



NEWS

CHAMPIONSHIPS

CLUB EVENTS

FAN CORNER

[Home](#)[The IIHF](#)[Sport](#)[History](#)[Tickets](#)[Links](#)

Countries

Quicklinks



NEWS

[Archive](#)[Press Releases](#)[Ice Times](#)[Annual Report](#)[RSS Feeds](#)[Videos](#)

Finally, a Greek champion

[← Back](#)

Iptameni champion after an eight-year break

15.07.2008



Iptameni Athens celebrates its first Greek championship since 2000. Photo: icehockey.gr

ATHENS – Greek hockey is making its comeback step-by-step. After its first appearance in the world championship program for nine years, finishing 45th out of 48 teams, the first Greek championship in eight years was played.

A Greek ice hockey championship hasn't been played since 2000. The reason was the lack of an ice arena in the Mediterranean country after the last rink shut down in 2003. The situation changed this year. After the national team celebrated its comeback by qualifying for the IIHF World Championship Division III, a national championship was played on a temporary ice rink in Athens in the middle of May.

The good news came after a long-lasting ice hockey draught in Greece, but the gods seem to have more mercy on the hockey community now. During the lean years, the Greek national team was still in existence, and held training camps in the Czech Republic. This core of committed players also formed a club team named Iptameni Athens – the "Wings" – which won the last Greek championship in 2000. To avoid bureaucracy of founding a new organization, the players decided to wear the jersey of the defunct club. They entered the championship as a Greek version of CSKA Moscow during the old Soviet days, virtually doubling as the national team.

It's no surprise; the 2008 champion is the same in 2000. Iptameni climbed the hockey Olympus winning the six-team, five-game regular season with a 5-0 record and 70-9 goals. They also swept through the semi-final and beat Albatros in the final series, 6-3 and 9-5. PAOK Thessaloniki, a team that finished second in the regular season and had three female players, lost the semi-final series to Albatros, 2-1.

The scoring title went to Dimitris Kalyvas, who is also the captain of the Greek national team, with 44 points (31 goals, 13 assists) in nine games. "After our qualifications to the Worlds, the Greek government gave green light to continue works on our Olympic-sized rink and also to open a temporary rink in the Olympic Stadium village. The rink was opened two weeks after our qualification. It seats 200 people and it was always filled to capacity for each game," Kalyvas said.

"It looks like most of our players are on the national team, but this happened because only these 22 guys kept playing ice hockey after the rinks closed down. It feels great playing ice hockey on Greek soil after

MORE HEADLINES

Homegrown coach for Poland

[→ more...](#)

Coaching changes for Germany

[→ more...](#)

Getting the ship floating again

[→ more...](#)

Aiming high

[→ more...](#)

Scouting U20 stars

[→ more...](#)

so many years and it's amazing that after eight years, we were able to create six men's, two junior and one women's team. It's not so much about winning the championship, it's more important to build the sport in Greece."

Most players from the old days of Greek hockey quit or switched to inline hockey, and now, a league was formed – a milestone in rebuilding ice hockey in Greece.

The temporary rink was open until June 8. The Olympic-sized rink is expected to open in October 2008 – if everything goes smoothly.

Greece will also play in the world championship program next season. They'll travel to Dunedin, New Zealand, where they will play Ireland, Luxembourg, Turkey and Mongolia in the IIHF World Championship Division III in April 2009.

[← Back](#)

[CHAMPIONSHIPS](#) [CLUB EVENTS](#) [FAN CORNER](#)

[Home](#) [The IIHF](#) [Sport](#) [History](#) [Tickets](#) [Links](#) [Contact](#) [Sitemap](#) [Extranet](#) [Media](#)

Copyright IIHF. All rights reserved. [Terms and Conditions](#)