

Home is where the heart is



Photos: Andre Ringuette / IHOFF-IIHF Images

A big congratulations to Team Sweden, which overcame a tough start and the pressure of playing in front of their home fans to win the country's ninth IIHF World Championship gold.



■ ■ The curse is over. Finally, after 27 years, a home team has won the men's IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship. It was also the first time that Sweden won gold on home ice.

RENÉ FASEL EDITORIAL

■ This was a World Championship of "firsts". On top of Sweden's accomplishments, Switzerland did something that very few observers saw coming after last year's 11th place finish.

Not only did the Swiss win their first medal since 1953 (when the tournament took place on home ice in Zurich and Basel) and their first silver medal since 1935 (also at home, in Davos), but they did it while playing a highly attractive style of hockey. During the process they defeated four of hockey's major powers; Sweden, the Czech Republic (twice), Canada and the United States.

Despite the final loss to the Sedin-led Swedes, Switzerland's silver is by hockey historians considered as the

biggest surprise in international ice hockey since USA's Olympic gold in Lake Placid 1980. The Swiss took a nice little jump in the IIHF World Ranking, positioning themselves just behind the traditional Top-6 and ahead of Slovakia.

■ The 77th IIHF World Championship was by the way a treat for hockey historians. When the eventual bronze medalist United States defeated Russia 8-3 in the quarter-final in Helsinki, it was the first time in the history of Soviet/Russian ice hockey that the national team gave up eight goals in one World Championship game.

TV-ratings showed how hungry Sweden was for its first gold medal since 2006. The final game was watched by over 2.9 million TV-viewers. These are quite astounding numbers for a country of nine million people.

■ This was the last major tournament before the Olympics in Sochi. When you read this, it's around 220 days left to hockey's greatest stage and the positioning for medals, at least on the men's side, is more blurred than ever after Stockholm 2013. Who dares to call the undisputed gold medal favourite?

■ The Annual Congress in Stockholm approved the IIHF's 12 percent share in the new European Club Competition, where the top clubs and leagues will be the other stakeholders. This is a very encouraging development which comes after more than one year of goal-oriented co-operation between the three parties.

The plan is to start the club competition for the 2014/2015 and in the beginning of June we issued an invitation to tender to various marketing agencies, many of them showing interest in the project before we even made it official. We are not there yet, but all involved parties are following the action plan.

With the international season 2013/2014 now officially over, I would – on behalf of the international ice hockey family – wish you a wonderful summer and finally some well-deserved rest away from the rink.

René Fasel
IIHF President

Congress approves IIHF's ECC share

■ The Annual Congress in Stockholm unanimously approved on May 18 the IIHF Council's proposal of the IIHF's 12 percent share in the new European Club Competition (ECC) planned to start in 2014/2015.



Bidders are invited to submit tenders for the commercial rights of the new European club competition.

the leagues and 12 percent for the IIHF, in a new shareholding company about to be founded.

■ Since the Congress, the joint working group, with the mandate to execute and oversee the advancement of the project, has issued an invitation to Tender for the commercial rights of the club competition. Several major marketing agencies showed interest in obtaining the ITT.

IIHF General Secretary Horst Lichtner gave a presentation outlining the progress since the Barcelona Hockey Forum one year ago.

■ The deadline for submitting a tender was set for June 28. Details about the format and the name of the competition will be released at a later stage. The "ECC" is a working name for the project.

The main stakeholders in the ECC-project, Europe's top club, leagues and the IIHF, have agreed on an approximate share of 66 percent for the clubs, 22 percent for

New technology for Sochi 2014

■ The IIHF Ice Hockey U18 World Championship concluded in April, with all the teams and officials declaring a ringing endorsement of the future Olympic hockey venues. With the event taking place in the site of the 2014 Winter Games, the U18s served as the hockey test event for a huge number of logistical and technical issues that have to be worked out ahead of the puck dropping in February.



The IT team and Swiss Timing at the U18 Worlds.

■ Among the technology that was tried out in Sochi were special tags inserted into the jersey that were fitted an automatic RFID Time on Ice system. The tags are designed to provide quicker reception of data concerning which players are on or off the ice at any given time. It functions similarly to security entrances used in stores, and can register when a certain player enters and leaves the bench.

Behind the scenes, the IIHF IT Department, in cooperation with Swiss Timing, spearheaded a few new technical innovations that will be put in place for the games. These innovations were developed with the aim to improve the game of hockey and increase precision when measuring the important aspects of the competition for teams and fan, such as timekeeping.

■ Timekeepers at the Olympic hockey games will also benefit from Automatic Game Time Stop, which stops the clock as soon as the referee whistle is blown. A similar technology is used in basketball games, but this will be the first time the technology was implemented in an international hockey game. A keypad-based timing scoring device with an exceptionally accurate time base will be in place to ensure not a second is lost during the games.

NEWS & NOTES

■ **IIHF:** The IIHF has appointed **Florence Schelling** as IT Coordinator and Administrative Assistant, replacing Simona Richiger who will be moving to the Sport Department. Schelling has an impressive hockey background, having backstopped the Swiss women's national team in two Olympic Games (Turin and Vancouver), and several World Championships.



ness Administration, and worked as an Imports and Exports Planner for Molson Coors in Montreal.

Tim Broadbent (Marketing), **Darryl Easson** (Sport), **Tanya Foley** (Sport) and **Rob van Rijswijk** (Event) left the IIHF to pursue other career opportunities. The IIHF thanks them for their contributions to international ice hockey and wishes them good luck in their future careers.

■ **AUSTRIA:** The Austrian Ice Hockey Association named **Dieter Kalt** new head coach of the Austrian U20 national team. **Dieter Werfring** will take over the U18 national team.

Long-time national team player **Dieter Kalt**, who ended his playing career in 2012, will be the new head coach of the U20 national team taking over from Jason O'Leary, whom he assisted last year. For the 38-year-old it will be his first head coaching experience. Since January he's also an assistant coach at KAC Klagenfurt, which won the Austrian championship this spring.

Werfring returns to the Austrian Ice Hockey Association as the U18 national team where he follows after Herbert Hohenberger. **Werfring** was in the coaching staff of the U20 and U18 national teams for many years. He was the head coach of the U20 national team from the 2005/2006 season until 2011.

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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



OBITUARIES

Kevin Conway, a defenceman for the Penticton Vees that won gold for Canada at the 1955 IIHF World Championship, passed away peacefully 8 May at a hospital in Penticton. He was a top prospect for the Montreal Canadiens and played two seasons for the Penticton Vees, a team that went to the Allan Cup finals in 1953 and won in 1954, resulting in the team's nomination to represent Canada at the World Championship. He was 86.

