

They've waited 31 years for this...



Photo: Andy Devlin / IIHF-IIHF Images

JOY IN YELLOW, BLUE AND RED: Canadian fans made Sweden their adopted team and joined in the celebrations after Mika Zibanejad's gold-winning overtime goal at the 2012 World Juniors.



Anyway you turn it, the 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship was record-setting.

RENÉ FASEL EDITORIAL

With the number of tickets sold and fans in the seats, the success of the 36th World Juniors was of Olympic proportions.

The 2010 Olympics in Vancouver was arguably the biggest ice hockey tournament ever. The 30 games of the men's event two years ago drew 491,444 fans for an IIHF record average of 16,381 per game.

■ But fact is, if you look at tickets sold, the World Juniors in Calgary and Edmonton recorded 571,539 fans for the 31 games at Calgary's Saddledome and at Edmonton's Rexall Place, for an average of 18,437 per game.

When counting actual fans in the seats, the numbers were still overwhelming: 444,718 for an average of 14,345. Those numbers by far exceed the previous World Juniors record – 359,000 from Ottawa 2009.

But the success of Alberta 2012 went beyond the number of fans who purchased tickets. The total economic impact on the Canadian province was somewhere between 80 and 90 million dollars. Various hockey organisations shared a profit of 20 million dollars, monies which will be reinvested into the game and its development.

■ There is no doubt that this tournament is spectacular and it appeals to a broad base of the population both in Canada and in the top European countries. We have strong indications that people who are not hard-core sports fans, tune in to the World Juniors because they love what they see.

It was very encouraging that both the 2013 (Ufa, Russia) and the 2014 (Malmö, Sweden) organisers spent considerable time in Alberta to see what potential this IIHF event has and also to pick up ideas now that the event goes back to Europe for two years. To make this championship grow in Europe is one of our main objectives.

■ In my editorial before the event, I predicted that the 2012 championship may be the most evenly matched we have seen for some years. I am happy I was right. Five out of six playoff games ended with one-goal wins, three of them needing overtime, including the gold medal game.

At the end, there was no question that the right team won. Sweden was not only undefeated in the tournament, but their national junior team didn't lose one single game in regulation time during the entire season. After 31 years of disappointments, it was their time.

■ As the World Juniors ended, a new junior tournament began in Innsbruck as the inaugural Youth Olympic Winter Games kicked off. The Youth Olympics are meant to be a different kind of competition, fully embracing the spirit of the Games while emphasizing participation and the Olympic experience rather than the medal count.

Apart from the boys' and girls' tournaments, there was a Skills Competition, and for the first time individual Olympic ice hockey medals were awarded. The teams and the skills competitors were selected based on maximizing differentiated participation, not necessarily picking from the traditional best countries.

The Youth Olympics were a splendid success and you can read more about them on pgs. 4 and 5 in this newsletter.

René Fasel
IIHF President

IIHF to form special committee on player safety

■ The IIHF has decided to form an ad-hoc committee on player safety with the focus on concussion prevention. "The committee will study body checking, the speed of the game and put some fundamental questions on the table," says IIHF President René Fasel. "Safety of players is our main priority."

René Fasel announced the formation of this new working group during a press conference on the last day of the 2012 IIHF World Junior Championship in Calgary.

"Concussions have been a concern for us for many years. For the last six-seven years we have taken major action against head shots and we have been quite successful in the international game. But especially in leagues, both in Europe and in North America, the numbers are going up and we are trying to find a solution," Fasel said. "The goal and the mission for us is the safety of players."

■ The IIHF President informed the media that, at an IIHF Council meeting in Moscow in December, the creation of a new working committee on player safety was decided with IIHF Vice-President Murray Costello as its chairman.

"Murray was the first person to start symposiums on concussions ten years ago. We really worked hard to implement rules since then, and Murray will have the mission also to work close together with the NHL as they also have a working group," Fasel said.

What will the committee do?

"It's kind of a look at the state of the game. We have been looking at that through different committees and now we will have a special committee," Murray Costello said. "We want to bring in the people within the IIHF family and include specialists like medical experts, for-



IIHF President René Fasel and IIHF Council member Murray Costello announced the formation of the committee at the world junior championship.

mer players – think of the job Brendan Shanahan is doing for the NHL – and equipment specialists."

"There's a lot that has been done, but a lot has to be done. We want to find the best people to find the problems in the game and to overcome them."

■ Costello added that the IIHF has been working in this aspect also with medical specialists from other team sport federations like football-soccer, handball, volleyball, and rugby to better understand their concerns on concussions.

"We will look at different things: The speed of the game, rules, body-checking, equipment, the redline-offside rule. All what we look at is to keep hockey as spectacular as it can be and respect the players. It doesn't make sense to take out players with head shots. We have to address that with the best possible way. This won't be short term. It will take some time, but we will look at it in a comprehensive way."

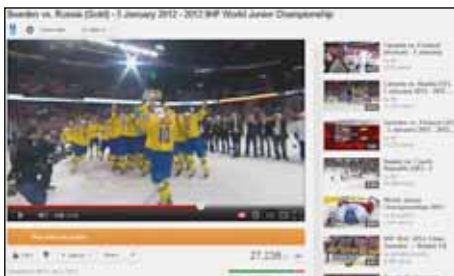
Costello noted encouraging progress at the under-20 level:

"To a reasonable degree we had less head injuries at the World Juniors. We have set the tone in a more disciplined way. Progress is been made," Costello said. "I think the players are learning at this age to respect each other and not to take head shots. We have to educate the players and that's a good level to do that."

■ Costello made a comparison between the 2011 event in Buffalo and the recently concluded 2012 championship in Calgary/Edmonton, where one player received a one-game suspension for checking to the head, a dramatic decrease from last year where five players were suspended for a total of 13 games.

IIHF.com scores with social media, mobile platforms

■ The IIHF has extended its social media activities this winter. After having previously launched its Facebook page with 55,000 fans and its Twitter news feed (@IIHFHockey) with 15,000 followers, a second Twitter account (@IIHFScores) was launched at the beginning of the 2012 IIHF World Junior Championship in Canada. It provides live scores from all World Championship events of any category and any division as well as the final tournaments of the Continental Cup and the European Women's Champions Cup. The goals are published by the IIHF's statistical system soon after they happen.



Since the IIHF launched its Youtube channel last summer, there have been a total of 457, 360 views of video material on the site.

The IIHF also moved its video activities to the Web's leading video platform under www.youtube.com/iihf, with game highlights from the World Juniors, videos from the Youth Olympics and upcoming features leading up to the World Championship in Finland and Sweden.

IIHF available on smartphones

Since December IIHF tournaments and stories can also be followed on smartphones. A free app for iPhone and iPad can be found in the App Store, and the version for Android phones in the Android Market. BlackBerry users can download their app by accessing <http://blackberry.iihf.com>.

OBITUARIES



Germany's legendary coach with the hat, Xavier Unsinn, coaching at the 1988 Olympics vs. Austria.

Xavier Unsinn was the coach with the most international games behind only Soviet legend Viktor Tikhonov. Known as the "coach with the hat," Unsinn was behind the German bench in 107 World Championship games and led Germany to Olympic bronze in 1976 at Innsbruck. Unsinn also represented West Germany as a player in 72 international games and won silver at the 1953 World Championship in Basel and Zurich, Switzerland. Unsinn was inducted into the Builders' Category of the IIHF Hall of Fame in 1998. He died on 4 January at age 82.

Roger Christian who teamed up with his brother Billy to win Olympic gold in 1960 in Squaw Valley for the USA, died at the age of 75 on 9 November, 2011. One of the icons of USA Hockey, Christian was instrumental in leading the U.S. to its first Olympic gold medal. The Christians later founded a highly successful hockey stick company, Christian Brothers.

Fred Etcher passed away at age 79 on 25 November, 2011. He helped Canada win a silver medal at the 1960 Olympics where he was the leading scorer in Squaw Valley, with nine goals and 21 points in seven games.

Heini Lohrer was one of the most successful Swiss players in the era before and after World War II. He represented Switzerland in 74 games and was on the teams that won the 1948 Olympic bronze on home ice in St. Moritz and became European Champions in 1939. He was 93 when he passed away on 12 December, 2011.

Johnny Wilson passed away on 27 December 2011 after a lengthy battle with lung disease. He was 82. Wilson had one of the longest Iron Man streaks in NHL history, playing 580 straight games at one point in his eleven-year career. Incredibly, between 1952 and 1960, he never missed a single game. After retiring in 1962, Wilson later coached Canada at the 1977 IIHF World Championship.

Aldo Zenhäusern represented Switzerland in the 1976 Olympic Winter Games and at six IIHF World Championships in the B- and C-Pools in the '70s. He passed away at age 60 on 9 January.

