



***Street Hockey In Switzerland***

The Sierre Lions play in Swiss first division and they have won the Swiss Championship Trophy the last two years. They have about 200 members in their league. Sierre hosted the Junior World Cup in 2003 and their next large tournament is May/05 where they hope to attract teams from all over Europe.

League organizer, Sébastien Pico, has been involved in street hockey since he was fourteen years old. He was the man behind the World Cup Junior Championships and he has been the coach of the Swiss Junior National Team for the last four years. Sebastien played with Sierre at that time and he was president of the league. Pico stopped playing to become the team coach and they went on to win two Championship titles and move onto the semi finals at the European Cup.

Over the last ten years, street hockey is one of the most popular sports in the Wallis part of Switzerland. After the World Cup, Se-

bastien talked to some sponsors and they decided to create a regional association, to promote the sport. Sierre is part of the Swiss Street-Hockey Association. They want to help create new teams, get women's street hockey going, local junior street hockey and just fun street hockey. If a team is good, organized and has ambition, they go onto Swiss Street-Hockey Association. Sebastien is now working 80% for this Association, so he made his hobby, his job.



Sierre made history because they were the first league to have an international

transfer of a player, Jindrich Hossinger. Officially, it was the first time that a country had taken a foreign player not USA-Canada or Slovak-Czechs, but a real transfer, with a player who is a professional. Hossinger is the only professional on the Sierre club. The

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**Hot Shots**

- \* Mekong Cup set for Phuket, Thailand May 6-8, 2005
- \* Canadian National team chosen February 19/20 in Toronto
- \* The "**Ultimate Road Trip**" Tournament set for Turks and Caicos Islands October 21-23, 2005.
- \* Possible Thai International Ball Hockey Tournament to be held September/October 2005.
- \* Czech Ball Hockey Federation will donate 1000chf for Tsunami relief.
- \* Four team World League set to operate out of the Ultimate Sports Dome in Toronto.

## *What is Mateflex?*

Matéflex is the oldest U.S. manufacturer of modular flooring. Matéflex incorporated in 1974 in New York State to produce a rubber and polypropylene injection molded playing surface. Today, Matéflex continues to be America's premier manufacturer of modular flooring for a multitude of applications.

Mateflex is the playing surface of choice for both Ball Hockey Ontario, Barrie, and Ball Hockey International, with facilities in Welland and St. Catharines, Ontario. Both groups have had multiple playing surfaces over many years time. Mateflex surfaces have been installed for both ball hockey and inline hockey from Maine to California.

Matéflex operates its own molding plant, in Utica New York, insuring the finest materials across all product lines, quality, and value added customer service. Matéflex manufactures 9 multi-purpose products for a variety of applications: Sport Flooring, Indoor and Outdoor Residential/Commercial flooring; Industrial Anti-Fatigue; Wet Areas, and many more. And unlike other modular flooring manufacturers, Matéflex remains at the forefront of innovation. Most recently, Matéflex has announced major advances in modular flooring with three new additions to their product line: CarpetFlex™, Tile-Flex™ and SoftFlex™. From sport flooring and drain-through tiles to vinyl and carpet tiles, experience and innovation make Matéflex a strong competitor in the modular flooring industry.

Manufacturing for such prestigious national and worldwide accounts as Parks and Recreation Asso-



**Top: Mateflex in action—Bottom: Welland complex**

ciations, U.S. Military and Government facilities, Schools and Universities, Condominium and Apartment complexes, Hotel and Resort facilities and many private Clubs and Residences, Matéflex has continued to uphold its mission for over 30 years. They continue to strive and meet the demands of the market and remain focused on design, production, and marketing of high-quality, innovative products.

