

*See you in...*



Clockwise from top: Latvia, Slovenia, Japan, Germany, and Austria have booked their ticket to the 2014 Winter Olympics, making it through the qualification phase to take their place among hockey's elite.



With around 350 days left to the XXII Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, all 20 teams are now known following the Final Olympic qualifications. And as usual, the tournaments were thrillers.

## RENÉ FASEL EDITORIAL

■ ■ Latvia, Austria and Slovenia qualified to Sochi on the men's side, Germany and Japan on the women's. The best storylines were in the men's tournaments. Latvia qualified after being two goals down in the final game against France before rallying in front of 10,190 fans who lifted the roof in Riga Arena.

Austria denied neighbour Germany a trip to Sochi, making it the first time Germany failed to qualify for an Olympic tournament. And how about tiny Slovenia, who came as only the third-seeded team in their group in Vojens, but who secured Olympic tickets after just two games, both of those wins coming against considerably higher ranked Belarus and Denmark.

■ What we also witnessed here is an indication of more equality among roughly the top 20 nations in the IIHF World Ranking. Only twelve teams can go to the Olympics, but we saw an 18th seed – Slovenia – qualify. This is an encouraging sign. Look for more on the Olympic qualifications on pages 4-5.

■ The 37th IIHF World Junior Championship in Ufa, Russia confirmed that the USA is a leading power in youth development. After four consecutive under-18 gold medals, it was only natural that the Americans confirmed their superiority at the under-20 level.

And despite two narrow losses in the preliminary round, the convincing win was emphasized by the U.S. placing four players on the All-Star Team as well winning the MVP honours. Add the 2010 World Junior gold in Saskatoon and USA Hockey can feel confident that the association's National Team Development Program (NTDP) in Ann Arbor is paying dividends.

Development is a long-term process and one where results must be evaluated over a period of 15-20 years. During this time frame, Team USA has gone from being an occasional medal contender to an almost annual gold medal favourite. It is impressive progress and could serve as inspiration for others. I wouldn't be surprised if many of the USA's Olympic selections will be NTDP graduates.

■ The championship in Ufa attracted over 110,000 fans making it the third most attended U20 in Europe, after Finland 1998 (who had 34 games, as opposed to Ufa's 31) and Finland 2004 (31 games).

I would like to thank the Russian Ice Hockey Federation and the people of Bashkortostan for a wonderful, memorable and very well organized event.

**René Fasel**  
IIHF President

## NEWS &amp; NOTES

■ **IIHF:** Registration for the **2013 International Coaching Symposium** that will take place in Stockholm, 10-12 May, during the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship, is now open.

This year the International Coaching Symposiums will feature two separate symposiums that will be held in conjunction with the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship in Stockholm, Sweden:

The **IIHF International Coaching Symposium** goes from 10-12 May 2013 and will focus on senior hockey. The **IIHF International Youth Coaching Symposium** will run from 3-5 May 2013 is for youth ice hockey coaches. This symposium is already fully booked.

■ **KOREA:** **Mongwon Chung** was elected as the new President of the Korea Ice Hockey Association for a four-year term. At the Annual Congress held on 25th January in Seoul, Chung won the presidential election with five

out of eight votes to succeed Gapchul Park, who had served as President for eight years starting in 2005.

Chung had previously served as Vice President of the Korea Ice Hockey Association and was responsible for the national team in the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship program including serving as a Team Leader at the men's national team that won the 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division I Group B in Poland.

■ **ITALY:** The Italian Ice Sports Federation (FISG) announced that it has terminated **Rick Cornacchia's** contract and named **Tom Pokel** as the new head coach of the men's national team.

Pokel was hired to coach the team in the Final Olympic Qualification Group D in Bietigheim-Bissingen, Germany, and in the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division I Group A in Budapest, Hungary, 14-20 April.

# Bids for 2017 Worlds officially entered

## Two co-hosting proposals submitted, winner to be chosen at IIHF Congress in May

ZURICH – The IIHF has officially received the bids for the right to host the 81st IIHF World Championship in 2017. There will be two co-hosting bids for the tournament, one from Germany-France and the other from Denmark-Latvia. The winning bid will be voted on during the 2013 IIHF Congress in Stockholm in May.



Lanxess Arena in Cologne was the main venue for the 2010 IIHF World Championship.



### GERMANY – FRANCE 2017

France and Germany have combined forces to bring the Worlds as part of a wider effort to promote hockey in both countries.

"From our side, hosting the World Championship is a part of the development strategy for France," said French Ice Hockey Federation General Secretary Eric Repert. "We thought

that we wouldn't be able to do it alone, after all the last time we hosted the World Championship was in 1951. We have an excellent working relationship with Germany, and we can benefit from the experience that they had hosting the World Championship in 2010."

■ The plan according to the bid is to have Cologne, Germany as the primary venue, with the secondary venue located at the Palais Omnisport Paris-Bercy Arena in Paris. Cologne's Lanxess Arena – the biggest arena in Europe with a capacity for 18,000 spectators – will host the semi-finals and medal games.

"We chose Cologne because of the good infrastructure and because it is closer to Paris than Berlin," said German Ice Hockey Association General Secretary Franz Reindl.

"In Germany we like to always have a goal on the horizon to reach. Hockey in Germany is very regional, newspapers cover the sport in the major cities like Berlin and Cologne, but at the nationwide level is where we think the sport needs to be promoted, and the World Championship will help with this."



### DENMARK – LATVIA 2017

Next up in the bid list for 2017 are Denmark and Latvia. These two countries may be smaller than their bid rivals, but have repeatedly punched above their weight when it comes to their national ice hockey teams.

For Denmark, the main host, the 2017 Worlds would be the single biggest sporting event that the country has ever hosted. The site for the games in Denmark will be Copenhagen Arena, a planned multi-use indoor arena in the neighbourhood of Ørestad Syd. Construction of the arena is set to begin in mid-2013, and will be able to host up to 12,500 spectators.

"I'm proud of our joint bid for the 2017 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship," says Danish Hockey Federation Pres-

## OBITUARIES

**Damien Velay:** The French referee passed away on 21 January after suffering a cardiac attack. He was just 37 years old.

