

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Bakalářská práce

**The game of Ice Hockey in the Czech Republic:
Understanding Ice Hockey League in the Czech
Republic with interviews and glossary**

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Plzeň 2016

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Fakulta filozofická

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Studijní program Filologie

Studijní obor Cizí jazyky pro komerční praxi

Kombinace angličtina – němčina

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Plzeň 2016

Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

Plzeň, srpen 2016

Na tomto místě bych chtěla poděkovat panu Alokovi Kumarovi, M.A. za pomoc, rady a trpělivost při zpracování této bakalářské práce.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 ICE HOCKEY WORLDWIDE	3
2.1. History of the game of Ice Hockey	3
2.1.1. The game and its development	4
2.2. The game of ice hockey, main characteristics including the number of players and describing of the ice rink	7
2.2.1. Offensive and defensive tactics (checking)	9
2.2.2. Periods and overtime	9
2.2.3. Penalties and officials	10
2.3. Ice hockey official rules	11
2.4. Leagues and championships	11
2.4.1. International leagues	11
2.4.2. IIHF World Championships	12
2.4.3. Ice Hockey at the Winter Olympic Games	12
3 ICE HOCKEY LEAGUE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC	13
3.1. Development of the Czech Ice Hockey League in the Czech Republic	13
3.2. Czech Extraliga	14
3.2.1. Basic information and league format	14
3.2.2. The past and current teams' overview	15
3.2.3. Past champions	15
3.2.4. The most achieved points in the qualification round	16
3.2.5. Average attendance in the qualification round	16
3.2.6. Trophies and awards	16
3.3. First Czech Ice Hockey League	18
3.3.1. Basic information and league format	18
3.3.2. The past and current teams' overview	18
3.3.3. Past Champions	19
3.4. Second Czech Ice Hockey League	19
3.4.1. League format	19

3.4.2. Winners of the league and teams, which moved to the First Czech Ice Hockey League	20
3.5. Regional Ice Hockey Championships in the Czech Republic.....	20
3.5.1. Basic information	20
3.5.2. League format.....	21
4 SALARIES OF THE ICE HOCKEY PLAYERS IN THE CZECH LEAGUES	22
4.1. Salaries of the ice hockey players in the domestic competition	22
5 COMPARISON CZECH EXTRALIGA WITH OTHER LEAGUES FROM EUROPE	24
6 PRACTICAL PART	26
6.1. Interviewee with Pavel Zacha	27
6.2. Interviewee with Lukas Zdrha	29
6.3. Glossary.....	32
6.4. Comments to practical part.....	39
7 CONCLUSION	41
8 ENDNOTES	43
9 BIBLIOGRAPHY	46
10 ABSTRACT	51
11 RESUMÉ.....	52
12 APPENDICES.....	53

1 INTRODUCTION

The author of this thesis chose the ice hockey theme because she greatly enjoys and plays ice hockey herself. Ice hockey is very close to her. She has been playing for nearly 8 years, gaining big successes and is currently a member of the Pilsen student ice hockey team Akademicki Plzen competing in the European University Hockey League (EUHL).

This introduction will describe what the game of ice hockey is and in the following part the author will present the goals and tasks of her thesis.

Ice hockey is one of the most popular team sports in the world. It is a very hard contact sport and is played by two teams on the ice. Each team usually consists of 15 players and 2 goalkeepers. These 15 players are divided into 3 lines, where 3 of them are forwards (left wing, center and right wing) and 2 of them are defensemen (right and left) in each line. So the game is played by 5 players with a goalkeeper on each side, who skate on the ice and try to score a goal against the opposing team with a hard rubber disc called puck. The goalkeeper is for the whole game in the goal and his job is to catch the puck and to make saves. A second goalkeeper is sitting on the bench and he is ready to substitute the first one if he has some problem. Ice hockey is the most popular in the Northern America (Canada and the northern part of United States). There is league called National Hockey League (NHL). This league is the highest achievement some hockey player can gain. The second world popular league is Kontinental Hockey League (KHL). It is played mainly in Russia and includes also some East European countries.

In Canada this game is also considered as the official national winter sport. The formal governing body for ice hockey worldwide called The International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF). [1]

At the end of Introduction the author would like to present the goals and tasks of her thesis.

Theoretical part will be divided into four smaller parts.

The first one will be the get - to - know - you part. There will be a brief description of the game of ice hockey from different points of view. The author will present the history of the game, development, tactics, checking, periods and overtime, penalties, official ice hockey rules as well as leagues, championships and Olympic Games. In the second part the author will deal with the ice hockey league in the Czech Republic. She will describe the basic information, league format, the past and current teams' overview, past champions of each league in the Czech Republic from the highest to lowest one. In the third part she would like to present you something about salaries of Czech ice hockey players. The fourth part is about comparison Czech Extraliga with other leagues from Europe.

A practical part of this thesis will include two interviews and glossary. The first interview is taken from sports internet website and it is with the father of the greatest young hopeful in actual Czech Ice Hockey, Pavel Zacha. The second interview is with the head coach from one of the author's past team, Lukas Zdrha. The interviews deal with the topic of Czech ice hockey league and its current situation.

2 ICE HOCKEY WORLDWIDE

2.1. History of the game of Ice Hockey

Ice hockey evolved from field hockey. These sports are very close to each other. Field hockey was played in Northern Europe for hundreds of years.

The name of ice hockey came from French word „hoquet“, meaning a bent stick. The place for playing ice hockey was used in curling in Scotland in the 18th century. There were around 30 players on each side and the goals were two frozen stones on both ends of the ice. On third March 1875, the first hockey games took place at the Victoria Rink in Montreal. Students from McGill University played there against another, with nine players on each side. The team with captain James Creighton won 2-1.

The modern version of ice hockey has its origin in the rules outlines by James Creighton. These rules were published 1877 in Montreal Gazette. The teams that had nine players on each side were then reduced only to seven players. In the late 1880s, a hockey club showed a reduced number of players at the Montreal Winter Carnival. Everybody also agreed to play with seven players. The players also preferred smaller squads, including one goalkeeper, three forwards, two defencemen and one rover. This format was valid until 1922, when the rover was eliminated.

By 1893, ice hockey was expanded to the United States and one year later was opened the first indoor rink with artificial ice in North America, in Baltimore. This ice rink was used by students from John Hopkins University.

By 1895, also women's ice hockey had gained popularity. Female students at two Canadian universities: University of Toronto and Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, played ice hockey. They played it wearing long skirts. By the early 1900s, hockey became common in some countries in Europe, including the United Kingdom. On May 2002 the sub – committee for The Society for International Hockey Research (SIHR) had a press conference where it was agreed that hockey has neither birthplace nor a birth date. For the first time hockey is considered a game at Victoria Skating Ice Rink on 3rd March 1875. It is the earliest specific game in specific place at a specific time and with some score between two identified hockey teams. [2]

2.1.1. The game and its development

The center of the development of the contemporary ice hockey is considered Montreal because of the first organized indoor game at Victoria Skating Ice Rink on 1875. The game was played between some McGill University students. They were divided into two nine – player teams. The goal posts were eight feet apart and today the goals are only six feet wide.

In 1876 the first game was played in Montreal and it was conducted under rules of "Hokey Association". This Hockey Association came from England and dealt with the organization of field hockey. In 1877 The Gazette published a list of rules, which was comprised of 7 rules based on rules of English Hockey Association. There were, of course, some differences. The only thing, which stayed the same, was the word "ball". As the author said before, the first ice hockey team was founded in 1877 and it consisted of McGill University students. The hockey team called McGill University Hockey Club was followed by the team called Montreal

Victorias, which was founded in 1881. Meanwhile, in 1880, the number of players was changed from nine to seven. The game became more and more popular. That is also the reason why the first “world championship” was organized. It was held during the annual Winter Carnival in Montreal in 1883. The team, which consisted of McGill University students, won the “Carnival Cup”. In that time the game was one hour long and it was divided into thirty – minute long halves. The posts were also called different than nowadays. There were left and right wing, centre, rover, point, cover point and goalkeeper. Currently, we have just left and right wing with the centre as forwards and defensemen with the goalkeeper. But this will be described in the following part of the thesis. In 1885 the Montreal City Hockey League was established.

