

## Past, present & future collide in Canada



**GENERATIONS MEET:** During the 2008 World Championship in Canada, the IIHF honored its colorful past by recognizing the 1980 USA Miracle on Ice as the top story of the Century (bottom left Rene Fasel, Walter L. Bush Jr. 1980 player Mark Johnson, Art Berglund and IOC President Jacques Rogge mark the milestone). Also recognized was the Centennial All-Star Team (bottom right - see page 4). The IIHF also ushered in a new generation of stars as a young Russian team, led by Alexander Ovechkin, captured the 2008 gold medal. Also on the minds of those in Canada, the formation of the new CHL, where European Clubs, including top attended Bern in Switzerland, will play.

## IIHF pays homage to hockey legends and welcomes next generation



*After recognizing and honouring our past in Quebec City, it's time to look forward. The General Congress in Montreal gave the new council and myself a new four-year mandate to lead the IIHF until 2012. I take on this task with great modesty and pride.*

**RENÉ FASEL EDITORIAL**

■ We anticipated a lot from the first-ever IIHF World Championship in Canada and no one left Quebec City and Halifax disappointed. It was a splendid tournament and many observers said that the Russia vs. Canada final was one of the best international games ever.

This means that the two dominant forces of men's international hockey are again tied in their number of World Championship titles as Russia (with Soviet Union) and Canada both have earned 24 gold medals. And yes, the home-ice curse at the men's top event goes into its 23rd year.

■ The day before the gold medal game, we had the opportunity to honour those who have made the IIHF and international hockey what it is today. At the Centennial Gala we paid tribute to the greatest players and to the people behind the greatest accomplishments. It was a truly wonderful evening with the Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper, and IOC President Jacques Rogge among the guests of honour.

Mr. Harper was once again on hand a couple of days later when the IIHF finally realized the long-standing goal of paying homage to James Creighton and the people

behind the first organized game of at the Victoria Skating Rink in Montreal in 1875.

■ It's time now to roll up our sleeves and try to make international hockey even better in the four years to come. We are facing many challenges. As most people know, the IIHF-NHL transfer agreement has expired, which means that the relationship between the IIHF sphere and the NHL is not regulated.

It is the goal of the new council to secure the NHL players' participation in the World Championship, to make sure that all player transfers are executed in an orderly fashion (with or without a specific agreement) and to look beyond the Vancouver Olympics in 2010.

■ We would like to continue to present our member associations with the opportunity to be able to select NHL players for the next Olympics (Sochi 2014) and to revive the World Cup of Hockey, possibly for 2012. As you know, this tournament is a joint-venture between the NHL, NHLPA and the IIHF.

Effects of this co-operation will already be evident this autumn, when the inaugural Victoria Cup will take place in Berne, Switzerland as the European champion Metallurg Magnitogorsk and the New York Rangers will square off best-of-one game for the new trophy.

■ In October we enter a new era in European club hockey with the opening round of the Champions Hockey League. The second century of the IIHF has begun.

**René Fasel**  
IIHF President

## Champions Hockey League draw held in Zurich

■ The groups for the inaugural 2008-2009 Champions Hockey League were drawn at the IIHF headquarters in Zurich on April 25.

"For us, this is the start of a new era in European ice hockey," IIHF President René Fasel said. The 11 participating teams and the qualifier were drawn into four groups consisting of three teams each.

### Group A:

Karpat Oulu (Finland)  
Eisbaren Berlin (Germany)  
Metallurg Magnitogorsk (Russia)

### Group B:

HV71 Jonkoping (Sweden)  
Espoo Blues (Finland)  
Qualifier (TBD).

### Group C:

Salavat Yulayev Ufa (Russia)  
Slovan Bratislava (Slovakia)  
Mountfield Ceske Budejovice (Czech Republic).

### Group D:

Slavia Prague (Czech Republic)  
ZSC Lions Zurich (Switzerland)  
Linköping HC (Sweden)

The 12th team will be determined through a qualification tournament with HC Kosice (Slovakia), SC Bern (Switzerland) and the Sinupret Ice Tigers Nuremberg (Germany), September 12-14.

The reigning European club champion is Metallurg Magnitogorsk, which won the 2008 edition of the European Champion's Cup.



## The Class of '08

The IIHF formally inducted its Hall of Fame class for 2008 in conjunction with the World Championship in Canada. In total, seven people were inducted. Top row (L-R): IIHF Vice-President and Chairman of the Hall of Fame Committee Walter L. Bush Jr., Paul Loicq award winner Juraj Okolicany, Philippe Bozon (France), Art Berglund (USA), Igor Larionov (Russia). Bottom row (L-R): Angela James (Canada), Cammi Granato (USA), Geraldine Heaney (Canada).

Photo: IIHF/HHoF/Matthew Manor

## NEWS & NOTES FROM THE HOCKEY WORLD

■ **ZURICH:** IIHF President René Fasel, who also serves as the president of the Association of the International Olympic Winter Sports Federations (AIOWF), was nominated to be the winter sports representative on the International Olympic Committee Executive Board. The nomination will be considered at the IOC session in August.

■ **CANADA:** Canadian defenceman Luc Bourdon died after a motorcycle crash near his hometown Shippagan, New Brunswick, at the age of 21. Bourdon won gold medals at the 2006 and 2007 U20 Championship and a silver medal at the 2005 U18 Championship.

■ **ZURICH:** The IIHF Disciplinary Committee suspended Russian player Maxim Mamin for two years from all competition or activity authorized or organized by any IIHF member nation. Mamin, 20, tested positive in a random doping control on January 2, 2008, following the game Russia – Czech Republic at the 2008 IIHF World U20 Championship in Pardubice, Czech Republic.

■ **ZURICH:** The IIHF-NHL Player Transfer Agreement expired on June 15 and a new agreement will not be reached before the start of the 2008-09 season. Among other things, the transfer agreement made a deadline for transfers from the IIHF associations to the NHL, and gave clubs a transfer fee for each player. There is no word on when negotiations will begin for a new PTA.

■ **TORONTO:** The Hockey Hall of Fame announced its class of inductees for the 2009 season on June 17. Highlighting the group of four inductees Russian Igor Larionov, who was recently inducted to the IIHF Hall of Fame. Canadian Glenn Anderson joins Larionov along with Ed Chynoweth who will be included in the Builder Category and referee/linesman Ray Scapinello.

■ **RUSSIA:** IIHF Hall of Fame member Viktor Kuzkin died on June 24 at the age of 67 near Sochi, Russia following a diving accident in the Black Sea. Among other feats, Kuzkin won eight World Championship gold medals and three Olympic medals with the Soviet Union.

■ **PITTSBURGH:** The IIHF's Triple Gold Club expanded to 22 members as three new players joined the group that has won the Stanley Cup, along with both Olympic and World Championship gold medals. Niklas Kronwall, Mikael Samuelsson and Henrik Zetterberg are the newest members after winning the Stanley Cup with Detroit. Triple Gold Club member, Nicklas Lidstrom, became the first European captain to hoist the Stanley Cup (right) when Detroit beat Pittsburgh in the final series.



## Commemorate 100 years with collector's DVD

■ How was ice hockey played in 1898? How did it get from Canada to Europe, and how has it developed over the last 100 years?

Slovak Television, in cooperation with the IIHF, has produced a documentary to answer these questions and more, featuring the key moments in international ice hockey since the foundation of the IIHF in 1908.

The DVD includes unique pictures of IIHF tournaments from 1910, Canadian dominance in the pre-war era and the emergence of the Soviet "Big Red Machine" on the international ice scene.

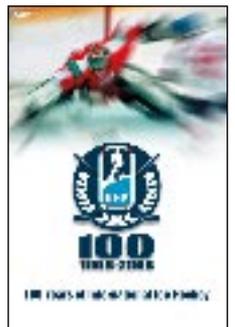
Also included is the 1972 Summit Series between Canada and the Soviet Union, the 1980 Olympic U.S.

Miracle on Ice, the upset Czechoslovakian victories over the Soviet Union, a Swedish goal that made it all the way to a postal stamp, the golden Swedish double in 2006, memories of hockey legends, and many historic film documentation.

### Bonus Features:

Photo gallery  
Key moments of games  
Interview with Horst Lichtner

**DVD Price:** 13.99 EUR + shipping and handling: 4,80 EUR. Go to IIHF.com for order information.



## CONTINENTAL CUP GROUPS

■ The groups for the 2008-2009 Continental Cup were determined after a meeting in Budapest, Hungary involving the participating clubs. In total, 19 teams will play in the four-round competition.

The Super Final of the Continental Cup will be in Rouen, France, with the French champion Dragons de Rouen hosting. Also seeded for the final tournament is the Slovakian top team MHC Martin.

The Continental Cup has been played since 1997. Last year, Russia's Ak Bars Kazan won the Super Final in Riga.

### First round, September 19-21, 2008:

**Group A** HC Novi Sad (SRB), Dundalk Bulls (IRL), KHL Mladost Zagreb (CRO), Slavia Sofia (BUL)

### Second round, October 17-19, 2008:

**Group B** Energija Elektrenai (LTU), Cracovia Krakow (POL), Sokil Kyiv (UKR), Tilburg Trappers (NED)

**Group C** SC Miercurea Ciuc (ROU), D.E. Dunaujvaros (HUN), CG Puigcerda (ESP), Winner Group A.

### Third round, November 21-23, 2008:

**Group D** Liepajas Metalurgs (LAT), Keramin Minsk (BLR), ICH Gorniyak Rudny (KAZ), Winner Group B.

**Group E** Bolzano Foxes (ITA), Coventry Blaze (GBR), HDK Maribor (SLO), Winner Group C.

### Super Final, January 16-18, 2009:

**Group F** Dragons de Rouen (FRA), MHC Martin (SVK), Winner Group D, Winner Group E.

The host team is listed first in each group.