Velay worked as an official in France since 1995, first as a linesman and since 2005 as a referee. Velay was also an IIHF referee who officiated in several international events including the 2009/2010 IIHF Continental Cup (1st round), the 2011/2012 IIHF Continental Cup (2nd round) and last November in the Men's Olympic Pre-Qualification Group G in Budapest.

**Roland Dellsperger:** the former Swiss national team forward died on 6 February at 65 due to a heart attack.

Dellsperger was one of the best Swiss forwards in the '70s and played in three B-Pool World Championships for Switzerland. He spent 18 years with SC Bern in the National League A and led the team to five national championships.

ident and IIHF Council member Henrik Bach Nielsen. "The event is one of the world's biggest sports events and thus a great and exciting challenge for any host. Our concept for the Denmark part of the finals is based on outstanding facilities in a brand new Copenhagen Arena, a strong event organization and an activation plan that involves the Danish population and further develops Danish hockey."



Once built, Copenhagen Arena will be the first indoor sports facility of its size in Denmark.

■ Since 2003 Latvia has hosted nine IIHF tournaments and three Olympic qualification tournaments. The country has also developed a reputation for having some of the most enthusiastic hockey fans on the continent, and its national team is a regular fixture at World Championships. Latvia's hockey-mad reputation was cemented in 2006 when Riga hosted the World Championship.

"Taking into account the successful organization of the IIHF World Championship 2006 in Latvia I believe that it was a great experience for all participating nations, as well as all parties involved, such as organizers, teams, staff and guests," said Latvian Prime Minister Valdis Dombrovskis. "With the experience the Latvian Hockey Federation gained during this event, we will be honoured to host the Championship in 2017 once again."

Arena Riga, located in the Latvian capital and home to the KHL's Dinamo Riga, will be the second site for the tournament games. There are also plans to set up not just one but three fan zones, one at the arena, another at the Riga Congress Hall, and the last in Riga's Old Town.

# New IIHF Committee list finalized

## New groups will put focus on athletes, player safety

■ The new IIHF Committees have been formed for the new four-year period that began last September with the IIHF Council elections. Committees serve as recommending bodies whose purpose is to propose decisions to be approved and implemented by the IIHF Council. The first committee meetings will take place 28 February to 1 March in Zurich.

### ASIAN STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP

Chairman: Thomas J. Wu

Secretary: Harald Springfield

Committee is made up of the Presidents and General Secretaries of the Asian National Associations.

### ATHLETES COMMITTEE

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Saku Koivu (FIN)

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Gérald Guennelon (FRA)

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Martin Urban (CZE)

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Franz Reindl (GER)

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Co-Chair Development: Paul Carson

Co-Chair Coaching: Tommy Boustedt

Secretary: Dave Fitzpatrick

### DEVELOPMENT

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Marius Gliga (ROU)

Jon Haukeland (NOR)

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Boris Mikhailov (RUS)

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Jan Cerny (CZE)

Peter Forsberg (SWE)

Sergej Gontcharov (UKR)

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Barna Tanczos (ROU)

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### HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

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Andrew Podnieks (CAN)

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Andras Gurovits (SUI)

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Casey Jorgensen (USA)

Sean Kelly (CAN)

Doris Högne Rydheim (SWE)

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Dr Marc Aubry (CAN)

Dr Jaan Mölder (EST)

Dr Jan Nohejl (CZE)

Dr Paul Piccininni (CAN)

Dr Mike Stuart (USA)

Dr Markku Tuominen (FIN)

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Manuel Hüttli (GER)

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Mel Davidson (CAN)

Christine Duchamp (FRA)

Martin Kogler (AUT)

Arto Sieppi (FIN)

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International Ice Hockey Federation  
Brandschenkestrasse 50  
Postfach 1817  
8027 Zürich  
Switzerland

Phone +41 44 562 22 00  
Fax +41 44 562 22 39  
Email office@iihf.com  
Website www.iihf.com





# All aboard for Sochi: Olympic groups set

## Final qualification comes up with a few surprises: 18 th-ranked Slovenes, Japan women's team make it in



With one year to go until Sochi 2014, the five qualifying teams that will complete the field for the Olympic men's and women's ice hockey tournaments have officially earned their spots.

Latvia was the only host nation on the men's side that won its Final Olympic Qualification group. The maroon-white team will be travelling to Sochi next year along with a few surprise underdogs from the other tournaments held this past week, Austria and Slovenia.

On the women's side Germany succeeded on home ice in Weiden while Japan won the group in Slovakia.

Let's have a quick look at the five qualifiers and their road to Sochi.

### Latvia takes care of business in Riga

■ Latvia have now made it to the Olympics for the fourth time in a row. Four and eight years ago respectively the Latvians won the Final Olympic Qualification in Riga. 2013 was no exception, but it wasn't an easy promenade for the home team either.

After defeating Great Britain 6-2, the Latvians gave up a 2-0 lead against Kazakhstan before defeating the Central Asian team 3-2 thanks to an early third-period goal from Lauris Darzins.

The last day became a challenge for mathematicians. Since Kazakhstan also surprisingly defeated France with the same result, 3-2, a French regulation-time win against Latvia on the last day could have caused extensive calculations to determine who would reach Sochi.

It looked like a great day for Les Bleus in front of more than 10,000 fans at Arena Riga. Damien Fleury and Laurent Meunier opened the scoring and France was virtually in Sochi for more than 20 minutes.

But then Darzins into cut the lead, putting Kazakhstan in pole position for some minutes. But after 12 seconds in the



Latvia was the only men's tournament host to advance.



A key win against favourites Belarus in the opening game helped clear Slovenia's path to the Games.

third period Martin Karums tied it up. The 2-2 tie remained after 60 minutes of play and Latvia got the minimum it needed to win the group: one point. Pierre-Edouard Bellemare's overtime-winning goal for France was just for the record.

"I don't really know how, we're a small country but we've got a lot of strength and a lot of... I can't say it but you know what," said a smiling Latvia team captain Sandis Ozolins, when asked how a country of slightly more than 2 million inhabitants has been able to qualify for four consecutive Olympics. Ozolins had previously retired from international hockey after the Torino Olympics in 2006, but returned this year to help his country make it to the Winter Games in Sochi.

