

NHL exports iPhone apps to Europe

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The NHL this week plans to release mobile applications for the iPhone and iPod touch in Europe, part of a broader strategy to better serve its growing fan base there.

The league also this week will revive its annual postseason-themed sales push for its flagship online product, GameCenter Live, this time with a new archival product called NHL Vault that will offer fans digital on-demand replays of more than 150 classic hockey games from the last 50 years.

The European offerings will seek to capitalize on a fan base that generates nearly 20 percent of the traffic to NHL.com, in terms of unique visitors, and consumes more video on average than North American users. With 26 percent of the NHL's players being from outside North America, many European fans are seeking to better follow their native countrymen playing in the league.

The free version of the application, titled NHL Ice Time 2010, will include live scores, in-game statistics, a gametracker, photos, schedules and standings. A premium-level version, carrying price points in euros, English pounds, and both Australian and American dollars, will add a variety of multimedia content such as condensed game videos, in-game and postgame highlights, and live game audio.

League partner NeuLion Inc. aided in development of the applications and will support the video content.

"Our fans in Europe are simply looking for more content, as much as they can get, and it's an area we believe is presently underserved," said John Collins, NHL chief operating officer. "So this is one of the first of what we believe will be more moves to better reach our fans there."

The league also makes its games available online on both a live and on-demand basis in Europe through a partnership with ESPN360.com.

The new NHL Vault product, meanwhile, will be the latest addition to a "Race For The Cup" version of GameCenter Live that will offer live video of the final three weeks of the regular season and first two rounds of the playoffs for \$79. The archival content will also be available separately for \$4.95 per month.

"With both the Vault product and the new mobile applications, we are employing a try-and-buy strategy that's long been something we've believed in and think is the best approach toward driving consumption, scale and the best net revenue," said Perry Cooper, NHL senior vice president of direct and digital marketing.

The league will not revive this spring a joint-venture subscription between GameCenter Live and MLB Advanced Media's MLB.TV that was unveiled last year. Cooper, however, did not rule out a revival of the alliance perhaps in the fall, when "the opportunity may be bigger," he said.

The screenshot shows the NHL Ice Time 2010 app interface on an iPod touch. At the top, it displays the time as 3:57 PM and the app title. Below that is the player's name, Henrik Lundqvist, and his position, GOALIE - NYR. A small NHL logo is visible. The player's stats are listed: NUMBER: 30, HEIGHT: 6' 1", WEIGHT: 198, CATCHES: Left, BIRTHDATE: Mar 2, 1982, BIRTHPLACE: Ars, Sweden, DRAFTED: NYR / 2000 Draft, and ROUND: 7th (205th overall). There are buttons for "Recent Highlight" and "Player Profile". Below this is a "SEASON STATISTICS" table for the 2009-2010 season, showing GP, W, L, SV%, GAA, and MIN. A "Last 5 Games" table follows, listing dates, opponents, and game results. At the bottom, there are navigation icons for Schedule, Standings, Players, NHL.com, and Settings. A white box at the bottom of the screenshot contains the text: "The app will come in free and pay versions."

2009-2010	GP	W	L	SV%	GAA	MIN
	57	26	22	.920	2.42	3297

Last 5 Games	DEC	GA	SA	SV	SV%	TOI
Mar 07 BUF@NYR	O	2	32	30	.938	62:16
Mar 04 PIT@NYR	O	5	55	50	.909	63:42
Mar 02 NYR@OTT	W	1	25	24	.960	60:00
Feb 14 TBK@NYR	W	2	29	27	.931	60:00