

Development of Ice Hockey in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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<p>This thesis explains general situation of ice hockey in Bosnia and Herzegovina, what is the current state of hockey and how did it come to the situation as well as how this situation could and should be resolved.</p> <p>This thesis should explain how the development of ice hockey in Bosnia should be done. Thesis main focus is on ice hockey programs and not on financial side of the development. Thesis covers all important areas of ice hockey sport such as: junior programs, junior league, men league, refereeing, women hockey, coaching, national association, and national teams.</p> <p>It also explain a little bit about BIHU (Balkan Ice Hockey Union) whose part is Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p> <p>Thesis also explain main way of how the Bosnian ice hockey is sustaining at this difficult times.</p>	
Keywords Ice hockey, development, Bosnia and Herzegovina	

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1 Introduction

The topic of this thesis is Development of ice hockey in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but to fully understand the development plan which I propose, it is necessary to explain the current situation and the reasons why this is so. Hockey in Bosnia and Herzegovina is far from developed. There are number of factors that are causing this, among them the most important are the political situation, the absence of permanent ice rink, and disagreements in Bosnian ice hockey federation.

The reason I decided to write thesis on this topic is primarily my familiarity with the state of hockey in the country, and I'm very well acquainted with the other deciding factor influencing its development and the problems that delay the development. The first time I came into contact with the hockey in HC Bosna and every since those early starts conditions for hockey have not been on good level and set up, and since then it is my wish that I would somehow help and improve conditions for this sport in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Another reason for me to write about development of ice hockey in this specific country is my current job. As director of BHL and BHL Kids, I face problems daily and most of those should not been hapenning inside the sport. The problems in Bosnian ice hockey are not only financial, even though those take a good part of it, some of the problems come due to the complicated political situations and different levels of government. Considering that this is a paper on the topic of sports, I do not want to talk too much about politics, but it is necessary to explain, for better understanding, that BIH has four levels of government and each decision has to go through all the levels. This is important to know, because when you take into consideration that BIH is one of the most corrupted countries in the world, it is not surprising that most, though not much, of funds intended for hockey does not finish in the right place.

“ZOI 84” is the company that is responsible for the management of the ice surface in Sarajevo, single ice surface large enough to play ice hockey. Ice surface is located inside the Olympic Hall Zetra and it is usually open between one and four months. In the last three years the ice surface has been placed in a balloon inside the complex of Zetra and

since then regular season length is between three and four months, depending on the weather conditions. "ZOI 84", as the owner of the ice surface, each year receives significant funding from the city and municipality for maintenance of ice surface. Funds that are provided by the city are justified as necessary for keeping the ice sports active since ice surface is essential for these sports which Sarajevo as an Olympic city has to have. Funding that the city and municipality provides are much larger than those claimed by "ZOI 84" and are sufficient for the complete maintenance of the ice surface in a minimum period of 6 months. Despite the fact that these funds are allocated, "ZOI 84" is still charging every ice time to the ice sports in order to conduct its training and competition on the ice, and complete resources they get from ice sports clubs go straight into their budget. This way city doesn't help ice sports even though money provided for the ice surface is intended for that. This practice would not be so controversial that the "ZOI 84" uses these funds to improve conditions on the ice surface, for the purchase of new equipment and the development of existing infrastructure but instead each year clubs find worse situation than the previous. Instead of previous setup when the ice surface was inside the Zetra, in the last three years conditions are even worse. By the current setup ice surface is inside the balloon, which is placed in the Zetra complex, with inadequate lighting, no grandstands, ice that very often breaks and melts. Clubs, National Associations, not only hockey but skating, have a constant battle for the return of the ice surface inside the Zetra but everyone is aware that this would shorten the season from three months to one month or month and a half. Zetra, Sarajevo's Olympic Hall during the Olympic Games in 1984, which was used for competitions in figure skating and hockey, is now used as a concert hall, tennis, basketball and handball arena rather than its original purpose. During recent years there has been lot of talks and petitions, and arguments on transferring the ice surface to Skenderija. Skenderija also remained as part of the infrastructure from the Olympic games. Specifically Skenderija was training hall during the Olympics and within the halls there are all installation necessary to maintain an ice surface. Skenderija and "ZOI 84" are both companies run and managed by political parties and every change in government is followed by change of director and responsible parties inside these companies. Despite the agreements reached with one political party, due to changes in structure and personnel within the company, all the arrangements would be

revoked and renegotiations would begin. Bosnia and Herzegovina Ice Hockey Federation (SHL BiH) managed through the raised loans to secure Skenderija with chiller for the ice surface. Through the donations from IIHF Zamboni and boards are also provided but despite all of that ice is still not set in Skenderija. Due to the huge snowfall in February 2012, balloon under huge deposits of snow loosened and crashed. Due to that balloon provided by Zetra become unsuitable for setting the ice surface and same suppose to be moved in Skenderija right away and later it would be decided about the duration. Unfortunately during the negotiations, Skenderija's roof collapsed under layers of snow and ice could not be placed in the facility. Later in the month of February the ice was at the open after the balloon is removed but due to high temperatures it was very quickly removed. This season the "ZOI 84" put the ice surface back in a balloon, that was repaired, in November, promising to keep it there until the end of March if weather conditions allow.

The only place in Bosnia and Herzegovina you can play ice hockey is Sarajevo, and there isn't a permanent ice rink setup anywhere in the country where ice hockey or any other skating sport would grow. In the past couple of years there have been tries to make a permanent ice rink setup in Sarajevo. Due to the low interest of the government to invest, donate or to provide land where the object would be built, this and the bad financial situation of ice hockey and skating clubs, ice rink was never built. In order to create a demand from the authorities to build the ice rink, ice hockey clubs as well as skating clubs need to increase number of kids and by doing that they are increasing demands. Ice rink will not be built until there is big enough base of users to make it financially affordable and easily manageable. Once it is possible to have permanent ice rink in Sarajevo and programs that are running smooth then it can be considered starting hockey programs in other cities such as Mostar, Tuzla, or Zenica. There is already start of hockey in small town of Gorazde even though it is small town it could be popular sport there. This thesis should provide guidelines on how to improve ice hockey program in order to create bigger base, improve organization an overall develop sport first in Sarajevo and then eventually in country.

2 Governance structure at the international and national level

“Sport means all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels. ”

(Council of Europe. Committee of Ministers 2001.)