Contact them at [www.mateflex.com](http://www.mateflex.com)

## *World Groupings—Pittsburgh June 2005*

### **GROUP A-1**

**Canada, Italy, Switzerland, United States**

### **GROUP A-2**

**Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany,  
Pakistan.**

### **GROUP B-1**

**Great Britain, Austria, India,  
Cayman Islands**

### **GROUP B-2**

**Mexico, Bermuda, Portugal, Greece.**



## Mekong Cup Set For May



Laguna Beach Resort, Thailand

The Amari Coral Beach Resort in Patong was badly affected by the tsunami and will be closed until August because of repairs and renovations. Their position on the hillside leading into Patong beach took significant damage and they're using this time to make extensive repairs and renovations to their swanky resort.

The Amari's tennis courts, used for the annual Mekong Cup tournament are up higher on a hill next to the hotel and were not damaged by the wave, but now it has been filled up with salvaged furniture and equipment that was not destroyed by the tsunami. Thus, if we want to play at the Amari, we won't have the chance to play the 11th Annual Mekong Cup International Ball Hockey Tournament until August. As you know Unfortunately, the tournament is scheduled for May 7th to avoid the rainy season, which starts in the middle of May and goes until October. Therefore, I feel that we cannot afford the risk of postponing the tournament until August, when we'll run serious risk of ruining the event with typical hour-long tropical rain storms and subsequent mop up efforts. So, we are now considering the possible alternatives.

The best Fortunately, alternative we've found an excellent alternative in Phuket is at the Laguna Phuket Beach Resort. They sustained minimal damage from the tsunami and have already returned back to 100% of their operating capacity (and but are suffering at something



like 30% occupancy at a time of year where when they're usually 90% occupied; I guess the rest of the world hasn't yet made a distinction between Aceh and Phuket). So they're keen to get our business. Laguna Phuket Resort They have has 4 sets of tennis courts at the resort and we are in the process of determining which ones will be most suitable for the tournament. Laguna Phuket Resort has to choose from and 5 hotels companies offering various product ranges (i.e., Banyan Tree, Sheraton, Dusit, Beach Club, and Allamanda). The resort is close to the airport, it has a golf course, and truly excellent facilities (for more info see: <http://www.lagunaphuket.com/> ). Phuket Laguna Beach This beach Resort resort is also the sight of the Phuket Triathlon, so the Mekong Cup is the sort of event they should easily accommodate. I've dealing with a Canadian woman who also organizes the Phuket Triathlon and she has a good understanding about the Mekong Cup. We hope to have everything settled before the end of February.

The only drawback I some people can might see to the Laguna Beach Phuket Resort is that it's about a