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# The leaders of the pack: New IIHF Council elected

□ The new IIHF Council was elected for a four-year term (2008-2012). The 11-member council includes three newcomers and eight veterans. Two additional female members will be added at the Semi-Annual Congress in September to bring the total number of council members to 13.

Returning for a fourth term as IIHF President is René Fasel, who ran uncontested. Fasel has been IIHF President since 1994 and in that time was influential in the growth of the game especially within the Olympics. Fasel received a standing ovation from the Congress after his next term was confirmed.

□ Three Vice Presidents were also uncontested. Shoichi Tomita (JPN) was named the Vice President of Asia for a fourth term and like Fasel, has been in the position since 1994. Kalervo Kummola (FIN) was elected the Vice President for Europe. Kummola has been a member of the IIHF Council since 1998 and begins his second term as a Vice President. Rounding out the group is Murray Costello (CAN). Costello is a newcomer as a Vice President after filling the position vacated by Walter Bush Jr.

The Congress also elected seven council members. In total, 11 individuals ran for the council positions. Congress elected three newcomers and re-elected four veterans. The newcomers are Russian Alexander Medvedev, American Tony Rossi and Swede Christer Englund. Coming back for a fourth term as a council member is Frederick Meredith (Great Britain) who has served on the council since 1994. Joining Meredith are several council members who will begin their second terms. The group of two-term members is: Ernest Aljancic (Slovenia), Frank Gonzalez (Spain) and Juraj Siroky (Slovakia).

## Meet the Newcomers:

□ **Christer Englund:** Born on August 29, 1947. Englund was a board member in the Swedish Ice Hockey Association from 1993-2001 and was active on several committees. In 2004, he was named the chairman of the Swedish Ice Hockey Association. The former bank manager has also served as the General Manager for the Swedish national team from 1994-96 and has represented the IIHF at several congresses dating back to Moscow in 1986.

□ **Alexander Medvedev:** Born on August 14, 1955. Medvedev's hockey background is primarily based in his native



**A NEW FAMILY PORTRAIT:** The new IIHF Council poses for their first group shot directly after the election in Montreal. Back row (l to r): Tony Rossi, Christer Englund, Alexander Medvedev, Juraj Siroky, Frank Gonzalez. Front row (l to r): Frederick Meredith, Murray Costello, Shoichi Tomita, René Fasel, Kalervo Kummola and Ernest Aljancic. The three newcomers, Rossi, Medvedev and Englund also took their rookie photo after being welcomed to the Council. PHOTOS: Phillip MacCallum

Russia where he is a Chairman of the Board of Directors of the SKA St. Petersburg hockey club. He is also a member of the Supervisory Board of the Russian Ice Hockey Association and a member of the Organizing Committee of the new Open Russian Hockey League (KHL). In the business world, Medvedev is well-known as Deputy Chairman of Gazprom.

□ **Tony Rossi:** Born on April 9, 1941 in Illinois, USA. Rossi began his administrative career in hockey in the 1970s in Illinois when he started a local hockey club for kids. Rossi was elected to the USA Hockey Board of Directors in 1983 and was named a director of the Central District in 1989. In 1995, Rossi was named the USA Hockey Treasurer where he helped develop the USA Hockey Foundation to promote the growth of hockey in the U.S. Rossi was elected USA Hockey Vice-President in 2003.



## New Statutes & Bylaws passed

Every four years, changes to the IIHF Statutes and Bylaws are proposed by council or the member nations. Below are the key changes that were approved by the General Congress.

■ **NEW:** A member national association that has participated in IIHF Championships (men's) loses its second vote, if it fails to compete in two straight championships. **Background:** A full member nation in good standing has one vote. A full member nation in good standing, whose national team has competed in three straight IIHF World men's championships immediately preceding or concurrently with the Congress, is entitled to two votes. **Rationale:** Voting strength at congresses should reflect a country's activity in championships.

■ **NEW:** Nominees for Council must not be over 72 years of age as of June 1st the year of the General Congress. **Background:** There was no age limit earlier.

■ **NEW:** The first directorate of any IIHF competition has jurisdiction for incidents in pre-competition games

which affect the subsequent championship.

**Background:** Previously, the IIHF had no jurisdiction over exhibition games prior to IIHF championship.

**Rationale:** If a player commits a severe infraction during a pre-event exhibition game, his action can go under review and he can face a suspension at the championship.

■ **NEW:** A penalty that affects a player playing for his national team must be reported immediately by the national association to the chairman of the event. The directorate will review the case and may impose disciplinary action and may refer the case to the IIHF Disciplinary Committee. **Rationale:** A suspension for a severe infraction, imposed by a national association prior to an IIHF event, must be reviewed to determine if the player should be allowed to participate.

■ **NEW:** A three-man audit committee replaces the position of the treasurer. **Background:** Before, the treasurer was a council member.

■ **NEW:** For World Championship allocations, except the men and women top divisions, only the participating countries and council will vote. For the allocation of the men and women top divisions, all present nations with voting rights, and the council, will vote.

**Background:** Before, all present nations with voting rights, voted on the allocation of every championship.

**Rationale:** The allocation of an event should be decided by the participating countries.

■ **NEW:** An ad-hoc independent disciplinary panel will be appointed prior to each top IIHF championship to deal with all disciplinary issues at the event.

**Background:** Before, the tournament directorate dealt with disciplinary issues.

**Rationale:** The judiciary power at the event should be an independent body, separated from the legislative body.

■ **NEW:** If two teams meet for the second time in the same event, the better preliminary round record will determine which team is the home team.

**Background:** Before, the team that was the home team in the first game, was the away team in the second game.

**Rationale:** As the home team has advantages (bench choice, last change of lines) and in the final stages of the tournament, it should be determined by sportive criteria.

■ **NEW:** Women's teams will register a third goalkeeper for a top championship and the Olympics. **Background:** Before, women registered two goalkeepers, with the third as a stand-by non-traveling reserve.

■ **NEW:** The video goal judge system will also be applied in men's Division I championships.

# IHF Centennial Celebration i

## Gala evening recognizes All-Star Team and T

■ *Mirror, mirror on the wall, who are the best players of them all? That was the question that 10 months ago the International Ice Hockey Federation set out to answer when it announced that a Centennial All-Star team would be named as part of the 100-year celebrations. Countless debates and discussions later, the team of six was named as part of the IIHF's Centennial Gala Evening on May 18. Who made the list of the century's best? Read on to find out.*

### GOALTENDER: VLADISLAV TRETIAK RUSSIA



Tretiak backstopped the Soviet national team to 10 World Championship gold medals and three Olympic gold medals. The legendary Russian goaltender also made his mark as the starting goalie for the USSR in all eight games of the history-making 1972 Summit Series versus Canada. He helped the USSR earn an 8-1 victory in the final of the 1981 Canada Cup. He became the first Soviet-trained player inducted into the Hockey Hall of

Fame in 1989. Each player was introduced by a fellow hockey colleague. Lauding Tretiak was Canadian goaltending icon Patrick Roy, who drew laughs from the audience when commenting on the Russian goalie's retirement at the age of 32 in 1984 when the Soviet authorities didn't allow him to join the Montreal Canadiens: "Maybe I should be the one who should be grateful for that. Had Vladislav signed with the Canadiens, maybe there wouldn't have been room for me in 1985."

### DEFENSEMAN: VYACHESLAV FETISOV RUSSIA

A longtime teammate of Tretiak's, Fetisov led his national team to two Olympic gold medals and one silver medal, seven World Championship gold medals, and one Canada Cup title. His two Stanley Cups with Detroit rounded out his resume and made him a member of the IIHF's Triple Gold Club. Long viewed as international hockey's top blueliner, this extraordinary leader was named World Championship Best Defenseman on five occasions, and he was selected an unprecedented nine times to the World Championship All Star Team. Long-time Detroit head coach Scotty Bowman who introduced Fetisov. Bowman described Fetisov as "a born winner and leader who apart from all the things you want in a defenseman also scared his opponents with his physical presence and punishing checks." Bowman concluded that Fetisov for a full decade was the best defenseman in international hockey.



### DEFENSEMAN: BORJE SALMING SWEDEN

Salming pioneered the way for Europeans to play - and star - in the NHL, with a 17-season career that was mostly spent with Toronto and ended in Detroit in 1990. The brilliant, tough defenceman also represented Sweden internationally over 21 years, starting with the 1972



World Championship. The 1992 Olympics in Albertville was his last appearance. In 1996, he became the first Swede inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame. Salming was introduced by former Finnish star Jari Kurri who said, "It was his ability to survive first and excel thereafter which gave the next generation of Europeans, among them me, the confidence that playing overseas was possible."

### FORWARD (WING): VALERI KHARLAMOV RUSSIA

Kharlamov starred on the great Soviet line of the 1970's with Boris Mikhailov and Vladimir Petrov, and was just as renowned for his artistry as his victories. At eleven World Championships he won as many medals, eight of them gold. He added two Olympic gold medals and one silver to his collection. He dominated the 1972 Olympics with 15 points in just 5 games. He is still second in All-Time World Championship scoring with 159 points in



105 games. Kharlamov passed away in a car accident in 1981 and was posthumously inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 2005. Accepting the award on behalf of Kharlamov was his son, Alexander. Offering words of praise and introducing the forward was Ken Dryden who said of the Soviet player, "No one embodied the special Russian qualities better than this speedy winger whom we simply couldn't contain in 1972."

