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Photos: (top) Andre Ringuette / HHOF-IIHF Images, (bottom) Martin Miek

Top Picture: Alexander Ovechkin waves the Russian flag after his team rode an undefeated record to World Championship gold. Bottom picture: IIHF General Secretary Horst Lichtner addresses the Hockey Forum.



After celebrating Russia's 23rd IIHF World Championship gold in Helsinki, we went to Barcelona to try to unite the various stakeholder groups in Europe.

RENÉ FASEL EDITORIAL

The Hockey Forum was a success, but the real work starts now.

It was the first time the IIHF invited all stakeholders of our sport in Europe to a meeting in order to try to address the fragmented ice hockey situation on the old continent. Present were national associations, representatives of the top European leagues, their clubs, the union of leagues (Hockey Europe) and European Trophy, the tournament which represents 32 of Europe's top teams. All in all, we were more than 150 people in the Catalan capital.

What came out on June 12-14 were three very productive days. On Day 1, we listened how the other major team sports in Europe (football, basketball, handball) organized their European club competitions and how they have restructured their governance structures to accommodate the growing influence from the pro leagues and their clubs.

■ ■ How to re-launch a sustainable European club competition and how to reform the IIHF's current structure

were the two main subjects, together with the issue of how to achieve harmony between the associations and the leagues regarding the national team breaks and release of players to these events.

The issues are many. Each one represents a challenge of its own and you cannot solve everything in three days. But some very important resolutions were reached, the most important being that all relevant stakeholders will assign representatives to join forces in working groups which will address these issues.

I would like to say thank you to all presenters, panelists and specially invited guests who participated and who made those three days really worthwhile. It is my wish that the word "Barcelona" will in some years from now be synonymous with a new era of cooperation and progress, not only in Europe but in the world of ice hockey.

■ ■ The 76th IIHF World Championship in Finland and Sweden was the first co-hosted event of our annual flag-ship championship since 1930. As Russia stormed to one of the most impressive showings for many years while claiming its 23rd Worlds gold medal (including 19 from the Soviet days), there were things which we were not entirely content with.

During the Annual Congress in Helsinki, I voiced concerns about the many empty seats and the ensuing negative press this caused. The brand of the World Championship

took a hit and we all must admit that we must assume responsibility for the situation, especially the pricing of the tickets. It was in many cases (in particular for the top games) far above of what a regular fan could afford.

As we will be back in Sweden and Finland next year, and Stockholm will assume the role of main host, we will do everything we can to regain the confidence of the fans.

With this in mind, the briefing for the 2013 organising committee has already begun.

The 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship proved once again how difficult it is to win on home ice. This was the 25th consecutive men's senior event without the host winning gold. Next challenger to try and break the curse is Sweden, who has never won gold on home ice.

■ ■ Congratulations to Canada, who despite a bad tournament-opening loss to the USA, came back to win the Women's gold in Burlington, their 10th but the first since 2007. USA, which claimed gold in 2008, 2009 and 2011, saw their streak stopped.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to organizers of all our 26 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championships this past season, and I wish all hockey fans a great summer.

René Fasel
IIHF President

Jamaica, Qatar join IIHF ranks

Federation welcomes first Caribbean nation, membership at 72

HELSINKI – The International Ice Hockey Federation grows to 72 members countries as two new members were accepted by the 2012 IIHF Annual Congress.

Jamaica joins the IIHF as an associate member, and Qatar as a full member under the precondition of an audit.

The Jamaican Olympic Ice Hockey Federation was founded last winter. The Caribbean country has one ice rink and currently 20 players but aims to grow the game and fulfill the criteria to participate in IIHF tournaments in the future.

And the dream is to once participate at the Olympics like the Jamaican bobsled team in Calgary 1988 that became famous in the film "Cool Runnings".



The organization is chaired by Edmond L. Philipps Jr., and his son Edmond R. Philipps, a player and Level 4 coach,

JAMAICA FACTS
Population: 2,889,187
Area: 10,991 sq km
Location: island in the Caribbean Sea, south of Cuba
Capital City: Kingston
Status: IIHF Associate Member

QATAR FACTS
Population: 1,951,591
Area: 11,586 sq km
Location: Middle East, peninsula bordering the Persian Gulf and Saudi Arabia
Capital City: Doha
Status: IIHF Full Member (pending audit)

NEWS & NOTES

■ **AUSTRIA:** The Austrian Ice Hockey Association named Alpo Suhonen its new sport director. Suhonen has coached both the Finnish national team and the Chicago Blackhawks.

■ **CANADA:** Hockey Canada named Steve Spott (Kitchener Rangers) head coach of Canada's National Junior Team for the 2013 World Juniors in Ufa. Dan Church will continue as women's national team coach.

■ **KAZAKHSTAN:** The Kazakhstan Ice Hockey Federation released its national coach Andrei Shayanov. The members of the committee decided to release the coach due to "unsatisfactory results and performances" at the 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship. The committee also accepted the resignation of the team's General Manager, Nurlan Orazbayev.

■ **LATVIA:** The Latvian Hockey Federation named Leonids Tambijevs head coach of the U20 national team. The 41-year-old coached the U18 national team that finished in ninth place at the 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship. Before retiring in 2008, Tambijevs represented Latvia in 208 national team games including 15 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championships (11 in the Top Division) and two Olympic Winter Games.

■ **POLAND:** Piotr Halasik has been elected President of the Polish Ice Hockey Association after his predecessor Zdzislaw Ingielewicz didn't stand for re-election. The other elected board members are: Piotr Demianczuk (Vice President), Mariusz Wolosz (Vice President), Dawid Chwalka (Treasurer), Kazimierz Szynal, Adam Zieba, Andrzej Skowronski and Marta Zawadzka.

■ **RUSSIA:** The Russian Hockey Federation named Mikhail Varnakov as the new head coach of the U20 national team. The former national team forward coached second-tier club team HK Sarov recently. Mikhail Chekanov will take over the women's national team after having held the same position in China last season.

■ **TURKEY:** The Turkish Ice Hockey Federation has elected Orhan Duman as Federation Chairman on 7 April.

■ **UKRAINE:** Head coach Anatoli Khomenko will not return as head coach of the national team next season. He will be replaced by Olexander Kulikov, who has been the head coach of Donbass Donetsk.

■ **USA:** USA Hockey has announced that Phil Housley has been named head coach of the 2013 U.S. National Junior Team. It is Housley's first stint as the head coach of a U.S. National Team after serving as an assistant coach for the 2007 (bronze) and 2011 (bronze) U.S. National Junior Teams and the 2011 U.S. Men's National Team. The Americans also re-signed Katey Stone for the women's national team.

■ **IIHF:** Simona Richiger has begun work for the IIHF as a Receptionist with IT and Administration Tasks as of June 1, 2012. Simona is Swiss, currently living in Regensdorf. She finished her commercial apprenticeship in the Administration of Canton Zürich in 2008. Since 2008 she served as a clerical assistant at the commercial register in Zürich.



OBITUARIES

Miro Subrt was associated with the game for more than 60 years, 55 of these with the IIHF. He was the longest serving top-rank official in international ice hockey, and was part of 14 Olympic ice hockey tournaments, starting in 1960 at Squaw Valley. For many of the Olympic tournaments Subrt was the IIHF's Technical Delegate.