*(Continued on page 7)*



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## **TOURNAMENTS**

- April**      **Gators Cup** Bad Wörishofen, Germany (C5 Tournament)
- April, 8-10**      **Southwest Ball Hockey Tournament** Southwest Ball Hockey Rink, 115th & Mayfield, Alsip Illinois  
Ages 7-9 Minor Division (Penguin), 10-12 Junior Division (Beaver), 13 to 15 Senior Division (Cadet)  
Ages based on age as of December 31, 2004. Birth Certificates should be available upon request  
**\$250.00AM** per team due March 18th 2005 3 games guaranteed Contact Mike King 815-834-2535 or  
Jack Pyznarski 708-424-1984 southwestballhockey.com.
- April 1-3**      **Eastern Regional** at Bellmawr, NJ. Youth 7-9, 10-12 & 13-15. Outdoor. 3 Asphalt surfaces. 856-931-0874.
- April 15-17**      **Mid-West Regionals** At Greater Pittsburgh Dekhockey, Pittsburgh, PA. Youth 7-9, 10-12, 13-15 & 16-19. Outdoor. Two Sport Court surfaces. 412-793-1966.
- April 23-24**      **10<sup>th</sup> Annual Street Hockey USA National Championships** **\$425.00AM** RMU Island Sports Center Pittsburgh  
Men's C & D & Men's Novice ASHI/IDTA Rules 3 Games Guaranteed Prizes for each Member Championship  
Team, Team Trophies for Champions and Runners-up, MVP Awards streethockeyusa@hotmail.com
- April 22-24**      **Old Dutchies WOMEN'S Ball Hockey Tournament** Strathroy, Ontario GEMINI Sportsplex,  
Division: Recreational Contact: John Seyler (519) 245-8373 Fee: \$250.00 First 16 Teams to Register (@ \$250 per  
Team). 3 Game Guarantee per Team. For more INFO:www.freewebs.com/olddutchiesballhockeytourney/
- April 23-24**      **Men's C, D & Novice National Championships** at RMU Island Sports Center, Pittsburgh, PA. Indoor.  
Two Sport Court surfaces. 412-231-6759.
- April 23 – 24**      **Jahreiss Cup**, Bad Aibling, Germany (B5 Tournament)
- April 24-25**      **Street Hockey USA National Championships** Street Hockey USA national championships at Island  
Sports Center, Pittsburgh, PA. Men's C, Men's D, Men's novice divisions. Covered. Two Sport Court  
surfaces. 412-231-6759.
- April 29– May 1** **Caribbean Cup** Cayman Islands
- April 29–May 1** **Montreal Cup** (Montreal, Quebec, Canada) www.cbha.com
- April 30-May 2** **Eastern Seaboard Regional** Eastern Seaboard Regional at Bellmawr/Egg Harbor, N.J. Youth 7-9, 10-12, 13-15 divisions. Eligibility determined by player's age on 1-1-04. Outdoor. three asphalt surfaces.  
856-931-0874
- May**      **Pfingst Turnier** Mannheim, Germany (C5 Tournament)
- May 6-9**      **Mekong Cup**, Phuket Thailand
- May 8-9**      **Street Hockey USA National Championships** Street Hockey USA national championships at Leominster Dek  
hockey, Leominster, MA. Men's Open division. Outdoor. Two Sport Court surfaces. 978-537-6711.

- May 14-15** **Men's Open National Championships** at Leominster Dekhockey, Leominster, MA. Outdoor, two Sport Court surfaces, Chris 978-537-6711
- May 15-16** **Street Hockey USA Nationals—Freshmen** Street Hockey USA National Championships at Leominster Dek hockey, Leominster MA. Youth 16-19 Division Eligibility determined by players age 01/01/04 Outdoor, two sport court surfaces 978-537-6711 or 412-231-6759
- May 20-22** **Mammoth Cup** (Bratislava, Slovakia) www.hokejbal.sk (B5 Tournament)
- May 21-22** **Sierre (Switzerland)**. Teams from all countries welcome, Discover the Swiss the Wallis people and their culture One of the largest tournaments in Europe. Around 1000 players will play in the categories of active, popular, women, mixed and different junior age categories. Many events, exhibition games and contacts will make your spring time visit in Sierre unforgettable. Contact: Sébastien Pico streethockeyvs@bluemail.ch
- May 27-30** **National Championships** Youth 7-9, 10-12 & 13-15 at Leominster Dekhockey, Leominster, MA. Outdoor. Two Sport Court surfaces. 978-537-6711
- May 29-30** **Street Hockey USA Nationals Youth Divisions** Street Hockey USA national championships at Leominster Dekhockey, Leominster, MA. Youth 7-9, 10-12, 13-15 divisions. Eligibility determined by player's age on 1-1-04. Outdoor. Two Sport Court surfaces. 978-537-6711.
- June** **Toronto Classic** (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) www.cbha.com
- June 11-12** **Prague Cup** (Prague, Czechia) www.streethockey.cz
- June 11-12** **Cappa Cup** (Letohrad, Czechia) www.hokejbal.cz
- June 13-18** **5th World Senior Street/Ball Hockey Championships** Robert Morris University Island Sports Centre, Pittsburgh. 16 nations have been announced as competing for the 2005 World Senior Championships The A Pool will feature Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Pakistan, Slovakia, Switzerland, & United States of America. The B Pool consists of Austria, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Great Britain, Greece, India, Mexico, and Portugal. The seedings were determined based on the results of 2003 WC. Two divisions will be formed in each pool, with three round robin games played. The top two teams from both B Pool divisions will then have an opportunity to challenge for the A Pool playoffs with a relegation game versus the bottom two teams in each of the A Pool divisions. Two indoor sport court surfaces Contact: Mark Madden (streethockeyusa@hotmail.com) Competition will also be held in the following age groups: Bantam (players born in 1989 & 1990) Pee Wee (players born in 1991 & 1992) Atom (players born in 1993, 1994 & 1995) Contact: Mauro Cugini (IAM@ontarioballhockey.ca)
- June 25-26,** **"Streethockey" in the Mountains**, Tournoi Street hockey at Montagnes Switzerland, Play street hockey at an altitude of 1400 metres. There are 3 categories: Elite/popular, Junior, Co-ed, Sleeping arrangements on the mountain will be available. For more information and to register contact Jens Blatter at jens27@hotmail.com
- July** **CANPRO Cup** (Dusseldorf, Germany)
- July 01-03** **European Junior Cup** Czech Republic Under 18, Under 16.
- July 01-03** Montreal, Quebec Fee: \$ 600.00 per team (Register before APRIL 1st and save \$ 100) Division: A, B & C Contact: Frank Dodaro (416) 789-7575 frank.dodaro@sympatico.ca, A,B and C Divisions, 3 games guaranteed, Game Star Medals, Tournament MVP's Championship Jackets
- July 9-10** **Maple Leaf Cup** Youth 7-9 & 10-12 at Niagara Regional Dekhockey, Niagara Falls, ON. Outdoor. Two Sport Court surfaces. 978-537-6711.
- July 10-11** **Jersey Shore Tourney**. Wildwood, NJ. Contact Jay Machin @ 631-331-1220.
- July 15-19** **Ontario Bantam & Jr. Men's Provincial Championships** Barrie, Ontario,



