

ISSUE 6 | 2016

planet HOCKEY

magazine



CALIFORNIA CUP HOCKEY FESTIVAL
HOCKEY CHAMPIONS TROPHY
2016 HAWKES BAY CUP

D R E A M B I G



PLAY HUGE

Kelsey Kolojejchick No. 7

Katie Bam No. 16

Jill Witmer No. 10

Ali Campbell No. 30



STX.COM

Proud partner of



CONTENTS

ISSUE 6
2016

26

CALIFORNIA CUP
INTERNATIONAL
HOCKEY FESTIVAL

75

FESTIVAL
OF HOCKEY
HAS MUCH TO
CELEBRATE

This year, the second year as an 8 Nations Cup saw Japan, China, Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, India and Canada take part in the tournament.

99

FULTON & THE
HISTORY BOYS

While the majority of other teams bound for Rio are full-time, Ireland's 27-man extended panel straddle an awkward middle-ground, attempting to compete at elite level with non-elite funding.

104

SEEKING GOLD
IN RIO

The Rio Olympics are just weeks away and, for many players, the recent Champions Trophy was the final opportunity for players to ensure that they would be on the bus to Brazil. We spoke to four players about their hopes and dreams for Rio.

116

THE UNSUNG
HEROES OF THE
SIDELINES

126

HOCKEY IN THE
21ST CENTURY –
CAN
TECHNOLOGY
TRUMP
INTUITION?

134

MEN'S HOCKEY
CHAMPIONS
TROPHY

144

WOMEN'S
HOCKEY
CHAMPIONS
TROPHY

169

HOCKEY'S
HEROES MARCH
ON

172

GRASSROOTS
OR STAGNANT
POND?

182

STICK REVIEW

188

THE IDEAS MAN IS
AHEAD OF HIS TIME

196

EFFECTIVE GOAL
KEEPING

204

BLITZ & FURY
SEE OFF SHARK
ATTACK

212

THE MOST
ADVANCE HOCKEY
STICK EVER MADE

REGULARS

Editor's Notes
Lauren Penny

7
11

Peter Langford
Stephen Findlater

14
18



Kia Kaha Media Group

PO Box 37 978, Parnell,
Auckland 1001, New Zealand

+64 21 757 747 | info@planethockeymag.com

THE TEAM

PUBLISHER

Neville 'Ned' Dawson

EUROPEAN EDITOR / DEPUTY EDITOR

Sarah Juggins

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

John Whiting

Lawrence West

Diana Dobson

Stephen Findlater

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

James Philip Harris

Iain McAuslan

Greg Thompson

Russell Brown

Grant Treeby

Frank Ujlenbroek

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Carolina De Armas @ Dot Design

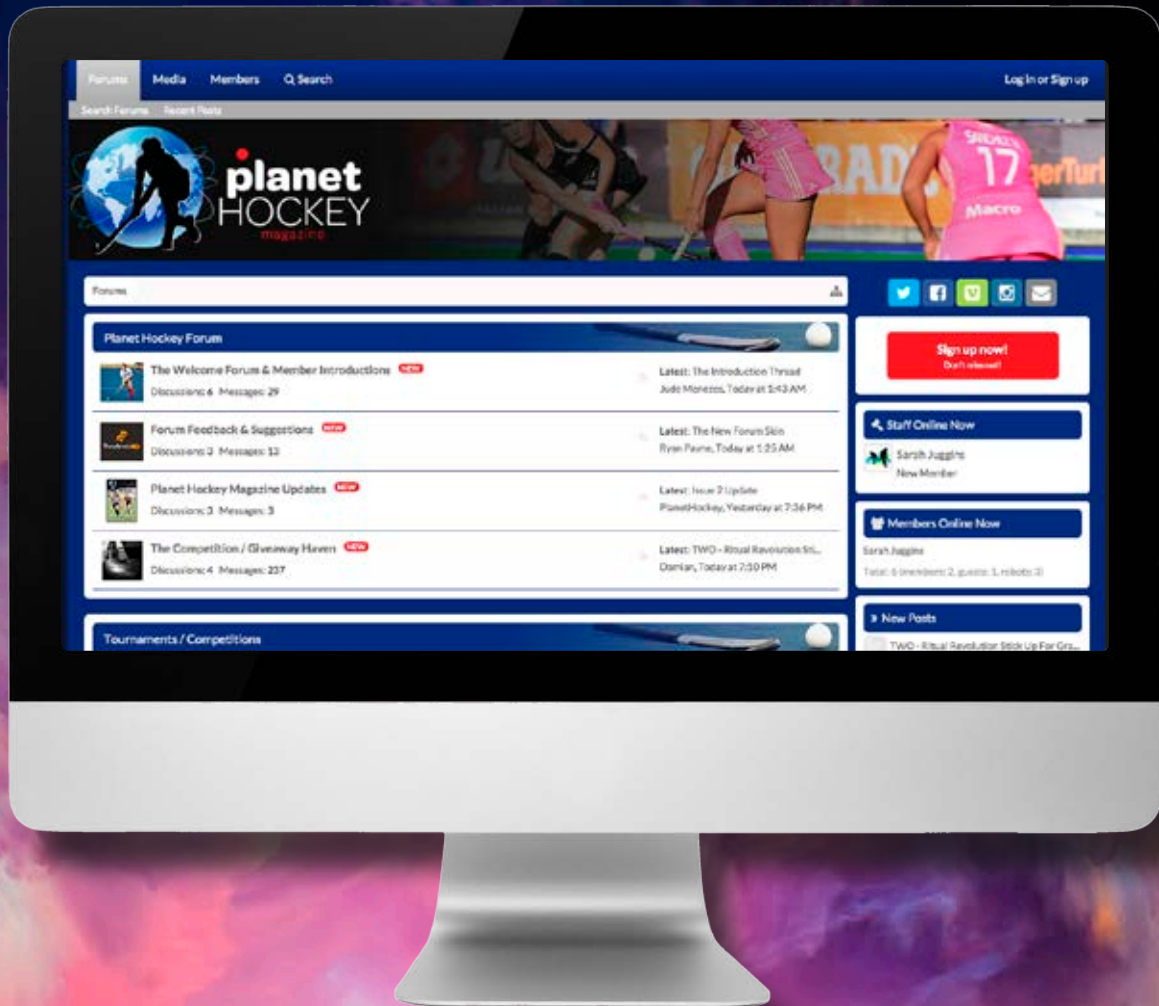




www.planethockeymag.com

planet HOCKEY

magazine



HAVE YOUR SAY!

www.planethockeyforum.com



HOCKEY'S TALKING POINTS

.....

BY
SARAH JUGGINS

Here at Planet Hockey we love people to comment and get involved with discussions about our great sport. Whether you are disagreeing with the latest rule changes, have a beef about our viewpoint or want to highlight something worthy of celebration, all views are welcome.

So the opinion piece by Ralf Heuser, outlining his views on the state of field hockey in the USA, is a welcome critique of the game in that country. It will certainly not be the standpoint of everyone and, elsewhere in the magazine, you will read about both the success of the women's USA team as they took bronze at the Champions Trophy in London and the spread of the game in the States via huge participation tournaments such as the Cal Cup. Is hockey stagnating in the USA? You decide.

It is impossible to write about hockey this month without looking forward to the biggest event in the international hockey calendar – the Olympic Games. It is at this multi-sport event that heroes are created, dreams achieved or heartbreak suffered. The Hockey Champions Trophy, held in London last month, was a precursor to the Olympics and gave us a sneak preview of what may be to come and our extensive coverage of that event reflects the top quality hockey that was on offer over two weeks of men's and women's competition.

Stephen Findlater looks forward to Rio in his articles about two of the lower ranked teams hoping to create their own moments of Olympic magic – Ireland men and Brazil's Samba Sticks. His articles outline the difficulty that comes from playing a sport that struggles to attract funding and sponsorship. Ireland has been punching above its weight for some time now, but the team's success is proving a double-edged sword, while Brazil men will be looking to knock football off the back pages – at least for two weeks of the year.

But, while all that is going on at the highest level of the sport, it is also worth reflecting on all the other developments that are taking place across the world. Coverage of two mega events – the ever-growing Cal Cup and the Holland Cup in Hong Kong



are just two examples of the universal appeal of hockey, while the most touching story in this issue has to be the recent Hockey World League Round One event in Fiji. Teams from one of the most cyclone-ravaged areas of the world came together to play out a competitive and intriguing qualifier. This, just months after tornadoes and cyclones had dashed homes to the ground, wiped out villages and left any sports facilities destroyed.

The government of Fiji has decreed that all sports fixtures and events will be played, despite the destruction and chaos, because sport has the power to bring communities together and raise a country's morale in times of trouble. That is a very powerful message about the importance of sport.

And finally, if anyone was left in any doubt about the good that hockey can do, take a read about the exploits of the guys and girls supporting the charity Hockey for Heroes. With several challenges already under their belts, they are gearing up for another mammoth act of physical endurance to raise funds for armed forces and their families whose lives have been devastated by war.

Sarah Juggins

Deputy Editor, Planet Hockey

NB: Here at Planet Hockey, we believe in audience participation, so email/write/tweet to me and share your thoughts on all things hockey - twitter: @sjuggs15

PASSION FOR PERFECTION



TOUR STICK RANGE

The perfect balance between power and control.

- One lay-up, five shapes
- Silicon Sleeve Technology (SS)

SEE THE FULL 2016 RANGE AT GRYPHONHOCKEY.COM

C.C
CLASSIC CURVE



PRO
PRO



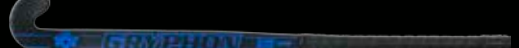
T.B
T-BONE



DII
DELICE II



SAM
SAMURAI



planet
HOCKEY
magazine



@PlanetHockeyMag

Connect with your friends, get in-the-moment updates
& watch events unfold, in real time, from every angle.

DEALING WITH DISAPPOINTMENT IN SPORT



BY
LAUREN PENNY

The countdown to the Olympics has begun.

It is a time that people look forward to because we get the chance to watch the world's best athletes compete in sports that we don't always get the opportunity to see. There are often a ton of extraordinary moments and inspirational stories of achievement, which can inspire us even in our everyday lives.

I am pretty sure that every sports person at some stage has dreamt of the opportunity to perform on the biggest stage in the world, the Olympic Stadium. It is an exciting time, whether you're a player, coach, official, spectator or like most just a fan of sport watching on the big screen.

But for some athletes it can be one of the toughest moments in their life

Imagine putting everything in your life to one side, giving up what most people consider normal and pushing yourself through intense training sessions for four years towards something and then fall short weeks prior, not achieving what you set out.

Many would see this as a waste of time and effort, but one thing to remember is that there are always at least two ways to look at things...

I've been in this situation myself and it's not easy to think like this in the moment.

Back in 2012, I was devastated when I picked up an injury (dislocated shoulder) just six weeks prior to the London Olympic Games, which made me a high risk choice for selection, just days before our Olympic team announcement.

I had to take several months off work (unpaid) while still having bills to pay which was a huge risk for me, but it was one I was willing to take because I had waited many years for this kind of opportunity.

Do I regret my decision to give it a go?

No way. Yes it was, and still is, devastating to think about the disappointment of "missing out" and I do still wonder what would have happened had I not been injured. But I am also very aware of the fact that I can't change what happened in the past.



In fact, I believe that every setback we face provides us with an opportunity to learn and grow. I actually see my personal Olympic disappointment as a blessing in disguise.

I feel like I have learnt more being in the position I was in as a first reserve, till getting the opportunity to experience the Olympics as an athlete but almost having more of a bird's eye view, I was getting to see what goes on outside my own world too.

As a competing athlete you have to be completely focussed on yourself. Although I was still focussed on myself, I was able to experience what most don't get to.

Being a first reserve is a difficult position to be in because you know that you won't play but you have to be ready to step up and be at the top of your game if anyone gets injured.

Without having gone through this, there is no way I would be able to help people the way I do now. I have been through it myself and have faced disappointment, which I believe is a very important lesson for life in general.

"It's not about what happens to you, it is about how you choose to deal with it that really matters"

My message is that 'yes' there is a degree of risk that you have to take in anything that is worthwhile, otherwise everyone would do it. And yes you may have to give up everything and there's still a chance of not getting what you want but in my experience even if you give 100 per cent and fail, it is still worth it.

Something I always say to the sports people that I work with:

"It's better to give 100 per cent and not reach your goal but go further than you thought, than to regret not giving everything you had and remain average for the rest of your life"

You won't reach your goal if you don't commit 100 per cent anyway so you may as well decide what you want and go all in.

Every journey or achievement will not be without any bumps in the road, so

put on your seatbelt and embrace the rough ride, just like any rollercoaster. And remember that often the journey is more important than the actual destination.

As Michael Jordan says: *"I have failed over and over again and that is why I succeed"*

Five Tips To Dealing With Disappointment:

1. Accept what has happened

Be upset in the moment and fully experience the emotions that you are feeling, don't ignore or downplay this as it is very important to deal with what you are feeling.

2. Don't dwell on the past

Once you've dealt with the emotion and let it out, then try to move on as soon as possible. Don't dwell on things in the past for too long because, remember, you can't change the past.

3. Use setbacks as opportunities

Setbacks and disappointment are inevitable in anything worthwhile achieving so expect them. Instead we can use them as ways to learn, improve and better ourselves as a result. Often setbacks can give us extra motivation and drive to work harder and come back even stronger.

4. Choose your perspective

There are always at least two ways to view things so try to take the positive out of every situation, no matter how bad it is. There is always a positive perspective in everything, sometimes you just have to look for it. For example I used my injury setback as a way to focus more on helping others and that is how I discovered my passion for coaching, which I enjoy more than playing now.

5. Set future objectives

Remember that just because you've experienced a setback now, it doesn't mean you won't be successful in future so don't ever give up at the first hurdle. It is those who keep getting up over and over again that succeed. To make this easier you can set yourself new objectives and things to work towards that can drive you forward.

Are you willing to go all to be among the most successful or are you happy with remaining average for the rest of your life? ●

If you would like some guidance on how to reach the next level in your hockey, then visit <http://hockeyperformanceacademy.com> to find out how Lauren can help you get the most out of yourself, both in sport and also in life.

ASK THE DOC



BY
PETER LANGFORD

ONE SIMPLE EXERCISE THAT CAN CUT YOUR RISK OF HAMSTRING INJURY IN HALF

Hamstring injuries are a common complaint for athletes. They can be very painful, quite debilitating and hard to fix properly. Once you have had a hamstring strain then it increases the likelihood that you will have another one at some point.

So obviously the best thing you can do for a hamstring injury is avoid one in the first place. The good news is there is a simple exercise that has been found to significantly reduce the risk of hamstring injury.

Mechanism of Injury

The hamstrings are a group of three muscles in the back of the thigh. There are two main ways that people strain their hamstrings. They occur by:

1. stretching the muscles beyond their limits and tearing them
2. powerful forces going through the muscles as they contract

Out of these options, the second one is more common in athletes. This type of injury happens when a player accelerates rapidly. People who have suffered a hamstring strain will attest to this. They take off quickly to chase a player or the ball and suddenly feel like they have been shot in the back of the leg.

Once you have suffered a hamstring tear they can be troublesome and difficult to rehabilitate, as well as causing ongoing issues.

Injury Prevention

A number of factors have been identified which can predispose people to suffering hamstring injuries. These include age, previous injury, reduced movement in the hip and weak hamstrings.

Strangely enough, there is no real link between hamstring tightness and risk of injury. So stretching programs have been found not to reduce your risk of hamstring injury.