1926-2012

From 1957, Subrt was a directorate member at the IIHF World Championships and Olympic ice hockey tournaments. He was chairman of the 1959 IIHF World Championship Organizing Committee and elected the same year to the IIHF Council, later becoming its Vice President in 1966. Subrt stepped down from the IIHF Council during the 2003 IIHF General Congress in Marbella. He was named IIHF Life President soon after and was elected to the IIHF Hall of Fame in 2004. He passed away on April 5 at age 85.

Paul Cyr, a member of Canada's gold-medal winning U20 team in 1982, passed away at age 48 on 19 May in Nakusp, British Columbia. That 1982 team was the first to win gold for Canada at the U20 World Championship under Hockey Canada's Program of Excellence. Cyr went on to play 470 NHL games.

Roman Gasser passed away on 20 February at age 94. He was a referee-in-chief who was a significant influence on hockey in Italy for several decades. Born in Bolzano in 1917, Gasser served in World War II as a pilot before he became a player and pioneer for Italian hockey. He was the referee-in-chief for 24 years and received the Medal of Merit in Sport by the Italian National Olympic Committee.

Vladimir Krutov, two-time Olympic champion, five-time World Champion and one of the finest players ever to come out of the Soviet Union, passed away on 6 June in Moscow at age 52. Krutov was named to the IIHF World Championship Best Forward twice (1986, 1987) and was selected to the All Star Team on four occasions (1983, 1985, 1986, 1987). In official international competition (IIHF Worlds, Olympics, Canada Cup) Krutov scored 89 goals, added 75 assists for an astounding 164 points in 123 games. He also won 11 Soviet national championships with CSKA Moscow.



Pekka Marjamäki died of a heart attack in Tampere on 10 May at 64 years of age. Marjamäki represented Finland in ten World Championships and twice in the Olympics, and wore the blue and white national team sweater 251 times. At the 1975 World Championship he led his team in scoring and was named Best Defenceman of the tournament. He also won five Finnish championships with Tappara Tampere.

Frantisek Prochazka passed away at the age of 50 on 27 April. Prochazka was known as a defenceman with great offensive abilities in his native country. In 95 games for the Czechoslovak national team he scored 14 goals and won the bronze medal at the 1992 Olympics in Albertville and three IIHF World Championship bronze medals (1989, 1990, 1992).

Valeri Vasiliev passed away on 19 April at the age of 62. Anchoring the Soviet Union's defensive corps, he won eight IIHF World Championship titles between 1970 and 1982, two Olympic gold medals (1972, 1976), one Olympic silver (1980) and the 1981 Canada Cup. He was on the 1976 inaugural Canada Cup team and played in the historic 1972 Summit Series against Canada. Vasiliev played in 116 Worlds and Olympic games, scoring 18 goals. He was named World Championship Best Defenceman 1973, 1977 and 1979, and inducted into the IIHF Hall of Fame in 1998.

HOCKEY FORUM

Hockey Forum eye-opener for stakeholders

Mandate aimed at improving the game in Europe

By Martin Merk

BARCELONA – The IIHF organized for the first time a Hockey Forum dedicated to topics concerning European ice hockey and invited all stakeholders to openly discuss, listen and draw conclusions.

The event was seen as a vital success in terms of generating ideas that that could have a lasting effect on European ice hockey in the years to come if converted to action.

The Hockey Forum with more than 150 participants representing clubs, leagues, national associations, broadcasters and other stakeholders started with presentations from other major team sports from which ice hockey can learn.

leagues. The same opinion was shared in an internet fan poll.

Some club representatives, however, suggest guaranteed long-time participation rather than having qualification principles based on the European credibility model of sport.

It was agreed that the various stakeholders name representatives to join together and work on a European club competition.

Another core topic was governance structures in international sport federations – an issue the IIHF wants to work on with the new Council that will be elected in September. The goal is to bring stakeholders closer together in deci-



Bringing together over 150 participants from around the hockey world, the Forum addressed core issues on the state of European hockey.

Then it went over to the core topics of a pan-European club competition, reforming governance structures and finding the optimal solution and balance between national teams and leagues for an international calendar.

One first lesson was that the competitors are not within ice hockey, but other sports around it. Sports that have been more successful in using synergies to create successful European club competitions. This was one of the main topics on the agenda.

The European Trophy, the Kontinental Hockey League and the IIHF presented their visions of what such a competition can look like and they mainly differed in two components:

- Firstly, whether it should be a permanent pan-European league that would affect the existing national leagues – such as the KHL's suggestion to expand to 64 teams – or whether it should be a Champions League style competition run parallel and in collaboration with the national leagues.
- Secondly, whether such a competition should be open and built on sporting qualification principles (Champions League model), or whether it should be closed and invitational (NHL, European Trophy).

While no formal decisions were taken, participants demonstrated an overwhelming tendency towards a European club competition played parallel to the national

sion-making processes and meet with demands to give leagues and clubs more voice.

"One of the main reasons to have this forum is to put the governance structure into question," said IIHF General Secretary Horst Lichtner. "We have to discuss this and we have to come to different conclusions than what we have today. The critical question is whether the stakeholders are listening, whether they're at the same table and whether they can have their say."

Another important issue on the agenda was the international hockey calendar, how to optimize it and find the right balance between league and national team play. European and North American hockey calendars need to be taken into account same as important sport events to ensure large TV coverage.

Solutions need to be found for pinnacle events, but also for giving developing hockey nations a competition. However, one crucial topic for a calendar in four-year Olympic cycles needs to be discussed at a more global level: NHL participation at Olympics and other events.

"The players tell me that they want to play the best in the world," said NHLPA Executive Director Donald Fehr. "Hopefully, after we get our CBA done, we will be in a position to have a discussion to see what we can figure out."

IIHF.com For Forum resolutions go to: **IIHF.com/HockeyForum**

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2012 IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RECAP

Coach Bill gets it done in first year on the job

Guides Russia to first World Championship gold medal in three years

By Andy Potts & Yevgenia Chaikovskaya

■ ■ As Russia celebrates a flawless World Championship triumph, confidence in the Red Machine's ability to land Olympic gold on home ice in 2014 is growing. But while many have hailed coach Zinetula Bilyaletdinov as the natural successor to the great Viktor Tikhonov, the man himself is well aware that there is plenty more hard work ahead before the puck is dropped in Sochi.

What are your impressions from your first year in charge of the national team?

There are many different impressions. Now we've won the World Championship, everyone is happy. But before there were a lot of problems, a lot of questions. This team is still developing and we thought we needed changes, new people. It took a lot of work, mostly during the Euro Hockey Tour, to see what we've got and to make some decisions. In the end, it was positive and we're happy.

What was the difference between this national team stint and the last one?

I wasn't there for long, and I was an assistant. I only worked for one tournament, it was in 2004. It was all over very quickly. This time I worked for the full season. Back then there were more NHL players, and now we have our players, who play in our national championship. That makes a difference.

Did it help you that you were not combining club work with the national team?

At first I was a little bit against the idea [of only coaching the national team]. It was very new for me. Of course it was very difficult to start with: I needed to quickly understand what I should do, and how I should do it. That caused some problems, but then I calmed down and it started to work out.



The former AK Bars Kazan coach's focus on changing the mentality on defence resulted in Russia allowing a tournament-low 14 goals.

Next year's KHL schedule will allow more time for the national team. How does that affect your work?

I suggested that we should increase the number of free days before each round of the Euro Hockey Tour so we could prepare the guys more calmly. The schedule is very tough, and everybody needs recovery time to prepare for the international games.



