

FEEL SPORT

PRESERVE VALUES

We must always remain about our sport and its development; about our players and providing equal opportunities to them, about our fans and making them more integral part of the game, about principles of solidarity, fair play and competition. **Know our history, preserve traditions and stay true to our values. We shall never become a financial institution; an investment for profit. Our mission is different.**

However, we need the means to do it, to stay financially sound and help our members with their economic stability. **'Change or be changed'** as IOC **President Thomas Bach** stated fittingly when it comes to today's need to stay on top of trends and developments.

The IIHF is the **headquarters** that should **treat its Member National Associations as its portfolio, the 'assets'**, and feel more responsible for steady development and progress of each and every stakeholder.

Assistance under jointly tailor-made and approved manuals and guidelines should be provided to those who need it and are willing to capitalize on it. MNAs that can join the IIHF in providing such assistance will also play a major role in ensuring collective success and sustainable performance.

From this perspective, the IIHF is similar to the NHL, and should learn from it in strengthening its members and making them more profitable, expanding as a strong organization, increasing its commercial operations and maximizing profits.

And as such, we need to look wider, learning from experts in different industries, including fields such as business, marketing and finances.

| If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together
~ African proverb

THINK BUSINESS

LEAD LIKE A BUSINESS

Beyond the traditional revenue sources the following opportunities should be deeper explored and exploited:

- Utilizing our collective vast knowledge, know-how, expertise and wide network to generate ideas and review emerging financial instruments. **After all, we have bankers, state leaders, marketing professionals, etc. among our members**
- New finance models for effective management of funds: money should not only stay in the bank, but it should bring profit via smart, reliable and responsible concepts
There is so much out there being it crypto currencies, blockchain or investment firms that we need to prepare ourselves for. This is not science fiction. This is real if you consider the different ventures between sports and investment firms, such as tennis (ITF's 25-year, 3\$ billion partnership with investment group Kosmos for transformation of Davis Cup into the World Cup of Tennis) or volleyball (FIVB's partnership with CVC Capital Partners Fund VII, a private equity and investment advisory firm with a record of investing in multiple sports businesses, including Formula 1, Moto GP, and Rugby, for launch of Volleyball World) selling their rights to firms that create new event formats. I am not saying we need to do this. I am saying **we should better know what risks, but also opportunities are coming towards us**
- Development of **project-based sponsorship and partnerships**
For the sake of example: "China Air brings your Chinese hockey to new heights" (in cooperation with the IIHF)
- **Value-in-kind sponsorship** for our MNAs (e.g. off-ice apparel outside Nike agreement, software and hardware providers, etc.)

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Here also comes a question of how funds should be spent and distributed.

For federations from big markets to gain more, others need to become stronger to contribute more. Existing markets are highly valued, but are almost at their maximum in some cases. **We either keep on this level or unlock the potential of existing and new markets and human capital.**

The long-term solution is to focus our efforts, minds and resources on investing in making our sport more universally successful. **Development is the key.**

I am convinced that it is in the interest of those that have been financing our development to this point to put growing MNAs in such a position so that they are able to contribute for a stronger IIHF as soon as possible.

We need to strike the right balance between:

- raising the prize money for the top teams that have been driving us and our products to this point, and
- increasing focus on development of lower-ranked federations and investing in them so that they will become money generators in the future

Once new big markets for ice hockey are created and more MNAs start returning investment, there will be something meaningful to contribute to our international community and raise our level globally.

THEN WE WILL GROW THE PIE BIGGER & HAVE MORE TO SHARE FOR EVERYONE

THINK BUSINESS

LEAD LIKE A BUSINESS

- Learning from the best in sports and beyond
Involving external ad-hoc experts and agencies with expertise appropriate to the specific task
- **Optimized approach to ticketing** with the goal of:
 - establishing more direct customer relations
 - improving customer experience, including via enhanced hospitality concepts that will generate better revenue
 - accumulating and creating the database of fans
 - while ensuring highest standards of data protection and privacy
- **Attraction of sponsors for IIHF events outside existing contracts** to provide equal approach to female, junior competitions and lower divisions. By investing in such competitions, we will help their development & visibility and eventually make their value more appealing to sponsors
- **Streaming, increased media coverage and content production**
Application of the latest technological opportunities within OTT (over the top) media platforms and of automated streaming solutions that will generate more content for analysis of players' performance and fan engagement, e.g. AI (artificial intelligence), AR (augmented reality) explore new marketing and commercial opportunities within NFT (non fungible token), blockchain, etc.
- **Commercialization of existing and future IIHF events:** IIHF Gala Awards Show, All-Star Celebrity Game, IIHF Hall of Fame