# Tournaments

- July 22-25** Ontario Minor Provincial Championships Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario
- July 23-24** Maple Leaf Cup Youth 13-15 at Niagara Regional Dekhockey, Niagara Falls, ON. Outdoor. Two Sport Court surfaces. 978-537-6711.
- July 27-31** Canadian Junior Men's Championships and Youth Regionals, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island,
- August 5-7** Ontario Men's "B", Women's and Master's Provincials, Kanata, Ontario  
www.ontarioballhockey.ca/2005events.html
- August** Tigers Cup (Dusseldorf, Germany)
- August 13-14** Maple Leaf Cup Men's Open, D & 35-and-over at Niagara Regional Dekhockey, Niagara Falls, ON. Outdoor. Two Sport Court surfaces. 978-537-6711.
- August 21-22** Beach Blast Men's C, D and Novice at Ocean City, MD. \$500.00/team Indoor. 1 Sport Court surface. Jamie 301-728-0579.
- September 2-4** Czechoslovak Open (Bratislava, Slovakia) www.hokejbal.sk
- September 2-4** European Cup, Martin, Slovakia (A Tournament)
- September 4-6** Labor Day Tournament, Lancaster PA. Maximum roster of 16. Silver and Bronze (may have 3 Silver play ers). \$350 per team, \$100 deposit no later then Aug. 20th. Balance will be due prior to your first game. Any questions email Bryan Glatfelter at bg\_025@yahoo.com or call Joe Slocum @ (717)464-5983, Don Tankesley @ (717)392-1151.
- September 4-5** The SHC Visp organizes an international juniors U18 tournament takes place in Visp, canton Wallis, Switzerland (CH). Must be under 18—clubs from all over the world. Registration and information 078/814 14 78 or o.willimann@shc visp.ch.
- Sept 10-11** Hnilicka Oldtimer Cup (České Budejovice, Czechia) www.hokejbal.cz
- December 16-18** NASK Christmas Cup (Bratislava, Slovakia) www.hokejbal.sk

## Grande Prairie Donates to Charity in a BIG Way

To comment on your editors notes in the October 2004 issue regarding penalty fines imposed. By implementing these fines our goal was to cut down on major penalty infractions (ie: Fighting, high stick majors, checking from behind etc.) Prior to the implementation of fines we experienced approx 11 suspension infractions that would have warranted fines. This was all in the first half of the regular season! Once our fine structure was communicated to all team members we had only 4 penalties that required suspension and fines. It was agreed in our associa-

tion that the fines paid would go towards a local charity at the end of the season.