A sports club or sport club is a club for the purpose of playing one or more sports. Sports clubs range from organisations whose members play together, unpaid, and may play other similar clubs on occasion, watched mostly by family and friends, to large commercial organisations with professional players, which have teams that regularly compete against those of other clubs and attract large crowds of spectators. Clubs may be dedicated to a single sport, or to several sports (multi-sport club).

Some of the larger sport clubs have professional and amateur departments. The teams and athletes belonging to the club may compete in several different leagues, championships and tournaments wearing the same club colours and using the same club name, sharing also the same club fan base, supporters and facilities. Registered associate member fees, attendance receipts, sponsoring contracts, team merchandising, TV rights, and athlete/player transfer fees, are usually the primary sources of sports club financing. Also there are sports clubs, or their teams, which are traded and listed on a stock exchange. Some sport teams are owned and financed by a single non-sports company, or by a single owner.

(Chisty, L. M., Khromov, N. I. & Zharov, K. P. 1979)

A sport governing body is a sports organization that has a regulatory or sanctioning function. Sport governing bodies come in various forms, and have a variety of regulatory functions. Examples of this can include disciplinary action for rule infractions and deciding on rule changes in the sport that they govern. Governing bodies have different scopes. They may cover a range of sport at an international level, like the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee, or only a sin-

gle sport at a national level. National bodies may or may not be affiliated to international bodies for the same sport.

There are lots of types of sport governing bodies and some of them are:

- **International Federations** are responsible for one sport (or a group of similar sport disciplines, such as aquatics or skiing). They create a common set of rules and organise international competitions.
- **Trusts** are organizations or groups that have control over money that will be used to help someone else, such as the Youth Sport Trust.
- **National Federations** have the same objectives as an international federation, but within the scope of one country, or even part of a country, as the name implies. They support local clubs and are often responsible for national teams. National Olympic Committees and National Paralympic Committees are both a type of National Federation, as they are responsible for a country's participation in the Olympic games and in the Paralympic Games respectively.
- **Multi-sport event organizers** are responsible for the organization of a certain event that contains more than one sport. The best-known example is the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the organizer of the modern Olympic games.
- **Professional leagues** are usually the highest level of play in sport, specifically if they consist of the best players around the world in a certain sport. Because of this, they usually work with national and/or international federations, but there is usually a separation between the different federations. Most professional leagues usually do not have amateur divisions, as the amateur divisions are mostly run in separate leagues. In addition, most professional leagues are related to other leagues, as players usually attempt to play in the league with the highest level of play. Because of this, promotion and relegation can occur; or, in league systems without promotion and relegation, clubs in professional leagues can have a team in the minor leagues. This enables them to shuffle players who are not doing well to the minor leagues, which will inspire them to contribute more to the team by playing better.

(Wikipedia. 2012)

Sports organisations spend a lot of time doing administrative tasks; whether it is planning the next championships, preparing bidding processes, account managing member federations and clubs, compiling statistics, or collecting and distributing revenues. All this is often the core activity of a governing body, be it national or international.

Role of a sports organisations governing body is to perform administrative tasks for their members and also provide consulting services.

(TSE Consulting. 2012)

“Ice hockey is a team sport played on ice, in which skaters use wooden or composite sticks to shoot a hard rubber puck into their opponent's net. In countries where the sport is very popular it is known simply as "hockey"; however, the name ice hockey is used in countries where the word hockey is generally reserved for another form of the sport, such as field hockey or roller hockey.”

(Wikipedia 2012)

Ice hockey is one of the fastest growing women's sports in the world, with the number of participants increasing 350 per cent in the last 10 years. In 2011, Canada has 85.827 women players; United States has 65.609, Finland 4.760, Sweden 3.075 and Switzerland 1.172. While there are not as many organized leagues for women as there are for men, there exist leagues of all levels, including the Canadian Women's Hockey League, Western Women's Hockey League, Mid-Atlantic Women's Hockey League, and various European leagues; as well as university teams, national and Olympic teams, and recreational teams. By the end of 2011 there had been thirteen IIHF World Women's Championships.

(Wikipedia 2011)

2.1 IIHF

The International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) is founded on May 15, 1908 in Paris, France (French: Ligue Internationale de Hockey sur Glace) It is the worldwide governing body for ice hockey and in-line hockey, for both men and women. It is based in

Zurich, Switzerland, and features 72 member associations, each of which is the national governing body of the sport in its nation. It is responsible for the management of international ice hockey tournaments, and maintains the IIHF World Ranking.

Despite its worldwide authority, the IIHF has little control of hockey in North America, where the National Hockey League (NHL) is the highest hockey organization. Its base of power rests in Europe with the respective national governing bodies and leagues. Canada (Hockey Canada) and the United States (USA Hockey) are the only members who have their own rulebooks.

The main functions of the IIHF are to govern, develop, and organize hockey throughout the world. Other duty is to promote friendly relations between the member national associations and to operate in an organized manner for the good order of the sport. Another purpose of the federation is to provide aid in the young players' development and in the development of coaches and game officials. On the other hand, the federation along with establishing and maintaining contact with any other sport federations or sport groups organizes all the events of IIHF. The IIHF is responsible for processing the international players' transfers. It is also the body that presides over ice hockey in the Olympic games as well as over all levels of the IIHF World Championships. The federation works in collaboration with local committees when organizing its 25 World Championships, at five different categories.

Even though the IIHF runs the world championships, it is also responsible for the organization of several European club competitions such as the Champions Hockey League or the Continental Cup. With its 100 anniversary, the federation launched a new annual club competition in 2008, the Victoria Cup, named after the Montreal Victoria Skating Rink, the site of the first organized indoor ice hockey match. The legislative body of the IIHF that is the General Congress along with the executive body governs the federation, which is the Council. The Congress is entitled to make decisions with regard of the game's rules, the statutes, and bylaws in the name of the federation. It is also the body that elects the president and the council or otherwise known as board. The president of the IIHF is basically the representative of the federation. He

represents the federation's interests in all external matters and he is also responsible that the decisions are made according to the federation's statutes and regulations. The General Secretary who is also the highest ranked employee of the IIHF assists the president.

The Federation has 51 full members: Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Chinese Taipei, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, North Korea, South Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United States. Full members have a national body dedicated to the sport, and participate annually in the international championships. Only full members have voting rights.

In addition, there are 17 associate members and 2 affiliate members.

Associate members are nations that either do not have fully independent national associations or who have independent national associations, but participate to only a limited extent in IIHF championships. They are Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Brazil, FYR Macedonia, Georgia, Greece, Jamaica, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Macau, Macedonia, Malaysia, Moldova, Morocco, Portugal, Qatar, Singapore, and United Arab Emirates.