Peter Åslin passed away in Leksand after having suffered multiple strokes on 19 January. He was 49. The former goalkeeper won the IIHF World U20 Championship in 1981, Sweden's lone World Junior gold until the win in Calgary on January 5 this year. He medalled in each of the men's IIHF World Championships he played in; gold in 1992 and three silver medals ('86, '90, '93). Åslin also won an Olympic bronze medal in Calgary 1988.

Elwin Friedrich passed away on 2nd February at age 78 after suffering a heart attack. The former defenceman captained Switzerland at the 1964 Olympics and played in three World Championships.

NEWS & NOTES

■ **ANDORRA:** Former General Secretary Monica Lopez has been appointed President of the Andorran Ice Sports Federation. Raquel Puigcernal will take over Lopez's former position as General Secretary.

■ **LATVIA:** The Latvian Hockey Federation has named Leonids Tambijevs coach of the U18 national team. He represented the Latvian national team in 15 IIHF World Championships (11 in the top division) and two Olympic Winter Games. The Riga native began his coaching career in 2008 with SK Riga 18 of the Latvian league. Currently he's in his second season with HK Riga in the MHL.

Hockey's renaissance in France

Rouen wins Continental Cup, Paris longs for IIHF Worlds

By Martin Merk

The Rouen Dragons have roused French hockey from its slumber, winning France's first European club title at the Continental Cup Super Final. The victory comes as the French try to woo the international hockey community into bringing the World Championship to Paris.

In the early 2000s, France seemed to be on its way to becoming a second-tier hockey nation. There was no representation in top events, bankrupt clubs, marginal interest in the domestic league, and outdated arenas.

Not everything has changed since in La Grande Nation, but there has been a considerable upgrade in many areas in the last few years. The success of the Rouen Dragons in the Continental Cup Super Final, where they defeated top clubs from Ukraine, Belarus and Italy, is just the latest example.

■ Relegated from the top division in 2000 and 2004, the French national team has become stronger and gained consistency by having the same coach (Dave Henderson) and captain (Laurent Meunier) since 2005. Since 2008 the Frenchmen haven't left the Top-16 and will play in the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship for the fifth straight time this year in Helsinki.

While the national competition, now called Ligue Magnus in honour of the IIHF's first President, is still concentrated to smaller, but hockey-crazy towns with rinks of limited capacities, the French Ice Hockey Federation (FFHG) has created an event that totally contrasts with the usual hockey landscape.

The final of the French Cup, a football-style knockout competition with clubs from several divisions, was moved from regular hockey rinks of roughly 3,000 seats to the spacious Paris-Bercy arena in 2007. And since it takes place in one of the most storied multifunctional arenas in Europe, the Cup Final has become an annual national festivity. This year's final between Rouen and Dijon saw another sold-out game – 13,362 spectators.

■ One of the main reasons for the visible progress is that ice hockey was dissociated from the national ice sports body in 2006. There was also the pressure from losing voting power at the IIHF Congress by not being independent.

"To be independent gave us a chance to start building and following a long-term sport policy," said FFHG President Luc Tardif. "When we were part of the ice sports federation it was difficult to organise things like the Cup Final in Paris because of the risk of failure. Now it's completely different. Now it has become a celebration for people around Paris. It has become a rendezvous for French hockey and we can make a profit, which we can use to fund youth hockey with."

The bid is in for hopeful 2017 co-hosts France and Germany

■ Germany and France presented their joint bid for the 2017 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship before the French Cup Final in Paris under the slogan "tous ensemble pour 2017" (all together for 2017).

The organising committee and main venue would be in Germany, possible options are Berlin, Cologne and Mannheim. The Palais Omnisports de Paris-Bercy would be the sec-



The Rouen Dragons' historic Continental Cup victory could serve as a springboard for France's bid to cohost the 2017 World Championship.

The game was held in front of many guests from other hockey associations as France marshalls support for its 2017 World Championship bid.

"We would like to organise the World Championship one day, but we know that doing it on our own would be a challenge," Tardif said about the plans with Germany. "We will have a serious look at how Finland and Sweden will do with co-hosting the next two World Championships."

The FFHG hopes to open its new national ice hockey centre with two ice sheets 25 kilometres away from Paris, in Cergy-Pontoise. Meanwhile, the best news on the ice came further away to the Atlantic, from the Normandy city of Rouen.

The Year of the Dragons

The Rouen Dragons hosted the IIHF Continental Cup Super Final for the second time in January and surprisingly ended up in first place.

The French started the four-team round-robin event by blanking HC Asiago from Italy 6-0, but the dreams of becoming the first French team to win a European club competition seemed to shatter when Rouen lost 4-2 to 2011 winner, Belarusian champion Yunost Minsk, on day two.

But because Yunost had previously lost to Donbass Donetsk from Ukraine, 2-1, there was still a marginal chance for Rouen to win the tournament by causing a three-team tie on the last day.

■ But the Frenchmen would have to win against the undefeated Ukrainians by a margin of three goals to end up on top. Had they won by one or two goals only, Yunost would have been declared winner thanks to the goal difference in the head-to-head games. So Rouen came into the game as a long shot, while Donbass needed to gain only one point against Rouen to claim the title.

Donbass was the favourite, but the French believed in their slim chance. The game between the hosts and the Ukrainians was as exciting as was the pre-game plot. It ended up in a dramatic finale that was definitely not for the faint-hearted.

ondary venue that would host one preliminary-round group and two of the quarter-final games. While Germany has hosted the event six times, most recently in 2010, France only had the World Championship on its home soil twice, 1930 in Chamonix and 1951 in Paris. The application logo includes the tricolours of both countries and a goalie to commemorate former German national goalkeeper Robert Müller, who passed away in 2009 at age 28 of a brain tumour.

"To win with such a scenario was not so much a dream, but rather tough realism for us," said French-Canadian forward Marc-André Thinel.

The French led 3-1 after the second period, thanks mainly to Thinel, who scored two identical goals with semi-wraparounds. Suddenly hoisting the winners' plate became more realistic.

Donbass cut the lead midway through the third period and was close to tying the game in the dying minutes of the game. But then Carl Mallette's shot from behind the goal line trickled over the line via Donbass keeper Yevgeni Tsaregorodtsev's pads with 2:44 remaining in regulation time. Just 24 seconds later Julien Desrosiers escaped for a breakaway to score the 5-2 goal. The arena exploded in jubilation.

In the most unlikely scenario, three teams were close to clinching the Continental Cup title in the last minutes of play, but Rouen ended up with the three-goal margin needed to win the competition and write French hockey history.

"To score the two necessary goals with three minutes left, that's unbelievable. That's hockey. It's never over until the final buzzer," said French national team goalie Fabrice Lhenry, who saved 35 shots and had a stellar performance in all three games.

"I'm really happy to be part of this team that won the Continental Cup the first time for Rouen and the first time for France in front of our supporters."

Shell-shocked Donbass had nothing more to give, and the French wouldn't allow another goal. The "Miracle de Rouen" was perfect.



EWCC IN FINLAND

■ The eighth European Women's Champions Cup will culminate with the final tournament in Hämeenlinna, Finland, 24-26 February. It will be the second time after 2009 in Lohja that the finals are hosted in the country.

■ The new Finnish champion HPK Hämeenlinna will be among the favourites on home ice, but they will face strong competition. Russia's Tornado Moscow Region is back in the EWCC after winning the event in 2010.

Hämeenlinna already hosted a preliminary-round group it won with a 3-0 record while Tornado was defeated in the other group of the second round in Dornbirn, Austria.

■ The two teams will be joined by the second-place teams of the last preliminary stage, Switzerland's ZSC Lions Zurich and ESC Planegg from Germany.

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These kids are good: Innsbruck hosts inaugural Winter Youth Olympic Games

Finland, Sweden win men's, women's tournaments, hockey skills challenge introduced as Olympic event

By Adam Steiss

Hold on London. Before the Summer Games begin in August, the Olympic party kicked off early in 2012 in the mountains of Innsbruck, Austria, host of the inaugural Winter Youth Olympic Games.

The Games were conceived by the President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Jacques Rogge, who wanted to fulfill an eleven year-long vision of an Olympic competition for young people. It brought together 1,059 top athletes aged 14 to 18 from over 60 nations to compete in the seven sports which will also be represented at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, including ice hockey.

More than 110,000 spectators watched the events. Of those, 18,914 people attended the Ice Hockey Competitions, larger numbers than at any other event at the Games.

■ ■ The National Olympic Committees of the top four IIHF teams were given the choice to send either their men's or women's team to the Youth Olympic Games. Canada, Finland, USA, Russia, and Austria sent their men. Sweden sent their women, who were joined by Slovakia, Germany, Kazakhstan and the hosts.