Bilyaletdinov's coaching debut came at the Karjala Cup, which Russia won without losing a game. He repeated the feat six months later at the 2012 World Championship, going 10-0.

How is the relationship between the KHL and the Russian Hockey Federation from the national team's point of view?

I don't think it's ever easy working with the national team, whether dealing with the KHL or the federation; whether you combine with a club position or not. Now I'm only working with the Russian national team, but if you are combining jobs you can work with the players throughout the season. If, like me, you don't combine the jobs, you can only call them into the national team and do something with them here. That causes some difficulties.

Is this full season the last chance for the players to make themselves noticed before the Sochi Olympics?

There is not much time left. This is why we want to hold a training camp in Switzerland to look at our players – especially young players – one more time. We need to see who they are, what they can do and what prospects they have. We are already setting this up.

KHL President Alexander Medvedev said now there is no good reason to leave for the NHL. Will the players that remain in the KHL have an advantage?

Of course [KHL players] are right here in front of us and we can say exactly how they play and what they do. On the other hand, the NHL has a very high level of hockey; the best players are there, world-class players, and it's very prestigious.

There has been lots of talk about whether NHL players will be involved in Sochi. How confident are you that they will be able to play, and how disappointing will it be if they cannot?

I do not think there will be any problems. I think all the teams want to take part in the Olympics and there will be no problems.

When Russian players go to North America and miss out on Euro Hockey Tour squads (and often World Championships), how hard is it to keep them involved in the national set-up?

It is one of the difficulties. Fortunately, now we can call up someone who becomes available to the World Championships. Players have a chance to play there so we understand what they can do, and they get a glimpse of the direction we are moving in and how we play. So there is an opportunity. It's not big, but at least it exists.

What was it like working with NHL players this time with the likes of Malkin, Datsyuk or Ovechkin?

It was fine. These are great players and everything went as you'd expect. I'm grateful to them.

Was their attitude to training, to the tournaments any different?

No, we were a team, and everyone understood what had to be done, how to prepare. There were no questions.

Fact File:
Zinetula Bilyaletdinov

- Born March 13, 1955 in Moscow.
- Represented the Soviet Union in eight IIHF World Championships (six golds, one silver, one bronze), two Olympic Winter Games (one gold, 1984 and one silver, 1980) and three Canada Cups (won in 1981).
- Coached Ak Bars Kazan since 2005, winning the Russian championship in 2006, 2009 and 2010, the European Champions Cup in 2007 and the Continental Cup in 2008.
- He also coached his only club he represented as a player, Dynamo Moscow, and Swiss team HC Lugano. Bilyaletdinov was in the coaching staff of the Winnipeg Jets/Phoenix Coyotes organization from 1993 to 1997.
- Russian national team head coach at the 2004 World Cup of Hockey, assistant coach at the 1998 and 2002 Olympic Winter Games and the 2000 IIHF World Championship.

Russia retains top spot in World Ranking

Olympic seeding determined for Sochi 2014; 2013 WM groups set

■ ■ The 2012 IIHF World Ranking has now been released and unsurprisingly there is little change at the top, with Russia's world championship gold further sealing their claim on the #1 slot.

The 2012 ranking is of particular significance this year, as it determines the groups for the 2014 Olympic Winter Games.

The new ranking includes the results of the 2009-2012 World Championships and the 2010 Olympics, with higher value put on the most recent tournaments.

■ Russia defended its 2011 top position because it advanced to the gold medal game while sending its closest follower, Finland, to the bronze medal game. The Czech Republic improved from fifth to third place by making the semi-finals at the expense of Sweden (4th) and Canada (5th), which both lost one place.

Slovakia's gold medal game appearance is behind their impressive move from 10th to 6th place. Thanks to the top-9 position, the Slovaks earn a bye to the 2014 Olympics as do the United States (7th), Norway (8th) and Switzerland (9th).

The other teams will have to battle for the three remaining slots of the men's ice hockey tournament in Sochi 2014 through qualification tournaments. Germany (10th), Latvia (11th) and Denmark (12th) earned the right to host one of the Final Olympic Qualification events in February 2013.

At the Sochi Olympics, host nation Russia will face Slovakia, the United States and the third-best ranked qualifier in its preliminary-round group.



2014 OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES		
GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C
Russia	Finland	Czech Republic
Slovakia	Canada	Sweden
USA	Norway	Switzerland
Qualifier	Qualifier	Qualifier

■ The IIHF announced the groups of the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship in Stockholm and Helsinki.

The groups are based on the 2012 IIHF Men's World Ranking with one minor change. Russia and the Czech Republic swap their slots between their groups to optimize the seeding for the Finnish-Swedish organizers.

According to the IIHF Bylaw 710, Article 3, "the IIHF Council shall have the option to amend the pre-tournament seeding to accommodate special requirements if a championship is organized in two countries."

The IIHF Council decided in favour of the proposal, so the Preliminary Round will played in the following groups below.

As part of the two-year co-hosting agreement, the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship will be held in Stockholm (Sweden) and Helsinki (Finland), 3-19 May 2013, with the semi-finals and medal games staged in Stockholm.



2013 IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP	
STOCKHOLM GROUP	HELSINKI GROUP
Czech Republic	Russia
Sweden	Finland
Canada	Slovakia
Norway	USA
Switzerland	Germany
Denmark	Latvia
Belarus	France
Slovenia	Austria



Slovakia's improbable turn through to the 2012 World Championship gold medal game shot the team up four spots and won itself a trip to Sochi 2014.

2012 IIHF Men's World Ranking					
Rank		Country	Points	Prev	+/-
1		Russia	3425	1	0
2		Finland	3345	2	0
3		Czech Republic	3330	5	2
4		Sweden	3280	3	-1
5		Canada	3255	4	-1
6		Slovakia	3100	10	4
7		United States	3065	6	-1
8		Norway	2960	9	1
9		Switzerland	2910	7	-2
10		Germany	2885	8	-2
11		Latvia	2765	12	1
12		Denmark	2710	13	1
13		Belarus	2705	11	-2
14		France	2660	14	0
15		Austria	2465	15	0
16		Italy	2440	17	1
17		Kazakhstan	2440	16	-1
18		Slovenia	2375	18	0
19		Hungary	2265	20	1
20		Ukraine	2235	19	-1
21		Great Britain	2110	21	0
22		Japan	2105	22	0
23		Poland	2020	23	0
24		Netherlands	1925	25	1
25		Lithuania	1905	24	-1
26		Estonia	1760	26	0
27		Romania	1725	28	1
28		Korea	1665	31	3
29		Spain	1665	29	0
30		Croatia	1665	27	-3
31		Serbia	1565	30	-1
32		Australia	1385	34	2
33		Bulgaria	1270	32	-1
34		Mexico	1230	33	-1
35		Iceland	1185	36	1
36		Belgium	1135	35	-1
37		New Zealand	1125	38	1
38		China	1040	39	1
39		Turkey	1015	37	-2
40		Israel	875	40	0
41		South Africa	780	42	1
42		Ireland	735	41	-1
43		Luxembourg	665	43	0
44		Greece	625	44	0
45		DPR Korea	540	45	0
46		Mongolia	375	46	0
47		UA Emirates	110	47	0

2012 IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RECAP

Ten things learned from 2012 Worlds

Malkin's making magic, Slovaks can still surprise, and Norway is on its way

By Lucas Aykroyd

The 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship not only determined the seedings for the 2014 Olympics, but also revealed much about the state of international hockey. Lucas Aykroyd reflects on what we learned from the co-hosted Worlds in Finland and Sweden.