Affiliate members for those countries that only participate in IIHF InLine championships. They are Chile and Namibia.

(International Ice Hockey Federation-IIHF)

2.2 BIHU (Balkan Ice Hockey Union)

Sport, ice hockey as well, is a powerful tool to strengthen social ties and networks, and to promote ideals of peace, fraternity, solidarity, non-violence, tolerance and justice.

The national sport federations are well aware of their responsibility arising from this

network of social contacts among children and youth. Additionally, sport coaches very often have more influence on youths than schoolteachers. They also have the function of a role model.

For those reasons, sport inclusion projects in post-conflict societies have to focus from the very beginning on building bridges between the various stakeholders and on creating mutual understanding and trust.

Tackling problems in post conflict situations as in former republic of Yugoslavia can be eased as sport has the ability to bring people together. In its efforts to use sport as a catalyst for peace and social development name sport and play are human rights that must be respected and enforced worldwide; sport has been increasingly recognized and used as a low-cost and high-impact tool in humanitarian, development and peace-building efforts, not only by the governments but also by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), development agencies, sports federations, armed forces and the media. Sport can no longer be considered a luxury within any society but is rather an important investment in the present and future, particularly in developing countries.

Sport plays a significant role as a promoter of social integration and economic development in different geographical, cultural and political contexts. Sport is a powerful tool to strengthen social ties and networks, and to promote ideals of peace, fraternity, solidarity, non-violence, tolerance and justice.

The positive potential of sport does not develop automatically. It requires a professional and socially responsible intervention, which is tailored to the respective social and cultural context. Successful sport, for development and peace programs, works to provide the right to all members of society to participate in sport and leisure activities. Effective programs intentionally give priority to development objectives and are carefully designed to be inclusive.

BIHU combine sport and play with other non-sport components to enhance their effectiveness. Such programs embody the best values of sport while upholding the quality and integrity of the sport experience. They are delivered in an integrated manner

with other local, regional and national development and peace initiatives so that they are mutually reinforcing.

Sport and such programs as BIHU has been recognized as a viable and practical tool to assist in the achievement of the United Nations MDGs

Specifically, BIHU can give a ray of hope for young children who are growing up in a climate of no tolerance. We aim to bring children that love hockey sport, from all sides of the Balkan region, to come together and play Ice hockey. Through mutual participation in sport, and careful guidance from the leaders of youth that we have trained, it is hoped that these children will begin to:

- Build dialogue with each other
- Understand and respect their differences
- Show greater tolerance
- Play fair play with respect to each another

BIHU initiative with support of IIHF President Mr. Rene Fasel, members of IIHF Executive Committee, and Gazprom company. Program has started in august last year with first IIHF-BIHU Development Camp taking place in Bled Slovenia.



Figure 1. BIHU Development camp, Bled, Slovenia

BIHU consists of 9 countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey.

On first hockey camp in five days has participated 45 players, 9 coaches, 19 game officials and all together with IIHF Coach instructors it counted 80 participants.

The players from Balkan country were divided into four teams (Brown, Maroon, Red and Blue) and then started their camp with lot of team building activities. They had ice practice, games and other class session for all participants to learn and improve their Ice Hockey skills and build new friendship.

This program is very important for Balkan or East-South European countries to develop Ice Hockey and infrastructures in the region. People in this area are extreme talented for team sports and are willing to learn and work hard to improve their skills.

Some countries struggle with facilities and the goal of our program is to help them as International Ice Hockey Federation and their members to reach the minimum standards to compete in our sport.

It is planned to run the program for four years and the program is based to held Hockey Development Camp, Goalies Camp and Challenge Tournament for players U16 years old, yearly. Actions will take place in different countries so that we can educate more Coaches, Game Officials, Marketing Managers and Office staff at organizing countries.

At the first camp on beginning organizers were concerned about difference between players and coaches coming from such a different hockey developed countries. At first two practices there was noticeable difference especially in skills knowledge and they wondered how would it look in the game. But when the games started, it was clear that there will be no problem, because of mentality of people from this region, they can play any sport one way or another, but they can play.

This program should continue and help Balkan countries gain knowledge how to organize tournaments, camps, and educational seminars for coaches, game officials and office personal to organize competition, make recruitment of young players and build new facilities.

The program is very important especially in this region where people was living together in different occasions for hundreds of years with theirs different mentality, religion and passion but sport bring them together even in hardest times during last twenty years.

2.3 SHL BIH

The Bosnia and Herzegovina Ice Hockey Federation, or Savez Hokeja Na Ledu Bosne I Hercegovine (SHL BIH), is the governing body of ice hockey in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its field of responsibilities covers Bosnia and Herzegovina Hockey League and the Bosnia and Herzegovina national ice hockey team.

Table 1. Bosnia and Herzegovina ice hockey

Member Since:	May 10, 2001	Total Players:	208
Male Players:	42	Junior Players:	162
Female Players:	4	Total Referees:	5
Indoor Rinks:	0	Outdoor Rinks:	0
Nation Population:	4,622,292	President:	Haris Muhic
Men's World Ranking:	n/a	Women's World Ranking:	n/a

(International Ice Hockey Federation-IIHF)

2.3.1 History

Hockey in Bosnia and Herzegovina started in 1953, and at this time it was only played during winter on frozen lakes. First hockey team was started that year. For reactivation of HC “Bosna” we have waited until 1980. At that time Sarajevo was preparing for the Winter Olympic Games in 1984 so the infrastructure was build so for the first time hockey had proper facilities made for hockey. In season 1981/82 HC “Bosna” joined the league of former country Yugoslavia and that was the first time that competitive hokey started in Bosnia and it has been played for 10 consecutive season. During those time youth selections and specific programs were started and hockey started growing and becoming more and more popular. Hockey was most popular during the WOG 1984, which were held in Sarajevo and period right after. Hockey team from Sarajevo was making good results after and arena was always full no matter who was the oposing team. We can say that that period was peak of hockey in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Figure 2. HC Bosna hockey team in season 1981/1982

In 1992, war started and just like every other sport, hockey was shut down during this period. Sadly hockey was hit by the war a lot more than all other sports. During the aggression over Sarajevo, Serbian army was aiming to destroy all the facilities built for WOG 1984. Zetra, ice rink during the Olympics, was completely destroyed and burned. That left hockey without its only ice rink in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It took time to recover after the war and Zetra was rebuilt in 1998. In 1999, the ice surface was installed for the first time after the rebuild. That was the year that hockey was introduced to the public of Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war. During that time, the most important issues were gathering the equipment, recruiting players and battle to keep the ice surface on as long as possible.