### Austria beats out Germany for Sochi spot

■ Austria hasn't been that successful in qualifying for the Olympics in recent years. Four years ago they lost the deciding game to Germany in Hanover 2-1, but this time in Bietigheim-Bissingen the Austrians took revenge on the opponent's home ice and finished the group in first place ahead of Germany and Italy.

It will be the 13th participation in the Olympic men's ice hockey tournament for Austria and the first since 2002 after upsetting Germany, whose streak of participations in Olympic men's ice hockey tournaments since 1952 comes to an end.

Austria went into the last day with a perfect record after defeating Italy 3-2 and the Netherlands 6-1. Thanks to the good start the team just needed one additional point against host Germany, which suffered what turned out to be a key overtime loss against Italy on the second day.

Same as the Latvians, the Austrians got exactly what they needed. They cut into two German leads to celebrate a 2-2 score after 60 minutes and even Patrick Reimer's overtime goal for Germany couldn't spoil the Austrian party in the sold-out arena.

"Right now we still can't believe it because it's an unbeliev-

able feeling. At this point we're just happy that we made it," said Austrian goalie Bernhard Starkbaum, who had 35 saves.

"Tonight we lost, but nobody cares. We played a good tournament and everybody stuck together. That's why we had success. Everybody really deserves to go to Sochi."

### Slovenia will be Olympic rookies

■ Slovenia (18) came in as the third-ranked team out of four in Group F, but needed only two games to secure the tickets to the Sochi Olympics. Both wins came against teams who were ranked considerably higher; Belarus (13) and Denmark (12).

After winning 4-2 against Belarus on opening day and 2-1 against Denmark on Day 2 before a boisterous capacity crowd of 5,000 Danish fans, Slovenia could book their tickets for Sochi, even before playing Ukraine on the final day. It is the first time that Slovenia will take part in an Olympic ice hockey tournament.

This is arguably the biggest qualification upset in the modern era of Olympic ice hockey tournaments.

"This is a miracle, and a great success for our country," said coach Matjaz Kopitar. "We were rewarded for our team play. We were maybe not the most talented team, but we played as a team. We may have had some luck, but I believe that only hard work got you luck."

Slovenia will play in the Olympic men's ice hockey tournament as the lowest-ranked team (18th) and will be seeded in Group A together with Russia, Slovakia and the United States.



Austria ended Germany's Olympic participation streak.

When coach Kopitar calls this a "miracle" it's not far from the truth. Fact is: Slovenia has one professional team (which plays in the Austrian league) and altogether around 140 senior or pro players.

"This was depressing for us," said Denmark coach Per Bäckman after the 2-1 loss, a game which decided everything and put an anticlimactic end to the qualifier after only two days. "We have no excuses, Slovenia were the better team. We had all the players we wanted, except for our NHLers, we got all the support we wanted, but we failed."

Slovenia's hero was David Rodman. After scoring one goal in the 4-2 game against Belarus, he got both against Denmark.

"Nobody expected this from us, we came here as the third-ranked team, we have beaten both the favourites and we are going to the Olympics," said Rodman. "I am really speechless."

"That's Rodman," said coach Kopitar. "A pure goal scorer, our difference maker."

Belarus finished second after defeating Denmark 3-2 in what most expected would be the decider. Denmark took the third position, winless Ukraine was fourth.

Although Slovenia has never participated in an Olympic tournament, former Yugoslavia – mostly with Slovenian players – played in five Olympics, last time at home in 1984 in Sarajevo, what today is the capital of neighbouring Bosnia-Herzegovina.

### German ladies come through on home ice

■ After some tough years, German women's hockey is on the rise again. The U18 women's national team is among the top European talent producers and the senior national team made its way back to the Top Division for last year and managed to stay there.

Now the results are also reflected in Olympic participation. After missing on Vancouver 2010, the German ladies will go to Sochi 2014 thanks to a clean record in the final qualification that took place on home ice in Weiden.

The Germans had the strongest opposition on the first two days and defeated China 3-1 and the Czech Republic with the same score. That was already enough to secure first

place in the tournament. A 5-0 victory over Kazakhstan on the last day was the icing on the cake.

"We have practised all-season for this goal, to qualify for the Olympics. You don't believe it is true, but slowly you start to feel it has become true," said Manuela Anwander, who



Top photo: Japan has earned its first ever Olympic trip via the qualification phase.

Bottom photo: Germany's women's team swept the field in Group D.

had a goal and an assist in the deciding game against the Czechs.

### Japan celebrates landmark qualification

■ The Japanese women's team had only played in one Olympics so far and that was when the country hosted the 1998 Games in Nagano. Now they return to the Olympic stage after winning a tournament full of surprises.

The biggest surprise in Poprad, however, seemed to be Denmark. Ranked only 19th in the world, the Danes had to start in the first of three stages. They won three games in Barcelona in October and surprised with three more wins in Valmiera, Latvia, in November.

Unbelievably, the streak continued with victories over favoured Slovakia (2-1) and Norway (2-1 in shootout).

Only one team could stop the Cinderella story. Japan also defeated Norway but suffered a 1-0 shootout loss to Slovakia before entering the last day.

When it came to the deciding game, luck was not on Denmark's side anymore. Japan shone with scoring efficiency and blanked Denmark 5-0 en route to Sochi.

"We tried to play our best game today. We promised each other we'd go for the win, and we did it," said Japan captain Chiho Osawa.



**IIHF.com** For all qualification highlights: [youtube.com/IIHF](http://youtube.com/IIHF)

## 2014 Winter Olympic Games Ice Hockey Tournament Groups

### Men's tournament

GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C
Russia (1)	Finland (2)	Czech Republic (3)
Slovakia (6)	Canada (5)	Sweden (4)
USA (7)	Norway (8)	Switzerland (9)
Slovenia (18)	Austria (15)	Latvia (11)

-Nations ranked 1-9 according to the 2012 IIHF Men's World Ranking plus three qualifiers.

-The format will be the same as in Vancouver 2010. The four teams with the best records (the group winners and the second-place team with the best record) advance to the quarter-finals, the remaining eight teams will play a qualification game.

