

August 2009



Wellington Hockey Association

Newsletter 8

Hockey Competitions for summer

Masters

A Masters competition is being run for the first time this year - short and sharp with the emphasis definitely on the social side of hockey. There is a great deal of interest out there in the competition and **teams will be chosen on a first come first served basis** (there will be a maximum of 6 teams in each men's and women's competitions) therefore please get your entry forms in as soon as possible.

[Masters Comp details](#)

Summer League

There will be two summer league competitions running again over the 2009 / 2010 summer season. The first has entries forms available online now under Local Competitions.

[Summer League details](#)

Twilight Hockey

A new competition was run early in 2009 for years 4-5, 6-7 and 8 (half field, 6-a-side). We will be running this same competition again toward the end of this year - therefore please keep an eye out for details, or get in touch with the WHA office to register your interest.

Thank you to those who have responded to the Draft Strategic Plan. The stated closing date for responses was 31 August - therefore if you still wish to comment please do so by 12pm, Friday, 4 September at the latest.

[Draft Strategic Plan](#)

Note from the Chief Executive

I have just enjoyed a great weekend in Taupo watching the men's and women's NHL teams in action preparing for the National Hockey League (NHL) this year. It was wonderful to see the support from the families and friends who travelled there and to observe the continuous improvement from the teams over the weekend. Both teams drew against Auckland, and comfortably beat North Harbour. The women beat Midlands with the men narrowly losing to the Midlands' men 4-3.

There was some tremendous hockey being played by our teams and it will be well worth your effort to get to Palmerston North to support them for the opening weekend of NHL against Central (12 September, 1pm women, 3pm men). The competition continues in Christchurch the following weekend.

[NHL Draw](#)

We are also blessed to have the Federation Cup played outside our office windows this week. The

final is being played on Friday at 1.45pm and it will definitely be worth while to take a long lunch and come along to watch (and we even have great coffee on sale here this week).

[Federation Cup Draw](#)

In saying that, the passion shown on the sidelines and on the field with our own Secondary and Primary competitions is often difficult to surpass. Good luck to all those teams with finals coming in the next weeks.

Anne-Margaret

Dates for your diary:

- Saturday 12 September - the Men's and Women's NHL teams play the first round against Central in Palmerston North.
- Secondary Competition Finals Week - 15 - 18 September
- Primary Competition Finals - Saturday 19 September
- Open Grade Finals (P2 - R4) - Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 September
- Open Grade Competition Review Meeting to be held early October (notice confirming date to go to all clubs shortly)
- Further events can be found online at [WHA Events Calendar](#)

Mark Rutter - Profile

Mark Rutter was appointed Coach of the Men's NHL Team in 2009. Mark has very strong coaching experience in a range of local, regional and national teams in Australia and as noted below, a range of experience with teams from around the world.

Describe a typical working year for you?

This has been a different year for me as I am not directly employed by Hockey Australia for the first time in 10 years. Therefore I have been working with many different coaching programs - January and February in Brisbane. March had the inclusion of working with the Labrador club on the Gold Coast who are very progressive and looked at having programs put into place to develop their coaches as well as their players. April involved the same as well as working in Japan, individual players came on board for coaching as the representative season is in May and June. A visiting team from Sth Africa arrived late April and I worked with them for the 2 weeks they were in Brisbane. May involved work talent identification with the National Indigenous program at the State Championships in Qld as well as working with TID squads in Brisbane.

of training programs within centres and clubs before watching my sons play cricket during a long summer. Then another year begins.

You are a keen sportsman. If you weren't a hockey coach – what sport would you like to coach and why?

I would like to coach Australian Rules Football as firstly I find the game very exciting with players having great personal attributes such as speed, agility, ball skills with both hands and feet and also to be involved in the culture of AFL. With the sport being professional it would be fantastic to be involved when you could fund research programs, have rehab programs and the ability to have athletes, outside support staff and other coaches 7 days a week and for 8 hours a day.

You have travelled fairly extensively with hockey – how have the varying hockey cultures influenced you as a coach?

I think that the culture of a country has a great impact on how athletes within that country think and behave. For some countries the culture is reflected in the style and way they play the game e.g. Japan have the most respectful and polite culture which at times does not allow for people to question information it receives. They therefore will do everything to the letter and will not think and adjust to different situations. The good players in the country can adjust and with the fitness and discipline they all have make them international standard. Living in Brunei for 2 years was a great insight into Asian culture and the culture again had a great bearing on what they achieved and how they progressed as hockey players. A piece of every country that I have visited has had an impact and influence on me as a coach. I know that the people I have met and worked with in every country have also had an impact.