The GPBHA was able to donate over \$250.00 to Kev's Kids. (see info below). We received acknowledgment over the local radio station for this contribution.

I do have another suggestion on fund raising for local charities, called "buck a save". Prior to the season teams would find sponsors to contribute a dollar per save for their team. My team last year raised \$269.00 and this was also donated to Kev's Kids. Again we re

## snoBLAST A Cool Idea

In 2004, the Owen Sound Attack hockey team held a road hockey tournament in conjunction with the snoBLAST event in Owen Sound, Ontario. The 2004 set-up was excellent. The playing surface was on asphalt with snow banks pushed into place by a bobcat as "boards" and sand on the snow packed surface to minimize sliding.

Cubby the mascot of the local Junior A hockey team the Attack (#6 in Canada at the moment!) with a couple of kids, and a shot of the 2003 tournament (road barricades make lousy boards).



## Grand Prairie (cont)

ceived further acknowledgement, not only for our team (East Side Marios), but for the company (Dobson Oil Field Services) that sponsored the buck a save. We are including this fundraiser in a form of a letter in all our team packages, to encourage all teams to participate this year. Our goal is to raise at least \$2500.00 for the 2005 season.

During 16 games for the ESM Team there was 269 saves and 331 shots. This is posted on our website under stats for the sponsor to access. We are estimating approx 300 saves per team when look for sponsors this year.

It really is quite easy for us to get sponsors, because...

- ◆ SUNFM advertises the complete story of how the fundraiser works, provides each sponsors name and their amount donated to Kev's Kids

and the sponsor company receives a charity receipt.

- ◆ The sponsors this year will be advertised on our



website under Charities

\* A 'Buck a Save' poster, (which will be posted at our location of play), will advertise the sponsors and updated weekly with the saves.

Kev's Kids is a fundraising organization created to help needy children in Grande Prairie and area. Kev's Kids not only fund raises for needy children, it also publicizes the good that many individuals and organizations do in raising money for children.  
<http://www.sunfm.com/KevsKids/index.asp>

Sorry, no cash grabbing in this league!

John Liosis - President  
[www.gpballhockey.com](http://www.gpballhockey.com)

(Continued from page 1)

Sierre Lions played in the second division and the dream of the city was to go up to the first division. For three years, Sebastien had talked to Vit Rezak, President of the Czech Republic Ball Hockey Association. Rezak told Sebastien about Hossinger and it seems that he wanted to play in another country, like Canada. Sébastien phoned Hossinger and they decided to meet. Hossinger had played for many years for Czech National team. He was thirty years old, but still considered one of the best defensemen in the world. The meeting took place twelve hours away in Munich, where they were playing the European Cup. The two men talked; Sierre had a good sponsor, who was ready to pay his salary. Hossinger agreed and he went to Switzerland to play. In the finals, Sierre took a second Czech, Radek Huja, who was a good friend of Hossinger. Those two players helped Sierre move up to the first division. More than 500 spectators were on hand to see the tournament.

The ISBHF had to make a new regulation because Sierre added a second Czech player, Radek Huja, and then the fun began. Huja is no ordinary player; he was captain of the Czech Champions, Elba. These two players must have worked because the



Lions reached the European semi-finals held in Kladno last August. This was the first time a team not from the Czech Republic or Slovakia had gone that far.

Note: Elba is a team from the Czech Republic and they were the Czech Champions from the first division. Many players on the Czech National team came from that team. Elba has a great sponsor and they are well organized. The Lions played one game in the European Cup against them; it was a great moment for the Swiss.