### Women's tournament

GROUP A	GROUP B
Canada (1)	Sweden (5)
USA (2)	Russia (6)
Finland (3)	Germany (8)
Switzerland (4)	Japan (11)

-Nations ranked 1-6 according to the 2012 IIHF Women's World Ranking plus two qualifiers

-Note: This is the only major change compared to 2010 as the preliminary round will take place in two tiers,  
-Group A will consist of teams ranked 1-4 while Group B will be comprised of teams ranked 5-8.  
-Quarter-finals: 3A-2B & 4A-1B  
-Semi-finals: 1A vs. winner 4A/1B, 2A vs. winner 3A/2B.



## WORLD JUNIORS RECAP

# Ten things we learned from Ufa 2013

## U.S. on the rise, home not always sweet, OT cruel to Swiss & Ufa knows hockey

By Lucas Aykroyd



It was another thrilling IIHF World Junior Championship in Ufa, Russia, and few could argue that the final result this year was eminently fair. Let's take a closer look at the lessons from 11 days of triumph and tears.

### 1 American dream alive and well

The U.S. struggled to find its offence early on, losing 2-1 to both Russia and Canada. But sticking with rookie coach Phil Housley's system, the Americans defeated Sweden for their second gold medal in the last four years. It was a well-deserved triumph for USA Hockey, which spawns great junior talent each year.

Watching John Gaudreau stickhandle and shoot like a young Sergei Makarov while blueliners Jacob Trouba, Jake McCabe, and Seth Jones delivered great two-way play was a pleasure. Tournament MVP John Gibson (1.36 GAA, 95.5 save percentage) provided brilliant, cool netminding, allowing just two goals in three elimination games.



Gibson's 95.5 save percentage posted a new Team USA goaltending record for a single World Juniors tournament.

### 2 Roger that!

Does Roger Rönnberg leave the Swedish U20 program as its best-ever coach? You can certainly argue so, with all due respect to the piles of silver and bronze that Bengt



Rönnberg went out with silver in his U20 coaching finale.

Ohlson (1978-80), Tommy Tomth (1992-96), and Pär Mårts (2008-10) amassed.

In some ways, Rönnberg's silver-medal performance in Ufa was even more impressive than 2012's gold in Calgary, which broke a 31-year drought for Tre Kronor. In 2013, the 41-year-old Luleå native fostered superb team cohesion while marching to the final without top-shelf talents like forward Mika Zibanejad and defencemen Oscar Klefbom, Jonas Brodin, Hampus Lindholm, and Jesper Pettersson. Articulate, firm, and respectful of his players, he brought a winning mentality, and will be missed.

### 3 Home ice can't save Russia

Amazingly, it's now been 30 years since Russia last won the World Juniors on home ice. The 1983 team prevailed in Leningrad with a roster featuring Sergei Nemchinov and Ilya Byakin. But the hosts failed to top the podium in 1988 and 2001 in Moscow, and a 3-2 semifinal shootout loss to Sweden in Ufa ended their championship hopes this year. At least they wound up with bronze.

In the big picture, the Russians haven't won any big IIHF tournaments at home since the Soviets claimed gold at the 1986 IIHF World Championship in Moscow. They'll want to fix this trend soon – if not at the 2013 IIHF World U18 Championship, certainly at the 2014 Olympics. Both tournaments will take place in Sochi.

### 4 Yakupov can "pull a Kovalchuk"

"Pulling a Kovalchuk," in an IIHF context, isn't about landing a \$100-million contract or potting 30-plus NHL goals every year. Here's the partial parallel between 2013 Russian U20 captain Nail Yakupov and World Championship legend Ilya Kovalchuk.

In Canada 2008, Kovalchuk had a poor tournament with overly individualistic play and was held goalless – until the gold medal game, where he scored twice, including the overtime winner, against Canada.

This year in Ufa, Yakupov only had one goal prior to the bronze medal game and had constantly tried to do too much by himself, but he tallied twice in a 6-5 victory over Canada. If the 19-year-old Edmonton Oiler from Nizhnekamsk keeps learning to use his teammates effectively, he may someday boast a stack of gold medals like Kovalchuk's.

### 5 Canada medal isn't a gimme

Canada, the perennial World Junior favourite, fell short in its golden quest for the fourth consecutive time. Worse



Earning respect: The United States bounced back from a seventh place finish in 2012 to capture its second World Juniors gold medal in three years.

still, its streak of 14 straight medals dating back to 1999 ended. While some fingered easy scapegoats like goaltending or coaching, Hockey Canada's biggest concern must be that the team came out flat in the semi-finals, just like in 2012 – and couldn't stage a dramatic rally as it did against Russia in Calgary. The 5-1 loss to the U.S. didn't show the traditional Canadian fighting spirit.

Will Canada consider the possibility of making its final roster cuts only after the pre-tournament exhibitions, as the U.S. and some other nations now do to increase internal competitiveness? It'll be interesting to monitor.



Nail Yakupov came up big in the bronze medal game.

### 6 Finns struggle with consistency

2013 was supposed to be the year that Finland didn't have to rely totally on its usual strengths of goaltending

and defensive play. With highly touted forwards such as Joel Armia, Markus Granlund and Teuvo Teravainen, coach Harri Rindell's team had the potential to fill the net. Unfortunately, while those three players wound up 2-3-4 in tournament scoring, they only hit their stride during the Relegation Round.

The Finns seemed mentally fragile after losing Miro Aaltonen with a nasty ankle injury in the opener against Latvia, and losses to the Czechs and Swedes bore that out. It's back to the drawing board after a seventh-place finish.

### 7 It's still about the "Big Four"

For the seventh straight year, the World Junior medalists came exclusively from the group including United States, Sweden, Russia, and Canada. The last other nation to medal was Finland (2006, bronze). Traditional powers like the Czech Republic and Slovakia haven't closed the gap. Only a long-term commitment to player development, funding, facilities, and coaching will swell the pool of medal contenders.

### 8 A ray of light for Germany

The senior German national team has trended upward recently, finishing fourth on home ice at the 2010 IIHF World Championship and seventh the following year. Is the U20 team also on the right path? Despite getting trounced in the round-robin by Canada, the United States, and Russia, the Germans kept their place in the elite division with a 5-2 Relegation Round win over Latvia. This marks the first time that Germany has avoided relegation at this tournament since 1997.