Bosnia and Herzegovina was accepted in IIHF family in May of 2001. In February of 2003, U18 National team of Bosnia and Herzegovina was made and Bosnia and Herzegovina participated in the World Championship Division 3 for the first time after becoming independent nation. Championship was held in Sarajevo and that was the first opportunity for crowd in Sarajevo to watch hockey games after the war.



Figure 3. Bosnia and Herzegovina National team for 2003 WC

Following this, U18 National team also played in 2004 IIHF U18 World Championship Division 3 in Sofia, Bulgaria, and in 2005 IIHF U18 World Championship Division 2 Qualifiers. National association worked closely with IIHF throughout this period on education and development of all people involved with hockey such as players, coaches, referees, and medicals through IIHF development camps and seminars. One of the IIHF instructors, Juunu Kaataja, visited Bosnia and spend couple of days educating local coaches about Learn To Play program.

In season 2008 Bosnia and Herzegovina presented their first men National team. That team participated in 2008 IIHF World Championship Division 3 Qualifiers which was played in Sarajevo.



Figure 4. Bosnia and Herzegovina national team in 2008

In season 2009/2010 proper national league was established and it was named BHL (Bosnia and Herzegovina Hockey League) and the league had 3 teams in the first season. In next season league counted 4 team by names: HC Bosna Lisice (Foxes), HC Stari Grad Vukovi (Wolves), HC Medvjedi (Bears) and HC Ilidza Ajkule (Sharks). League has been active for past three seasons even though it has been facing lot of difficulties. (The Bosnia and Herzegovina Ice Hockey Federation- SHL BIH)

Today hockey in Bosnia and Herzegovina is on steady but slow path of development. It battles with uncertainty from year to year but thanks to couple of hockey enthusiasts and volunteers it manages to stay active.

3 Developmental plan

Developmental plan for ice hockey in Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided in several parts and every part is presented with problems and solutions within the paragraph.

3.1 Developing Junior Program

Junior program is definitely most important part of hockey in Bosnia, and it is the part that still keeps hockey alive and running. There has been some work done on developing the program but not a lot of it has been effective and kept for a longer period of time. Most important step would be to develop the clear plan in order to keep following the same path and increasing the level one step at the time. One of the issues in ice hockey in Bosnia is that plans are always short-term and new ones are being built after every season and that is not beneficial for anybody and not good for the junior programs to develop and to increase number of players. Main issue to focus on is developing a clear long-term plan that would be followed so that structure and aims of program are not changing every season. Of course adjusting the plans is always necessary but constant changing and building new plans after every season is not benefiting anyone. After building a good plan it is important to get everyone on board with the program and to have good reasoning why this program should be followed.

Ice times are always an issue and there is never been enough ice time provided for each selection. It is important to provide separate ice time for each age group because of the growing number of kids in program and also to be able to keep adequate practices for every age group.

Every age group needs to have one coach assigned to the team as a Head Coach. Age groups should be divided in two to three year differences starting from U10 to U12 to U14 to U16 and U18. If the number of players is not sufficient for separate age groups according to this system, clubs may merge some groups so that they get good number of kids but keep it in a way that there is not too much difference in skill level and in age. Every coach should develop a season plan for each age group, something that they

can look into when they are planning practices and know on what skills to base practices to.

Table 2. Example plan for U16 age group:

2012-2013 HK Stari Grad - Vukovi U16 Group Seasonal Plan																		
	Date	December			January		February		March		April							
		11 to 18	18 to 25	25 to 31	2 to 8	8 to 15	15 to 22	22 to 29	30 to 6	6 to 13	13 to 20	20 to 27	28 to 6	6 to 13	13 to 20	20 to 27	27 to 4	4 to 15
Competitions																		
Technical	Primary Skills	Passing - General			Backchecking				Puckhandling - Dekes, Drags, etc.									
		Shooting - General			Shooting - One Timers		Puck Battles		Skating - Speed and Agility									
	Secondary Skills	Defending/Angling			Defensive Boxing Out/Coverage		Counter Attacks - Transition, Steals, Blocks											
Skating - Gen.			Checking - Gen.		Passing - One Touch/Quick		Shooting - Power/Accuracy/Tipping/Screens											
Introduce	Secondary Skills	Forechecking - Intro			Neutral Zone Forecheck		Passing - Stretch Passing/Multi-direction											
		Puckhandling - Basics			Backwards Skating - Speed/Mobility/Pivots													
	Introduce	Checking Basics			Puck Battles		Regroups		Endurance Training									
Offensive Cycling - Basics			Dump and Chase															
Tactical	Tactics	Offensive Attack - Triangle Rush			Shot Blocking													
		Defensive Zone - Basics			Defensive Zone - Man on Box Behind/Cross													
	Special Teams	Breakouts/Transition			Emergency Breakouts													
Faceoffs			Regroups															
Other	Testing Meeting Team Build	Powerplay - Basics			PP Zone Play		PP Regroups/Breakins/Full Ice Rush to set up											
		Powerplay Breakouts			PP Forecheck													
	PK - Box			PK Forecheck														

Table 3. Example plan for U14 age group:

2010-2011 HK Bosna U14 Seasonal Plan														
	Date	December			January		February		March		April			
		11 to 18	18 to 25	25 to 31	2 to 8	8 to 15	15 to 22	22 to 29	30 to 6	6 to 13	13 to 20	20 to 27	27 to 4	4 to 15
Competitions														
Technical	Primary Skills	Skating - General			Skating - Cross-overs/Agility/Mobility				Skating - Edge Control					
		Passing - General			Passing - Creativity/Quickness		Passing - Stretch/Longer Passes							
	Secondary Skills	Shooting - General			Shooting - Net Drives		Checking - Basics							
Backwards Skating - Mobility/Pivots/Speed			Shooting - One Timers, Dekes, etc.											
Introduce	Secondary Skills	Puck Battles - Basic			Defensive Plays - Shot/Lane Blocks									
		Backcheck			Triangle Straight Attacks									
	Introduce	Forecheck			Regroups									
Faceoffs														
Tactical	Tactics	Defensive Coverage - Man to Man, Box Behind, Cross, House			Offensive Cycles, Slot Area Presence, Tipping, Crashing the Net									
		Powerplay - Intro			Powerplay Breakouts/Set Pieces									
	Special Teams	Penalty Kill - Intro			PK Forecheck, Clears, Etc.									
PK - Line Changes														
Other	Testing Meeting Team Build													