DESIGNED BY
5x WORLD
PLAYER OF
THE YEAR



VISIT WWW.JDHOCKEY.CO TO LEARN MORE

Warm up

Part of protecting yourself from hamstring injury is making sure you warm up properly and consistently. It needs to be done every time players train and every time they play. It is generally agreed these days that an active warm up is best. This should include things like running, leg swings forwards and backwards and bending forward to touch the ground.



Image 1:
Start position hamstring stretch

Warm down

Warming down tends to be the most forgotten part of the whole process. It is very easy to come off the playing field, exhausted, and head straight for the change rooms. It is important to warm down your muscles with some gentle running and stretching. At this time static stretching can be done, that is a prolonged stretch for 30-plus seconds. Hamstring stretches are commonly done incorrectly so it is important to have the correct technique.

Handy Tips For Hamstring Stretch

Hamstring stretches are often done wrong. Bending over to try and touch your toes or put your head on your knee will not necessarily stretch the muscle properly. The stretch needs to be felt in the belly of the muscle, that is, the back of your thigh.

If you feel the stretch behind your knee then it is likely that all you are doing is putting tension on the nerves in your leg and not through the muscle.

Specific exercise

This exercise is most commonly known as "Nordic Hamstring". It is a simple exercise that has been shown by several studies to significantly reduce hamstring injuries in athletes. The key to making this exercise successful is for people to do it consistently.

Just like any training, if you do not stick with the program then you will miss out on the benefits.

A number of high quality studies have now been performed using the Nordic Hamstring exercise. One of the best was a Danish study using almost 1000 athletes. The outcome of this study was significant. They were able to cut the incidence of hamstring injuries in their athlete population by 65 per cent!

The exercise program used in this research ran for 10 weeks, followed by weekly "maintenance" sessions. So just doing the exercise now and then for a couple of weeks will be a waste of your time.

One way to make sure the exercises are done regularly and compliance rates remain high is to incorporate it into the team's training session. Making it compulsory for the entire team tends to make individual athletes more accountable to the rest of the group.

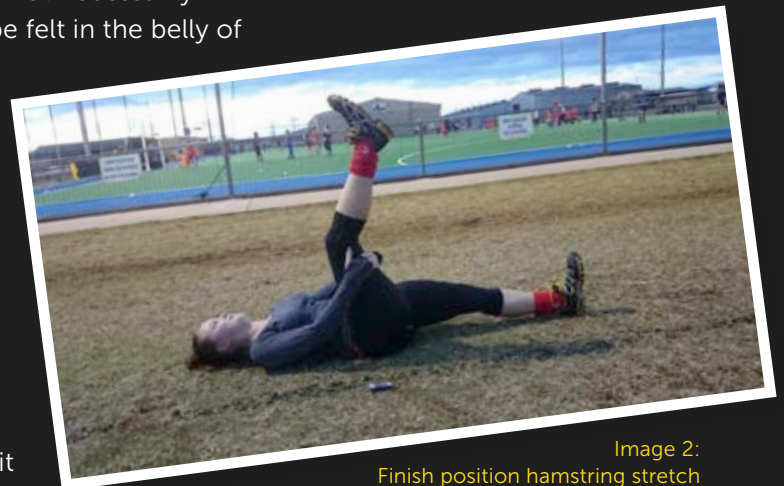


Image 2:
Finish position hamstring stretch

HOW TO PERFORM THE NORDIC HAMSTRING EXERCISE:

Nordic Hamstring start position

- Kneeling down with a partner holding firmly around your ankles to hold you stable throughout the movement
- Stay up tall and brace your core muscles so that your trunk does not bend during the movement
- Your arms can remain by your side



Image 3:
Nordic hamstring start position

The Movement

- Gradually lean forward, keeping your trunk straight.
- As your weight comes forward you should feel your hamstrings start working hard
- Continue to lean into the movement very slowly, using your hamstrings to control the movement

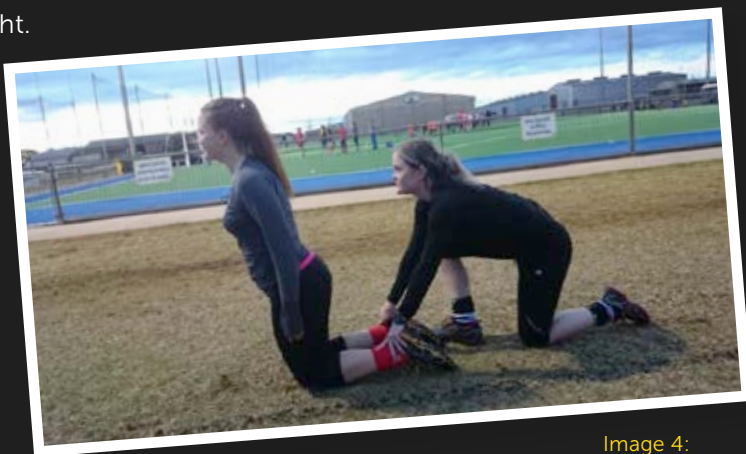


Image 4:
Nordic hamstring mid position

End Position

- When you reach a point where your hamstrings can no longer control your movement, allow yourself to drop to the floor
- Use your hands to catch your descent onto the floor and you should end up in a "push up" type position
- Work your way back up to the start position and repeat



Image 5:
Nordic hamstring finish position

The Protocol

Week	Sessions p/week	Sets	Repetitions
Week 1	1	2	5
Week 2	2	2	6
Week 3	3	3	6 to 8
Week 4	3	3	8 to 10
Week 5-10	3	3	12 then 10 then 8

After week 10 ongoing maintenance consisted of one session per week of one set each of 12 then 10 then eight repetitions.

When talking about injury prevention there are not many things that are this simple and this effective. Just one simple exercise that can cut your risk of hamstring tear enormously. It makes sense to add Nordic Hamstrings to your training routine. ●

If you have any injuries specific to hockey or would like advice on injury prevention, email us at Planet Hockey Magazine and we will pass your questions to Peter.

BRAZIL'S SAMBA STAR DREAMS OF BRINGING HOCKEY HOME



Stéphane Vehrlé-Smith is under no illusions; one of the star men of the Brazilian team, he knows that “just quick a look at our hockey history” suggests their Olympic debut will be a huge uphill battle.

But the Samba sticks have been climbing those mountains ever since he came on board in 2012. Indeed, in many ways, the powerful sweeper is one of the more unlikely Olympians, set to line out for the unlikeliest of qualifiers for the sport’s pinnacle event.

Up until recently, the giant nation had just one legitimate astroturf pitch for hockey to its name. Brazil have never breached the world’s top 30 ranks but managed to get the right results at the right time at the Pan-American Games in 2015 to meet the FIH qualifying standards to play as tournament hosts at the Olympics.

Vehrlé-Smith was born in Recife but had not returned to the country since he was adopted and relocated to Kent in England. As such, it’s an international career he never envisaged in a jersey he never grew up dreaming he would wear on the highest stage.

A top youth player, he played in the same school team as Ashley Jackson and was part of England’s youth teams alongside Nick Catlin, too.

He made his Holcombe first team debut at just 15-years-old but his career was drifting when the Brazilian invitation came around, one that he never sought out but is delighted has come along.

Having finished university, he took three months in Germany to play in the second tier with Rot Weiss Munich, deliberately choosing a lower level to “play for fun”.

But, soon after his return to England, an email popped into his inbox out of the blue from Bert Bunnik, the assistant coach with Brazil at the time.

“I wasn’t looking to push my hockey on at that stage. I had just got back from Munich and was trying to find my feet again,” he said.

“I got an email from someone I didn’t recognise. It said ‘we have heard through our European contacts about you, the level you play and you

BY STEPHEN
FINDLATER

PHOTOS BY
WORLD SPORT PICS



have a Brazilian passport. Would you like to be part of our journey?’ I thought someone was winding me up in the dressing room so I deleted it immediately.

“I got another one a few days later, following up. I asked how they knew so much about me, a bit on the defence. Bert said let’s Skype and told me all about the qualifying process and so on and I basically flew out to Brazil a week later!”

It was his first time in Brazil since he had been adopted by a French mother and English father. He never had contact with his biological family and only has a picture of his parents with his birth mother.

His parents, though, did save all his documents from the time and Vehrlé-Smith says there was always pride, a deep connection, to his South American roots intertwined with his English childhood.

“I had an identity of being Brazilian first and was really proud of saying it; most of my friends were white basically.

“It’s a strange feeling and hard to explain to those who are not mixed race or multi-cultural but my passion for English and Brazilian sport is really strong. I have always been a supporter of both since I was young.”

He is one of a number who have been co-opted to the Samba sticks with the Dutch-based van der Heijden brothers Yuri and Patrick qualifying via a Brazilian mother in 2008. Paul Duncker, meanwhile, got his yellow shirt as a result of his father earning citizenship while working in South America.

Vehrlé-Smith admits he was “sceptical” heading over to Rio for the first time but once he started training with the side, he was hooked, relishing a very different challenge than he enjoys at club level in England.



Apart from the 50 degree heat, he says it has been a tough battle that he is getting used to while he is also having to adjust what kind of player he is.

At Holcombe – who topped the regular season standings in England this season – he is part of a star-packed side alongside Jackson, Catlin, Barry Middleton, Iain Lewers and Dan Fox. With Brazil, his role is far more of a centrifugal force.

“You can’t really hide from it; the level of hockey is very low in Brazil, especially at club level.

“When I joined, it was quite frustrating for me; I was taking on too much responsibility and trying to help people improve. That took away the focus from my hockey.

“When you are used to playing with experienced players who play at the highest level, you don’t have to take on as much responsibility and make a move every time you get the ball.

“With Brazil, I have to be a bit more instrumental and aggressive. Now, just in time, I have learned a good balance of how to perform.”

A bronze medal arrived from the 2013 South American championships. Gold at the Pan-Am Challenge kept Olympic hopes alive, qualifying the side for the Pan-AM Games where a top six finish would procure their ticket.

A 1-0 win over Mexico in the group was followed up an all-important shoot-out success against USA in the quarter-final, kick-starting the celebrations of the biggest moment in Brazil’s hockey history.

Reflecting on that tournament, he adds that an early hammering provided the perfect motivation: “We had a focus. We ended close to getting a medal and reaching a final.

“We got pumped 9-1 by Canada in our first game and that was a really good thing.

"We thought quite a lot of ourselves [going into the tournament] because we had played friendlies against the US and Trinidad and did well. Getting smashed by Canada put everyone in our place and brought the team together.

"In the next game against Canada in the semi-final, it went to a shoot-out! we worked really hard as a team, stuck to some key principles: working hard, running hard and counter-attacking and it paid off."

It completed a meteoric rise and paid off the faith of some of the players to go out of their comfort zone to pursue their dreams.

"We told the guys who had only ever played in Brazil that if they really believed that we could qualify and wanted to push their hockey, they would need to leave for Europe.

"A couple went to France, one to Germany. When they came back, it was great to see the step up, the speed of what they did from playing with better players abroad.

"The problem is Brazil doesn't have the number of clubs, thousands of registered players and the amount of kids that play in, say, Holland or England.

"We are trying to change that, showing our journey through social media. If we can put in a decent performance at the Olympics, we can gain more coverage and awareness."

They still have a long way to go to push the world's top sides, especially in a group that features Australia, New Zealand, Spain, Belgium and – his personal big one – Great Britain with their array of club mates.

But the sweeper is hopeful that a shock result along the way can have a transformative effect on the sport in the country while the additional pitches – the Olympics have brought four extra astros, raising their total to five.

"When you are on the world stage, eyes are on you domestically and internationally. Football and beach volleyball drives Brazil at the moment. It's unlikely hockey will impact that immediately but hopefully it will pick up.

"Lots of people are already starting in the schools and colleges to get equipment over – which is a big issue – to build the momentum.

"It's not a pressure but is something everyone cares about. We have spoken about wanting to push for one or two of the pitches to be taken down south. It does all come down to politics but hopefully the hockey federation can do the appropriate thing.

"If you want to move the game on, you can't just have the pitches in one area to give kids access to the pitch."

And what would be a good outcome in August?

"First and foremost, we want to be competitive and cause some of these top teams some trouble.

"I have some experience playing in a top team against a considerably weaker team. Sometimes, it's just not your day when a lesser team is up for it and want to do you over, combined with a bit of luck and their frustration.

"We look at Spain a lot in our first game and can't look beyond that. We don't have the privilege of having a squad to say we want to reach the semis.

"Realistically, that's hard to achieve. We just want to do the country proud and feel like we have left everything out on the pitch and were worthy of playing in the Olympics.

"We are just trying to fulfil a dream like anyone else!" ●



NO DOPES IN HOCKEY

A clear indication of how seriously hockey is taking the education of its athletes on anti-doping was evident at the recent men's and women's Hockey Champions Trophies, which were played at the Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre in London.

After the event, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) reported that every single athlete that competed at the events had completed anti-doping education courses either organised by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) or their National Anti-Doping Organisations (NADO).

All 216 athletes on show at both the Men's Hero Hockey Champions Trophy and the Women's Hockey Champions Trophy had earned certificates by completing either WADA's online anti-doping course or one specifically organized by their NADOs.

The FIH has requested that all hockey athletes selected by their National Association to compete at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games must earn their anti-doping certificate prior to the start of the competition.



PHOTO BY NED DAWSON

BATH BUCCANEERS GO DUTCH

Team Bath Buccaneers hope that a groundbreaking twinning process with Dutch Premier League club Hurley will lead to more talented young players combining hockey and study at the University of Bath, England.

Current Hurley player Andrew Eversden spent the 2014-15 season with Buccs, helping them win the EHL Conference West title, and instigated closer links between the clubs upon his return to the Netherlands.

Three Buccaneers executive members flew out to Amsterdam recently to establish the link, the first of its kind between two European clubs.

And chair Nick Kendall, who was joined on the trip by director of hockey Heber Ackland and men's assistant coach Jon Williams, believes there will be plenty of benefits for both clubs.

"There are various things we can do through this partnership, like exchange information about coaching and how the clubs are run," he explained.

"We are taking the men's first team to Hurley for pre-season and will look to make that a regular thing. There is also the chance for other exchange visits and tours in the future.

"But what really hit home to me was the potential for recruitment to the University.

"Hockey is the national sport in the Netherlands and it is not easy for either men or women players aged between 18 and 21 to play for a Dutch 1st XI. There are 2,500 members of Hurley alone and they are on a campus with two other similar-sized clubs.

"There are so many players ahead of them but they could be stand-out performers if they came to England.

"What we can offer them here is not only the chance to play hockey at a very high standard with Buccs and the University in the high-performance structure and environment provided by the Sports Training Village but also gain a world-class education at the University of Bath and live in a World Heritage City – that is a powerful combination."



HWL ROUND ONE

Fiji men and women were victors at the recent Hockey World League Round One event, which took place in Suva, Fiji.

The Fiji Hockey Association was particularly proud of hosting the event because in May a cyclone hit the islands, causing devastation in its wake. Houses, businesses and sporting facilities were all wrecked and thousands were left homeless.

The national association, with the help of the Oceania Hockey federation were determined to use sport as a way of lifting the mood of the population, so the Round One event, and Fiji's subsequent double win, couldn't have come at a better time.

The result means Fiji will be playing in Round Two later this year.



PHOTO BY MARK PALCZEWSKI

A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR USA HOCKEY

The 2016 National Futures Championship (NFC) gave 680 U19 athletes a chance to showcase their skills at the home of women's hockey – Spooky Nook, in Pennsylvania.

The Citi NFC, presented by Harrow Sports, was a nine-day tournament played out in front of top collegiate coaches and selectors. The competitive fire was strong as invitations to Junior National Camp and AAU Junior Olympics were up for grabs.

The winners were Sochi, who were coached by Mark Egner. Second place went to Athens, while Amsterdam took third spot. Sochi also picked up the Barbara Longstreth Award for Sportsmanship.