### FORWARD (WING): SERGEI MAKAROV RUSSIA

Makarov teamed up with Igor Larionov and Vladimir Krutov on the Soviet "KLM Line" of the 1980's, and he won 8 World Championship gold medals in 11 trips to the event. An amazingly gifted skater and stickhandler, the winger also captured two Olympic gold medals and one silver. He dressed for the national team on 315 occasions, and in 101 World Championship games he scored an amazing 118 points. He won the scoring crown in three consecutive World Championships (1983, 1985, 1986), averaging nearly 1.6 points per game in the process. Makarov was unable to attend the ceremony, but he was offered a heartfelt introduction by Igor Larionov who said when accepting the award on Makarov's behalf, "He was an artist in the Valeri Kharlamov mold. What Kharlamov did in the 70s, Makarov did in the 80s. As his centre for almost a decade, I was extremely fortunate to have the best seat in the house to witness his magic."



### FORWARD (CENTER): WAYNE GRETZKY CANADA

The 'Great One' was no surprise as the top center as he is still widely regarded as the greatest player ever. In his international debut at the 1978 World Juniors, despite being the youngest player, he won the scoring title with 17 points in six games. Three years later he played in his first major international event, the 1981 Canada Cup. He won the scoring crown again. The next year he debuted on European ice, taking part in his first and only IIHF World Championship, and led the tournament in scoring again. Gretzky led Canada to wins in the 1984 and 1987 Canada Cups, winning the scoring crown in both events. In Rendez-Vous '87 versus the Soviets, he was named MVP, and also led this event in scoring. Four years later, in 1991, he led his country to a third consecutive Canada Cup victory. Once again he led the tournament in scoring. And of course, to go with his amazing international resume, he also owns 61 NHL records, 31 individual NHL trophies, and four Stanley Cup rings. Gretzky was introduced by Jean Beliveau who said, "Gretzky not only dominated international hockey for more than a decade, he defined the new way of playing the game and he single-handedly altered the perception of Canadian hockey internationally." His award was picked up by Kevin Lowe.



# n Canada op 100 stories

## ABOUT THE IIHF CENTENNIAL ALL-STAR TEAM SELECTION:

A panel comprised 56 ice hockey experts from 16 countries representing a balance between North American and European countries, including people who have worked in the game for an extended period and whose opinions are universally respected voted for the Centennial All-Star Team. One of the 56 voters represented the collective opinion of the staff of *The Hockey News*.

Tretiak received 30 votes, Fetisov 54, Salming 17, Kharlamov 21, Makarov 18, and Gretzky 38.

Voting was completed in April. No distinction was made between right or left defenders and right or left wingers.

None of the 56 voters individually matched the final results of the voting.



**HOCKEY'S BIRTHPLACE RECOGNIZED:** The Victoria Skating Rink and James Creighton the 'Father of organized hockey' were officially recognized with two commemorative plaques on May 22 at the Bell Centre in Montreal. Unveiling the Victoria Skating Rink plaque were (l to r): Bob Nicholson (President, Hockey Canada), Gerald Tremblay (Mayor of Montreal), René Fasel and Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada. The ceremony wrapped up two years of efforts to officially recognize the Victoria rink as the birthplace of organized hockey and Creighton as a person of historical significance. PHOTO: Alexandre Choquette

# USA's Miracle moment is Century's Top Story

■ It took a Miracle to top the IIHF's list of the Top 100 stories of the Century as USA's 'Miracle on Ice' took the top spot. The honor was announced as part of the Centennial Gala evening where the Top 10 on the list were also unveiled.

### #1: DO YOU BELIEVE IN MIRACLES?

The Olympic Fieldhouse in Lake Placid, New York, hardly seemed like the place where hockey history could be made, but on one afternoon in 1980, the greatest moment in international hockey took place. It was a moment that transformed the game in one country and, over time, around the world. It was the moment on February 22, 1980 a group of college kids beat the unstoppable Soviet Union, 4-3, allowing the team to eventually win gold. The game remains the greatest moment in international hockey because of its continued impact over time. For 20 college players to defeat a team that trained year round and won virtually every game it played before and after truly is, in a sporting sense, a miracle. There have been greater teams which have accomplished greater feats over greater periods of time in international hockey, but there is only one game, one team, one moment, that can truly be called a miracle....a Miracle on Ice.

### #2: "HENDERSON HAS SCORED FOR CANADA!"

Game eight of the Summit Series was maybe the most important hockey game ever played. It was the climax of the greatest series ever played, Canada versus the Soviet Union. Paul Henderson scored the game-winning goal in game six, and in game seven he did it again in the third period. In game eight he completed the trifecta with the game winner with just 34 seconds left in the game in what is considered as the most important goal in Canadian hockey history.

### #3: SOVIETS SHOCK CANADA IN SUMMIT SERIES OPENER

Leading up to the 1972 Summit Series, the consensus in Canada was simple: Canada would win all eight games. But the Soviets had other ideas as they thrashed Canada after falling behind early, the Soviets piled in seven goals to win the opener, 7-3, leaving fans at the Forum in the state of shock and sending a clear signal to the hockey world the Soviets were not to be taken lightly.

### #4: SOVIETS WIN GOLD AT THEIR FIRST WORLDS

A 7-2 victory over the East York Lyndhursts announced that a new world hockey power had arisen as in 1954 the Soviet Union made its first appearance in international hockey, doing so in a blaze of glory winning the gold and setting the stage for generations of future stars.



### #5: CZECHOSLOVAKIA ENDS SOVIET STREAK

Jaroslav Holik was the big hero as his nation ended almost a decade of World dominance by the Soviets. Holik scored the eventual winner, making it 3-1. Holik's goal remains maybe the most famous marker in the history of Czechoslovakian hockey. They eventually won 3-2, sending fans in Prague's Sportovní hala and an entire nation into a frenzy and ending 22 years of frustration and the Soviets nine-in-a-row.

### #6: FIRST CANADA CUP OPENS UP HOCKEY WORLD

In 1976, the IIHF endorsed a new event which featured professionals called the Canada Cup. It featured six teams, and any team could use whatever players it wanted, regardless of professional or amateur status, a breakthrough at the time. It was the first truly international tournament featuring "best on best" from the top countries. Canada, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Finland, and the United States played a round robin series followed by a best-of-three finals between the top two teams, which Canada won.

### #7: NHL RELEASES PLAYERS FOR 1998 OLYMPICS

For the first time ever, the world's top pro league shut down for 17 days so its superstars could compete in Nagano. The

TV ratings were excellent, and the general response to NHL participation was so favourable that it has been the norm ever since.

### #8: SWEDEN'S UNIQUE DOUBLE, OLYMPICS & WORLDS

In 2006, Tre Kronor became the first hockey team to capture gold in the Olympics and World Championships in the same calendar year. After a surprise win in Torino, where Canada was the odds on favorite, Sweden struck gold again three months later in Riga at the World Championship with only eight players from the Olympic squad.

### #9: SOVIETS BEAT HOSTS 8-1 TO WIN CANADA CUP IN MONTREAL

Thanks to Vladislav Tretiak and Sergei Shepelev, the 1981 Canada Cup ended with the most shocking defeat Canada has ever had in an international title game. The Soviets scored five times on eight shots in the third period putting the game out of reach and giving Canada an 8-1 humiliation it had never experienced in a championship game at this level.

### #10: CZECH REPUBLIC WINS FIRST "OPEN" OLYMPICS

Dominik Hasek starred in net and Petr Svoboda scored the winning goal as the Czechs triumphed over NHL-laden opponents in the 1998 Nagano Olympics. The Czechs defeated the two most successful hockey nations in the sport's history—Canada and Russia—to win its first gold in 78 years of Olympic hockey. The team flew to Prague the next day for a celebration parade, and estimates of more than a million people in the capital spoke to the win not just as a sporting moment of Czech history but a cultural one as well.

# After 15-year drought - Russia fi

By Andrew Podnieks

*Hockey players are generally remembered for things they do at the end rather than the beginning, which is a good thing for Russia's Ilya Kovalchuk. At the 2008 World Championship, he had the most ignominious stretch of several games he's ever played, but in the end he was the gold-medal hero for his country.*

■ ■ ■ Indeed, Kovalchuk lives and breathes goals. That's how his reputation is defined, and that's why he's a great player. He knows how to score. But in every game up until the last game of the tournament, Kovalchuk didn't score. Not once. Even worse, he was uncharacteristically chippy, earning two game misconducts against the Swedes and Swiss, and earning a one-game suspension for actions in the latter of those two.

Going into the gold-medal game, Kovalchuk was nothing short of a major disappointment for the Russians, but the team had many other weapons to rely on and was able to minimize the effect of a sub-par Kovalchuk. Even through the first two periods of the final game against Canada he was not a factor, but then as time wound down in the third period and Russia still trailing, 4-3, the great scorer made his mark. He ripped a quick shot past goalie Cam Ward with just 5:12 remaining to tie the game, and then he let go a bullet of a wrist shot at 2:42 of overtime on a 4-on-3 power play to give his country its first gold medal since 1993. The game misconducts and suspension and goalless drought were instantly forgotten.



