

# Bookmakers place bets on hockey favourites

Many try to predict the results of some Ice Hockey World Championship matches and even foresee the winner

By Alexander Fiodorov

Betting shops are gaining an increasing popularity these days, and Svetlana Basko, from Pari-Match specialised office, tells us of the most popular stakes and most interesting matches.

**Is the popularity of hockey rising among betting shops' players now?**

*We actually prioritise five sports which always enjoy popularity among our clients: football, volleyball, basketball, tennis and, of course, ice hockey. The latter is our national sport and at present, bets on the IIHF World Championship winners are very popular and we are already providing odds for all the separate matches.*

**Who are the leading four?**

*These are Sweden, Russia, Canada and Finland but everything can change. Strangely, the US team has failed to join the list of favourites this year.*

**Is it possible to learn what matches are the most popular amongst fans based on the quantity of bets?**

*Definitely, these are the semi-final and final matches. After the group stage finishes, fans gain their own understanding of the participating teams and their manner of playing. An overall picture of the tournament becomes clear and it's then possible to predict what results a certain team would demonstrate.*

**A theory exists stating that the forecast of a single person has few chances to be correct but the likeli-**



Swedish national team — one of the tournament's favourites

**hood ratio increases if a public poll takes place. You analyse clients' preferences' as well, while calculating special odds?**

*Bookmakers' odds reflect the possibility of the game's result. In addition, they make it possible to calculate a probable win of stake. At the moment, the odds of Sweden's win is set at 3.55 and Finland's — 4.45. This indicates that, according to bookmakers' belief, Sweden has a greater chance to win.*

**What are the highest and lowest stakes?**

*The margin is huge: the lowest stake possible is Br10,000 and the highest can be several million Roubles. Some of our clients view sporting stakes as an amusement while others as a habit. On returning home from the office (knowing that a hockey match is being played this evening, for example), they come to our shop to bet on their favourites. They also say that it's much more interesting to watch the match when you have such an interest on the outcome. Moreover, this is a way of making money. Not long ago, a player won Br150m in an express*

*stake (made on 15 different events).*

**Who are your clients?**

*These are mostly men, as they traditionally follow sport more actively. However, women also come, and account for around 5 percent of all players. Some place bets on a single sport or team and others concentrate on different sports simultaneously. Some clients make bets before a match and others prefer live bets ('in-game' bets made during a game). Accordingly, it's hard to characterise a typical player — each one has their own strategy.*

## Quickest goal at championship

By Igor Leshin

**The quickest puck of World Championship-2014 delivered during the meeting between Sweden and the Czech Republic**

The match of these national teams was marked with the quickest puck of the Minsk forum. During the 8th second the score was opened by Czech shooter Tomáš Hertl; Swedish goaltender Anders Nilsson was unlikely to expect such a turn of events. The Czechs immediately began to furiously pressure the rival, winning most of throws and fiercely attacking the opponent. However, in the middle of the period the Swedes managed to seize the initiative and quickly improved the situation. Forward Oscar Möller restored the balance, delivering the puck during the 12th minute.

This helped the national squad wake up and the players seized the initiative from the Czech hockey players. Meanwhile, the latter decided that they wouldn't surrender easily and took the lead after another attack, with Jiří Hudler delivering the puck to the Swedish goal during the last minute.

The game was equal and neither regular nor extra-time revealed the winner. Everything decided in a series of penalty shoot-outs — 4:3 in favour of Swedes.

## Our people beyond the seas

**The NHL is the most prestigious hockey league in the world and only the strongest get to play there. Amongst those stars have been a number of Belarusian players.**

Alexander Andrievsky became the first Belarusian in the NHL. He played in the 1992-1993 season with the Chicago Blackhawks team.

Oleg Mikulchik has played three seasons for the Winnipeg and Anaheim teams.

Vladimir Tsyplakov became the next Belarusian who conquered the NHL. He played five seasons with Los Angeles team and two with the Buffalo team, giving him 331 plays and 170 points under his belt.

