

Start of the 2011/12 Erste Bank ice-hockey league season

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The 2011/12 Erste Bank ice-hockey league season begins on 9 September

1.1 million spectators converged on the arenas last season – new attendance record expected

The first round of the Erste Bank ice-hockey league begins on 9 September. Eleven teams from five nations will this year compete for a spot in the play-offs and the title of 2011/12 Erste Bank Ice-Hockey League Champion. Increasing crowd numbers see the popularity of ice hockey skyrocket.

The constantly growing interest in ice hockey in Austria has led to a new attendance record for this sport. Around 1.1 million spectators (+ 4.4%) watched the games live in the arenas in the 2010/11 season. "Spectator numbers at the rinks have more than tripled since Erste Bank joined forces with the ice-hockey league, and the new

attendance record endorses our involvement with the sport", says Mario Stadler, marketing manager at Erste Bank Austria. Even greater crowd numbers are expected at the rinks for the new season, partly due to the

incorporation of the team HC Orli Znojmo from the Czech Republic, a country which has been the world ice-hockey champion on several occasions. "The increasingly international nature thus makes the Erste Bank ice-hockey league even more attractive", says Stadler.

Ice hockey perfect for Erste Bank's sports sponsorship

The Erste Bank has been the main sponsor of the highest level of the Austrian ice-hockey league, as well as the Austrian national team, since 2003. "Ice hockey is an important cornerstone of the Erste Bank's sporting

activities", says Stadler. The Austrian Sparkassen (savings banks), who participate as team sponsors, are loyal regional partners.