Table 4. Example plan for U10 age group:

2012-2013 HK Stari Grad - Vukovi U10 and Initiation Program Seasonal Plan																		
	Date	December			January		February		March		April							
		11 to 18	18 to 25	25 to 31	2 to 8	8 to 15	15 to 22	22 to 29	30 to 6	6 to 13	13 to 20	20 to 27	28 to 6	6 to 13	13 to 20	20 to 27	27 to 4	4 to 15
Competitions																		
Technical	Primary Skills	Skating - Basics (Stride, Stops and Starts, Turns etc.)			Skating - Crossovers/Backwards/Pivots				Shooting from Skating/Accuracy									
		Shooting Basics (Technique, Lifting the Puck)			Puckhandling Basics (Forehand, Backhand, etc.)		Puckhandling - Agility											
	Secondary Skills	Puckhandling Basics (Forehand, Backhand, etc.)			Passing - Basics													
Skating - Edge Control			Puck Battles															
Introduce	Secondary Skills	Net Drive Shooting			Net Area Passing													
		Net Drive Shooting			Net Area Passing													
	Tactics	Faceoffs			Defensive Zone Positioning		Offensive Zone Positioning											
Faceoffs			Defensive Zone Positioning		Offensive Zone Positioning													
Other	Testing Meeting Team Build																	

3.2 BHL Kids Project

“BHL KIDS” league is project that has already been started and it involves developing a league for two youngest age groups. It is known that young kids learn most through games so aim of this project is to develop a league for U8 and U10 age groups in order to provide as many games as possible for the kids and to create a feeling of competition but as well to create habit of playing games.

One of the basic conditions for the operation and sustainable development of ice hockey is its popularization among the youngest and massification, which would also create the basis for the greater interest of the population and in its the wider framework bigger need for appropriate infrastructure. With the popularization and massification, the main goal of “BHL KIDS” is to create an organized system of ice hockey for the youngest age category of children under the age of 8 years (U8) and children under the age of 10 years (U10). To meet these objectives within the project “BHL KIDS” are planned for three primary activities:

1. Organization of leagues for U8 and U10 age groups
2. Organization of skating school and hockey school
3. Promotional - marketing activities.

The time frame in the first phase of the project is 3 years (seasons), after which they should be created conditions for independent functioning of teams and leagues for the youngest age groups.

Realization of “BHL KIDS” will be in charge of a team of coaches and instructors, and their task, except the election of Director, will be the preparation and planning of all the things needed for start and development of “BHL KIDS”.

Calculated costs of “BHL KIDS” are 30.720KM (15.706 euros) and expected funding from Ministry of Culture and Sport is 10.000KM (5.112 euros).

Main activities planned under the project "BHL KIDS" will be skating school, hockey school, organizing, and development of U8 and U10 league and promotional-marketing activities.

1. Skating school:

- Training of at least 100-120 children for the season (up to 40 children on the ice at one time with 3-4 instructors)
- Depending on the interest of students, if possible, write and arrange in groups before the start of the program
- After completed skating school, diploma and an invitation for the hockey school with an offer for the equipment purchase
- Skating school price is 40 KM (20.45 euros)
- Kids are provided with skates, helmet, elbow pads and shin pads
- Length of Skating School is 8 hours on ice (two weeks, 4 sessions per week)

2. Hockey school:

- Advanced level students of this program become members of “BHL KIDS” and they are provided with membership cards
- Children are divided in advanced group and more advanced group
- If conditions permit, in addition to dividing into groups also divide by age with more instructors on the ice
- With these age groups there is no need to divide kids by gender
- Price of hockey school is 70KM (35 euros) per month, and price for siblings is 60KM (30 euros) per month
- Hockey school needs to be provided with separate locker room
- Hockey school will have 3 ice sessions per week.
- Hockey school already has existing base from previous year of 40 – 45 kids that have been also involved in summer ball hockey school

3. Organization of U8 and U10 leagues:

- Develop the competing league for two age groups
- Games will be played cross-ice with 8 to 10 players per team
- Games will be played on weekends and there will be scorekeepers and results of the games together with standings will be updated on the web site
- Based on the number of kids there will be 3 or 4 teams in the league. Teams will be “Vukovi” (Wolves), “Medvjedi” (Bears), “Bosna Lisice” (Bosna Foxes), and “Ilidza Ajkule” (Ilidza Sharks), and if there is need for one more team “Divlje Macke” (Wildcats) will be created
- Games will be played in the official game jerseys and socks made and provided to the kids and practices will be in practice jerseys
- Players will be drafted in the teams by the coaches assigned for the teams in order for teams to be even

4. Promotional-marketing activities

- Goal of these activities is to attract as many kids as possible to the program
- In order to get better response and bigger participation of children in the program it is planned to actively advertised in printed and electronic media
- In order to attract kids to join several ball hockey games are organized in front of biggest mall in downtown Sarajevo so that everyone can try the sport
- At the same time flyers are made and divided during the game and also large number of flyers has been sent to primary schools for kids to see that sports exist and hear more about it
- There is possibility of organizing ball hockey tournament and inviting teams from Serbia and Croatia in order to promote the sport
- Goals in future are opening of hockey store nearby ice rink, starting the magazine and similar
- In order to provide funding for the project, we presented sponsorship package for any companies willing to sponsor the league and teams with clear spaces provided on jerseys and gear and boards

Jerseys for following season:



Figure 5. “Medvjedi” (Bears)



Figure 6. “Ilidza Ajkule” (Ilidza Sharks)



Figure 7. “Vukovi” (Wolves)



Figure 8. “Divlje Macke” (Wildcats)

3.3 Development of Coaching Staff

Coaching staff in Bosnian ice hockey is one of the parts that need the biggest development. There are not a lot of educated coaches within the national association and getting the education and providing the education to the coaches is difficult task.

Among the educated coaches, the highest education is Learn To Play program (LTP) and none of those coaches have been on any higher-level seminars or courses. In past couple of years there has been several imported coaches who have been working with the kids in junior programs and some of them with the men's national team but problem is that they would be in charge of all selections. They were not able to give their full attention to one team and adjust the program so that it fits one team in a best possible way. A lot of things have changed and have gone better last year when Ross Maclean was in charge of all the categories inside the program. Ross built the specific program for each team based on length of ice hockey season in Bosnia (4 months) and focus on specific tasks for each age group. I believe that this was the year when they improved more then ever before. At the same time while he was working with the teams, Ross tried to involve more assistant coaches for every team and to teach those assistant coaches who were involved. Also several players from older age groups could and should be involved to the practicing of younger age groups if not as assistant coaches at least as demonstrators. That provides better demonstrations to the junior players, more feedback to the players and at the same time introduces older players to the role of coach, and that might be something they would like and show interest to.