Photo: IIHF/HHoF IMAGES

**THE STREAKERS:** *Finland won its third straight medal at the World Championship after capturing bronze against Sweden in Canada. The Finn's triple is the best current medal streak at the top event.*

But if Kovalchuk's funk was so easily forgotten, his country's 15-year funk was not. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union and the ensuing Olympic gold in 1992 under the transitional name of Commonwealth of Independent States (later changed to Russia), the restructured country experienced its worst drought since entering international competition in 1954. There was a silver medal at the 1998 Olympics and a bronze four years later, and one other silver at the 2002 World Championship to go with two other World bronze medals (in 2005 and 2007). But not a single gold medal, except at the U20 level.

■ ■ ■ During this time Canada, Sweden, and the Czech Republic all had their turn at being number one while fans and critics discussed ardently what had happened to Russia. Some people blamed the economy and the fact that once the socialist USSR disappeared, automatic funding for hockey disappeared with it. Many people pointed to the most puzzling aspect of Russian hockey—that in the years after the retirement of the great Vladislav Tretiak, there was not even one goalie who could lead his team to victory. All the great scorers, yet no goalie inspired by Tretiak to follow in his footsteps? Unbelievable, yet true.

And what about coaching? This was in many ways a more serious problem than goaltending. Boris Mikhailov led the team to victory in 1993, but the next two years the team finished a shocking fifth under the same coach. Then the revolving door started: Vladimir Vasilyev coached in 1996, Igor Dmitriev in '97, Vladimir Yurzinov in '98, Alexander Yakushev in '99 and 2000, and Mikhailov again in 2001 and '02.

Vladimir Plyushchev was behind the bench (or, in Russia's case, in front of the bench) in 2003, but when Viktor Tikhonov stepped in 2004, one knew there was trouble. Tikhonov had coached the great Soviet teams of the late 1970s and 1980s, but his last great triumph was that Olympic victory in 1992. He was hardly a 21st century coach when he came on board in '04, and the team's 10th place finish attested to as much.

■ ■ ■ In 2005, another new name was added to the country's coaching history when Vladimir Krikunov took over for two years. In 2007, it was Vyacheslav Bykov, and he was back this past season in Canada for the World Championship in IIHF's centennial year. One of the great features of Soviet hockey was consistency, from Tretiak to Fetisov to the KLM line-to coach Tikhonov. Yet in the free Russia, no coach proved successful.

The coaching changes signaled problems with team chemistry, and each year's World Championship saw the same on-ice troubles manifest themselves. The Russians, for all



**HANDS UP!** *Russia's Sergei Fedorov takes a moment to relish the Russian gold medal victory.*

their sensational individual skill, never played as a team. The coach could never get them to sacrifice a few fancy moves for some timely passing, hitting, or defensive play, and so every year the Russians waltzed through many early games winning by high scores, creating highlight-reel goals, and found themselves being shut down later in the tournament by a smartly coached, disciplined team from, usually, Canada, Sweden, or the Czech Republic.

■ ■ ■ So what made 2008 so different, so special? Several factors, all of which came together beautifully for the Russians. First, Alexander Ovechkin. The top player in the NHL with Washington in 2007-08, he brought an enthusiasm for the game that was unmatched and a scoring presence that the Russians often lacked in big games.

Next, the team got goalie Evgeni Nabokov to come to the tournament after his San Jose Sharks were eliminated from the Stanley Cup playoffs. In the five games he played, he allowed just nine goals and had two shutouts. He gave the team true Tretiak-quality goaltending for the first time in a decade and a half.

Another key element was the quality of the roster overall. Ovechkin said yes to the invitation. So did Kovalchuk and Nabokov. Ovechkin's two Capitals teammates also came, Alexander Semin and Sergei Fedorov. The two Markovs, Andrei and Daniil, came, and so did Maxim Afinogenov. From a purely quality point of view, this was a world-class roster.

# finds recipe for gold



Photos: IIHF/HHOF IMAGES

in Quebec City alone, while his teammates start the golden celebration in the background.

## Lucky Loonie in Russian hands

■ As Alexander Ovechkin skated around the ice of Le Colisee waving a Russian flag, the gold medal freshly won by Ilya Kovalchuk, he tried to jam the flagpole into centre ice with a pride and purpose that would have made Sir Edmund Hillary, conqueror of Mt. Everest, proud. Ovechkin was unable to do so, but he spotted a shiny object under the ice—a Canadian, one dollar coin, more commonly known as a loonie.

Some may recall that back in 2002, that a loonie was placed at centre ice in Salt Lake City, which many believed was a lucky omen in helping Canada win Olympic gold (or so the myth goes!).

In the years after Salt Lake, Hockey Canada used the "lucky loonie" for the World Championship, World Women's Championship, and World U20 Championships, all with success. But more recently the loonie superstition hadn't been employed—until Le Colisee!

■ Ovechkin dug the loonie up—lucky for Russia, but not Canada—and vowed to make a necklace out of it as a lucky charm and prized memento. He would wear Canada's lucky loonie around his neck to remind him of Russia's gold medal!

Perhaps we've seen the last of the lucky loonie on Canadian ice.

## SWITZERLAND 2009 PRELIMINARY ROUND GROUPS

Next year the 2009 IIHF World Championship returns to Europe as Switzerland will play host. Zurich-Kloten and capital city Bern will serve as the host cities. Following the 2008 championship in Canada, the groups for the 2009 edition were determined based on the nations' new position in the IIHF World Ranking. Groups A and D will be played in Zurich-Kloten, located just minutes from the main airport into Switzerland, while Groups B and C will be based in Bern, located just an hour by train away from Zurich. Joining the top 14 teams are newly promoted Austria and Hungary, which will play in groups C and A, respectively. Defending champion Russia will play the preliminary round in Bern, together with host Switzerland. Bern will also serve as the venue for the semi-final and medal games



Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
Zurich-Kloten	Bern	Bern	Zurich-Kloten
Canada	Russia	Sweden	Finland
Slovakia	Switzerland	United States	Czech Republic
Belarus	Germany	Latvia	Norway
Hungary	France	Austria	Denmark

Bykov's skill cannot be overlooked. He was able to get the players to play as a team. They played smart hockey, offensive and exciting hockey, disciplined hockey. Appropriately enough, the Russians didn't have the top scorer or the best defenceman or even the goalie with the best save percentage in Canada. There was no superstar who tried to win the tournament alone. Instead, several players made huge contributions. Ovechkin had three game-winning goals; Alexei Morozov scored the OT winner to beat the Czechs, 5-4, and scored the shootout winner against Belarus; Nabokov had two shutouts; and, Kovalchuk won the gold in the final game.

And then the final factor: There is no doubt that playing in Canada was a motivating factor for the Russians. The great Canada-Soviet rivalry which started in 1954 and reached its zenith in 1972 at the Summit Series and again in 1987 in the Canada Cup finals, produced many of international hockey's greatest moments.

■ To beat Canada in its own backyard during the IIHF's 100th anniversary could not have been more satisfying. The enormous pressure the team faced in 2000 playing at home in St. Petersburg, which produced a disastrous 11th place finish, was nowhere to be found. There was only the anticipation and enthusiasm of winning in Canada. And that's exactly what the Russians did. They won gold.

## And the award goes to....



### Directorate Awards:

**Goaltender:** Evgeni Nabokov (RUS)

**Defenseman:** Brent Burns (CAN)

**Forward:** Dany Heatley (CAN)

**MVP:** Dany Heatley (CAN)

*Pictured left to right*



### Media All-Star Awards:

**Goalie:** Evgeni Nabokov (RUS)

**Defensemen:** Mike Green (CAN), Tomas Kaberle (CZE)

**Forward:** Dany Heatley (CAN), Alexander Ovechkin (RUS), Rick Nash (CAN)

*Pictured left to right*

# A new era of InLine begins

*Canada returns, Slovakia stuns, Sweden repeats*

■ The 2008 edition of the InLine Hockey World Championship was full of firsts for the annual summer event. Most notably, it was the first time that Slovakia hosted the championship, as the capital city of Bratislava welcomed the 16 teams from around the world. And home ice was definitely nice for the hosts, who scored an impressive first of their own.

The number of nations playing InLine Hockey is on the rise and the effect at the World Championship was clearly felt as the top division was rocked by upsets, while division I teams fought to keep their place at the World Championship. In the end an unlikely and ground-breaking trio of teams ended up on the podium at both levels.

## Top Division:

■ It was just a mere seven years ago that Sweden's ascent into the realm of InLine Hockey's elite was a shock to the championship. Until its first gold medal performance in 2002, the Swedes had never even cracked the top four. Fast-forward to the 2008 event, and Sweden has become a force to be reckoned with.

The 2008 gold medal just adds to the impressive collection of the Swedes in the last seven seasons. While this year's gold medal was the second straight for Sweden and its first back-to-back gold performance, it was still the nation's fourth gold since 2002. Sweden also has two silver medals and one bronze to its credit. Not bad for a country that wasn't even on the InLine Hockey radar before the turn of the century.

■ So it's no surprise that Sweden's gold-medal opponent Slovakia is taking note of the rise of the Nordic nation. The host nation earned its first-ever medal at the InLine Hockey World Championship after surviving overtime games in both the quarterfinals and semifinals. Some may say it was just the luck of having the event at home. But others can argue that Slovakia just might be the next Sweden - a sleeping giant that has at long last awoken.

Whichever side of the argument people are on, it's tough to deny the fact that the standings shake-up was long overdue. Since Sweden won its gold in 2002, the same four teams, Finland, Sweden, Germany and Sweden, have won medals at the top division championship. One of the powerhouses had to make room for Slovakia's rise this season and the team falling the hardest was perennial powerhouse Finland. For the first time since 1997, the Finns missed the medal podium. In fact, the nation wasn't even close to the top of the standings as they finished in an uncharacteristically low sixth place, even losing its placement game against the Czech Republic, 10-8. The Americans also fell in the latter stages of the tournament, losing back-to-back games in the semi-final and bronze medal contests.

