



UPDATE FROM HILARY POOLE - CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Friday 18th December 2009

Dear Associations, Regions and Councils – Chairs, Board Members and Executive Officers

I am writing to you at the conclusion of a very successful year for Hockey throughout New Zealand and on the international stage.

From Hockey New Zealand, here is a summary of highlights for us in terms of our work in the last 2 months:

- Hosting of the Regional Development conference and completion of the development of the introductory coaching courses, which are now accessible on line;
- Confirmation of the National Domestic Tournament Programme;
- Confirmation of the National Hockey League (NHL) format and timing for 2010;
- The Black Sticks Women won the Champions Challenge in South Africa;
- With Hockey Southland, we successfully hosted the World Cup Qualifying Tournament in Invercargill, which was won by the Black Sticks Men who have qualified for the 2010 World Cup to be hosted in New Delhi;
- The Black Sticks Men won the Champions Challenge in Argentina, qualifying for the Champions Trophy in Germany in July 2010;
- A draft 'Whole of Sport' Strategy has been prepared and is with the Hockey New Zealand Board; and
- The Hockey New Zealand Annual Plan and Budget for 2010 has been adopted by the Board.

This update from me is released in behind Hockey New Zealand's December E Newsletter, to avoid duplication of Hockey related content. You can access the most recent newsletter through this link <http://www.p6.co.nz/nzhockey/Dec09/email.html>

NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE (NHL)

An NHL planning meeting was held with representatives of the 8 NHL franchises during November. We all agreed that the overall NHL objectives are:

1. To provide the highest level of national domestic competition; and
2. To provide a marketable product or package that will attract media, spectators and sponsors.

There was discussion and agreement that the optimal competition structure was a hybrid format which included play over 2-3 weekends, followed by the final rounds, semi finals and final run together. There was commitment to increasing the amount of play throughout the 8 Regions, enabling this competition to have greater local exposure, plus strong commitment to retaining cost equalization.

Acknowledging the increased costs of this structure, we agreed that it would take several years to get to the optimal format and that if there was to be a move away from the current September timing, Regions and Associations would need a minimum of 18 months notice to make changes to their own programmes to accommodate this. Hockey New Zealand remains of the view that September is not the optimal timing for the National Hockey League as this timing overlaps with major internationals and the northern hemisphere competitions, meaning a number of our international players are often unavailable, thus compromising the first objective.

National Hockey League 2010

The format for 2010 NHL will be similar to 2009 except the first weekend will be a double header with games on both Saturday and Sunday, enabling semi finals prior to the finals while still maintaining 2 rest days during the tournament week.

The games for the first weekend will be split between three venues. The four Northern teams Auckland, Midlands, North Harbour and Northland will play in Auckland on the Saturday and Albany on the Sunday. The four remaining teams Canterbury, Central, Southern and Wellington will play in Palmerston North on both days. The remaining rounds and finals will be played in Wellington.

The first double header will be held on the 11th -12th September with the tournament week being played from the 18th – 26th September.

National Hockey League September 2010

11 th	12 th	18 th	19 th	20 th	21 st	22 nd	23 rd	24 th	25 th	26 th
SAT	SUN	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
Rnd 1	Rnd 2	Rnd 3	Rnd 4	Rnd 5	Rest	Rnd 6	Rnd 7	Rest	Semi's	Finals
AUCKLAND	ALBANY	WELLINGTON								
PALMERSTON NORTH										

Hockey New Zealand plans to reintroduce the NHL player function and increase communications around this event.

Player Eligibility

This was discussed at the NHL Planning meeting and it was decided that the player eligibility ruling for 2010 will remain the same as for 2009:

“Players named in the current year’s National Squad are entitled to play representative hockey for either the province where they currently play club hockey, or the province they last represented (excluding those who participated under Guest Player Status), or apply for Province of Origin status.

Once a province is chosen, the player must represent that province for the entire year.

National squad members not selected or required by the Association they are registered with, are still eligible for Guest Player status.”

This ruling applies to the Under 21 and Under 18 tournaments as well as NHL. Please ensure that players are aware that once they have made their decision they must play for the same province for the entire year.

NB. This ruling applies to players playing in Auckland and North Harbour Associations as well.

2010 NATIONAL MASTERS TOURNAMENT

The National Masters Tournament is one of the larger tournaments hosted by Hockey New Zealand. Entries have now closed for the 2010 Tournament which will be hosted by Nelson Hockey Association with some games being played in Blenheim.

In 2010 there will be 10 divisions, starting from 35 years plus for both Men and Women, and in total 56 teams have entered. The one team entered in the Men's 35 division will instead play in the Men's 40 division, however they will not be able to win that competition.

Teams entered into 2010 Masters Tournament

	MEN'S DIVISIONS					WOMEN'S DIVISIONS				
Age Group	35	40	45	50	55	35	40	45	50	55
No. of Teams	1	7	6	7	5	9	7	7	3	4

The Masters Tournament will continue on its agreed hosting cycle with one event in the South Island (Nelson 2010), followed by two in the North Island (venues tbd 2011, 2012). Interest in hosting these Tournaments should be expressed directly to the Masters Council.