1. Russia's taking Sochi super-seriously

New Russian head coach Zinetula Bilyaletdinov kept his word. Before the tournament, he promised the national team would play two-way hockey. The 57-year-old who guided Ak Bars Kazan to two Gagarin Cups in the KHL didn't disappoint. Russia outscored its opposition 44-14, overpowering Norway (5-2), Finland (6-2), and Slovakia (6-2) in the medal round.

It wasn't just about Russia winning its first World Championship since Switzerland 2009. Getting excellent performances from NHL superstars like Yevgeni Malkin and Alexander Ovechkin, as well as from 10 World Championship first-timers, Bilyaletdinov served notice that Russia intends to capture its first Olympic title since 1992 when Sochi hosts in 2014.

2. Malkin might be world's best

There are plenty of contenders nowadays for the title of the world's best player. Sidney Crosby, the golden boy of the 2010 Olympics, has put up some incredible point-per-game paces in the NHL recently, but only when he's healthy enough. Ovechkin has yet to recapture the flair of his Hart Trophy-winning seasons with the Washington Capitals (2008, 2009), although that potential is still there. And you can't go wrong with the goal-scoring panache of Steven Stamkos or the all-around game of Pavel Datsyuk.

However, Malkin separated himself from the pack at this year's Worlds. After earning his second NHL scoring title with 109 points for the Pittsburgh Penguins, the big-



An infusion of offensively-talented youth players such as Stéphane Da Costa (left) gave the French some scoring punch in Group A.

bodied 25-year-old centre from Magnitogorsk recorded a tournament-leading 19 points, including two hat tricks, in Sweden and Finland. In addition to cracking the media all-star team, he was named MVP and Best Forward. Malkin was quite simply unstoppable. Now that he has his first senior-level gold medal, his confidence will be that much higher for Sochi.



COMING OF AGE: At 25-years-old, Malkin tore through the tournament with 19 points in ten games. With an NHL scoring title and World Championship gold to his name in 2012 the Russian forward has hit his prime.

3. Slovak hockey's still alive and kicking

What a difference a year makes. Slovakia finished tenth on home ice at last year's Worlds. It was a profound disappointment, considering the star-studded roster with everyone from the late Pavol Demitra to Marian Gaborik.

But in 2012, after squeaking into the quarter-finals with a 5-4 round-robin victory over France, the Slovaks surprised everybody. Granted, the pure power game of hulking captain Zdeno Chara wasn't unexpected. Yet the back-end firepower of Andrej Sekera and the coming-out party for 30-year-old netminder Jan Laco were more than pleasant bonuses.

After eliminating favoured opponents like Canada and the Czech Republic, the Slovaks were happy despite losing to a stacked Russian team in the final. The silver medal marked their first hardware since 2003's bronze, and it was their first gold medal game since beating Russia in 2002. No wonder the team was honoured with a reception at Bratislava's Presidential Palace.

4. Canada must pick up the pace

Since the joy of winning Olympic gold in Vancouver in 2010, life has not been good to the Canadian national

team. Versus Slovakia, Canada lost its third consecutive World Championship quarter-final this year, with captain Ryan Getzlaf in the box for the winning goal after taking a late kneeling major.

This isn't the longest medal drought ever for the red Maple Leaf. Canada returned empty-handed from the Worlds from 1998 to 2002. But now, despite dressing superb youngsters like John Tavares and Jordan Eberle, the Canadians haven't gotten the response they've needed from their Olympic veterans to beat what other countries are icing.

Whether it's about complacency, average goaltending, or something else, Canada must eradicate its problems before defending its Olympic crown in Russia.

5. Jack Johnson needs some help

Columbus Blue Jackets defenceman Jack Johnson is always ready to represent the United States. In fact, the 25-year-old star has suited up at three consecutive World Championships. He even paid his own way to Vancouver to march in the 2010 Winter Games opening ceremonies.

But few of Johnson's peers have been equally willing to don the Stars and Stripes since taking silver in Vancouver. USA Hockey has settled for 13th (2010), eighth (2011),

and seventh (2012) at the last three Worlds. Considering the U.S. boasts 236 NHL players (24 percent of the league's total), there's much room for improvement.



Ageless Peter Nedved (centre) helped guide the Czechs to bronze.

6. Norway's on its way

When Denmark returned to the elite division in 2003, it appeared poised to become the third-best Nordic hockey nation after Sweden and Finland. Yet lately, Norway's come closer to claiming that distinction.

Exhibiting great teamwork and surprising offensive flair

under longtime bench boss Roy Johansen, the Norwegians earned their second straight quarter-final berth this year. They're now seeded eighth for Sochi. And three-year KHL veteran Patrick Thoresen exploded for 18 points, including six in a 12-4 pounding of Germany, which earned him an all-star team berth – unheard-of for a Norwegian. Nobody will take Norway lightly next year.

7. Quarter-finals can be murder

With seven preliminary games, the new IIHF World Championship format gives a fairer reading of the strength of each team – you can lose a game or two early on and still rebound with solid play to make the final eight. But that doesn't mean the quarter-finals are any more forgiving.

This year, three of the four higher-seeded teams – Canada, Sweden, and the United States – were knocked out in the first elimination game. It's a tough way to go out – like tripping over your shoelace in the first heat for the Olympic 100-metre race.

8. Henderson has scored...for France!

Even if France didn't make the quarter-finals, its ninth-place finish was still remarkable for this underdog nation, and reflects well on head coach Dave Henderson. He hasn't been blessed with a ton of new stars, even if he is able to dress NHL-seasoned players like goalie Cristobal Huet and forward Stéphane Da Costa. But Les Bleus rose to the occasion against teams they could beat, like Kazakhstan (6-3) and Belarus (2-1), and achieved a bona fide upset versus neighbouring Switzerland (4-2). Accordingly, Henderson's men moved up in the standings for the second straight year.

9. Home-ice curse applies to co-hosts

It's been a long time since a host team won the IIHF World Championship. No one's achieved that feat since the 1986 Soviets in Moscow. And clearly, the novelty of co-hosting the tournament didn't change the "bad luck formula."

The Swedes lost to the Czechs in stunning fashion in the quarter-finals, thanks to Milan Michalek's last-minute goal. Also, it was doom and gloom at Helsinki's Hartwall Arena when the Russians pounded host Finland 6-2 in the semis. Will the home-ice curse extend to 27 years when Stockholm witnesses the 2013 finals?

10. It's good to be a goalie

There were far more shutouts at this year's tournament than usual. The tone was set on Day One when Germany blanked Italy 3-0, the Czechs beat Denmark 2-0, and Finland edged Belarus 1-0. Ultimately, 16 out of the 64 games featured shutouts, compared to an average of 9.6 per tournament from 2007 to 2011. Even when you consider that the Worlds were eight games longer this year, seeing a goose egg in 25 percent of the matches was remarkable.