FEEL SPORT, THINK BUSINESS

We should celebrate our achievements and conduct a **Gala Awards Show** to honor our stars and praise federations, their leagues and clubs for their initiatives:

- demonstration of our enormous **gratitude to those who inspire** us and make an impact
- **well-deserved rewards for and appreciation of hard work is one of motivators to keep going**, encouragement to stay active, create new ideas and share know-how with each other
- giving a say to all stakeholders including the media and fans in defining the best of the best into the voting process
- generating more publicity in the entertainment industry, commercializing our assets and re-investing into the growth

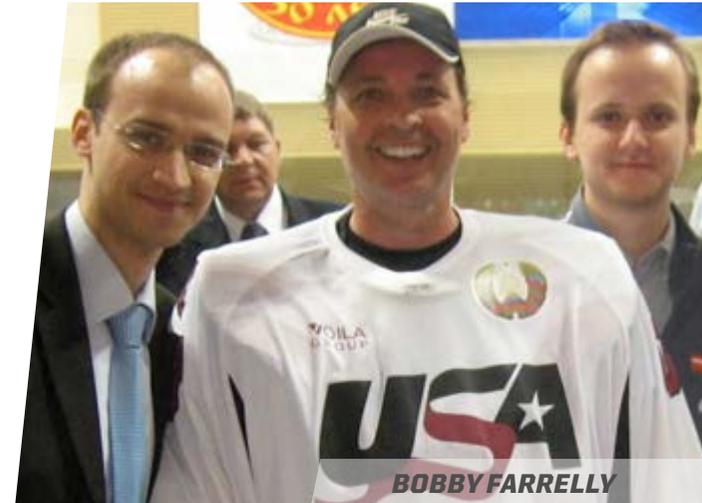
Ice hockey can further be promoted by conducting the **All-Star Celebrity Game**

- unique once-in-a-life-time experience for celebrities of playing with the best-of-the-best
- attraction of significant public and media attention, which presents further commercial opportunities
- development of the IIHF Family game and creation of IIHF Oldtimer's Team that could find sponsors, especially if Miroslav Satan, Dainius Zubrus and the likes join... And if nothing else, it offers a great way for exchange and development

Staying true to our values, IIHF activities and the above-mentioned events should definitely include newly-created **IIHF Charity Projects, Sustainability Programs** and **Equality Campaigns**. Donating profits for a good cause will show our organization's social responsibility and give one more occasion for the ice hockey community, including fans, media and sponsors, to unite to make a difference.

The **Hall of Fame** has great potential to evolve into another premier event and project:

- a **virtual home for international ice hockey can become the heart of our sport's history**, provide comprehensive information about those who shaped the IIHF and ice hockey in general, and give access to video footage from past ceremonies
- setting a clearer set of nomination rules
- increased awareness of the event will develop the induction ceremony into a **show to be sold to rightsholders, or marketed by ourselves to grow our communication platforms**, either existing or future ones
- as a next step we should consider **arranging a traveling exhibition that will be presented for public display during IIHF competitions and/or virtual reality Hall of Fame**
- the above points, in line with an even closer cooperation with our great partner, the Hockey Hall of Fame, will help us preserve and celebrate our heritage and achievements better



Over a decade ago, I organized an arena opening all-star game. Aside from such Hall of Famers as for example Glenn Andersson and Igor Larionov, celebrities and hockey fans, such as a Hollywood movie director Bobby Farrelly got wind of it and gladly joined because those are priceless memories. So who knows – maybe a hockey nut like Justin Bieber would love the opportunity to skate next to Mario Lemieux, Pavel Datsyuk or Peter Forsberg along with other inspiring personalities. Certainly, it will create considerable interest among sponsors, media and fans alike, which will make the event self-financing.