Kladno is a town, thirty minutes from Prague. In Europe, there are two kinds of competitions, for the National Teams of each country they have the European Championships and the best teams in each country vie for the European Cup. The Lions were the Swiss Champions and they played for the European Cup. Teams from Austria, Germany, Finland, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Switzerland were there, in all about eleven teams played. When the Lions qualified for the semi finals, it was an incredibly big moment for them.

Not everyone liked the transfer from Hossinger. The







Czech's did not like seeing players leave their country and play in other parts of the world and other Swiss teams were not very happy to see foreign players in their league. These Swiss teams did not have the cash to take anybody. The Swiss Association limited their teams to one foreign player and then that was restricted to a licensed street hockey player from another country. The ISBHF had to make an official transfer rule that had not existed before.

The difference in play with the larger countries is still a problem, but the Swiss have become better organized. Sebastien is working for a regional association, which has very good contacts with Swiss National Association. The Sierre Association does a lot of work to organize a great league in Valais (their part of Switzerland) and they are slowly working on another French region of Switzerland. Last year, they had around 15 new teams.

In Switzerland, they play street-hockey with the soft orange ball, as they do in many European countries. Normally they play with four players and a goal-keeper. They have different size of rinks which are out-doors. The one in Sierra is one of the largest in Switzerland

at about (48 meters by 25 meters). There are many smaller rinks but first and second division they all have large rinks. The Swiss have four active divisions and different junior division

In Switzerland, they play street hockey from September to middle of December and from middle of January to middle of May. They play the game during the same season as ice hockey and the reason is that they want to offer street hockey as an alternative sport, not just a summer-sport for ice hockey players. The Swiss wear helmets, as well as hand and leg-protection and they also have some special clothes, like Canada, they will be wearing shorts this year.

In Europe, you find street hockey in different countries. The Czechs and Slovaks are top, than Switzerland, Germany and Austria. New countries are coming in that include England, Finland, Latvia and Hungary.

You can visit their photo gallery on Sierre Lions ([www.sierre-lions.ch](http://www.sierre-lions.ch)) photo gallery, matches and take the season 2002/03 (first title in first division). You will see some nice pictures. On the photo gallery, Sierre Lions gallery, you have pictures from our tournament (2002).

Sebastien Pico



30-minute drive to Patong Beach (the sight of the last 10 Mekong Cup tournaments and the partying hotspot on the island). As we all know, there is more to the Mekong Cup than simply the ball hockey. Plenty of decent beer bars, restaurants, Thai massage and other establishments have opened up around the Laguna Phuket Beach Resort, but it's tough to compare to Patong. We'll have to arrange buses to shuttle people into Patong after the awards banquet on Saturday night.

A team from Calgary withdrew their request to join the Mekong Cup because of serious concern to me about the threat of "disease" in the aftermath of the tsunami and speculated that we're going to cancel the Mekong Cup ... PLEASE, spare me from having to explain the distinction difference between Aceh and Phuket. We didn't cancel the Mekong Cup because of SARS or the Bird Flu, Flu; we're not going to cancel it now!

Something like 95% of the island of Phuket was not affected by the tsunami (e.g., they didn't even lose electricity). Many of the affected establishments have already reopened and are back in business (e.g., the Laguna Phuket Beach Resort). Even the badly hit Beachfront Road in Patong will be back in business in time for the Mekong Cup. So, in case you're concerned, you'll be able to get your fill of McDonalds, Starbuck and HOOTERS in May; get it sit-down or takeaway, it's up to you. When you think about what Phuket has been through, they need our patronage more than ever! At this point, I feel we practically have a moral obligation to hold the Mekong Cup! Some thought had been given to changing the location of this year's Mekong Cup to Chiang Mai, Koh Samui, Pattaya, or even Bangkok. But, we didn't want to abandon Phuket in their time of need after 10 years.

So, the 11th Annual Mekong Cup International Ball Hockey Tournament is confirmed for Saturday, May 7th. We expect to have teams from Bangkok (2 teams), Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Hong Kong (2 teams), Taiwan, and Vancouver. There's still room for two more teams, but you'll have to act fast!