### 9 Extra time can be extra-cruel

Poor Switzerland. Head coach Sean Simpson's hard-working crew lost shootouts against Sweden (3-2), Finland (5-4), and Russia (5-4), and also fell in overtime to the Czechs (4-3). "That doesn't happen very often," said a rueful Simpson. "Normally you win at least one." It's hard to be inches away from vying for a medal and instead settle for sixth place.

### 10 Ufa knows hockey

During the medal games, TSN ran messages on the Ufa Arena video scoreboard thanking the people of Ufa for their hospitality. Warm applause was the response, and it was fitting. Volunteers, arena workers, security, and local fans went out of their way to make visitors feel welcome in the capital of the Republic of Bashkortostan.

It was the first time the World Juniors have ever taken place this far east, nearly 1,200 kilometres from Moscow. The attendance of more than 110,000 and the enthusiastic ambience set the bar high for next year's host city: Malmö, Sweden.



Ufa's hockey town atmosphere was plain for all to see. Photos: Andre Ringuette / HHOF-IIHF Images

## All-Stars and Stripes

USA well-represented in 2013 awards

■ Team USA's John Gibson became the first goalie since Steve Mason (CAN) in 2008 to be named MVP. Gibson was also one of four Americans named to the 2013 All-Star team.

Canada's Ryan Nugent-Hopkins was selected as the tournament's top forward. The Burnaby native and 2011 No. 1 NHL draft pick scored 15 points (4G, 11A) in six games.

Playing in his second World Junior tournament, Sweden's Filip Forsberg led his team in shots on goal and at 18 years-old captured his fourth IIHF World Championship medal, adding to last year's U20 gold and two U18 silvers.



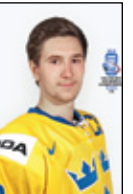
**John Gibson:**  
All-Star Team Goalkeeper,  
Directorate Best Goalkeeper,  
Most Valuable Player

**Jake McCabe:**  
All-Star Team Defenceman



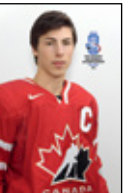
**Jacob Trouba:**  
All-Star Team Defenceman,  
Directorate Best Defenceman

**Filip Forsberg:**  
All-Star Team Forward



**John Gaudreau:**  
All-Star Team Forward

**Ryan Nugent-Hopkins:**  
All-Star Team Forward,  
Directorate Best Forward





# Canada wins Women's U18 World's in OT Evens up gold count with USA, Hungary proves it belongs



By Adam Steiss

**A thrilling 2-1 overtime comeback victory by Canada capped off the first major tournament of the 2013 calendar.**

"Winning the gold medal... it just feels amazing," said Hannah Bunton, who had the key assist on Canada's game-winning goal. "We've worked so hard for it and put in so much effort in the last two weeks and it just feels amazing."

The game very nearly ended in regulation in favour of the United States, but for a last-gasp goal from Canada's Catherine Dubois, who tied the game with 12 seconds left to send it into overtime.

Then 58 seconds into the extra frame Hanna Bunton got the puck in the U.S. zone to the left of the net, stickhandled the puck towards goaltender Sidney Peters and at the last moment sent a backhand pass to an open Karly Heffernan in the slot for the overtime winner and Canada's second consecutive gold medal.

"I remember being in the slot open and calling for the puck," said Heffernan. "She passed it perfectly right on the tape and I took the shot far side and it went in...though I don't really remember that part I sort of blacked out [laughs]."

Dubois' goal ended the United States' new shutout record for a U18 Women's World Championship. The USA went 299 minutes without allowing a goal in the tournament.

■ With the victory, Canada claimed its third gold medal to bring it even with the U.S. in the six-year head-to-head history between the two teams at the U18 Women's World Championship. Following the game, the Directorate Awards named Team USA's Katherine Schipper Best Forward and MVP, Canada's Halli Krzyzaniak Best Defenceman, and Swedish goaltender Minatsu Murase Best Goaltender.

As for Canada, the heart attack kids got to leave Finland with gold around their necks.

## Hungary draws inspiration from tragedy

■ The Canadian victory marked another chapter in what has become an annual gold medal battle between the top two international women's U18 teams.

There were other stories to share from the 2013 tournament. Sweden collected its second straight bronze medal, but the biggest surprise of the tournament had to be Hungary.

The newcomers to the top division who not only gave Canada a tough time in its opening game but followed that up with a 2-1 overtime upset of Germany. The victory over Germany was the first ever for a Hungarian women's team in the top division of an IIHF World Championship.

The Hungarian ladies ended up in sixth place and will compete again in the top division next year. This, for a team that had to go through the qualification tourna-



**Cardiac kids:** Canada left it until 12 seconds left in the final before coming back to beat the U.S.



*With Ocskay's jersey hanging on the bench, Hungary's U18 team earned the country's first ever victory in a top division IIHF World Championship.*

ment last year to play in the 2012 Division I tournament, and ended up winning it all.

■ It was a feel-good moment for the country, which has had its ups and downs on the international hockey stage, and had one of its greatest successes marred by a tragic death five years ago.

In 2008, the Hungarian men's national team won the IIHF World Championship Division I tournament, riding a perfect 5-0 record to qualify for the top division. This was the first time since 1939 that Hungary had qualified to play in the top division.

The team was keyed by star player Gabor Ocskay, a three-time Hungarian League top scorer who returned to win back to back Hungarian Championships after being out of the game for four months in 2004 when he was diagnosed with heart disease.

But only two days after winning his second Hungarian championship with Alba Volan Székesfehérvár, Ocskay passed away on the night of 24th March 2009 of a heart attack, just days before he was to begin training for the World Championship. His death sent shockwaves across the country, and is remembered by every player and official on the U18 women's national team.

"I was at home because it was early in the morning when I heard," said IIHF Council member Zsuzsanna Kolbenheyer. "My father played to together with Gabor's father on the same defensive line so they were very good friends and we knew the family well. It was shocking and really tough to deal with."

"It happened three weeks before the start of the world championship, he was the captain and the heart and soul

of the team, and I think his passing shook the team, which was really good at that time. He was a big hockey hero in Hungary."

