

PRACTICAL MANUAL ON DUAL **CAREER OF STUDENTS-ATHLETES**

using an example of the regular
university hockey league



With the support of
the Erasmus+ programme of
the European Union



With the support of
the Erasmus+ programme of
the European Union

Disclaimer:

This project has been funded with the support of the European Commission.
This publication only reflects the views of its author, and the Commission

Publisher:

European University Hockey Association (EUHA)



Editors:

European University Hockey Association (EUHA)

This manual is funded by the European project “Sport and Education in Europe
– change of status quo! (Grant agreement: 2017-3024/001 – 001).
European Union. Education, Audiovisual and Culture

Executive Agency (EACEA). Erasmus+Sport Programme.
Call EACS/A03/2016 Collaborative Partnerships).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We want to thank the European Union for their support through the Erasmus + project and to all project partners listed below participating in the project for their contribution to this manual, which is a result of a collaborative partnership.



With the support of
the Erasmus+ programme of
the European Union

List of project partners:

- EUROPSKA UNIVERZITNA HOKEJOVA ASOCIACIA
- WYZSZA SZKOLA BIZNESU - NATIONAL-LOUIS UNIVERSITY W NOWYM SACZU
- MITTETULUNDUSUHING BALTIC SELECTS ESTONIA
- KUNGLIGA TEKNISKA HOGSKOLANS ISHOCKEYFORENING
- UNIVERZITA KARLOVA
- UNIVERZITA MATEJA BELA V BANSKEJ BYSTRICI
- KLUB ABSOLVENTOV
- CAVALIERS BRNO ZS
- AKADEMICI PLZEN ZS
- VSK CVUT PRAHA ZS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Definition of terms

Stakeholders

- **European University Hockey Association (EUHA)**
- **Student-athletes and prospective student-athletes**
- **Universities**
- **Managers**
- **Coaches**
- **Parents**
- **Other stakeholders**

Best case scenario

Conclusions

INTRODUCTION

Every year, Europe becomes home to many talented young hockey players, who decide to finish their sport career and proceed only with their studies, without continuing to play hockey. The European University Hockey Association (EUHA), which manages the organisation of regular European University Hockey League (EUHL) offers, in its seventh consecutive season, a chance for these players to continue with hockey while studying at the universities involved in EUHL.

In 2016, the EUHA has received a grant from the European Union, namely from Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) for a project titled “Sport and Education in Europe – change of status quo!”. One of the project objectives called “EUHL – Good practice worth spreading around” is to spread the concept of the regular academic hockey and sport leagues, which can be seen as a powerful tool for providing hockey players with an opportunity to continue with their ice-hockey career without sacrificing their education.

The EU has already published several documents on supporting the dual career of student-athletes. Among one of the most cited publications is a document titled “EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes” published on 12 November, 2012 in Brussels.

The very first guideline of this document states the following:

“Guideline 1 – Talented and elite athletes in amateur and professional sports, including athletes with a disability as well as retired athletes, should be recognised as a specific population group in the relevant policy areas. This status should be:

- 1. Developed and recognised through cooperation between stakeholders in elite sport including the athletes’ representing organisations, education, employers and business, as well as governmental agencies (ministries responsible for sport, education, employment, defence, home affairs, economy, health and finance);*
- 2. Integrated in the institutional regulations and policy plans of sport bodies and educational institutes, in the social dialogue between employers and employees in professional sports and in the dialogue between executive boards and athletes’ committees of sports organisations in amateur sport;*

3. *Supported by specification of pathways for late and early specialisation high-performance sport and for athletes with a disability, in particular where pathway for able-bodied athletes cannot be used.”*

With our project, we have tried to support the overall strategy of the EU in the area of dual career of students-athletes by exchanging the good practices among all of the project partners involved in dual career of students-athletes, specifically hockey players students-athletes.

One of the agreed deliverables of this project was the manual on dual career of student-athletes. We have prepared this manual as a practical guide for the stakeholders involved in the dual career of student-athletes. The information and knowledge presented in this practical manual has been collected during transnational meetings organised within this project. Each meeting has been assigned a stakeholder topic and this stakeholder was analysed in detail during the presentation part of the meeting as well as table discussions. Knowledge and information gathered were used to prepare this practical manual together with the know-how of the EUHA representatives gathered during the past seven years of existence of the regular EUHL league.

This manual provides practical guidance for each stakeholder involved in the regular university sport league and uses the European University Hockey League (EUHL) as a practical example.

The analysis of the most important terms of dual career is followed by analyses of individual stakeholders. Final chapter of the manual discusses a “best case” fictional scenario using real combined examples of good practices. The conclusion provides a summary of the status quo of the dual career of student-athletes, in this case hockey players, taking into consideration the overall project results and experience.

To keep this manual up to date, any comments or experiences on dual career are welcomed at office@euhl.eu



DEFINITION OF TERMS

Dual career
in sports
and education

a platform made available by the stakeholders enabling students to proceed in their studies while being able to participate in regular and organised sport competition

EUHL

European University Hockey League is a regular hockey league competition between the participating universities

EUHA

European University Hockey Association is the governing body of the EUHL

IIHF

the International Ice Hockey Federation

Student
-athletes

a student enrolled in the university and engaging in regular and organised sport competition

University

an institution, officially recognised by the state authority, providing facilities for higher teaching and granting academic degrees

STAKEHOLDERS

European University Hockey Association (EUHA) – the league organiser

This chapter describes the league organiser – the European University Hockey Association and its roles and responsibilities within the scope of dual career of student-athletes (hockey players).



The European University Hockey Association was founded in 2012 by three volunteers Jaroslav Straka, František Sádecký and Peter Špankovič, who were joined by a native of Trenčín, former successful Czechoslovak and later Slovak national player representative with experience from NHL and KHL Ľubomír Sekeráš.

The primary goal of the association founders was to provide an extension of hockey career to two groups of students: students who did not enter into professional hockey, because they were not ready and students, who chose to only proceed with their studies without continuing to play hockey. These young hockey players, together with their parents and the rest of their families dedicated at least ten to fifteen years of their lives to hockey and from one day to another they were forced to make a decision: if the player wanted to study, he or she had to quit playing ice hockey actively. Of course, such a forced and abrupt end of sport career is often associated with the feeling of disinterest, bitterness and anger against a sports system that puts a student-athlete in front of such an unfair dilemma.



Lubomír Sekeráš entered the whole project with his own financial investment, without which the entire long-term competition called the European University Hockey League (EUHL), as we know it today, would not be possible to sustain. Mostly thanks to this initial investment, we can now confirm the successful completion of the sixth year of the regular competition and the preparation of the seventh season of the EUHL league.

EUHA's main goal is to support the current and help to build new university teams across Europe, while enabling university students-athletes to take part in the regular EUHL hockey competition. At the same time, the EUHA declares its efforts to integrate the university hockey into the overall sports and education system of its participants, in a way that allows the student-athlete (hockey player) to receive all the benefits of great quality higher education, sports, social and ethical experience that the university hockey brings.

