

July 2009



Wellington Hockey Association

Newsletter 7

Welcome to Sean Dancer

Sean Dancer has now started his role as Development Manager with Wellington Hockey Association and we are delighted to have him join the team. As part of his role, Sean is coaching the Women's NHL team and therefore with less than eight weeks to go before nationals, Sean has hit the ground running (more like sprinting).

Only just now retired from playing hockey in order to focus on his coaching, Sean has competed for the Queensland Blades, North Harbour and Northland and represented Australia at

Under 21 level. Latterly he has been playing his club hockey in Belgium.

Sean's coaching experience includes Head Men's Coach and Junior Coach at Herakles Hockey Club, Head Women's Coach at Braxgata Hockey Club and Head Coach of the Belgium Under 16 girls team.

Sean has most recently been working in Belgium for the Braxgata Club undertaking very similar



work to the role he will fulfill here in Wellington. His current priorities are getting to know the Wellington Hockey set up, teams, people and processes, get the women's NHL campaign fully underway and begin to draft plans for developing hockey in the Wellington region.

Note from the Chief Executive

The first issues of the newsletter were primarily aimed at starting to get some information out to the Wellington hockey community in 2009. However, as you can see, we have gone 'all modern' for this issue as I have now discovered Microsoft Publisher on my computer.

We will add a little personality to the communication each month for example starting with an introduction to Sean Dancer,

our new Development Manager and Tim Brown, Chair of the WHA Board, on page 4. Suggestions on who you would like to hear from or about are most welcome.

On a separate topic the WHA Draft Strategic Plan 2009–2012 has just been disseminated to club and secondary contacts (apologies, this will go to Primary contacts on Monday morning) with feedback requested by 31

August. It can also be found online at www.wellingtonhockey.org.nz/page/strategic_plan.html

Finally, I wanted to highlight the update from Kapiti which we felt was timely as they are nearly half way through their first season. A few minor hiccups on the way but I think most will agree it is a fantastic surface.

Best wishes,
Anne-Margaret

Dates for your diary:

- **Primary Competition Review** meeting—Monday 10 August, NHS Pavilion, 7pm. For Team conveners and coaches to attend
- **Secondary Competition Review** meeting—Monday 17 August, NHS Pavilion, 7pm. For Team conveners and coaches to attend
- Saturday 12 September—the **Men's and Women's NHL teams** play the first round against Central in Palmerston North. Come and support them!
- Further events can be found at www.wellingtonhockey.org.nz/plugins/

Update from Kapiti

The Kapiti turf has been well used in its four months of operation. Conceived by the Kapiti Coast Hockey Club, driven and built by a specially created community trust, it has been built (at a cost of \$1.8m) as a multi-sport turf to ensure financial viability. However the Hockey Club users have been very busy making sure they get primary usage through sheer weight of numbers.

The Hockey Club and the Trust are especially pleased to be working with the WHA in developing hockey and the use of the turf.

Home and away games in the WHA senior, junior and secondary competitions seem to have gone well. There are also local competitions with juniors through their schools and a mid-week competition that involves Horowhenua schools using home/away series with the Levin turf. Evenings are busy with hockey training with the full range of teams from primary schools through to Senior P2. There have been visits by college teams from Wellington, Wainui Juniors, Tawa Juniors and some age grade rep teams have had warm-up games.

Feedback from visiting players has been very positive about the playing surface. In the planning and funding, having a top-of-the-line surface was a primary target. Visitors and locals have been very tolerant of the extra walk to the facilities and the lack of shelter. Fortunately Kapiti's reputation for good weather has been reasonably true for most of the winter. Temporary arrangements have coped with the rain, but have struggled in the occasional windy day that we have up here.

The changing rooms are further down the park service road and are not always that obvious when visitors arrive. Our neighbors in the Gym Club have been reasonably tolerant but have asked that we use the council facility. And we had

the occasional difficulty with the Kapiti Council's contractors not always opening the facilities as they were supposed to. Perhaps nobody told them that the turf is a 7 days a week venture.

“We would love to share the turf with anybody who wants to make the trip!”

One of the challenges has been the watering system. It is designed to run off rain and bore water so as to not contribute to Kapiti's water woes, particularly in summer. It has run dry on a couple of occasions meaning the turf has not been at its best. The water storage levels are now closely managed.

Further development is in progress. Stage 2 for dugouts, improved paths and a kiosk had aimed to be completed by mid-June but has been delayed by a funding gap. The designs have now been finalised and there are enough funds to buy the materials at least. Dugouts will definitely be available for next season, even if we have to build them ourselves!!

Stage 3 involves building a pavilion to incorporate changing rooms, storage, social rooms and office space. The plan is to build on the eastern bank between the turf and the car park. It is hoped to finalise design by year end so that funding can be tackled during 2010.

We would love to share our turf with anybody who wants to make the trip up here. We want to fill it with Hockey users. The key contact is Operations Manager, Sue Cotter. She can be reached on 0508 HOCKEY or at kcrtt@paradise.net.nz. The Turf Trust's website is www.kapitisport.org.nz and includes an online booking system.