Now the author would like to present the development of hockey in Europe. The roots of ice hockey in Europe come from England. In 1885 the Oxford University Ice Hockey Club was founded and played the first match against their rival from Cambridge University. The game was played in St. Moritz in Switzerland. Even this game was not documented, we know that match was won by the Oxford University team and the score was 6-0. The first team rosters, statistics and photographs come from 1895. This rivalry was very famous and became the oldest one in history. In 1888 Lord Stanley of Preston, who was the Governor General of Canada, came to the Montreal Winter Carnival tournament and really fell in love with this game. In 1892 he came to know that there is no prize or cup for the best team in Canada and he bought a decorative bowl, which was used as a trophy. This trophy was later called the Stanley Cup. In 1893 the Stanley Cup was firstly awarded to the Montreal Hockey Club. Later it was awarded to the winner team of National Hockey League (NHL). The Ontario Hockey Association (OHA) was organized by Stanley’s son Arthur and Stanley’s daughter Isobel. She was the first women who ever played ice hockey. Later also their sons brought the

game of ice hockey to Europe. So we can say that the Stanley Family was very important in ice hockey development and its history. By 1893 there were more and more teams who wanted to play ice hockey. The problem was that they were usually alone, although there were many leagues across the Canada. In 1900 the players used cricket pads because it was better for goalkeeper's legs and protected him better. Also, they shot only a "scoop" shot, which is nowadays called a wrist shot. Goal nets in goals became more common. Later also were substituted the point and cover posts by the left and right defensemen posts. The people who brought the game of ice hockey to Europe were Lord Stanley's five sons, and it happened in 1895. By the year 1903, a five – team league was founded in Europe and in 1910 there was the first European championship, which was won by Great Britain. In the 20th century, this European league became the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF). The game of ice hockey became more popular for spectators. Current ice rinks were replaced by bigger and larger rinks. Many of the past indoor ice rinks were demolished. Also because of the wooden construction, most of the ice rinks burnt. The most famous and first indoor ice rink Victoria's Rink in Montreal was demolished in 1925. The oldest indoor ice rink, which was built in 1910 in Boston and called Matthew's Arena, is still used until today. The first game of NHL was played there on 1st December 1924. The second oldest arena, which was built in 1968 and continuously operates in the NHL, is Madison Square Garden in New York City. [3]

Professional hockey

Before the author will tell you something about professional ice hockey, it is necessary to say that playing hockey on a professional level means not to be always at home ground and sometimes also a lot of travelling. Many players get better offers in foreign countries. Better offers

mean that the player will get more money for playing. When the player is on a professional level, the priority for him/her is mainly the money. [4]

We could say that professional hockey has existed since the 20th century. The first league which employed professionals was the Western Pennsylvania Hockey League (WPHL) in 1902. Later, in 1904 the first fully professional league called the International Professional Hockey League (IPHL) was formed and it was connected also with teams from Michigan and Ontario. These two leagues, WPHL and IPHL, were the first ones, who began to pay money to players. In the following years, there were more and more professional leagues in Canada, for example, leagues in Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba. [5]

2.2. The game of ice hockey, main characteristics including the number of players and describing of the ice rink

The general characteristics of the game are the same everywhere and they are based on exact rules of the code of play, which means official ice hockey rules. IIHF and NHL cover the two most important codes. Both of the codes are originated from Canadian ice hockey rules dated to the early 20th century. [6]

As was mentioned in the beginning, normally there are six players on each side, where one of them is a goalkeeper in the goal. The remaining 5 players skate up and down on the ice rink to score goals by shooting a hard vulcanized rubber disc, called a puck, into the opponent's goal. The puck is black color, 1 inch (25mm) thick, 3 inches (76mm) in diameter and weighs between 5, 5 till 6 ounces (156 till 170g). First pucks were made from wood and later they were substituted by rubber. The first round puck was used in the 1880s by the Victoria Hockey Club in Montreal. The opponent's goal is placed on opposite ends of the rink. [7]

Players may direct the puck with any part of their body. Players also cannot hold the puck in their hands and it is forbidden to use their hands to pass the puck to their teammates. Even in the defensive zone. It is also forbidden to kick the puck into the opponent's goal or score by throwing the puck with their hands.

The game of ice hockey is an "off - side" game. It means that passes in the forward direction are allowed. But in the past, in the 1930s, the ice hockey was an on - side game, which means that there were allowed only passes in the backward direction. With the arrival of these offside rules, the ice hockey became more of a team sport. The forward positions are divided into a centre and two wingers, a left wing and a right wing. Three forwards and two defenders are often playing together in one line. Usually the same three forward and two defenders always play together. The defenders usually stay together as a pair for the whole season because they have to understand each other very well. One line cannot play a whole game, so usually after 30 seconds it comes to a line change. It is also necessary to say that every team has special lines for the shorthanded or power play. The changing of lines is possible whenever the players want. [8]

Now let's say something about the ice hockey rink. The rink has a rectangular shape with rounded corners and surrounded by a wall, which is approximately 40 - 48 inches (1m) high. This wall is called "the boards". There are two sizes of ice hockey rinks. First one is used in North America and it is called "North American" and the second one is used everywhere all over the world and it is called "International". As the author mentioned before, the first ice hockey rink was the Victoria Skating Rink in Montreal. The rink's size of the surface was 204 feet (62m) x 80 feet (24m). The Northern American type of ice hockey rink is very similar. It is measured 200 feet (61m) x 85 feet (26m). This type follows the specifications of NHL played in North America. The distance from board

to the nearest goal line is 11 feet (3, 4m). The International type of ice hockey rink follows the specifications of the IIHF. We could say that this type is very similar. The only thing which is different is that International type is much wider (100 feet - 30, 5m). The nearest goal line is situated 13 feet (4m). Till today also the attacking zone has expanded. The distance between the goal line and the blue line is 64 feet (20m) in North American type and 57 feet (17, 3m) in International type (see below appendix 1). [9]

2.2.1. Offensive and defensive tactics (checking)

In ice hockey there are several different tactics, which are of course very different from each other. Some of these tactics are legal and they could be used in playing and some of them are forbidden at all. If the players use some forbidden tactic, they are always penalized. The author will deal only with the legal ones. [10]

One of the most important offensive tactic or strategy is called forecheck or forechecking. To forecheck means the act when you attack the opponents in their defensive zone.

Checking belongs to the one of the most important defensive tactics. Checking means to attempt to remove the opponent from the play and take the puck from him/her.

2.2.2. Periods and overtime

A professional or mostly also the amateur ice hockey game is divided into three periods of twenty minutes each. The time is running

only when the puck is played, that is called that players play “net” time. Only the children’s leagues or some recreational leagues play also three periods long game but the difference is that every period is shorter. It could be around 15 minutes only.

For league standings when the team wins in normal time, meaning three periods, it takes 3 points. If the team loses in normal time, it means no points of course. When the team wins in overtime or after a penalty shootout, it takes 2 points. If the team loses in overtime or after a penalty shootout, it takes 1 point of a tied game. [11]

2.2.3. Penalties and officials

The game of ice hockey has very strict rules. When the player does not play fair and with fouls, he/she is always penalized. This player, who breaks the rules, is sent to the place off the ice which is called the “penalty box”. The player spends there a period of time. The team which is one player missing plays “short - handed” (4 players on the ice with goalkeeper or sometimes also 3 players only), while the opponent team play the “power play” (power play 5 players on 4 players or also on 3 players).

There are several types of penalties. Minor penalties are two minutes long, major penalties are five minutes long.

A two - minute minor penalty can get a player for, for example, “tripping”, “elbowing”, “roughing”, “high sticking”, “delay of the game”, “hooking”, “slashing”, and so on.

Every typical game of ice hockey consists of 4 officials on the ice. They know very well the ice hockey rules and they referee the game. Normally two of them are linesmen, who are responsible for looking for

the “offside”, “icing” and they do the faceoffs. The other two officials called referees. They wear orange stripes on their arms so the players recognized them well. Their task is to call goals and decide about all other penalties. Other very important persons, which help off - ice are goal judges, time keepers and official scorers. [12]

2.3. Ice hockey official rules

With the ice hockey development all over the world there was a need for unification of the rules and sensible interpretation of them to improve the growth of the game.

As it was mentioned several times before, the sport of ice hockey is governed by many organizations but the most important ones are IIHF and NHL. These two organizations have their own rule books. The first one, the IIHF rule book, is used worldwide for all amateur and professional hockey leagues. The second one, the NHL’s rule book, is based on North American professional leagues, so it is mainly for them only. See below in appendix 2 quotations of the rules, firstly from the IIHF and secondly from the NHL. [13]

2.4. Leagues and championships

2.4.1. International leagues

The most famous and the oldest still operating ice hockey league is called the NHL (National Hockey League). It is specific with the Stanley Cup trophy. In this league are clubs from the United States and Canada. The next very famous hockey league called KHL. It is played in Eurasia

and it is the successor of the Russian Super League and the Soviet League. Next international league in Asia called Asia League, which includes teams from China, Japan, South Korea and the Russian Far East. See below Appendix 3 – table 1, where are stated leagues by countries in Europe. [14] [15]

2.4.2. IIHF World Championships

For the national teams of all countries IIHF World Championships are organized every year. This championship is annual and official. It is not held only during years of the Olympic Games. There are many categories of men's and women's ice hockey, for example, the World Championship, the Worlds Women's Championship, the World U20 Championship, the World U18 Championship, the World Women's U18 Championship and much more. The "U20" or "U18" mean categories limited with age "under 20 years old" or "under 18 years old". [16]

2.4.3. Ice Hockey at the Winter Olympic Games

Firstly ice hockey was played at the Summer Olympic Games in 1920. Then it was decided that this sport should be more likely included at the Winter Olympic Games. This sport moved there. In 1924 Olympic Games were held in Chamonix, France and since that time ice hockey is an official part of the Winter Olympic Games. [17]

3 ICE HOCKEY LEAGUE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

3.1. Development of the Czech Ice Hockey League in the Czech Republic

The predecessor of the Czech Extraliga was the Czechoslovak First Ice Hockey League, which was established in 1936 in Czechoslovakia. It was founded, because people wanted some regular competition among the best ice hockey teams in the Czech and the Slovak Republic. The beginnings of this league were quite difficult and there were several problems. The league was not playing a regular schedule in the beginning, as they planned and most of the games were played outside on natural ice rinks. The other problem was that the league season often did not come to an official end, with clearly decided winners. The format of league play was that the teams played only two times with each other team, one time at the home ice rink and the second time as visitors.

