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## Cristina Neagu and Filip Jicha World Handball Players of the Year 2010



Double premiere in the world of handball: For the first time ever a female player from Romania and a male player from the Czech Republic are the World Handball Players of the Year. An expert jury, international media and handball fans from all over the world have cast their votes – and the winners are Cristina Neagu and Filip Jicha.

IHF President Dr Hassan Moustafa announced the new World Handball Players of the Year at the opening press conference of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Men's World Championship in Gothenburg on Thursday. The awards, sponsored by IHF partner Grundfos, will be handed over to the winners at the final weekend of the WCh in Malmö.

The results of the voting for the World Handball Players 2010\*:

(\*a combined voting of a jury of experts and coaches, international media and fans)

### Women:

1. Cristina Neagu (Romania, 25%)
2. Katrine Lunde-Haraldsen (Norway, 23%)
3. Bojana Popovic (Montenegro, 19%)
4. Grit Jurack (Germany 17%)
5. Liudmila Postnova (Russia 16%)

### Men:

1. Filip Jicha (Czech Republic, 31%)
2. Nikola Karabatic (France, 28%)
3. Thierry Omeyer (France, 17%)
4. Igor Vori (Croatia, 14%)
5. Arpad Sterbik (Spain, 10%)

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## Portraits World Handball Players of the Year 2010:

### Cristina Neagu

Born: 26/08/1988

Nationality: Romanian

Club: Oltchim Valcea (Romania)

List of awards: IHF Rookie of the Year 2009, bronze medallist at the Women's EURO 2010 with Romania, member of the EURO 2010 all-star team, EHF Champions League finalist 2010 with Valcea

The Romanian left back was only 18 years old, when she started in the first Romanian league, and has played – despite her young age – more than 80 international matches for the Romanian women's national team (and scored more than 300 goals) up to now. After she had started playing basketball, she turned to handball at the age of 12 and played for CSS Bucharest. At the age of 16 she changed to the Romanian top club Rulmentul Brasov and became a player of the youth national team. In 2005 she won the silver medal at the European Youth Championship and was awarded Most Valuable Player of the tournament. Again in 2006 at the Youth World Championship she was awarded MVP and won the bronze medal with Romania. One year later she took her third medal – again bronze – at the European Junior Championship and was awarded best left back of the tournament. At the same time she started to play in the Romanian women's team and reached the fourth place at the WCh in France in 2007. In 2008 she played at the Olympics (7.) and the EURO (5.); in 2009 Neagu and Romania ranked eighth at the WCh in China. Six months after she had played in the finals of the European Cup Winners' Cup with Brasov, she transferred to Oltchim Valcea in January 2009. In 2009 and 2010 she became Romanian champion and played (and lost) the final of the 2010 EHF Champions League against Viborg (Denmark). In December 2010 she led the Romanian team to the bronze medal at the Women's EURO in Norway and Denmark, where she was also awarded all-star team player on the left back position.

### Filip Jicha

Born: 19/04/1982

Nationality: Czech

Club: THW Kiel (Germany)

List of awards: EHF Champions League winner 2010, Czech and German Handball Player of the Year, German champion 2008, 2009, 2010, German cup winner 2008 and 2009, EHF Champions League finalist 2008 and 2009, top scorer of the EHF EURO 2010, Most Valuable Player and all-star team member at the EHF EURO 2010, top scorer of the EHF Champions League 2009 and 2010, runners-up of the top scorer list of the World Championship 2007, 8<sup>th</sup> place at the EURO 2010 with Czech Republic, best player in the German Bundesliga 2010, silver medallist at the Youth World Championships 1998 and 2000.

Filip Jicha, nicknamed "Pavel", was one of the most successful handball players in 2010 worldwide. For the first time ever he won the EHF Champions League title due to a great final victory against FC Barcelona with THW Kiel, attended by more than 20,000 spectators in Cologne. The season 2009/2010 was the "Jicha year"; he became top scorer of the Champions League and the EHF EURO 2010 in Austria, where he led the Czech team to the eighth rank.





In addition he was awarded Most Valuable Player of the EURO. The left back, who is married to Hana and father of Valeria, has taken several more titles with his German club, where he has played since 2007. The powerful shooter who is two metres tall is also a strong defence player. Prior to this he played for TBV Lemgo (Germany) and won the EHF Cup in 2006 after some short stays in Arabic countries and Switzerland. He started his career in the Czech city of Pilsen, before changing to the Czech top club Dukla Praha in 2000. Despite two great Jicha performances, his Czech team missed the qualification for the World Championship in Sweden in the play-off matches against Serbia. In more than 120 international matches, Jicha scored more than 630 times for the Czech national team.

### World Handball Players of the Year:

#### Women:

2010: Cristina Neagu (Romania)  
 2009: Alison Pineau (France)  
 2008: Linn-Kristin Riegelhuth (Norway)  
 2007: Gro Hammerseng (Norway)  
 2006: Nadine Krause (Germany)  
 2005: Anita Görbicz (Hungary)  
 2004: Anita Kulcsar (Hungary)  
 2003: Bojana Radulovics (Hungary)  
 2002: Chao Zhai (China)  
 2001: Cecilie Leganger (Norway)  
 2000: Bojana Radulovics (Hungary)  
 1999: Ausra Fridrikas (Austria)  
 1998: Trine Haltvik (Norway)  
 1997: Anja Andersen (Denmark)  
 1996: O Kyeong Lim (Korea)  
 1995: Erszebet Kocsis (Hungary)  
 1994: Mia Hermansson (Sweden)  
 1990: Jasna Merdan-Kolar (Austria)  
 1989: Hyun-Mee Kim (Korea)  
 1988: Svetlana Dasic-Kitic (Yugoslavia)

#### Men:

Filip Jicha (Czech Republic)  
 Slawomir Szmal (Poland)  
 Thierry Omeyer (France)  
 Nikola Karabatic (France)  
 Ivano Balic (Croatia)  
 Arpad Sterbik (Serbia)  
 Henning Fritz (Germany)  
 Ivano Balic (Croatia)  
 Bertrand Gille (France)  
 Kyung Shin-Yoon (Korea)  
 Dragan Skrbic (Serbia)  
 Rafael Guijosa (Spain)  
 Daniel Stephan (Germany)  
 Stephane Stoecklin (France)  
 Talant Dushebajew (Spain)  
 Jackson Richardson (France)  
 Talant Dushebajew (Russia)  
 Magnus Wislander (Sweden)  
 Kang Jae-Won (Korea)  
 Veselin Vujovic (Yugoslavia)