Tim Taylor, passed away on 27 April at the age of 71. One of the most respected American coaches of our time. A veteran of two Olympic Winter Games, in 1984 he was both the assistant general manager and assistant coach for the U.S. Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia. Taylor then served as head coach for Team USA in 1994 in Lillehammer, Norway. He also led the United States to its best finish at a Canada Cup when the team captured second place at the event in 1991 and coached Team USA in four straight World Championships between 1989 and 1992. Taylor served as director of player personnel for the U.S. National Junior Team the past five years, a stretch that included gold medals for the United States at the IIHF World Junior Championship both in 2013 and 2010, along with a bronze medal in 2011. Taylor represented the United States twice as a player in international competition in 1965 and 1967. In the U.S. he was head coach for the Yale University for 28 years and earned the ECAC Coach of the Year Award on three occasions and the NCAA Division I Coach of the Year honours in 1998.



Elvis Beslagic, died on 24 April at age 39. Beslagic was a former defenceman of the Slovenian national team who was most recently playing amateur hockey in Germany where he operated a gym in Munich with his wife. The Jesenice native won six national championships in the '90s with Acroni Jesenice and Olimpija Ljubljana before spending over a decade with minor-league teams in Germany. He played 115 international games for the Slovenian men's national team including eight IIHF Ice Hockey World Championships – two of them, 2002 and 2003, in the top division.

Tentative Olympic ice hockey schedule released

■ A tentative schedule for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games ice hockey tournament has been released by the Sochi 2014 Organising Committee, the IOC and the IIHF. Note that this schedule is still subject to change. The first ice hockey games at Sochi 2014 will be in the women's tournament, which kicks off on February 8 when Group A opponents USA play

Finland and defending Olympic champions Canada take on Switzerland. The men's tournament will begin four days later on 12 February with two Group C games: Czech Republic vs. Sweden and Latvia vs. Switzerland, and will end 11 days later with the gold medal game on the final day of competition on 23 February.

Men's Tournament

	GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C
Wed 12.02.14			Czech Republic vs. Sweden 21:00-Bolshoy Latvia vs. Switzerland 21:00-Shayba
Thu 13.02.14	Russia vs. Slovenia 16:30-Bolshoy Slovakia vs. USA 16:30-Shayba	Finland vs. Austria 12:00-Bolshoy Canada vs. Norway 21:00-Bolshoy	
Fri 14.02.14		Canada vs. Austria 21:00-Bolshoy Norway vs. Finland 21:00-Shayba	Czech Republic vs. Latvia 12:00-Bolshoy Sweden vs. Switzerland 16:30-Bolshoy
Sat 15.02.14	Slovakia vs. Slovenia 12:00-Bolshoy USA vs. Russia 16:30-Bolshoy		Switzerland vs. Czech Republic 21:00-Bolshoy Sweden vs. Latvia 21:00-Shayba
Sun 16.02.14	Russia vs. Slovenia 16:30-Bolshoy Slovakia vs. USA 16:30-Shayba	Austria vs. Norway 12:00-Bolshoy Finland vs. Canada 21:00-Bolshoy	
Tue 18.02.14	Qualification Playoff #1 12:00-Bolshoy	Qualification Playoff #2 16:30-Bolshoy	Qualification Playoff #3 21:00-Bolshoy Qualification Playoff #4 21:00-Shayba
Wed 19.02.14	Quarter-Final #1 12:00-Bolshoy	Quarter-Final #2 16:30-Bolshoy	Quarter-Final #3 21:00-Bolshoy Quarter-Final #4 21:00-Shayba
Fri 21.02.14		Semi-Final #1 16:00-Bolshoy Semi-Final #2 21:00-Bolshoy	
Sat 22.02.14		Bronze Medal Game 19:00-Bolshoy	
Sun 23.02.14		Gold Medal Game 16:00-Bolshoy	



Women's Tournament

	GROUP A	GROUP B
Sat 08.02.14	USA vs. Finland 12:00-Shayba	Canada vs. Switzerland 17:00-Shayba
Sun 09.02.14		Sweden vs. Japan 12:00-Shayba Russia vs. Germany 17:00-Shayba
Mon 10.02.14	USA vs. Switzerland 14:00-Shayba	Finland vs. Canada 19:00-Shayba
Tue 11.02.14		Germany vs. Sweden 14:00-Shayba Russia vs. Japan 19:00-Shayba
Wed 12.02.14	Switzerland vs. Finland 12:00-Shayba	Canada vs. USA 16:30-Shayba
Thu 13.02.14		Japan vs. Germany 12:00-Shayba Sweden vs. Russia 21:00-Shayba
Sat 15.02.14	Quarter-Final #1 12:00-Shayba	Quarter-Final #2 16:30-Bolshoy
Sun 16.02.14	Classification #1 12:00-Shayba	Classification #2 21:00-Shayba
Mon 17.02.14	Semi-Final 16:30-Shayba	Semi-Final 21:00-Shayba
Tue 18.02.14	Classification #3 12:00-Shayba	Classification #4 21:00-Shayba
Thu 20.02.14		Bronze Medal Game 16:00-Bolshoy Gold Medal Game 21:00-Bolshoy



Switzerland's MVP

Defenceman Josi impresses at Worlds, rewarded in Nashville

By Martin Merk

■ **Switzerland was the Cinderella story at the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship with an unbeaten streak of nine games – a historical achievement for the Alpine country.**

Only in the gold medal game were the Swiss stopped by Sweden. It was Switzerland's second silver medal after 1935 – one that can be worth gold with the euphoria that it created within the country.

The team was welcomed at the airport by thousands of fans and a stamp was produced in honour of their memorable run to the World Championship final.

The Swiss did not only write history as a team, but their young star Roman Josi also became the first Swiss All-Star, Best Defenceman, and MVP in World Championship history.

■ With 20:08 minutes per game he was the most used skater on his team. He provided strong defensive play while also chipping in offensively with fast and agile rushes and dangerous shots from the blue-line. He took over a similar role like in Nashville, where he was the number-two defenceman in points and ice time behind his linemate Shea Weber.

At the Worlds the 23-year-old ended up on top in goals (4) and points (9) among defencemen, a performance that helped encourage his NHL team, the Nashville Predators, to offer Josi a new contract.

Josi was disheartened when he received the awards after losing the gold medal game against Sweden. But now, a few weeks removed from the Worlds, things look differently.