2012 World Championship Individual Awards

Slovaks, Russians, headline All-Stars



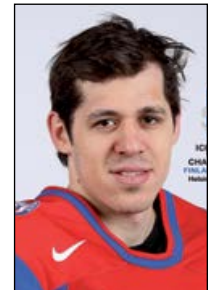
Jan Laco, SVK:
All-Star Team Goaltender,
Directorate Best Goaltender



Zdeno Chara, SVK:
All-Star Team Defenceman,
Directorate Best Defenceman



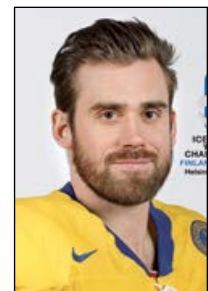
Ilya Nikulin, RUS:
All-Star Team Defenceman



Yevgeni Malkin, RUS:
All-Star Team Forward,
Directorate Best Forward,
MVP



Patrick Thoresen, NOR:
All-Star Team Forward



Henrik Zetterberg, SWE:
All-Star Team Forward

Canuck ladies win a classic, Swiss surprise

By Andrew Podnieks

The 2012 Women's World Championship was arguably the best edition ever presented to hockey fans. Yes, it had the expected Canada-United States gold-medal game, which was another classic, but it also featured many close games, some fantastic performances, and several unexpected results.

■ Some of the new excitement surrounding the even has to be credited to the new format which presented the two groups vertically rather than in a parallel structure. That is, Group A featured the top four teams and Group B the bottom four. This had one immediate effect. The first day saw Canada and the U.S. play, a game which resulted in the worst loss in Canada's history, a 9-2 decision.

The effects of that game, though, gave Canada extra motivation in the re-match, for gold, a game in which Canada had two early leads and the Americans two late leads. Caroline Ouellette was the hero in overtime for Canada, breaking a streak of three WW wins in a row for the U.S.

■ Perhaps the most stunning result was a 6-2 win by the Swiss over Finland for bronze. It was the first medal for Switzerland and was won almost single-handedly by goalie Florence Schelling, who was named Directorate Award Best Goalie for her sensational play. It also proved how important goalies were to the women's game as teams often relied on their puckstopper. Think Kim Martin

in Sweden, Noora Raty in Finland, Zuzana Tomcikova in Slovakia, or Anna Prugova in Russia.

In all, 12 of 22 games were decided by two goals or less, suggesting a parity of unprecedented standing in the women's game. Finland squeaked by Sweden, 2-1, in a rivalry that continues to endure, and Canada was in turn held to a 3-2 decision over the Finns. But, Switzerland beat Sweden, 3-2, thanks to Schelling, and had an impressive tournament from start to finish. Russia, too, proved competitive and might well be a medal competitor come Sochi in two years' time.

■ The goal of the tournament must be credited to an unexpected source: Ilya Dyubanok of Russia. It came in the first period of the first game of the tournament, against Finland. She got the puck at the blue line on the point and made two sensational toe drag moves à la Rick Nash, and then when she was at the top of Meeri Raisanen's crease, Dyubanok roofed a lovely backhand over the goalie's glove.

Kudos must also be given to USA Hockey for choosing a host city and pair of venues that matched the event perfectly. Burlington, Vermont, a small, university town, embraced the event whole-heartedly, and the Gutterson Fieldhouse and Cairns Arena, not large by any means, were the perfect size to accommodate an impressive, albeit modest, turnout, proving again that a small, full building is more preferable to a large, near-empty one.

Directorate Best Player Awards



Florence Schelling, SUI:
Directorate Best Goaltender



Jenni Hiirikoski, FIN:
Directorate Best Defenceman



Kelli Stack:
Directorate Best Forward

IIHF Women's World Ranking				
Rank	Country	Points	Prev	+/-
1	Canada	2960	2	+1
2	United States	2940	1	-1
3	Finland	2780	3	0
4	Switzerland	2685	6	+2
5	Sweden	2680	4	-1
6	Russia	2650	5	-1
7	Slovakia	2500	8	+1
8	Germany	2430	10	+2
9	Kazakhstan	2350	7	-2
10	Norway	2320	12	+2
11	Japan	2285	11	0
12	Czech Republic	2245	14	+2
13	China	2235	9	-4
14	Latvia	2195	13	-1
15	Austria	2185	15	0
16	France	2055	16	0
17	Great Britain	1955	18	+1
18	Italy	1915	17	-1
19	Denmark	1625	21	+2
20	Slovenia	1505	19	-1
21	Netherlands	1480	22	+1
22	Croatia	1480	20	-2
23	Hungary	1210	25	+2
24	Australia	1205	24	0
25	New Zealand	1110	27	+2
26	Korea	995	28	+2
27	Belgium	985	26	-1
28	Poland	975	34	+6
29	Iceland	960	29	0
30	Spain	940	35	+5
31	DPR Korea	920	32	+1
32	South Africa	890	31	-1
33	Bulgaria	705	23	-10
34	Romania	405	30	-4
35	Turkey	330	33	-2
36	Ireland	315	36	0

tion tournaments thanks to their placement in the 2012 IIHF Women's World Ranking.

■ The following teams have registered to participate in the qualification tournaments: Slovakia, Germany, Kazakhstan, Norway, Japan, Czech Republic, China, Latvia, Austria, France, Great Britain, Italy, Denmark, Slovenia, Hungary, Korea, Poland, Spain. The final seeding and venues of the qualification tournaments are to be confirmed.

Canada tops World Ranking

Overtakes USA thanks to gold in Burlington, Swiss move up

■ Canada reclaims the top position in the IIHF Women's World Ranking after its overtime victory in the gold medal game against the U.S. at the 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship.

2013 IIHF ICE HOCKEY WOMEN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP		
GROUP A		GROUP B
Canada		Sweden
USA		Russia
Switzerland		Germany
Finland		Czech Republic

The United States claimed the top position in 2009 and 2011 while Canada has been leading the ranking in all other years since its introduction in 2004.

The ranking that lists 36 countries that have participated with women's national teams in IIHF events in the last four seasons saw several other changes.

■ Switzerland advanced from sixth to fourth place after surprisingly winning its first ever bronze medal in women's hockey on Saturday.

2014 OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES		
GROUP A		GROUP B
Canada		Sweden
USA		Russia
Finland		Qualifier
Switzerland		Qualifier



Canada won a 5-4 overtime thriller against the U.S., while plucky Switzerland (below) defeated a heavily favoured Finnish squad to win the bronze.



Photos: (top) Dave Sandford, (bottom) Andre Ringuette / HHOF-IIHF Images

Slovenia, Austria heading north in 2013

By Martin Merk

■ The 16 teams at the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship in Stockholm and Helsinki will be the same ones as in 2011. Italy and Kazakhstan were relegated back to Division I while Slovenia and Austria earned promotion at the 2012 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division I Group A.

It was the first time that the tournament was played after the change to a vertical format – meaning that each division is split into two groups that represent two separate tiers rather than equally strongly seeded groups.

■ The parity of the teams' talent created many tight games. 10 out of 15 games in Ljubljana ended with a one- or two-goal win, including three that went to overtime.

For the first time both promoted teams came from the same group. Host Slovenia and Austria eventually occupied the first two places after starting with four straight wins. On the last day Slovenia won the gold medal by edging Austria 3-2 before 10,500 fans at Arena Stozice.

"It's a huge win for us," said Slovenian head coach Matjaz Kopitar, the father of Los Angeles Kings star and Stanley Cup champion Anze Kopitar. "We don't have so many



The Slovenian national team celebrated a gold-medal win on home ice in Ljubljana.

players in Slovenia. We have four forwards missing for the top-two lines including two in the NHL, but other players stepped up very well."