"I always followed his career and thought he was one of the best," said defenceman Monika Molnar. "It was a really tragic moment in the country when he died, I remember when the news came out my grandmother heard it over the radio and told me, then soon after I went to the rink and candles were already being lit there in remembrance."

Without their top forward, Hungary got swept in the preliminary and relegation round. The country since then has not returned to the top division in any IIHF tournament. That is until the women's U18 team came along and, with Gabor's jersey hanging behind the team bench for every game, won the 2012 Division I Group A tournament and made it to Finland. Finishing the 2013 U18 World Championship in sixth place, the team is assured of a spot in the top division next year.

■ Drawing on a pool of only 389 registered female hockey players in the entire country, Hungary's roster is largely made up of players from around the capital of Budapest, home to four mixed-gender teams.

Up until age 19, a female hockey player can play with an Under-16 boy's club. While offering few development opportunities beyond that age, it has allowed the girls talented enough to play in these teams a chance to play an extended season and to hone their game in a demanding environment.

"It's a big challenge, the game is a lot faster and there is body checking, even in the world championship we don't check," said Alexandra Huszak, who scored the winning goal against Germany and led her team in points. "But I think it helps us to improve our game all around. We also play a lot of games, about 50 per year, which is really great."

And the infrastructure, non-existent not too long ago, has progressed to the point where the country now has 18 fully functional indoor rinks.

"It's very different now, we used to play only on an open ice rink and it would be tough to practise when it was raining or snowing (laughs)," said Kolbenheyer, who holds the distinction of being the country's first registered female ice hockey player. "We also didn't have any ice between April and October, and no ice machines. I wish I had what they have now but we had to start somewhere."

Two years ago, new government regulations allowed companies to donate their taxes to one of five youth sports, one of which is ice hockey, which has helped to offset the cost of equipment for parents.

Will it be enough for Hungary to have consistent success in IIHF World Championships? It may be too soon to tell, but for at least one group of young ladies, things are heading in the right direction.



# Ottawa set for record Women's Worlds 23 years later, women's hockey has changed

By Andrew Podnieks



**In 1990, Team Canada wore pink sweaters. All eight teams were coached by men. On-ice officials were men, and attendance wasn't even recorded at the mostly small venues.**

On the other hand, TSN broadcast the gold-medal game, a landmark event. Four players from the event went on to be inducted into the IIHF Hall of Fame, and two into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Welcome to the contradiction that was the historic and first ever Women's World Championship, held in Ottawa some 23 years ago. And in less than two months, the women's game – now so different and advanced the 1990 version is barely recognizable – returns to the site of that inaugural event where organizers expect to obliterate all attendance records.

"Sales are going really well," explained Cyril Leeder, president of Senators Sports & Entertainment and vice-chair of the Women's World Championship committee (with Fran Ryder).

"We'll have over 200,000 attendees by the time the event is over. Previously Winnipeg had the record, but we'll exceed that total by 70,000. Right now, we're at 80,000 tickets sold, which is near 50 per cent of our target, and within two weeks we'll surpass Winnipeg. The interest has really picked up."

Indeed, the upcoming tournament is going to be the largest event in the history of women's hockey, an event that began with a bidding process and ended with a collaboration of unprecedented enthusiasm and size.

Leeder expanded: "There were two groups interested in hosting – ourselves, and the Ontario Women's Hockey Association. We contacted the OWSHA and formed a partnership, so that the Senators and the OWSHA would co-host this year in Ottawa. This was a key factor."



*The upcoming tourney is shaping up to be the biggest yet.*

"As well, the big event for the OWSHA every year is the girls' provincial hockey championships with nearly 500 teams descending on Toronto every April. We were able to move that event to Ottawa to coincide with the World Women's, so we'll have thousands of players taking up every hotel room in the city. It's going to be a great atmosphere. Our pitch

was to stage the largest celebration of women's hockey ever taken place. It's really an OWSHA-Senators event."

■ The preparations began pretty much immediately after Hockey Canada considered the bids in April 2011, and the combination of this remarkable collaboration as well as Ottawa's successful hosting of the U20 tournament in 2009 was more than enough to convince Hockey Canada that Canada's capital city was the place to be in 2013.



**Party in the nation's capital:** 2012 World Champions Canada get to defend their title on home ice.

In 1990, games were played in small community arenas, with the showcase Canada-United States final at the Civic Centre, home to the 67's of the OHL. This time, Group A games (Canada, Finland, Switzerland, United States) will take place at the Senators' home, the 20,000-seat Scotiabank Place. Group B games will be played at the smaller Sportsplex, also in Nepean.

"The Civic Centre is under renovation for the next two years and is closed, but the Sportsplex is a good size for the pool B teams that will be in town with a capacity of about 2,000," said Geoff Publow, who is working alongside Leeder and was a key member of the team's successful 2009 U20 bid. "We're focused on creating an exciting environment for those teams while they're in Canada. And we have the large NHL size venue here at Scotiabank Place for Team Canada and USA and the pool A teams."

"We already have more than 200 of the girls' teams buy tickets for the double-header on Friday, April 5," Leeder enthused of the anticipation for the United States-Switzerland and Canada-Finland games. "The OWSHA has also been great, customizing their tournament schedule to the Women's Worlds. They are starting a day earlier and have a day off on the 5th so the girls teams will all have a chance to watch Team Canada play at least once."

■ The women's event differs from the U20 in one key area—dates. "Because the schedule is so tight, there are four games going on most days," Leeder explained. "Unlike the World Juniors, which happens during the Christmas holidays where people are more flexible with their schedule, this time the event is in April, so we focused on filling

the 20,000 seats with the main ticket package, and we have a number of initiatives to get people into the Sportsplex games. But those games will be at noon and 4pm, so it's a little difficult compared to the Canada pool which play at 3.30 and 7.30. We've had to get creative."

■ The Senators' interest in playing host is a microcosm of what Hockey Canada wants to create around the country – increased participation at the lowest levels of the game.

"Financial legacy and funding are two of the keys to Hockey Canada's development strategy," Publow said. "The event will generate a fund to focus on hockey development in excess of \$700,000. Much of that will stay in Ontario and in Ottawa and focus on grassroots female hockey development programs, but it will also be spread across Hockey Canada's 13 branches across the country. That's a significant boost for the female game."