"I feel good. After some days everybody saw what we reached and we feel proud about the silver medal," Josi said. "After the gold medal game it was tough for us because it was such a huge chance to win the World Championship."



Switzerland finished the tournament with an 8-1-1 record.

"We had a great team and the players were close together. That was special and it was the key to success. The team spirit was really unbelievable. On the first day I joined, it felt like I've been part of the team for four weeks."

For Josi it was clear after the first couple of games that this year's Swiss team would be able to achieve more than in the last few years.



As a 16-year-old, Roman Josi recorded 30 points (14 goals, 16 assists) in just 33 games for the SC Bern junior team. Two years later, he made his World Championship debut in the 2009 tournament held in his hometown.

"We had three top opponents first and thought that we could maybe beat one of the big teams, but not to get three straight wins. Everybody felt there could be a breakdown against the smaller teams but we also won against them," Josi said.

The awards and the silver medal got a place of honour in the living room of his new apartment in Berne.

"After the game everything went fast. We lost gold and I got the awards and didn't really realize what I won but it was cool to get these awards."

■ If you want an offensive-minded defenceman on your team, Josi is definitely one of the best to choose from.

Few fans would have expected him being named MVP and Best Defenceman before the tournament, but it came as a consequence of his steady development.

At just 16 years old, Josi played his first game for his hometown team SC Bern and one month later he was the youngest player at the 2007 IIHF World Junior Championship among players who were three or four years older.

As a 17-year-old he had a fixed place on SC Bern's line-up and as an 18-year-old he played his first IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship with the senior national team – also held in the Swiss capital.

For him, playing and developing in Switzerland was the right way since he got the chance with his home club. By the age of 20 he had participated in two World Championships and four U20 World Championships before transferring to the Predators organization in 2010.

After bad luck with injuries he had his breakthrough one year ago and made another step forward this season. In 48 games he had 18 points (5+13) and 23:31 ice time per game. His performance prompted the Predators to sign Josi to a seven-year, \$28 million contract. But despite the buzz he keeps both feet on the ground.

"I try to stay myself no matter what happens. I'm also happy to go to my usual environment with my family after the season," he said and added with a smile: "They would tell me if I lifted off."

■ During summer he will work to continue his steady development and make the next step.

"Making the play-offs will be a goal and also the Olympics is a huge goal for me," said Josi, who will be joined by his teammate Simon Moser at the Predators' camp.

Becoming an Olympian would be a dream come true for Josi, who missed out on Vancouver 2010 due to an injury.



Nine points at the 2013 Worlds earned Josi the MVP.

"The Olympics is one of the greatest things for a hockey player and it would be cool to be there. Unfortunately I missed the last Olympics and it was tough just to watch it on TV," Josi said.

"It will be difficult for sure," he said about Sochi 2014. "It'll be difficult to confirm the second place, but we showed that it's possible to achieve such a feat and I hope it's not a one-off thing and we can play with the top teams in the next years."

"We had many young players [in Stockholm] to whom the future of Swiss hockey belongs."



Memories from the 2013 IIHF Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony



From left: Jan-Åke Edvinsson, Gord Miller, Mats Sundin, Danielle Goyette, Paul Henderson, Peter Forsberg, Teppo Numminen, and Boris Mikhailov.

"When I was growing up, I didn't have any female hockey players as role models," she said. "You guys were my heroes. Peter Forsberg, I played with your curve for many years – I guess it worked." ---Danielle Goyette

"(To Vladislav Tretiak) Thank you for letting me score that last goal, I've been riding that goal for 40 years, and it's been a nice ride." ---Paul Henderson

"I loved playing in the big tournaments," said Forsberg, who recalled the game winning goal scored by his teammate Nicklas Lidström. "Thank God I didn't go in front of the net or Lidström would have killed me with that shot!"

"To play hockey, you need passion, determination, strong will, and maybe a little bit of madness," ---Mats Sundin

"I remember our battles in 1972 as if it was yesterday. It's almost incredible that 40 years have passed – and we still look so good!" ---Boris Mikhailov to Paul Henderson



Vladislav Tretiak (right) hugs IIHF Hall of Fame inductee Paul Henderson after presenting him at the ceremony. Henderson scored his famous goal against Tretiak in Game Eight of the 1972 Summit Series.



Teppo Numminen joined his father Kalevi (left-inducted in 2010) as the first father-son duo to be part of the IIHF Hall of Fame. Boris Mikhailov (right) was on hand to accept the Milestone Award for the 1954 Soviet Union national team.



Forsberg accepts his plaque from René Fasel and Swedish heptathlete Carolina Klüft. His and the rest of the players' jerseys were auctioned off for charity.



TSN's Gord Miller was awarded the 2013 Paul Loicq Award. "Hockey enlightens, teaches, entertains, and exhilarates us," he said during his speech.

2013 IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RECAP

Ten things we learned from 2013 Worlds

Stockholm finalists show you can't take anyone for granted, Sochi gold impossible to call

By Lucas Aykroyd

■ ■ After 64 games in 17 days in Stockholm and Helsinki, a few lessons have become apparent from the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship. If there's an overarching theme, it's that international hockey is becoming increasingly unpredictable.

1) Curses don't last forever

Sweden is consistently among hockey's elite nations, but that didn't mean everyone picked the host country to win this year's tournament and break the fabled "home ice curse." (No hosts had won the Worlds since the Soviet Union in 1986.)

Tre Kronor brought a less star-studded roster than in 2012, when the likes of Henrik Zetterberg and Daniel Alfredsson suited up. Yet after an iffy Preliminary Round, which included a 3-2 opening loss to Switzerland and a 3-0 defeat against Canada, coach Pär Mårts's 2013 crew hit its stride at the right time. Their 5-1 final win over Switzerland will rank among Swedish hockey fans' greatest memories.

2) The Sedins have still got it

Daniel and Henrik Sedin are former NHL scoring champions and 2006 Olympic gold medalists, but recently, the twin superstars of the Vancouver Canucks haven't gotten as much respect as usual. That's mainly because they didn't produce in first-round exits against the Los Angeles Kings (2011) and San Jose Sharks (2012).

However, after joining the Swedes for their last round-robin game against Denmark, the twins kicked it into high gear. At least one Sedin was involved in every regulation-time goal Sweden scored in the 3-2 quarter-final win over Canada and the 3-0 semi-final blanking of Finland. Henrik tallied the winner in the gold medal game, and cracked the all-star team with nine points in four games.