Dave Jennings – Kapiti Coast Hockey

Jamie MacDuff - Kapiti Community Recreational Turf Trust

July 2009



View of the turf looking north east. Note on the left, the concrete foundations in place for the dugouts and officials box. Council changing rooms are out-of-sight down the service road to the right. The building to the top of the picture is the privately operated Gym Club.

Blacksticks update

We are delighted to confirm Anita Punt and Beth Jurgeleit have both been named to compete in the Oceania Cup in August. You hopefully saw Anita's picture on the cover of Capital Life this week! The Cup will be played in Invercargill at the Turnbull Thomson Hockey Stadium from 25- 29 August. It will be contested by New Zealand, Australia and Samoa. New Zealand is the current Cup holder.

We also send our best wishes to Tae Samuel and Frances Shaw who headed off to Junior World Cup this week

(Boston, USA). The Junior Blacksticks are in a very tough pool with the Netherlands, Spain and China. If you wish to follow the team's results the website for the World Cup tournament is at www.usfieldhockey.com/juniorworldcup/schedule/index.php

Joel Baker and Kyle Pontifex also take the field for New Zealand shortly, playing for the Blacksticks in the test series against Malaysia. The first two of the 5-test series are in Palmerston North:

- **Sunday, 9 August, 2.30pm Palmerston North**
- **Tuesday, 11 August, 6.30pm Palmerston North**
- **Thursday, 13 August, 6.30pm Napier**
- **Friday 14, August, 6.30pm Napier**
- **Sunday 16, August, 1.30pm Taupo**

Devendra Patel will also be umpiring in this series and we wish him all the best.

Club News

As part of her role, Anne-Margaret has been meeting with a number of Clubs' committees to get a feel for the issues facing them and also to inform clubs about the changes happening and plans taking shape within WHA.

Anne-Margaret finds the meetings incredibly enjoyable and valuable and aims to make these contacts an at least annual occurrence.

Common concerns expressed include the high cost to play hockey, the reliance we have on grants to fund our core activities, learning more about the relationship between the NHS Trust and WHA and some good discussion about how some of the competition structures could be changed to make them more stimulating.

Some other issues raised by clubs include:

- The high numbers of secondary players in senior competition
- Improving the quality of competition at secondary level
- How to improve the quality of the women's competition
- The Elsdon toilet facilities were criticised (we have passed this on to the NHS Trust)
- Lack of turf time for practice difficult for larger clubs and smaller clubs may be stuck with the least desirable training times

Some good ideas also came forward for stimulating the competition structure:

- An FA cup-type competition (all teams from all grades can enter, a knock-out competition, runs alongside main competition games)
- A super league for top clubs in the region – perhaps instead of the 3rd round of competition.
- A 6-a-side competition to occur at some time (Kapiti are keen to build their beginning of season event into a high profile tournament for the region)
- Indoor hockey to break the season

If your club committee is interested in having Anne-Margaret attend a meeting, please do get in touch (contact details on pg. 4).

Sponsorship

In order to reduce our reliance on funding grants, we are keen to increase and update the signage around the various grounds in Wellington, Porirua and Lower Hutt and in the first instance have been contacting businesses based around Newtown to see if they are interested in sponsorship of some form.

As you would expect, the current financial times mean there is limited funding

available for this type of commitment. However despite this, a small number of businesses have expressed good interest and we will be meeting with these contacts over the next weeks to see how we can support them.

If you have ideas on who we could contact, for any of our grounds, please get in touch with Anne-Margaret (contact details on Page 4). There are a wide

range of options ranging from \$50 to over \$5000 per annum (something for everyone).





Supporting great hockey

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Wellington Hockey Association is proud to receive support from the following funders:



On the spot—Tim Brown

Tim Brown joined the newly formed WHA Board in late 2008 and subsequently took on the role of Chair. A member of the Infratil Executive, Tim is also a Director of the Wellington Airport and NZ Bus. Among all this activity he easily managed to find some time to answer a couple of questions for the newsletter:

What made you decide to contribute your time to WHA as a member of the Board?

My three children are or have been players. I was very impressed with the sport's organisation but also felt there were things which could be done better. Standing on the sidelines talking to people like Brent Miskimmin about ways which the sport could be improved, he said "rather than just talking about it, why not actually do something to help", so I did.

How have your first months been as Chair of the WHA Board?

It has been a steep learning curve having a new governance structure, board members and Chief Executive. There is a lot of not even knowing what you don't know. WHA has been extraordinarily fortunate to have got Anne-Margaret as chief executive and to have so many very knowledgeable and constructive people involved in the sports governance and administration.

What comes next for WHA?

We have to make sure Hockey in Wellington is affordable. We have to make sure we get talented coaches and other ways to lift our players. We have to improve facilities.

What else should we know about you?

I'm a passionate about Wellington and about its social climate, where Hockey is doing a great job. But I have to admit I don't really understand the game at the top level.



Tim Brown, Chair, WHA Board