In order to provide better coaching to the juniors best solution would be hiring educated, experienced coach who would be working with kids and also work with coaches in order to improve them. Cooperation with DP program could be very helpful for most of the clubs and especially for the national team.

Head of Coaching role hasn't been used in Bosnian ice hockey so far and mostly reasoning is that there is not enough educated and experienced coaches to be in that position. Most experience coach in organization should be named head of coaching and keep track of all the other coaches inside organization. Head of coaching should be presented with the plans for every age group so that he can track what will every age group be focusing on in certain period of time. This provides opportunity for coaches' evaluation and providing them with a proper feedback. This person may also be head coach of one of the categories inside the association but not all of them. Role of head of coaching would be to control all the coaches inside the organization and make sure

that every team is getting good and proper coaching and that their practices are developmental and helpful for the players.

All of the coaches involved with the organization are volunteers and hockey players that would like to help younger kids develop in hockey. Some of them do not have any coaching experience and only knowledge of hockey they have come through playing. They are involved and they deserve credit for that but they also need to get some education in order to develop their coaching skills in order to improve their practices, interpersonal skills and to learn more about the game.

Couple of solutions would be:

1. Hiring coach from Vierumaki DP

Through this you would be able to get properly educated coach, most with a lot of experience, for a relatively small amount of money. This would also benefit students and give them a chance to work in a different environment that is still at its development and student may be able to assist and help increase and guide the development.

2. Hiring experienced coach from neighbour countries

Hiring coach from neighbour countries could also be cheap and relatively easy to arrange, and it is helpful considering that the coach will not have troubles adjusting to the new culture, language, and environment. It would be easy for him to work with younger kids since he understands the language so kids would understand better what he wants and expects from them.

Bosnian clubs previously have been unable to hire international coaches due to the fact that they haven't been able to know exact duration of the ice for the season. It is hard to get coaches to come for a three or four-month season when on other places they have contracts for whole year or at least 8 month period. Unfortunately this will keep on happening until there is permanent ice rink setup in Bosnia.

For this season HC Stari Grad – Vukovi hired two coaches from Canada through organization called “Hockey Sans Frontiers” from Quebec, Canada. Organization provides help to less developed hockey countries and also provides opportunity to Canadian young coaches to travel and gain experience. This will be good for club and it will be almost free. HSF organization provides coaches with salary, and plane tickets, and the club only pays for their accommodation and fills their fridge once a month. This is the first time one Bosnian club hired a coach through this organization and we will see how will these two coaches fit in the organization, but based on review clubs received from Subotica, Serbia, where HC Spartak hired coach through HSF, things should work out good and positive for the hockey in Bosnia.

3.4 Off-ice programs to develop interest in sport and support training

Since period when ice is available in Sarajevo is very short in order to keep interest and to attract new players, new off-ice programs need to be developed. Ball hockey may be a valid alternative for ice hockey because it still develops a lot of skills that are needed for ice hockey such as stickhandling, passing, shooting and also helps coordination. HC Ilidza 2010 already has a ball hockey program that they have been using for several years now and other teams could follow their lead and example in order to keep an amount of practices and keep players involved through out the whole year. One of the ideas is to develop either the league in ball hockey that could be played during the months when ice is not available or instead of league there could also be several tournaments on which could be invited some international in order to attract people on that sport as well as on ice hockey. Equipment for ball hockey is similar or almost exactly like equipment for ice hockey except in ball hockey you are wearing shoes instead of skates. Unlike ice hockey, ball hockey can be played on open fields, handball and basketball arenas and similar and there is real possibility to use this as training because it is really affordable and most similar to hockey from all the other sports.

Other than ball hockey players should have trainings in the gym during the summertime. Some of the older age groups could benefit from this type of practice and especially considering that some of the coaches are well educated sport teachers they may

help them to make programs that will fit them in a best way and also to be as hockey like as possible.

3.5 Development of National League

National league is called BHL (short for Bosnia and Herzegovina Hockey League) and it counts 4 teams, all from Sarajevo. Teams are Ilidza 2010 – Ajkule (Sharks), Medvjedi Sarajevo (Bears), and Stari Grad – Vukovi (Wolves) and Bosna Sarajevo.

In new organization BHL would be organized as a LLC (Limited Liability Company), following NHL and KHL organization, where clubs would own the league and share profits, costs, sponsors, and reach agreements on every crucial part or decisions concerning the league. Problem for the league is that not all of the teams, which are playing in BHL, have junior programs. Every team is drafting players from junior clubs so they can play the league but players still remain registered in the junior team or once they leave junior program they are not registered at all. All of the players playing in the league are registered in only two teams HC Bosna Sarajevo and HC Ilidza 2010. Every team in league should make their registration form and the players should be registered for the teams that are playing for and stay with that team unless transfer or retiring.

League, which has operating for three years now, has been concluding the draft every year to decide which player plays in which team. This way league is able to keep teams even but there is no consistency and the players once drafted for one team are not registered for that team. This issue needs to be fixed. Draft should only be done for the players that have not played in the league yet and every player should be registered in the team he is playing for. This way Bosnian National Association SHL BIH can keep track of all the players playing in the league as well as which player is with which team. This way there is consistency inside the league and teams. There should also be assigned one team manager per team that should be present on every league meeting when there are changes and issues addressed. Another thing that needs to be decided is transfer rules and transfer dates. Clarified document about transfer rules and transfer dates needs to be made and sent out to all the teams, players and team managers. In this document should strictly be clarified under which rules players can transfer from one team to another and also until which date that is possible. Considering that none

of these players are professionals and not locked by contracts to their teams, league needs to provide clear rules under which transfers can be made so that every side is satisfied.

Score keeping is one issue the league that needs to be improved. The new score sheets need to be made and the tracking of the statistics needs to be improved. There needs to be at least 3 guys at the score sheet desk so that they can make sure all the statistics, time and everything is running smooth and that there is no data missed.

One thing that league needs is separate website only for the league. On the league website needs be all the rosters and all statistics and standings of the league. This would provide better and easier view for everyone interested in league including press, so that information they are publishing are correct and right on time. This also provides better info for all the clubs and for the players involved in league. With the website there comes another marketing opportunity for all of those who are interested to promote themselves on the league website and that way they give profit to the league. Another way to keep league popular is Facebook and Twitter page where updates can easily be posted. Every modern company and almost every person in world has Facebook and this provides excellent coverage for the league.

