

The arrival of the young Czech players at the darkest time of the year was a pleasure for everyone

There have been tough times in the world lately and the things we love, have been partially prohibited. In O2-Jyväskylä floorball action, the light in the darkest time of the year was the arrival of young Czech players from Panthers Praha. Getting international players to our team practices and games was delightful and instructive experience to us and hopefully also for the players.

Before the arrival, we had agreed, that players practice on the team that suits best on their skill level. Different options were U18 team 1 and 2, U21 team, men's academy team and men's first, second and third teams. Jaroslav, Michael and Zdenek arrived first and came to U18 team practices. It was maybe a bit surprise for the boys that practices were on a parquet floor and Michael in particular had difficulty staying upright. Otherwise practices went well. Jaroslav dribbled one of the defenders once so well that the whole team started laughing.

The rest of the practices on the trip was on a carpet floor which was probably a relief for the boys. Boys participated on U21 team and men's academy team practices on most of the time of the visit. There were usually four team practices on a week. Unfortunately, there was a lot of bad luck with the games due to coronavirus situation. In the first weekend, we planned lineups for the games on Friday, only to hear in the evening that games are cancelled because of coronavirus situation, which was getting on a bad direction.

After the official games were cancelled, we were still able to practice and play friendly matches locally. We played couple of games against our local rivalry Happee and between our own club teams. Czech boys were part of our U21 team when they won Happee in friendly match 😊. At least Jaroslav scored a goal (dribbled the defender in the corner and carried ball in the center before the shot) in the friendly matches that we had time to play.

Currently, there is a strong culture of ball possession game in Finland. It seemed that the boys had to adapt on ball possession game, where scoring chance is often built more patiently and losing the ball to opponent is avoided. Best result comes of course from a combination of ball possession game and fast counterattack, but to learn principles of the ball possession game, we must usually reduce straightforward game. It was nice to see that specially Jaroslav and Michael were able to carry to ball in the centre of the field and keep their options open (pass, shoot, dribble). There is often a little problem with the Finnish boys as their shot takes too much time to be released. With Jaroslav, there was very short release time on the shot, which we admired. In the last week of the trip, we wanted to offer our men's first team trainings to Jaroslav, but unfortunately the team was set to quarantine due to exposure on the virus in their last game so the opportunity cancelled. 😞

All in all, the period in the club action went well in our opinion despite there was a lot of misfortune with coronavirus. It was nice to get motivated players to our trainings and games – maybe someday there will be more to come! We wish you all the best – just remember to give some handicap when playing against Finns 😊