The first league was not certainly played earlier than in 1937. Since the very first beginning, the league had fulfilled a double role. In the country it has become the most authoritative sports competition, and at the same time offered entertainment to thousands of fans. The Czechoslovak league was stopped only during the Second World War. That is why the Bohemian - Moravian Hockey League and Slovak League was played in Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. We can say that in that time many new ice rinks were built and it has increased the number of ice hockey matches in league competition. The last official season was 1950/1960, when only two games were played by each team. The next seasons brought changes. In 1967/1968 the number of officials was changed. Since that time there were three officials, two linesmen and one referee on the ice. The next changes came between years 1970 - 1982,

when a play-off system was used for the first time (it was not used for a long time) and the overtime system with a penalty shootout. It means that games could not end with a tied score.

The most frequent champions were called LTC Prague (11 titles), Ruda hvezda (ZKL) Brno (11 titles), Dukla Jihlava (12 titles) and SONP Poldi Kladno (6 titles).

Since the 1993/1994 season two new ice hockey leagues were established, Czech Extraliga and Slovak Extraliga. [18] [19]

3.2 Czech Extraliga

3.2.1. Basic information and league format

The Czech Extraliga is the current highest level of men's professional ice hockey in the Czech Republic. The director of Czech Extraliga is Josef Reznicek.

In the 2014/2015 season, a total of 52 qualification rounds were played from September till February. Following the qualification was a play-off. A preliminary round of play-off is played, for teams ranking 7th to 10th place. Other teams, ranked 1st to 6th place, go straight to the regular play-off. The preliminary round is played on the format of one team winning 3 games. Then, when the regular play-off begins, the 1st placed team plays against the 8th placed team, 2nd placed team against the 7th placed team, 3rd placed team against the 6th placed team and so on. The regular play-off is played on the format of 4 winning games. The four winning teams go to the semi-finals and then two winning teams of semi-finals go to the final series. The teams who were placed from 11th to 14th place play, after qualification round, play-out. These last four

teams play together with each other for two times (6 rounds). Two teams, which end in the last two places, play with the best two teams from First Czech Ice Hockey League. It is played 4 - rounds games together with each other (in total 12 rounds). Teams, which are afterwards placed on the first and second place, go for the next season to the Czech Extraliga. [20]

3.2.2. The past and current teams' overview

Here the author would like to tell you something about the past and current teams, which were/are participating in the Czech Extraliga. She drew up table (see Appendix 4 - table 2), where you can see which teams were or still are in the Czech Extraliga and how many seasons played in it. Current teams are written in bold print. Teams such as Pardubice, Plzen or Sparta Praha have the highest number of played seasons (22 seasons). On the other hand, teams such as Usti nad Labem or Jindrichuv Hradec have the lowest number of played seasons (1 season). [21]

3.2.3. Past champions

For this table see Appendix 5 – table 3. Here you can see an overview of winners of the league, losing finalists and also winners of the qualification round from complete beginning of Czech Extraliga. The most successful teams were definitely Vsetin with 6 titles and Sparta Praha with 4 titles. The most repeated losing finalists were Zlin and Vitkovice with 4 lost final games. [22]

3.2.4. The most achieved points in the qualification round

For this table see Appendix 6 – table 4. It shows the highest number of achieved game points in the qualification round together with the team, which achieved that and in which season it was. [23]

3.2.5. Average attendance in the qualification round

Attendance means how many visitors come to support their teams. The author can state that the average attendance ranging between 4 000 – 5 000 of visitors. The highest average attendance was in season 2009/10 with 5 240 visitors and the lowest was in season 2003/04 with 4 209 visitors. See Appendix 7 – table 5. [24]

3.2.6. Trophies and awards

In the Czech Ice Hockey League there are many trophies and awards. The author will mention only some of them.

T. G. Masaryk Cup

It has been awarded since the 1999/2000 season to the team winning the Czech Extraliga. This trophy is awarded by the Czech Ice Hockey Association.

Award for The best hockey player of the whole season

This is an individual player award sponsored by BPA Sport Marketing and it is awarded to the best hockey player of the season by

the BP. Fans decide to whom this award should be delivered by voting on the internet, and the player receiving the most votes wins the competition.

Top Scorer of the Czech Extraliga Award

This award is annually presented to the player who shoots the most goals in the season. The award is sponsored and given by newspapers Denik Sport. Martin Ruzicka from HC Ocelari Trinec with 40 goals from 2012/2013 season is the record holder.

Best defender of the Czech Extraliga Award

This award is the best defender of the whole season. The award is sponsored and given by Denik Blesk.

Best goalkeeper of the Czech Extraliga Award

We could say that this award is the oldest in the history of Czech and Czechoslovakian ice hockey. It was first given in the Czechoslovak First Ice Hockey League. It is sponsored and awarded by Denik Pravo.

Best coach of the Czech Extraliga Award

This is the best coach of the whole season. It is sponsored and presented by Lidove noviny.

Fair - play of the Czech Extraliga Award

This award is for the player, who was recognized for the fairest play in the whole season. It is sponsored and delivered by Ceska tiskova kancelar. [25]

3.3. First Czech Ice Hockey League

3.3.1. Basic information and league format

The first Czech Ice Hockey League is the second highest league in the Czech Republic. It was formed in the same year as Czech Extraliga in 1993 and it is also a professional league.

In the 2014/2015 season 14 participants were part of this league. In regular season qualification rounds, all teams play each other, two at their home ice rinks and two as visitors, making 52 rounds in the season. Afterwards the best 6 teams go directly to play - off quarterfinals. Teams, who end their qualification round on 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th place, will play a preliminary round of play - offs. It is played on the first to gain three winning games. Quarterfinals and semifinals are played on a four winning games series. The two winning teams of the First Czech League will play together with the two last teams of Czech Extraliga. This part is played only between these four teams. All teams play with each other two times at their home rinks and two times as visitors. The last team of this First Czech League goes down directly to the Second Czech League. [26]

3.3.2. The past and current teams' overview

Here the author would like to tell you something about the past and current teams, which were/are participating in the First Czech Ice Hockey League. For the table see Appendix 8 - table 6, where are the teams, which were or still are in the First Czech Ice Hockey League and how many seasons played in it. Current teams are written in bold print. Teams such as Usti nad Labem, Trebic or Kadan have the highest number of played seasons (18, 18 and 17 seasons). On the other hand, teams such

as Karvina or Melnik have the lowest number of played seasons (1 season). [27]

3.3.3. Past Champions

For this table see Appendix 9 – table 7. Here you can see an overview of winners of the league and promotion to the Czech Extraliga from the complete beginning of First Czech Ice Hockey League. [28]

3.4. Second Czech Ice Hockey League

This league is the third highest league in the Czech Republic and it is also the last one, where you can find professional players. They are playing here together with some amateurs, who are playing it just for fun and they are good enough for this level. That is the reason, why this league is called semiprofessional. [29]

3.4.1. League format

Since the season 2009/2010 the league format was changed and the league was divided into three groups. It was very comfortable for players to play league in three groups. It did not require a lot of travelling and overall it was better organized. Although, everything went fine, the league format was still changed again with the season 2014/2015 and it is topical till today. The league has now two groups. First is called Group East and second is called Group West. The winners of both groups play against each other for the promotion to the First Czech Ice Hockey

League. On the other hand, the last teams go down to their relevant Regional Czech Ice Hockey Leagues. [30]

3.4.2. Winners of the league and teams, which moved to the First Czech Ice Hockey League

For this table see Appendix 10 – table 8. There are stated teams, which moved to the First Czech Ice Hockey League from the Second Czech Ice Hockey League. The teams are written in bold print. [31]

3.5. Regional Ice Hockey Championships in the Czech Republic

3.5.1. Basic information

The regional Ice Hockey Championships were established in 1954 and they are divided into two parts. The first part is Regional Leagues, which is considered as the fourth highest level of men's ice hockey and the second part is Regional Competitions, known as the fifth highest level. These two levels of ice hockey are fully amateur. It means that players are not under contracts, they do not get any money for participating in a game and usually play for fun when they have free time. The author would say that it is good for some older players, who could play in the past on some good levels and now they want to play hockey simply for fun. Also it could be for players, who started to play ice hockey, when they were older and they are not good enough to play some leagues. [32]

3.5.2. League format

Also it should be mentioned that the main difference between “League” and “Competition”. As was said before, teams from the league can move to the Second Czech Ice Hockey League. The “League” could be considered as more professional teams. Likewise every team has still some set of rules, which have to be obeyed. Usually they have around two or three practices a week and they work together as one team with a coach. On the other hand, the team in “Competition” is free. Usually they have no coach and no practices and one game a week is for them like a meeting and having fun on the ice. We could say that players from Regional Competition treat hockey as their hobby.