■ Slovenia succeeded thanks to strong goaltending from Robert Kristan, but most notably thanks to upcoming forwards like Rok Tigar, Robert Sabolic and Ziga Jeglic. There were other players who shone offensively, such as the powerful duo of Great Britain's Robert Dowd – the tournament's scoring leader with five goals and four assists – and Colin Shields, Austria's Manuel Latusa and Gregor Baumgartner, the astonishingly skilful Japanese forward

USA claims seventh gold medal in Brno

Junior development program continues to deliver at U18 level

By Adam Steiss

■ Another year, another feather in the cap for the United States National Team Development Program. The Americans romped over Sweden 7-0 in the IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship in Brno, winning their fourth straight world championship and seventh overall to further cement the States' dominance at the U18 level.

Mental mistakes for Sweden in the second period of the gold medal game led to three key goals for the Americans. The United States defence shut down the potent Swedish offence throughout the game, in the process setting an IIHF U18 World Championship record of only four goals allowed in the entire tournament.

"Things turned for us in the second period," said USA coach Danton Cole. "We were able to get a good fore-check going and forced them into making a few mistakes that we were able to capitalize on and I think that turned the game for us. I thought our guys did a great job, they played hard and skated very physical."

■ Goaltender Collin Olson made 27 saves and recorded his third shutout of the tournament, tying Jack Campbell's record set in 2010. Nicolas Kerdiles had two goals and three assists.

"It started with the goaltending," said USA captain Seth Jones. "Olson and Rutledge were outstanding, allowing



Familiar scene: Team USA has been unstoppable at the U18.

four goals total in the whole tournament, that's unheard of. They really set the tempo and the defence came behind them."

■ The U.S. also set a pair of records with its ninth medal in a row at the tournament and 10th overall in the history of the U18 championship. The margin of victory is the second highest in the U18 gold medal game after Canada's 8-0 win over Russia in 2008, and gives further testament to the success of the U.S. National Team Development Program.

The NTDP was started in 1996 by USA Hockey as a way to identify elite hockey players in the country under the age of 18, and develop their skills within a centralized environment. At the U18 level, the program's influence is apparent every year at the IIHF U18 World Championship. 21 of the 22 players on Team USA's 2012 roster came from the program, and the familiarity and cohesiveness demonstrated by the Americans on the ice in the Czech Republic this year once again proved that the NTDP continues to fulfil its mandate.

■ In the bronze medal game, Canada gave up a 4-1 second period lead to Finland but scored in overtime to win its first U18 medal in four years.

Captain Matt Dumba had three points in the game, putting him at 12 (5+7) for the tournament and on top of the points table, becoming the first defenceman in history to lead the U18 championship in scoring.

Shuhei Kuji or Olexander Pobyedonostsev, a Ukraine blueliner who scored four goals.

Austria won its fourth and deciding game for promotion against Hungary, thanks to a pair of goals from Gerhard Unterluggauer, who had just returned that day following a groin injury.

"It's so great, I didn't know whether it will work out, and then I scored two goals and we got promoted," the veteran blueliner said. "I'm happy for the young players who haven't played in the Top Division yet and can experience this next year."

■ Group B in Krynica was won by Korea. The Asians defeated host Poland 3-2 after trailing by two goals in the deciding game for promotion to next year's Division I Group A. Hyung Joon Kim scored the game-winning goal with eight minutes left in regulation time.

It was a strong signal for the nation that will host the 2018 Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang.

"I am proud of my players. My players are not big or strong, but they are good skaters and have a big heart," said assistant coach Hee Woo Kim.

Canada wins Inline

Breaks 14-year gold drought



Canada's inline team won its first championship since 1998.

■ Canada won its second IIHF InLine Hockey World Championship and its first gold in 14 years in Ingolstadt after defeating host nation Germany 9-5 in the gold medal game before a sell-out crowd of 4,575 fans.

"You always think about winning a gold medal, but when you actually do it, it's the best feeling in the world. It's the greatest thing that has ever happened to me in my life," said Max Grassi, who scored four goals in the final.

Germany tried hard to compete and outshot their rival 40-27, but the Canadians were simply more dangerous. They built up a three-goal lead before the half-time break, but Germany came as close as one goal later on.

"Both teams had a long way to get here," said Grassi. "It just came down to sticking together as a team. They made it close. We got worried, but we stuck to our game and it worked out well."

It was a tournament that turned upside down the moment the knockout stage began. Defending champion Czech Republic as well as group-stage winners Sweden and the U.S. were ousted in the quarter-finals, opening the way for other nations.

Finland won the bronze medal in a 9-4 victory over Slovenia. (MM)

IIHF class of 2012 honoured

Newest international Hall of Famers inducted in Helsinki

By Andrew Podnieks

HELSINKI – The names are familiar to any fan of international hockey – Pavel Bure, Raimo Helminen, Phil Housley, Milan Novy, Andy Murray. Five hockey greats were inducted into the IIHF Hall of Fame in a ceremony crowded with former inductees and luminaries from the hockey world in Helsinki.

Their inclusion brings to 183 the number of inductees representing 22 countries. As well, Kent Angus was given the prestigious Paul Loicq Award for his contributions to the IIHF.

The hour-long event was broadcast live by the Canal+ 24/7 Hockey Channel in Finland.

■ Bure, known as the Russian Rocket for his combination of speed and skill, thanked his family and teammates. The youngest inductee at 41, Bure is a player whose exploits in international hockey and the IIHF are easily remembered.

“It was a great experience to go to another country and play in the best league in the world,” he said of going to the NHL. “It was really interesting. On the other hand, we had lots of international experience already from the World Juniors and World Championships.”

■ Helminen, tongue in cheek, lamented the fact that he was being honoured in his native Finland, “No free trips to another country,” he joked. “Only a two-hour drive.” His humility belies his incredible career, one which includes six Olympics and a record 331 international games played.

“What a fantastic event,” Helminen enthused. “This is something I will never forget. That a kid from Tampere is included in a group like that is mindboggling.”

■ Housley noted how appropriate it was to be honoured in Finland considering USA Hockey gave him a two-game tryout in 1982, his first international experience. The ceremony also gave him time to reflect on career highlights.

“Definitely, I look back at the 2002 Winter Olympics, when we won a silver medal. At the World Championships, we won some special games, like beating Russia in their own barn in 2000, or winning the quarter-final game against Canada in 2001 in overtime. Those things you never forget. Just playing in the competition is great



The 16th IIHF Hall of Fame class: (from left) Andy Murray, Pavel Bure, Milan Novy, Raimo Helminen, Kent Angus, and Phil Housley at the induction ceremony in Helsinki.

players to work together quickly, and was successful enough to take three very different rosters to gold. What was his secret?

“We came in with the expectation that we were going to win the gold medal,” Murray began. “You work as hard as you possibly can. You make sure that you’re organized. The bottom line is that you have committed players. In each of those tournaments that’s what we had. We got solid goaltending, played solid defence, and scored some timely goals. My dad told me a long time ago you’re only as good as the people who surround you. That was the case with me.”

■ The Paul Loicq Award went to Kent Angus, who is the point man between the IIHF and Nike, the official supplier for top-level events. Angus has been on the job for 17 years, supplying more than 75,000 team sweaters at 49 events.



Milestone Trophy honours Summit teams

■ The IIHF also introduced a new honour called the Milestone Trophy, to be given periodically to teams that have made a significant contribution to the development of international hockey. The inaugural recipients were Team Canada and the Soviet national team in honour of the 1972 Summit Series, a turning point in the game’s history.