3) Switzerland's for real

After Switzerland's 11th-place finish last year, no one would have picked coach Sean Simpson's crew to take silver in Stockholm. Yet on balance, they delivered the most consistent performance of any of the top 16 teams. They won nine straight games with high-tempo skating and disciplined defensive play. Roman Josi made the All-Star team with fellow blueliner Julien Vauclair, and also claimed Best Defenceman and tournament MVP honours.

Remarkably, the typically low-scoring Swiss even tied the Americans for the tournament goals lead (35). This run was a credit to Switzerland's development programs. Another medal in Belarus next year isn't out of the question.

4) America's teens are living the dream

Normally, you don't ask teenagers to be your go-to players in senior IIHF competition. Especially with a medal on the line. Yet that's what the United States did in its 3-2 bronze medal win over Finland. Alex Galchenyuk, a 19-year-old Montreal Canadiens rookie, dazzled with two shootout goals. Goalie John Gibson, a fellow 19-year-old who starred with Galchenyuk on the U.S.'s golden World Junior team



The 2013 World Championship had more than its share of surprises: A silver medal run by the Swiss, Sweden exorcising the home ice demons, and even a huge upset of Russia by France.

in January, finished with 36 saves to outduel Finland's Antti Raanta. It was the first U.S. medal at the Worlds since 2004's bronze.

Notably, the Americans are the only team to medal at each World U18 tournament since 2004, including six golds. This wave of youthful talent isn't about to slow down.

5) Rotating goalies can work

Coaches generally prefer to have a designated number one goalie in IIHF competition. Even though Canada changed starters in its last two Olympic triumphs, switching from Curtis Joseph to Martin Brodeur in 2002 and from Brodeur to Roberto Luongo in 2010, that wasn't the original plan.

But Swiss coach Sean Simpson's strategy involved giving Martin Gerber and Reto Berra an equal opportunity. Keeping his masked men physically and mentally fresh worked well in the run to the final. Gerber finished with a 1.81 GAA in six games, while Berra's GAA was 1.00 in four games.

6) Russia's got goalie issues

Looking back on 2013, Russian head coach Zinetula Bilyaletdinov may well regret how he handled his goaltending options. He anointed the erratic Ilya Bryzgalov as his starter over Semyon Varlamov, who backstopped Russia to the 2010 and 2012 finals. In addition, he excluded Sergei Bobrovsky from the roster altogether, even though "Bob" was coming off a Vezina Trophy-nominated season with the Columbus Blue Jackets.

Bilyaletdinov's decision to play third goalie Vasilii Koshechkin versus France certainly wasn't the only reason for Russia's stunning 2-1 loss. But both goals Koshechkin conceded were weak. When Bryzgalov and Varlamov allowed four goals apiece in an 8-3 quarter-final loss to the Americans – the most goals ever allowed by Russia in one World Championship game – it totally muddled the picture in terms of who might start in Sochi.

7) Canada straying off course

Out of the five nations that have made the final eight at each of the last four World Championships, only Canada has lost in the quarter-final every year. That's unacceptable for the motherland of hockey.

Is it complacency after winning Olympic gold in Vancouver? Is it a lack of veteran support compared to other top nations? Is it lower-quality goaltending than Canada is accustomed to? Whatever the root causes are, there's real urgency for Canada to get back on track before the 2014 Olympics.

8) Personal bests are overrated

Tournament scoring leader Petri Kontioli's 16 points, marking his personal best at the Worlds, didn't get Finland on the podium. And Finland's second-leading scorer, Juhamatti Aaltonen, had more points in these Worlds (11) than in his previous two combined.

Ilya Kovalchuk's eight goals were a personal best. Ditto for Steven Stamkos's 12 points. But neither Russia nor Canada medaled. There's a message here. Notwithstanding the Sedins' combined brilliance, it was the team game of Sweden that brought it to the final against Switzerland.

9) Sometimes relegation hurts a bit less

The two teams that were relegated to Division I, Austria and Slovenia, were both newly promoted. They're also two of the three teams (Latvia being the other) that earned 2014 Olympic berths in February's qualification tournaments. So even though Italy and Kazakhstan will supplant them at the Worlds in Belarus, Austria and Slovenia know that regardless, being at the Olympics could spawn something special. Remember Belarus's 4-3 shocker over Sweden at the 2002 Winter Games?

10) It's wide open for Sochi

Nobody would have predicted that Sweden, Switzerland, and the U.S. would finish 1-2-3 at this tournament. Equally, anything is possible at the Olympics. Host Russia's won nothing at home since the 1986 Worlds. Canada hasn't won Olympic gold overseas since 1952. The U.S. has only ever won gold in the United States (1960, 1980). And beyond such historical stumbling blocks, every team, at least on paper, will have some personnel concerns, whether it's the Slovak goaltending or the Finnish forwards. That unpredictability should make Sochi thrilling.

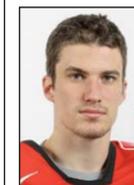
Awards and World Ranking

■ ■ Finalists Switzerland and Sweden were well-represented in the 2013 World Championship player awards. The Swiss defensive duo of Roman Josi and Julien Vauclair took home All-Star honours, with Josi's nine points and clutch play through the tournament also earning him a Directorate nod and the MVP. Henrik Sedin's nine-point stretch through just four games at the championship earned him an All-Star spot, alongside scoring leader Petri Kontioli and USA's Paul Stastny.

Sweden's victory on home ice gives the country the No.1 ranking heading into the Olympic season. The only other nation to move up three spots from last year was Korea. The 2018 Winter Games hosts, promoted to Division IA in 2012, finished in fifth place and will again compete in the division on home ice next year in Seoul.