"From the Senators' perspective," Leeder continued, "we get involved because we want to see grassroots hockey grow. If we can expose more girls and boys to seeing Team Canada play at the highest level, and experience the excitement of cheering their country on, it's an important part of getting them on skates and developing hockey fans for life."

■ Perhaps the only conflict of interest between hosting the Women's Worlds and working for an NHL team was the

aforementioned schedule. At first, the games were to take place during the final week of the NHL calendar, meaning the Senators would have to go on the road for the last week and a half of the season. In a league where playoff spots are often determined in the final days, that could have had a crucial result on the team's NHL season. But, thanks to the labour conflict and delayed season, those worries have been removed.



*Switzerland was last year's Cinderella story, winning bronze.*

"As it turned out, we still have two more weeks of NHL hockey after, so it's actually worked out better. We still have six or seven home games after the Women's Worlds," Leeder noted.

And for fans in eastern Ontario, this year's event isn't likely to be the last. "We want to be active with Hockey Canada and bid on other events," Publow confirmed. "They have a number of World Juniors they're scheduled to host over the next seven or eight years, so we'll be actively bidding on those."





# IIHF Snapshots



Photo: Martinis Aise



Photo: Jana Chytilova / HHOF-IIHF Images

Sweden defeated the Czech Republic 4-0, winning bronze at the women's U18.



Photo: Andre Ringuette / HHOF-IIHF Images

Switzerland gave Russia a scare, taking the hosts to a shootout in the U20 quarter-final.



Photo: Marco Leopold / City-Press

German defenceman Benedikt Kohl tries to force Dutch goaltender Ian Meirdres to give up the puck during Group D action at the Final Olympic Qualification tournament.



Photo: Richard Wolowicz / HHOF-IIHF Images



Photo: Andre Ringuette / HHOF-IIHF Images

Above: Team USA jumps the boards after the final whistle blew at the 2013 World Juniors, later on bringing the trophy into the locker room to continue the celebrations. It was the country's third gold medal in the tournament, and the second since 2010.



Photo: TIHF

With eight points in two games, Seda Semir gave Turkey all the offence it needed to earn promotion at the 2013 Women's World Championship Division II Group B Qualification.



Photo: Jakub Sukup

Japan's women's team had an unusual but unmistakably Japanese way of celebrating after scoring a goal, gathering together in a circle and bowing to each other on the ice.

## Donbass Donetsk dethrones Dragons

### Ukrainian KHL team writes Continental Cup history



By Martin Merk

One year ago the Rouen Dragons won the Continental Cup – a landmark international success for French hockey – after defeating Donbass Donetsk 5-2 on home ice.

This year Donbass took revenge and slew the Dragons, 7-1, on home ice. It was the biggest international triumph by a Ukrainian hockey team led to Donbass even being honoured by a presidential reception.

"It's nice to win the Continental Cup. I love winning and we won all three games, conceded just one goal and the fans were great," Finnish forward Tuomas Kiiskinen said after the game with the gold medal dangling around his neck. "The first two games were really hard for us, so we expected the last game to be harder."

This season's team was quite different to the squad that fell to Rouen one year earlier. Between the 2012 and 2013 Continental Cups, the club took a big step by joining the Russian-based Kontinental Hockey League.

Donbass had to sign several new players in order to be competitive and the Continental Cup included only four Ukrainian players after the departure of NHL players Ruslan Fedotenko, Olexi Ponikarovsky and Anton Babchuk following the end of the labour dispute in North America.



With a 2013 Continental Cup and a place in the KHL, Donbass Donetsk is spearheading a hockey revival in Ukraine.

A new coach, Julius Supler, came in, and the Slovak got quite a challenge having ten different nationalities on his team. With players coming from Belarus, Canada, the Czech Republic, Finland, Latvia, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden, Ukraine and the U.S., the 62-year-old needs some polyglot skills in the eastern Ukrainian city.

"I have to make quick decisions and everybody has to understand. It's a pretty interesting job. You have to be alert all the time," Supler said.

"I start in Russian and translate everything to English," he said before adding with a smile: "If somebody doesn't understand, I will say some harsh words in Slovak, after that everybody understands."

His players seemed to understand very well. After a rough start with a tight 1-0 victory against Belarusian champion Metallurg Zhlobin, the Ukrainians followed up with a 3-0 blanking of Italy's Bolzano Foxes before defeating Rouen in the deciding game.



The Ukrainian champions surrendered just one goal and netted 11 in three games.

Donbass got some strong goaltending with Slovak Jan Laco only allowing one goal from 54 shots in three games for a 98.15 save percentage. The scoring stats were – apart from Rouen's top forwards Julien Desrosiers, François-Pierre Guénette and Marc-André Thinel – dominated by Donbass players. Yevgeni Dadonov and Denis Kochetkov had five points each, Kiiskinen and Ukrainian national team forward Sergi Varlamov scored their two goals apiece in the deciding game against Rouen, and American defenceman Clay Wilson had two markers throughout the tournament.

"I'm relieved, tired and satisfied. It was a sweet revenge especially winning on home ice," said Varlamov, one of the few players who returned from last season's team. "We did it in a way fans expected it to be with many goals. We were patient when we couldn't really get it going in the beginning of the tournament. But in the last game luck was on our side."

Early in the first period Donbass Donetsk showed why the Ukrainians were the favourites going in. Facing Donbass' speed, puck-control, and precise passing, Rouen's French national team goalkeeper Fabrice Lhenry was under constant pressure.

The Ukrainians opened the scoring already at 1:54 by capitalizing on a power play after 17 seconds. Lukas Kaspar passed the puck from the goal line on the left side to Varlamov, who netted the puck for the first goal.

The French got the opportunity to bounce back playing almost four minutes with a man advantage but the team wasn't able to produce anything. And a few minutes later a Rouen goal was disallowed because a forward stood in Laco's crease.

Swedish forward David Fredriksson ended Laco's shutout streak after 129:57 minutes to tie the game with a shot from the blue-line. But the direction changed drastically after Kiiskinen's tip-in goal 13 seconds before the first intermission. Donbass ramped up the offensive pressure and Rouen took three unanswered penalties. Wilson, Kiiskinen and Varlamov capitalized with three power-play markers within less than three minutes to make it 5-1.

