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STORY HEADLINE: The language of hockey helps coaches overcome unique challenge at Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020

LOCATION: Lausanne, Switzerland
DATE: January 16, 2020
LANGUAGE: English

Broadcast quality footage available at the IOC Newsroom: http://iocnewsroom.com

STORY SCRIPT:

When the International Olympic Committee (IOC) introduced Mixed National Olympic Committee (NOC) Ice Hockey 3-on-3 tournament at the Winter Youth Olympic Games (YOG), they gave coaches a unique challenge.

The format saw eight squads of 13 players allocated from NOCs from around the world and battling it out for gold. So not only did the players not know each other, communication was an issue with the number of different languages spoken. The men’s and women’s events had gold medallists from 20 different nations, including the likes of Hong Kong, Luxembourg, Mexico and New Zealand.

But coach Anders Lundberg from Sweden insists it wasn’t a problem, with the universal language of hockey coming to the rescue.

He said: “Some guys speak, for instance, Russian, but they also speak English, and some players don’t speak English at all. We help each other out, but we all can speak hockey and that’s the main thing.”

Lundberg had 13 different nationalities in his Team Orange squad, but he believes the inaugural tournament was a huge success. The small-sided games allowed players to practice skills they would not always get to practice in normal matches.

But he says the biggest impact of the tournament is on the players - and seeing them grow as people.

He said: “The most amazing thing about this game is the players growing, not just as hockey players but as human beings. Coming together as a team, as a group, with all the different cultures, how they treat each other with respect, how they are having fun together.
I think that's the most amazing thing because this is the kids games. It's not about us as coaches, it's not about anything else, it's about the kids, and I think that's awesome."

Lausanne 2020 is the third edition of the Winter YOG, bringing together the world’s best young athletes between the ages of 15 and 18. For the first time in Winter Olympic history the Games will have gender equality, with equal numbers of male and female competitors in the 81 medal events.

1,872 athletes from 79 NOCs will be in action in Lausanne, 12 of those NOCs for the first time at a Youth Olympic Games - Albania, Azerbaijan, Ecuador, Haiti, Hong Kong, Kosovo, Pakistan, Qatar, Singapore, Thailand, Turkmenistan and Trinidad & Tobago.

As well as the brand new sport of Ski Mountaineering, Lausanne 2020 features five new events, Women’s Nordic Combined, Individual Normal Hill/4km, Women’s Doubles Luge, Mixed NOC 3x3 Ice Hockey, Freeski Big Air, Snowboard Big Air.

The first Winter Youth Olympic Games took place in Innsbruck, Austria, in 2012. The second edition was held in the Norwegian city of Lillehammer in 2016.

SHOTLIST:

00:03 Anders Lundberg talks to young ice hockey players in locker room ahead of game
00:11 Ice hockey players listen

00:18 SOUNDBITE: Anders Lundberg, coach from Sweden for Men’s Mixed NOCs Ice Hockey Team Orange (English Language).

"I’m here with the IIHF as a coach for the men’s 3-on-3 tournament. So, I’m coaching one of the eight teams that are participating from 13 different nationalities. So, it’s really awesome."

00:38 Shots of young ice hockey players in locker room listen to coach ahead of game

00:47 SOUNDBITE: Anders Lundberg, coach from Sweden for Men’s Mixed NOCs Ice Hockey Team Orange (English Language).

"Big challenge as a coach is that the players don’t speak or everyone doesn’t speak English or they… The language barrier to be honest. But they find a way. Some guys speak, for instance, Russian, but they also speak English, and some players don’t speak English at all. We help each other out, but we all can speak hockey and that’s the main thing."

01:17 Anders Lundberg talks to young ice hockey players ahead of the game in locker room, teammates applauding at the end of meeting

01:24 SOUNDBITE: Anders Lundberg, coach from Sweden for Men’s Mixed NOCs Ice Hockey Team Orange (English Language).

"The players are helping each other out how to find a way how to communicate, which I think is just amazing - to see those young kids growing like persons, not just here for playing hockey. So, I think it’s really great."

01:43 Young ice hockey players walk along corridor and go on skating rink for warm-up
02:00 SOUNDBITE: Anders Lundberg, coach from Sweden for Men’s Mixed NOCs Ice Hockey Team Orange (English Language).

“Hockey is like one big language, I think. Everyone who is here, they love the game, they love to play, they see a lot of videos from hockey all over the world at home. So, they have like the terminology in hockey and that helps a lot.”

02:23 Anders Lundberg makes scheme of game on board

02:27 SOUNDBITE: Anders Lundberg, coach from Sweden for Men’s Mixed NOCs Ice Hockey Team Orange (English Language).

“The thing about different cultures is that you can teach from each other. They have different warm-up routines, they have different styles of play. The thing with differences is that you can learn from each other. And that’s what I see here, I see it in my team and I see it in the other teams as well, so just how quickly they see what other kids are doing and they start doing the same thing because that’s something, they think, this could benefit for me as well.”

03:04 Young ice hockey players on ice during warm-up

03:11 SOUNDBITE: Anders Lundberg, coach from Sweden for Men’s Mixed NOCs Ice Hockey Team Orange (English Language).

“The most amazing thing about this game is the players growing, not just as hockey players but as human beings. Coming together as a team, as a group, with all the different cultures, how they treat each other with respect, how they are having fun together. I think that’s the most amazing thing because this is the kids games. It’s not about us as coaches, it’s not about anything else, it’s about the kids, and I think that’s awesome.”

03:46 Shots of Anders Lundberg watches ice hockey players warming up

03:58 SOUNDBITE: Anders Lundberg, coach from Sweden for Men’s Mixed NOCs Ice Hockey Team Orange (English Language).

“I think this is really, really good for developing good hockey players playing 3-on-3 games. It’s fast, the players need to take quick decisions, they are battling. We don’t do body checking, but there is a lot of body contact all the time. Just decision making, a lot of shots taken, a lot of passes, lots of goals and lots of saves - it’s more of everything in this game format.”

04:29 Shots of game in progress

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