Jhonas Enroth
Directorate Best Goalkeeper
All-Star Team Goalkeeper



Roman Josi
Most Valuable Player
Directorate Best Defenceman
All-Star Team Defenceman



Julien Vauclair
All-Star Team Defenceman



Petri Kontioli
Directorate Best Forward
All-Star Team Forward



Henrik Sedin
All-Star Team Forward



Paul Stastny
All-Star Team Forward

Rank	Country	Points	2012	Change
1	Sweden	3105	4	+3
2	Finland	3065	2	0
3	Russia	3040	1	-2
4	Czech Republic	2975	3	-1
5	Canada	2940	5	0
6	USA	2895	7	+1
7	Switzerland	2845	9	+2
8	Slovakia	2840	6	-2
9	Norway	2685	8	-1
10	Germany	2650	10	0
11	Latvia	2520	11	0
12	Denmark	2480	12	0
13	France	2450	14	+1
14	Belarus	2410	13	-1
15	Austria	2265	15	0
16	Kazakhstan	2225	17	+1
17	Slovenia	2215	18	+1
18	Italy	2210	16	-2
19	Hungary	2075	19	0
20	Ukraine	1970	20	0
21	Japan	1960	22	+1
22	Great Britain	1940	21	-1
23	Poland	1835	23	0
24	Netherlands	1765	24	0
25	Korea	1740	28	+3
26	Lithuania	1700	25	-1
27	Romania	1635	27	0
28	Estonia	1610	26	-2
29	Croatia	1510	30	+1
30	Spain	1445	29	-1
31	Serbia	1375	31	0
32	Australia	1330	32	0
33	Iceland	1240	35	+2
34	Belgium	1210	36	+2
35	New Zealand	1120	37	+2
36	Mexico	1110	34	-2
37	Bulgaria	1070	33	-4
38	China	1000	38	0
39	Israel	960	40	+1
40	Turkey	945	39	-1
41	South Africa	790	41	0
42	Ireland	705	42	0
43	Luxembourg	680	43	0
44	Greece	610	44	0
45	DPR Korea	600	45	0
46	Mongolia	415	46	0
47	UAE	275	47	0
48	Georgia	180	(new)	0

Canada steals the show in Sochi

U18 tournament final warmup for Olympic venues



By Adam Steiss

■ ■ Canada broke the United States' dominant four-year run of gold at the U18 World Championship, beating USA 3-2 in the final game of the 2013 tournament.

The Canadians rode a six-game unbeaten streak all the way through to the championship game, finishing with convincing wins over Sweden, Czech Republic, and Finland to set up their clash with Team USA, winners of seven of the last 14 U18 World Championships.

The Quebec connection came through big time for Canada in the final. Goal-tender Philippe Desrosiers was called upon to make 33 saves, while Frédéric Gauthier scored the game-winning goal in the second period.

"One of the best feelings in the world," said Gauthier, whose winning goal was his first of the tournament.

Despite being outshot nearly three-to-one through two periods, Canada came into the third up 3-2 thanks to Gauthier's score. The States, who made it through to the gold medal game thanks to a dramatic comeback shootout win over hosts Russia, couldn't conjure up any more magic as the score stood for the Canadians.

With the victory, Canada wins its third U18 World championship gold medal. The loss ended the United States' four-year U18 gold medal streak, and returned their North American rivals back on top for the first time since 2008.

■ For Canada, a nation that is usually unable to bring its best players overseas to play in the championship (the Canadian Hockey League playoffs run at the same time as the U18s, meaning top draft prospects such as Nathan

MacKinnon and Max Domi were unavailable this year), the 2013 squad that the country iced was a force to be reckoned with.

Canada's offensive engine was run by forward Connor McDavid, who earned the tournament scoring title in his U18 debut. Nick Baptiste and Morgan Klimchuk each chipped in eight points as Canada led the tournament in goals scored. Captain Sam Reinhart and Josh Morrissey, U18 veterans who played on the bronze medal-winning team last year, led a defensive group that was the tournament's No.1 penalty killing unit and allowed just six goals in seven games.



Photo: Francois Laplante / HHOF-IIHF Images

Canada's offence was a force, averaging 5 goals per game.

Another big part of Canada's success lay in net. Playing in his first international tournament, Desrosiers registered a 0.80 goals-against average and a 97.01 save percentage through five games, tops among goalies at the 2013 U18.

■ The tournament served as the final test event for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, and based on the response from the teams, the experience of playing in the Olympic venues could not have gone much better.

Both facilities, the Bolshoy Ice Dome and Shayba Arena, were used for the tournament. Judging by the near-sell-outs for the Team Russia games, and the atmosphere created by the fans at the Bolshoy in particular, these arenas will pass with flying colours come Olympics-time.

"Beautiful rink, it's just a great rink to come in and play in," said Don Hay, head coach of Team Canada. "We've been shown great hospitality by everybody since we've landed here. We appreciate this hospitality and the efforts that the people are going and putting forth for us."



Hitting the books, then the ice: school's in at U18

■ ■ For Team Canada, the value of a good education is as important as goals scored or shots saved.

During their 2013 gold medal campaign, Canada's U18 team has had to attend academic sessions, designed to keep the players up to date on their studies back home.

The program has been in place with Hockey Canada for a number of years, to avoid players who are competing in the U18 tournament falling behind on their schoolwork during what is a sensitive time for many Canadian students.

"We had to do it, at this time of the year they're simply missing a lot of school," said Scott Salmond, senior director of hockey operations at Hockey Canada. "It was a need that was specifically for the U18 team because of the time of the tournament."

With late-April a busy time in most Canadian high schools, Hockey Canada has made a point of bringing in an academic advisor along with the team when it travels to the U18



Photo: Matthew Murnaghan / HHOF-IIHF Images

Tope (left) goes over the day's work with Team Canada.

World Championship. This year, Niagara Icedogs education consultant Timothy Tope travelled with the team to Sochi and supervised eight one-and-a-half to two-hour sessions during the preliminary round.

"It's tricky because we get players from different backgrounds, some are in the high-A range and others are

A star is born

McDavid puts on a show in Russia



Photo: Matthew Murnaghan

McDavid's impressive skill set was on full display in Sochi.

■ ■ The 2013 IIHF U18 Worlds also introduced a rising talent to the rest of the hockey world. Playing in his first World Championship, all 16-year-old forward Connor McDavid did was lead an offensively gifted Canadian team with 14 points in half as many games.

The Richmond Hill, Canada native put eight goals and four assists in the tournament, including two straight hat tricks against Sweden in the final preliminary round game and the Czech Republic in the quarter-final. Coming into the tournament as one of the top players in his age group, McDavid flashed the creativity and competitive edge that has made him the consensus projected No. 1 overall pick in the 2015 NHL draft.

At just 15 years old, McDavid was allowed to enter the Ontario Hockey League Priority Selection that year after being granted "Exceptional Player Status," becoming only the third player to be given this exception after Aaron Ekblad of the Barrie Colts and New York Islanders forward John Tavares. The exception allowed him to compete in the Canadian Hockey League a year earlier than his eligible age.

Playing for his Canadian Hockey League club, McDavid had 66 points in 63 games for the Erie Otters of the Ontario Hockey League this season, second among first-year Ontario Hockey League players.