Nations that weren't participating in the tournament had the chance to send a competitor to a fresh and new Olympic ice hockey event, the ice hockey skills challenge.



HOCKEY FANS COME OUT: A sellout crowd watched Finland's gold medal shootout win against Russia.

Finns claim Youth Olympic men's ice hockey gold

An exciting tournament featuring the top Under-16 men's players culminated in a thrilling final between Finland and Russia. Just when it seemed that Russia would win the game 1-0 and take the Youth Olympic hockey gold before their big show in Sochi 2014, Finland scored the tying goal with just over a minute left in the third period and won the game 2-1 in a shootout.

The hero of the game for Finland was goaltender Kaapo Kahkonen. The 15-year-old made 26 of 27 saves in regulation and stopped both of Russia's shooters in the shootout to seal the win for his team.

With 1:02 remaining in the third period, Finnish forward Waltteri Hoppinen redirected a pass in front of the net past Russian goaltender Sergey Korobov, tying the game

and sending the Finland supporters into a delirium. The overtime period did not decide a winner, and the teams prepared for a shootout that would decide the winner of the first Youth Olympics men's hockey gold.

The first player to shoot was Finland captain Manu Honkanen, who scored by pulling back and firing the puck under Korobov's glove, the same move he converted in penalty shots against Russia and Canada during the preliminary round.

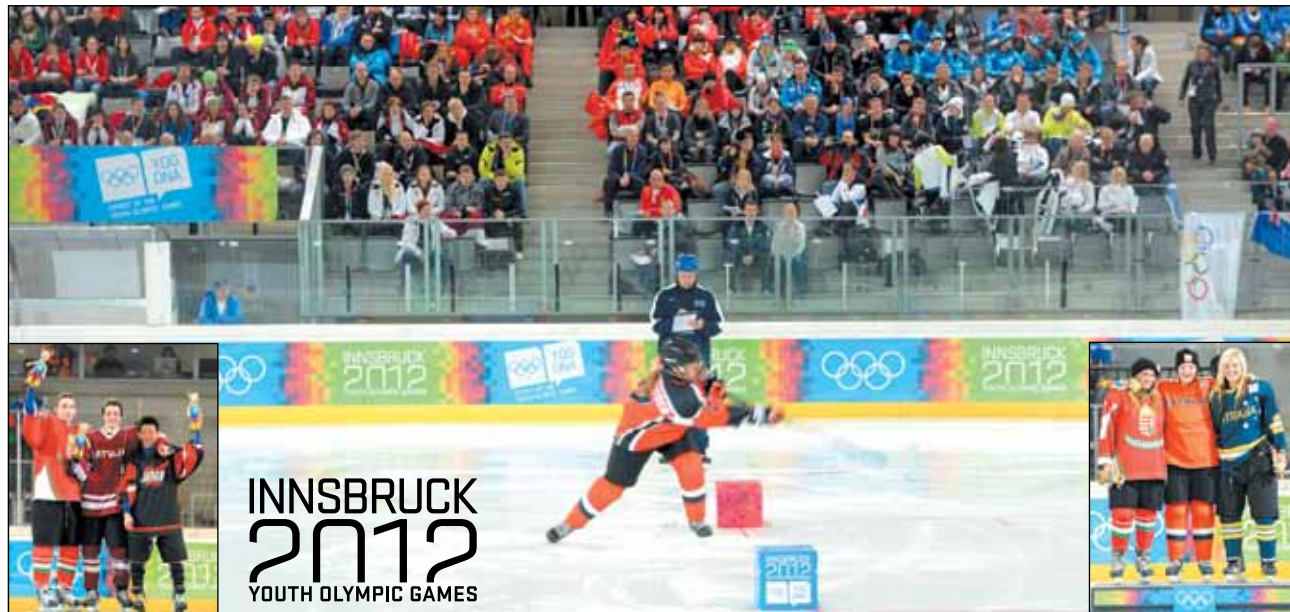
Then Russian Maxim Lazarev's shot sailed past the net, and after Kapanen buried his chance, with a shot identical to Honkanen's, Kahkonen stoned Russian captain Ivan Nikolishin, sealing the gold medal and prompting his team to jump the bench and mob their goaltender.

"Amazing performance, he played really good," said Kapanen following the game. "Of course it came down to the one game where you have to be at your best, and he was tonight."

Swedish ladies roll through opposition

As expected, the gold medal in the women's tournament went to favourites Sweden. The women's team, winners of the bronze at the IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's World Championship held two weeks earlier in the Czech Republic, dominated the competition en route to winning the inaugural Youth Olympic women's ice hockey gold medal 3-0 over Austria.

Their opponent in the final was a plucky Austrian team, buoyed by a supportive home crowd and a pair of wins over rivals Germany. The victories over the Germans were a big step for the Austrian ladies, most of whom played in the



SKILLS AN OLYMPIC SUCCESS: Nearly 2,000 spectators watched the skills challenge grand final. (left inset) In the men's event, Attila Kovacs (HUN, 2nd), Augusts Valdis Vasilonoks (LAT, 1st) and Seiya Furukawa (JPN, 3rd), took home medals. Fanni Gasparics (HUN, 2nd), Julie Zvarthoed (NED, 1st), and Sharnita Crompton (AUS, 3rd) medalled in the women's event (right inset).

U18 Women's World Championship Division I earlier that month, where they finished in second place. Although they did not win the top prize the Austrians played very well and managed to sweep a team that played at an IIHF championship in a division above their own.

"I think our team came together in this tournament," said Austrian forward Anna Meixner. "We played some great games and battled the whole game against Sweden. We played nearly our best game and we can be proud of ourselves."

■ ■ Although Sweden's games were lopsided (the team outscored the opposition 57-0 in six games), the rest of the field was able to get some valuable experience at an Olympic event, including the Kazakh women's U18 team, which was participating because the Czech Republic and Switzerland didn't enter their teams and managed to get a surprise 2-1 victory over Slovakia.

Jennifer Botterill, women's ice hockey Olympian and Youth Olympic Games ambassador, was happy to see the involvement of new nations in Women's Ice Hockey at the Youth Olympic Games, and hopes that it will spark growth in the women's international ice hockey scene.

"The Youth Olympics is about having all these athletes

that are getting the experience," she said. "Then to go back to their countries and get more exposure and hopefully have more support. Ultimately it helps their path to get to the Olympic Games."

Skills Challenge a hit

For the first time in Olympic history, a hockey skills challenge competition was held as an Olympic medal event. In this event, the best 15 female and male athletes from nations other than the ones in the tournaments were allowed to compete, plus athletes from the host country Austria. The participants were qualified from a global qualification program based on a series of individual skill tests designed by the IIHF:

1. Fastest Lap
2. Shooting Accuracy
3. Skating Agility
4. Hardest Shot
5. Passing Precision
6. Puck Control

"The skills competition came out of the situation when we were told by the IOC that we were gonna have a tournament that involved just a few nations," said IIHF Sport Development Manager Darryl Easson. "We needed to look at more ways to include more people."

■ ■ Easson, as well as Research and Audit Coordinator Adam Sollitt, developed the competition out of a skills program used at the annual IIHF Development Camp in Vierumäki, Finland, since 1999. With between 30-40 nations participating in these camps and only nine allowed by the IOC for the tournament, the skills competition was an ideal choice to get them involved in the Games.

Initially, there were a total of 29 different drills in the skills program. Easson, Sollitt, IIHF General Secretary

Horst Lichtner and Sport Director Dave Fitzpatrick brought the number down to eight drills at a test event in Lausanne, before settling on six drills for the Innsbruck competition: Two skating, two shooting, one passing, and one stickhandling drill.

Although there was some skepticism as to the competition level of a skills challenge between under-16 boys and under-18 girls, these were quashed when the participants took to the ice to try out the skills.

"On day one with the boys, they were diving through the finishing line even though we weren't timing it or keeping score," said Easson. "The competitiveness was there from the get-go."

Men's Event

In a riveting contest that was not decided until the final heats, Latvia's Augusts Valdis Vasilonoks and Julie Zvarthoed of the Netherlands won the first hockey skills challenge competition ever to be held as an Olympic medal event. The competition was very close, played out in front of almost 2,000 spectators in Innsbruck, including the IOC's top brass.



HOT START TO THE YEAR FOR SWEDEN: Fresh off a bronze medal finish at the IIHF women's U18 championship, Sweden added a Youth Olympic gold in women's hockey to the 2012 medal cabinet.

Going into the final men's event, the Puck Control competition, Vasilonoks held a slim two-point lead (18 total points) over Slovenia's Primoz Cuvan, Japan's Seiya Furukawa, Callum Burns of New Zealand, and Attila Kovacs of Hungary (16 points each).