KZN INLAND AND BOLAND TRIUMPH IN INTERS

Twelve boys' teams and 12 girls' teams participated in the South Africa U18 Hockey Interprovincials at University of Free State Hockey Centre. A report from Jon Cook, who was watching the action unfold at the Kovies Astros, shows that hockey is very much alive and kicking in South Africa, despite that country's absence from the Rio Olympics.

Pietermaritzburg based KZN Inland won the SA U18 boys title after beating Northerns from Pretoria 3-1. The girls title was won by Boland, who beat Southern Gauteng 1-0 in a shoot-out after the teams were locked 1-1 at full time.



EHL FINAL4 IS DOUBLE DUTCH AFFAIR

An all-Dutch final of the EuroHockey League Final4 saw SV Kampong beat AH & BC Amsterdam to take the title for the first time. Second half goals from Quirijn Caspers and Man of the Match Bjorn Kellerman were enough to seal the victory but not after a pulsating match, which really could have gone either way.

"What a way to end the season," Caspers said. "We got our prize, we fought for it really hard for the last couple of years and that feels amazing."

The bronze medal went to Harvestehuder THC after they beat Atlètic Terrassa 3-1. Two goals from

Michael Körper under-pinned Harvestehuder THC's run to the bronze medal in this season's EHL, at the Pau Negre Stadium in Barcelona.

It was something of a battle throughout with numerous cards dished out but, when at full tilt, HTHC had the greater incision in either circle to win out. David Goodfield scored Harvestehuder's third and Roc Oliva got the consolation goal for Atlètic Terrassa.



PHOTOS BY FRANK UIJLENBROEK/WORLD SPORT PICS



PHOTOS BY NED DAWSON

THIRD TIME LUCKY FOR BLYTH

Madonna Blyth will be leading Australia in Rio in her third Olympic Games. The Hockeyroos have gone for youth over experience with only four players with Olympic experience – Blyth, Casey Sablowski, Jodie Kenny and Emily Smith.

For the Kookaburras it is a case of wise heads leading the way. Mark Knowles and Jamie Dwyer both go to their fourth Games, while a total of 10 players are returning Olympians.

TOP OF THE WORLD

Australia men and Netherlands women remain top of the world rankings after the recent Hockey Champions Trophy. However, Argentina has closed the gap on the Netherlands following their win at the Champions Trophy.

There is no change at the top for the men, Netherlands remain second with Germany third and Great Britain fourth. India, however, have leapfrogged Belgium into fifth place, pushing the Red Lions to sixth and Argentina to seventh. Further down the rankings, Brazil has moved up two places to 30th and South Africa has moved back to 14th.

The main mover in the women's rankings is USA, who moved to fifth place from seventh after taking bronze at the Champions Trophy. England and Germany both get pushed down a spot to seventh and ninth. There has also been movement in the middle of the table as Poland, Czech Republic and Mexico have all moved up to 20th, 26th and 32nd respectively.



PHOTOS BY NED DAWSON



CALIFORNIA CUP INTERNATIONAL HOCKEY FESTIVAL

STORY BY SARAH JUGGINS | PHOTOS BY NED DAWSON



“ Hockey is such a good sport, my hope is the more we get it out there, the more it will be noticed. ”

KIRSTEN WILSON

Officer with the Royal Australian Navy and a member of the Mates4Mates team.

With more than 2,000 players of all ages taking part in the 45th Cal Cup, Kirsten's wish for giving the sport some profile is certainly being realised.

With more than 2,000 players of all ages taking part in the 45th Cal Cup, Kirsten's wish for giving the sport some profile is certainly being realised.

Warwick Smith is another member of the Australian military. He played for the men's Mates4Mates team in the Cal Cup Super League. Warwick has spent most of his adult life serving his country and the Cal Cup offers the talented hockey player a chance to represent his country in another way. "We love touring together," he says of the Mates4Mates team, "we stay in contact with each other and once we are released from work, we come together and play and it's great. In our squad we have some Grade A players and some social players. They are all catered for here."

The Cal Cup also provides a chance for coaches to watch their proteges in action. Speaking during the event, Chris Clements, USA Men's National Team Head Coach, said: "The competitive nature that the Cal Cup has brought to the teams play has elevated the demands on the players to perform under pressure. The players and coaching staffs are taking each other to the next level and these games are very enjoyable to watch and also reflect the improvements made throughout our High Performance season."

And the event has gained even greater sanction after some collaborative work with the organisation that governs hockey across the Pan-America region, the PAHF. "The CalCup is certainly one of the most traditional hockey event in the Americas," said PAHF chief executive Julio Neves. "Tom Harris, the founder, is also an excellent ambassador of the event, and personally promotes the event wherever he goes - and, as passionate hockey man, he attends many hockey events worldwide yearly. "

"The event is very important to give hockey people a great motivation throughout the year, as players and coaches look forward to competing and showcasing their skills. The tournament is key to supporting hockey in USA and also the "hockey for all" strand, which is very important to promote the idea of a "family sport" and community integration - as we all know, a successful athlete need the support of the family.

And Neves praised the work of the organising committee: "I am pleased that this event is delivered consistently every year, because the tournament is an important opportunity for development of hockey players, coaches, managers, umpires and officials."

With players as young as eight playing in their own age group tournaments alongside international stars, such as USA national players Trent Warren, Sean Cicchi and Doug Allison, this really is a hockey experience that transcends barriers of age, genders and abilities. With 10 pitches - including mini-pitches for the junior games - all hosting hockey matches over the four day period,



U19





it was absolutely possible that a grandfather and his grandchild could be competing at the same time at the same tournament.

Planet Hockey took a trip to southern California to find out more about this mammoth hockey event, and we caught up with one of the busiest men in USA field hockey, Cal Cup Organiser and Director of Digital Marketing Marc Bakerman.

Planet Hockey Mag: Tell us a little about the history of the California Cup International Hockey Festival?

Marc Bakerman: *The California Cup International Field Hockey Festival was started in 1971 by Tom Harris with six men's teams. Now, forty-seven years later, our Festival, popularly known as Cal Cup, has grown to more than 150 teams, in 14 divisions played over four days in beautiful Moorpark, California. Cal Cup is North America's largest International Field Hockey Tournament, featuring teams and players from many countries, including USA, New Zealand, England, Germany, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Holland, Trinidad & Tobago, Spain, Taiwan, Australia, Malaysia and India.*

Many current and former International players from many of these countries play for various clubs that participate in the Men and Women Super Divisions with a \$7,500 USD prize for each champion. International Hockey Federation (FIH) level umpires from different countries as far afield as Germany and Australia are invited to officiate.

Cal Cup is held annually over the Memorial Day Holidays (weekend preceding the last Monday in May) at the Moorpark College, California. It is located just an hour NW of Los Angeles and within driving distance to many popular destinations such as the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, Dodger Stadium, Disneyland, Universal Studios, The Griffith Observatory, The Paul Getty Museum, the California Missions, and many well equipped shopping malls.



PHM: What is the story behind the Cal Cup Founder Tom Harris?

MB: *Tom Harris taught civil engineering for 28 years at Moorpark College, retiring in 1996. Tom used to play baseball and softball recreationally. He came across field hockey and immediately fell in love with the sport. Tom introduced the Cal Cup in 1971 with six teams: three area teams; one from Kiel, Germany; and two from Canada – Vancouver and Vancouver Island. He is the only person to play in all 46 Cal Cup competitions for the club he founded, the Conejo Bulldogs. Tom’s obsession for field hockey has led him to play and watch hockey on six of the seven continents. We joke with Tom that we need to get him to travel to Antarctica to complete his journey! Last year, USA Field Hockey inducted Tom into its Hall of Fame.*

PHM: We at Planet Hockey Mag attended our first Cal Cup this year and we were most impressed with the event. How much effort goes into the planning of Cal Cup?

MB: *Cal Cup is a labor of love. We work year round to put this event together. We have nine dedicated board members in the organising committee, of which I am a director of Digital Marketing. We meet formally once per month planning every detail. Each committee member volunteers hundreds of hours and, once the Cal Cup is over, we begin the journey all over again! It amazes me the commitment and professionalism of our volunteers, they truly will do whatever it takes to make the next Cal Cup better than the last.*

PHM: There were hundreds of hockey players of all ages taking part. Just how big is this tournament?

MB: *There are 14 Divisions – age U8 mixed is the youngest division and it goes up to Super Division, which is the highest level of play and attracts*

“I am pleased that this event is delivered consistently every year, because the tournament is an important opportunity for development of hockey players, coaches, managers, umpires and officials.”

JULIO NEVES, CEO - PAHF

internationals from around the world. Then there is the Mixed Social, which has adult players from 18-81 years old.

The youth divisions have teams and players from across the States: California, Arizona, Colorado, Texas, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Georgia and Florida. And there are also players and teams from Baja Mexico, Estadio Mexico, Sonora Mexico, Canada, Chinese Taipei, India, New Zealand and Australia.

In the adult competition the reach is even greater. We had players from England, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Singapore, Cuba, Argentina and Trinidad & Tobago.

PHM: Tell us about the site of Cal Cup, Moorpark College?

MB: *Moorpark College is a California state community college with a 150-acre campus on a hillside in Moorpark, in Ventura County, California, about 40 minutes north of Los Angeles. It was established in 1967 and now has nearly 15,000 enrolled students. Moorpark College is considered the “Home” of boy’s/men’s hockey in the United States. This has been Cal Cup’s only home has been here since 1971.*

PHM: In the USA hockey has a far greater presence and participation from women. We noticed that there is definitely a large contingent of boy’s and men’s teams at Cal Cup. To what do you attribute your success in attracting so many male participants?

MB: *Cal Cup is the “granddaddy” of male hockey tournaments in North America. No other tournament here in the States promotes competition between males. At this year’s Cal Cup we had more than 50 teams with males playing. We saw some very high level of play in our boys’ U14, U16, and U19 divisions with international teams coming from Mexico, Canada, Taiwan and New Zealand. In our Men’s Super-Division, we hosted teams/players from India, Australia, Holland, Cuba, England, Spain, Mexico, Argentina and Trinidad & Tobago.*

Despite all of our international visitors, this year the American-based teams won the championships in all of the boy’s/men’s divisions, boding well for the future of male hockey in the USA.

Our goal is to involve the Pan American Federation and FIH to promote and grow male hockey at Cal Cup into the future. We will not rest until we have equal numbers of male teams as female!



PHM: Speaking of female hockey, the USA Women's team is having amazing success heading into the Rio Olympics. More than 100 participating teams in Cal Cup are female. What do the women mean to Cal Cup?

MB: *Cal Cup would not be the success that it is without women's hockey! More than 1,000 players at Cal Cup are girls or women. USAFH has done an amazing job introducing girls into the sport, providing unlimited playing opportunities for them to develop and flourish. Cal Cup provides girls with an opportunity to showcase their skills, particularly because there are so many college coaches in attendance. On a local level, two of our homegrown high school girls recently accepted college scholarships to attend Yale and Stanford Universities because of their scholastic aptitude and hockey prowess. Cal Cup is more laid back and fun for all participants, usually bringing out the best in the players without all the pressure of other all-female tournaments. Much like our mission to bring in more international boys teams, we want to match that for our girl's teams. Typically, our girl's matches are between teams from North America, Mexico, Canada and USA. We want to invite and secure teams from Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand for greater competition and to forge global friendships.*

PHM: What are the greatest challenges the Cal Cup committee faces when putting on an annual tournament of this magnitude?

MB: *Within two weeks of Cal Cup 2016 ending, our volunteer directors begin the planning process for 2017 all over again. We submit a "Benjamin Franklin T-List" highlighting what we believe to be the strengths and weaknesses of the event. When we agree upon a consensus opinion, actions are taken to make these changes. The past two years our most serious issue is the drought here in Southern California and the water restrictions that have been imposed upon our hockey pitch. Our grass fields received very little water, causing them to be a little brown and patchy. Also, the built-in plumbing system that provides*



water for our FIH Turf pitch was capped off by the college. Because of this, we are forced to use provisional water acquired by a temporary permit, building a new above ground piping system just for the five day Cal Cup event. It looks like the mandatory water restrictions will be lifted for the beginning of the 2017, which will cut our expenses and the unnecessary work we must plan for. Another challenge we encounter is housing the more than 2,000 athletes and their families during a busy American Holiday weekend. As our tournament has grown, the supply of hotel rooms has not. We are now hard at work securing an adequate supply of affordable rooms near the venue to prevent the shortages we sometimes encounter.



The final challenge is scheduling all the games during the tournament to accommodate the many special needs of our participants. Since we utilise two different venue locations that are within five miles of each other, many teams will share the same coach for different divisions and age groups. We must listen to the needs and requests of the team managers the best we can to make it as easy as possible for them. Last minute teams dropping out also makes for a nightmare and sleepless nights for our Director of Scheduling.

PHM: What are proceeds from Cal Cup used for?

MB: *Cal Cup is part of the Field Hockey Federation, which is the local non-profit organisation which introduces children to the sport of hockey, creates practice and league opportunities for them, and builds a pipeline of young talent that filters into our National Futures and High Performance programmes. The revenue from each Cal Cup is set aside to maintain and replace the artificial hockey turf every 7 -10 years.*

PHM: How would you describe Cal Cup to a newcomer?

MB: *Cal Cup is not just a hockey tournament; it is about the Cal Cup Experience! Cal Cup is a family event that is generational. We have generations of families, mothers and fathers, grandparents and their children who have continued to come back since 1971. Cal Cup is a festival atmosphere where a six-year-old girl or boy can play on a team and receive a trophy for participation on the same field, at the same time, as some of the greatest players in the world. Cal Cup brings people together from around the globe to make friends they would have never had the opportunity to meet before, creating a life time of positive memories. Most participants don't remember the wins or the losses, they just remember the Cal Cup Experience, and can't wait to come back the following year!*



PHM: Can you share any news or changes in-store for Cal Cup 2017?

MB: *We listen to all of our Cal Cup participants and we sincerely want to improve upon all that we can if possible. We will be opening registration on our website earlier than ever, 1 August 2016, offering an “Early Bird Discount” which only requires a small deposit to guarantee a team its entry. For people that register three teams or more, we will be showing our appreciation by providing an additional discount. Our array of vendors and food suppliers will grow even bigger. A vast array of Cal Cup merchandise to include a variety of hats, shirts, jackets, hoodies, water bottles, stickers etc. will be made available online year-round and at Cal Cup for the first time. We are also discussing the possibilities of growing our Beer Garden to include wine, live music and DJ’s, an opening ceremony party at the field, a Beach Sand Hockey exhibition and more fun for everyone. Rumours are now abounding that a certain male legend hockey player from down under may attend Cal Cup 2017! Stay tuned in for more updates at Calcup.com.*

PHM: Is there anything else noteworthy you would like to share?

MB: *Los Angeles is currently a leading contender to get the 2024 summer Olympics. Moorpark College is on the map as the possible location for the Field Hockey venue! Moorpark College is a wonderful place for foreign students who want to get a great affordable education & love to play hockey to attend!*

PHM: If a team wanted to register a team or participate in Cal Cup 2017, what is the process?

MB: *Registration fills up fast and is capped, so do so quickly. Contact me, Marc Bakerman – Digitalmarketing@calcup.com and/or Leslie Warren, Director of Administration at ldwarren@hrl.com ●*



Field
1







**GRASS
GAMES**





**GRASS
GAMES**







**GRASS
GAMES**





**GRASS
GAMES**





**GRASS
GAMES**





U19





U19



U19



U19



THE FINAL

U19







THE FINAL

U19





THE FINAL

U19





MEN





MEN





MEN



MEN





THE FINAL

MEN





THE FINAL

MEN





THE FINAL

MEN





WOMEN





WOMEN







WOMEN



THE FINAL

WOMEN







WOMEN





THE FINAL

WOMEN



RESULTS FROM THE 2016 CAL CUP

The Bulldogs walked off proud winners of the Men's Super competition, as well as picking up medals in the U14 boys and Competitive Men's, while the intriguingly named Jolie-Pitts winning the Women's Super and all six teams in the U8 competition sharing the spoils, the event reached some thrilling conclusive matches.