4 SALARIES OF THE ICE HOCKEY PLAYERS IN THE CZECH LEAGUES

Especially in the Czech Republic it is very hard to find out the real amount of salaries of some athletes, so we could say that it is not public. That is also the reason, why all amounts of salaries will be here very approximate.

We start to deal with salaries in general. If you would be an excellent ice hockey player, like one in a million, you will be a member of the national team, have some participations in the national team and you will be a man (because a woman can never earn huge money in ice hockey) you could earn around 900, 000 Crowns. [33]

4.1. Salaries of the ice hockey players in the domestic competition

An average hockey player in the First Czech Ice Hockey League can have an average salary 20 000 - 40 000 Crowns per month. An average player in the Czech Extraliga earns around 100 000 - 130 000 Crowns per month. If the player of Czech Extraliga is also a member of the Czech National Team and he is considered to be a “star”, his average salary per month is, of course, higher - 200 000 - 330 000 Crowns. [34]

Some players from Czech Extraliga are for example Karel Pilar from HC Sparta Praha with average salary 400 000 Crowns per month or Martin Ruzicka from HC Ocelari Trinec with average salary 300 000 Crowns per month. [35]

Between the TOP 5 the highest - paid Czech players, which are not competing in the Czech Extraliga, belong for example Patrik Elias with average salary 5 694 000 Crowns per month or David Krejci with average salary 4 983 000 Crowns per month. These players play in NHL. [36]

5 COMPARISON CZECH EXTRALIGA WITH OTHER LEAGUES FROM EUROPE

Here, the author of this thesis would like to compare eight European TOP leagues from many points of view. [37]

1. KHL - mainly Russian but it also includes some teams from Finland, Croatia, Slovakia, Kazakhstan, Latvia and Belarus
2. Swedish Hockey League - Sweden
3. Liiga - Finland
4. Deutsche Eishockey Liga - Germany
5. National League A - Switzerland
6. Erste Bank Eishockey Liga (EBEL) - Austria, Slovenia, Italy, Hungary, Czech Republic
7. Czech Extraliga - Czech Republic
8. Slovak Extraliga - Slovakia

In Appendix 11 there are tables, which will mention: Goals per game, Teams with most goals scored per game, Teams with most goals against per game, Teams with fewest goals scored per game, Teams with fewest goals against per game, League leaders - % of points won, Last placed teams - % of points won, Difference between best and worst team, Spectators per game, Teams with most spectators per game, Teams with fewest spectators per game, Penalty minutes per game, Teams with most penalty minutes per game, Teams with fewest penalty minutes per game, % of games that go to overtime, Number of players used per team.

In the tables the first team is the best one, and then follow the placement of the Czech Extraliga or Czech team and the last one (the third one) will be the worst team from the 8 competitors. [38]

6 PRACTICAL PART

For this practical part was chosen to do two interviews with a glossary, which were related to the topic of Czech Ice Hockey. Before anything else the author would like to briefly introduce you both persons with who are made the interviews.

The first one is with Pavel Zacha. He is the father of the greatest young hopeful in actual Czech Ice Hockey and he is well - known because of his very unusual upbringing of his son.

The second one is with a coach and his name is Lukas Zdrha. Currently he is the coach of team SHC Klatovy, which is competing in the Second Czech Ice Hockey League.

The questions for the interview were chosen as best as possible related to the topic. The first interview with Pavel Zacha is taken from sports internet website including questions for example about youth hockey, financial system of Czech ice hockey or Czech Ice hockey coaches. In the second interview author asked about coach's ambition in his ice hockey carrier, what he would change in the actual situation of Czech ice hockey, his opinion on strengths and weaknesses in Czech ice hockey, what he thinks about level and quality of Czech ice hockey and his comparison with European leagues, what he knows about players salaries and also his opinion on possible success of Czech ice hockey national team at forthcoming IIHF World Championship in the Czech Republic. Overall the interview with the coach consists of 6 questions.

6.1. Interviewee with Pavel Zacha

Q1: What is the main problem of Czech ice hockey?

Pavel Zacha: The problem is that the majority of all Czech ice hockey teams have changed. During the last 20 years stopped to work for the development of ice hockey in given region, for the quality upbringing of youth and for the upbringing of players for National team or NHL.

Q2: How does it show?

Pavel Zacha: The children do not have attractive tournaments anymore and also National championships were cancelled. There are not so many games played and that is very wrong, because the games are the most entertaining for children and their parents. The seven years old children play nowadays only once in a month or in a three weeks.

Q3: What more does the Czech ice hockey miss?

Pavel Zacha: Coaches and functionaries, who loved their jobs and did it only with their heart. They did not disappear completely, but they are in the minority. Another problem is that is not allowed to children go away from their teams to the new ones.

Q4: What do you think about financial system?

Pavel Zacha: Financing of Czech ice hockey is definitely not balanced. In Czech Extraliga and in First Czech Ice Hockey League are average players overpaid. Then only a very small part of the whole amount is available for youth. Earned millions of Crowns go directly from youth to adult hockey and youth is just an unpleasant and difficult problem. The functionaries in teams do not know how to handle with that and they do not think of the future.

Q5: Would help to improve the quality with coming of former famous players to youth teams in the roles of coaches?

Pavel Zacha: The coming of players' legends into teams and into ice hockey overall could bring the revival. I personally met some of them and unfortunately they were the worst ice hockey coaches ever. Some of them missed the motivation for quality work or they wanted to work for the huge amount of money only with adults and working with youth was for them degrading. There are also some other risks. For example that they will not want to educate themselves and their teaching will be based only on their own experiences from youth. Education of coaches is a problem here. Nobody is interested in Czech coaches in the world. The results of their work are without respect and appreciation. Only the part of Czech youth coaches or specialists in skills have really top level. Mostly they are already in foreign countries, where are more respectable.

Q6: The good player does not mean a good coach in the future.

Pavel Zacha: To be a player and a coach is the very big difference. Coaching is a mission. If the player would like to become a coach, he needs more than talent. He needs to be as human very developed and abundant. From former player can be an excellent coach only if he really wants to be and if he feels that it is his cup of tea. It is very disastrous if the former player sees in coaching only his job and never gives to it more than it is necessary.

Q7: What roles have parents in Czech ice hockey?

Pavel Zacha: Parents are the most important power and the biggest investors in Czech ice hockey. Without them would be our hockey extinct. It is necessary to get primarily the parents of little children, because these children are dependent on them. Important is to communicate with parents and motivate them.

This interview is the most important one in the practical part. Father Pavel Zacha is very experienced in actual Czech ice hockey situation and has good and truthful opinions. Nevertheless he is criticized for what he says or what he thinks. The author agrees with him absolutely in everything and that is also one of the reasons, why this interview was chosen. Very true is that all Czech ice hockey teams have changed and stopped to do something for improvement or development. If the team wants to develop, it misses usually educated coaches on good level. Another problem is that finance are missing. The result is that the children cannot play games or participate at international tournaments.

6.2. Interviewee with Lukas Zdrha

Q1: You are a coach of the team in the Second Czech Ice Hockey League. How are your ambitions in Czech ice hockey?

Lukas Zdrha: My ambition is to focus on myself and reach the highest level of coaching which I am able to reach.

Q2: If given the opportunity, what would you change in the actual Czech ice hockey (changes for improvement)?

Lukas Zdrha: It would deal with youth hockey. The coaches of youth hockey should be better educated and their treatment with youth should be controlled from Czech Ice Hockey Association.

Q3: Where are, in your opinion, the strengths and weaknesses in Czech ice hockey?

Lukas Zdrha: If we would talk about the players themselves, there are still some creative ones and this is very important for team and league. Czech players are able to make a maximum effort and win the game with the

flawless observance of tactics. On the other side, if we would talk about weaknesses, I see them in moral effort in practice process and also in psychological resistance. This is the reason why Czech players much fewer break through in European leagues and primarily in overseas National Hockey League. I am persuaded that this problem begins with the upbringing. There are so many young players who have their own way already “prepared” from parents. The players run into the first hard psychological situation and suddenly they do not know how to handle it.

Q4: What do you think about level and quality of competition in the Czech ice hockey league? Could you compare it with other European leagues (Swedish, German or Swiss)?

Lukas Zdrha: Czech Extraliga keeps up still very high. Recently all European leagues are in the performance very comparable. It is caused by finances. The quality, for example, of Swiss league still grows because of the buying of players from foreign countries.

Q5: What is your knowledge in regards to the salaries of Czech players or coaches? If yes, could you tell me, please, what do you think about them? Are some players overpaid?

Lukas Zdrha: I do not know anything about particular numbers so I cannot state my opinion here.