SPORT DEVELOPMENT

The national conference for Regional Development Officers and Coach Force staff was held in Wellington in October. Fifteen Associations were represented by the seventeen participants. The majority of the two days was spent working on delivery skills for the Hockey New Zealand Small Sticks, Youth and Club coaching courses.

These introduction level courses are now fully developed and will be delivered consistently around the country in 2010. As a supporting resource to these courses, a website www.nzhockeytoolkit.com is now live and available to provide drills and coaching tips for all course attendees. A notes summary of the conference is available on the Hockey New Zealand website.

Members of the Coach Development squad, Hymie Gill and Dave Ross, led by Kevin Towns, attended part of the World Cup Qualifier in Invercargill. The learning opportunities for Hymie and Dave, while watching international hockey with Kevin were tremendous. The ongoing learning of both Dave and Hymie will be of great benefit to their regions.

PLANNING, 2010 AGM AND THE 2010 ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE

Hockey New Zealand has begun work on a 'Whole of Sport' Strategy for Hockey. This includes nationwide strategies for our sport from grass roots through to high performance. Its important that this strategy is endorsed by members of the Hockey community, and the respective organizations that are involved in the delivery of hockey – Clubs, Associations, NHL Regions, Councils and Hockey New Zealand. To that end, this strategy will gain input from participants at the upcoming Administration Conference and AGM.

The Hockey New Zealand Board approved Hockey New Zealand's 2010 Annual Plan and Budget at the Board meeting held on Tuesday 15th December. These will be presented at the 2010 AGM.

Administration Conference – 10th and 11th March 2010

The Administration Conference will be held in Auckland on the 10th and 11th of March. A key focus will be the input from administrators into the Whole of Sport Strategy. We will work to finalise the agenda for this conference in the New Year with input from attendees – if you have specific topics you would like to cover, can you please send these through to Tracy Willis.

2010 AGM – 20th March 2010

My doesn't time fly! With the change in Hockey New Zealand's financial year, the 2010 AGM will be held in Auckland on Saturday 20th March 2010. Remits and recommendations will be called for on 15th January 2010. Because of the short time frame following the last AGM, we will not be calling for nominations for Awards, but will do this as 2010 draws to a close for consideration and presentation at the 2011 AGM.

FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

This project is now underway with a national strategy and two local strategies being developed for greater Auckland and Wellington.

The steering committee for the National Strategy comprises:

- Neil Edmundson – Hawkes Bay
- Hilary Stubbs – Canterbury and Youth Council
- Tim Shannahan – Canterbury
- Dion Gosling – past Black Stick and Players Association
- Nicola Connell and Hilary Poole – Hockey New Zealand

Besides forecasting future demand and participation and turf requirements, a key output from the National Strategy will be the facilities specification matrix, including minimum standards for the full range of competitions, for turf and surrounding facilities and infrastructure. This will be a key input to the review of the current Domestic Tournament Allocations Schedule and Surface Policy that Hockey New Zealand will review with input from the respective councils in 2010.

Regional Capability

I continue to receive a number of questions and comments regarding “regionalisation”. I am a big believer in strategy before structure, thus the focus first on developing the Whole of Sport Strategy which will provide a logical input into the capabilities that we need as a sport, then the implications for organisation. In the meantime, Hockey New Zealand will continue quarterly calls during 2010, primarily for communication purposes, between the chairs of the NHL Franchises and Graham Child, chair of Hockey New Zealand.

Hockey New Zealand Staff News

We said good bye to Iain Stewart last week from his role as Team Services Manager. Iain has taken on the toughest and most important role of his life with his decision to stay home and look after his baby daughter, while his wife returns to full time work. We have had more than 150 applications for Iain's role, and until the new appointment can begin Leanne Knox is relieving in this position.

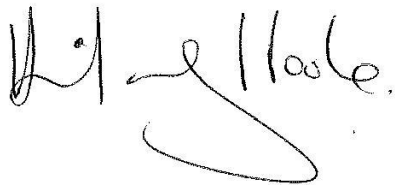
We farewell Megan Horsburgh from the role of Media Manager at the conclusion of the year, after 7 years of working part time for Hockey New Zealand. Megan has been appointed Communications Manager for the Child Cancer Foundation. Megan has done a great job for Hockey New Zealand, and I have really enjoyed working with her in my short time here and wish her all the very best for her new role.

Taking over Megan's responsibilities and leading the communications initiatives for 2010 will be Val Hayes, who takes up the role of Acting Communications Manager on January 22. Val has an extensive communications background having had communications roles with DB Group, Vodafone New Zealand, and Air New Zealand. For the past seven years Val has been working as a communications consultant, including four years with Netball New Zealand in various communication and marketing roles.

I thank you all for your dedication and commitment to Hockey and I am really looking forward to an exciting 2010.

Wishing you and your families a very Happy Christmas and restful holiday.

Kind regards and best wishes



Chief Executive - Hockey New Zealand