2016 CAL CUP FULL RESULTS

MEN'S SUPER

- 1st Bulldogs - Winners \$7,500 & "The California Cup"
- 2nd Team HFS
- 3rd Surinder Lions

WOMEN'S UNDER 19

- 1st SD Short Corner
- 2nd SD Flyers
- 3rd RUSH

WOMEN'S SUPER

- 1st Jolie Pitts - Winners \$7,500 & "The California Cup"
- 2nd RUSH'd
- 3rd NorthWest

GIRL'S UNDER 16

- 1st Rob Short ACD
- 2nd Chang An
- 3rd SJ Fly Blue

MEN'S COMPETITIVE

- 1st Yuba Brothers
- 2nd Phx Scorpions
- 3rd Surinder Lions

GIRL'S UNDER 14

- 1st Short Corner III
- 2nd Key Biscayne
- 3rd Rob Short ACD

MEN'S UNDER 19

- 1st VCRD
- 2nd Mt. Tauhara HC
- 3rd ECHP

MIXED SOCIAL

- 1st Sun Devils
- 2nd MP Coyotes
- 3rd SD Field Hockey

BOY'S UNDER 16

- 1st Chu Shan
- 2nd Hayward Hawks
- 3rd Sonora

MIXED UNDER 12

- 1st USA XVI Lions A
- 2nd Lightning Red
- 3rd Ping He

BOY'S UNDER 14

- 1st USA XVI Lions
- 2nd Bulldogs
- 3rd Shiang-An

MIXED UNDER 10

- 1st Doral FH
- 2nd USA Lions
- 3rd Key Biscayne

WOMEN'S COMPETITIVE

- 1st Oh Yeah!
- 2nd Senior Flyers
- 3rd Monarcas

MIXED UNDER 8

- 1st place tie USA Lions B, Surfers, Turtles, USA Lions, Lightning, Key Biscayne



A woman with brown hair and blue eyes is wearing a dark green hoodie. She is holding a hockey stick with a white blade and a black shaft. The shaft has 'RITUAL' written vertically in gold. The blade has a gold 'R' logo and a pink and purple chevron design. She is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a dark, textured wall.

THIS IS ELLEN'S RITUAL



2016

HAWKE'S BAY CUP



STORY BY KATIE GLYNN
PHOTOS BY NED DAWSON

FESTIVAL OF HOCKEY HAS MUCH TO CELEBRATE

.....



FCH
WHITELOCK
1

Ford

OKABUR



This year, the second year as an 8 Nations Cup saw Japan, China, Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, India and Canada take part in the tournament.



Former Black Stick and Olympian Katie Glynn was a spectator at this year's Hawkes Bay 8 Nation Invitational. Here, as her team bask in the glory of their first win at the event, she reflects upon how the tournament has grown from being one part of a larger plan to becoming an important fixture on the international hockey calendar in its own right.

In 2011 a group of 23 community leaders from Hawkes Bay led by Bruce Mactaggart committed to the idea of joining together in what was trumpeted as a world first, to sponsor two national sports teams in its quest for Olympic glory. This unique agreement between Hawkes Bay and Hilary Poole – who was at the time Hockey New Zealand CEO – proved to be something extraordinary. As part of the agreement Hawkes Bay was to play host to an international multi year tournament for 10 years. In 2014 the Hawkes Bay Regional Sports Park was complete, and the first Hawkes Bay Cup, with six participating nations, took place.

We are now into the third year of the Hawkes Bay Cup, and I have been privileged to have attended all three, as a player, spectator, and as of this year, part of the commentary team. I have watched the Hawkes Bay Cup develop into a world class tournament, one that the International Hockey Federation (FIH) is extremely supportive of, recognising it as almost the equivalent to the men's Azlan Shah Cup. This year, the second year as an 8 Nations Cup saw Japan, China, Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, India and Canada take part in the tournament. The unique difference to this





tournament however is that it is not just an International Tournament. From April 2nd – April 10th The Hawkes Bay Cup was part of the greater Festival of Hockey. Alongside the 8 Nations, Hawkes Bay hosted the Affiliates Tournament comprising 14 teams, as well as the Secondary Schools Furnware Cup with a further eight schoolgirl's teams. Having 30 teams in the region over this period of time creates an atmosphere amongst the community that is like no other, and as a result, keeps bringing teams from around the world back for more.

Bruce Mactaggart and the not-for-profit Hawke's Bay Sports Events and Education Consortium (HBSEEC) had a vision to see what could be possible when a community comes together, how they could unite and use all of their resources – financial and intellectual – to support their national teams while also galvanising and supporting their own community. The support of HBSEEC for an event like this provides an opportunity to showcase what Hawke's Bay has to offer and gives the community and people travelling to Hawke's Bay a chance to experience all the local delights, while watching some top international hockey.

Even the players themselves have come to love the region; Edwina Bone with over 100 caps for Australia summed up the tournament and the atmosphere: "The tournament is great, the facility is perfect for international competition and it continues to improve every year. The crowd the tournament attracts are always so enthusiastic and supportive, which is why I love playing there. The people in the community are always so friendly and up for a chat even if we are wearing our Hockeyroo's uniform".

To put on such an event requires a lot of hard work and planning, and the team behind the scenes of the Festival of Hockey is an exceptional one at that. Alongside Bruce Mactaggart, David Nancarrow and Emily Naylor make up the Festival of Hockey Operations Team. The trio work tirelessly to make sure all aspects of the festival run smoothly. Their hospitality is second to none, with every team passing comments as to how well they were looked after. Having Emily Naylor (New Zealand's highest capped female Black Stick) join the team in 2015 gave great insight as to what is important from a player's perspective at a tournament of this nature. With the support of Richard Palmer (Hockey New Zealand Events Manager) and Ian Francis (Hockey New Zealand CEO) Bruce and David have turned the Festival of Hockey into an incredibly successful, well run tournament.

Bruce and David's vision, to bring the community together was showcased this year by initiatives such as international teams Canada and Ireland attending local schools Temata and Lucknow. Students were able to interact with the athletes and ask questions







to get a true insight into what it is like to be an international hockey player. On the Tuesday of the Festival, 500 school kids were given free tickets to the day's play and the turf was buzzing with excitement. Banner competitions were run around the region, and the turf was decorated from the start of the week with colourful supportive banners for each team. Ticket sales were at an all-time high for the three years that the tournament has been running, and the live streaming numbers reached more than 190,000 viewers, including the final being picked up by Tokyo TV and played live for Japanese viewers.

The standard of hockey throughout the week was exceptional. The quality of teams provided spectators with some exciting match ups and some unexpected results. With five teams ranked inside the top 10 in the world, Canada (19) and Ireland (15) were relishing the opportunity to be able to test themselves against these quality oppositions, and test themselves they did. The opening day of the tournament saw Canada upset Korea (9) in a thrilling game with a final score of 2-1. Ireland were welcomed into the tournament by dominant China (5) suffering a 4-0 defeat, but turned this quickly around on day two, upsetting India with a 4-0 win. Ireland carried on this fine form testing the New Zealand team who eventually prevailed with a 3-1 win. Ireland finished their tournament by beating Korea and India in shootouts to finish in fifth place. Having these two teams compete this year at the Hawkes Bay Cup has shown the current strength of hockey around the world, and has left both Canada and Ireland with a lot of confidence moving forward.

The most impressive team at the tournament for me, (apart from my home team the Black Sticks) would have to be Japan. After drawing with Australia 1-1 on the first day, you could see the intent of this well drilled group. The style of hockey they were playing, with an aggressive attacking, high speed nature, was something we have not seen from them in the past few tournaments. After topping their pool on goal difference they set themselves up with a good opportunity to face China in the semi final, and a 1-0 win put them through to the final. The other semi final saw close rivals Australia face the home side New Zealand in what was the most thrilling, exciting match of the tournament. Australia took an early 2-0 lead and had the Black Sticks on the rope. The fast paced game was end to end and the Black Sticks managed to fight back to take the game 3-2 and put themselves through to the final. The final saw the Black Sticks take control and put themselves ahead with a 3-0 lead going into the final quarter. Goals from Olivia Merry, Gemma Flynn and Kayla Whitelock giving the home team a seemingly unassailable lead. Japan however, never give up. With 10 minutes to go Japan found the net twice, through Miyuki Nakagawa and Mie Nakashima. Under pressure, the Black Sticks managed to hold on to the game to take out the final 3-2 and claim their first Hawkes Bay Cup victory.



The Festival of Hockey is continuing to develop each year. The vision for Dave and Bruce from here is to have another turf added to the venue, and to grow the tournament into a 10-12 nation event. Between Dave and Bruce, the HBSEEC, and the community of Hawkes Bay I have no doubt that this tournament will continue to excel over the next few years. The Hawkes Bay is a beautiful region, and I strongly suggest if you have not visited, that you keep an eye online for the 2017 Festival of Hockey ticket sales. It is something not to be missed.

ROUND-UP OF ALL THE ACTION AT THE HAWKES BAY FESTIVAL OF HOCKEY

8 NATION INVITATIONAL

It was a moment to savour for the large crowd at the Hawke's Bay Regional Sports Park in Hastings, as the Black Sticks finally ended their drought at the Hawkes Bay Invitational and secured a 3-2 win over Japan.

Japan's Cherry Blossoms caused a scare with two goals in the final five minutes of the match from Miyuki Nakagawa and Mie Nakashima – who finished as the tournament top scorer with five goals, all from open play – but the Kiwis held firm to seal the result and the title.

Black Sticks captain Stacey Michelsen – who also won the Robyn Mactaggart trophy as top scorer – said the Hawke's Bay Cup triumph was a glimpse at bigger things to come later in the year.

"To come away with a win at the tournament is great. We certainly make it into a lot of semis and finals but it's been a long time since we've gone through to win, so we take a lot of confidence and belief going forward," she said, before looking ahead to this summer's Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. "Things are looking good for us later in the year and we have a very strong group of players vying for those finals spots in Rio."

Despite the disappointment of losing the final, the competition was a resounding success for Japan, a side that appear to have hit some serious form ahead of their Olympic challenge.

Japan (FIH World Ranking: 10) recorded some superb results in the competition, topping Pool A undefeated ahead of Australia (WR: 3), Korea (WR: 9) and Canada (WR: 19) before beating India (WR: 13) and China (WR: 5) in their respective quarter and semi-final matches. Head Coach Yuki Nagai will hope that his talented team take confidence from their excellent displays at the Hawke's Bay Cup as they continue along the road to Rio. ●





SMITH
26
THE Project
Curtin University





FINAL PLACINGS

AFFILIATES CUP

This is a men's and women's invitational tournament that expands the competitive offering to representative teams from Australia, Hong Kong and New Zealand. This year's entries – which comprised eight women's and six men's teams – included: NZ Maoris, NZ 35 Masters, NZ National Seniors X1, Hawkes Bay Regional Team, NZ Barbarians, Australian Country and Australian 35+ Masters Teams,

The Australian Country Team won the Men's competition beating Hawkes Bay Men 7-1, while the results were reversed in the Women's competition as Hawkes Bay Women put four goals past the Australian Country Women's team to win 4-1.

FURNWARE CUP

The Furnware Cup Invitational schoolgirl tournament is in its third year and the standard is getting higher and higher. Reigning champions Napier Girls High School came to the event hoping to make it a treble victory – they have won the previous two editions of the cup – but there were several other teams with equally high hopes of success.

In the end, it was Iona College, the local team that had taken runners-up spot in the previous two editions of the competition, who picked up the trophy, winning in thoroughly convincing fashion as they put six goals away in the final against the challengers from Hamilton.

Results from the pool play saw Iona College top pool A, with Hamilton Girls High School in the runner-up spot. Pool B winners were the all conquering Napier Girls School, followed by Gisborne Girls High School.

In the crossover semi-finals, Iona beat Gisborne 5-2, while Hamilton beat Napier in a thrilling 2-1 encounter.

The final between Iona and Hamilton saw the local team win 6-1 – a score that did not reflect a tight match as Hamilton's 'keeper was injured during the first half and the team played the remainder of the game with a stand-in goalkeeper.

Iona Coach Karen Holder said it was a fabulous start to the season. "The festival is a superb event, and a wonderful opportunity for player and team culture development," she said. "The chance to mingle with top class international players, many of whom will be representing their countries in Rio, is just not something that comes along every day."

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1. | Iona College |
| 2. | Hamilton Girls High School |
| 3. | Napier Girls High School & Gisborne Girls High School |
| 5. | Havelock North High School |
| 6. | Otumoetai College |
| 7. | Woodford House |
| 8. | St Peters, Cambridge |

FINAL PLACINGS

HAWKE'S BAY CUP

RESULTS

1st/2nd Place

JPN - NZL 2 - 3

3rd/4th Place

CHN - AUS 1 - 3

5th/6th Place

IND - IRL 1 - 1 (3 - 4)

7th/8th Place

CAN - KOR 1 - 3

1. New Zealand

2. Japan

3. Australia

4. China

5. Ireland

6. India

7. Korea

8. Canada





THE FINAL



THE FINAL



THE FINAL





GREAT THING
GROW HERE
HAWKES BAY NEW ZEALAND

THE FINAL





THE FINAL



planet
HOCKEY
magazine



[instagram.com/teamplanethockey/](https://www.instagram.com/teamplanethockey/)

STORY BY STEPHEN FINDLATER
PHOTOS BY WORLD SPORT PICS



FULTON & ON

THE HISTORY BOYS



While the majority of other teams bound for Rio are full-time, Ireland's 27-man extended panel straddle an awkward middle-ground, attempting to compete at elite level with non-elite funding.

Are you a logistics manager as well as a coach?" comes the question from a journalist at a press briefing with Irish coach Craig Fulton.

It is 108 years ago since Ireland last played in the Olympics; indeed, it was 1948 when the country last took part in a team sport of any description. They simply don't do Olympic team sports and it is giving Fulton a series of extra challenges the likes of Max Caldas (Netherlands) or Graham Reid (Australia) are never likely to encounter.

"You are juggling the whole time that you to get the best out of the programme," Fulton replies. "It's not as straight-forward as having 25 players and I can have them whenever I want. We are currently good but could be so much better."

A month out from a first Olympic experience in over a century, it is a frank statement on where the Irish men's hockey team sit currently.

While the majority of other teams bound for Rio are full-time, Ireland's 27-man extended panel straddle an awkward middle-ground, attempting to compete at elite level with non-elite funding.

There is a mix of seven full-time professional players with students and those working full-time. It makes for innovative solutions and some serious personal decisions to pursue the Road to Rio.

The Green Machine had to launch a Pledge Sports campaign, seeking direct financial support

from the public to help make up a funding shortfall of €225,000 for the programme.

In addition, Fulton was at the heart of organising a golf classic along with a gala dinner, personally asking Irish rugby coach Joe Schmidt to "give 10 minutes of his time" to make a speech at the event.

With no major corporate sponsorship and a significantly smaller than requested tally coming in from the Irish Sports Council, Fulton – the only full-time person associated with the Irish men's team – has taken on these extra tasks in order to give his side the best possible of challenging the world's top nations.

Fulton says it is completely new territory for everyone involved, including the Irish Sports Council, adding: "There is no model for team sports on this level [in Ireland]."