Q6: Do you think that Czech ice hockey national team can be successful at forthcoming IIHF World Championship in the Czech Republic?

Lukas Zdrha: Success at the IIHF World Championship is influenced by many factors. It is always important which players create the team. It depends on how many players play in that time Stanley Cup Play - Offs so which players from National Hockey League cannot participate in the tournament. In view of the fact that the tournament takes place in the Czech Republic, I think many players will do their best to come. Our team

could be very strong. This tournament is very specific one and it is really very hard and complicated to guess the result of Czech national team, however I would categorize our national team between the favorites.

The goal of this interview was to get the information about actual situation of Czech ice hockey and its strengths and weaknesses. Author's questions dealt also with level and quality of Czech ice hockey league. Of course, information in this interview are little bit different than in the first one, because this coach is still very young and he is not experienced in actual Czech ice hockey as the father, who needed to overcome all bad habits and difficulties with upbringing of his son.

The author agrees for example with answer on question 4 in interview. The Czech Extraliga keeps up still very high and the reason is that ice hockey is faster and more rectilinear. Players shoot more times and from every position in attacking zone. These aspects are good also for development of Czech Ice Hockey National Team.

6.3. Glossary

The Glossary was compiled for better understanding to the topic of Ice hockey in the Czech Republic. There are words and collocations from the field of ice hockey or words and collocations directly connected with this topic. The author did this glossary because sometimes is not easy to understand special ice hockey words and collocations. It could help also to laymen to orientate better in this field and correctly understand to it.

Note: Special ice hockey words and collocations are written in bold print.

1) Abundant	Vnitřně bohatý (o člověku) (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
2) Actual situation in Czech ice hockey	Aktuální situace českého hokeje (Author's own translation)
3) Adult hockey	Dospělý hokej (Author's own translation)
4) Ambition	Ambice (Author's own translation)
5) Appreciation	Uznání (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
6) Attack	Útočit (Author's own translation)
7) Average player	Průměrný hráč (Author's own translation)
8) Balance	Vyvážený (Author's own translation)
9) Board	Mantinel (Author's own translation)
10) Buying of players	Nakupování hráčů (Author's own translation)
11) Carrier	Kariéra (Author's own translation)
12) Coach	Trenér (Author's own translation)
13) Coaching	Trénování (Author's own translation)

	translation)
14) Competition	Soutěž (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
15) Creative	Kreativní (Author's own translation)
16) Czech coaches	Čeští trenéři (Author's own translation)
17) Czech Extraliga	Česká Extraliga (Author's own translation)
18) Czech Ice Hockey Association	Český svaz ledního hokeje (Author's own translation)
19) Czech players	Čeští hráči (Author's own translation)
20) Czech youth coaches	Čeští trenéři mládeže (Author's own translation)
21) Defend	Bránit (Author's own translation)
22) Defenseman	Obránce (Author's own translation)
23) Degrading	Ponižující (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
24) Development of ice hockey	Rozvoj ledního hokeje (Author's own translation)
25) Disastrous	Katastrofální (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
26) Education of coaches	Vzdělávání trenérů (Author's own translation)
27) Effort	Úsilí (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
28) Entertaining	Zábavný (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
29) European Leagues	Evropské ligy (Author's own translation)

30) Extinct	Zaniklý (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
31) Favorite	Favorit (Author's own translation)
32) Finance	Finance (Author's own translation)
33) First Czech Ice Hockey League	1. česká hokejová liga (Author's own translation)
34) Flawless observance of tactics	Bezchybné dodržování taktiky (Author's own translation)
35) Forbidden	Zakázaný (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
36) Former famous player	Bývalý slavný hráč (Author's own translation)
37) Forthcoming	Nadcházející (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
38) Forward	Útočník (Author's own translation)
39) Foul	Faul (Author's own translation)
40) Functionaries	Funkcionáři (Author's own translation)
41) Goal net	Branková síť (Author's own translation)
42) Goalkeeper	Brankář (Author's own translation)
43) Huge amount of money	Velká částka peněz (Author's own translation)
44) Ice hockey	Lední hokej (Author's own translation)
45) Ice hockey equipment	Hokejová výstroj (Author's own translation)
46) Ice hockey rink	Zimní stadion (Author's own translation)
47) International Ice Hockey	Mezinárodní hokejová federace

Federation (IIHF)	(Author's own translation)
48) League	Liga (Author's own translation)
49) Level and quality of Czech ice hockey	Úroveň a kvalita českého hokeje (Author's own translation)
50) Majority of all Czech ice hockey teams	Většina českých hokejových klubů (Author's own translation)
51) Minority	Menšina (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
52) Mission	Poslání (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
53) Moral effort	Morální úsilí (Author's own translation)
54) Motivation	Motivace (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
55) National championship	Mistrovství republiky (Author's own translation)
56) National Hockey League (NHL)	Národní hokejová liga (NHL) (Author's own translation)
57) National team	Národní tým (Author's own translation)
58) NHL lockout	Výluka v NHL (Author's own translation)
59) Official	Rozhodčí (Author's own translation)
60) Olympic Games	Olympijské hry (Author's own translation)
61) Overpay	Přeplatit (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
62) Overseas	Zámořský (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)

63) Own experiences	Vlastní zkušenosti (Author's own translation)
64) Penalty box	Trestná lavice (Author's own translation)
65) Performance	Výkonnost (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
66) Player	Hráč (Author's own translation)
67) Players' legends	Hráčské legendy (Author's own translation)
68) Players' salaries	Platy hráčů (Author's own translation)
69) Power	Síla (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
70) Power play	Přesilová hra (Author's own translation)
71) Practice process	Tréninkový process (Author's own translation)
72) Predecessor	Předchůdce (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
73) Primarily	Především (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
74) Professional hockey	Profesionální hokej (Author's own translation)
75) Psychological resistance	Psychická odolnost (Author's own translation)
76) Puck	Puk (Author's own translation)
77) Quality work	Kvalitní práce (Author's own translation)
78) Respect	Respekt (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)

79) Respectable	Úctyhodný (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
80) Result	Výsledek (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
81) Revival	Oživení (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
82) Rules	Pravidla (Author's own translation)
83) Season	Sezóna (Author's own translation)
84) Second Czech Ice Hockey League	2. česká hokejová liga (Author's own translation)
85) Short handed	Oslabení (Author's own translation)
86) Specialists in skills	Specialisté na dovednosti (Author's own translation)
87) Stanley Cup Play - Offs	Play - off Stanleyova poháru (Author's own translation)
88) Stick	Hokejka (Author's own translation)
89) Strengths and weaknesses	Silné a slabé stránky (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
90) Successor	Nástupce (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
91) Swiss league	Švýcarská liga (Author's own translation)
92) Talent	Talent (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
93) Team	Tým (Author's own translation)
94) Team roster	Soupiska týmu (Author's own translation)
95) Teammate	Spoluhráč (Author's own translation)
96) The biggest investors	Největší investoři (Author's own translation)

	translation)
97) Tied game	Remíza (Author's own translation)
98) To communicate	Komunikovat (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
99) To motivate	Motivovat (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
100) Tournament	Turnaj (Author's own translation)
101) Upbringing	Výchova (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
102) Very comparable	Velmi srovnatelný (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
103) Very developed	Velmi rozvinutý (Translation with Oxford studijní slovník)
104) World Championship	Mistrovství světa (Author's own translation)
105) Young players	Mladí hráči (Author's own translation)
106) Youth hockey	Mládežnický hokej (Author's own translation)

6.4. Comments to practical part

As was said in the beginning of this practical part, the task was to do two interviews with glossary. Now the author would like to tell you some pieces of knowledge out of these two interviews and also point of view out of her own experiences. Here will be mentioned the three weightiest problems.

The first problem, in which the father and the coach came to an agreement, was the education of coaches. According also to author, this is really very big problem in Czech ice hockey. Definitely it is necessary that the better education of the coaches should be enabled. The reason, why they are not educated is that they do not want to educate themselves. Their style and performance of coaching is unfortunately based only on their own experiences and they do not accept some other changes in it. The worst thing is that they think they do it in the best way. That is the reason, why they should be controlled from Czech Ice Hockey Association. The result of this problem is that nobody in foreign countries, where ice hockey is played, is interested in Czech coaches. They are not helpful and interesting for some cooperation.

The second problem is certainly the financial situation of Czech ice hockey. The situation is not good at all and system is not balanced. According to interview with Pavel Zacha, the average players in the Czech Extraliga and in the First Czech Ice Hockey League are overpaid and it is useless. Unfortunately Lukas Zdrha from another interview does not know anything about particular numbers so he cannot state his opinion here. On the other hand he knows that quality and level of each league is caused by finance and if the team has more finances then it gets better and better because of buying of players from foreign countries. Another difficult thing is that for youth hockey is available only

very small part of whole amount. According to author's experiences nobody wants to invest money in it, because they think that it makes no sense and it is only wasting of money. Then all money goes only to adult hockey and that is very wrong because there is no quality upbringing and then youth hockey cannot develop. The functionaries in all teams also do not know how to handle with huge amounts of money and usually they do not think on the potential future development.