Vasilonoks was under pressure, needing to perform well enough in the first heat to get the points necessary to hold off his opponents. He beat out Cuvan in the first heat, then in the semi-final he went against Callum Burns, who almost had Vasilonoks beat but slipped on the last obstacle, securing gold for the Latvian.

In all, Vasilonoks won only one of the six events, firing a slapshot registering 145.2 km/h in the Hardest Shot competition semi-final to help him win the event. He finished second in the Fastest Lap and the Skating Agility events, and third in Shooting Accuracy.

The heavily favoured Latvian was upset in his first heat of the Passing Precision event, being outduelled by Furukawa who hit all five targets on nine attempts. But his second place finish in the last event gave him a final total of 21 points, one more than second place Kovacs.

For Vasilonoks, the gold is the first ever that Latvia has won as a nation at a Winter Olympic event.

"I didn't know, wow," said Vasilonoks. "I'm proud that Latvia finally got it."

Women's Event

Julie Zvarthoed, Vasilonoks' counterpart in the women's event, was in an even more tenuous position in the last event, sharing the top spot in the rankings with Hungary's Fanni Gasparics, while Sharnita Crompton (AUS) and Agnese Tartaglione (ITA) were close behind with 15 points, and Great Britain's Katherine Gale sitting at 14 points prior to the final event.

But Tartaglione and Crompton lost the handle on the puck in their opening heats, and Zvarthoed was able to eliminate Gasparics with a clean run through the course to help cement her lead. She faced Gale in the final round and won by nearly a tenth of a second.

"The last heat, I knew I had to do it so I just gave it everything," said Zvarthoed.

The competition which began back in July 2011 in the early qualification phase in Vierumäki, Finland, served as an opportunity to give the Olympic experience to hockey players from countries that would not otherwise have a chance to participate in a hockey-related Olympic tournament.

"It's good because all these guys wouldn't have an opportunity to go to the Olympics, since in hockey it's always Canada, USA, Finland, Russia," said Zvarthoed. "So it's a nice event for other countries who have players but can't qualify for the hockey tournaments."

The Hungarian duo of Kovacs and Gasparics each won silver in the men's and women's events respectively. The bronze medals went to Furukawa in the men's event and Crompton in the women's.

For Zvarthoed, who is a hockey fanatic and named her dog after her hero Sidney Crosby, it was an unforgettable moment.

"I have no words for it now, it's tough to describe how I feel," said Zvarthoed. "We've built a friendship between all of us who competed and I'll never forget this experience."

Ten things we learned from Alberta 2012

Sweden is back, Czechs might be, U20 parity as good as ever & Russia's got goalies

By Lukas Aykroyd

Once again, the World Juniors dazzled us with some spectacular hockey, played before an all-time record attendance of 455,342 fans in Calgary and Edmonton. Lucas Aykroyd reflects on the lessons to take away from 2012.

1. Sweden is back

It shouldn't have taken 31 years for the Swedes to capture their second U20 gold medal. But it did. And for coach Roger Rönnerberg and his players, as well as the 600,000 Swedish fans watching the 2-1 overtime win over Russia on TV, the end of the drought couldn't have tasted any sweeter. Tre Kronor had been in the running for first place every year since 2007, but fell heartbreaking short under coach Pär Mårts in the 2008 and 2009 finals versus Canada.

Now it appears the yellow-and-blue squad has finally developed the mental toughness it needed to complement its traditional high skill set, the willingness to push through and win. That held true in Calgary, whether it meant rallying from a three-goal deficit to beat Russia in overtime in the round-robin, knocking off Switzerland and Finland in game-ending shootouts, or outshooting the Russians 58-17 in the golden climax.

2. Gold is up for grabs

Four years in a row, we've seen a different gold medalist: Canada (2009), the United States (2010), Russia (2011), and Sweden (2012). Canadian fans, who support this tournament more than any other nation and have the highest expectations, obviously don't appreciate seeing their boys miss out on top spot for the third consecutive time. Since Hockey Canada founded its Program of Excellence in 1982, such a dry spell has only occurred once, during the seven-year interregnum from 1998 to 2004.

But it's not all about one nation winning over and over again. When different U20 champions emerge, it stimulates interest in the tournament, forces each national program to elevate its standards, and is ultimately healthy for hockey worldwide. Sweden's 2012 victory sets the stage for another exciting and unpredictable tournament next season in Ufa, Russia.

3. Kuznetsov remains on his "Malkin path"

Last year, we compared the flowering of hyper-talented U20 Russian forward Yevgeni Kuznetsov to that of current NHL and international superstar Yevgeni Malkin. The pattern still holds true. Much like Malkin's 2006 World Junior swan song, Kuznetsov vied for the scoring title, was named tournament MVP, and was held pointless in a gold medal game defeat.

As emotional and headstrong as Malkin at the same age – and probably even more demonstrative – the 19-year-old Traktor Chelyabinsk ace wowed onlookers with his hat trick and assist versus host Canada in the semi-finals and his nine-point explosion against Latvia, the second-highest single-game total in U20 history. Bizarrely, however, those were the only two games in which he recorded points. He'll have to tone down his pro-



Czech netminder Petr Mrazek became a fan favourite in Alberta for getting in the middle of his teammates' goal celebrations. Mrazek was also voted the tournament's top goaltender.



LONG WAIT OVER: Last time Sweden won the U20 championship, these players were more than ten years from being born. So, no wonder the Swedes were a happy bunch.

ensity for high-risk plays and showmanship verging on antagonism if he eventually intends to emulate Malkin as, say, an Art Ross and Conn Smythe Trophy winner.

4. Russia's got (some) goalies

Just 17, Andrei Vasilevski delivered one of the most poised and technically accomplished goaltending performances Russia has seen in decades. At these World Juniors, he recorded a tournament-leading 95.3 save percentage and two shutouts.

And when the Salavat Yulaev Ufa prospect faltered during Canada's third-period comeback in Russia's nail-biting 6-5 semi-final win, backup Andrei Makarov of the Saskatoon Blades stepped in and held down the fort. Makarov continued his excellence in the final, giving coach Valeri Bragin's team a chance to win it might not otherwise have enjoyed against relentless Sweden.

It was a good sign for Russia, usually as mediocre in net as it is strong at the forward position.

5. Canada needs (improved) goalies

Realistically, the last time Canada truly got dominant goaltending at the World Juniors was in 2008 with Steve Mason. The duo of Dustin Tokarski and Chet Pickard was adequate in a winning effort in Ottawa the following year.

In the three tournaments since then, Canadian goalies have allowed five or more goals in games that have ended their country's hopes of gold: the 6-5 OT failure against the



Tournament top scorer Yevgeni Kuznetsov (right) was held without a point in the gold medal game as Sweden bottled up the Russian attack.

Americans in the 2010 final (Jake Allen and Martin Jones), the 5-3 collapse against Russia in the 2011 final (Mark Visentin), and the 6-5 loss to Russia in the 2012 semi-finals (Scott Wedgewood and Visentin).

For the country of Terry Sawchuk, Ken Dryden, and Patrick Roy, that just doesn't cut it. Be sure that Hockey Canada is on the case.

6. Scandinavians don't like goofing around

Early in the 2012 World Juniors, the Swedish team arbitrarily decided to not allow Mika Zibanejad to do interviews with the English-speaking press. Eventually that moratorium was lifted, and the Ottawa Senators prospect went on to score the golden goal at 10:09 of overtime against Russia. So somehow, it worked out for Tre Kronor.

The Danish braintrust, though, might have benefited from more of a sense of humour. Coach Todd Bjorkstrand suspended five of his players for holding a mock press conference after falling 10-2 to Canada.

"I don't want my players to goof around after a game we lose 10-2 against Team Canada," he said. "That's absolutely the wrong message."

A shortstaffed Denmark finished the round robin with a 10-1 loss to Finland. A pair of overtime losses in the Relegation Round sent Bjorkstrand's boys back to Division I for 2013.

7. Good things come in small packages

As young, nifty dangles like Patrick Kane, Jordan Eberle, and Claude Giroux have shown in international and NHL play, you don't need to be a strapping six-footer to make it big in modern hockey. That trend continued at the 2012 World Juniors, where Sweden's Max Friberg and Finland's Mikael Granlund, the tournament's two leading point-getters after Kuznetsov with 11 apiece, dazzled with skills and determination that belied their modest stature.

8. The U.S. needs a killer instinct

In any given year, based on pre-tournament predictions, you'd figure the Americans should make the U20 finals nearly as often as Canada. Yet despite being laden with first-round NHL picks, the U.S. has only won it all twice (2004, 2010). This year's seventh-place finish was America's lowest of the new millennium. The team's struggle to get pucks past Finnish goalie Sami Aittokallio and Czech netminder Petr Mrazek in humbling, back-to-back losses (4-1 and 5-2) in the round robin proved fatal. It's back to the drawing board for USA Hockey.