The duality of the squad has been in place since he took over in April 2014, linking up with a panel shy many key men as life moved on in the wake of the narrow miss for London 2012. Then, they were tied with Korea in their final qualifier in front of a packed house in Dublin before falling to a goal with seven seconds to go.

The team drifted apart before Fulton took on the job.

"On April 9, 2014, when I first took over we played two games against England and lost 3-0 and 6-0 with a very young group of players. There were 60% of the experienced group



not playing, either working or away.

“Over the next year or 14 months, we had to try and get everyone back but to also accept that these players are now in careers. How do we get a bigger squad to cover when some players can’t always commit as they don’t have enough holiday days left?”

While those are the realities and limitations, however, the coach says that he always knew the raw materials were in place to break mindsets and moulds.

“For us to qualify, being 15th in the world, we would have to be in the top 12 in the world and beat higher ranked teams to qualify. We had to think totally differently than before and push way beyond our usual to get into that space.”

“In a coaching environment, we were trying to do something that hadn’t been done and making history. In the first presentation I did to the team, I said we know we can do this and make our own piece of Irish history.

“We’ve been close to this a few times. If we put everything into it again and learn from what happened before. Resilient belief is what we needed. The guys bought into it and had a shared belief around it. It wasn’t just coming from my side; we all had to commit. Dreams can fly. If you are in the right space and

commit to it enough, anything is possible.”

Since February, the side has been training together Sunday to Tuesday with the full group, transitioning from the start of May to a full-time schedule for the next three months.

There have been casualties; Jonny Bruton and Stevie Dowds have both stepped away from the panel after qualification was achieved, unable to continue to commit to the programme with their respective personal circumstances.

“It was obviously a difficult conversation and we tried everything but, in elite sport, there are no guarantees would there be a business to come back to and x, y and z. I respect everything they have done and it does not close the door going forward.

“You have guys taking sabbaticals, guys working as lawyers, doctors, IT or whatever. They have mortgages and a family to keep. There is not much there for them to cover them other than our fundraising.

“That funding we get in will be split. We have an amount to go to the players and then also to allow us play further games. You can’t have one without the other.

“It’s great to have the programme but if the players aren’t available – the top choice players with the most



experience – to take part in it, it's such a dilemma. So we are trying to bridge the gap."

They are doing so by playing as many matches as possible this summer. It includes 10 matches on home turf, bringing Irish matches around the island in between trips to Germany and Spain before departing for Rio in mid-July.

Fulton says it is crucial for the team to showcase themselves, primarily for their own preparations but also to build an affinity with a potentially larger public. Little seen, Irish cricket exploded into the public conscience in the wake of a 2007 World Cup win against Pakistan. It led to a spectacular growth in youth numbers and Ireland are keen to experience something similar.

Off the back of a similarly hectic

2015, Ireland played 41 games, the most they have ever had in one calendar year and Fulton says it is no coincidence it ended with Olympic qualification and a European bronze medal and the volume of fixtures is crucial.

"We are taking the game around the country to profile the squad and get families and young hockey players within touching distance of their hockey heroes.

"It's a massively intense programme. Last year was the most successful we have ever been. In that equation, the more time we spend together, the better we got; the more we could adapt and learn about ourselves.

"In the end, it was always going to be about us and where we could make the improvements." ●



ditausa.com

*"Scored a goal
in my first
international game,
thanks to
the Black Cat."*

– Loren Shealy



elite sticks

fieldhockeysticks.com





SEEKING GOLD IN RIO



The Rio Olympics are just weeks away and, for many players, the recent Champions Trophy was the final opportunity for players to ensure that they would be on the bus to Brazil. We spoke to four players about their hopes and dreams for Rio.

Argentina are the most successful team to have contested the Champions Trophy in the past decade and in June this year they won their seventh title, reclaiming the trophy that they won in 2014.

Back in 2014, Las Leonas said an emotional farewell to their iconic captain Luciana Aymar, widely recognised as one of the best female players the world has seen.

Carla Rebecchi is a superstar forward for Argentina and, after Aymar's retirement, she has been captaining the side, most notably to Hockey World League success in Rosario last year. She has her eye on two big trophies this year. "Of course, this year we are going to Rio without Luciana Aymar. She can never be replaced. But we have a lot of new, young players coming through so we are learning to do things differently. In London 2012 we had Lucha but we also had a lot of players with injuries. In 2016, we don't have Lucha but we have a fit squad.

"Things are going really well with training and test matches. After winning the title again at the Champions Trophy now our sights are on an Olympic medal, gold if possible. It would be a dream come true.

"We started our preparation for Rio on January 25th. We are training a lot, we played six test matches against New Zealand in February and right now we are playing in Europe, we played two test against Belgium and we are playing three against Germany. Then we go back to Argentina for very hard physical training."

Rebecchi says the team has altered little from the squad that won the Hockey World League title. It is a squad that has been building since the last Olympics, with some of the older members retiring and some "really very good" young players coming into the squad. A disappointing HWL Semi-Final in Valencia seemed to provide the impetus that Las Leonas needed to start firing again and, with a win at last December's HWL Final and now success in London, they are back to number two in the world and look to be challenging for top spot.

"Our biggest challenge in Rio, will be the top seeds – Netherlands, Australia. But New Zealand are also always very tough and Great Britain will be a big threat."

Susannah Townsend of Great Britain and England is fast becoming one of Great Britain's most effective midfielders. Despite a disappointing Champions Trophy [Great Britain finished fifth] Townsend is optimistic for her side's chances in Rio. She says the current squad is one that has been given time to evolve. "Since New Year we have had an intense training block, but this hasn't been any different to the last four years. The beauty of our programme is that we have had four years as a squad in the build up to an Olympics games, this means that time is on our side and nothing has had to be rushed. We have planned and prepared and are at a stage we want to be at prior to Rio."

The stability in the Great Britain side is reflected in the fact that this will be coach Danny Kerry's third Olympics in charge and the thoughtful and meticulously prepared coach has been signed up as women's head coach until Tokyo 2020. It is clearly an appointment that Townsend is delighted with. "Danny is a fantastic coach. As players we all look to develop every single day and Danny is meticulous in doing the same with his development. We are improving as players and our coaches are also improving as coaches. Stability at this time in preparation is a good thing and having this decision made early has benefited the squad as it avoids any speculation and also allows the coaches and players to focus on the task in hand, which is Rio."

Talking to Townsend, you get the impression that this Great Britain side is a very tight knit unit. At the 2014 World Cup, England – who provide the majority of the Great Britain side – had an implosion. The sense among the players and staff is that this resulted in a very strong group of players emerging the other side of that painful period. Certainly Townsend feels she is part of a very tight knit group.



CARLA
REBECCHI

“Our biggest challenge in Rio, will be the top seeds – Netherlands, Australia. But New Zealand are also always very tough and Great Britain will be a big threat.”

CARLA REBECCHI

“After the New Year we had a physical training month, this was interspersed with hockey and physical training as well as team bonding exercises. This was a very tough month especially in the freezing cold, it is a month I will always remember though as tough times like that bring a team together!

“We also played six test matches in the freezing cold against Australia; this was invaluable. Playing against world class opposition and spending some quality time on and off the pitch as a squad proved to be a great experience for the team.

“We are a very close knit group. We spend every single day together and know each other inside out. I believe this sets us apart from many other teams. Our European success of course gave us belief and confidence but we had this before. We are very



SUSANNAH
TOWNSEND







“Every event we go to we are aiming to be the best we can be. With the Champions Trophy being so close to Rio we wanted to be performing close to our best hockey, however you don’t win an Olympic games in June.”

GEORGIE PARKER

aware of what it takes to be successful and we live by those values each day. I can’t give away our secrets on how we will be playing but it goes without saying that tactically we can set up in anyway but you can guarantee we will play with confidence, fight and determination.”

Another team that never lacks fight and determination is the Hockeyroos of Australia. Ranked number three in the world, Australia are a side that desperately want a gold medal on the world stage. In the past few major tournaments they have been thwarted by either a consistently successful Netherlands or the sporadically brilliant Argentina.

Approaching her 100th cap in the famous gold and green of Australia, Georgie Parker is a player who knows the pain of defeat at the top level. She was part of the team that won silver at the World League Finals in Tucuman in 2013 and then again against the Dutch at the World Cup final of 2014. The Hockeyroos did win Commonwealth gold in 2014, but the team’s performance in the 2015 Hockey World League Finals was only good enough to see them finish in sixth place.

“We took a very young team to the Hockey World League finals last year, and our results showed that,” says Parker. “With every international experience you have as a player you learn and grow, so we have matured as a playing group. We now have a much larger group of players, with many more international caps all willing to put their hands up in big games. It is an exciting time for us and the future of Australian hockey.”

There is a note of steely determination in Parker’s voice as she says: “Every event we go to we are aiming to be the best we can be. With the Champions Trophy being so close to Rio we wanted to be performing close to our best hockey, however you don’t win an Olympic games in June.”

And Adam Commens and his coaching staff has certainly been putting the team through its paces. “The past few months of training has been some of the hardest I have ever been involved in,” says Parker. “We are getting pushed to our limits physically and mentally, both on and off the pitch and are progressing really well as a unit. We are wanting to leave no stone unturned and want to be the most prepared team heading to Rio.

“The only thing you can expect is the unexpected. We have no idea what will get thrown at us in Rio, or any tournament for that matter, so that is why we are planning and preparing for any and every situation. There is nothing more motivating than the prospect of winning a gold medal, and we are all putting everything into doing that.”

The past few months have not been easy for the 27-year-old. She explains: “I had a pretty rough 2015 with injuries and illness, and my passion for hockey was affected. I am



GEORGIE
PARKER



back on track with my fitness and form, and my love for the sport has been reignited. My goal is to be part of the successful team heading to Rio, and if not part of the team, doing everything I can to push the team to success.”

The USA turned up at London for the Champions Trophy with the lowest ranking among the participants, but that has never stopped the women wearing the red, blue and white from eyeing the main prize. This time they emerged with a bronze medal and a jump up the rankings to fifth place. Katelyn Falgowski is a hardened campaigner for Team USA and she spoke with her customary enthusiasm about the challenges ahead.

“Whether training for the past 11 years or the past 11 months, as a united front, we are ready to enter the battle field. We have trained hard and are ready to draw on our training for strength, encouragement and determination. We view every opportunity as a chance to get better and take practice, one day, one game at a time. We are preparing ourselves to the best of our abilities and are excited to see what this summer holds for us in Rio.”

When I asked about her aspirations for Rio, Falgowski was quick to deflect the question, another pointer to the USA team mentality. “We have training and practice games coming up. We have always been a one-game-at-a-time kind of team. We try to control what we can, and looking too far down the line can cause us to lose sight of the details that will get us to the big picture.”

The USA team has won plaudits for its hard working ethos. Opponents have learnt over the past few years that if there is one thing the American squad will never do, it is stop running. Falgowski explains the mindset further: “We strive every day in training to break the ceiling of what we thought was possible in terms of our own strength, endurance and skill. Whenever you think you have reached your point of exhaustion, as a team we draw strength from one another and realise there is always more to give. Every day we ask the question to ourselves, how will we make this ordinary Tuesday into something extraordinary?” ●



KATELYN
FALGOWSKI

THE UNSUNG HEROES OF THE SIDELINE



PHOTOS BY NED DAWSON





// found out at 3am in the morning and had to wait until everyone was awake to share the news,” says Australian umpire Kylie Seymour.

“I was away from Moscow with no Wi-Fi, so I didn’t find out until I had a message saying a letter had arrived.” Elena Eskina, Russia’s top hockey umpire laughs as she recalls, “My friends were going crazy because they knew the appointments were out but they didn’t know if I had been selected.”

“Just the confirmation that you are going to be a part of some of the most exciting and challenging games of hockey – ever – is an amazing emotion,” adds New Zealand’s Kelly Hudson. “It’s the absolute peak of any sport.”

It’s not just the athletes who have spent the past four years, or longer, training for selection to go to the Rio Olympics. For umpires too, taking their place on the biggest sporting stage is a dream come true.

It is a second Games for Kelly – along with Elena she umpired at London 2012 – and she explains why the Games means so much to her: “I have memories of the Olympics growing up, we would study them at school, and my memory is typically filled with New Zealand medal winning highlights! We are a small but proud sporting nation who has always ‘punched above its weight’ and I think we really hone in on the history and values that the Olympic movement brings.”

Olympic debutante Kylie says her first appreciation of the importance of the Games was the 2000 Sydney Olympics. “I had only just started umpiring at the time – I had been playing since I was five – but that was when I realised just how much the Olympics meant and what it stood for.”

Sixteen years later and Kylie, Elena and Kelly are three of the team of umpires chosen to officiate at the Rio Olympics and for Kylie it is a dream come true. “Back then, the thought of umpiring at an Olympics was far from my mind, but 12 years later I was an international umpire and I was watching the games as they took place in London [in 2012] starting to dream that this could be possible. I had been in London just a month earlier at the Investec





Cup, umpiring with the girls who were going, so that brought it much closer to reality.”

For Kylie, her dream of an appointment at Rio has come true after a fairly seamless journey up the umpiring ladder. Her colleague from Russia, Elena Eskina, has not always had it so easy. She was selected to umpire at the London Olympics in 2012 but in the four years since has faced many difficult times and some personal challenges. A shadow falls over her face as she says she prefers not to talk about those darker times.

She brightens however, as she recalls her reaction to her first Olympic appointment in 2012.

“When I got the appointment to go to London, for sure, this is a goal for all umpires. To know you have achieved this – well, at first you feel happy, content even. But in reality, it hadn’t totally sunk in. Yes, you feel happiness and you talk about the Olympics with everyone and you know it is something







special but in those early days, when you first learn you are going, it doesn't really sink in.

"My first reaction was simply that this was a really big, really prestigious hockey tournament. I didn't realise the difference between being at a big hockey tournament and being at the Olympics. It took a while to sink in, to realise just how special that was. So my feelings before the Olympics compared to my feelings after the Olympics were totally different."

Elena says it was sometime after she returned from London that she began to realise she had been part of something very special. "It became obvious to me that it doesn't matter what role you are in, the important thing is that you are there. Whether you are a sportsperson, volunteer, official – it is really, really special and you only fully understand that when you have been part of it."

Kylie listens on intently as Elena speaks: "Well that has sent goosebumps down my spine," she says. "If I wasn't a bit nervous before, I am now."

Having spent time with these umpires, one thing is very obvious. While the players might consider themselves to have strong ties with their teammates, the umpires have developed an enormously tight-knit support group over the past few years: a Facebook page dedicated to umpiring issues; friendships rooted deeply in shared experiences at international tournaments around the world; a sense of watching each other's back.

It is a philosophy that Kelly firmly believes in: "When you are appointed to an event you are representing the greater umpiring community, and so you have a responsibility to promote the best performance for your team of umpires, for the players, and for the game of hockey."

At major tournaments there is a tight team of support for the umpires: an umpire manager, video umpire and judges are all on hand to offer advice, support and constructive criticism. Over the course of a 10 day tournament, the umpires will spend a lot of time training, discussing rules, watching video



clips of their performance and talking about their performances – it is extra work that is done for good reason.

“The demands upon umpires are increasing all the time,” Kylie says. “The players at the moment are the fittest I have ever seen. They are fast, strong, they have unbelievable endurance and they are playing at an incredibly high level. We have to make sure we are consistently at a level – mentally and physically – that allows us to move with the game as it intensifies.”

It is a tough ask. These umpires are in full-time jobs and the training is done in their own time. And yet, their approach is as professional as any player’s as Kelly explains: “I think the main thing that I have done, aside from now clocking up more experience and time at the top level matches, is continue to develop the understanding of the players, what they are trying to do, and where the game is heading. To consistently apply the rules when the game is becoming faster, more dynamic, skilful and spectacular, is a tough thing to do! But I like to manage the game by communicating with the players and getting them to understand where I am coming from with a touch of empathy.”