Another mentioned problem is that youth hockey overall keeps very low level in last few years. Mainly it is caused by not so many played games by children. The more games children play, the higher level and development in ice hockey they can achieve. In Czech ice hockey there are very creative players and the events like National Championships or some international tournaments are entertaining for them and develop them a lot.

7 CONCLUSION

Firstly it is very necessary to say what the objective of this bachelor thesis was. For this thesis, it was very important to find the right sources. The author has to say that she worked more with internet sources because in the books are not as accurate as far as actual information statistics goes. All foreordained goals and tasks of this thesis were fulfilled.

In the first part of this thesis author described ice hockey worldwide. It dealt with the history of the game, development, tactics, checking, periods and overtime, penalties, official ice hockey rules and as well as leagues, Olympic Games and championships worldwide. This part should introduce you the game of ice hockey from different points of view.

In the second part the author presented the ice hockey league in the Czech Republic. There were presented some basic information about Czech ice hockey league, development of Czech ice hockey league and partition of Czech league. There is, of course, information on each league in the Czech Republic from the highest to lowest one. The most of all information were stated in the chapter where the Czech Extraliga is. There you can read about basic information, league format, the past and current teams' overview, past champions, trophies and awards and much more.

In the third part the author dealt with the topic Salaries of the ice hockey players in the Czech Republic. She described there some approximate salaries and compared salaries of top players and average players. There are also mentioned TOP 5 the highest - paid Czech players and the league in which they earned the money.

The fourth part is about comparison Czech Extraliga with other leagues from Europe. This topic presented comparison by numbers and statistics.

Last part of this bachelor thesis is a practical part. For this topic was really necessary to do it. As a practical part the author chose to do two interviews and glossary. The first interview was taken from sports internet website and it was with the father of the greatest young hopeful in actual Czech Ice Hockey, Pavel Zacha. The second interview was with the head coach from one of the author's past team, Lukas Zdrha. He answered the author's questions about Czech ice hockey league and its current situation. Then there is glossary with words and collocations, which deal with the topic and finally there are also comments to practical part.

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10 ABSTRACT

The topic of this bachelor thesis is called The game of Ice Hockey in the Czech Republic: Understanding Ice Hockey League in the Czech Republic with interviews and glossary.

The thesis deals with the description of the game of ice hockey worldwide but most of it is devoted to ice hockey league in the Czech Republic and its understanding from different points of view, which was also the task and goal of this bachelor thesis.

The theoretical part of this thesis is divided into four smaller parts. The first one is get - to - know - you part. Before reading this thesis is very important to know some basic information about the game of ice hockey. Here are presented for example the history and development of the game, the description of the ice rink, the official ice hockey rules, and much more. The second part of this thesis is about Czech ice hockey. It is described from different points of view including some statistical tables in appendices. The third part deals with salaries of Czech ice hockey players and the fourth with comparison Czech Extraliga with other European leagues.

The practical part of this bachelor thesis includes two interviews and glossary. The first interview is taken from sports internet website and it is with father of the greatest young hopeful in actual Czech Ice Hockey, Pavel Zacha. The second interview is with the head coach from one of the author's past team, Lukas Zdrha. The interviews deal with the topic of Czech ice hockey league and its current situation.

11 RESUMÉ

Téma této bakalářské práce se nazývá Lední hokej v České Republice: porozumění české hokejové lize.

Tato práce je jak o hokeji celosvětově, tak také o české hokejové lize. Ovšem největší část práce je věnována právě české hokejové lize a jejímu porozumění z mnoha různých úhlů pohledu, což bylo také cílem této práce.

Autor rozdělil práci na dvě části, na teoretickou a na praktickou. Teoretická část se dělí na další čtyři menší části. První z nich je víceméně část, která Vás s hokejem seznámí. Je zde uvedeno například něco o historii a rozvoji ledního hokeje, popisu ledové plochy, oficiálních hokejových pravidlech a o mnoho dalším. Ve druhé části této práce se autor zaměřuje už na samotné porozumění české hokejové lize. Je popsáno z mnoha různých úhlů pohledu a zahrnuje také statistické tabulky v příloze. Třetí část této práce se zabývá platy českých hokejových hráčů a v poslední, čtvrté, části je uvedeno porovnání české hokejové ligy s ostatními evropskými ligami.

Praktická část této práce zahrnuje dva rozhovory a glosář. První rozhovor je ze sportovní webové stránky a je s Pavlem Zachou, což je otec aktuálně největší české hokejové naděje. Druhý rozhovor je s jedním z bývalých hokejových trenérů autora, Lukášem Zdrhou. Otázky v obou rozhovorech se týkají české hokejové ligy a její aktuální situace.

12 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Picture of an ice hockey rink

Appendix 2 - Quotations of the ice hockey rules

Appendix 3 – Table 1: Leagues by countries in Europe

Appendix 4 – Table 2: Past and current teams' overview - Czech Extraliga

Appendix 5 – Table 3: Past champions - Czech Extraliga

Appendix 6 – Table 4: The most achieved points in the qualification round

Appendix 7 – Table 5: Average attendance in the qualification round

Appendix 8 – Table 6: Past and current teams' overview - First Czech Ice Hockey League

Appendix 9 - Table 7: Past champions - First Czech Ice Hockey League

Appendix 10 - Table 8: Winners of the league and teams, which moved to the First Czech Ice Hockey League

Appendix 11 - Tables 9 - 24

Appendix 12 - Questionnaire with Lukas Zdrha

Appendix 13 - Questionnaire with Pavel Zacha

Appendix 2

Quotations of the ice hockey rules

IIHF

“SECTION 4 – SKATERS’ EQUIPMENT OVERVIEW:

Skaters’ equipment consists of sticks, skates, protective equipment, and uniforms. All protective equipment, except gloves, helmets, and skates must be worn entirely underneath the uniform. Equipment must conform to safety standards and be used only to protect skaters, not to enhance or improve playing ability or to cause injury to an opponent. Full equipment, including helmets, must be worn properly during the pre-game warmup.

RULE 29 – DANGEROUS EQUIPMENT

i. Illegal equipment, equipment that does not conform to IIHF standards, and equipment deemed unacceptable for play are all classified as dangerous equipment and players utilizing such equipment are subject to penalties as outlined in Rule 128.

ii. A referee may request the measuring of any piece of equipment at any time. If he rules that it does not conform to IIHF standards in the rules set out below, it will be considered dangerous equipment and be confiscated.

iii. A player who uses dangerous equipment will be ruled off the ice and his team will be issued a warning by the referee.

iv. Dangerous equipment includes wearing a visor in a way that may cause injury to an opponent, wearing non-approved equipment, using dangerous or illegal skates or stick, failing to wear equipment under the uniform (excepting gloves, helmet, and goaltender’s pads), and cutting the palm out of one or both gloves.”

“SECTION 7 – PLAYING RULES/PLAYER CHANGES OVERVIEW:

Players can be changed during a game in two ways: during a stoppage of play and during game action. In either case, specific rules apply as to how these changes may be carried out and under what circumstances they may not be carried out.

RULE 88 – PLAYER CHANGE DURING GAME ACTION

i. Player changes may occur at any time during game action provided that the changing players are within 1.5m (5') of the boards across the width of their players' bench, and the changing players are not involved in game action in any way.

ii. If an oncoming player leaves the 1.5m (5') zone and participates in game action before the departing player has at least one skate off the ice at the players' bench, the team will be assessed a penalty for too many men.

iii. If, during a player change during game action, a player coming onto the ice or coming off the ice plays the puck, makes contact with an opponent, or participates in game action while both the departing and entering players are on the ice within the 1.5m (5') zone, a penalty for too many men will be assessed.

iv. If player changes are made during game action and the changing players are within 1.5m (5') of the boards across the width of their players' bench, and the changing players are not involved in game action in any way, no penalty for too many men will be assessed.”

NHL

“SECTION 1: PLAYING AREA

Rule 1:

1.1 Rink - National Hockey League games shall be played on an ice surface known as the “Rink” and must adhere to the dimensions and specifications prescribed by the League and these rules. No ice markings shall be permitted except those provided for under these rules unless express written permission has been obtained from the League. On-ice logos must not interfere with any official ice markings provided for the proper playing of the game.”

“SECTION 3: EQUIPMENT

Rule 13:

13.1 - Dimensions - The puck shall be made of vulcanized rubber, or other approved material, one inch (1") thick and three inches (3") in diameter and shall weigh between five and one-half ounces (5 1/2" oz.) and six ounces (6 oz.). All pucks used in competition must be approved by the League.”