3.6 Developing Refereeing

Refereeing needs lot of attention and it is very vital for the development of hockey in Bosnia to improve in this particular area. Refereeing has not been at a very good level in the past couple of years and there have not been a lot of referees that went through IIHF seminars or any courses on refereeing. Most of the referees have been volunteers with little bit more playing experience then others willing to step in referee shoes. In pre-war Yugoslavian period there has been only one referee from Bosnia in a top hockey league. After the war when hockey was rebuilt he was in charge of refereeing all the games on Bosnian soil. After Bosnian National Association was joined to IIHF, two additional referees have been sent to seminars to become educated referees in order to increase number of referees and also level of refereeing. From 2005 until present day there have not been any new referees joining the referee team and level of referee-

ing has stayed the same. In the BHL there is only one full time referee and he is also referee in chief. The same referee referees all league games and that is not good for the league. Two additional linesmen are assigned to the game, one from each team that is not playing in that fixture. Problem with the linesmen is that they are not educated referees and only things they learned are from head referee and their knowledge of rules is not the best. This often leads to frustration from players and in a tight game this is always an issue.

There are three main things that need to be improved on refereeing part:

- Increase number of referees
- Educate referees through clinics, seminars and games
- Assign game supervisor for every game who will provide feedback to the referees and the scorekeepers.

Numbers of referees needs to be increased. The politics of taking couple of players from each team is good but those referees also need to be educated. Also if there are players that are cut of from their teams and they are not able to play the league, they may be added to referees list. Some players that are involved in junior programs may be educated to become referees. Junior teams should also be educated about game rules from the referees and that way they can also learn and maybe develop the interest to become referees.

Increasing number of referees needs to be followed with educational seminars for new coming referees, clinics for existing referees, and also opportunities for the referees to try and practice their skills. There are plenty of opportunities for IIHF referee seminars where new referees can go and receive education from professionals. Referee in chief can provide seminars and first step teaching for new referees with materials that can be collected from IIHF and also from IIHF rule book. During the season there should also be a referee clinics where referees can discuss about problems and issues they had on games they refereed, about some calls they haven't make and similar. On those meetings also referee in chief can give his feedback to the other referees from his perspective and also from the game supervisors sheet.

Game supervisor might be one of the very crucial roles in the league. This may be one of the other referees that are not working on the game that is played. He may follow the game from the stands and write his suggestions, views, feedback (positive and negative), and provide tool for the referee in chief to base his feedback on following game.

New referees will need practice in order to get experience of refereeing and to understand the new role they are in. It might be for them to jump in the refereeing BHL right away so better way is to let them referee on practices, junior or men team, if it is known that here will be scrimmage, on the junior tournaments that are played and slowly put in for the harder games.

One of the possibilities to educate referees is to bring experience referee from outside to ref, educate, and help local referees. Of course this part is mostly determined by financial situation. It would be great if there were possibility to bring international referee for period of two to four weeks during which he would be refereeing on couple of league games, give clinics to existing referees and also educate and teach new referees. It always helps bringing outsiders and new faces with lot more experience and education, which is on higher level in order to give more knowledge to the new referees. Other possibility is to bring experience referee for a whole season. That way he has a lot more time to educate new referees and give advices to existing one. Of course financial factor is again most important, but in this way everyone is benefiting. Referees are getting good education and it is lot let time limited, league is getting good experience referee to raise the level of refereeing in the league.

3.7 Development of National Association SHL BIH

National association work in recent years has not been the best and transparent to all the members of the association. Organization should and needs to be lot better and there needs a lot of improvement in order to make things smother and better inside the organizations. Work of the association in past couple of years has been mainly focused on getting permanent ice rink in Bosnia and Herzegovina where ice would be stationed for at least eight-month period. Association also work on building national

teams as well as improving programs inside. Work of the national association hasn't been transparent and many things were unknown inside the association about the work that was done or the current work of the association.

Main issues that need to be improved inside the SHL BIH:

- Organization
- Communication
- Cooperation
- Transparency
- Autonomy
- Committees

One of the problems inside the national association is that same people are on important functions inside national association as well as they are on important functions inside hockey clubs that are members of national association, mainly HC Bosna. This makes it hard to differentiate what SHL BIH does and what clubs do. This causes financial instability and lack of trust from other members of association. It makes it hard to differentiate which funds are used for certain things like booking ice times, paying referees, paying coaches and similar and if those funds were provided for the association or for the club. Changes need to be made in order to keep everything transparent as well as to keep association fair to all the clubs that are joined in it. There needs to be two different sets of people one running the clubs which are members of the association and one running the SHL BIH. There needs to be fair treatment for every club in association and provides equal amount of funding for all of them.

One of the goals for SHL BIH needs to be to provide enough funding in order to manage and run good hockey programs and to provide the existence of the sport in the country. Ice hockey, as one of the sports in Bosnia, should get financial support from the government. These funds provided by them self are not enough so SHL BIH needs to find lot more sponsors to support the sport. Sponsors need to know what are they investing into and what type of marketing possibilities they are getting when they are giving funds to the association. SHL BIH needs to develop clear plans for future

and their goals and missions for upcoming seasons. Two main plans need to be developed: **long-term plan** that may be made for period of three to five years, and a **short-term plan** that is made for upcoming season. With these two plans nicely made and clarified it should be easy to present to the sponsors what are they supporting. Every sponsor wants to know where are funds going and are they used right.

Inside the association there should be several committees. One in charge of the league (BHL) and officiating, one in charge of junior programs and development, and one in charge of financing. Later with necessity new committees may be started but for beginning these would be most important. Every committee should have one person in charge. One person can only run one committee at the time in order to manage all the requirements of the committee. SHL BIH should financially support the clubs that are part of the association. Every club should present their plan for the following season and based on that plan SHL BIH should provide appropriate funding. Sharing the funding to the clubs should be fair and based on their previous work and their ideas and ways they are trying to use the money for developing hockey.

3.8 Making Women Team

Founded in January of 2012, entering its second season, girls hockey in Bosnia and Herzegovina has arisen from the enthusiasm and drive of a small core who had the desire to lace up their skates and pioneer the establishment one of the world's most popular winter sports in Sarajevo. Not content to stand on the other side of the boards and watch their brothers and friends take to the ice, this group founded their own team and, with the support of the local hockey community and clubs, **Ilidža 2012** has taken to the ice in force. However, our girls are not alone. It is time to acknowledge the potential of girls' hockey worldwide – and our girls' place within this world.