The EUHA creates opportunities for university hockey team students to participate in a regular university league. Students-athletes have to fulfil the following requirements:

- be a college or university student
- or be a student of the last year of high school (graduation year)
- not to play in the professional hockey competition (have amateur status)



Respecting the amateur status of students-athletes is fundamentally important for the long-term functioning of a regular university hockey competition. For any sport, it is important to create a segment that will ensure that during the “university” life stage, the student-athletes remain first and foremost students and only then athletes, in this case hockey players. The usefulness of the trend to interlink education with sport is unquestionable. Most young athletes wish to achieve the highest possible education without being forced to end their sports dreams. By creating the opportunity to start in a regular and high-quality university hockey league, we enable these young talented people to grow further as people and athletes.

The regular hockey university league is complementing the system of national sports associations, so far missing in the European countries. Its organization, maintenance, deeper integration and possible expansion into the existing systems will ensure higher participation and involvement of more students- athletes. EUHA sees this integration on the vertical and horizontal level.

On the vertical level, university hockey covers the following:

- helping players who would prefer to study before playing hockey during their 19th-20th year of age
- enables student-athletes to participate in international study exchange programmes and to play hockey at the same time
- allows smooth transition of young hockey players to senior categories while studying (bridging the junior and senior hockey for late bloomers)

On the horizontal (geographical) level, university hockey covers the following:

- enables the university team to take part in the regular EUHL university competition
- supports continuous growth of university hockey teams in every region of Europe, in a way that fits with the strategies of the national sports association (e.g. strategy to establish university / high school hockey academies).

As an organization with more than 6 years of experience, the EUHA has been actively providing students with a link between their studies and a healthy lifestyle by organizing long-term and regular ice hockey competition. University teams from Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary have been participating in the EUHL. One of the EUHL seasons included a participating team from Austria. This regular competition brings together hundreds of students, actively engages high number of volunteers and helps to create strong school identity and strong relationships between students and their schools and teams. At the same time, these volunteers learn how to use their theoretical knowledge acquired through study by managing and supporting the university team in areas such as marketing, mass media, IT skills, financial and general management. In this way, the EUHA supports dual education system that is currently a topic high on the agenda of many policy makers.

Activities of the EUHA help to avoid situations, where high school graduates / players face the decision to quit hockey, a sport they have been practising since early childhood. Through its regulations, the EUHA ensures that the EUHL students try to achieve best results in their studies. The goal of the EUHA is to contribute to education of the youth to become valuable and healthy members of the society.



In addition to organisation of the EUHL, which is currently the only regular and long-term (e.g. not a one-day sport event, but a long-term competition whose season lasts from September to April) university competition of this kind on the territory of the Slovak Republic and the V4 countries, the EUHA also has a fruitful relationship with the American University Association of the American Collegiate Hockey Association (achahockey.org) as well as with the Russian Student Hockey League (www.rshl.ru). In cooperation with the ACHA, the EUHA has organized several hockey games between the selection teams of both leagues and also related social events and meetings between the association representatives. At the beginning of 2018, the EUHA organised the World Cup of College Hockey (www.wcoch.org), where EUHA, ACHA and SHL selection teams played against each other in the first unofficial world championships of the university hockey.

The EUHA has also successfully applied for financial support of its Erasmus + activities, where it has received grant from the European Commission to spread the good practice of the league and to support dual careers of student-athletes.





Interest in participating in this project was also shown by university teams from Sweden, Latvia and Estonia, who are currently playing their competitions as a cooperation partner of the EUHA with a prospective view to become the north division of the EUHL. EUHA's goal at this stage is to help any individuals in any country who want to take the initiative at their university to establish a university hockey team. At the same time, the EUHA is trying to put pressure on existing teams, to initiate the establishment of national university hockey associations that could have easier access to funds provided by national governments.

In the current funding model, a portion of the funding is provided centrally by the EUHA, thanks to national support of the Slovak government, the home country of the EUHA. However, this funding method is not stable and sustainable in the long term. Fortunately, the EUHA has repeatedly managed to obtain funding from different public resources and the remaining finances were managed by the individual teams through their activities. Individual public institutions in each state will have to contribute or a change in the legislation providing indirect funding of university sports in the form of tax breaks for business entities is needed.

EUHL Environment

The European University Hockey Association creates an environment for universities to implement dual education system for their students-athletes, who are members of an “university-based sports club” through the organization of the European University Hockey League (EUHL). Organization of this long-term and regular university competition is based on two main platforms.

The first platform is the definition of game rules. This is the simpler of the two. University ice hockey league generally follows ice hockey rules that are in accordance with the rules of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF). The players come to the university teams from their youth hockey clubs, which are also organized and are members of the national hockey associations. These national hockey associations are members of the IIHF and are therefore subject to using the game rules as approved by the IIHF. Also, from the perspective of game referees and in cooperation with the referee associations, it is not advisable to differ from the internationally recognised IIHF rules. Referees participating in the university hockey league games are thus not required to learn the differences in hockey rules compared to the IIHF standards. At the same time, using the generally accepted IIHF hockey rules ensures smooth running of the games from the perspective of timekeepers, reporters, security, health and other personnel that must be present at every EUHL championship game.

Second, and for the overall organization of a regular competition, much more significant platform for the implementation of dual education under the scope of the organisation of the regular league is described and summarized in a practical document called the “EUHL Manual for the Current Season” (“Manual”). This Manual describes rights and obligations of the EUHA and individual EUHL participants in detail. Content of the “Manual” is updated and amended at a regular pre-season conference. This regular pre-season conference is organized by the EUHA with mandatory participation of individual team representatives. This is a two-day event that focuses on evaluation of the previous season. Critical moments of the previous year are identified and proposals for changes are discussed in order to implement them in the most recent version of the Manual. Amendments to the manual can be proposed by any of the teams participating in the EUHL and every amendment to an article of the Manual has to be approved by the majority of the teams. If approved by the majority, the proposed changes and amendments to the Manual are implemented after a final review. In addition to participating teams, also potential new teams for the next season are invited to this conference, however they do not have the voting power. Participation of the prospective teams at this conference serves mainly educational purposes, since the new teams have a chance to get familiar with the rules and requirements of the league. Furthermore, there is a networking aspect of this conference as well, where the new teams get to know more experienced teams that are willing to share their practical know-how from the league.

Traditionally, the EUHA distributes its two main documents to each participating team for review in July. The first document is a proposal of a new version of the “Manual” for the next season and a proposal for the “Accession agreement to the current EUHL Season YY / YY”. In addition to these two main documents, other league related documents are also distributed for comments and these are: “Disciplinary Rules”, “Referees Manual”, “Code of Ethics”. As a matter of course the versions of these documents that are currently in force are made available on the EUHL website. Each participating partner confirms these distributed documents with their signature by the end of August, so that the competition can be started with the first regular league games usually at the end of September or at the beginning of October.

