



## **IIHF AND VIERUMÄKI JOIN FORCES IN ICE HOCKEY CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE**

The International Ice Hockey Federation, the Finnish Ice Hockey Association and Vierumäki Sports Institute have joined forces to create the International Ice Hockey Centre of Excellence, which will be based at Vierumäki Sports Institute in Finland.

In connection with the Centre of Excellence, Vierumäki Sports Institute, a department of Haaga Institute Polytechnic, organizes international ice hockey coaching education, the Degree Programme in Sports and Leisure Management.

### **IIHF CERTIFICATED HOCKEY CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE**

The goal of the International Ice Hockey Centre of Excellence, located in Heinola 130 km north of Helsinki, is to combine research and sport development specifically targeted at ice hockey.

The objectives of the Centre are to continually develop the game of ice hockey through research and education. The Centre will also create new educational materials, host international conferences, camps and tournaments, and promote ice hockey awareness.

As an integral part of their studies students enrolled in the Degree Programme will be required to work at the Centre. They will take part in projects designed by the partners, thereby enabling them to “learn by doing” in a practical working environment. They will also be responsible for providing research data upon which the IIHF can base decisions regarding the development of our sport.

The facilities at Vierumäki are of the highest standard and include two indoor ice rinks, a 200 metre indoor athletics track, four squash courts, tennis courts, a fully equipped gym, swimming pool, two golf courses (18 hole and 9 hole) and several outdoor playing fields.

### **INTERNATIONAL ICE HOCKEY COACHING DEGREE IN FINLAND**

The degree course is a three and a half year full time undergraduate programme, and graduates will receive a Bachelor of Sports and Leisure degree upon graduation.

The course will focus primarily on ice hockey coaching, and the principle objective will be for students to gain an internationally recognized qualification that will allow them to work as a head coach, coach or sports instructor. The aim of the programme is to prepare the student for employment in the competitive sports and leisure industry. The language of instruction is English, which will enable the student to work in an international environment.

The first two years of the course studies are based at Vierumäki. The final 18 months consist of on-the-job training, additional seminars and a work placement, which can be in the student's home country or abroad. The graduates from this programme will form an elite body of knowledgeable coaches and managers, educated in the technical, managerial and business aspects of the sport.

## **IIHF SUPPORTS APPLICANTS FROM MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS**

Vierumäki Sports Institute will pay the tuition, but students must pay for textbooks and course material. Students can live on campus and the Institute offers a range of accommodation. Students are responsible for their own equipment and travel expenses.

The IIHF and the Institute are currently seeking applicants interested in pursuing a career in ice hockey coaching and with a desire to be a part of an exciting new programme. The 2003 intake will be 15 new students, 7 or 8 of whom will be from abroad.

The IIHF will support the international students coming from member national associations, helping with their living expenses during the study. The IIHF is also planning to help organize the work placement of students for the final 18 months of the course.

The Coaching Committee of the IIHF recommends that the member national associations take advantage of the benefits of such a programme by having one or two of their hockey coaches attend this degree programme as students and graduating with a degree in coaching. The programme provides a win-win combination for the IIHF and the member countries.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Selection for the programme is based on the applicant's prior education, work experience in the sports and leisure industry, coaching experience especially in ice hockey, entrance examination and interview. Eligibility for higher education and good command of English are required. After the preliminary selection successful applicants will be invited to an entrance examination by letter. The entrance examination and interview will be held at Vierumäki Sports Institute in Finland on 16-17 June 2003.

Applications should be sent directly to Vierumäki Sports Institute's Student Affairs Office between April 1 and May 15, 2003.

### **Further information and application forms:**

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Application forms also available in the Internet [www.vierumaki.fi](http://www.vierumaki.fi)