■ Back for its second straight bronze medal was Germany, which rebounded after a disastrous, winless start in the preliminary round. The Germans had to play in the qualification game against the tough Canada team and easily won. The win seemed to give Germany the confidence they needed to power through the quarterfinals and go onto their third-ever medal at the InLine World Championship.

## Division I:

■ They're back. Canada returned to the InLine Hockey Worlds and quickly made its presence known after sweeping through the preliminary round group with a 39-3 goals advantage and winning the gold medal with relative ease.



**Slovak Souvenirs:**  
Canadian captain Kirk French shows off his division I InLine prizes, while above Sweden celebrates its second straight top division gold medal.



■ The re-emergence of Canada was the buzz of the championship as many weren't quite sure what to expect from the ice hockey powerhouse. But Canada made it clear after its first few games what could be expected, a high-flying team that prided itself on crashing the net and scoring. Even the Top Division teams took note as all knew that one of the last-place finishers would have the dubious task of meeting Canada in the qualification game.

Germany was the unlucky loser of its preliminary round group and had to defend its top division spot in the qualification round. But much to everyone's surprise, the Germans found the off switch to Canada's offense and skated onto an easy 11-3 win. But no matter to the Canadians, who moved back to Division I and rolled through the playoff round again pouring in the goals with a 24-5 goals advantage in the three playoff games. The win gave the Canadians the back-door route to the top division: as the winner of Division I, they will move up to the Top Division, while least-place finisher Austria is relegated to Division I.

■ With Canada's new elite status and the emergence of Slovakia on the medal podium it is easy to say that there is indeed a new era of InLine Hockey.

## ALL-TIME IIHF INLINE HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

### 1996 USA: Minneapolis, St. Paul/ Minnesota

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. USA         | 7. Italy          |
| 2. Canada      | 8. Czech Republic |
| 3. Finland     | 9. Austria        |
| 4. Germany     | 10. Australia     |
| 5. Russia      | 11. Japan         |
| 6. Switzerland |                   |

### 1997 USA: Anaheim/ California

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. USA            | 7. Germany      |
| 2. Canada         | 8. Austria      |
| 3. Switzerland    | 9. Italy        |
| 4. Russia         | 10. Netherlands |
| 5. Czech Republic | 11. Australia   |
| 6. Finland        | 12. Japan       |

### 1998 USA: Anaheim/ California (A-Pool)

- |                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| 1. Canada      | 5. Germany |
| 2. USA         | 6. Austria |
| 3. Finland     | 7. Italy   |
| 4. Switzerland | 8. Russia  |

### 2000 CZECH REPUBLIC: Hradec Kralové/Chocen

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Finland        | 8. Netherlands  |
| 2. Czech Republic | 9. Australia    |
| 3. USA            | 10. Brazil      |
| 4. Germany        | 11. Hungary     |
| 5. Slovakia       | 12. New Zealand |
| 6. Sweden         | 13. Argentina   |
| 7. Austria        | 14. Chile       |

### 2001 USA: Ellenton, Fla.

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Finland        | 7. Austria      |
| 2. USA            | 8. Brazil       |
| 3. Czech Republic | 9. Hungary      |
| 4. Slovakia       | 10. Australia   |
| 5. Sweden         | 11. New Zealand |
| 6. Germany        | 12. Argentina   |

### 2002 GERMANY: Nürnberg/Pfaffenhofen

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Sweden         | 9. Hungary        |
| 2. Finland        | 10. Japan         |
| 3. Germany        | 11. New Zealand   |
| 4. Czech Republic | 12. Great Britain |
| 5. USA            | 13. Brazil        |
| 6. Slovakia       | 14. Argentina     |
| 7. Slovenia       | 15. Belgium       |
| 8. Austria        | 16. Chile         |

### 2003 GERMANY: Nürnberg/ Amberg

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Finland        | 9. Japan          |
| 2. Sweden         | 10. Brazil        |
| 3. USA            | 11. Australia     |
| 4. Czech Republic | 12. Hungary       |
| 5. Germany        | 13. Great Britain |
| 6. Slovakia       | 14. New Zealand   |
| 7. Slovenia       | 15. Argentina     |
| 8. Austria        | 16. South Africa  |

### 2004 GERMANY: Bad Tölz

- |                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. USA            | 9. Great Britain |
| 2. Finland        | 10. Brazil       |
| 3. Sweden         | 11. Japan        |
| 4. Germany        | 12. Hungary      |
| 5. Slovakia       | 13. Australia    |
| 6. Czech Republic | 14. New Zealand  |
| 7. Austria        | 15. Belgium      |
| 8. Slovenia       | 16. Argentina    |

### 2005 FINLAND: Kuopio

- |                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Sweden         | 9. Hungary         |
| 2. Finland        | 10. Japan          |
| 3. USA            | 11. Great Britain  |
| 4. Czech Republic | 12. Brazil         |
| 5. Germany        | 13. Australia      |
| 6. Slovakia       | 14. Namibia        |
| 7. Slovenia       | 15. Portugal       |
| 8. Austria        | 16. Chinese Taipei |

### 2006 HUNGARY: Budapest

- |                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. USA            | 9. Great Britain |
| 2. Sweden         | 10. Hungary      |
| 3. Finland        | 11. Brazil       |
| 4. Germany        | 12. Japan        |
| 5. Czech Republic | 13. Namibia      |
| 6. Slovakia       | 14. Australia    |
| 7. Slovenia       | 15. Croatia      |
| 8. Austria        | 16. Argentina    |

### 2007 GERMANY: Landshut/Passau

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Sweden         | 9. Brazil         |
| 2. Finland        | 10. New Zealand   |
| 3. Germany        | 11. Hungary       |
| 4. Austria        | 12. Australia     |
| 5. Slovenia       | 13. Great Britain |
| 6. United States  | 14. Japan         |
| 7. Czech Republic | 15. Namibia       |
| 8. Slovakia       | 16. South Africa  |

# Let the games begin: Teams start 2010 qualification process

■ The 2008-2009 international season will be a busy as teams race to make the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver, Canada.

At the conclusion of the men's and women's World Championships, 15 teams (nine men's and six women's) had their tickets punched to Olympics. For the remaining teams, a qualification process awaits.

■ On the women's side, the qualification process will come in two stages. First will be the pre-Olympic Qualification tournaments in September. Nine teams will play in two groups with the winner of each group advancing to the next stage. Awaiting the winners of the pre-qualification tournaments are six teams that, by virtue of their IIHF World Ranking position, were all automatically put in the final qualification tournament.

The final qualification will be held in November 2008 and played in two groups of four teams. Germany and China, as the two highest-ranked teams in the tournament will host the groups. Each group will be made up of the pre-qualification tournament winner, along with three other teams.

In total, two teams will make it to Vancouver via the qualification tournament route. They will join the top six teams from the IIHF Women's World Ranking (see box on right).

■ On the men's side the process is a bit more complicated as 24 nations will compete for a slim three Olympic berths. There are 12 teams that will compete in Vancouver, and nine are already determined.

The interest in qualifying for the men's Olympic tournament was so high this year, that there will be a tournament played just to make it to the pre-qualification tournament. This first step will include four nations and will be played in October 2008 in Turkey.

The winner of the tournament in Turkey will be seeded into one of the three pre-qualification tournaments in November 2008. Each of these three tournaments will have four teams, with only the winner moving onto the final qualification step.

■ In February 2009, three more tournaments consisting of four teams will be played in Germany, Latvia and Norway. The winner from each of these groups will have their ticket punched to join the nine other pre-named teams in Vancouver. As with the women's process, the entire seeding and hosting rights for the men's Olympic qualification was determined through the IIHF World Ranking.

2008 FINAL MEN'S RANKING		
Rank	Country	Points
1	Canada	3410
2	Russia	3400
3	Sweden	3400
4	Finland	3385
5	Czech Republic	3265
6	United States	3105
7	Switzerland	3020
8	Slovakia	2955
9	Belarus	2845
-----AUTOMATICALLY QUALIFIED-----		
10	Germany	2740
11	Latvia	2740
12	Norway	2735
13	Denmark	2660
14	Italy	2580
15	Slovenia	2460
16	Austria	2445
17	Ukraine	2435
18	France	2410
19	Kazakhstan	2405
20	Hungary	2220
21	Poland	2175
22	Japan	2120
23	Lithuania	1970
24	Netherlands	1935
25	Estonia	1930
26	Croatia	1790
27	Romania	1770
28	China	1650
29	Great Britain	1645
30	Serbia	1425
31	Korea	1365
32	Bulgaria	1305
33	Australia	1300
34	Belgium	1230
35	Israel	1190
36	Spain	1120
37	Mexico	1010
38	Iceland	965
39	New Zealand	890
40	Ireland	775
41	Turkey	765
42	South Africa	755
43	Luxembourg	695
44	DPR Korea	645
45	Mongolia	415
46	Greece	240
47	Bosnia and Herz.	200
48	Armenia	200