Which are the hockey-playing countries we should be looking to emulate in some way?

I am not sure we need to emulate any country in particular as there is no clear Nation who is totally outstanding. So a piece of the really successful and strong Nations would be the best thing to do. I think that NZ has some really good attributes that other countries would like to know more about. If we were to look at the way hockey is played but also administered in some countries, the benefits to NZ hockey would be significant. The club atmosphere and the discipline of the Dutch are just examples of what some countries have to offer. I think that the coaches that are put into place are very important to any country as they have a very important role in shaping the hockey culture within that country.

New Zealand hockey teams have been inconsistent performers over the years – how do you envisage this changing in the near future?

I think that measuring consistency is very difficult as teams are graded on results and the obtaining of those results has many factors. Injuries, depth of talent, other results are all factors a coach has no control over. My observation of NZ hockey is that

Reminder:

Vote for your...



Nominations close 4 Sept

[Further details](#)

June involved my first introducing to Wellington and my position as Men's NHL coach where I met the support staff involved with the team and had the opportunity through trials to see players first hand. The selection of the squad at the end of June was certainly the start of our NHL campaign.

I took some time out to watch my son play his first rep tournament. I enjoyed being a parent and looking at things from a different prospective. July firstly involved watching my older son play in his first

rep tournament in hockey (after years of playing Aussie rules football). Then came TID work and a camp with the Indigenous program. The continual work with individuals and guest work with clubs in Brisbane made for a busy month as well as a busy week in Wellington when we had the squad in training and setting the benchmarks for our program. The support staff have been doing a wonderful job and we were getting over injuries and sickness and a good culture was present in the squad.

August was work back at the Labrador club as the main project. I have been coaching my son's U11 team during the year and they were a wonderful challenge and experience and we played a semi-final which they won. I have been in Wellington since mid August and will be here until the start of October. November and December has coaching in regional Queensland and work with TID groups in Brisbane as well as working in Japan and maybe India. The setting up

Mark Rutter - Profile cont...

it is becoming more consistent and a greater threat on the world stage. Players playing overseas, the development of coaching directors in provinces and an NHL that wants to be of a quality standard are all important for NZ hockey. Of course if there was more money then the players could have more international experience, more coaches in the provinces for the development of players and also having coaches looking after the young children in school and junior levels. I'm sure the administrators could also find money for areas which would also benefit the game with the injection of funds.

Now you have had a chance to observe some of the talent in the Wellington region, where do our strengths lie?

I think that Wellington has a really nice blend of coaches who are very competent working in your junior programs. There is good TID and the appointment of Sean will only add to the excellent work which has been carried out over the previous years. Wellington has very good youth coming through and this is helping to strengthen the senior grades which seems to have an even spread of talent in the clubs. This is of course the area which must always be held with importance as with a continual flow of talented youth the province will become stronger.

Are there some obvious areas WHA should be focusing on to further develop our players?

I think this is already being developed and the most important areas are being addressed. You have in place a CoachForce Officer coaching the coaches and a Development Manager structuring the player development. The structuring of TID squads/ coaching development programs exposing players to coaches who have various hockey backgrounds is a very strong asset. I look and see you have German, English, Dutch and Australian coaches just to name some of the coaches I have met. All these people bring something different and give the players an opportunity to gain skills from not only NZ coaches. Not forgetting that you have NZ National team coaches and ex-national players here who offer so much to your coaching programs. Being as progressive as Wellington is will help everybody involved in hockey.

There are a number of very good Australian's working in hockey in New Zealand – is this a coincidence or something more?

I think that Australians have a really healthy respect for NZ hockey and therefore like what NZ offers. I would hope that Australians bring things to NZ hockey which only benefit NZ hockey, plus they are really nice people.

FYI Fraser Park is all due for replacement at the end of the winter season (September). The new surface will be a wet-dressed surface, of higher quality than the Elsdon Turf (which was the best available at the time). STI will be laying the Fraser Turf.

A great letter

We were delighted to have received the following letter recently, which was subsequently communicated to the WHA Board. It was agreed this was more than appropriate to share with the wider hockey community.