IIHF: Official Rule Book 2014 - 2018 [online]. [Retrieved 2015-04-17]. Available from: http://www.iihf.com/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Sport/IIHF_Official_Rule_Book_2014-18_Web_V5.pdf

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Appendix 3

Table 1: Leagues by countries in Europe

Czech Republic	Czech Extraliga
Denmark	Metalligaen
Eurasia	Kontinental Hockey League (KHL)
Finland	Liiga
France	Ligue Magnus
Germany	Deutsche Eishockey Liga
Italy	Elite. A
Norway	GET - ligaen
Slovakia	Slovak Extraliga
Sweden	Swedish Hockey League
Switzerland	National League A
Ukraine	Professional Hockey League
United Kingdom	Elite Ice Hockey League

Appendix 4

Table 2: Past and current teams´ overview - Czech Extraliga

TEAM	SEASONS PLAYED
Brno	7
Ceske Budejovice	19
Havirov	4
Hradec Kralove	3
Chomutov	2
Jihlava	7
Jindrichuv Hradec	1
Karlovy Vary	18

Kladno	20
Liberec	13
Litvinov	22
Mlada Boleslav	5
Olomouc	5
Opava	3
Pardubice	22
Plzen	22
Slavia Praha	21
Sparta Praha	22
Trinec	20
Usti nad Labem	1
Vitkovice	22
Vsetin	13
Zlin	22
Znojmo	10

Appendix 5

Table 3: Past champions - Czech Extraliga

SEASON	WINNER OF THE QUALIFICATION ROUND	WINNER OF THE LEAGUE	LOSING FINALIST
1993/94	HC Kladno	HC Olomouc	HC Pardubice
1994/95	HC Dadak Vsetin	HC Dadak Vsetin	AC ZPS Zlin
1995/96	HC Sparta Praha	HC Petra Vsetin	HC Chemopetrol Litvinov

1996/97	HC Petra Vsetin	HC Petra Vsetin	HC Vitkovice
1997/98	HC Petra Vsetin	HC Petra Vsetin	HC Zelezarny Trinec
1998/99	HC Slovnaft Vsetin	HC Slovnaft Vsetin	HC ZPS Barum Zlin
1999/00	HC Sparta Praha	HC Sparta Praha	HC Slovnaft Vsetin
2000/01	HC Slovnaft Vsetin	HC Slovnaft Vsetin	HC Sparta Praha
2001/02	HC Sparta Praha	HC Sparta Praha	HC Vitkovice
2002/03	HC Pojistovna Pardubice	HC Slavia Praha	HC Pojistovna Pardubice
2003/04	HC Moeller Pardubice	HC Hame Zlin	HC Slavia Praha
2004/05	HC Hame Zlin	HC Moeller Pardubice	HC Hame Zlin
2005/06	HC Bili Tygri Liberec	HC Sparta Praha	HC Slavia Praha
2006/07	HC Bili Tygri Liberec	HC Sparta Praha	HC Moeller Pardubice
2007/08	HC Mountfield Ceske Budejovice	HC Slavia Praha	HC Energie Karlovy Vary
2008/09	HC Slavia Praha	HC Energie Karlovy Vary	HC Slavia Praha
2009/10	HC Plzen 1929	HC Eaton Pardubice	HC Vitkovice Steel
2010/11	HC Ocelari	HC Ocelari	HC Vitkovice

	Trinec	Trinec	Steel
2011/12	HC Sparta Praha	HC CSOB Pojistovna Pardubice	HC Kometa Brno
2012/13	PSG Zlin	HC Skoda Plzen	PSG Zlin
2013/14	HC Sparta Praha	PSG Zlin	HC Kometa Brno
2014/15	HC Ocelari Trinec	-	-

Appendix 6

Table 4: The most achieved points in the qualification round

SEASON	TEAM	ACHIEVED POINTS
2002/03	HC Pojistovna Pardubice	111
2013/14	HC Sparta Praha	110
2003/04	HC Moeller Pardubice	108
2011/12	HC Sparta Praha	107
2014/15	HC Ocelari Trinec	107

Appendix 7

Table 5: Average attendance in the qualification round

SEASON	NUMBER OF VISITORS
2003/04	4, 209
2004/05	4, 999
2005/06	4, 332

2006/07	4, 384
2007/08	4, 784
2008/09	4, 902
2009/10	5, 240
2010/11	4, 935
2011/12	4, 824
2012/13	5, 167
2013/14	4, 948

Appendix 8

Table 6: Past and current teams' overview - First Czech Ice Hockey League

TEAM	SEASONS PLAYED
Vsetin	1
Slavia Praha	1
Kometa Brno	14
Opava	9
Usti nad Labem	18
Trinec	2
Havirov	15
Prostejov	14
Havlickuv Brod	15
Sokolov	4
Beroun	21
Hodonin	2
Prerov	5
Tabor	4
Jindrichuv Hradec	7
Hradec Kralove	13

Pisek	14
Karlovy Vary	2
Kralupy nad Vltavou	4
Liberec	7
Karvina	1
Znojmo	4
Trebic	18
Chomutov	16
Olomouc	13
Rosice	4
Kadan	17
Jihlava	15
Melnik	1
Sumperk	9
Hvezda Brno	3
Kladno	2
Mlada Boleslav	8
Zdar nad Sazavou	1
Ceske Budejovice	3
Poruba Ostrava	5
Vrchlabi	4
Most	6
Chrudim	3
Benatky nad Jizerou	7
Litomerice	5

Appendix 9

Table 7: Past champions - First Czech Ice Hockey League

SEASON	WINNER OF THE LEAGUE	PROMOTION TO THE CZECH EXTRALIGA
1993/1994	HC Zbrojovka Vsetin, HC Slavia Praha	Yes, both teams.
1994/1995	HC Kometa Brno, TZ Trinec	Yes, both teams.
1995/1996	HC Prerov, HC Opava	Only the team HC Opava.
1996/1997	HC Becherovka Karlovy Vary, HK Kralupy nad Vltavou	No, any team.
1997/1998	HC Znojemsti Orli	No.
1998/1999	HC Znojemsti Orli	Yes.
1999/2000	HC Dukla Jihlava	No.
2000/2001	KLH Chomutov	No.
2001/2002	HC Bili Tygri Liberec	Yes.
2002/2003	HC Vagnerplast Kladno	Yes.
2003/2004	HC Dukla Jihlava	Yes.
2004/2005	HC Ceske Budejovice	Yes.
2005/2006	HC Slovan Ustecti Lvi	No.
2006/2007	HC Slovan Ustecti Lvi	Yes.
2007/2008	BK Mlada Boleslav	Yes.

2008/2009	HC Slovan Ustecti Lvi	No.
2009/2010	KLH Chomutov	No.
2010/2011	HC Slovan Ustecti Lvi	No.
2011/2012	Pirati Chomutov	Yes.
2012/2013	BK Mlada Boleslav, HC Olomouc	No, any team.
2013/2014	BK Mlada Boleslav, HC Olomouc	Yes, both teams.
2014/2015	Pirati Chomutov, HC Motor Ceske Budejovice	-

Appendix 10

Table 8: Winners of the league and teams, which moved to the First Czech Ice Hockey League

SEASON	WINNERS
1993/1994	IHC Pisek , HC ZVVZ Milevsko
1994/1995	HC Slavia Becherovka Karlovy Vary , HC Liberec , SK Horacka Slavia Trebic, HC Precheza Prerov
1995/1996	HC Pribram, HC ZVVZ Milevsko, SK Horacka Slavia Trebic, SK Karvina
1996/1997	SK Horacka Slavia Trebic , HC Znojmo
1997/1998	SK Kadan , HC Sumperk

1998/1999	HC Slovan Usti nad Labem, HC Sumperk
1999/2000	HC Slovan Usti nad Labem, HC Ytong Brno
2000/2001	HC Banik Most, BK Mlada Boleslav, HK Novy Jicin
2001/2002	HC Banik Most, BK Mlada Boleslav , HC Orlova
2002/2003	HC Banik Most, HC Benatky nad Jizerou, HC Olomouc
2003/2004	HC Banik Most, KLH Vajgar Jindrichuv Hradec, HC Sareza Ostrava
2004/2005	KLH Vajgar Jindrichuv Hradec , HC Rebel Havlickuv Brod, HC Prostejov
2005/2006	IHC Pisek, HC Rebel Havlickuv Brod , VSK Technika Brno
2006/2007	HC Banik Most, HC Vrchlabi, HC Sumperk
2007/2008	HC Benatky nad Jizerou, HC Chrudim , VSK Technika Brno
2008/2009	HC ZVVZ Milevsko, HC Tabor, Hokej Sumperk 2003
2009/2010	HC Stadion Litomerice, IHC Pisek , HC Bobri Valasske Mezirici
2010/2011	HC Banik Most , KLH Vajgar Jindrichuv Hradec, Salith Sumperk

2011/2012	HC Klasterec nad Ohri, SHK Hodonin, HC AZ Havirov 2010
2012/2013	HC Tabor, VSK Technika Brno, HC AZ Havirov 2010
2013/2014	HC Banik Sokolov, SC Kolin, LHK Jestrabi Prostejov
2014/2015	HC Banik Sokolov, HC Zubr Prerov

Appendix 11

Table 9 - Goals per game

EBEL	6, 15 goals per game
Czech Extraliga	5, 39 goals per game
Swedish Hockey League	5, 06 goals per game