2008 FINAL WOMEN'S RANKING		
Rank	Country	Points
1	Canada	2950
2	United States	2930
3	Finland	2770
4	Sweden	2760
5	Switzerland	2645
6	Russia	2575
-----AUTOMATICALLY QUALIFIED-----		
7	Germany	2525
8	China	2510
9	Japan	2420
10	Kazakhstan	2410
11	France	2220
12	Czech Republic	2205
13	Latvia	2195
14	Norway	2150
15	Italy	2065
16	Slovenia	1810
17	Slovakia	1735
18	Denmark	1650
19	Austria	1580
20	DPR Korea	1560
21	Netherlands	1480
22	Australia	1405
23	Great Britain	1385
24	Belgium	1305
25	Hungary	1265
26	Korea	1215
27	New Zealand	1110
28	South Africa	1105
29	Romania	1100
30	Croatia	1095
31	Iceland	1090
32	Estonia	910
33	Turkey	840

**MEN'S OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION GROUPS:**

**Pre-Qualification, October 9-11, 2008**  
 GROUP A: HOST TURKEY  
 Bulgaria, Spain, Mexico, Turkey

**Olympic Pre-Qualification, November 6-9, 2008**  
 GROUP B: HOST NARVA, ESTONIA  
 Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Estonia, Qualifier

GROUP C: HOST HUNGARY  
 Hungary, Lithuania, Croatia, Serbia

GROUP D: HOST SANOK, POLAND  
 Poland, Japan, Romania, Great Britain

**Final Olympic Qualification, Feb. 5-8, 2009**  
 GROUP E: HOST GERMANY  
 Germany, Slovenia, Austria, Qualifier

Group F: HOST LATVIA  
 Latvia, Italy, Ukraine, Qualifier

GROUP G: HOST NORWAY  
 Norway, Denmark, France, Qualifier

**Groups in Vancouver 2010**  
**Group A:** Canada, United States, Switzerland, Qualifier G  
**Group B:** Russia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Qualifier F  
**Group C:** Sweden, Finland, Belarus, Qualifier E



**WOMEN'S QUALIFICATION GROUPS:**

**Olympic Pre-Qualification, Sept. 4-7, 2008**  
 GROUP A: TBA, LATVIA:  
 Latvia, Italy, Slovakia, Croatia, Bulgaria

GROUP B: TBA, SLOVENIA  
 Norway, Slovenia, Austria, Great Britain

**Final Olympic Qualification, Nov. 6-9, 2008**  
 GROUP C: TBA, GERMANY:  
 Germany, Kazakhstan, France, Qualifier

GROUP D: TBA, CHINA:  
 China, Japan, Czech Republic, Qualifier

**Groups in Vancouver 2010**  
**Group A:** Canada, Sweden, Switzerland, Qualifier 2.  
**Group B:** United States, Finland, Russia, Qualifier 1.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

## MEN'S

## IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

2009	SWITZERLAND, Bern & Zürich - Kloten	24.04-10.05.09
2010	GERMANY, Cologne & Mannheim	07-23.05.10
2011	SLOVAKIA, Bratislava & Kosice	30.04-15.05.11
2012	FINLAND, Helsinki & Turku	04-20.05.12
2013	SWEDEN, Stockholm & Malmö	TBA
2014	APPLICANTS: LAT	

## IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group A

2009	LITHUANIA, Vilnius	11-17.04.09
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## IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group B

2009	POLAND, Torun	11-17.04.09
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## IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group A

2009	SERBIA, Novi Sad	09-15.04.09
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## IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group B

2009	BULGARIA, Sofia	06-12.04.09
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## IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION III

2009	NEW ZEALAND, Dunedin	10-16.04.09
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## WOMEN'S:

## IIHF WORLD WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP

2009	FINLAND, Hämeenlinna	04-12.04.09
2011	APPLICANTS: TBA	TBA
2012	USA, TBA	TBA

## IIHF WORLD WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I

2009	AUSTRIA, Graz	04-10.04.09
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## IIHF WORLD WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II

2009	ITALY, Torre Pellice	12-18.04.09
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## IIHF WORLD WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION III

2009	Applicants: TBA	TBA
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## IIHF WORLD WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION IV

2009	Applicants: TBA	TBA
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## IIHF WORLD WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION V

2009	POLAND, Gdansk	26-29.03.09
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## IIHF WORLD U18 WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP

2009	GERMANY, Fussen	05-10.01.09
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## IIHF WORLD U18 WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I

2009	Applicants: TBA	TBA
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## UNDER 20:

## IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP

2009	CANADA, Ottawa	26.12.08-05.01.09
2010	CANADA, TBA	TBA
2011	USA, TBA	TBA
2012	CANADA, TBA	TBA
2013	APPLICANTS: RUS	

## IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group A

2009	SWITZERLAND, TBA	14-20.12.08
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## IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group B

2009	DENMARK, Aalborg	14-21.12.08
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## IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group A

2009	ROMANIA, Miercurea Ciuc	15-21.12.08
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## IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group B

2009	Applicants: TBA	TBA
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## IIHF WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION III

2009	Applicants: TBA	TBA
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## UNDER 18:

## IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP

2009	USA, Fargo & Moorhead	09-19.04.09
2010	APPLICANTS: TBA	TBA

## IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group A

2009	BELARUS, Minsk	06-12.04.09
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## IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION I, Group B

2009	ITALY, Asiago	29.03-05.04.09
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## IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group A

2009	SLOVENIA, Bled	22-28.03.09
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## IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION II, Group B

2009	ESTONIA, Narva	16-22.03.09
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## IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION III, Group A

2009	CHINESE TAIPEI, Taipei City	27.02-04.03.09
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## IIHF WORLD U18 CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION III, Group B

2009	IRELAND, Dundalk	09-14.03.09
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## OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES

2010	CANADA, Vancouver	12-28.02.10
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## OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION

## MEN'S FINAL OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION

2009	GERMANY, TBA	05-08.02.09
2009	LATVIA, TBA	05-08.02.09
2009	NORWAY, TBA	05-08.02.09

## MEN'S OLYMPIC PRE-QUALIFICATION

2008	HUNGARY, TBA	06-09.11.08
2008	POLAND, Sanok	06-09.11.08
2008	ESTONIA, Narva	06-09.11.08

## MEN'S PRE-QUALIFICATION

2008	TURKEY, TBA	03-05.10.08
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## WOMEN'S FINAL OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION

2008	GERMANY, TBA	06-09.11.08
2008	CHINA, TBA	06-09.11.08

## WOMEN'S OLYMPIC PRE-QUALIFICATION

2008	LATVIA, TBA	04-07.09.08
2008	SLOVENIA, TBA	04-07.09.08

## INLINE HOCKEY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

## IIHF IN-LINE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

2009	GERMANY, Ingolstadt	TBA
2010	SWEDEN, Karlstad	TBA

## IIHF IN-LINE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFICATION

2008	Africa: NAM vs RSA	24 & 30.08.08
2008	Asia: CHN vs TPE	05-06.09.08

## IIHF CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS (CHL not included)

## 2008-2009 IIHF EUROPEAN WOMEN CHAMPIONS CUP (EWCC)

First Round:	CZE, ITA, LAT, RUS	31.10-02.11.08
Second Round:	SWE & TBA	05-07.12.08
Final Round:	TBA	30.01-01.02.09

## 2008-2009 IIHF CONTINENTAL CUP

First Round:	SRB	19-21.09.08
Second Round:	LTU, ROU	17-19.10.08
Third Round:	LAT, ITA	21-23.11.08
Final Round:	FRANCE, Rouen	16-18.01.09

## NATIONAL TEAM BREAKS

## 2008/2009 SEASON:

1st International Break	Sept. 1 - 7, 2008
2nd International Break	Nov. 3 - 9, 2008
3rd International Break-	Dec. 15 - 21, 2008
4th International Break-	Feb. 2 - 8, 2009

## 2009/2010 SEASON:

1st International Break	Aug. 31 - Sept. 6, 2009
2nd International Break	Nov. 2 - 8, 2009
3rd International Break	Dec. 14 - 20, 2009
4th International Break-	Feb. 8 - 14, 2010

## 2010/2011 Season:

1st International Break	Aug. 30 - Sept. 5, 2010
2nd International Break	Nov. 8 - 14, 2010
3rd International Break	Dec. 13 - 19, 2010
4th International Break	February 7 - 13, 2011

## OTHER INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

## WINTER UNIVERSIADE

2009	CHINA, Harbin	18-28.02.09
2011	TURKEY, Erzurum	27.01-06.02.11

## CONGRESSES

## IIHF SEMI-ANNUAL CONGRESS

2008	SWITZERLAND, Montreux	25-27.09.08
2009	TUNIS, Tunisia	20-23.09.09

## IIHF ANNUAL CONGRESS

2009	SWITZERLAND, Bern	07-09.05.09
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**RESULTS SUMMARY**

**IHF World Championship**

**Quebec City & Halifax CANADA May 2-18**

**Preliminary Round - Group A**

Belarus - Sweden	5 - 6	(1-2, 3-2, 1-2)
Switzerland - France	4 - 1	(2-0, 1-1, 1-0)
Switzerland - Belarus	2 - 1	(1-0, 1-1, 0-0)
Sweden - France	9 - 0	(0-0, 4-0, 5-0)
Sweden - Switzerland	2 - 4	(1-2, 0-0, 1-2)
France - Belarus	1 - 3	(1-1, 0-1, 0-1)
<hr/>		
Switzerland	3	3 0 0 0 10-4 9
Sweden	3	2 0 0 1 17-9 6
Belarus	3	1 0 0 2 9-9 3
France	3	0 0 0 3 2-16 0