Communication between the teams and stakeholders during the season rests upon the general manager of the entire league, who is a member of the EUHA. This person communicates with team managers and provides necessary information needed within the scope of the organization of the league. The management of the EUHL also includes expert committees to

deal with potential conflict in the sports-technical areas, disciplinary misconducts or complaints about the decisions made by the referees. These situations are treated in accordance with the EUHL rules of procedure by individual authorities (e.g. disciplinary committee). During the season, individual members of the EUHA attend league games as delegates in order to check the compliance with previously agreed rules of the game and other rules covering the organisational aspects.

All of the above confirms, that the EUHL is an independent amateur European university hockey league, whose main tasks are the development of sports activities of the youth, further deeper development and promotion of ice hockey, and assurance of cooperation between the participants. The EUHL consists solely of university teams or teams of higher education institutions. Further objectives are the realisation, promotion and development of extracurricular interests and activities and of non-formal education and the enhancement of physical and mental fitness in sports, physical culture and last but not least, the strengthening of conditions for youth health in Europe and possibly in other countries of the world where the EUHA is active.

Through the EUHL, the EUHA association has an interest in supporting and developing the educational and pedagogical process of students-athletes, who are members of the participating teams in EUHL, including facilitating study exchange programs at universities in Europe and worldwide for students, players, coaches and other assisting team members. The EUHA association tries to create opportunities for cooperation with government institutions and NGOs in the European Union or other countries in the world. One of the main goals of the EUHA is to establish and develop cooperation between universities in sport and also non-sport areas through the EUHL and to provide students with the opportunity to receive scholarships, individual plans for their studies and other benefits offered by the universities.



Students-athletes and prospective students-athletes

This chapter provides practical advice and recommendations to students-athletes who are interested in pursuing their studies and at the same time participating in the regular university hockey league, namely the European University Hockey League (EUHL) or to students-athletes already studying and participating in the EUHL. The manual is written for the specific needs of the EUHL, however any stakeholder is free to use this manual and amend it to fit their needs.

There are several phases of pursuing dual career in studies at the university and playing university hockey league. The first preparatory phase comprises of indication of interest of prospective student-athlete in participating in the hockey league at certain university and of admission process in the university and the team. In the second, active stage the student-athlete studies at the university and participates in the university hockey league. In the final stage, the student-athlete graduates from the university and makes the transition into professional life and becomes alumni of the university and the university hockey team.

Preparatory phase

As a general advice for the preparatory stage, the prospective students-athletes/hockey players are recommended to take active part in the process of being admitted to the university participating in the regular ice hockey league such as the European University Hockey League. Currently, there are 12 university teams participating in the EUHL and the list of these university teams is available on the EUHL website: www.euhl.eu Prospective student-athletes can always contact the EUHL representative and request their assistance and information regarding the participating universities. Prospective students-athletes should collect information on the academic admission requirement of each university and requirements on their eligibility to participate in the EUHL. Each university has different requirements for students to be admitted to their school and these need to be obtained directly from the school. Regarding the EUHL participation requirements, these are listed in the league manual available on the EUHA website.

Among the basic initial requirements for participation in the EUHL is the “student” status of the player, meaning that the player is enrolled in the university programme that grants him/her the student status. Moreover, his/her player status is required to be amateur, meaning that the student cannot start in the professional hockey league. Additional explanation of the amateurism and other requirements are listed in the league manual.

The most suitable time to start researching the possibility of pursuing dual career in hockey and studies is the third year of the high school studies. Prospective students-athletes (hockey players) are recommended to make a list of universities having a university hockey team and also a list of subjects/courses of interest to the prospective student-athlete offered by these universities. In the final year of the high school studies, the prospective students-athletes are recommended to contact the university team representatives and indicate their interest in becoming a member of their school and the university team. Preferably, the student-athletes should provide the university team representative with their hockey statistics and invite them to their hockey game. In the personal meeting, it is recommended to discuss the following:

- University admission process
- Acceptance to the university team or try out procedures
- Frequency of practices and games
- Playing time for newcomers
- Team cooperation with the school, such as flexible schedules or individual study plans
- Possibility of scholarships
- Possibility of other financial aid (e.g. purchase of hockey equipment)
- Financial cost of participating in the university hockey league for which the student-athlete is responsible
- International opportunities (e.g. participation in international tournaments)
- Housing opportunities at school
- Sport insurance for practices and games
- Social and community activities of the university teams

After choosing the universities, the prospective student-athletes have to be accepted and enrolled at the university of their choice. Thus, all the enrolment procedures, such as submission of certificates of previous education history, diplomas, transcripts, submission of personal information, undertaking of enrolment examinations need to be performed in line with re-

quirements of each specific university. After receiving positive replies from the universities, the student-athletes should contact the university teams of their choice to inform them about their successful admission at their schools and make a final decision which university they wish to attend.

Example of a good practice from freshman student-hockey player:

“During the first years of my high school I have heard about the relatively new European University Hockey League and I was aware that they have a strong presence in my home town of Banská Bystrica. The Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica offers wide selection of majors and the Faculty of Education and Sport has a great reputation. I always wanted to continue with my studies at the university. Since my childhood, I was playing hockey on a high level and I had practices or games almost every day of my life. It would make me very depressive to quit hockey completely even though I knew my higher education would have priority over hockey. Thus, I decided to study and play hockey for the Matej Bel University team – the UMB hockey team. In my last year of high school, I have contacted the UMB hockey team with the wish to play for their team and to study at the UMB. They have a great team website where I have learned about the team composition and all their activities. The team representatives – coach, who is also the sports director of the university, together with the manager helped me with getting all the information on admission to the university and as we live in the same town, they came to watch me play in several of my junior games. I also visited the school with my parents and the sports director showed us the school facilities and gave a lot of information on the study programmes and how the study is managed and accommodates hockey and vice versa. I was excited to learn that they would love to have me on the team next season, and this motivated me even more to study for my final exams at the high school and the admission test to the university. In my first season, I have contributed with a few goals and assists, and we made it again to the league finals. I love playing hockey for the team and I am a proud student of the Matej Bel University.....”

Player of the UMB hockey team, Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia

Active phase

Once enrolled at the university, the students-athletes enter the active part of their dual career in studies and playing sports (hockey). Certain universities automatically offer students with some flexibility when creating their study schedules. Especially for the universities, where there is still a limited flexibility offered for the study schedules, it is highly recommended for student-athletes to coordinate with the university team representative regarding how to best schedule study, practice and game schedule. Preferably, the new students-athletes should meet their professors and talk to them about their involvement in the university hockey team, discuss hockey related situations allowing them to miss a class and discuss how certain stress periods such as final playoffs could be solved with additional flexibility provided on the side of academics.

To be allowed to play in the current season of the EUHL, the players are required to register individually or with help of the team manager online at: www.euhl.eu/player-registration and pay the registration fee.

Information regarding the registration deadline and the fee is available in the most recent version of the EUHL league manual

The student-athlete will also have to provide the manager of their team with the certification of the enrolment at the university as a proof of their student status (one of the eligibility requirement of the EUHL).