Just like the players, umpires know that there are good games and bad games and how a match pans out is often out of their control. Kylie says a good game relies upon all the stakeholders playing their part. “You get a sense of the overall feeling of the game. When the players come off and have enjoyed the game, then you know you have had a good one. It is impossible to pinpoint games or moments where it all slots into place – the players on both sides have to play well, both umpires have to have a good game, the crowd can play their part.”

When things do go wrong, it can happen spectacularly and often provides a very sharp learning experience. For Elena, it is all about moving on... quickly. “The best thing you can do is forget about it. Start again. Like the team, they start from the centre line after a goal – we have to have our own centre line moment.”

She agrees that is hard for an umpire to pick themselves up after a game. This is where experience plays its part. All three umpires talk about ‘pulling the

blind down'. "For more experienced umpires it is easier," says Elena. "You need to remember that you can think about it later, but now it is all about being in the moment. You need to continue. Yes, of course it's still there but we have to concentrate on the action on the pitch. After the game you talk to the other umpires, look at the video clips and discuss it then."

Of course the perception between what happened and what the umpires or players perceived is often very different. Something that caused players to argue, coaches to scream and umpires to question themselves are often revealed in playback to be nowhere near as dramatic. The advent of video referrals often proves just that. Both umpires agreed that video referrals were a benefit to the game. "I am very happy to take a player's request to look back at a decision," says Kylie. "And I am happy to admit when I am wrong. I want the correct decision for the game and I think the players respect the acknowledgment of a mistake. The respect is a two-way thing though, I admire it when a player puts her hand up and admits that it was the correct decision."

As the questions probe into how the umpires deal with difficult situations, Kylie admits that she finds it tough to talk about. "It is giving the players and spectators an insight into our thought processes. I do find that uncomfortable, although I also want to get out there and show just how much goes into umpiring and why we have to be at the top of our game."

Again, like the players, there are times when the umpires question why they put themselves through it. "I have had real disappointment in my umpiring career through missed selection and also through injury," says Kelly. "I know never to take any appointment for granted. Each opportunity is one to be taken with both hands and prepared for really well. Failure to take that approach can lead to massive disappointment. Also, going through those lows helps you to solidify who your support team really are and also serves to evaluate and reignite your motivation."

"It is not the right move for everyone to make," says Elena. "If you are considering moving into umpiring, it is very important that you ask yourself 'why?'. It is tough and you will have to make sacrifices, but that is true of whatever you choose to do in life."

Her point brings the conversation back round to what it takes to get to the top. For Elena it is all about getting your head strong. "Mental preparation is so important. You need to be at the same consistent level of performance no matter how you are feeling inside. If you are down, you constantly think you are not good enough, you are not happy with yourself and that affects your demeanour on the pitch. It is difficult to keep yourself at that high level all the time, mentally. For some umpires, the physical fitness is tough to reach, here [she taps her head], that is the difficult part for others."

Bearing in mind the commitment and the intensity of being an international umpire, I asked Elena if she had ever harboured doubts about going for a second Olympics. She looked in amazement: "During the Olympics I really enjoyed every minute there and at the end I felt so full of happiness that there was no room for sadness at coming to the end. I decided at that moment I wanted to go to Rio."

"I was really, really happy and I just wanted to share that with everyone. I hope my friends understood what a great experience it was, but this is so special that sometimes you just have to be part of it to understand that feeling." ●

rely



Insurance
Advice for Life

With Rely you get the very best advice and are able to choose from the leading New Zealand insurance companies.

Our Team will work with your best interests in mind to put in place a protection plan that meets all your needs with affordable and relevant insurance policies.

We know that this is about YOUR needs and meeting YOUR objectives.

Give us a call 0800 7359 123 we can help you.

HEALTH INSURANCE

LIFE INSURANCE

INCOME PROTECTION

TRAUMA INSURANCE

MORTGAGE PROTECTION

A good broker is the best insurance you can have

andrew@rely.co.nz
www.rely.co.nz



HOCKEY IN THE 21ST CENTURY CAN TECHNOLOGY TRUMP INTUITION?



PHOTOS BY
WORLD SPORT PICS & COACH LOGIC



Ever since the Aztecs or the Egyptians first picked up sticks and began to knock a rock around, hockey has been a sport of innovation and development. Sticks change shape, size, composition and weight on an almost seasonal basis; balls have gone from leather to plastic, from ridged to smooth to dimpled; clothing has become lightweight, quick drying, technology-carrying. It is a sport that adopts innovation easily and readily.



Andy Halliday is manager to the Great Britain and England men's hockey team. He has been involved in the game for 40 years, as a player, coach and as part of the international team management. He explains how, and to what extent, the Great Britain team use technology: "The main area is use of video and associated software for both individual and team debriefing and briefing. Individual day-to-day player development revolves around the ability to view all clips from training and matchplay.

"Technology is influencing the game more and more. Video referrals, iPad substitution apps, logistical squad support, such as Whats App, social media. We also have advances in medicine and medical equipment which helps with players' rest and recovery."

Among the technologies used by the world number four team are video analysis, logistical spread-sheets for player monitoring and a central camera feed sending footage to the pitch-side analyst. Halliday also talks of the high definition pictures produced by the broadcasters, which help both the officials and teams when it comes to video referrals.

Graham Reid, coach to the world's number one men's team, Australia, is someone who is a huge advocate of technology. In a previous incarnation Reid was an IT geek. His degree is in computer science and he has continued to take a keen interest in technology, particularly how it can influence the game of hockey.

"On one level, the equipment has developed massively. I know that is not technology particularly, but it is all about design and the science behind the design. The sticks are getting lighter, the composite sticks are lighter but allow players to hit the ball even harder. The goalkeeper equipment is lighter, which is great for the game, as it means



BRAIDED REVOLUTION DESIGNED IN GERMANY
MADE IN THE FUTURE

TOTAL ONE CB 512

WHERE SCIENCE FICTION AND TECHNOLOGY CONVERGE



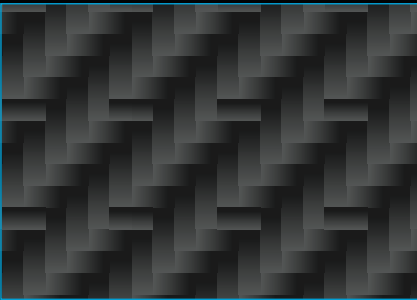
TK HY-BRAID CARBON

Introducing TK's revolutionary performance stick, a perfect hybrid between Unidirectional Fibre, Braided Carbon Fibres and Aramid, with the latter used in areas of heavy impact. Optimising game play, ball handling and vibration reduction, delivering unparalleled strength over standard carbon braided sticks.

By combining technical expertise with sporting excellence, the revolution of TK HY-BRAID is here.

THE TECHNOLOGY

We have utilised biaxial braiding technology to enable automated high quality production of continuous fiber composite components. The mechanical interlocking results in high energy impact absorption properties. A stronger, tougher, more flexible alternative to woven composites.



EXCEPTIONAL FEEL WITH HIGH POWER TRANSFERENCE

Carbon fiber reinforced plastic (CFRP) weighs up to 80% less than steel and up to 70% less than aluminum. This reduces weight while increasing stiffness to optimize power transference to the ball.

"Our innovation team has worked tirelessly with a specialist engineering company to bring you a revolution in hockey. I have the greatest pleasure of introducing the Total One CB-512 Carbon Hy-Braid Stick, designed and developed in Germany."

Thomas Kille CEO TK Hockey GmbH



kids can get into the goal and move freely in the goal. With all this new kit, it is cool to be a goalkeeper, so that is good for participation.”

One area of equipment technology that Hockey Australia are keen to explore is the use of an accelerometer in a ball to see how fast the ball travels. At the moment this is proving difficult to implement but Reid thinks it is an imminent development.

However, it is the technology that gives more information about the players that is really exciting Reid and his team at the moment. “In our programme we have an innovation person, a consultant who spends 10 hours a week going out and looking at other sports and other technology to see what we can use and adapt for our one purposes. I think the use of video technology is probably the biggest area for us. The use of drones and wearable videos - who knows how we can use that? There are endless possibilities. For example, where a drone follows a player, it will show a perspective that the player may not realise existed. When we talk to a player about how he reacted in a situation, the player might have interpreted the phase of play in one way, but the video feedback will demonstrate that other options were available.”

Aside from the innovations consultant, Hockey Australia is also working with universities and other bodies to develop technology. A student is basing a Phd on measuring how players react to work rates. Player rotations will be designed upon that work. In another ground-breaking piece of work, a student is examining player impact. Who was on the pitch when a goal was scored? How did each player influence the goal at each stage of build-up play?

For Reid, technology can only get better and add to the game further. “Video technology will get better and of a higher quality, so we will really be able to drill down into how skills are performed. GPS links to heart-rate and a heap of information that can be used to make the most effective substitutions.”

But is this information overload for the players? Reid concurs that there is too



much information for the players to take it all in and make sense of it. "We try to get the facts presented in a format that is simple to understand, concentrating upon the key points and messages we want to get across."

Ensuring players are completely prepared for any eventuality, Reid also has his players receiving match feedback with no video evidence at all. "We have to be prepared for a situation where we are relying on player and coach perspectives. Imagine if we are at a tournament and the technology fails for whoever reason, we must be prepared for that. It's interesting how closely the players' perspectives match the reality."



Reid might be all in favour of the use of IT but he is also aware of the dangers of being blind to anything but the statistics. "While technology can confirm your instincts about a period of play, an individual player or a match, you must be aware of bias; the situation where you use the information to back yourself, even if a different reading of the statistics might reveal a different picture."

The Australian says that the statistics behind a game can be useful in both a winning and a losing situation when it comes to restoring perspective. "We look at the opportunities and rate the play based on those chances. Let's say we lose 4-1. The players will be gutted but, if you look at the chances you created an equal amount as your opponents, you just didn't score. Equally, you might win 7-0, but the statistics reveal that you weren't 7-0 better than the opposition when it comes to possession and chances created. The statistics can lessen the negative feeling behind a loss but also reduce the euphoria of a win."

A coach who takes the polar opposite viewpoint to Reid is Germany's new head coach, Valentin Altenburg. He took over from Markus Weise in November as men's coach after a spell with the men's U21 side. He has the small challenge of an Olympic title to defend in his first year in charge.

"Yes, we use a lot of technology," says Altenburg. "We use walkie-talkies among the coaching team during matches so the coaches within the game are connected. We use a lot of video analysis; we use statistics to help us understand why games are won or lost but, to be honest, I don't really believe in technology too much. I personally like to go on what my eyes are seeing and the information the statistics are giving me is not always the same."



Altenburg is a coach who believes in intuition – both on the part of the coach and the players and he feels that technology can detract from a player's natural instinct for the game. "Sport is about the surprise element. Let's face it, sport is all about surprise otherwise you would predict every result. We won 7-0 today [against Korea in the Champions Trophy], but no-one expected that.

"The more technology we use, the more we have to be careful that the human part doesn't suffer. As it is, with all the rule changes and the increased speed of the game, the players are making hundreds of decisions all the time, more information can be too much."

There is another reason why Altenburg is not a huge fan of video analysis and gathering information. He explains: "Technology is enormously helpful but we, the German team, have a problem with that because it means all the teams have a very good understanding of how we have played in the past and what made us strong tactically. After each campaign it is a challenge to adapt as technology allows other teams understand our strategy, our tactics, what we want to achieve and so they are able to use that information to defend against us."

For the German coach, information technology has brought a new dimension to the game. He says the players and teams now have far greater tactical awareness about their opponents. This information is almost instant as the data is sent to bench about what is happening during a game.

Altenburg agrees with Reid that the statistics can be used to back the coach's perception, sometimes erroneously. "As coaches, we use statistics to back up our ideas and to give us some security but the truth is that in sport there is no certainty. We might have all the stats but it is the surprising things that win games. Coaches must know there is no security and we should embrace that. It is what sport is all about. If you can prognose everything, then it becomes a boring game."

A new player on the scene, hoping to persuade coaches and players of the need for intelligent and focused feedback, rather than just a myriad of stats, is the team behind Coach Logic.

The company is the result of a collaboration between two former PE teachers and sportsmen who were fed up with the lack of high quality and targeted feedback.

"There is a lot of information being fed back to players for analysis but, in fact, they want just the feedback needed to improve," explains international sevens rugby player Mark Cairns.

This is sweet music to the ears of many of the coaches working with international teams who are always looking for a clear way to collect and disseminate information to their players. Effective use of technology is becoming a key quality in the modern game.

"As PE Teachers, plus coaches and players, we were a bit fed up with two things," says Andy Muir, the other half of the brains behind Coach Logic. "The first was the inefficient way that video was being delivered to players who were desperate to improve.

"One of the best ways to learn is to view video of your performance to gain a real understanding of what 'actually' happened. If you then have the opportunity to engage with the video and have peer to peer discussion around it, the level of learning becomes even greater.

"The second thing was the negative way in which statistics were being used. Coaches were identifying 'what' had happened in a game, which was normally negative and, without the context of the video to back it up, this feedback was not actually conducive to learning. In a continuous and dynamic team sport such as hockey, there are often many correct ways to deal with a particular situation. Therefore to simply use a stat to say 'what' happened with no explanation of the 'why', can become a pretty useless interaction. Interpretation through the use of video and positive discussion around it is far more useful."

Currently, Coach Logic are working with clubs and associations in Europe and Oceania and they hope that their brand of user-friendly technology will bridge the gap between technology and intuition. ●

B E A
U T Y
B A R

**I THINK
THERE IS
BEAUTY IN
EVERYTHING**

*CHARLOTTE HARRISON
- THE BEAUTY BAR -*

SAY HELLO

- to -

CHARLOTTE
Qualified Skin Specialist

021 117 7990
hello@thebeautybar.co

thebeautybar.co

MEN'S HOCKEY CHAMPIONS TROPHY

INDIA MAKES KOOKABURRAS SWEAT IN TENSE FINAL

STORY BY SARAH JUGGINS / PHOTOS BY NED DAWSON







Despite winning all its pool matches, the world number one side Australia was made to sweat it out by India in the final of the men's Hockey Champions Trophy. Although the Kookaburras won out in the end, it was not before a dramatic shoot-out - in which Australia's goalkeeper Tyler Lovell played a heroic role.

On route to the final, Australia had won five matches and drawn just once – a tough 0-0 encounter with the host nation Great Britain. India, by contrast, had suffered two losses – to Australia and Belgium.

But when it mattered, the Indian team stepped up and put the reigning champions to the severest of tests. The match went to shoot-out and then both teams had to wait for an official protest by India to be heard before the result was known. Although India were disappointed at the result, the team will be delighted as they move up the world rankings to fifth place, leapfrogging Belgium and Argentina in the process.

In the earlier bronze medal match, the host nation Great Britain lost out by a single goal to reigning Olympic champions Germany, with striker Marco Miltkau scoring the only goal of the game.

Belgium recovered from the disappointment of missing out on the competition final at the Hero Hockey Champions Trophy 2016 by claiming a narrow victory over Korea to seal a fifth place finish in London.

The Red Lions showed great fighting spirit to fight back from 3-1 down to snatch





THE FINAL



take a 4-3 win, ensuring that they would not finish the event as the lowest placed team in the final standings.

GOLD MEDAL MATCH: AUSTRALIA V INDIA 0-0 (AUSTRALIA WON ON SHOOT-OUT)

The Kookaburras won an unprecedented 14th Hockey Champions Trophy title after a tense shoot-out with India. The full-time score was 0-0 but the Australian's held their nerve to win the shoot-out 3-1. The victory was confirmed after a protest by India was overruled.