**Preliminary Round - Group B**

Canada - Slovenia	5 - 1	(1-0, 3-1, 1-0)
United States - Latvia	4 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 2-0)
Latvia - Canada	0 - 7	(0-3, 0-4, 0-0)
United States - Slovenia	5 - 1	(1-0, 3-1, 3-0)
Canada - United States	5 - 4	(2-0, 1-2, 2-2)
Slovenia - Latvia	0 - 3	(0-0, 0-2, 0-1)

Canada	3	3 0 0 0 17-5 9
United States	3	2 0 0 1 13-6 6
Latvia	3	1 0 0 2 3-11 3
Slovenia	3	0 0 0 3 2-13 0

**Preliminary Round - Group C**

Germany - Finland	1 - 5	(0-0, 1-2, 0-3)
Slovakia - Norway	5 - 1	(1-0, 2-1, 2-0)
Finland - Norway	3 - 2	(2-2, 0-0, 0-0) OT
Slovakia - Germany	2 - 4	(0-2, 1-1, 1-1)
Finland - Slovakia	3 - 2	(2-2, 1-0, 0-0)
Norway - Germany	3 - 2	(0-1, 1-1, 2-0)

Finland	3	2 1 0 0 11-5 8
Norway	3	1 0 1 1 6-10 4
Germany	3	1 0 0 2 7-10 3
Slovakia	3	1 0 0 2 9-8 3

**Preliminary Round - Group D**

Denmark - Czech Republic	2 - 5	(2-2, 0-2, 0-1)
Russia - Italy	7 - 1	(1-0, 5-0, 1-1)
Czech Republic - Russia	4 - 5	(2-2, 1-1, 1-1) OT
Italy - Denmark	2 - 6	(0-3, 1-1, 1-2)
Russia - Denmark	4 - 1	(1-0, 2-0, 1-1)
Czech Republic - Italy	7 - 2	(2-2, 4-0, 1-0)

Russia	3	2 1 0 0 16-6 8
Czech Republic	3	2 0 1 0 16-9 7
Denmark	3	1 0 0 2 9-11 3
Italy	3	0 0 0 3 5-20 0

**Qualifying Round - Group E**

Denmark - Czech Republic	2 - 5	(2-2, 0-2, 0-1)
Belarus - Sweden	5 - 6	(1-2, 3-2, 1-2)
Czech Republic - Russia	4 - 5	(2-2, 1-1, 1-1) OT
Switzerland - Belarus	2 - 1	(1-0, 1-1, 0-0)
Russia - Denmark	4 - 1	(1-0, 2-0, 1-1)
Sweden - Switzerland	2 - 4	(1-2, 0-0, 1-2)
Sweden - Denmark	8 - 1	(2-0, 2-0, 4-1)
Switzerland - Czech Republic	0 - 5	(0-1, 0-3, 0-1)
Russia - Belarus	4 - 3	(0-2, 1-0, 2-0) PS
Czech Republic - Belarus	3 - 2	(0-1, 1-0, 1-1) PS
Russia - Sweden	3 - 2	(0-1, 1-1, 2-0)
Denmark - Switzerland	2 - 7	(0-2, 0-3, 2-2)
Sweden - Czech Republic	5 - 3	(0-0, 2-2, 3-1)
Switzerland - Russia	3 - 5	(0-3, 0-1, 3-1)
Belarus - Denmark	2 - 3	(0-0, 0-1, 2-1) OT

Russia	5	3 2 0 0 21-13 13
Czech Republic	5	2 1 1 1 20-14 9
Sweden	5	3 0 0 2 23-16 9
Switzerland	5	3 0 0 2 16-15 9
Belarus	5	0 0 3 2 13-18 3
Denmark	5	0 1 0 4 9-26 2

**Qualifying Round - Group F**

United States - Latvia	4 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 2-0)
Germany - Finland	1 - 5	(0-0, 1-2, 0-3)
Latvia - Canada	0 - 7	(0-3, 0-4, 0-0)
Finland - Norway	3 - 2	(2-2, 0-0, 0-0) OT
Canada - United States	5 - 4	(2-0, 1-2, 2-2)
Norway - Germany	3 - 2	(0-1, 1-1, 2-0)
Canada - Norway	2 - 1	(1-0, 0-1, 1-0)
United States - Germany	6 - 4	(3-2, 1-1, 2-1)
Finland - Latvia	2 - 1	(0-1, 1-0, 1-0)
Germany - Canada	1-10	(0-4, 0-5, 1-1)
Norway - Latvia	1 - 4	(1-2, 0-1, 0-1)
Finland - United States	3 - 2	(0-0, 0-2, 3-0)
United States - Norway	9 - 1	(3-0, 3-1, 3-0)
Canada - Finland	6 - 3	(2-1, 2-0, 2-2)
Latvia - Germany	3 - 5	(1-1, 2-1, 0-3)

Canada	5	5 0 0 0 30-9 15
Finland	5	3 1 0 1 16-12 11
United States	5	3 0 0 2 25-13 9
Norway	5	1 0 1 3 8-20 5
Germany	5	1 0 0 4 13-27 3
Latvia	5	1 0 0 4 8-19 3

**Relegation Round - Group G**

Slovenia - Slovakia	1 - 5	(0-1, 1-4, 0-0)
Slovakia - Slovenia	4 - 3	(1-0, 2-2, 0-1) PS

*Slovakia wins best of three series, 2-0*

France - Italy	3 - 2	(1-1, 1-0, 1-1)
Italy - France	4 - 6	(1-2, 1-1, 2-3)

*France wins best of three series, 2-0*

*Italy & Slovenia are relegated to 2009 World Championship, Division I*

**Playoff Round**

Czech Republic - Sweden	QF	2-3	(0-0, 1-1, 1-1) OT
Norway - Canada	QF	2-8	(1-2, 1-3, 0-3)
Russia - Switzerland	QF	6-0	(3-0, 3-0, 0-0)
United States - Finland	QF	2-3	(0-1, 0-1, 2-0) OT
Russia - Finland	SF	4-0	(1-0, 1-0, 2-0)
Canada - Sweden	SF	5-4	(1-1, 4-2, 0-1)
Finland - Sweden	Bronze	4-0	(2-0, 0-0, 2-0)
Canada - Russia	Gold	4-5	(3-1, 1-1, 0-2) OT

**Final Ranking**

1. Russia	5. Czech Rep.	9. Belarus	13. Slovakia
2. Canada	6. United States	10. Germany	14. France
3. Finland	7. Switzerland	11. Latvia	15. Slovenia
4. Sweden	8. Norway	12. Denmark	16. Italy

**Tournament Directorate Awards**

Best Goaltender: Evgeny Nabokov (RUS)  
 Best Defenseman: Brent Burns (CAN)  
 Best Forward: Dany Heatley (CAN)  
 MVP: Dany Heatley (CAN)

**Tournament Media All-Star Team**

Best Goaltender: Evgeny Nabokov (RUS)  
 Best Defensesmen: Mike Green (CAN); Tomas Kaberle (CZE)  
 Best Forwards: Rick Nash (CAN), Dany Heatley (CAN), Alexander Ovechkin (RUS)

**Individual Scoring**

1. Dany Heatley	CAN	9	12	8	20
2. Ryan Getzlaf	CAN	9	3	11	14
3. Rick Nash	CAN	9	6	7	13
3. Alexander Semin	RUS	9	6	7	13
5. Mattias Weinhandl	SWE	9	5	8	13
6. Alexander Ovechkin	RUS	9	6	6	12
7. Sergei Fedorov	RUS	9	5	7	12
8. Mike Green	CAN	9	4	8	12
9. Phil Kessel	USA	7	6	4	10
10. Derek Roy	CAN	9	5	5	10
11. Pat Kane	USA	7	3	7	10
12. Martin St. Louis	CAN	9	2	8	10
13. Tomas Kaberle	CZE	7	1	9	10
14. Patrik Elias	CZE	7	6	3	9
15. Dustin Brown	USA	7	5	4	9

**IHF InLine Hockey World Championship**  
**Bratislava, SLOVAKIA June 21-28, 2008**

**Top Division Preliminary Round**

Austria - Slovakia	4 - 6	(1-1, 0-2, 2-2, 1-1)
Austria - Slovenia	1 - 8	(0-2, 1-0, 0-2, 0-4)
Germany - United States	3 - 9	(1-2, 1-3, 1-1, 0-3)
Slovakia - Sweden	0 - 5	(0-0, 0-2, 0-2, 0-1)
Czech Republic - Finland	4 - 2	(1-0, 1-0, 1-1, 1-1)
Germany - Czech Republic	6 - 7	(3-1, 1-2, 2-0, 0-2)

Finland - United States	5 - 6	(3-2, 0-1, 0-2, 2-1)
Sweden - Slovenia	3 - 7	(0-1, 0-2, 2-3, 1-1)
United States - Czech Republic	7 - 6	(4-1, 1-1, 1-4, 1-0)
Finland - Germany	5 - 4 PS	(0-2, 0-0, 4-0, 0-2)
Slovenia - Slovakia	4 - 3	(1-0, 1-1, 1-0, 1-2)
Sweden - Austria	8 - 2	(3-0, 0-1, 3-1, 2-0)

**Preliminary Round - Group A**

Slovenia	3	3 0 0 0 19-17 9
Sweden	3	2 0 0 1 16-9 6
Slovakia	3	1 0 0 2 9-13 3
Austria	3	0 0 0 3 7-22 0

**Preliminary Round - Group B**

United States	3	3 0 0 0 22-14 9
Czech Republic	3	2 0 0 1 17-15 6
Finland	3	0 1 0 2 12-14 2
Germany	3	0 0 1 2 13-21 1