Each university hockey team defines their own rules regarding the playing time and team composition. Some teams even organise additional try-outs shortly before the season starts to decide on admission of additional players and to keep the competition within the team high. The practice schedule differs from team to team as well, however students-athletes are asked to participate in all practice in timely and proper manner and to respect the coach, managers, teammates and everybody else helping or being associated with the team. Nomination for games is normally announced day or two before a game and game participation is mandatory, with the exception of special circumstances (e.g. sickness, family emergency). All the obligatory safety requirements for hockey gear are described in the most recent version of the league manual, which is required reading for all student-athletes (hockey players) before the start of the season. The official game and individual statistics are captured and made available on hockeydata.net in line with GDPR.

In addition to game and playing times, students-athletes might be asked to perform individual training sessions (e.g. strength training, conditioning), regeneration activities, review videos of games or practices, as these are considered to be athletic activities related to the athletic part of their dual career.



Example of a good practice:

"I was positively surprised with the way I was received by professors at the Matej Bel University. The university sports director, who is also the hockey team coach and university teacher introduced me to the professors and all of us together agreed on a flexible exam schedule. The sports director also approved of my individual study plan. I was also advised to develop a strong network among my classmates so they can inform me about the study material in case I will miss a class. These friendly talks in presence of the official team representative helped with my fears about how I will be able to simultaneously study and play hockey at this level. I am also not afraid to contact my professors if needed as I have the feeling that the initial ice has been broken and I can talk to my professors any-time..."

Player of the UMB hockey team, Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia

Besides athletic activities, the student-athletes are commonly involved in providing services to community such as helping with the organisation of charitable events, team fundraising, answering questions to media or meeting with prospective student-athletes interested in playing for their team and studying at their university.

Example of a good practice: Visiting children cancer patients by the hockey team of the Charles University hockey team:

“It was very spontaneous. The children came to meet us; we took a table hockey and played with them. With the smaller ones, we played with dice and it was quite fun. Some kids could not play, because they had difficult procedures, but with those who were able to participate, it was really fun and I think that after a while we also forgot we are at the hospital and we enjoyed our time with the little patients. We brought the kids our trophy we won last season and jersey signed by all the players to express our support. We hope we also cheered up the parents a little, who always suffer the most. We hope that when they saw us fooling around with the kids, we made them smile, at least for a moment. “

Player of the Charles University hockey team, Prague, Czech Republic



Transition phase to professional life

After graduation at the university, the student-athletes are expected to transition into their professional lives and pursue their career. This guide points out that during their studies, the student-athletes had to balance study time, practice, games and other team related tasks. In addition to being a team player, these skills are high on list of recruiters and students-athletes should realise the value of the skills acquired via dual career and use this experience in their favour.

Students-athletes are highly recommended to work with school advisors to help them with preparation for job search, if the university has an advisor available. In any case, in addition to the knowledge acquired through their studies, it is recommended to also draw attention of the employers to their dual career experience and demonstrate that they can work hard, are disciplined and are loyal to their teams.

It is also recommended to start preparing for their professional life earlier. Community service of the team could be offered in different areas such as teaching; entertainment, journalism and these services should help student-athletes to develop strong network around them.

As many job offers are related to effective networking, the university hockey team alumni should preferably stay in touch with their teammates after graduation and, if possible, keep attending the games and events organised by their former university team. These relationships should be maintained as they lead to effective exchange of information including information about job offers and possible good candidates. Social media are already effectively used by many teams and student-athletes and these channels can also be very effectively used for networking with university team alumni.

Example of a good practice:

“One of the former student-athletes hockey player of the Diplomats Pressburg team from VŠMVV Prague – Educational and consulting institute in Bratislava, who played in the university hockey league for the entire length of his studies and who successfully graduated with a degree in diplomacy is currently employed by the Slovak Ministry of Sports and Education. He remains one of the most active alumni of the league and tries to raise awareness of the importance of dual career in sports and education in his organisation. He regularly visits season games and related events and attends some of the project meetings and contributes with presentations.”

Former student-athlete of the Diplomats Pressburg team from the Education and Consultation Institute in Bratislava



Recommendations for students-athletes:

- Start planning dual-career in higher education and hockey in the third year of high school at the latest
- Write down a list of universities offering dual career and a list of preferred majors
- Contact and meet team managers of the university teams and university representatives
- Study hard and get accepted to the university
- Train hard to secure position on the team
- Request information on scholarship opportunities
- Request information on financial aid related to participation in the university team
- Comply with the requirements of the organiser of the league
- Represent the best interest of the school and the team
- Start networking on and off the ice
- After graduation become an alumnus of the team and stay in touch with the school and the team



Universities

This chapter describes how universities can support dual career of student-athletes.

Universities play a major role in supporting dual career of students-athletes within the regular university hockey league such as the EUHL, as athletes should be first considered students and only then hockey players. The list of universities currently offering dual career while having a team in the European University Hockey League is published on the EUHL website: www.euhl.eu This also means that these universities do have a university hockey league active either directly under the school name or under a separate club name containing the university name. In case of a separate club, there is a need for formal contract giving the club the mandate to use the school name and to act in line with the school requirements.

The universities recognise that having a university team helps them to gain popularity among prospective students and strengthen the promotional strategy of the university as well as the school brand. In addition to this, there are a lot of new areas of income related to a university hockey team. Each university hockey club has its own logo, club name and a mascot and produces other intellectual property such as transmission and recording of the games. It is highly recommended that the university and the club define treatment of intellectual property associated with the operations of the hockey club. In case of future income, it is recommended to define the distribution of such future income and additional exploitation of intellectual property rights including the university name being a part of the hockey team name.

Thanks to the increased popularity of university hockey league and positive outlook on the possible future benefits for the universities derived from the functioning of the university hockey team, more and more universities within the EUHL are willing to offer student-athletes at their universities flexible study schedules, individual dates for exams, tolerate absences or provide additional consultation hours with university professors to obtain materials presented in the missed classes.

Individual study plan is one of the most effective ways to combine study, exams, practice and game schedules. Furthermore, distance studies at the universities are also being used by students-athletes. They do provide major flexibility when dealing with daily study schedules and attendance at the regular practices, which are normally taking place several times per week. However, for the outside games during the weekend, which are taking place in cities other than the university town, there could be a major conflict with the studies, as distance study courses are usually taking place on Saturdays. Attendance at these courses is mandatory.

The most flexibility when it comes to regular training during the work week and also for the games and tournaments is offered via online study programmes, which are becoming more and more popular not only among students-athletes but also employed students. Online classes normally consist of reading required study material and providing written answers to assignments electronically with a set deadline. Often, the exams take form of written papers. This way of study is probably the most suitable for students-athletes, however it might not fit all the students. Online study requires a lot of discipline and organisational skills to dedicate the time to studies outside of practice, games or regeneration.



Online study might also not be an option for student-athletes who want to have strong social relationships with their classmates and friends outside of the hockey community. These classmates are an important link to technical or other professional areas, in which these student-athletes major. These contacts are as important for the professional future of these student-athletes as the contacts and networks related to hockey, and maybe even more important, since majority of student-athletes will not pursue professional career in hockey after graduation. Universities should preferably keep a list of alumni students on their website and in addition the university team, they should also keep a team alumni list to create a strong network and facilitate the transition of the student-athletes to professional life. The list should be created and maintained in line with GDPR regulations.