The record of 917 plays by Belarusian hockey player, Ruslan Saley, has not been beaten. Saley spent 14 seasons in the league, playing for Anaheim, Florida, Colorado and Detroit.

Konstantin Koltsov played three seasons (144 matches) for the Pittsburgh team.

Another of our countryman, Andrey Kostitsyn, has also been in the NHL for a long time. He spent seven seasons with Montreal and Nashville. His record of 103 delivered pucks has not been beaten for a long time. However, another Belarusian hockey player — Mikhail Grabovski — who has played for Montreal, Toronto and is now playing for Washington could beat the shooter Kostitsyn and jump to the head of the sniper rating of Belarusians in the NHL.

Sergey Kostitsyn has followed the example of the elder brother and has, so far, spent six seasons (353 matches) in Montreal and Nashville.

# We will see an interesting game

By Kirill Karin

**After end of the formal ceremony of the raising of flags of the participants of the 78th Ice Hockey World Championship, the Head of the Ice Hockey Federation of Russia and legendary Soviet goalkeeper, Vladislav Tretiak, appeared in the centre. And it is quite logical, after all, according to many fans and the state of betting shops, the his national team is the favourite for the tournament.**

Vladislav Tretiak did not deny that the Russian team will struggle to win the world championships, but at the same time he declared that any medal would be a success.

"I've just spoken with the President of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF), René Fasel, who watched the test match Switzerland-Canada, in which the founders of hockey whitewashed their opponents 4:0," says Mr. Tretiak. "In the composition of the 'maple leaves' are a lot of young players who have already proved themselves. The strong teams are the USA and Sweden. 'Tre Kronor' will be represented in Minsk by 8 hockey players who are playing in



the NHL. Therefore, do not think that this tournament will be an easy walk to the podium for anyone. Remember, how last year at the World Championship in Sweden and Finland we lost in a quarterfinal to the American national team — 3:8, which was also experienced and young. Many teams equal in strength will fight in Minsk. I hope that new stars will shine at the IIHF World Championship-2014, while veterans will sparkle with their skill. Whatever happens, we will see some interesting hockey."

**Does it mean that this tournament is less important compared to last year's tournament?**

*Not at all, every young hockey player, the participants of the IIHF World Championship-2014 will want*

*to glorify their own name and to be assured of a national team position not for a year, but for several years. Therefore, I am sure that all players will have high speed and give their maximum dedication. I saw Finland, the Czech Republic and Sweden in 'Euro-tour'. These are potentially strong teams with healthy ambitions.*

**In all national teams there are many refusals, including the Russians, how optimal is their claim for IIHF World Championship-2014?**

*In general, this year we did not complain about those who refuse. We have never had them before the Olympic Games, unlike the Swedes and Finns who constantly complain of them. And if we have them, they are necessarily connected with important reasons, for example, traumas. Radulov received a serious trauma, Kovalchuk had an operation and Zaripov has not yet recovered. Therefore, we have not any players who refused because they did not want to play in the national team.*

**Yet the Internet is full of comments about the best goal-scorer of the KHL and the most valuable play-off hockey player, Sergey Mozyakin, not being in the team.**

*We consider this question, but, seemingly, it is justified by his state of*

*health. It simply happened so — his error is that it was necessary for him to arrive to the national team and to see the doctors. There are no problems, because the trainers are adequate and understand everything.*

**But maybe Mozyakin was offended that he was not included in the Olympic team.**

*I doubt it. The national team had other coaching staff in Sochi. What has Bilyaletdinov to do with Znarok?! That was an absolutely different team. I think that we have not offended any hockey player.*

**Has the team managed to prepare and to approach the World Championship being fully armed?**

*We will see. I was at the training in Novogorsk and in Sochi. Both goalkeepers, and forwards and defenders have prepared seriously. Certainly, Switzerland is very serious contender, and the first duel of the group stage will be very difficult for us.*

**It seemed that Russians perceive this team somewhat indifferently, but it was the silver medallist last year.**

*Earlier this was true, but after last year's 'silver' in Sweden and Finland, it is necessary to be fully prepared for the Swedish players.*