If you want more background information about the Mekong Cup, go to the website (<http://www.flyingfarangs.com/>) and click on "BALL HOCKEY" at the top right corner

John Casella





## Slovaks head for Pittsburgh



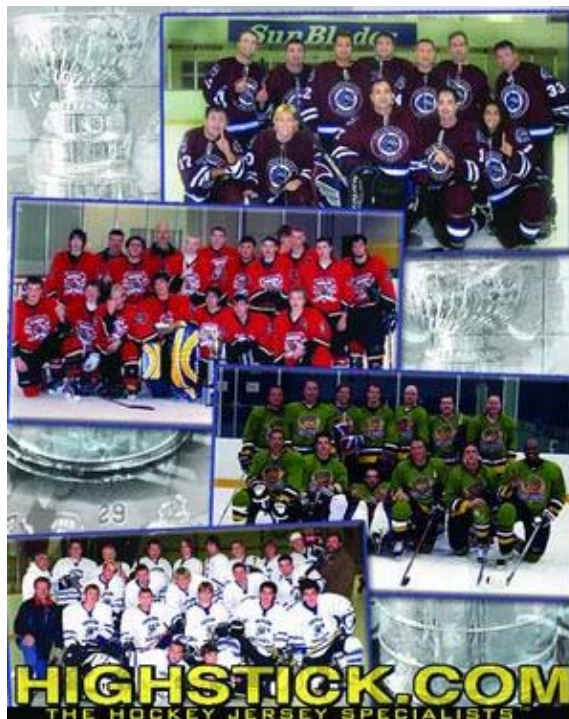
Preparation of the Slovak national ball hockey team for the World Championship in Pittsburgh started at the beginning of August 2004, when head coach Roman Torok was joined by a new assistant, Jaroslav Salka. In September and October last year, players participated in two tryouts. In February, the Slovak national team played two friendly international games with Czech National team. The Slovaks lost one game 4 to 8, but won the other game 6 to 4. This victory came after six years without beating the Czechs. The main purpose of the games was to test the physical and psychological durability of the players. The players were also graded on how they played as a team. There are five newcomers on the squad, including Pokryvcek, junior world champion from Martin 2004. At the end of March the final list of the players participating in the World Cup in Pittsburgh will be completed. There might be even be some NHL players in the team (Zalesak, Malec and Smrek) but the list is still open. The last meeting of the players before they leave for Pittsburgh will take place by end of May.

## HIGHSTICK.COM

I was cruising the net and I came upon this manufacturer of jerseys. Check them out, tell them you read it here and get a great sweater and a great deal.

HIGHSTICK.com has been creating custom jerseys for ball, street and dek hockey teams in North America and Internationally since 1991. Focusing solely on custom uniforms has allowed HIGHSTICK.com to offer superior customer service and develop new

and innovative products for their jerseys. HIGHSTICK.com's unique Dye Patch™ tackle twill logo patches combine the best of quality, durability, and value. Less expensive than embroidery and superior in appearance and toughness compared to screen printed patches, Dye Patch™ logos are quickly becoming the preferred logo choice of teams everywhere. Dye Patch™ prints a higher detailed design than embroidery and at a fraction of the cost -- and since the dye becomes a permanent part of the patch, the design doesn't flake or peel like screen printed graphics which sit on top of the patch! Specializing exclusively in custom hockey jerseys coupled with the efficiency of their Dye Patch™ logos has enable HIGHSTICK.com to introduce a service to customers that's unheard of in the industry: reorder quantities as low as one jersey! Once your opening team order for stock jerseys has been placed, you can purchase just one jersey if needed, for regular price and that's it -- no set up charges or other hidden fees. If a jersey is lost or stolen, if you add players to your team, or if you need jerseys for friends and fans, it's no problem -- simply contact HIGHSTICK.com and place your order. All team jersey specifications are kept on file, so it's a breeze. You can even conveniently order using their secure online order form.





## Czechs Tune Up



Prague: Spring is slowly arriving and the ball hockey season in Czech Republic is coming to a conclusion.

