

FIRS

IN-LINE HOCKEY



- **Roller In-Line Hockey is twelve-year-old sport discipline of the International Federation of Roller Sports (FIRS), founded in 1924 in Montreux, Switzerland. The International Olympic Committee recognizes FIRS as the International Federation for all roller sports. Roller hockey, under FIRS, was a Demonstration Sport in the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games.**
- **FIRS established the first European Championship for roller hockey on quad skates in 1925 and the first World Roller Hockey Championships in Germany in 1936. FIRS went on to create the first World In-line Roller Hockey Championship for Men, which were hosted in 1995 at Chicago. The 2006 world championship for men in Detroit, Michigan was the twelfth such international event.**
- **The first in a continuing series of World Inline Hockey Cups for Junior Men was held by FIRS in Chicago, Illinois in 1996. This year's event will be the eighth such competition sponsored for Junior Men by FIRS, to be held in Dusseldorf, Germany, the first time not conducted in North America. In 2006 the Junior Men tournament has been upgraded from a "cup" to a "world championship".**
- **An annual World Inline Hockey Championships for Women was originated by FIRS in 2002 at Rochester, New York. The 2006 Detroit, Michigan, USA was the fifth competition, which followed venues in Czech Rep., Canada and Paris, France.**
- **Inline roller hockey is a participant sport in the Pan American Games. FIRS is recognized by the Pan American Sports Organization (PASO) as the controlling international federation for in-line hockey, as well as other roller sports disciplines, all of which are or have competed at the quadrennial Pan American Games.**
- **FIRS and its roller sports disciplines have been part of the World Games since the first Games were organized in 1979 at Santa Clara, California. In-line roller hockey was introduced to the World Games for the first time in July of 2005, substituting for ball roller hockey, which had an original sport of the Games. The IOC sanctions this multi-sport event for non-Olympic Games sports, under the jurisdiction of the International World Games Association (IWGA), an affiliate of the General Association for International Sports Federations (GAISF). As does PASO, the IWGA also recognizes FIRS as the governing International Federation for roller sports, encompassing the sport discipline of in-line roller hockey.**
- **The 2007 FIRS World Inline Hockey Championship for men and women is scheduled for July 1 – 14 in Bilbao, Spain.**

QUESTION: Has the International Olympic Committee recognized an International Federation (IF) to govern the discipline of inline/roller hockey? If so, which IF has been recognized? When was the IF Recognized?

The Federation Internationale de Patinage a Roulettes (FIPR) was formed in 1924 as an international sport organization to conduct roller hockey competitions between the few national federations which were already engaged in such competitions in western Europe on an informal basis. This fundamentally hockey oriented group was originated in Montreux, Switzerland in April of 1924 by two Swiss men, Fred Renkewitz and Otto Myer, who had close ties to the International Olympic Committee. Four European countries were represented at this meeting: Switzerland, Great Britain, Germany and France. The first President of the FIPR was Fred Renkewitz, who served from 1924 until 1960. Immediately a plan was developed to hold an April 10, 1926 European Championships in England, which was then the dominant power for Rink Hockey, the British having organized this sport on a national level since before WWI. The 1926 championships had six countries participating, which included the addition of teams from Belgium and Italy. Under the Presidency (1964 to 1973) of Victoriano Oliveras de la Riva, a Spaniard, the FIPR changed its name to Federation Internationale de Roller Skating (FIRS) in the mid 1960's to become officially recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as the international governing body for all roller skating. There was much interest, originating in Europe, for making the sport of roller skating a participant in the Olympic Games. Such IOC recognition is first necessary for inclusion in the Olympic Games. In the 1970's, the General Association of International Sport Federations (GAISF) gave similar membership recognition to FIRS.

The first World Championship organized by FIPR was for Rink Hockey (Ball and Cane) in 1936, hosted by Stuttgart, Germany. At the insistence of its growing number of member nations, the next world championship was conducted in 1937 in Monza, Italy for Roller Speed Skating on the Road. In 1938 a FIPR World Championship was held in London, England for Track Roller Speed Skating and in Ferrara, Italy for the second Road Speed Skating World Championship. In 1939, the second Rink Hockey world championship for FIPR was held in Montreux, Switzerland, after which all World roller skating championships were interrupted by World War II and did not resume again until 1947. In 1947 Rink Hockey returned with its third world championships in Lisbon, Portugal. Artistic Roller Skating conducted its first FIPR World Championships in Washington, USA also in 1947. From that time, the three disciplines of FIRS conducted annual World Championships again, expanding to include all continents of the world. Roller hockey, under FIRS, became a Demonstration Sport at the 1992 Olympic Games of Barcelona. The latest and fourth discipline of roller sports, Inline Roller Hockey organized the first such World Championship in Chicago, USA in the summer of 1995.

The earliest history may be verified by the book "Roller Skating – History and Introduction" published by FIRS in Spring of 1982, authored by Rolf Noess of Freiburg, Germany, who was then the Secretary/General of FIRS, and Camille Fetler of Bordeaux, France who had served as President of the FIRS Rink Hockey from 1958 until 1976 and subsequently was awarded with FIRS Honorary Life Membership.