The action flowed from one end of the pitch to the other as both sides created chances but were unable to convert. Four early penalty corners for Australia were uncharacteristically wasted and India showed similar reluctance to break the deadlock.

A golden opportunity came when Australia won a penalty stroke but this also went unconverted.

With three minutes to go in the third quarter, Australia were down to nine players with both Flynn Ogilvie and Trent Mitton sent off with green and yellow cards respectively. The opportunity was missed by India and going into the last quarter the score remained at 0 – 0.

With just over ten minutes to go Matt





Dawson was given a ten minute card, leaving Australia to play the rest of the match a player down. With three minutes to go Chandanda Thimmaiah was given a yellow card and both teams were both down to ten.

As full time came, the score was still deadlocked and the gold medal match went to a sudden death shoot out. For Australia, Aran Zalewski, Daniel Beale and Simon Orchard scored, with Harmanpreet Singh putting the ball away for India. Tyler Lovell, in the Australia goal, was in fine form much to the chagrin of the Indian strikers.

On the win, Australian Head Coach, Graham Reid said: "I'm happy with the result as far as us winning, but disappointed with the fact that we didn't win it in normal time. We created a lot of opportunities but we couldn't put them away.

"We gave away too many cards and it's very hard to play hockey with nine or ten men. There's a lot of work to do before Rio, so that's what we will be concentrating on in the coming weeks."

Captain Tim Deavin added: "It was an interesting game, not how we wanted to play. India played pretty well. We had the opportunity and the chances to put them away but we just didn't score.

"That's always going to happen with a quality team like India. If you leave them in the match they're going to keep coming so I think great that the boys did it in the end



with the one on ones, and just happy to be going home with the trophy.”

BRONZE MEDAL MATCH: GERMANY V GREAT BRITAIN 1-0

It was a day for goalkeepers to step up as Nico Jacobi was the star performer for Germany, producing numerous saves to stop Great Britain making their mark on the scoreboard.

The game was fiercely contested, with both sides having far more chances than the score-line would suggest, although GB will rue their failure to register despite having 20 circle entries and 12 shots on target, six of which came in the first quarter.

The winning goal arrived in the third quarter, with 25-year-old striker Miltkau scoring his fourth goal of the tournament to seal the bronze medal and condemn the home favourites to a fourth place finish.

“We came here with a team that had never played together before, and came directly from the German league”, said Germany midfielder Tobias Hauke. “We started ok against India, have improved game by game and now at the end we have finished in third place. With a little bit more luck in the earlier games we could have been in the final, but it’s fine this year to get the third place in a really important tournament like the Champions Trophy





because we have an even more important event coming up with the Olympics.”

FIFTH/SIXTH PLACE: BELGIUM V KOREA 4-3

Belgium had a disappointing tournament by their standards. They lost their opening game to Korea and then registered just a win and two draws in the competition. The results mean they drop one place down the world rankings from fifth to sixth. Korea, by contrast, would be relatively happy with their performance over the course of six games. They came to the event as qualifiers from Champions Challenge; they are the only team not preparing for Rio; and they are currently ranked ninth in the world, three places below their nearest rivals.

In the match to avoid sixth place, the first quarter was a cagey affair with neither side over-committing. A second period penalty corner from Simon Gougnard broke the deadlock and gave Belgium the advantage before Korean legend Seo Jongho restored parity ahead of half time. A third quarter double from Yang Jihun put Korea into a commanding 3-1 lead, although strikes from Gougnard, Tanguy Cosyns and Florent van Aubel turned the result in favour of the Belgians.

Belgium’s Jerome Truyens said: “I’m glad that we got the result because it was difficult but we showed character in the second half to end the competition on a winning note” ●

FINAL PLACINGS

HERO HOCKEY CHAMPIONS TROPHY 2016



1. Australia
2. India
3. Germany
4. Great Britain
5. Belgium
6. Korea

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

Best player: **Tobias Hauke** (GER)

Best junior player: **Harmanpreet Singh** (IND)

Best goalkeeper: **George Pinner** (GBR)

Top scorer: **Marco Miltkau** (GER)





EBECCHI

11

Macro

PERYPHON

WOMEN'S HOCKEY
CHAMPIONS TROPHY

**ARGENTINA
IN SEVENTH
HEAVEN**

STORY BY SARAH JUGGINS / PHOTOS BY NED DAWSON





WINNERS 2016

There was a distinctly Pan-American feel to the party at the end of the women's Hockey Champions Trophy in London, England.

Argentina claimed a record seventh Champions Trophy title thanks to a 2-1 win over reigning World and Olympic Champions The Netherlands, while USA came from 2-0 half-time deficit to draw even and then grab the bronze medal in their match against Australia.

Host nation Great Britain and New Zealand battled it out for fifth and sixth place – a match that went Great Britain's way after Alex Danson found form to score a sparkling hat-trick.

GOLD MEDAL MATCH: ARGENTINA V THE NETHERLANDS 2-1

First quarter goals from Martina Cavallero and Noel Barrionuevo gave Las Leonas a 2-0 lead over the world number one team, The Netherlands. The Dutch fought back with a high quality penalty corner flick from Eva de Goede just after half time, but Argentina held on to win their third successive Champions Trophy title. The Netherlands were without the services of their talismanic drag flicker Maartje Paumen, who sat out with an injury.

BRONZE MEDAL MATCH: AUSTRALIA V USA 2-2 (USA WON ON SHOOT-OUT)

In the bronze medal game, USA battled to a shootout victory over Australia, giving the team a first Champions Trophy medal since winning bronze at the 1995 event in Mar del Plata, Argentina. The Americans (FIH Hero World Ranking: 7) bounced back from 2-0 down to level at 2-2 thanks to a double from Katie Bam before USA keeper Jackie Briggs kept a clean sheet against the Hockeyroos (FIH Hero World Ranking: 3) to seal a famous victory. Remarkably, USA team captain Melissa Gonzalez scored the only shootout of



the contest, with Briggs proving herself unbeatable in the American goal to give her team a brilliant bronze medal ahead of their Olympic challenge in Rio later this year.

"We are so excited", said an understandably delighted Jackie Briggs after the match. "It didn't matter who we played, we just so happy with the result. We worked really hard to keep it at 2-2. I made a few mistakes in the game, but I was just really thankful that the team had my back today and I knew that going into the shootout I just had to keep it out."



FIFTH/SIXTH PLACE: GREAT BRITAIN V NEW ZEALAND 4-3

Earlier in the day, Great Britain ended on a high with their finest performance of the competition as Alex Danson scored a brilliant hat-trick as the hosts delighted the home fans with a 4-3 victory over New Zealand to secure a 5th place finish.

Danson scored the opening goal in the 10th minute when she fired home a backhand effort after an excellent pass from Lily Owsley before the Black Sticks levelled thanks to a fabulous run by Anita McLaren. Owsley made her mark on the scoreboard ahead of half time before Danson netted her second just after the break. New Zealand hit back to level at 3-3 with goals from Olivia Merry and Kelsey Smith, but a wonderful chipped finish from Danson ensured that Great Britain finished the event on a winning note.



FINAL PLACINGS



HERO HOCKEY CHAMPIONS TROPHY 2016

1. Argentina
2. The Netherlands
3. USA
4. Australia
5. Great Britain
6. New Zealand

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

Best player: **Carla Rebecchi** (ARG)

Best junior player: **Maria Granatto** (ARG)

Best goalkeeper: **Joyce Sombroek** (NED)

Top scorer: **Carla Rebecchi** (ARG)









Over the course of the competition, all six teams demonstrated why this tournament is named the Best of the Best, with some great performances all round. There were also some shockers, perhaps explained away by the fact that Olympic selection will follow this event.

"Sure there will be some tension," agreed Carla Rebecchi, captain of Argentina, speaking before the final match. "Everyone wants to play well and that can sometimes make you nervous. But we will deal with the pressure."

Her Dutch counterpart, Maartje Paumen said she thought the pressure of selection was a good thing and one that could be used positively. "If you are all fighting for your place, you will try to play harder and do better. That could cause problems, but we are a close group and we know how to look after each other as well as work hard."

Selection worries and the pressure created by playing in front of a home crowd seemed to be part of Great Britain's problems as they were without a win after their first five games.

A 2-2 draw with Argentina was no real cause for concern for Danny Kerry and his players, but then a run of defeats at the hands of Netherlands (2-0), USA (2-0), New Zealand (2-1) and Australia (4-1) meant the host's high hopes of a medal were dashed.

New Zealand had a similarly disappointing run. They got off to a poor start when the Netherlands beat them 6-2, they followed this with losses to Australia (3-1) and Argentina (4-2) before beating Great Britain (1-0) and drawing with USA (1-1).

Second goalkeeper Amelia Gibson said: "Obviously we are disappointed by the results, but we can take so much away from this experience. You have to go through a losing process to learn and we have a lot to go back and work on. One of the things we saw here was how much the smallest margins count – it is a fine line between scoring a goal and shooting wide, or saving a shot or just seeing it slip past you."

Australia were bitterly disappointed not to end the campaign with a medal. Captain Madonna Blyth was her usual straight-talking self as she spoke of her team's progress since 2012. "Back then we finished where we deserved, but we





are playing a different brand of hockey now. And this tournament has been the chance for players to put their hands up and stake a claim for their place in Rio.

"The tournament here has highlighted that we need to fine tune some things, but generally we are heading in the right direction."

A delighted Katelyn Falgowski could hardly hide her joy at wearing the bronze medal. Two years earlier the team had been competing in the Champions Challenge, a second tier event, but success there meant the team qualified for this Champions Trophy.

"This is huge for us, with the Olympics coming up," she said. "It wasn't a perfect tournament by any means, but we go into these things believing anyone can be beaten. There is a grit about us, we never back down from the fight and that relentless pressure is hard on anyone."

During the course of the tournament, the USA had started poorly, losing to Argentina and the Netherlands and drawing with Australia but a convincing win over Great Britain seemed the catalyst the squad needed and they played with renewed self belief as they drew with New Zealand in the final pool game to secure a spot in the bronze medal match.

Before the final, Lidewij Welten revealed that The Netherlands team still had some improvements to make. "We have little details that need to be sorted out before Rio, the star striker said. "But we are happy with how it has gone so far. We know we can always do better though."

Certainly coach Alyson Annan and her players will be working on those details between now and Rio, because when it came to the medal match, it was Argentina who were in the driving seat. The Netherlands had beaten Argentina in the final pool match – a dress rehearsal for the real thing. But as Rebecchi said: "Today was very different to yesterday [when Argentina lost to Netherlands in the pool match] there is something inside us that make us play better in finals. We know that when we get on the pitch in the final we have to give a little bit more than in other matches. We have to celebrate this victory."

For Rebecchi, lifting the trophy for the third consecutive time was made all the sweeter because it comes after a fight back from a knee injury sustained last year. With the Rio Olympics just around the corner, the captain and her team couldn't have laid down the markers any more clearly. ●

planet
HOCKEY
magazine



www.facebook.com/planethockey







THE FINAL







THE FINAL



THE FINAL





HOCKEY CHAMPIONS TROPHY **MEDIA vs HOCKEY MAKERS**









#HCT2016

FIH

Hockey

CHAMPIONS

port

EVE





HOCKEY'S HEROES MARCH ON

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOCKEY4HEROES/ENGLAND HOCKEY

"These guys are really something, we know we sacrifice a lot to be hockey players, so we understand a little of what they go through, but they are truly inspirational." George Pinner, the Great Britain goalkeeper shakes his head in admiration as he talks about his role as ambassador to the Hockey for Heroes movement.

Hockey for Heroes came into existence in 2012, when a squad was formed comprising a number of military and ex-military personnel who all rally for the cause. The movement is an off-shoot of charity Help for Heroes who raise money to help injured and fallen military personnel. The funds raised help run a series of country-wide recovery centres, all focused heavily on the role sport can play.

Managing director is Gary Ryder and he explains how the charity started life: "Hockey for Heroes all started when, as two ex-army soldiers, we [with co-founder Joel Forrester] decided we should combine our love for hockey with a military past we will never forget. Our inspiration is the fantastic work that Help for Heroes continually do for our injured service men and women. This is our way of giving something back.

"There are personnel within England Hockey and the Great Britain side who have really supported our cause and it has picked up momentum every year."

Help for Heroes has been involved with Sports Recovery since 2008, and in the past year alone have put on 350 events across 50 different sports enabling more than 2,100 wounded, injured and sick service personnel and veterans to take part in adaptive sports.

Using hockey as the vehicle for their work, the Hockey for Heroes team, which currently comprises 26 players from 20 different clubs, works to raise funds for Help for Heroes. Their



HOCKEY *for* HEROES



challenges are always a mixture of exceptional physical exertion combined with playing hockey. In 2013, the squad took on an inaugural tour, which encompassed 26 matches in seven days; in 2014 they took part in a tough mudder adventure race, then ran up Mount Snowdon before playing two hockey matches; and their most recent challenge, completed earlier this year, the Hockey for Heroes Tour, which saw them play 33 matches in 10 days, while completing the three peaks challenge [climbing the three highest peaks in the UK, Snowdon, Ben Nevis and Scafell Pike].

Next year the ambition gets even greater. The plan is for a 200 mile hike between the national stadium in Wales to the National Hockey Centre in London, playing a number of matches along the way – oh and carrying a man on a stretcher all the way.

The Great Britain team's involvement with Hockey for Heroes began when England first sported the logo on their shirts at the European Championships in August 2015. The idea was first mooted by team manager Andy Halliday, long a supporter of this and many other charities. "I was a member of the police force for 15 years," explains Halliday. "I have an affinity with and a huge admiration for these guys who give their all to serve their country."

Halliday's support is welcomed by Ryder: "We hope the link between hockey for heroes and the GB hockey team is a long one. Our aim is to support our charity but it's also to promote hockey as a sport. We're extremely proud to see our logo on the national shirt and we know the Great Britain hockey team is proud to wear it.

"The support overall, in clubs as well as with the national team, has been overwhelming, it's fantastic to see so many

people willing to give up their time to support, donate and come to events. The support from the hockey family is amazing. Our aim is to reach as many hockey clubs as possible. It's important for us to keep attending events throughout the year to raise the profile and awareness. It's in the early stages of planning, but in 2017 we aim to complete our toughest challenge to date.

"This challenge will consist of the hockey squad marching more than 200 miles between Sofia Gardens [the Welsh national hockey centre], to the Lee Valley Stadium, playing more than 30 matches as they go. They will be carrying injured Royal Marine Dom Lovett – a close friend of many of the squad, and son of one of the newest members of Hockey for Heroes, Welsh Masters International Shane Lovett."

Joel Forrester is Hockey for Heroes Captain. He said: "As the captain of Hockey for Heroes I am honoured that the Great Britain hockey team choose to have our names across their shirts. For us, this really is the pinnacle of what we are trying to achieve in awareness and we really hope the guys who are wearing 'Hockey for Heroes' on their shirts can take the true meaning of our organisation, and can achieve that extra boost from the memories of those men and women who have served and fought and died for our country.

"I really hope other clubs follow the lead of England and Great Britain Hockey in getting behind us to help raise a substantial amount of money and awareness for our nations' heroes. We just want to thank everyone for their support so far and long may it continue."

The 2015 Hockey for Heroes Tour raised £35,000 and Joel and Gary are hoping the 2017 extravaganza will raise even more funding for the charity. ●



NEW 2016/17 HOCKEY



INTERNATIONAL
DELIVERY



SAME WORKING DAY
DISPATCH



LIVE STOCK
UPDATES



ENQUIRIES ANSWERED
WITHIN 24 HRS



SAVE 5% WITH PLANET HOCKEY USE PROMOCODE: **PLANETHOCKEY16**



Barrington
SPORTS.COM

THE HOCKEY SPECIALIST

www.barringtonsports.com/hockey

GRASSROOTS OR



PHOTOS
COURTESY OF
USA FIELD HOCKEY

STAGNANT POND?