In addition to the different formats of studies, most of the universities involved in the EUHL are already offering many of their study programmes in English and some of the programmes also in other languages such as Russian. This helps universities to attract student-athletes who want to study in English and also international student-athletes who want to study in countries where English is not the official language. Information about study programmes available in English at universities that offer dual careers for student-athletes need to be promoted, made more visible and awareness has to be increased as this directly supports the mobility among the students within Europe and worldwide.

Example of a good practice:

“Every year the universities participating in the European University Hockey league (EUHL) are requested to provide a list of their academic programmes which are offered in English or other foreign languages. This list is updated, and the most recent version is made available to public on the European University Hockey Association (EUHA) website. There have already been several international students playing in the EUHL and the association recognizes the importance of student-athletes mobility, in this case their hockey players”.

Example by the European University Hockey Association (EUHA)

To attract and maintain the best talent on ice and in classrooms, each university can offer scholarships or other financial aid. Especially in case of private universities, the scholarship can be in the form of covered tuitions, books or accommodations. Schools can also cover expenses of the hockey equipment or contribute to travel expenses, e.g. to international sports events, which also promote the school at international level. Schools can tie the scholarships not only to sport performance but also to academic performance of the stu-

dent-athlete. It is up to each school to define their scholarship requirements for student-athletes. The school can for example request the proof of academic performance or active involvement in the team on a regular basis.

Example of a good practice:

“The student-hockey players of the UMB hockey team at the Matej Bel University receive a so-called motivational scholarship at the beginning of a semester. However, this lump sum scholarship depends on the student’s overall performance in the previous season. Furthermore, to allow players more flexibility regarding the proximity of student accommodation to school, gyms and other sport facilities that are part of the campus, these student-athletes are offered accommodation in the dorms located very close to the university. In addition, the university also helps with travel costs when the team is participating in international hockey tournaments”

The Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia

At the moment, most universities do not provide student-athletes with a special medical or psychological support. As a general rule, these students are insured by the state in the same way as every other regular student. Schools normally have advisors and psychologists available for regular students and student-athletes can reach out to them as well. Specialised athletic and sport-psychology support is made available either via team manager or team coach. There is a special chapter on exploring the roles of manager and coach that analyses their roles in detail. Managers or coaches can be employed by universities or they can get involved with the team as volunteers. Full time employment of coaches and managers provides higher quality of services for student-athletes as the coach or manager can professionally dedicate all their office time to these students. Managers usually take care of logistical, administrative and financial part of the team operations, while the coaches act as advisors, psychologists and sport professionals helping with the athletic development of each player.



Example of a good practice:

“The team of the Charles University - UK Prague is managed and lead by an employee of the school, who is at the same time a teacher at the Faculty of Sports. He is responsible for securing the ice for practices and games, for the team roster and for helping the team members – student-athletes to obtain individual study programmes and flexible exam schedules. His working hours include agreed time solely dedicated to the organisation and management of the university hockey team. Him being also a member of the faculty plays a major role in effective communication between the players and the university professors. Furthermore, as he is an official employee of the university, he has a mandate to speak on the university’s behalf and make decisions about the team such as team’s participation in international sports events, as he is aware of the overall school strategy. To help him with all of the tasks associated with being a team manager he is supported by student volunteers from the school, adding a great practical experience to their studies. Moreover, he keeps close contacts with several retired colleagues, who also volunteer to help with tasks such as ice skates sharpening or preparation of sports drinks for the practices or games.”

University hockey teams of the Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

Recommendations for universities:

- Support student-athletes and give recognition of their accomplishments
- Increase the awareness of dual career of student-athletes among the faculty staff and all students
- Decide on the most suitable relationship with the university hockey team (team directly included in the university structure or team being a separate entity outside of the university)
- Decide on how to use the university name and intellectual property related to operations of the university team
- Decide on the manager and the type of employment (employee of the school, volunteer...)
- Agree on roles and responsibilities of the manager and the scope of his/her mandate
- Agree with the team on expected behaviour of student-athletes when representing the school (e.g. giving their best, acting fairly and ethically towards others, respecting others and themselves...)
- If possible, support student-athletes with scholarships and other financial aid
- Communicate with the league organisers either via team manager or another designated person
- Communicate with other stakeholders including policy makers (e.g. ministries of sports or education) on how to better facilitate dual career of student-athletes within the university league
- Network with other universities and use sport events to establish cooperation with other schools
- Create networking opportunities for student-athletes and regular students to strengthen their relationships in the areas of their studies (e.g. school event for recognition of sport results of student-athletes including all students, or a lunch event for all students successfully representing the school in all areas including sports)

Managers of the team

This chapter aims to define the roles and responsibilities of a university hockey team manager.

The team manager can be an employee of the university tasked to professionally support students-athletes within the university team and or a volunteer or contractor in a direct relationship with the university hockey team. Preferably, they should be employed by the university as this enables them enough time and resources to effectively manage the team and to make decisions related to the team activities, which are in line with the overall university strategy. The manager closely works with the coach and their tasks in certain areas often overlap. The manager is mostly responsible for administrative and logistic task, while the coach focuses more on the progress of the players and overall performance of the team.



During the season, the manager should also be responsible for recruitment of new players. Using the communication initiated by prospective student-athletes, who contacted the team manager and the school on their own and expressed their interest to attend the school and play for the team, the team manager should contact these prospective student-athletes. Furthermore, the coach can, based on the junior leagues monitoring, propose players who are suitable candidates for the university team. The manager should provide them

with information on dual career in written or oral communication. The team manager together with the coach shall attend games of the recruits and engage in personal meetings to answer the questions of prospective student-athletes.

The manager should also assist the prospective students-athletes in the university admission procedure, particularly to make sure the prospective students-athletes receive all the necessary information on the admission process to enrol in their universities.

Once the prospective student-athlete is accepted by the university, the manager and the coach should work together to integrate the student-athlete into the team structure. The manager should assist the student-athlete with getting to know the faculty staff, arranging flexible study and exam schedules and finding the best compromise between hockey and study schedules.

Before the start of season, the manager should collect all the necessary information, and documentation as defined in the most recent version of the hockey league manual, in this case the European University Hockey League Manual. The manager should always be familiar with the most recent version of this manual, particularly with important dates and deadlines set by the league organisers. The manager should also inform the league organisers about his role on the team and about all other persons involved in the team and their roles and responsibilities. The managers should also sign an agreement with the league organisers that includes a list of the team's responsibilities within the league.

One of the most important tasks of a team manager is to secure ice time for the team's practices and games. The stadiums are usually owned by municipalities or private entities. Team managers need to contact the stadium owners and sign an agreement or a contract renting the space for university team practices. The best-case scenario is to involve the municipalities as sponsors of the hockey team, where the municipality provides the ice for free or with a major discount in exchange for promotion or recognition of the municipality's role within the league. In case a municipality the owns the stadium uses a third party to run the stadium, based on the agreement signed with the municipality, the managers need to prepare specific practice and game schedules with this third entity. The university can also act as a sponsor and provide financial aid to secure the ice for their team.