9. Czechs are worth checking out

While the Czech Republic's Olympic and World Championship teams remain strong, they've leaned heavily on veteran talent for years. Their World Junior squads haven't captured gold since the back-to-back titles engineered by then-coach Jaroslav Holik in 2000 and 2001. But this year's fifth-place result was a small step in the right direction. Buoyed by the great saves and emotional celebrations of Mrazek, plus four-goal tournaments from Petr Holik and Tomas Filipi, the Czechs showed they can at least challenge the medal contenders in U20 competition.

10. Latvia's not going away

After the Soviet Union's 1991 demise, many predicted that hockey in Latvia would die too without state subsidies and sporting academies. More than 20 years later, that notion's proven false. The Latvian junior national team, newly promoted for 2012, found a way to survive in the elite division despite suffering a 14-0 thrashing from Russia. With emerging stars like forward Zemgus Girgensons and defenceman Nikita Kolesnikovs, the future looks hopeful for the senior team as well.

Kuznetsov gets trio of individual awards



Petr Mrazek, CZE:
All-Star Team Goaltender,
Directorate Best Goaltender



Brandon Gormley, CAN:
All-Star Team Defenceman,
Directorate Best Defenceman



Oscar Klefbom, SWE:
All-Star Team Defenceman



Max Friberg, FIN:
All-Star Team Forward



Mikael Granlund, FIN:
All-Star Team Forward



Yevgeni Kuznetsov, RUS:
Most Valuable Player, All-Star Team
Forward, Directorate Best Forward

Bleary-eyed Swedes tune in to gold medal victory over Russia

■ Although television ratings on TSN were down significantly from last year's U20 when Canada and Russia staged a dramatic gold-medal game finale, numbers were still impressive all the same for the 2012 U20 in Alberta.

The bronze medal game earlier in the day between Canada and Finland drew 1.2 million, while the wildly entertaining Canada-Russia semi-finals game on January 3 drew a tournament-high 3.1 viewers.

The gold medal game between Sweden and Russia drew an average audience of 1.4 million viewers.

■ Even though the game began at 2am in the night in Sweden, 600,000 persons watched the U20 gold medal game on Swedish TV channel SVT. The audience averaged 530,000 persons and peaked at 600,000 at the end of the gold medal game against Russia that Sweden won 1-0 in overtime.

Going from west to east: 2013 tournament groups set

■ The IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship goes from western Canada the most eastward city in World Junior history: Ufa, Russia in 2013. The capital of Bashkortostan with one million inhabitants is a two-hour flight from Moscow and home to reigning Russian champion Salavat Yulayev Ufa. Based on the final ranking in Calgary, host Russia was seeded with both teams from North America in the main venue, the 7,950-seat Ufa Arena.



2012 IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship - Ufa, Russia

Group A	Group B
Sweden (1)	Russia (2)
Finland (4)	Canada (3)
Czech Republic (5)	Slovakia (6)
Switzerland (8)	United States (7)
Latvia (9)	Germany (10)

Stellar goaltending wins Canada's second gold at U18

Team USA dropped in finals for only second loss in tournament history, Sweden wins bronze

By Szymon Szemberg

■ ■ The United States' reign in the IIHF U18 Women's World Championship is temporarily over. After conceding a goal after 5:12 in their first game, Canada shut out the opposition for the remaining 294 minutes and 48 seconds of the tournament – including a 3-0 blanking of the USA in the final – to win its second U18 gold in the IIHF's youngest championship category.

There was no question that the United States arrived in Zlin and Prerov, Czech Republic as emphatic favorites. Since the inception of the IIHF U18 World Women's category in 2008, the USA had won three out of four possible gold medals and in the process won 19 out of 20 games with a goal difference of 173-19.

■ ■ The only game which the U.S. girls had lost prior to the 2012 event was at the 2010 championship in Chicago when they were defeated in an overtime gold medal



Goaltenders Emerance Maschmeyer (pictured) and Elaine Chuli went four games and over 300 minutes without allowing a goal.

game heartbreaker against Canada, 5-4. So Canada's 3-0 win in the final game in Zlin was not only a fitting revenge for last year's 5-2 gold medal game loss to the Americans in Stockholm, Sweden, but it also marked the first time a U.S. women's under-18 team lost a game in regulation time. Ever.

This was the time for Canada to pile up impressive numbers. After the 13-1 drubbing of Switzerland in the opener, they went on to defeat Germany 6-0 and Finland 7-0 in the preliminaries, before sweeping aside Sweden 7-0 in the semi-final.



CATCHING UP: Team Canada now has two gold medals to Team USA's three in the five-year history of the IIHF women's U18 championship.

Despite being outshot 28-16 in the gold medal game against their North American rivals, Canada scored all the goals. Defenceman Alexis Crossley scored a goal and assisted on Sarah Lefort's power-play marker for 2-0 in the first period, providing Canada with all the scoring needed in this tight final.

Cydney Roesler, also a defenceman, added an insurance goal with less than five minutes remaining to give the Canadians their second women's U18 world championship gold.

■ ■ With a goals-against-average of 0.20, Canada obviously dominated the goaltending statistics. Elaine Chuli played in two games and didn't concede any goals, while Emerance Maschmeyer let in one goal (vs. Switzerland in the opener) in 180 minutes, including the gold medal game.

After a disappointing fifth place finish last year at home in Stockholm, Sweden bounced back and grabbed their third women's U18 bronze after defeating Germany 4-1 in the game for 3rd place.

Russia very narrowly avoided relegation. In the deciding game against Switzerland, captain Valeria Pavlova scored 1:44 into overtime, a goal which sent the Swiss

to Division I. They will be replaced next season by Hungary which surprisingly won the U18 division I to earn promotion.

■ ■ USA's Haley Skarupa led the tournament in scoring with eleven goals for as many points, but it was her teammate Alex Carpenter (4+5) who got the Best Forward honours by the tournament directorate. It was the second consecutive year that Carpenter received this recognition. Germany's Franziska Albl was named Best Goaltender while Erin Ambrose of Canada got the most votes as Best Defenceman.

The 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's World Championship set a new attendance record for this category. 17,480 fans attended the 22 games in Zlin and Prerov, Czech Republic, for an average of 794.

The previous record was set at the inaugural event in 2008 in Calgary, Canada, with a total attendance of 9,872 spectators and an average of 494.

■ ■ The highest attendance figures were set in the secondary venue, the Zimni Stadion in Prerov, where 3,250 fans saw the 5th-place game between the host Czech Republic and Finland. This is also a new single-game record, beating the gold medal game of 2008 in Calgary, which was attended by 2,156 fans.



ALL SMILES: Bronze medal winners Sweden pose for the netcam.

Surprising Hungarian ladies rocket to top division

Competing for first time in Division I, U18 team wins it all and gains promotion in a memorable run

By Martin Merk

■ ■ The Hungarian women's U18 national team completed one of the biggest upsets by a new entry since the breakup of the Soviet Union, and by leaps and bounds the biggest success in Hungarian women's hockey.

The Magyars won not only the qualification event in Asiago, Italy after having to participate as a new entry, they ended up winning the whole thing three weeks later, finishing atop the standings at the 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's World Championship Division I in Tromsø, Norway.

■ ■ This means Hungary will replace Switzerland in the Top Division next year after ending up with a 10-0 record in its two IIHF tournaments.



UNBELIEVABLE BUT TRUE: Alexandra Huszak, Fanni Gasparics and Dorottya Medgyes celebrate Hungary's promotion to the top division.

The success came to a huge surprise. Hungary has participated in the women's program since 2003, but its women's senior team has never got higher than the third tier

and is placed 25th in the IIHF Women's World Ranking. In its games against the toughest competition, Hungary defeated Austria 4-3 and Japan 3-2. Alexandra Huszak had tied the game against the Asians twice before Hungary claimed the win in a shootout.

■ ■ Huszak was named Best Forward and was the scoring leader with ten points (7+3) along with compatriot Fanni Gasparics (2+8=10), who continued her wave of success in January by winning a silver medal at the Youth Olympic Skills Challenge.

Continuing this rapid rate of progress among the top eight nations might prove to be difficult. But with 15 out of 20 players eligible to represent Hungary next year, the Hungarians have some hopes of possibly upsetting an elite nation or two.

From the beach to the rink

U20 Division III a special experience for teams and organisers

By Alistair McMurrin

For many players the 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship Division III was a trip to the other end of the world. For the winners from Iceland, the 26-hour trip took three days and the players raised the money by selling fish.