All leagues run an autumn-spring schedule with three months off for a winter break. Changes have started in Czech ball hockey. We will now play six players on the surface instead of five and a forty five minute game instead of thirty six. These rules have ended years of transition in the game and help make it into the regular sport. Five years ago there were players without helmets and we played with tennis balls filled with water. This made playing the sport dangerous for all the participants.

Plastic balls, helmets, score boards, good lighting and many other aspects changed character of ball hockey. "These changes were made for the highest league (extra league) to solidify the conditions of the game and for enhancement of our sport," says vice-chairman of Czech Street Hockey Association (CSHA) Josef Kadane.

Almost every region in Czech republic adopted the new rules and gradually installed them into their leagues. The CSHA runs three seniors long-term competitions (extraleague) They are called, the Bohemian league and the Moravian league and the highest leagues for under eighteen and under sixteen. Regional associations run lower leagues from which teams can go up to or down, depending on their performance during the season.

Last season was a real breakthrough for the Elba Club, Usti nad Labem. The team won three gold medals in three different championships in one year. In May, Elba captured the Czech extra league title and became the Czech Champions after beating Mlada Boleslav (four times champions in a row) in the semis and Kladno in finals. After a summer break Usti was crowned the Czech Cup Champion after beating Trinec in final. Several weeks later

Elba capped its hat trick by beating Bratislava in Europa Cup final, which is European club championship. "Elba is the best European ball hockey team and winning three titles in one year is the greatest thing in its history," said one article on the web page of Usti. They also state that no other Czech club had ever obtained three titles in one year.

During the extra league season, Elba was surpassed by Skoda Plzen who ended first in regular season. In the last four years Skoda went the finals three but all the appearances failed to live up to expectations and ended with only with a silver medal. "Playoffs are different than the regular season but if we want to win the league, we must be in the finals. This year we want gold," firmly stated Plzen coach Josef Kadane. Kadane is also an assistant of Czech ball hockey team head coach Miroslav Prerost.

After the last World championship in Switzerland CSHA chose new head coach. They picked Miroslav Prerost, ice hockey coach of Czechs highest division team Lasselsberger Plzen. With his assistant Kadane he invited thirty-four players for the first camp in last. November. Then they invited twenty-nine players in February for friendlies against former compatriots, the Slovaks. The first game was won by the Slovaks 6:4 but in the other battle, the Czechs defeated their eastern neighbors 8:4. "Results were not that important. We wanted to see players in action to know how they react in a game," said Prerost. The World Championships in Pittsburgh are knocking on the door. "Now we have about thirty players. We will scout them throughout the playoffs and then at last camp, we will select the final twenty-three," says Prerost. About the Czech team. "Our goal can be nothing less than a medal. We will see in Pittsburgh where we can judge our chances against Canada, USA the Slovaks and other teams."



For Czech ball

hockey this year is not only the World championship but also the European Championship under 18 and under 16 which will be hosted in Ostrava. "ISBHF asked us to take the helm of

hosting the Euro from Austria. We hosted Euro in 2003 in Rakovnik, so we decided to go for it because youth ball hockey is our other goal in CSHA," said its chairman Petr Fiala.

Ludek Sosna



From the right side of your vision enters a small catamaran skimming gracefully across the placid waters catching the pleasant trade winds. You immediately recognize the solo rider and your mind drifts aimlessly back a couple of hours to the precision breakaway pass you laid on his stick with pinpoint accuracy.

Your thoughts are broken by the sound of laughter as you watch a number of your teammates carelessly kick a soccer ball about the expansive beach creating small billows of flour-like sand in the air.

You're lazing on a comfortable lounge with a trusted cold brew by your side. Your toes sift slowly through the white, soft sand as you gaze out across the wide arching beach fringed with sparkling, crystal clear waters in graduating hues of turquoise through deep blue.

As your mind and senses slowly process this surreal scene it suddenly dawns on you...

**they were right.**

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**perfect.**

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