Usually, no advance agreements are signed with referees, medics, score keepers, security persons and other persons needed in hockey games. However, managers are expected to maintain a great network of these persons and contact them a few days before a game to make sure all staff needed to secure smooth operation and security of the game are present. Most of these persons are volunteers.

Example of a good practice:

“The team of the UMB hockey team of Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica practices and plays games in a hockey stadium owned by the municipality of Banská Bystrica. The town agreed to support the team by making the ice more available. For administrative reasons and to promote specific amount of provided aid, it was agreed that there will be a contract signed every year between the team and the municipality stating the number of hours on ice and the sum corresponding to rent other entities would pay for renting the ice under the same circumstances. From the rent normally due to be paid by other entities, the town gives the team a 70 percent discount and issues an invoice. The team pays the discounted rent but also requests the money back through additional financial aid. Commercial value of ice is calculated and recorded so all the stakeholders (including the government) are aware of the market value of this support. In addition, the university team has great relations with the professional hockey team of Banská Bystrica and it always helps with agreeing on the ice schedules as both teams practice and play in the same hockey stadium and they work together to avoid conflict of interest in the practices and games schedules.”

UMB hockey team, the Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia

Before games, managers should be responsible for aiding with the players' identity checks and overall logistic assistance. After games, managers should make sure the team results and individual player statistics are provided to the league organisers for publishing. In case a disciplinary action occurs in the game, the managers together with the coaches and players should assist with writing a short report on behalf of their teams and sending it to the disciplinary committee provided by the league organisers.

Example of a good practice:

“In one of the regular season games between teams of the Charles University of Prague and the UMB hockey team, the Matej Bel University of Banská Bystrica, one of the players hardly fouled an opposing player. The referee ruled it as a minor foul sending the fouling player on the penalty bench for a regular two minutes penalty. The manager of the team, whose player was fouled filed a complaint with the disciplinary committee of the EUHL requesting this foul to be reviewed based on the video recording. The committee changed the verdict and benched the fouling player for the next two games. The manager of this player discussed this verdict and accepted the decision of the committee. Both managers helped the situation by effective communication and acted as mediators between the two players.”

University hockey teams of the Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic and the Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica

Probably one of the most challenging tasks of a manager is to secure finances the university team operations. In ideal world, the funds could be provided by the government via Ministries of Education and Sports. Government funding of the participation of universities in the regular university sport league is only at the beginning stages as the funding rules are still being defined. Sports associations cooperating with universities and applying for governmental funding should be established in every country. Such support would have to be justified and the expenses would have to be documented. In this scenario, the managers would be the ones obliged to provide assistance in expense justification, documentation and submission of the corresponding documents.

Another source of income for the university team are sales of their game tickets. The managers should set the ticket prices and sort printing and other logistics related to ticket sales (e.g. volunteers selling the tickets at the stadium). Additional source of income could be auctioning of the jerseys during games or other social events related to the hockey team. Some of the teams are also running their own refreshment stands during the games directly at the hockey stadium and money earned from refreshment is also used to fund the university team activities.

Additional type of financial aid which the team managers could secure is barter with private companies - donation of hockey equipment, food services or any other services or products helping the university hockey team to operate. The managers should make sure these barter deals are in line with the overall strategy and values of the university they are representing.

Example of a good practice:

“Several university hockey teams of the European University Hockey League secured barter deals with major global producers of hockey equipment. In exchange for a promotion space on their jerseys, these teams received hockey gloves, helmets and other important hockey equipment that is normally a major expense for the team.”

Teams of the European University Hockey League

There are many tasks for which the managers are responsible. It is highly recommended to involve several volunteers to support the managers with either everyday tasks needed for the university hockey team to be operational or with individual projects such as organisation of tournaments, social or fundraising events. These student volunteers or university team fans can definitely take an active part in supporting the team. They can act as journalists, administrative support, physiotherapists and in supporting the team they can also practice and prepare in the areas of their studies.

Example of a good practice:

“In the first season of the European University Hockey League (EUHL) the European University Hockey Association appreciated one of the volunteer journalists, who at that time was a student at one of the universities participated in the EUHL. She supported the EUHL by writing and publishing articles about the games and league related events and helped to manage the EUHA social media accounts. She has now a contract with the professional hockey team in Trencin, Slovakia where she manages social media campaigns for this team. Occasionally, she helps the EUHL as a volunteer journalist.”

European University Hockey League (EUHL) and European University Hockey Association (EUHA)

Recommendation for team managers:

- Get familiar with the rules and requirements described in the league manual
- Communicate on regular basis with the league organisers and provide requested information (e.g. team rosters, registrations, proofs of studies...)
- Secure a working relation with the university (employment or other form)
- Get familiar with the university strategy related to dual career of student-athletes
- Discuss financial and other support from the university
- Create a list of potential sources of income and explore these revenue sources
- Continuously secure funding for the team
- Secure ice time for the season (practices and games)
- Get help from volunteers, delegate tasks, but remain in control
- Communicate with prospective student-athletes and provide information on dual career of student-athletes
- Work with team players and help them with individual study and exam schedules
- Prepare practice and game schedules
- Maintain your network of referees, medics, security persons, score keepers and keep their most recent contact details
- Closely cooperate with the coach and players

Coaches of the university teams

This chapter aims to define roles and responsibilities of a university team coach.

Coach is responsible for trying to accomplish the best long-term and short-term performance of the team and at the same time the best athletic and personal growth of each individual player. The coach has to demonstrate a high level of respect of the players, the university he is also representing, all stakeholders involved and also himself.

A coach should also provide psychological support to his players. The support needed by the athletes is very specific as it deals with sport psychology. Therefore, the coach should have all necessary licenses for coaching or an equivalent in the number of years of experience (e.g. years playing professional hockey).

A coach should also be a friend and a supporter of the players, must be ready to listen and to solve internal conflicts between the teammates. He/she should also motivate the players with short-term and long-term goals.

As mentioned before, in case of a conflict of any kind, a coach should be able to act as a mediator and give professional advice.

Coach must be aware of the academic priorities of the dual career of students-athletes and must work closely with the team manager and with the school. Coach must understand that these student-athletes are first students and only then they are athletes. He/she should promote discipline, motivation, equal ethical behaviour on ice, in the classroom and anywhere else. In some cases, one person can fill both, the manager and the coach position. In some cases, coach also fills other positions within the school and the school sports programme.



Example of a good practice:

“The coach of the UMB hockey team of the Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia is at the same time the sports director of the programme and he is directly employed by the university. He was previously the university team player and a student at the university studying physical education. While finishing his PhD degree, he started to coach and manage the team. He knows the league, the association, the sports landscape, the university and other professors. Most of all, he knows his players, what they are going through, how they feel, how much they have to study and when as he went through the same process and studied this subject as his major. He has led his team to league playoffs four times. Furthermore, based on his extensive experience in hockey and hockey management, the school has decided to use his valuable experience and create a new programme - now the school offers a hockey management major which he oversees.”