Six tournaments have been held over six weeks in the IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship and Dunedin in New Zealand was the only summer venue.

The Dunedin Ice stadium is just a five-minute walk from the city beaches with their rolling surf from the Pacific Ocean.

Players and officials enjoyed surfing the waves and soaking up the sun on the sand in their spare time.

Iceland's team leader Sigurdur Sigurdsson said his team spent some of their spare time at the beach surfing.

"We enjoyed the big waves and the white sandy beach," he said. "The water is too cold for ocean swimming in Iceland."

It was the first trip to New Zealand for Slovak referee Peter Loksik.

"I enjoyed going to the beach for a swim and seeing the penguins and seals," he said. "It was the first time I'd seen them in their natural state and not in the zoo. It was special."

■ ■ In their spare time the players and officials visited some of the tourist sites in Dunedin like Speight's Breweries, Cadbury's Chocolate Factory, the iconic Railway Station, and went to trips on the Taieri Gorge and the Coastal Railway.

But travelling from Europe to New Zealand – and vice-versa for many of the Kiwi teams – has its cost.

Iceland's team leader Sigurdur Sigurdsson said it cost about US\$ 2,500 for each team member to come to New Zealand. The players had to pay half of it and raised the money by selling fish. The 26-hour flight to New Zealand took the team three days.

Bulgarian team leader Iliana Popova said it took three flights and 38 hours for the 26-person strong squad to come to New Zealand. It cost each person €2700 and this was paid by the Ministry of Physical Education and Sport.

Turkish team leader Cengiz Akyildiz said it cost \$200,000

New Zealanders will find a place in their hearts for ice hockey because it's a great sport. It is good to bring tournaments to the Southern Hemisphere because we have to develop ice hockey as a global sport."

The cook Shelley Gerken, who fed the officials and the other volunteers, epitomised the volunteer attitude of New Zealand sport.

"They appreciated getting a hot meal from a friendly face," she said. She also did the laundry for the teams and became an assistant medic when an Iceland player injured his wrist.

Geoff Cook, another volunteer, was in charge of the liaison between the teams and the rink staff to make sure everything worked smoothly.

"Whatever needs doing we will do it," he said. "That is the Kiwi attitude."

There were some issues communicating with people of different languages. "But generally with sign language and a smile you can fix most things," he explained.

■ ■ It was mission accomplished for Iceland when they beat China 5-1 in the virtual final to get back into Division II next year.

The Iceland team broke into emotion when their national anthem played and they received their gold medals in Dunedin.

It was especially significant for captain Olafur Bjornsson.

"I am very happy," he said after the game. "It showed that we are good enough for the next level. We got relegated on a single goal last year."

It was also special for head coach Joshua Gribben who has moulded the team into a skilful and determined unit.

"It was what we wanted and was our goal," he said. "We believe we are a Division II team."

■ ■ Iceland was the only unbeaten team in the round-robin competition and finished with 12 points from their four games before China and New Zealand to claim the Division III gold medals.

Germany back among worlds' top juniors

By Martin Merk

■ ■ The German juniors will be back in the top division after one year. Germany won the 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship Division I Group A on home ice in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

Coach Ernst Höfner's team won the second tier among U20 nations with a clean record, but in dramatic fashion in its key games against Belarus and Norway.

In the opening game against Belarus, Bernhard Keil gave Germany the lead in a tight contest midway through the game, but Maxim Parfeyevets scored the equalizer early into the third period.

Belarus was close to even score the lead during a power play, but instead Nicolas Krammer scored Germany's game-winning goal on a short-handed breakaway for a 2-1 win.



Germany won two wild games against Norway and Belarus to advance.

After three clear wins Germany faced Norway in the last game and gained a 2-0 lead, but the Norwegians turn the score around also thanks to two goals within a 61-second span early in the third period.

However, the Germans didn't give up. Captain Konrad Abeltshauser tied the game at three with five minutes left in regulation time and when two penalty calls against Norway followed, David Elsner scored two power-play goals for the 5-3 win.

■ ■ Germany will play in the top division in Ufa for the sixth time since Höfner took over in 2000. Among his top players was 1993-born scoring leader Tobias Rieder of the Kitchener Rangers, who will be eligible for his fourth U20 World Championship next winter.

Early action: 2012 international hockey season in pictures



Photo: IHA

The event will be staged in Dehradun, a 580,000-inhabitant city in the State of Uttarakhand where the country's first indoor ice rink (pictured above) was built in 2010.



Photo: Magda Dolecka

The home team ended up in fourth place, but that didn't dampen the enthusiasm from Tychy, Poland's residents at the U20 Division IB.



Photo: Jana Chytilova / HHOF-IIHF Images

Russia had a close call but beat Switzerland in overtime in the tiebreaker game, winning the women's U18 relegation round 2-1.



Photo: Steve Poirier / HHOF-IIHF Images

None of the U20 participants were more exuberant than Czech goaltender Petr Mrazek, seen here piling on a hapless teammate.

IIHF PREMIERE IN INDIA

The 2012 IIHF Challenge Cup of Asia will be the first ever IIHF event to be staged in India, the second-most populated country in the world with 1.2 billion inhabitants. India has been participating in the Challenge Cup of Asia since 2009.

2012 IIHF Challenge Cup of Asia
In Dehradun, India, 17-25 March 2012

2012 IIHF U20 Challenge Cup of Asia
In Seoul, Korea, 26-30 May 2012

2012 IIHF U18 Challenge Cup of Asia
In Abu Dhabi/AI Ain, United Arab Emirates, 1-6 April 2012

2012 IIHF Women's Challenge Cup of Asia
In Qiqihar, China, 15-20 February 2012



Photo: Ben Mackey

BOARD RIDE: Finland was no pushover at the Youth Olympics, as Otto Nieminen demonstrated to a Russian opponent in their first game.



Photo: JC Pinheiro / HHOF-IIHF Images

THE GOLDEN MOMENT: Mika Zibanejad's backhand in overtime at the World Juniors will be known as a signature moment in Swedish youth hockey history, one that fans who were there (left) will never forget.

The IIHF would like to thank its official Partners:
and supplier pool members:



IIHF RESULTS SUMMARY

IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship

Group A - Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Latvia - Sweden	4 - 9	(2-3, 1-3, 1-3)
Switzerland - Russia	0 - 3	(0-1, 0-2, 0-0)
Slovakia - Latvia	3 - 1	(0-0, 1-1, 2-0)
Sweden - Switzerland	4 - 3 PS	(1-0, 1-1, 1-2, 0-0, 1-0)
Russia - Slovakia	3 - 1	(0-1, 1-0, 2-0)
Latvia - Russia	0 - 14	(0-1, 0-6, 0-7)
Sweden - Slovakia	9 - 1	(2-1, 2-0, 5-0)
Switzerland - Latvia	5 - 3	(1-0, 2-1, 2-2)
Slovakia - Switzerland	6 - 4	(1-2, 1-1, 4-1)
Russia - Sweden	3 - 4 OT	(3-0, 0-0, 0-3, 0-1)
Sweden	4	2 2 0 0 26 - 11 10
Russia	4	3 0 1 0 23 - 5 10
Slovakia	4	2 0 0 2 11 - 17 6
Switzerland	4	1 0 1 2 12 - 16 4
Latvia	4	0 0 0 4 8 - 31 0

Group B - Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Finland - Canada	1 - 8	(0-2, 1-3, 0-3)
Denmark - USA	3 - 11	(2-3, 0-6, 1-2)
Czech Republic - Denmark	7 - 0	(1-0, 2-0, 4-0)
USA - Finland	1 - 4	(0-0, 0-1, 1-3)
Canada - Czech Republic	5 - 0	(1-0, 2-0, 2-0)
Denmark - Canada	2 - 10	(0-4, 0-3, 2-3)
USA - Czech Republic	2 - 5	(1-1, 1-1, 0-3)
Finland - Denmark	10 - 1	(3-0, 2-1, 5-0)
Czech Republic - Finland	0 - 4	(0-2, 0-1, 0-1)
Canada - USA	3 - 2	(3-0, 0-0, 0-2)
Canada	4	4 0 0 0 26 - 5 12
Finland	4	3 0 0 1 19 - 10 9
Czech Republic	4	2 0 0 2 12 - 11 6
USA	4	1 0 0 3 16 - 15 3
Denmark	4	0 0 0 4 6 - 38 0

Relegation Round

Denmark - USA	3 - 11	(2-3, 0-6, 1-2)
Switzerland - Latvia	5 - 3	(1-0, 2-1, 2-2)
Switzerland - Denmark	4 - 3 OT	(2-2, 1-1, 0-0, 1-0)
USA - Latvia	12 - 2	(4-0, 7-1, 1-1)
Latvia - Denmark	2 - 1 OT	(0-1, 1-0, 0-0, 1-0)
Switzerland - USA	1 - 2	(1-2, 0-0, 0-0)
USA	3	3 0 0 0 25 - 6 9
Switzerland	3	1 1 0 1 10 - 8 5
Latvia	3	0 1 0 2 7 - 18 2
Denmark	3	0 0 2 1 7 - 17 2

Denmark is relegated to 2013 Division I championship.