Now, fresh off a U18 performance that had the 200-plus scouts in Sochi picking their jaws up from the floor, will McDavid get the chance for another gold at the U20 in Malmö?

struggling more, so we just make sure that they are attending and provide help as needed," said Tope. "In Niagara, we say that if you're a C-student in your home school, we expect you to be at least a C-student here."

Gathering the team in the morning at the press center of the Vesna hotel in Sochi, Tope supervised the players as they went through their work, usually prepared for them in the form of an online course or lessons sent by teachers via email.

"With that group, everybody's doing something different," said Tope. "We got guys coming in from across the country so some kids are doing online work and others are enrolled in classes at home, so I'm communicating with the teachers and guidance counsellors in Canada to ensure that the work is being sent to me and that I send things back."

With the way the tournament went for Canada, coming home with a gold medal plus a few As on the report card makes it that much sweeter.



Celebrations in blue and white

Kazakhstan, Italy will play in Minsk

By Martin Merk

■ ■ Kazakhstan and Italy will play in the 2014 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship in Belarus and replace the relegated teams, Austria and Slovenia.

For both nations it's a return to the top-16 nations after having been relegated in 2012.

The Kazakhs won the 2013 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division I Group A in Budapest. They recovered from a historic loss to host nation Hungary and blanked Italy 3-0 in the deciding game.

"It's great to get back to the top division. We kind of made up for the loss against Hungary," said Kazakh forward Konstantin Pushkaryov.

"In the games before we were not ready. We knew we can beat these teams here but Hungary put us in the right spot and we started to work. We cannot always be on attack and score goals, we have to work first on our defence."

The Italians worked better on their defence and won four games in the tournament before falling to Kazakhstan. The second-place finish led them to promotion.



Italy (left) and Kazakhstan (right) will return to the top division after just one year in Division I Group A.

without Korean heritage to represent the country in sports five years after transferring to Asia League team Anyang Halla.

The good performance came in time. Korea's ambition is to develop hockey and become a top division nation before hosting the 2018 Olympics with new initiatives including placing players in the second Finnish league.

"We are disappointed not winning the gold medal, but we are extremely happy that we're back in the top division," Italy coach Tom Pokel said.

Hungary again missed promotion tightly and had to settle for bronze. They had a historic win against Kazakhstan, but also a first-ever loss to Korea and were beaten 2-1 by their nemesis Italy, which beat Hungary for promotion already two years earlier at the same venue.

Korea on the rise

Korea sent Great Britain down and ended the tournament with five points and the best overall placing ever, 21st. One of the top players was Brock Radunske. Nicknamed "Canadian Big Beauty" in Korea, he became the first athlete

"At this event we gained confidence for games against higher-ranked teams," Korean head coach Sun Wook Byun said.

"We want to play in the Olympics in PyeongChang. For that we have to try our best every year, every time. We did our first step but we have to improve our game so we can do the next step."

Next year Korea will host the Division I Group A in its capital of Seoul in an event that will include Ukraine, which defeated Poland for Division I Group B gold on home ice in Donetsk.



U.S. back on inline hockey throne

By Martin Merk

■ ■ The United States won the IIHF Inline Hockey World Championship for the first time since 2010 and is now the undisputed leader in gold medal wins with six world titles after defeating five-time champions Sweden 6-3 in the final.

It was a well-deserved win for the Americans who ended the tournament with a 6-0 record. Sweden recovered from a preliminary-round loss to Nordic rival Finland and posted strong performances in the final round with physical play and great offensive instinct. But it wasn't enough for the fast and well-prepared American team.

"It's unbelievable. It's all I've dreamed about. I've played inline hockey my whole life and that's the highest thing you can get in inline hockey. I can't believe we actually won," said Travis Noe, who scored a hat trick and was named Best Forward of the tournament.

"I think we wanted it more and our speed decided too. We were a hungry team. We had a really good group of guys."

Sweden had a 2-1 halftime lead but the Americans created more scoring opportunities in what was a very fast-paced game and eventually outshot Sweden 36-31.

Tre Kronor occupied the second to fifth places in the scoring ranking behind Noe including the tournament's top goal scorer Henrik Höglund, who had 13 markers, and Daniel Brodin, who was named Best Defenceman.

The Swedes also had Dick Axelsson on their team, who won ice hockey gold two weeks earlier but missed out on the opportunity to win "double gold" this year. The Swedes also suffered through a few injuries that hurt the team especially in the final.



Team USA celebrates the first inline hockey gold since 2010.

Photo: Hans Oelschlägel

United against the flood

■ The tournament was played under unusual circumstances. At the beginning of June the teams encountered torrential rain that caused floods in parts of Germany and neighbouring countries. Players arriving for practice saw a parking lot that turned into a lake of several hectares, and water rising higher each day until it peaked one metre below rink level.

On the off day the teams became active themselves. The whole German national team was joined by players from many other of the 16 teams and staff from the organizer to accompany helpers at several sites. They helped protect buildings and vulnerable areas from the water with sand bags and fought united against the flood before getting back to the court for the final round one day later.

"We saw ourselves how the water got higher and higher and were immediately ready to help," said German national coach Georg Holzmann. "Our team was there, with Canadians, Hungarians, Australians and others. Normally you just see things like that on TV. It's praiseworthy how everybody helped."



Players from many countries helped in the flood area.

Photo: Martin Merk

USA goalie making a name for himself

19 years old with three IIHF medals, John Gibson ready to take the next big step

By Ryan O'Leary

■ ■ As the bronze medal was placed onto John Gibson's red, white and blue uniform during the medal ceremony at the World Championships, a certain fact became evident: this young goaltender is about to be in high demand.

But first, let's look back at how Gibson jumped to the top of several scouting wish lists in such a short period of time.

Gibson's accolades started five months prior at the World Junior Championship in Ufa, Russia. The American goaltender's 1.36 goals against average and 95.5 save percentage in Ufa not only secured a gold medal for Team USA, but it also earned him Tournament MVP honours in the process. Two years before that, he won his first IIHF gold with the U.S. at the U18 Worlds in Germany.

These tournaments were against players his age. Surely, not much was expected of the 19 year-old at the World Championships playing against top professionals from Europe and North America.

Or was it?

Team USA head coach Joe Sacco tapped Gibson to start against host Finland in the Americans' fourth preliminary round game – a tough test to say the least in front of a partisan Helsinki crowd.

After giving up an early first period goal to Jarno Koskiran-ta, Gibson stymied the Finns for the remaining 54 minutes, stopping 31 of 32 shots from the opposition in all, to give USA a 4-1 win and three important points.

Speaking of his ability to be so opportunistic, Gibson said, "Anytime you get to play for your country, it's a major honour. My approach was to be ready when called upon and not do anything differently. It's something I'll never forget."