UMB hockey team, the Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia

Coach should also decide on the players roster for the team as well as nominations for each game. He/she should also be involved in decisions regarding recruitment of prospective student-athletes.

Together with the team manager, the coach should help with practice and game times planning, as he must be available for these as well.

It is also highly recommended that the coaches receive first aid courses to improve health safety at practices.

Recommendation for coaches of the team:

- Establish relationship with the university team and the university (e.g. employee, contact staff, volunteer)
- Work closely with the team manager
- Get to know your team and act as a coach, mentor, motivator, mediator
- Respect that students-athletes are first students and only then athletes
- Lead your team by example
- Get to know the university faculty

- Get to know the league organisers, the league rules and requirements
- Invest time in preparing quality practice
- Strive for the best team and individual performance but not on expense of ethics, fairness or study progress
- Educate yourself on dual career of student-athletes
- Educate yourself as a coach
- Be ready to attend social and other team related events

Parents

Parents are very often excluded from the important stakeholders in dual career of student-athletes, however they do play a significant role. In the initial stages of hockey career of a child, parents are the ones who need to make sure their child receives proper training and athletic growth. At the same time, parents need to make sure their child is also progressing at school. Combining school and hockey while working is often a stressful job for the parents. Especially when more children from the family are active athletes.



Very often, parents only think in framework of professional hockey or nothing. It is important to educate them on dual career for students-athletes in hockey and explain that keeping their child in hockey programme does not have to negatively affect their performance in school. Based on extensive experience, only a fraction of players will make it to professional hockey and therefore more and more parents decide at very early stage that their child shall quit and educate themselves on the benefits of dual career and what it takes to stay on this dual path. In the time of performance crisis of their child, the parents should make sure that the child does not give up easily. Parents should try to find a way to make dual career of student-athlete attractive for their child and his or her peers to give this path even more credit.

Example of a good practice:

“The fact that many university players from U.S. universities make it to the US national team and play in the world championships makes the dual career of student-hockey player attractive and credible for young players around the world.”

Players of the US university teams who are members of the US national hockey teams

Once a child stays on this dual path and continues with studies and playing hockey, the parents should support him/her in making decision about the school and school programme in a way that fits the family situation, mostly finances and family structure.

Recommendation for parents:

- Educate yourselves about dual career of student-athlete and identify benefits for your child
- Teach your child and their peers about the value of playing hockey while staying at school
- Motivate your child and provide support especially during performance crisis
- Help your child to make right decisions about school and hockey programme

Other stakeholders

There are many other stakeholders active in dual career of students-athletes. This chapter identifies and briefly describes the most important stakeholders besides the ones already analysed in the previous chapters.

National sport associations play a major role in dual career of students-athletes. These associations are responsible for defining the overall sport strategy of a country. Thus, they should include university sports in the country's sports landscape and integrate university sports in the overall sports strategy. National sport associations also receive funds from governments, and they should establish the most suitable way for providing systematic financial support to regular university sports.

Example of a good practice:

“Representatives of the European University Hockey Association (EUHA) were invited by the Slovak Ice Hockey Federation to take part in workshops and discussions organised with the aim to prepare the overall hockey strategy for Slovakia. Participation of the EUHA in this discussion helped to raise awareness of dual career of student-athletes and how the Slovak hockey can benefit. Moreover, these discussions led to strengthening of the relationships with the EUHA and signing a Memorandum on cooperation.”

Involvement of the EUHA in workshops and discussions on the National hockey strategy of Slovakia

Another important stakeholder in dual career are businesses. Businesses can benefit from dual career of students-athletes by cooperating with the university and agree on internships for students-athletes in the area of their studies and for students of this university in general. They could sponsor the university team and in exchange they could gain access to prospective employees from the pool of the university students. This sponsorship can be then promoted as a highly valued social activity that helps young student-athletes to continue playing hockey while studying.

Recommendation for other stakeholders:

- Understand dual career of student-athletes
- Find out your role as a stakeholder in dual career
- Learn about how dual career of student-athletes can benefit you as a stakeholder in the long-term
- Communicate and coordinate with other stakeholders
- Find a systematic way to support dual career of student-athletes (e.g. legal framework, systematic financial support)
- Promote accomplishments of student-athletes dual career

BEST CASE (FICTIONAL) SCENARIO OF DUAL CAREER STUDENT-ATHLETE

This chapter provides a fictional “good practice story” of a young hockey player who chooses the path of dual career in sport and education.

Adam has been practising hockey since he was 5 years old. He comes from an athletic family - his father, grandfather and uncle played hockey, mother and aunt played basketball and his grandmother was an excellent volleyball player. His sister and his cousins play handball and all family members went to the university. The whole family understands the value of sport in personal development and they have spent their weekends cheering for young members of the family at hockey stadiums or sport centres.



At the age of 10, Adam enrolls in a special ice hockey class at his elementary school that cooperated with an ice hockey club. It allowed the kids one extra practice during the classes in addition to the afternoon practices, while keeping the curriculum required by the Ministry of Education and Sport. This ice hockey programme is one of the best in the country and requires a major dedication from the child enrolled and their entire family. Adam plays a centre position, is a great passer, returns back to defence and is reading the game well but he is not the highest scorer of his team. At this age, most of his teammates want to become NHL players, but Adam shares with them

that in case he will not play in the NHL, he wants to become an architect. At school, Adam learns English and German language. Adam goes through performance and psychological crisis, where the other teammates tell him he is not good enough as he does not score goals that often. His parents and his coach support him and explain to him that without his passes or game plays he creates, the team would not be winning that often. At school, he is performing well and gets As and Bs. However, he is often missing classes because of his additional participation in the tournaments of a selection team of Slovakia. To catch up, the parents pay for extra tutoring and private lessons to catch up with the school, especially in math and physics, to help to form solid base knowledge in these subjects. The Ministry of Education and Sports allows the possibility to have a special sport class at a regular elementary school, which helps the interaction with non-athlete students.

At the age of 14, Adam decides to leave for abroad to study and become a player of an elite youth hockey club in Europe. The school is international, and part of the tuition is covered by the parents and remaining part is covered by a scholarship. The home school allows Adam to leave under the condition of an individual study plan for his final year of studies. After Adam successfully passes all the exams required under his individual programme, he leaves for abroad. Soon after arrival, Adam quickly adopts to the new system and the school environment and becomes a much more independent young man. English skills that he learned back home are sufficient enough to allow him to study. Solid knowledge of the science courses, which he acquired at home is a major advantage, especially during the first year, when he is making significant progress with his English. His teammates and coach are supportive and thanks to his good nature and team spirit, they appreciate him very much, even though he is not the star of the team. There is another international player on his team playing defence and they both become friends and bond over being in the same situation away from their families. Most of his teammates want to study at the university and play hockey in the university hockey team.