**Division I Preliminary Round**

Hungary - Japan	5 - 6 OT	(1-2, 2-1, 0-1, 2-1)
Australia - Great Britain	7-11	(1-4, 1-2, 3-1, 2-4)
Canada - New Zealand	13-2	(7-0, 2-0, 0-1, 4-1)
Bulgaria - Brazil	2-13	(0-2, 1-2, 0-5, 1-4)
Hungary - Canada	0-14	(0-4, 0-4, 0-4, 0-2)
Australia - Bulgaria	10-3	(2-1, 3-0, 2-1, 3-1)
New Zealand - Japan	5 - 7	(1-1, 0-1, 3-2, 1-3)
Brazil - Great Britain	6-11	(0-3, 2-4, 3-4, 1-0)
Japan - Canada	1-12	(0-3, 1-2, 0-3, 0-4)
Great Britain - Bulgaria	8 - 1	(1-1, 0-4, 0-4, 2-1)
New Zealand - Hungary	4-11	(1-1, 2-3, 0-3, 1-4)
Brazil - Australia	8 - 3	(2-0, 0-0, 5-2, 1-1)

**Preliminary Round - Group A**

Great Britain	3	3 0 0 0 30-14 9
Brazil	3	2 0 0 1 27-16 6
Australia	3	1 0 0 2 20-22 3
Bulgaria	3	0 0 0 3 6-31 0

**Preliminary Round - Group B**

Canada	3	3 0 0 0 39-3 9
Japan	3	1 1 0 1 14-22 5
Hungary	3	1 0 1 1 16-24 4
New Zealand	3	0 0 0 3 11-31 0

**Qualification Round**

Germany - Canada	11-3	(3-0, 2-1, 3-1, 3-1)
Austria - Great Britain	6 - 1	(0-1, 4-0, 2-0, 0-0)

**Top Division Playoff Round**

Sweden - Finland (QF)	9 - 3	(3-0, 5-0, 0-0, 1-3)
United States - Austria (QF)	17-1	(4-0, 5-1, 4-0, 4-0)
Czech Republic - Slovakia (QF)	5 - 5	(0-0, 2-2, 1-2, 2-1)OT
Slovenia - Germany (QF)	2 - 5	(0-1, 1-1, 1-0, 0-3)
Czech Republic - Finland (5th)	10-8	(1-4, 4-0, 2-1, 3-3)
Slovenia - Austria (7th)	9 - 2	(2-0, 3-2, 3-0, 1-0)
Germany - Slovakia (SF)	2 - 3	(0-1, 0-1, 2-0, 0-0)OT
United States - Sweden (SF)	8-12	(0-2, 6-5, 1-2, 1-3)
United States - Germany (Bronze)	7 - 8	(3-1, 1-2, 1-3, 2-2)
Sweden - Slovakia (Gold)	7 - 3	(3-1, 2-0, 1-1, 1-1)

**Division I Playoff Round**

Japan - Australia (QF)	4 - 5	(0-1, 0-2, 3-1, 1-1)
Brazil - Hungary (QF)	5 - 3	(1-0, 1-2, 2-1, 1-0)
Canada - Bulgaria (QF)	9 - 1	(2-1, 3-0, 1-0, 3-0)
Great Britain - New Zealand (QF)	7 - 0	(1-0, 1-0, 2-0, 3-0)
Hungary - New Zealand (PL)	7 - 6	(3-2, 2-1, 2-2, 0-1)
Japan - Bulgaria (PL)	11-5	(2-1, 3-2, 2-1, 4-1)
Great Britain - Brazil (SF)	4 - 3	(0-2, 1-0, 1-0, 2-1)
Canada - Australia (SF)	8 - 0	(3-0, 1-0, 4-0, 0-0)
Australia - Brazil (Bronze)	3 - 4	(0-0, 0-1, 1-3, 2-0)
Canada - Great Britain (Gold)	7 - 4	(1-0, 1-1, 2-3, 3-0)



**Meet Moldova: IHF Member #66**

**Population:** 4,324,450  
**Area:** 33,843 sq km  
**Location:** Eastern Europe, Northeast of Romania  
**Capital City:** Chisinau  
**Language:** Moldovan (virtually the same as the Romanian language), Russian and Gagauz (a Turkish dialect)  
**Climate:** Moderate winters, warm summers  
**Background:** Formerly part of Romania, Moldova was incorporated into the Soviet Union at the end of World War II. Independent from the USSR since 1991, the Slavic majority population, mostly Ukrainians and Russians have proclaimed a "Transnistria" republic.

**JOHN VAN BOXMEER**

**Born:** November 20, 1962 in Petrolia, Ontario, Canada .

**■ NHL Coaching Experience:**

1990-92 assistant coach Buffalo

2003-07 assistant coach: Los Angeles

**■ Draft Information:**

Selected by Montreal Canadiens round 1 #14 overall 1972 draft

**■ Playing Highlights:**

Played in the NHL from 1973-1984 with Montreal, Colorado (Rockies), Buffalo & Quebec.

Played in the historic game between Montreal and CSKA Moscow on December 31, 1975 that ended in a 3-3 tie in the Montreal Forum.

**VAN BOXMEER BATTLES FOR BERN:**

After a stellar career in the NHL, van Boxmeer headed to Switzerland to try his luck coaching SC Bern. This season his past and present will meet as he becomes the first-ever coach to lead a Swiss team against an NHL team. Van Boxmeer will also try to make history as he guides SC Bern into the first edition of the Champions Hockey League...oh and don't forget about the quest to win the Swiss National Championship.

PHOTO: DANIEL WENGER

# Busy year for van Boxmeer and Bern

By Martin Merk

**■ John van Boxmeer enters his third season with Swiss club SC Bern, the team with the best attendance in Europe. But winning the Swiss title for the first time in five seasons won't be the team's only goal. The club is also eager to qualify for the Champions Hockey League. Also on the agenda, van Boxmeer will become the first to coach a Swiss team against an NHL team when SC Bern faces the New York Rangers on September 30.**

**□ As soon as the season begins, you'll have a big challenge with the Champions Hockey League qualification tournament. What do you expect?**

Our team will be ready. We'll play international games in the preseason against Russian and German teams so I don't think it will be anything strange for us, but it is a highly intense situation to put your team into that early in the season. There is a lot of pressure and certainly a lot at stake. The training camp and all the preparation we do at the beginning of the season will be very important. The way the players train and the experience we have, we will be ready.

**How appealing is it to be part of the Champions Hockey League?**

It's very exciting, not only for the players and the fans but certainly for all of European hockey, to see the different countries with their top teams playing against one another. It's something different, interesting and exciting. It gives people a chance to see different teams from different parts of Europe. I think it's something that the fans will enjoy.

**Is the European perspective more of a double burden or double opportunity for you and the players?**

I don't think that you have to look it as pressure. This

will be a great challenge to see how you do against players from other countries, so it should be exciting. If you look at the regular season, especially in Switzerland, it's only 50 games. I think you get bored at times. This will add a little spice. Hey, you come to the rink, doing the same thing over and over again. I'd rather play games than practice every day. This will add a lot of excitement and will challenge the players during the season and force players to step outside of their comfort zone. It can only help to make them better.

**You're the first person to coach a Swiss club team against an NHL team. How is this for you as a Canadian and former NHLer?**

I'm excited. I think it will be fun. It's a chance for our players to play against NHL players and see where they're at. Honestly, I don't think that a lot of players have any idea of how close they are talent-wise. Some of our players see the NHL and think it's miles and miles away from where they are ability-wise, but that's not true. It's very, very close. It's just a matter of commitment, or drive, or passion to want get to the highest level. They should look at it as a challenge. This is an opportunity for them to beat an NHL team.

**With the Victoria Cup between the Rangers and Metallurg Magnitogorsk, such clashes will have a revival. Could it be a factor for the October 1 game that training camps in Russia start already on July 15?**

I honestly don't think that you need to start the camp that early. Part of the game is still the emotion and I don't think that you can push your team that hard for that long time. I don't think that it will have a benefit, but they've been doing this for many years and had a lot of success, so to each his own.

**What do you think about the potential for European club competition like the Champions Hockey League and NHL vs. Europe club games like the Victoria Cup?**

I think it's a great idea because for the game of hockey to grow you need to see more of these international games, to see the best of one country against the best of another country. It's also very exciting for those cities involved and their club team. It's got a lot of merit. I think at some point, maybe not in my lifetime, we'll see it like in soccer, where the best clubs play for a championship.

**You had a great regular season with SC Bern, winning the regular season by a landslide. What made your team so dominant?**

We had a very good team with good character players and strong goaltending. Our team brought that willingness to compete hard and to play hard every night.

**Nevertheless, SC Bern was upset in the quarter-finals. What happened?**

Looking back, our first goal was to finish first in the regular season because of the Champions Hockey League. We spent a lot of emotion finishing first. Sometimes, when you put that much emphasis in finishing first, the team feels that they achieved their goal and don't have anything left to go to the next level. When the playoffs start, it's not that anybody improves their game just everybody has a little more emotion and focus. But if you've been playing on a high level for a long time, I think the team isn't able to produce, which was probably our biggest problem. We were emotionally not able to get to that next level.

**After missing the Swiss title twice at the helm, why do you think SC Bern will win it next spring?**

If you look back, a lot of teams need to learn and have setbacks to see what they need to do - like losing the seventh game of the 2007 final series 1-0 or having no success in the playoffs after a great regular season. We need to become stronger and I think we will be stronger but you also need luck and to stay healthy.