Representing Canada was IIHF Vice President Murray Costello and representing CCCP was the President of the Russian Ice Hockey Federation and the goalie from the series, Vladislav Tretiak (pictured above with IIHF President René Fasel and Councillor Tony Rossi).

“Everybody won in 1972,” Tretiak said. “We both played incredible hockey and paved the way for Europeans to play in the National Hockey League.”

play a best-of-three series to avoid relegation. The loser of this series will be relegated to Division I.

■ This also means that the 5-6 placing game (between the losers of the old-system quarter-finals) will be eliminated. The losers of the quarter-finals will be ranked according to their preliminary-round placement and records. Providing that the best-of-three relegation series goes full length, the new format will feature a tournament total of 31 games, just as the old one. If the relegation series ends after two games, the total will be 30 games.

The 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship in Sochi, Russia (18-28 April) will be held at the venues for the 2014 Olympics and the tournament will be the first test of the brand new facilities.

in itself. It’s a great game. I always looked forward to international games. The style is a little different, relying more on skill and skating.”

Now that his playing career is over, Housley continues to stay active in the game as a coach. “I’m coaching high school hockey back where I live in Stillwater, Minnesota,” he explained. “I’m also helping out with USA Hockey when they make the call. I’ve been an assistant coach in two World Junior tournaments in 2007 and 2011, and then with the national team in Kosice and Bratislava last year as an assistant. I still have that passion for this game.”

■ Novy, now 60, also suggested that he was young enough to score a couple of goals in this afternoon’s bronze medal game for the Czech Republic against Finland. On a more serious note, he appreciated his new place in hockey history. “I’m very happy now. When I started my career I never even imagined about playing for national team. When René Fasel called me to inform me [of the induction], I couldn’t believe it.”

■ But the bon mot of the afternoon goes to coach Murray. “I want to thank President Fasel,” he began, and added with a smile: “I remember when I first met him he was a referee, and I sometimes tell him he’s a much better president than he was a referee.”

What makes Murray’s three World Championship gold medals extraordinary is that each of his teams (in 1997, 2003, 2007) was built in a matter of days. He got the

before the congress, the new format will be applied for the 2014 World Juniors in Malmö, Sweden.

■ Under the old format, three teams from each of the two five-team preliminary round groups qualified for the playoffs with the two group-winners enjoying a bye to the semi-final, while teams placed 2nd and 3rd played cross-over quarter-finals. This consequently meant that teams placed 4th and 5th went to a relegation round where the last-placed team was relegated to Division I.

■ The new format will see teams placed 1-4 in each of the two groups qualify for the playoffs where the eight teams will play cross-over quarter-finals, paired against teams placed 1-4 in the other group.

The two teams placed fifth and last in each group will

Teams approve new format for U18, U20 Worlds; semi-final byes eliminated

ZURICH – The IIHF Ice Hockey U18 and U20 World Championships will have a new competition format, with four teams from each group making the playoffs and playing traditional quarter-finals. This means that the semi-final bye for the preliminary round winner is eliminated. Also the relegation system will be changed.

The new format was proposed by the participating nations and the decision to change was taken during the Annual Congress in Helsinki 18-19 May. The old format has been in place since 2003.

The new format will first be implemented at the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship in Sochi, Russia (18-28 April). As the playing schedule for the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey U20 World Championship in Ufa, Russia (26 December 2012 – 5 January 2013) was set already

Summer and hockey in Vierumäki

Annual camp expands with five programs including High Performance Camp

■ Following in the footsteps of international superstars like Kim Martin, Anze Kopitar, Florence Schelling and Victor Hedman, the future of the international women’s hockey scene will be gathering in Vierumäki, Finland for a week in July to soak up some sun and a few lessons from the sport’s elite players.

The primary Development Camp, currently in its fourth edition, is for girls born in 1996 and 1997. The camp will be joined this year for the first time by an under-18 High Performance Camp.

Each camp will operate its own schedule and programs, but use the expertise and experience present at both camps to create valuable crossover opportunities. The High Performance Camp will see athletes from the top nations invited, while the Development Camp will feature athletes from any eligible IIHF member nations wishing to participate.

■ In total, there will be 5 programs happening in and around the Vierumäki Sports Institute:

- 1) Hockey Development Camp with a focus on growing the leadership around the world.
- 2) Learn to Play program showing how to reach new young players.
- 3) High Performance Camp bringing the best mentors in the world together to teach the next generation of Olympic athletes and team staff.
- 4) Game Officials Camp bringing 30 referees and linesmen together for on and off ice training to educate them on being the next group of top officials.
- 5) Observer Program using the other 4 programs as practical examples to educate coaches, managers, federation staff and other team personnel.

- Total participants = 449
- Total nations involved = 46
- Total athletes = 204
- Total Game Officials = 30
- Total team staff from nations being mentored = 86

■ All of the programs will be led by selected IIHF mentors and instructors. Some of the notable participants include:

Melody Davidson (CAN)
Hayley Wickenheiser (CAN)
Danielle Goyette (CAN)
Saara Tuominen (FIN)
Iya Gavrilova (RUS)
Alena Polenska (CZE)

World Girls' Hockey Day Registration

This year’s World Girls’ Hockey Day – a global opportunity for girls to try out hockey as a new sport – will span an entire weekend. Those who wish to participate must complete and return the WGIHW Host Registration form by 15 September 2012. The form can be filled online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WGIHWRegistration>

IIHF CALENDAR OF EVENTS

IIHF Tournaments

IIHF World Championship	
2013 Stockholm, SWEDEN & Helsinki, FINLAND	03 - 19.05.13
IIHF World Championship Division I Group A	
2013 HUNGARY, Budapest	14 - 20.04.13
IIHF World Championship Division I Group B	
2013 UKRAINE, Donetsk	15 - 21.04.13
IIHF World Championship Division II Group A	
2013 CROATIA, Zagreb	07 - 13.04.13
IIHF World Championship Division II Group B	
2013 TURKEY, Istanbul or Izmit	21 - 27.04.13
IIHF World Championship Division III	
2013 SOUTH AFRICA, Cape Town	15 - 21.04.13
IIHF World Championship Division III Qualification	
2013 UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	14 - 17.10.12
IIHF U20 World Championship	
2013 RUSSIA, Ufa	26.12.2012 - 05.01.2013
IIHF U20 World Championship Division I Group A	
2013 FRANCE, Amiens	09 - 15.12.12
IIHF U20 World Championship Division I Group B	
2013 UKRAINE, Donetsk	10 - 16.12.12
IIHF U20 World Championship Division II Group A	
2013 ROMANIA, Brasov	09 - 15.12.12
IIHF U20 World Championship Division II Group B	
2013 SERBIA, Novi Sad or Belgrade	12 - 18.01.13
IIHF U20 World Championship Division III	
2013 BULGARIA, Sofia	14 - 20.01.13
IIHF U18 World Championship	
2013 RUSSIA, Sochi	18 - 28.04.13
IIHF U18 World Championship Division I Group A	
2013 ITALY, Asiago	07 - 13.04.13
IIHF U18 World Championship Division I Group B	
2013 POLAND, Tychy	14 - 20.04.13
IIHF U18 World Championship Division II Group A	
2013 ESTONIA, Tallinn	31.03 - 06.04.13
IIHF U18 World Championship Division II Group B	
2013 SERBIA, Novi Sad or Belgrade	09 - 15.03.13
IIHF U18 World Championship Division III Group A	
2013 CHINESE TAIPEI, Taipei City	11 - 17.03.13
IIHF U18 World Championship Division III Group B	
2013 TURKEY, Izmit	02 - 09.02.13
IIHF Women's World Championship	
2013 CANADA, Ottawa	02 - 09.04.13
IIHF Women's World Championship Division I Group A	
2013 NORWAY, Stavanger	07 - 13.04.13
IIHF Women's World Championship Division I Group B	
2013 FRANCE, Strasbourg or Rouen	08 - 14.04.13
IIHF Women's World Championship Division II Group A	
2013 NEW ZEALAND, Auckland	08 - 14.04.13