Gibson would go on to start one more preliminary round game against Germany – a convincing 3-0 shutout of the Germans.



Gibson won gold at the U18 in 2011, then added another this year at the U20 before claiming bronze in Stockholm.

In doing so, Gibson, Galchenyuk and defenceman Jacob Trouba became the first Americans in history to win medals at the World Junior and World Championship tournaments in the same year.

Now, the focus switches to Gibson's professional future. Talent-wise, everyone agrees Gibson fits the NHL bill.

But where will he play?

Gibson was drafted by the Anaheim Ducks in the second round of the 2011 NHL Entry Draft – 39th overall, but currently plays in the Ontario Hockey League with the Kitchener Rangers.

Alex Galchenyuk, Gibson's teammate on both the World Junior and senior squads, says the goaltender is a strong presence in the crease.

"When John is in net you just have a confident feeling as a skater. You don't have to worry so much about playing extra defence. Instead, you can focus on playing attacking offence," said Galchenyuk.

A shaky performance against Slovakia by the other American goaltender, Ben Bishop, convinced Sacco to start Gibson against the high-octane attack of Russia (which bolstered its roster by adding Alexander Ovechkin prior to the game) in the quarter-final round.

Buoyed by eight U.S. goals, Gibson stopped 31 of 34 Russian shots to help advance his team to the semi-finals, while sending an extremely disappointed Russian team home.

When asked about his mental approach against the likes of Ovechkin, Alexander Radulov and Ilya Kovalchuk, Gibson said, "You definitely notice when those guys are on the ice, but you have to stay steady. They shoot the puck like anyone else and you have to play the same way against them."

The U.S. would then fall to Switzerland in the semi-finals, setting up a rematch against a medal-hungry Finnish squad in the bronze medal match.

Gibson was tremendous again, including some critical saves late in the game to keep the game tied at 2-2 and in overtime as Finland attacked relentlessly. He would make two more massive saves in the shootout as Team USA went on to win its first medal at the World Championships since 2004.

"It was unbelievable what John pulled off in that tournament – especially in overtime and the shootout. He gave us a chance to win the medal and I think he was absolutely our MVP," said Galchenyuk.

At present, the crease in Anaheim is extremely crowded with the likes of Switzerland's Jonas Hiller and Sweden's Viktor Fasth occupying the starting and backup roles.

The two were quite the formidable duo for a dominant Anaheim team this past season.

And, with Gibson being NHL ready, is there a team willing to trade for his services?

Gibson says he's not concerned with all of the possible scenarios.

"Just like with this tournament, I'll be ready to capitalize on the opportunity whenever and wherever it comes," he said.

Similar to all the scouts at the World Championship, Galchenyuk is excited about Gibson's future.

"I can't wait to see him in the NHL. He's definitely ready for the next level. John has a great work ethic and approach to the game. I've told him that he's ready," Galchenyuk remarked.

Whether Gibson's NHL debut comes in Anaheim or somewhere else, his pair of medals in 2013 prove that the 19-year-old is prepared to compete against the best in the world.



Gibson stopped 36 of 38 shots in the bronze medal game.

IIHF Snapshots



Fredrik Pettersson's slapshot from close range gave Sweden a 3-2 win over Canada in the Worlds quarter-finals.



René Fasel (left) and Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt (right) induct Mats Sundin into the IIHF Hall of Fame.



Joining forces: Team France and Team Germany got together for a photo-op to promote their bid for the 2017 IIHF World Championship. The two countries won the right to co-host the championship, to be played in Cologne and Paris.

IIHF CALENDAR OF EVENTS

IIHF Tournaments

IIHF World Championship		
2014 BELARUS, Minsk		09 - 25.05.14
IIHF World Championship Division I Group A		
2014 KOREA, Seoul		20 - 26.04.14
IIHF World Championship Division I Group B		
2014 LITHUANIA, Kaunas (TBC)		20 - 26.04.14
IIHF World Championship Division II Group A		
2014 SERBIA, Belgrade or Novi Sad		09 - 15.04.14
IIHF World Championship Division II Group B		
2014 SPAIN, Jaca		05 - 11.04.14
IIHF World Championship Division III		
2014 LUXEMBOURG, Luxembourg		07 - 12.04.14
IIHF World Junior Championship		
2014 SWEDEN, Malmö		26.12.2013 - 05.01.2014
IIHF U20 World Championship Division I Group A		
2014 POLAND, Sanok		15 - 21.12.13
IIHF U20 World Championship Division I Group B		
2014 GREAT BRITAIN, Dumfries		09 - 15.12.13
IIHF U20 World Championship Division II Group A		
2014 HUNGARY, TBA		15 - 21.21.13
IIHF U20 World Championship Division II Group B		
2014 SPAIN, Jaca		11 - 17.01.14
IIHF U20 World Championship Division III		
2014 TURKEY, Izmir		12 - 18.01.14
IIHF U18 World Championship		
2014 FINLAND, Lappeenranta & Imatra		17 - 27.04.14
IIHF U18 World Championship Division I Group A		
2014 FRANCE, Nice		13 - 19.04.14
IIHF U18 World Championship Division I Group B		
2014 HUNGARY, TBA		13 - 19.04.14
IIHF U18 World Championship Division II Group A		
2014 GREAT BRITAIN, Dumfries		24 - 30.03.14
IIHF U18 World Championship Division II Group B		
2014 ESTONIA, Tallinn		13 - 19.03.14
IIHF U18 World Championship Division III Group A		
2014 BULGARIA, Sofia		24 - 30.03.14
IIHF U18 World Championship Division III Group B		
2014 TURKEY, Izmit		13 - 15.02.14
IIHF Women's World Championship Division I Group A		
2014 CZECH REPUBLIC, Prerov		06 - 12.04.14
IIHF Women's World Championship Division I Group B		
2014 LATVIA, Ventspils		16 - 22.04.14
IIHF Women's World Championship Division II Group A		
2014 ITALY, Asiago		06 - 12.04.14
IIHF Women's World Championship Division II Group B		
2014 ICELAND, Reykjavik		24 - 30.03.14
IIHF Women's World Championship Division II Group B Qualification		
2014 MEXICO, Mexico City		08 - 11.04.14
IIHF U18 Women's World Championship		
2014 TBA		TBA
IIHF U18 Women's World Championship Division I		
2014 GERMANY, Füssen		29.03 - 04.04.14
IIHF U18 Women's World Championship Division I Qualification		
2014 POLAND, Krynica - Zdroj		18 - 23.03.14
IIHF InLine Hockey World Championship		
2014 CZECH REPUBLIC, Pardubice		15 - 21.06.14
Olympic Winter Games		
2014 RUSSIA, Sochi		07 - 23.02.14
IIHF Congresses		
IIHF Semi-Annual Congress		
2013 PORTUGAL, Cascais		19 - 21.09.13
IIHF Annual Congress		
2014 BELARUS, Minsk		16 - 19.05.14
National Team Breaks		
2012/2014 Season		
1st International Break		26.08 - 01.09.13
2nd International Break		04 - 10.11.13
3rd International Break		16 - 22.12.13
4th International Break		03 - 09.02.14