At the age of 18, Adam successfully graduates from an international high school with IB diploma. Now he has to decide whether he will try his luck in the United States, where university hockey and dual career of students-athletes are the most developed or whether he will stay and study at a European university and play hockey. He cannot imagine quitting hockey; it's been his life since he was 5 years old and he loves it. From the US university he applied to, he receives positive reply. However, the school will not be

able to provide full athletic scholarship. Adam has heard about a recently established European University Hockey League and he visits website of the association in charge of the regular competition. From the association, he receives a list of universities currently participating in the league as well as contacts of respective team managers. Adam gets familiar with study programmes offered by these universities, performances of their hockey teams in the league and decides to contact three of them. He provides them with his individual statistics and a short cover letter about his motivation to play for the team and to study at the university. Two of the university teams contacted are very interested in having Adam on their team roster, the third one informs him that they already have enough players on the team and that he might not get in a lot playing time as a freshman player. Adam keeps communicating with the former two teams and they help him to get all the information about admission requirements to their universities. Adam and his parents also visit one of the universities and meet the team personally. The coach and the team manager take their time to talk to him and his parents about the school and how to best manage study and the hockey programme. He likes it there very much and so do his parents.

Adam gets admitted to all three universities of his choice. In the end, he decides to attend the university he has personally visited as he already knows the team and hopes for a lot playing opportunities as a freshman. He chooses international business as his major instead of architecture. His manager helps him to meet all of his professors. Fortunately, the team manager and the team coach work out a practice and game schedule that doesn't conflict with his normal study schedule. As for the exams, Adams asks for different exam dates. The manager is also an employee of the school and his office is open all the time, so Adam sometimes stops by to get an advice or just to say hello. Adam also receives scholarship in the form of a paid dorm and board and he also receives complete hockey equipment.

His team receives financial aid from the Ministry of Education and Sport. These funds are sent to the National University Association of the country, which has been set up solely for the purpose of obtaining funding from the national government. This financial support mainly covers transportation and other travel expenses. The hockey stadium is provided by and paid for by the municipality, that owns it. In exchange, the municipality logo has a prominent place on the team jerseys. Other funds come from private sector, from a company, where many of the university students do their internships, including some student-athletes. This company also has their logo on the team jerseys and the school has a cooperation agreement with the company.

The team has a busy schedule and engages in charity and social events. Adam especially likes to work with young kids as he has a great sense of humour. He also knows how it feels to be put down by other kids and he knows how important the right kind of support is. During his 5-year studies and playing for the university Adam helps with the team finances and also works with other team volunteers to help with fundraising and promotional activities of the team. In his fourth year, he decides to apply for a yearlong exchange programme to a European university abroad and applies for an Erasmus+ grant. He intentionally chooses a university participating in the same university hockey league just in a different country. Here, the other students-athletes already know him from the league and he already has experience in organising his studies while playing hockey. Again, he receives support from the team manager, the coach, faculty staff and fans. He becomes good friends with many of them, even though he will once again play against them in the next season. After one year, he returns back to his university and starts his final year of studies. He applies for an internship position with the company sponsoring the team and thanks to his educational background, his personality and also strong networking skills, Adam gets an opportunity to gain some practical experience in the industry before his graduation.



In his graduation year, he learns that he can still play university league while pursuing his PhD. Degree. He decides to stay in his home country and attend a university offering a PhD. Degree in international finance. Again, the university has an university team playing in the regular university competition. He receives an assistance position at the school. Besides being a team player, he starts assisting the team manager and the sports director of the school, mainly with the organisation tasks. After receiving his PhD. Degree Adam receives an offer to play for a professional team in his home country. He declines, thinking that from a long-term perspective, the right decision is to find a job in the field of his studies. Thanks to his network from the universities, he learns about a lot of suitable positions abroad. However, in the end he decides to stay in his home country and get a higher managerial position thanks to his experience abroad.

He becomes an active alumnus of his last team and regularly attends their games and takes part in social and networking events the university team is organising. Through his work connections, he even helps the team manager to meet potential sponsors. He plays hockey on recreational level to stay healthy and because he still loves it.





CONCLUSIONS

Strong university support and the work of a league organiser such as the EUHL is essential for the creation and maintenance of dual career of students-athletes, however without an additional support of other stakeholders in form of financial and legislative aid, the student-athlete leagues will not survive in the long-term. The bottom up approach using the influence and pressure of the student league associations, students-athletes and universities on the national policy and decision makers is already there, however it must be better coordinated. There is also a need to obtain support not only from national sport associations, but also from institutions operating on international level.

Furthermore, there is a major gap in the legal framework of national jurisdictions, which would enable systematic financial support of organizations such as the European University Hockey Association (EUHA) that runs the European University Hockey League (EUHL). This lack of supporting legislation is a major blocking factor in functioning of university league as this is directly linked to obtaining systematic funding needed to organize regular university sports league.

To support dual career of students-athletes, the universities could increase awareness and educate their staff on the benefits of dual career of students-athletes, such as positive university public relations, increased attractiveness of the university, high graduation and employment rates. The universities should define specific ways of supporting dual career of students-athletes, e.g. individual study plans, flexible schedules, scholarships, accommodation, board or official recognition of students-athletes.

Current and prospective students-athletes should play an active and not a passive role in their dual career. They should actively approach university teams and universities to help with pursuing their dual career in sport and education. Together with managers, coaches, peers, university staff and parents, they should find a way to effectively manage their studies and hockey careers making use of benefits offered by the dual system and all involved stakeholders.

Non-athlete students supporting the team in volunteer positions within the team, such as assistant, journalist or physiotherapist should also take advantage of additional practical opportunities created around the university team and the team should be perceived as a company and the jobs within as a form of internship.

Managers and coaches need to understand not only their specific roles but also the whole picture and the benefits the dual career of students-athletes brings. Coordinated goal of a long-term educational, athletic, personal and overall development of students is the key here.

Parents also play a significant role in the successful dual career of a student-athlete. From early childhood, the parents should educate their child about the valuable combination of hockey and education and motivate the child to work hard on ice and in the classroom as this combination has a high future value. Parents need to support their child in case of performance crisis to avoid the child quitting the sport too quickly. It is advised that parents raise talk about the value of dual career in front of the child's peers and other parents as credit coming from their close environment will motivate the child even more.

Businesses should be also better educated on opportunities brought by dual career and work closely with universities and university teams. Businesses should also initiate discussions with the policy makers regarding legislative changes that would help the dual career environment (e.g. tax breaks).

Policy makers should better understand dual career of student-athletes and what kind of fundamental role they play in maintenance of dual career of student-athletes. The policy makers need to have a regular discussion with other main stakeholders: league organisers, national sport associations, universities and industry.

In addition to organising the university league, the EUHA should continue the dialogue between all stakeholders and secure long-term survival of the university league that includes teams from several countries, as this survival is directly depends on systematic and long-term financial support of national governments.



With the support of
the Erasmus+ programme of
the European Union



CONTACT

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

Považská 35, Trenčín 911 01, Slovakia

web: www.euhl.eu | <http://students-athletes.eu>