"We lost the game due to indiscipline. At this level discipline is key," said Rouen defenceman Jonathan Janil. "Internationally the officiating is different than in France and we have to adjust. I think we played a solid game otherwise. We were not bad when playing in full strength."

The goals stopped midway through the period but Sergei Peretyagin and Peter Podhradsky added two more in the final frame for the final score of 7-1 before the celebrations began and fireworks illuminated the sky over Donetsk.

It was a big success for the newcomer on the fast lane. Although hockey came to the mining city in the '70s, today's hockey club was only founded in 2005 when the arena got an ice rink back after more than ten years.



Captain Vaclav Nedorost raising the 2013 Continental Cup.

Photos: Valeri Dudush

The owner's plan is ambitious. Apart from joining the KHL, Telekanal Hockey, a national 24-7 hockey channel, was created one year ago to popularize hockey in Ukraine. New ice rinks are being built across the country and Donbass hopes to play in a huge state-of-the-art arena soon that is also planned to be part of a future IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship bid from Ukraine.

In April Donetsk will again host an international tournament. Ukraine hopes to win the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division I Group B to get back to Group A.

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





# Captain America guides troops to gold

## Housley: "It was a team-first attitude that we wanted"

By Adam Steiss

For a former player whose impressive international resume earned him an induction into the IIHF Hall of Fame last year, Team USA U20 head coach Phil Housley's gold medal in Ufa was surprisingly the first he has earned at an IIHF competition.

After returning to Stillwater, Minnesota to resume coaching his high school hockey team, Housley reflects on his team's accomplishments at the 2013 World Juniors and shared his thoughts with Ice Times about the U.S.' World Junior triumph and the state of junior hockey in country.

**How was the flight home from Ufa?**

It was pretty funny because we won the gold medal and got to only spend about an hour and a half at the hotel, then we had to get on a bus at about 1 am to get to the airport for our flight, so we didn't really get a lot of time to celebrate and then from that point it took me about 30 hours to get back to Minnesota. I wouldn't change anything as it was a really great experience but it would have been nice to get to spend more time after with the coaching staff and the team.

**You've had a few months now to sit back and reflect on the tournament, what was the experience like for you as a coach?**

Certainly the whole process, starting way back in Lake Placid in the summer, getting the roster down to the number we had in Ufa, the exhibition games in Helsinki, the way our team came together was a great ride for me as a coach. Even though we lost a couple of games in the preliminary round we won the games we had to.

It seemed that, from the Slovakia game, where we needed to win every game from then on, everything started to click and our momentum was great. Then the quarters, the semis, and the final were unlike anything that I thought they were going to be, but I'm proud of the way our guys played and how they represented our country.

**With the hockey career you've had, certainly you must have a lot of great memories from your playing days, but how does this World Juniors experience rank amongst those?**

It's gotta be right up there, when you sit back and have time to look back at things you've accomplished you realize how hard it is to actually win a World Championship. It's got to be up there with my playing experiences: winning the World Cup of Hockey, earning the silver medal in 2002.

But being a coach behind the bench you of course don't have as much control on the game than you do as a player. But that's the great thing about it, the players

respected what we had to say and bought into our team gameplan and it all came together when it needed to and it was something that I'll never forget.

**When you first brought the team together in Lake Placid, was there one message or philosophy that you wanted to implement in the team?**

It was a team-first attitude that we wanted. Most of these players if not all play on the power play on their own respective teams and are impact players on their teams. The guys needed to buy into the roles that we envisioned for them and there was no second-guessing, they just came together and because of this experience

They helped my career before I was drafted, and the message for the players was that they should realize how special it is and how important it is to play for your country, because you can't take for granted that you're always going to make the national team. You may not get a chance so enjoy this opportunity, and also I told them that in all the years that I played in international competition I never had the chance to play for a gold medal, and I wanted them to make the most of this opportunity.

**The U.S. national team development program has been in place for 16 years now. We've seen some really great results for the U.S. at the U18 level, and now with two U20 gold medals in the last four years what can you say about the program's role in U.S. Junior hockey?**

I think if you have a chance as a junior player in the U.S. to go and improve and develop your game that's the place to play. Granted it's not for everybody, some kids like to stay home and develop which is ok also. But if you really want to push yourself to the limits you have access to outstanding coaches and great facilities and tough competition, especially at the U18 level where you're playing college teams and playing two or three times a year in Europe.

With those experience your level of maturity grows and I think that's the reason why we're seeing more and more players from the United States being picked high in the first round (of NHL drafts).



Housley, seen here addressing the team after the World Juniors final, played in six World Championships and won a silver medal at the 2002 Olympics. But his first gold medal came this year as Team USA's coach.

Photo: Andre Ringuette / IIHF Images

they'll all be friends for a long time even though they'll be playing on different teams.

**You yourself played in the 1982 World Juniors, how would you compare the talent level of your team and that of other countries back then versus today?**

If I look at 1982, the overall depth of all the teams is the biggest difference, especially this year in particular because of the lockout. Every player can play, whether that translates into playing in the NHL, KHL or another elite league in Europe remains to be seen, but definitely they belong on these national teams at this age. They're still young and their development is still going to move ahead, but the depth overall at this level is just getting better year after year.

**With your experience playing for Team USA internationally, did you have any advice for the players about wearing the jersey of the national team?**

From a player's perspective the national team had a major impact on my playing career, beginning with the world junior to the senior level.

**With the Olympics in Sochi coming up next year would you be interested in a coaching job with the senior national team?**

Well I certainly would take any role they would offer, for me it's my next step to either get more involved in the NHL or internationally. We have a good crop of players right now and last time we came one win away from a gold medal, so it's an exciting time for U.S. hockey and I would love to be a part of it.



### Fact file: Phil Housley

- Born: March 9, 1964 in St. Paul, Minnesota
- 1998 Stanley Cup finalist with Washington
- Seven-time NHL All-Star
- Played in six IIHF World Championships
- 2002 Winter Olympic silver medalist
- Inducted into IIHF Hall of Fame in 2012