

Words from Chad Huseby – 2020 WJHC Official

Recently I had the opportunity to represent Hockey Alberta, Hockey Canada and the Western Hockey League on the international stage at the 2020 World Junior Hockey Championship in Ostrava, Czech Republic. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity and it is something that I will truly never forget. My journey started on the 23rd of December as I made the long journey to the Czech Republic. Upon arrival in Ostrava I was introduced to the rest of the officiating team, along with the IIHF officiating coaching staff that was assigned to this event. 12 referees and ten linesmen along with four officiating coaches and the IIHF officiating manager is what made up the 11th team of the tournament. This team of 27 was very diverse with officials and coaches coming from eight different countries, it was extremely special to sit in our meetings on Christmas Day as we prepared for what we were facing in the coming days. We all come from different backgrounds and different styles of game play but for the next two weeks we knew we would need to trust each other and work together to serve the game and the tournament as best as we possibly could.

The games and the atmosphere around the games was amazing! They do hockey differently in the Czech Republic, the games have a party atmosphere that is tough to match in North America. That made being on the ice and being in the stands special. The tournament was very well attended and the people in Ostrava love the game of hockey! It was amazing to see how many Canadian fans made the long journey across the pond; it was very cool to be part of a tournament that means so much to Canadians.

I ended up having a very successful tournament and was fortunate enough to work seven games in total. I worked four games during the round robin and then was assigned to work a Quarter-Final, a Semi-Final, and then ultimately the Bronze Medal assignment on the final day of competition. I feel extremely thankful for this amazing opportunity, every game we had a detailed supervision from one of the officiating coaches as well as detailed video work that helped us as we moved throughout the tournament. I know that officiating always seems to be a topic of discussion at these events, but after having been to one and having seen the work that the IIHF and the officiating team puts in behind the scenes I can tell you that I couldn't be prouder to be part of the 11th team at the tournament and I am proud of the work that we did.

I would be remised not to thank my wife Lindsay for her support, having four young children, it was a huge sacrifice for me to leave for 2 weeks at the busiest time of the year. I also need to thank Hockey Alberta, Brett Kelly, and Curtis Nichols for their continued support. It was awesome to work with the other Alberta official, Fraser Lawrence, in all three of my playoff assignments. I feel like we were able to show the world the level of officiating that this province produces.