IIHF Women's World Championship Division II Group B	
2013 SPAIN, Logrono or Jaca	March/April 2012
IIHF Women's World Championship Division II Group B Qualification	
2013 TURKEY, Izmir	01 - 08.12.12
IIHF U18 Women's World Championship	
2013 FINLAND, Vierumäki	29.12.12 - 05.01.13
IIHF U18 Women's World Championship Division I	
2013 SWITZERLAND, Romanshorn	02 - 08.01.13
IIHF U18 Women's World Championship Division I Qualification	
2013 GREAT BRITAIN, Dumfries	29.10 - 03.11.12
IIHF InLine Hockey World Championship	
2013 GERMANY, Dresden	02 - 08.06.13

Men's Olympic Qualification

Final Olympic Qualification	
2013 Group D, GERMANY, TBA	07 - 10.02.13
Group E, LATVIA, Riga	
Group F, DENMARK, TBA	
Olympic Pre-Qualification	
2013 Group G, HUNGARY, Budapest	08 - 11.11.12
Group H, UKRAINE, Kyiv	
Group J, JAPAN, TBA	

Pre-Qualification	
2013 CROATIA	17 - 19.09.12

Women's Olympic Qualification

Final Olympic Qualification	
2013 Group C, SLOVAKIA, Bratislava	07 - 10.02.13
Group D, GERMANY, TBA	
Olympic Pre-Qualification	
2013 Group E, CHINA, Shanghai	08 - 11.11.12
Group F, LATVIA, TBA	

Pre-Qualification	
2013 Group G, SPAIN, Barcelona	Sept/Oct 2012
Group H, POLAND, Katowice or Krakow	

Olympic Winter Games

Olympic Winter Games	
2014 RUSSIA, Sochi	07 - 23.02.14

The IIHF would like to thank its official Partners:

and supplier pool members:



Korea's men's team celebrates a Division II championship in Krynica.

Photo: Mirek Ring

Tomita-san ready for farewell Congress

IIHF Council's "Iron Man" to be honoured in Tokyo for 34 years of exemplary service

By Martin Merk

A remarkable career on the IIHF Council will come to an end. Along with Murray Costello and Frederick Meredith, Shoichi Tomita will retire from the IIHF's board.

Known under his Japanese form of address Tomita-san, or less formal as Sho, the 76-year-old former Japanese national team goalie is the longest-serving member of the current IIHF Council.

Honouring his 34 years of work and dedication for the IIHF, the General Congress will be held in Tokyo, and in Asia for the first time ever.

Tell us a bit about how you developed to a top hockey goalie in Japan.

I was born in Tokyo, but we moved to different places due to World War II. In the countryside many boys were not happy about getting colleagues from Tokyo. I don't have happy memories from this time. Therefore I liked to show the people something.

That's why I never quit practising hockey. I tried to do my best, I didn't smoke, I didn't drink much alcohol, I went home early. I didn't want to have any excuses.

I was the only guy from Tokyo on the national team while all others were from Hokkaido where I signed with a professional team. That gave me the chance to play for the national team at the 1960 Olympics and the 1962 World Championship in Colorado Springs where we beat all five teams to win the B-Pool.

How was it to go to the 1960 Olympics in Squaw Valley?

We went from Yokohama to Vancouver by boat to have a camp there. It took us two weeks and we had training on the deck. After the camp we went to California to play at the Olympics. The first games were against Canada and Sweden. They were too strong. After the two games we moved to the outdoor ice rinks for the placement games against Australia and Finland. Finland wasn't so strong in those days. I'm impressed how much Finland has improved since.

How was it when you were elected to the IIHF Council?

In 1978 I was elected at the General Congress in Sirmione. It was unbelievable. The Swiss nominated two people, so their votes were split and I had more votes than them.



Shoichi Tomita (above, at the 2012 World Championship), represented Japan at the 1960 Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley.



It was like a fairy tale, a young Asian coming to the IIHF. Nobody believed it and I couldn't believe it myself. But then it was true, and I got the jacket and high-neck shirts for the Council members. When I see the photo of the Council in 1978, only Gordon Renwick from Canada and myself are still alive, all others passed away. I must keep myself in good health, otherwise I will also disappear from the picture.

How did you react after the election had surprised even yourself?

It was an unbelievable thing. I had to study, study, study. I didn't know that much about how it worked within the IIHF at the beginning, but I knew ice hockey, I knew the problems and had the experience. Only the strong countries were carrying the work and making the decisions. I had to learn and to understand a lot.

Did you always want to have such a long hockey career, from player to IIHF Vice President?

I didn't think about the IIHF when I was young. I was a player and later a member of the executive board of the Japanese Ice Hockey Federation and also a commentator for NHK TV at many Olympic Games.

I really appreciate the IIHF, all the Council members and office staff. Everybody has been so helpful to me and for my activities. Without the IIHF I wouldn't have such a bright life. I wouldn't know so many great people if I had just focused on study and business. It would have been an ordinary, boring life.

What are your future plans?

Now as I'm leaving the IIHF Council, and with all my experience, it's my responsibility to improve Japanese ice hockey again. So I won't stop being involved in hockey. Many people in Japanese hockey said I was too busy with the IIHF and the Asian program, but that was my responsibility. But after September I will be free from any duties and can help the JIHF as much as possible.

Now your last Congress as a Council member will be held in Tokyo. How do you feel before this event?

I'm looking forward to it, but I'm also a bit anxious. It's something new for the Japanese Ice Hockey Federation, but we have many people who help also from the Japanese Olympic Committee and the bidding committee for the 2020 Olympic Games. Therefore I expect a good General Congress with people who feel comfortable in Tokyo. If they go home and say 'thank you and good-bye', I will be very happy. But if they have lots of complaints or unhappiness, I will be disappointed. So I try my best to help. I'm looking forward to the "Good-bye Sho" and I really appreciate that the Congress comes to Tokyo and I will try to do my best.

What's your message to all the delegates coming to Tokyo?

Tokyo is very special for Western people. As much as possible I'd like to show the delegates the city and give them some information. We will have many volunteers. The federation is doing the work behind, but the volunteers who stand at the forefront are very important. Therefore we have to educate them well to help make a good atmosphere. I hope everybody will enjoy it in Tokyo and I'm waiting to welcome all delegates from all over the world.



Fact File: Shoichi Tomita

■ Born 1 January 1936 in Tokyo, Japan.

■ Goalie in the Japanese top league for 15 years.

■ Represented Japan at the 1960 Olympics and the 1962 World Championship B-Pool.

■ Worked as Management Director and later as Executive Director for the Japanese Ice Hockey Federation.

■ Member of the Japanese Olympic Committee.

■ Elected as IIHF Council member in 1978, became an IIHF Vice President in 1994.