The recent passage of IIHF World Girls' Hockey Weekend this October 13th and 14th marks the importance and growth of women's ice hockey. Girls' hockey has gone from a peripheral fringe sport to a prominent centrepiece of Olympic Winter Games and annual World Championships. The growth of the sport has been rapid and signifi-

cant. For example, when the first IIHF Women's World Ice Hockey Championship was held in 1990, there were 6,336 registered females playing hockey in the United States. In 2008, there were more than 60,000 females registered. Across Canada, more than 80,000 girls and women currently play hockey with organized leagues, ten times more than 20 years ago. The US and Canadian national women's teams are ranked number 1 and 2 in the world by the IIHF.

For girls in ice hockey, typically the training process is merged with boys in mixed teams to the age of 12. This pattern is adhered to in Sarajevo; younger girls up to 12 have the option of joining in HK Stari Grad, which organizes a hockey school and a kids' league for competition. At present, five girls under the age of 10 train with HK Stari Grad, in advance of joining the women's team full-time.

Female ice hockey team, club **Ilidža 2012**, brings together about twenty girls. They have received support and training from the established clubs, namely Ilidža 2010 and HK Stari Grad - Vukovi, with the highlight of last season a month-long training seminar with a professional Coach from the United States. Plans are in place to continue training and participate in the BHL KIDS competition programme for the season 2012/13.

Easiest way to increase level of female players is to have as many girls joining the clubs in very young ages. Creating recruiting posters and inviting boys and girls to join at the same time might be beneficial. All children are playing together when they are really young and there is not a lot of difference between boys and girls in young ages and instead of having a small number of girls this way number would be combined and good for both sexes. Having girls play with boys in young levels can be good on developing their skills. Of course following nature's laws girls should be separated from boys after when they arrive to U16 age group. Of course at that stage already having girls team would be good motivational tool for girls to stay and continue with the sport. With the increased number of girls it will be necessary to arrange matches or league for girls to play. Organizing regional leagues or tournament for girls would increase number of games they would have as well as their experience and level and be good motivational tool for them to see perspective and future in sport.

3.9 National Teams

Bosnia and Herzegovina men national team first time played in World Championship Qualifiers in 2009. After being unable to qualify for the World Championship team have not participated on any other event. National team that played in 2009 was formed from the new players who started playing hockey as kids after the war, as well as of several veterans who have been playing hockey in pre-war period. After that year many of the veterans finished their hockey career and team was unable to fill in empty spots with new promising juniors.

National team should be made as a motivation for all the athletes that are starting with the hockey, players that are already inside junior programs, and players that are playing in the national league. Now with the new youngsters coming out of the junior programs there should be enough players to fill out the good national team that could compete for the World Championship spot. Base of the young players that played in 2009 team still is actively playing hockey, there is new young hockey players from HC Ilidza that previously haven't been part of national team and together with a couple of promising juniors they make a good solid number to select a good team to represent Bosnia and Herzegovina on World Championship. Having a national team not only gives players sense of worth and pride but also give a lot of new opportunities for sponsorships and help from government structures. Representing your nation on a World Championship is a big thing and with a little work and financial help it should be plausible.

One of the IIHF requirements to play with the men national team is to have junior national team. In 2003 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina the first Bosnia and Herzegovina U18 national team participated in Division 3 World Championship. Same team participated in 2004 in Sofia, Bulgaria in same division. Even though team didn't make any significant result it was a huge honour for every single player to be part of the Bosnia and Herzegovina national team. In 2005 Bosnia and Herzegovina U18 team played in Division 3 qualifiers in Ankara, Turkey, and ever since then there have not been any other junior selection of Bosnia and Herzegovina that participated on any other World Championship or qualifications for World Championship. If the junior

selections are made and they are practicing and preparing for the league it is time to systemically start developing the junior national teams. Requirement to have a men national team is to have junior selections. There have never been U16 selection of Bosnia and Herzegovina and it is time to start it. Players as well as coaches need to understand that progression form U16 to U18 to U20 and at the end to the Men's team.

3.10 Promotion, sponsorship and fundraising

Due to the bad financial situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, not only in sports but overall in society, ice hockey has to battle hard to gather money to stay active from season to season. Due to the difficult situations Bosnian ice hockey club made couple of ways how to gather money for themselves.

Sponsorship is always first and that way most of the money was gathered but the sponsors want to know what are they getting from their sponsorship and this year it is first time that Bosnian ice hockey has a legit products to offer and those are BHL Kids league and BHL league. Leagues are offered for the sponsorship and the sponsor may buy in and put his name in the leagues name such as for example "Volvo BHL league", "Nokia BHL Kids league". When promoted sponsors are promised with the space on promotional material of league, their brand in written and electronic medias as well as their logos on teams involved in league.

Fundraising is the second way Bosnian clubs are trying to gather money. Of course amount of money clubs are able to gather through fundraising is not as high as the amount they get through sponsorship but is it still significant for clubs. Latest fundraisers were BHL fundraiser and BHL Kids fundraiser which were dinners arranged by hosts and tickets were 20 euros and 10 euros was going to restaurant and 10 was going to the budget of BHL and BHL Kids. Players, parents, friends, families mostly supported these fundraisers, and people involved with the organization closely trying to help organization.

4 Discussion

It is tough to predict development of this sport in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sadly in this county everything is revolving around politics and in order for everything to run smoothly there need to be political impact. In environment like that, hockey is having though time surviving and managing to keep alive.

Hockey in Bosnia and Herzegovina is facing two biggest challenges and those are: lack of permanent ice rinks, and bad financial situation. Hockey programs are probably not on their brightest and they are improving from year to year but unless there is change in these two critical conditions there will not be lot of changes in sport.

Lobbying for building or providing permanent ice rink for the ice hockey and skating clubs needs to be number one priority. Only with the permanent ice rink setup there can be build programs for increasing base of players and user of ice rinks.

Bright side, of current situation, is knowing that there lot of interest from kids and youth that are playing hockey now, together with the big number of kids in skating clubs. With the longer seasons and larger financial incomes clubs could be able to accept and increase number of kids and youth interested in ice hockey, develop the players that are already involved and educate staff through local and international programs. Looking with a wider perspective Bosnia and Herzegovina has everything that is needed for development of ice hockey. Only thing lacking is support from local community and government.

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