 0-0, 0-2)
Finland - Czech Republic	2-1	(1-1, 0-0, 1-0)
Czech Republic - Russia	3-4	(2-0, 0-2, 1-1) OT
Finland - Sweden	7-0	(2-0, 5-0, 0-0)

Russia	3	1	2	0	0	12-7	7
Finland	3	2	1	0	0	12-5	7
Sweden	3	1	0	0	2	5-14	3
Czech Republic	3	0	0	1	2	7-10	1

Deutschland Cup

Munich, GERMANY November 6-8

Preliminary Round

Switzerland - Slovakia	3-2	(1-1, 1-0, 1-1)
Germany - United States	2-3	(0-1, 2-1, 0-0) PS
Switzerland - United States	2-3	(0-1, 0-0, 2-1) PS
Slovakia - Germany	1-2	(0-0, 1-0, 0-1) PS
Germany - Switzerland	5-1	(3-1, 1-0, 1-0)
United States - Slovakia	2-3	(1-0, 1-2, 0-0) PS

Germany	3	1	1	1	0	9-5	6
United States	3	0	2	1	0	8-7	5
Switzerland	3	1	0	1	1	6-10	4
Slovakia	3	0	1	1	1	6-7	3

Polesie Cup

Bobruisk & Zhlobin, BELARUS November 5-8

Preliminary Round

Austria - Belarus	2-4	(0-1, 1-3, 1-0)
France - Polesie	3-2	(0-0, 3-2, 0-0)
Denmark - Austria	1-3	(0-0, 0-2, 1-1)
Polesie - Norway	1-4	(1-0, 0-1, 0-3)
Belarus - Denmark	4-2	(3-0, 1-1, 0-1)
Norway - France	6-3	(2-1, 2-0, 2-2)

Placement Games

Austria - Polesie	5-2	(1-0, 2-2, 2-0) 5th
Denmark - Polesie	2-4	(1-1, 0-1, 1-2) 3rd
Belarus - Norway	3-2	(1-1, 0-1, 1-1) 1st



RACE TO THE SUPER FINAL: It came down to Sheffield and Bolzano for a spot in the Continental Cup Super Final. Sheffield (in orange) earned the shootout win and the trip to France.

STEVE YZERMAN

Born: May 9, 1965 in Cranbrook, British Columbia, Canada

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- ❑ Won three Stanley Cups (1997, 1998, 2002) with Detroit.
- ❑ Captain of Detroit for more than two decades.
- ❑ A ten-time NHL All-Star
- ❑ Olympic gold medallist in 2002 as a player
- ❑ World Championship gold medallist in 2007 as a GM.
- ❑ Named Executive Director of Canada for the 2010 Olympics.
- ❑ Won a fourth Stanley Cup as the Vice President of Operations with Detroit in 2008.

NEW MEDAL FOR THE COLLECTION?

Steve Yzerman has won virtually everything as a player, including the Olympic gold in 2002 - pictured right. Now Yzerman aims to build an impressive resume in management. He's off to a good start, winning the gold medal with Canada at the 2007 World Championship in Moscow (inset). Is the Olympic gold in 2010 next? All of Canada sure hopes so.



Picking perfection:

Yzerman has the weight of a nation on his shoulders

by Andrew Podnieks

Steve Yzerman has the easiest or toughest job of all of the general managers readying themselves to pick their players for Vancouver 2010. He has an easy job because he has such a wealth of talent from which to choose; and, he has the toughest job for the exact same reason.

In truth, having so much talent to draw from is tricky because some incredibly talented players are going to be left off the team. The blessing is, however, becoming more apparent, for all the wrong reasons. The more players you have to choose from, the more likely injuries will play a part in the process. And, the more players, the more likely some will have a great start to the season and some will have a poor start.

Take goal, for instance. At the summer camp in Calgary, it was a given that Martin Brodeur and Roberto Luongo would be in the running for starter's role while Steve Mason and Marc-Andre Fleury were the likely backup candidates. While Brodeur has done his part, Luongo has been injured and average at best, Mason has had a horrible season, and veteran Marty Turco has played himself back into contention.

No matter what each goalie's circumstance, however, Yzerman will select the goalies based on performance and reliability. "A guy might look better if he's playing on a good team," Yzerman explained, "but I'm sure we'll have some players who are from teams with not very good records. I don't care how

their NHL team is doing, only the player we're looking at. If his team is having a bad year, we have to ask ourselves what sort of experience he has had, in the Stanley Cup playoffs, in the World Championships and international competition, in big situations. We're going to take everything into account."

For Yzerman, one of the key elements of choosing the team was the orientation camp in Calgary in August. "They've got to spend some time with the coaches," Yzerman said at the time. "(It's important) that they understand what the coaches want to do, how they want to play, and even just get the lingo that they use."

What's also important, as he has learned since the start of the 2009-10 season, is how quickly things change. Defenceman Dion Phaneuf, a stud this summer, has had a rough season so far. Dany Heatley, who was in a dispute with the Ottawa Senators at the time of camp, has not only been one of the best players in the league, he has ignited linemates Joe Thornton and Patrick Marleau to the point that the three of them seem sure bets for the team.

Another great example is Steve Stamkos in Tampa Bay. Only 19, he was a long shot to make the team at the start of the year. However, his chemistry with linemate Martin St. Louis, first evident to international fans at the 2009 World Championship in Switzerland, has been remarkable so far this year, again suggesting both players are likely to make the team and play together.

"Players are popping onto the radar screen that are

having better years," Yzerman admitted, adding ominously, "Names may be removed, and names may be added."

One of Yzerman's most important considerations will be the vast trove of centremen available to him. Some he can use up the middle; some he can move to a wing; and, some he won't select because the players either can't make the switch or are too low on the depth chart at centre.

"For each player out there, I believe I have a good understanding of their strengths and where they'll be effective," Yzerman suggested. "Some guys are more versatile than others and can potentially go in different spots."

In the end, Yzerman and his support staff still have lots of work to do, but time is running out. He has promised to name the 23 players-plus taxi squad in case of injuries on New Year's Eve. Then, the debating will begin across the country.

"We'll make a decision when we have to make a decision," he said philosophically.