"When John is in net you just have a confident feeling as a skater." -Alex Galchenyuk

Photo: Richard Wolowicz / IIHF-Images

Photo: Richard Wolowicz / IIHF-Images

Photo: Andre Ringuette / IIHF-Images

Photo: Matthew Murnaghan / IIHF-Images

Photo: Richard Wolowicz / IIHF-Images

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Photo: Andre Ringuette / IIHF-Images

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"They paid the price to score goals"

Switzerland coach Simpson looks back and forward after sensational silver

By Martin Merk

■ ■ After missing out on the quarter-finals twice in a row, the Swiss national team performed far beyond expectations in Stockholm, taking home the silver medals. Ice Times spoke with head coach Sean Simpson about this year's surprise team.

The disappointment about the lost gold medal was big on the final day. How do you feel with some distance and looking back at the whole World Championship campaign?

It was normal to be disappointed after losing the gold medal game. Every player or coach is going to be frustrated after losing the game but even a few hours later you realize what Switzerland has done. We won nine games in a row and played in the world final, that's something Swiss fans have been dreaming for many years.

What does the first silver medal in 78 years mean for Switzerland and Swiss ice hockey?

It means a lot. We've been proving in the last years that we're on a good level. We've been in the quarter-final game a couple of times and this time we were able to win it and go even one step further to the final. We showed in the last year that we're a good team and now we really broke through. It helps the whole hockey and the recognition of hockey in Switzerland.

The popularity has risen even though it was big before. We aroused the interest of a nation and that's always a special feeling for a group of coaches and players. It will help but on the other hand we have to be mature and keep our feet on the ground. We cannot expect to have it happen every year but we will try.

It was your fourth World Championship with the Swiss national team. Was the feeling with the team much different for you in this successful campaign than in the past years?

My approach wasn't different. I still had the same approach and philosophy. The difference between winning and losing at the Worlds is very small. We had a good start, we had a good group of guys and got it rolling in the right direction. It's just one game, one period that can send you in another direction. It's just a two-week tournament.

Momentum is a big key to success in the tournament. I didn't feel a big need to change the philosophy although I realized there was big disappointment in Switzerland in the last two years. But I always believed in my philosophy.

Will the success make your future work easier?

Absolutely not. We need to be very mature with what we've done. Everybody has to work every year to reach the next level. We have to be better next year if we want



Simpson and the rest of Team Switzerland arrived in Zurich to a hero's welcome after the World Championship.

Photo: Thomas Oswald

to reach our goals. Our goals shouldn't change. Our goal is the quarter-finals and it's not easy to reach. It's not an automatic goal, it's tough to reach. I won't change my work ethic, I will give 100 per cent.

You're the coach behind two of the biggest success stories for Swiss ice hockey. What is the secret behind and how would you compare this team with the ZSC Lions Zurich team that won the Champions Hockey League and the Victoria Cup in 2009?

I think the teams were both very good teams with very good players and a very good staff and a good organisation that's professionally run. That's where those teams were similar and also the momentum thing was similar. Nobody expected the ZSC Lions to win the Champions Hockey League. We came as underdogs and won. Same thing happened this year in the Worlds. When a team believes in what they do, good things can happen.

You're well known for adjusting the game plan to each opponent. You and your staff must have spent lots of hours working with videos.

I didn't sit there and go through hours of tape. We really use our coaching staff. Colin Muller is outstanding with videos, Patrick Fischer too, our video guy Benoît Pont as well. We can talk before the game what we need from

this opponent. We have to minimize our time, we cannot sit there for two or three hours. So I can't take credit for the video work. I really relied on my assistants.

What have been the biggest changes in Swiss ice hockey since you started coaching in Switzerland almost 20 years ago?

A lot stayed the same in Switzerland but the hockey is getting better. The money that was invested in the youth program like 20, 30 years ago paid off. The league is strong, the national team has become stronger and has now won a medal. Another proof is also our presence in the NHL. Five or ten years ago we didn't have the presence we had now. I think that's proving we're really making strides. But every other country is working as hard as we are. It's a constant battle to keep the level. Everybody in Swiss hockey – club coaches, junior coaches – has to work to make it even better.

While goaltending and defence have seldom been a weak point in the past, the offence was unusually successful this year. What are the reasons for this sudden change?

I've been trying to play like that for three years but we had to find a way to have success with this system. Just because I played with more forechecking it doesn't mean we played less defence. This time we had a great mix and finally the Swiss players went to the net and paid the price to score goals like they score in the NHL. We scored many goals from the blue paint and that was new for us. We brought in bigger forwards. It all worked this year really well finally. Maybe if it wouldn't have worked this year I would have been let go and now it worked and I'm proud every day to be the national coach.

With the results and the euphoria, also the expectations may rise. How would you estimate the chance of winning a medal in the next few years?

I think we shouldn't even go there. We should go back to the quarter-final qualification goal. If we're lucky enough in Sochi or in Minsk then we see where we go from there. We have to keep our feet on the ground and not be arrogant just because we broke through now.

After so many years in Switzerland, will you get the Swiss passport soon?

I think I have enough years and months in Switzerland that I can apply in fall and then I will see how it works. I live here all the time. I'm proud to be Swiss but also to be Canadian and British.

Fact file: Sean Simpson

- Born 4 May 1960 in Essex, England, Great Britain; grew up in Canada
- Played for Tilburg Trappers in Dutch Eredivisie, was top scorer in league in 1983/84 and 1988/89 seasons
- Coached EV Zug (SUI), München Barons (GER), Hamburg Freezers (GER), ZSC Lions Zurich (SUI)
- World Championship silver (2013), won Champions Hockey League and Victoria Cup titles with the ZSC Lions Zurich (2009), led EV Zug to its only Swiss title (1998). Won 2009 German championship with München
- Has coached Swiss national team since 2010