Dear Anne-Margaret

We have just recently accommodated your Wellington U18 Girls Hockey team here in Christchurch. I would like to personally acknowledge the pleasure it was to have Linda as Manager, the associated Coaches and referees and the girls staying with us. So often in this day and age we hear a lot of negative comment of our young people with their attitudes, behavior etc. It was heartening for us to have such a well managed and well behaved team with great respect and attitude that was displayed while here at our lodge for their national competition.

Please acknowledge to your association and to Linda, the Girls, Coaches and referees our thanks and appreciation.

Regards

*Neale Price
Manager, Ashford Lodge*

Our congratulations go to Linda Wellington, Paul Tessier and the Under 18 A Girls team.

Secondary and Primary Review Meetings

Two review meetings were held in August for the Primary and Secondary competitions.

Primary

There was some very good discussion at this meeting around a range of issues, with the key concern being lack of time to warm up and play the scheduled games. Unfortunately there is little we can do to resolve this issue until we get an additional turf in Wellington, as the turfs are used so heavily throughout the week there is no room to spare. Therefore we need to ensure that scheduled games do run to time and half-time breaks are kept to an absolute minimum to ensure the time on the pitch is maximised as much as possible for all teams.

The Primary Mixed competition was discussed noting there were not enough teams in the competition. The suggestion was made to play the first competition round and join in with the boys competition for the remaining weeks. This will be confirmed when we know entry numbers in 2010.

The role of the Duty Teams was clarified. Some teams feel their role is redundant as the umpires take over the timing of the games. However it was agreed the duty roster would continue however the instructions for teams would be updated and the control of timings of games clarified (control to remain with the Duty Team).

It was agreed promotion/relegation would continue as is (automatic).

The lack of entries in the 8-a-side competition was discussed (only 4 this year). Members of the Youth Advisory Council believe this competition is an important step for young players to take before they head into 11-a-side competition and that there are a number of teams entered into 11-a-side who would be playing a better structured game in 8-a-side. The length of these games was an issue in the past and definitely did prevent some schools from entering the competition again in 2009 (in the mean time the length of the games had been remedied). Schools are therefore encouraged to consider the 8-a-side competition for 2010.

Another issue talked through was around umpiring with feedback almost entirely positive about the number and quality of appointed umpires.

The Handbook was discussed with some of the proposed changes raised with the group. The draft Handbook will be disseminated to all conveners for comment before being finalised by year-end ready for the 2010 year.

Secondary

Discussion was positive at this meeting with it agreed the previous changes to the Secondary competition have made for a better competition.

The suggested changes to the Handbook were discussed with the attendees happy with the content. The draft Handbook will be sent to all conveners for comment before being finalised by year end.

Discussions during the evening included:

- Reminding teams of some of the rules at the start and middle of the season
- All grades are required to complete cards for games—cards to be sent to schools at the beginning of the year
- The other school must agree to the change if there is a change of playing day involved

Many thanks to those who contributed to the above meetings.

What a wonderful performance from the Blacksticks Women in beating Australia in the final of the Oceania Cup and therefore securing a place at the World Cup in 2010. The men in losing the final will now compete in the World Cup Qualifier in Invercargill in November. The winner of that tournament will also directly qualify for the 2010 World Cup.

Umpires' achievements

We have had some good success with our umpires for the 2009 tournament season with a much increased number of umpires being confirmed for tournaments this year. Our congratulations go to all those umpires for their successes noting in particular Daniel Hunt reserving for the Under 18 Premier Boys final, Samantha Hunt named as most improved umpire for the Girls Under 18 Premier tournament and Miles Parker umpiring the final of the Under 18 Boys Championship.

Devendra Patel has also featured on the international umpiring stage lately being series umpire for the recent Malaysian test series against the Blacksticks Men and acting as 3rd umpire at the Oceania Cup (you may have spotted him on TV officiating the strokes in the women's final).

We also wish good luck to the following umpires who have been appointed to up and coming tournaments:

Adam Parsons - Hatch Cup
Katie Fraser - Collier
Apera Akavi, Vaudin Cole (and hopefully Brendon Cullen) - Senior Nationals
Samantha Hunt - Federation Cup
Daniel Hunt - Rankin Cup
Devendra Patel, Umpires Manager and Warren Devereaux, Umpire - India Shield
Emily McNaughtan - U13b Girls
Sam McKee - U13b Boys
Penny Thompson - U11a Girls
Jack Wellington - U11A Boys
Blair Scannell - U11b Boys



Supporting great hockey

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