Table 10 - Teams with most goals scored per game

SKA St. Petersburg - KHL	3, 90 goals per game
Pardubice - Czech Extraliga	3, 32 goals per game
HV 71 - Swedish Hockey League	3, 03 goals per game

Table 11 - Teams with most goals against per game

Nitra - Slovak Extraliga	3, 71 goals per game
Mlada Boleslav - Czech Extraliga	3, 35 goals per game
Timrå - Swedish Hockey League	2, 97 goals per game

Table 12 - Teams with fewest goals scored per game

Metallurg Novokuznetsk - KHL	1, 80 goals per game
Zlin - Czech Extraliga	2, 10 goals per game
Banska Bystrica - Slovak Extraliga	2, 26 goals per game

Table 13 - Teams with fewest goals against per game

KalPa - Liiga	1, 84 goals per game
Sparta Praha - Czech Extraliga	2, 10 goals per game
Medvescak Zagreb, EBEL	2, 64 goals per game

Table 14 - League leaders - % of points won

Linz - EBEL	80, 4%
Mountfield - Czech Extraliga	65, 5%
Skellefteå - Swedish Hockey League	61, 3%

Table 15 - Last placed teams - % of points won

Timrå - Swedish Hockey League	36, 7%
Mlada Boleslav - Czech Extraliga	32, 3%
Automobilist - KHL	22, 2%

Table 16 - Difference between best and worst team

KHL	49, 8%
Czech Extraliga	33, 3%
Swedish Hockey League	24, 6%

Table 17 - Spectators per game

Swedish Hockey League	6355
Czech Extraliga	4617
Slovak Extraliga	2506

Table 18 - Teams with most spectators per game

Bern - National League A	15 750
Pardubice - Czech Extraliga	8415
Slovan Bratislava - Slovak Extraliga	5698

Table 19 - Teams with fewest spectators per game

Mountfield - Slovak Extraliga	1397
Kladno - Czech Extraliga	2719
Timrå - Swedish Hockey League	4636

Table 20 - Penalty minutes per game

EBEL	39, 5
Czech Extraliga	30, 2
Swedish Hockey League	20, 8

Table 21 - Teams with most penalty minutes per game

Vityaz - KHL	31, 06
Mlada Boleslav - Czech Extraliga	19, 74
Färjestad - Swedish Hockey	15, 57

League	
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Table 22 - Teams with fewest penalty minutes per game

Luleå - Swedish Hockey League	5, 94
Kladno - Czech Extraliga	10, 52
SAPA Fehervar - EBEL	12, 36

Table 23 - % of games that go to overtime

Swedish Hockey League	27, 9%
Czech Extraliga	23%
Slovak Extraliga	13, 8%

Table 24 - Number of players used per team

National League A	31, 4
Czech Extraliga	30, 9
DEL	24, 4

Eurohockey.com [online]. [Retrieved 2015-04-17]. Available from: <http://www.eurohockey.com/article/903-statistical-comparison-of-the-european-top-leagues.html>

Appendix 12

Questionnaire with Lukas Zdrha

Jsi trenérem druholigového týmu. Jaké jsou Tvé ambice jako hokejového trenéra?

Mým cílem je jít si svojí cestou a dosáhnout v trénování maximální úrovně, které jsem já sám schopný.

Pokud bys mohl, co bys změnil v aktuálním českém hokeji? Jsou tím myšleny změny ke zlepšení.

Jednoznačně by se týkaly mládeže. Šlo by hlavně o kvalitnější vzdělávání trenérů mládežnických kategorií a jejich následná systémová kontrola ze svazu.

Kde se podle Tebe nachází v českém hokeji jeho slabé a silné stránky?

Co se týče samotných hráčů, stále máme velmi kreativní typy, což je velice důležité. V krizových situacích dokážeme vyvinout maximální úsilí a vyhrát zápas bezchybným dodržováním taktiky. Slabé stránky však vidím v morálním úsilí v tréninkovém procesu a rovněž v psychické odolnosti, proto se v zahraničí a především v zámořské NHL prosazuje stále méně českých hráčů. Jsem přesvědčený, že problém začíná už od výchovy a je tu až moc mladých hráčů, kteří mají cestičku zametenou od rodičů a když v dospělosti narazí na první těžkou situaci, neumí si s ní po psychické stránce poradit.

Co si myslíš o úrovni a kvalitě české hokejové ligy? Mohl bys ji porovnat s jinými evropskými ligami, např. švédskými, německými nebo švýcarskými?

Česká Extraliga si stále drží svou velmi vysokou úroveň, ale v poslední době se evropské ligy výkonnostně vyrovnávají. Je jasné, že je

to zapříčiněné především finanční stránkou, proto například kvalita švýcarské ligy šplhá, díky nákupům kvalitních hráčů ze zahraničí, hodně nahoru.

Víš něco o platech českých hráčů a trenérů? Pokud ano, co si o nich myslíš? Jsou podle Tebe někteří hráči přeplaceni?

O konkrétních číslech nic nevím, takže nemohu říct názor, zda jsou někteří hráči přepláceni či nikoliv.

Myslíš si, že by český národní tým mohl pomýšlet na úspěch na nadcházejícím mistrovství světa?

Úspěch na MS je zapříčiněn vždy mnoha faktory. Důležité vždy je, jaký tým se dá dohromady. Záleží na tom, kdo vypadne z probíhající finále play - off Stanley Cupu a kolik je omluvenek. Jelikož jde ale o domácí MS, předpokládám, že omluvenek bude minimálně a náš tým by měl být velmi silný. Důležité je také načasování formy na vyřazovací boje. MS je velmi specifický turnaj, takže odhadovat něco dopředu je komplikované. Každopádně bych český tým zařadil mezi úzkou skupinu kandidátů na vítěze.

Appendix 13

Questionnaire with Pavel Zacha

V čem je nejvíc nemocný český hokej?

„V tom, že velká část hokejových klubů zmutovala. Během dvaceti let přestaly sloužit k rozvoji hokeje v regionu, ke kvalitní výchově mládeže a k výchově hráčů pro reprezentaci a NHL.“

Jak se to projevuje?

„Děti nemají atraktivní turnaje, zrušilo se mistrovství republiky. Hraje se velmi málo zápasů. Jenže právě zápasy děti i rodiče nejvíc baví. Sedmileté děti dnes hrají jednou za měsíc nebo za tři týdny.“

Co ještě z hokeje zmizelo?

„Trenéři a funkcionáři, kteří hokej dělají srdcem a z lásky. Nevymizeli úplně, ale jsou v menšině. Další brzdou je, že se dětem brání v odchodech z klubů.“

Jak se díváte na finanční zabezpečení?

„Financování českého hokeje je naprosto nevyvážené. V extralize a první lize jsou přepláceni průměrní hráči. Do dětí naopak jde velice málo prostředků. Někde se daří přečerpávat miliony z mládeže do dospělých a na děti je navíc pohlíženo jako na nepříjemný a obtížný problém. V klubech se vůbec nechovají jako dobří hospodáři, kteří myslí na budoucnost.“

Pomohla by ke zlepšení kvality invaze bývalých slavných hráčů k mládežnickým týmům v roli trenérů?

„Příchod hráčských legend do klubů a do hokeje obecně by mohl přinést oživení. Osobně jsem poznal v některých bývalých hráčích a trenérech vůbec ty nejhorší trenéry. Některým naprosto chyběla motivace do kvalitní práce, chtěli pracovat za velké peníze pouze u dospělých a působení u dětí považovali za svoji degradaci. Jsou zde další rizika. Je tu riziko, že nebudou ochotni se vzdělávat a budou čerpat jen ze svých zkušeností z mládí. Vzdělávání trenérů je u nás problém. O české trenéry dnes ve světě už vůbec není zájem. Výsledky jejich práce totiž nebudí respekt a uznání. Jen část našich trenérů mládeže nebo specialistů na dovednosti má skutečně špičkovou úroveň. Ti ale většinou už působí v zahraničí, kde je dokážou patřičně ocenit.“

Kvalifikace „dobrý hráč“ není automatickou zárukou, že se z dotyčného vyklube i dobrý trenér.

„Být hráčem a trenérem jsou dvě naprosto odlišné profese. Trénování je poslání. A k tomu, aby se hráč stal dobrým trenérem, je třeba nejen talent, ale člověk musí být zároveň vnitřně nesmírně rozvinutý a bohatý. Z bývalého hokejisty může být vynikající trenér, pokud se jím skutečně chce stát a pokud cítí, že je to jeho parketa. Pokud v tom ale vidí jediný zdroj své obživy, které je ochoten dát jen to nejnужnější, je to katastrofa.“

Jakou roli by měli mít v českém hokeji rodiče?

„Rodiče jsou největší hnací silou českého hokeje, největšími investory a často i hojně zneužívanou skupinou. Bez nich český hokej zanikne. V první fázi je třeba získat především rodiče malých dětí pro hokej, protože ti nejmenší nemohou sami přijet na zimák. Proto je třeba s jejich rodiči komunikovat, získávat je a motivovat.“