Playoff Round

Quarter-Final	8 - 5	(2-2, 4-1, 2-2)
Finland - Slovakia	2 - 1 OT	(0-0, 1-1, 0-0, 1-0)
Russia - Czech Republic	5 - 6	(0-2, 1-3, 4-1)
Semi-Final	3 - 2 PS	(0-1, 0-1, 2-0, 0-0, 1-0)
Sweden - Finland	5 - 6	(0-2, 1-3, 4-1)
Canada - Russia	5 - 6	(0-2, 1-3, 4-1)
5th-place Game	5 - 2	(3-0, 1-1, 1-1)
Czech Republic - Slovakia	5 - 2	(3-0, 1-1, 1-1)
Bronze Medal Game	4 - 0	(1-0, 2-0, 1-0)
Canada - Finland	4 - 0	(1-0, 2-0, 1-0)
Gold Medal Game	1 - 0	(0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 1-0)
Sweden - Russia	1 - 0	(0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 1-0)

IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship

Division I Group A - Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

Great Britain - Norway	2 - 5	(2-2, 0-1, 0-2)
Belarus - Germany	1 - 2	(0-0, 0-1, 1-1)
Austria - Slovenia	2 - 3 PS	(1-0, 1-2, 0-0, 0-0, 0-1)
Slovenia - Great Britain	8 - 0	(6-0, 1-0, 1-0)
Germany - Austria	11 - 2	(3-0, 6-1, 2-1)
Norway - Belarus	2 - 3	(0-1, 1-0, 1-2)
Great Britain - Belarus	2 - 10	(0-2, 0-6, 2-2)
Norway - Austria	5 - 2	(3-0, 0-2, 2-0)
Germany - Slovenia	5 - 2	(2-2, 0-0, 3-0)
Germany - Great Britain	11 - 1	(4-0, 3-0, 4-1)
Belarus - Austria	6 - 2	(3-1, 1-1, 2-0)
Slovenia - Norway	1 - 4	(1-1, 0-2, 0-1)
Austria - Great Britain	3 - 1	(0-0, 1-1, 2-0)
Slovenia - Belarus	2 - 1 PS	(1-1, 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 1-0)
Norway - Germany	3 - 5	(0-1, 1-1, 2-3)

Germany is promoted to 2013 top division championship.

Great Britain is relegated to 2013 Division IB championship.

IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship

Division I Group B - Tychy, Poland

France - Italy	2 - 1	(1-0, 0-1, 1-0)
Japan - Kazakhstan	1 - 2	(0-1, 1-0, 0-1)
Poland - Croatia	9 - 1	(3-0, 4-1, 2-0)
Italy - Japan	7 - 2	(3-1, 4-0, 0-1)
Croatia - France	1 - 8	(1-0, 0-4, 0-4)
Kazakhstan - Poland	2 - 0	(1-0, 0-0, 1-0)
France - Japan	5 - 0	(1-0, 2-0, 2-0)
Kazakhstan - Croatia	4 - 3	(2-1, 1-2, 1-0)
Italy - Poland	4 - 2	(2-0, 1-1, 1-1)
Kazakhstan - France	1 - 2	(0-0, 1-1, 0-1)
Croatia - Italy	3 - 1	(2-1, 1-0, 0-0)
Japan - Poland	3 - 2 OT	(1-0, 1-1, 0-1, 1-0)
Croatia - Japan	4 - 3	(0-0, 3-2, 1-1)
Italy - Kazakhstan	1 - 0 OT	(0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 1-0)
Poland - France	3 - 2	(1-0, 1-1, 1-1)
France	5	4 0 0 1 19 - 6 12
Kazakhstan	5	3 0 1 1 9 - 7 10
Italy	5	2 1 0 2 14 - 9 8
Poland	5	2 0 1 2 16 - 12 7
Croatia	5	2 0 0 3 12 - 25 6
Japan	5	0 1 0 4 9 - 20 2

France is promoted to 2013 Division IA championship.

Japan is relegated to 2013 Division IIA championship.

IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship

Division II Group A - Donetsk, Ukraine

Spain - Netherlands	5 - 0	(2-0, 1-0, 2-0)
Hungary - Lithuania	2 - 1 PS	(1-0, 0-0, 0-1, 0-0, 1-0)
Ukraine - Korea	3 - 2 PS	(0-1, 0-0, 2-1, 0-0, 1-0)
Lithuania - Netherlands	6 - 2	(2-1, 1-1, 3-0)
Korea - Spain	3 - 4	(3-1, 0-1, 0-2)
Ukraine - Hungary	7 - 6	(3-2, 1-3, 3-1)
Lithuania - Korea	2 - 0	(0-0, 1-0, 1-0)
Hungary - Netherlands	3 - 4	(0-0, 0-3, 3-1)
Ukraine - Spain	4 - 0	(0-0, 2-0, 2-0)
Korea - Hungary	2 - 6	(1-2, 0-2, 1-2)
Spain - Lithuania	4 - 8	(1-0, 2-5, 1-3)
Netherlands - Ukraine	0 - 7	(0-1, 0-2, 0-4)
Hungary - Spain	7 - 1	(3-0, 2-1, 2-0)
Netherlands - Korea	3 - 2 PS	(1-0, 1-2, 0-0, 0-0, 1-0)
Lithuania - Ukraine	2 - 3 OT	(0-1, 2-1, 0-0, 0-1)
Ukraine	5	3 2 0 0 24 - 10 13
Lithuania	5	3 0 2 0 19 - 11 11
Hungary	5	2 1 0 2 24 - 15 8
Spain	5	2 0 0 3 14 - 22 6
Netherlands	5	1 1 0 3 9 - 23 5
Korea	5	0 0 2 3 9 - 18 2

Ukraine is promoted to 2013 Division IB championship.

Korea is relegated to 2013 Division IIB championship.

IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship

Division II Group B - Tallinn, Estonia

Belgium - Mexico	3 - 2 PS	(1-1, 0-1, 1-0, 0-0, 1-0)
Serbia - Australia	4 - 2	(2-0, 2-0, 0-2)
Estonia - Romania	2 - 8	(1-1, 1-2, 0-5)
Mexico - Serbia	1 - 4	(0-0, 1-2, 0-2)
Romania - Australia	11 - 1	(2-1, 4-0, 5-0)
Belgium - Estonia	2 - 7	(1-3, 0-3, 1-1)
Romania - Mexico	10 - 1	(3-0, 6-0, 1-1)
Belgium - Serbia	2 - 4	(1-2, 1-2, 0-0)
Estonia - Australia	12 - 1	(4-0, 5-0, 3-1)
Serbia - Romania	3 - 9	(1-2, 1-3, 1-4)
Australia - Belgium	4 - 8	(1-1, 1-3, 2-4)
Mexico - Estonia	0 - 18	(0-6, 0-4, 0-8)
Australia - Mexico	4 - 1	(0-1, 1-0, 3-0)
Romania - Belgium	6 - 2	(2-1, 2-1, 2-0)
Estonia - Serbia	12 - 3	(4-0, 6-1, 2-2)
Romania	5	5 0 0 0 44 - 9 15
Estonia	5	4 0 0 1 51 - 14 12
Serbia	5	3 0 0 2 18 - 26 9
Belgium	5	1 1 0 3 17 - 23 5
Australia	5	1 0 0 4 12 - 36 3
Mexico	5	0 0 1 4 5 - 39 1

Romania is promoted to 2013 Division IIA championship.

Mexico is relegated to 2013 Division III championship.

IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship

Division III - Dunedin, New Zealand

Bulgaria - China	2 - 6	(1-1, 0-3, 1-2)
Turkey - Iceland	0 - 8	(0-3, 0-1, 0-4)
New Zealand - Bulgaria	3 - 1	(1-0, 1-0, 1-1)
China - Turkey	14 - 0	(1-0, 6-0, 7-0)
Iceland - New Zealand	7 - 1	(3-0, 4-0, 0-1)
Bulgaria - Iceland	0 - 10	(0-4, 0-2, 0-4)
Turkey - Bulgaria	0 - 4	(0-1, 0-2, 0-1)
China - New Zealand	5 - 3	(1-3, 3-0, 1-0)
Iceland - China	5 - 1	(2-1, 1-0, 2-0)
New Zealand - Turkey	12 - 1	(3-1, 8-0, 1-0)

Iceland	4	4 0 0 0 30 - 2 12
China	4	3 0 0 1 26 - 10 9
New Zealand	4	2 0 0 2 19 - 14 6
Bulgaria	4	1 0 0 3 7 - 19 3
Turkey	4	0 0 0 4 1 - 38 0

Iceland is promoted to 2013 Division IIB championship.

IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's

World Championship

Group A - Zlin, Czech Republic

Czech Republic - Sweden	1 - 4	(0-2, 1-1, 0-1)
USA - Russia	8 - 0	(2-0, 2-0, 4-0)
Czech Republic - Russia	2 - 0	(0-0, 0-0, 2-0)
Sweden - USA	0 - 7	(0-3, 0-0, 0-4)
Russia - Sweden	2 - 6	(0-2, 1-2, 1-2)
USA - Czech Republic	13 - 1	(3-0, 5-1, 5-0)

USA	3	3 0 0 0 28 - 1 9
Sweden	3	2 0 0 1 10 - 10 6
Czech Republic	3	1 0 0 2 4 - 17 3
Russia	3	0 0 0 3 2 - 16 0

Group B - Prerov, Czech Republic

Canada - Switzerland	13 - 1	(2-1, 5-0, 6-0)
Finland - Germany	3 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 1-0)
Finland - Switzerland	3 - 5	(2-1, 1-4, 0-0)
Germany - Canada	0 - 6	(0-1, 0-1, 0-4)
Switzerland - Germany	1 - 6	(1-1, 0-1, 0-4)
Canada - Finland	7 - 0	(3-0, 2-0, 2-0)

Canada	3	3 0 0 0 26 - 1 9
Germany	3	1 0 0 2 6 - 10 3
Finland	3	1 0 0 2 6 - 12 3
Switzerland	3	1 0 0 2 7 - 22 3

Relegation Round

Switzerland - Russia	4 - 2	(1-1, 1-0, 2-1)
Russia - Switzerland	5 - 3	(2-1, 1-1, 2-1)
Switzerland - Russia	2 - 3 OT	(1-2, 1-0, 0-0, 0-1)
Russia	3	1 1 0 1 10 - 9 5
Switzerland	3	1 0 1 1 9 - 10 4

Switzerland is relegated to 2013 Division I championship.

Playoff Round

Quarter-Final	2 - 1	(0-0, 1-0, 0-1, 1-0)
Sweden - Finland	2 - 1	(1-0, 0-0, 1-1)
Germany - Czech Republic	2 - 1	(0-0, 1-0, 1-1)
Semi-Final	7 - 1	(3-1, 1-0, 3-0)
USA - Germany	7 - 0	(3-0, 2-0, 2-0)
Canada - Sweden	7 - 0	(3-0, 2-0, 2-0)
5th-place Game	5 - 3	(1-1, 1-1, 3-1)
Finland - Czech Republic	5 - 3	(1-1, 1-1, 3-1)
Bronze Medal Game	4 - 1	(0-1, 1-0, 3-1)
Sweden - Germany	4 - 1	(0-1, 1-0, 3-1)
Gold Medal Game	0 - 3	(0-2, 0-0, 0-1)
USA - Canada	0 - 3	(0-2, 0-0, 0-1)

IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's

World Championship

Division I - Tromso, Norway

Great Britain - Japan	1 - 2	(0-0, 1-1, 0-1)
Hungary - Austria	4 - 3	(1-0, 2-2, 1-1)
Norway - Slovakia	7 - 2	(3-0, 3-1, 1-1)
Slovakia - Hungary	0 - 7	(0-4, 0-3, 0-0)
Austria - Great Britain	4 - 1	(1-0, 2-1, 1-0)
Japan - Norway	3 - 1	(1-0, 2-1, 0-0)
Slovakia - Austria	2 - 5	(1-0, 1-4, 0-1)
Japan - Hungary	2 - 3 PS	(1-0, 0-1, 1-1, 0-0, 0-1)
Great Britain - Norway	1 - 2	(0-2, 1-0, 0-0)
Austria - Japan	2 - 1 PS	(0-1, 0-0, 1-0, 0-0, 1-0)
Slovakia - Great Britain	1 - 4	(0-2, 0-1, 1-1)
Norway - Hungary	2 - 5	(1-2, 1-0, 0-3)
Hungary - Great Britain	5 - 3	(0-1, 3-1, 2-1)
Japan - Slovakia	6 - 0	(1-0, 3-0, 2-0)
Austria - Norway	2 - 1	(0-0, 0-1, 2-0)

Hungary is promoted to 2013 top division championship.

Hungary



Photo: JC Pinheiro / HHOF-IHF Images

THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF: Coach Roger Rönnberg had his troops well prepared for the battles in Calgary. "We should continue to foster our qualities, not to copy others."

Rönnberg's lesson learned: Win the key games

By Szymon Szemberg

■ ■ Thirty-one years was the longest wait for any Swedish national hockey team between two IIHF gold medals. On January 5, 2012, Roger Rönnberg's juniors slayed that dragon by winning the U20 gold after defeating Russia in the final. Ice Times caught up the coach to get some perspective on the victory.

The World Juniors evokes amazing emotions. What's the reason behind the popularity of this event?

I think there are two reasons. It's about young players who come across as incredibly ambitious, pure and genuine. And with this they reach into the inner soul of an entire nation. And the second reason is the product. It's high-level performance and excellent entertainment.

Why did it take Sweden so long to win gold despite the fact that your system almost constantly develops high-quality junior players?

To be fully correct – it's only in the last six or seven years that we have had a real chance. Before that, Sweden was happy to make it to the playoffs. We didn't produce exceptional talent in the years 2001-2006. And also, this tournament is very difficult to win. This is probably the simple reason why teams with Peter Forsberg or Mats Sundin didn't win.

Will the win in Calgary have any lasting effects on Swedish hockey?

I really hope so. Across the line in our program, we should be able to reinforce the quality of stepping up when everything is on the line, to win the crucial games. We should also be able to seize the opportunity now that young players like Max Friberg, Mika Zibanejad, and Johan Gustafsson have become household names. We should be able to seize the momentum.

You often said during the event that "You don't

have to play well all the time; you need to win the games that matter." Was that a lesson from Buffalo 2011?

Yes, to a certain degree. But maybe more a lesson we have learned from some men's World Championships and also from previous World Juniors. It's a new mindset. We must be in top shape when it all boils down to one game, not to repeat mistakes or to be emotionally drained prior to the key games.

What other things did you and the team improve on from last year?

We worked hard on our special teams and on discipline. We had a good power-play; we killed penalties well, and in the later stages of the tournament we hardly took any penalties.

Which is the more important job – to win the World Juniors or to properly educate the players for future men's World Championships and Olympics?

Both. We are creating an environment where players are proud to play for the junior national team and later for the big Tre Kronor, to take part in the World Championship and Olympics. It's all part of a long-term plan.

Who should take credit for the success – the clubs, coaches, the federation?

Many can proudly do so. The clubs are doing an excellent job. They are executing the development program very well. Many clubs are linked to hockey academies, and our junior leagues are of a high quality. Our system is also based on a well-balanced practice-to-game ratio. The combination of all those factors creates a good environment which produces good players.

Do you feel that the players face too much pressure when returning to their Swedish pro clubs after the World Juniors, almost expected to carry the club?

No, I don't think so. These players have extremely competitive characters and they love the challenge. They

thrive with the pressure. But I feel that they often sign NHL contracts too soon. Too often we see a player who maybe is a seventh defenseman or a fourth liner who signs an NHL contract. It very seldom works out well. To be successful, you need to become a front-line player in the Swedish league first before going to the NHL. Former World Junior players like Calle Järnkrok and Jacob Silfverberg are very good examples who stayed in our league instead of jumping at the first NHL opportunity.

Which qualities do you attribute to Swedish juniors specifically?

Our players are hockey smart. They are gifted with creativity, and they are able to solve tricky situations. They are smart with the puck and also excellent skaters. We should continue to foster those qualities and not try to copy others.

The next two World U20s will be staged in Europe. Do you have any advice to the organizers to close the gap between events staged in Canada and in Europe?

They must realize that what they have is a top quality product with an incredible potential. They need to promote it and to sell it as such. They also need to start promoting and selling very early. There is a lot here that European organizers can learn from Hockey Canada.



Rönnberg Fact File



- Born: July 27, 1971 in Luleå, Sweden
- Coaching career
- Luleå juniors: 2000-2006
- Luleå (Elitserien): 2007-2010
- Sweden A asst. coach since 2009
- Sweden U20 head coach since 2010