HERE AT **PLANET HOCKEY** WE LOVE TO GET VIEWS FROM HOCKEY PLAYERS, COACHES AND SUPPORTERS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD. THE FOLLOWING IS AN OPINION PIECE FROM USA BUSINESSMAN AND HOCKEY FOLLOWER **RALF HEUSER**.

GROWTH IN FIELD HOCKEY PARTICIPATION SEEMS TO BE STAGNANT...



Over the years USA FH has been stating its intent to grow the game of field hockey. In its Strategic Plan, USA FH's mission is "to promote and grow the sport of field hockey in the USA. This is a critical element and responsibility of being the National Governing Body for the sport of field hockey in the USA.

There were many initiatives among the plans undertaken by USA Field Hockey (USA FH). These included:

- StickStarz & TurfTykes
- Equipment Grant
- You Go Girl
- FUNdamental Field Hockey
- Play it Forward

These were all directed at growing the game but what are the results of all these efforts having consumed a large amount of monies?

As far as membership numbers are concerned, USA FH has been quite successful in increasing its membership steadily over the years. From 15,580 in 2006 to 25,878 in 2014 or 66 per cent. The major component of the total membership is the U-19 age group or high school girls, who account for 65 per cent. According to the statistics from the National High School Federation there were around 60,000 girls participating in high school field hockey. USA FH's share is 28 per cent, with potential to increase its share further.

While there is a potential for USA FH to increase its membership further, the sport as a whole may not grow further. This is based on a number of facts and supporting data.

- 1.** Participation numbers for girls in high school field hockey have been stagnant for 15 years since 2001, having reached an all time high in 2008 with 64,563. The latest participation number for 2014 is 60,549 – a decline of 6.2 per cent. Another indicator is the number of schools having field hockey as part of the athletic program. While the number of schools over the past 15 years averaged 1,800, there has been a noticeable decline from



2013 onwards of 1,995 to 1,753 in 2014 (12 per cent). Other sports are now emerging, particularly lacrosse, which has seen dramatic increases both in participation and number of schools. 15 years ago there were 783 schools with lacrosse on the timetable and today 2,446 schools have girls' lacrosse, an increase of 212 per cent!

This negative trend for field hockey is likely to continue as high schools are probably more inclined to support sports which are "IN" and decrease support for niche sports.

2. The membership numbers for the U-19 age group have been more or less stagnant since 2012, although there was margin increase over the past two years. There were 16,751 U-19 in 2013 versus 16,751 in 2014. Perhaps a saturation level has been reached as the majority of HS girls are viewing field hockey as a recreational sport or a secondary sport for them and have no intention to follow a pathway to a national level, a pathway which is quite expensive. Only around 5,000 girls are enrolled in USA FH's Futures Program.

3. The stagnating trend is also reflected in the membership dues USA FH showed as revenue. This stood at \$1,290 million in 2014 versus \$ 1,298 million in 2015. Likewise the registration fees for tournaments and other programs have been stagnant – \$4,040 in 2014 versus \$ 4,050 in 2015. There have been competitors emerging holding tournaments in competition with USA FH, eroding revenues and this trend may continue as others are trying to get a piece of this pie. USA FH has recognized this situation. It recently went on record in a board meeting: "our model as an organization has been to have good margins on our events that in turn cover non-revenue producing areas of the organization and projections for 2015 and 2016 are pretty dire. Not having sufficient income means growth in initiatives, in particular on the male side, will not have financial backing, thus growth will not happen.

4. As stated at the beginning USA FH has been deploying a number of programs. Among them is its flagship program "FUNdamental Field Hockey. This aims to grow the game for the 12 and under age group, however, the actual outcome of such efforts can be deemed at best very marginal as



membership numbers have not increased significantly. Over a span of eight years membership increased from around 1,500 in 2007 to a mere 3,432 in 2014, hardly a return on the investment USA FH made. This was despite close to 100,000 boys and girls having been exposed to field hockey. This is one area which is critical for future growth and an improvement in skills down the pathway to the national teams. USA FH lags behind the other leading hockey-playing countries. In March 2011, USA FH admitted that any grass roots effort cannot be driven from its National Office but requires efforts from local people, however, there was never a cooperative effort/ joint venture undertaken. Furthermore, as far as boys are concerned, those few by the time they get to be 12-13 years, quit playing as there are no traditional playing opportunities equal to that of the girls in middle and high schools.

5. The sport of field hockey has not seen an increase in spectators attending competitive games as evidenced by the attendance numbers issued by the NCAA for its top rated colleges in Div. I. Other than the national team competing internationally, Div.I competition is at the highest level in the USA. Over the span of three years, from 2010 to 2012, the average attendance for 680 games was 230. The attendance level falls to an average of 150 a game over 2,300 games for DIV. I, II and III. Attracting sponsors is made very difficult based on such minimal interest and exposure of the sport. The one exception is the Women's National Team which has obtained a position in the top ten of world hockey.

6. The single most important adverse fact is that field hockey is perceived as a "girls" sport. Boys wanting to play field hockey in high school had to wear kilts as late as 2010 and others had to employ the legal process to be allowed to play on girls' teams. This stigma has to be removed, as any efforts would be futile otherwise. Vonnie Gros, USA FH Hall of Fame member and 1984 Olympic bronze medal winning Head coach of the WNT alluded to the perception that hockey was a girls' sport: "That girls' sport designation has turned out to be a double edged sword. I don't think at this time field hockey is going to grow, if for no other reason than men don't play. It's not an inter-collegiate sport for men anywhere in



the country. Field hockey's reputation as a female sport has now become one of the reasons why the game has not spread more widely across the country." Even USA FH's management has recognized this shortfall when the executive director in July 2012 said: "A critical element of this NGB's responsibilities is to build the sport. If we want to flourish, we need to build the men's side. If we don't, we will stay in the background and be forever a niche sport." With falling revenues and income, it will be difficult for USA FH to invest in growing the men's side, which it has been unable to do for almost a quarter of a century, ever since the merger in 1993 with the Field Hockey Association of America which had been responsible for men's hockey until then.

7. The argument made in the previous paragraph is evidenced when looking at the ratio of male versus female members of USA FH. In 2013 there were a total of 1,182 male members out of a total of 23,156 members – this equates to five per cent of all US field hockey players. This compares to 980 males in 2004 – signifying practically no growth in 10 years! The male members, other than players, include coaches and umpires which makes the actual playing population insignificant.

According to 2011 USA FH data there were a total of 90 U-12 boys and 145 U-19 boys as members. Field Hockey, however, is played by boys/men not being USA FH members but still the overall male side of the sport is extremely low. Other countries and their field hockey organizations enjoy a more balanced membership compared to USA FH

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
USA FH	1,182	23,156	24,338
Belgium	19,552	17,250	36,802
New Zealand	23,498	25,763	48,782
Germany	47,040	34,149	81,189
Australia	61,389	71,463	132,852

8. The USA FH membership breakdown also indicates that the sport is primarily

played at high school level by girls, as they represent 65 per cent of membership. There is minimal participation/representation in the age group below 12 years and after college. The U-12 age group has little more than 3,000 as field hockey begins with playing opportunities in middle and high schools. Likewise, after college there are limited recreational opportunities to continue playing the sport. Focusing on the front end (grass roots) and the tail end (post collegiate) is an absolute must to grow the sport. As long as these two areas are not developed, growth is limited. In 2013, USA FH announced the creation of a semi-professional league to begin in November that year but the project never materialized.

9. Field Hockey in the USA is unlike any other country as the typical club system and competition structure does not yet exist. There are hardly any clubs involved in league games that cover all generations, from the very young to adult. A notable exception is the Field Hockey Federation of Moorpark, organizers of California Cup, the largest field hockey tournament in the Americas. Clubs tend to operate as businesses, providing training preparatory to high school and college including organizing participation in USA FH events. These clubs, aside from these events did not engage in competition with each other until recently when Nigel Traverso, a former MNT player, created a "Junior Premier Outdoor League" with 50 clubs in more than six regions in the US. This event is sanctioned by USA FH.

10. A major component of the US field hockey landscape is competition among the many universities/colleges which are all organized under the auspices of the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association). There are three divisions for competition and a total of 266 schools and 6,000 players participating. (Div. I = 1,757, Div. II = 654 and Div. III = 3,365). From this pool of players USA FH selects its players for the national teams. USA FH maintains a program called "Futures" which is a pathway to consideration for selection to the national teams but also serves as potential for players to obtain scholarships from the colleges/universities as their coaches look at prospects including the many USA FH tournament aimed at showcasing the athletes talents. Field Hockey's place as a college sport for women established itself when Title IX was established in 1972, mandating that colleges put forth equal funding towards men's and women's sport. Some of the dominant coaches have been heading their field hockey programs for more than 20 years and compete for the National Championship each year. Over the last five years a trend emerged to offer scholarships to foreign students to ensure having the best teams. The Div I schools are organized in conferences such as the Atlantic Coast Conference, Big Ten, Ivy League etc. and in 2014 there were a total of 160 foreign players in six conferences: This is the break down:

Canada 40
England 26
Germany 19
Netherlands 18
Ireland 8
Australia 8
Spain 7
South Africa 7 – and many other nations with just 1 representation



There are on average five foreign players on each of the top teams and the dominance comes to light when almost 50 per cent or 32 out of 68 are selected to the First All Conference Team (data based on six conferences only) and the trend continues with coaches or their assistants attending recruiting camps in Europe where European players can showcase their talent, assisted by consulting companies advising the best way to obtain a scholarship. Providing scholarships to foreign students is being viewed as a growth inhibitor as scholarship become less available to US students. Furthermore, it is generally believed that little assistance can be expected from the college coaches because growing the sport on the male side as a viable men's hockey college program could take a significant portion out of the college budget earmarked for women.

USA FH had a vision of using collegiate coaches in a number of core cities throughout the US to establish and maintain boy high school programs. This vision never materialized as USA FH's vision was not shared by collegiate coaches.

11.

Another major factor inhibiting the growth of field hockey and a barrier to participation, is the availability and access to artificial grass or turf fields. Introducing the sport to young boys and girls on ankle deep grass is no fun for the participants and a greatly demotivating. Using other surfaces such as cement or asphalt, such as basketball/tennis courts, is not readily accepted by the field hockey community, who believe that field hockey should be played on grass. By the way, one of the reasons for lacrosse to grow so immensely is the access to grass fields or rubber crumbed base turf field which is common for most high school American football.

The NCAA has water-based turf fields, however they are off limits to community hockey teams/clubs and are available only at a very high cost. Again, USA FH has recognized this but never progressed its Strategic Plan 2010-2020 "to make use of existing collegiate turf fields to enhance youth developing opportunities.

12.

A major part of the US field hockey landscape are "clubs". There are around 300 clubs of which 270 are sanctioned by USA FH. The name "club" is a



misnomer when compared to traditional hockey clubs known all over the world. These clubs do not have a structure consisting of teams from the very young to adult and seniors, boys/girls/men/women engaging in organized league competition. They are individual businesses to make income for their owners by training, coaching and preparing young girls for high school, college, potential scholarships from colleges and consideration to play on national teams through participation in USA FH's Futures program. The clubs organize participation for their teams in USA FH events to showcase their athletes to college coaches but also to bolster their reputation as a successful club to attract young girls in future. It is an expensive undertaking as the investment by parents for their daughters to follow the field hockey pathway could easily be in excess of \$ 10,000 per year. This makes the sport inaccessible for a large proportion of the population. USA FH became cognizant of this when it's "You Go Girl" program failed – this was a program targeted at young girls from "at risk" or "non-traditional communities". As there is no similar pathway for young boys, interest from the clubs is minimal as income generation is limited. The clubs could present a very important opportunity in developing the male side of the sport provided USA FH could harness that potential.

In summary, field hockey in the US may not be growing long term despite potential opportunities as there are many obstacles. The most significant of these are the lack of a viable male representation in the sport as well as the inability by the national organization to invest into growing the sport due to stagnating revenues and income, combined with a lack of a businesslike approach.

Enjoying a quasi monopoly status as the only organization responsible for field hockey in the US, USA FH is now being faced with competition to its programs and tournaments. It has to change its approach and develop a strategic vision and direction. While USA FH has been recognizing and expressing, over and over again for many years, the shortcomings, it has not made any progress in addressing those issues.

Field hockey legend Horst Wein summed up the situation: "American Hockey doesn't progress through an accumulation of camps, clinics, tournaments and championships, but through a systematic development of original, more effective and attractive strategies and ideas. When we continue to do what we have done always, we will never reach any further."

What are your thoughts? Is hockey stagnating and, if so, what should USA FH be doing to change things? Email: sarah@planet hockey mag.com ●



WINNING IS **NEVER** A
COINCIDENCE



A black and yellow STX Stallion 800 hockey stick is positioned vertically on the left side of the image. The stick has 'STX' and '800' printed near the top, and 'STALLION' printed vertically along the shaft. The background is a vibrant blue surface, possibly a hockey rink, with a pink hockey puck and several white and yellow hockey pucks scattered in the foreground.

STICK REVIEW

BY
SAMANTHA HARRISON

STX STALLION 800

It's our pleasure to welcome Samantha Harrison – former New Zealand Black Stick to the Planet Hockey team. Sammie will be giving her opinions and thoughts on various sticks as she spends time getting to grips with each one of them. Her first task was to try out the new STX Stallion 800.



STX STALLION 800





HITTING - 9.5/10

When hitting with the STX tt felt solid but not heavy. Because it has a straight bow it was easy to control the height of the ball with a standard hitting technique. I would recommend this stick more to someone in the striker/midfield role as it is not a super heavy stick such as those needed in defense for big hitters. When hitting it felt easy to control, as it didn't feel too stiff, therefore didn't ping off as much. Because this stick is smooth I didn't tend to feel any vibrations which can tend to hold players back in those cold mornings. Sweep hitting was also not an issue and something that I had great control over.



FLICKING/PUSHING - 9/10

Because this is a straight stick it's not as easy to flick, jinx or overhead/aerial compared to a stick with a bow in it. However if you don't drag flick then its just as easy to have the ball slightly further in





front of you to help with getting the ball off the ground when jinxing - and overheading/aerial which is no major at all. I found it no problem to get under the ball with the right technique. When pushing the ball it's easy to keep on the ground, unlike a bowed stick you constantly have to have hands over the ball.



REVERSE - 9.5/10

I'm a big reverse fan. The STX was very easy to hit a flat reverse with. It is slightly thicker before the hook of the stick - therefore less chance of getting under it. Ideal for midfielders when wanting to hit a cross ball into the circle or for finding deflection passes. It's a stick where you could be more confident in hitting flat reverse passes however if wanting to get under it then it's slightly harder. I do say it's harder to get under it, however I found I was still able to hit shots higher after working more on hitting under the ball and angling the stick downwards to get under it more.





TOUCH/DRIBBLING - 9.5/10

The touch on this stick was great at first as I was getting used to it the ball was bouncing off but when I adjusted my grip on the stick (less firm) I was able to receive with better control. Dribbling was no problem and I felt I could feel and control the ball without it feeling tinny.

OVERALL

The STX 800 could well be a stick I could get used to. The feel was great and hitting accuracy also. Jinxing is not an issue if you don't carry so close to your feet and the same goes for over heading/aerials. I would say the STX was a mixture between a stiff stick for power and softer for control, which seemed like a good balance of the two. Again it's a bonus for hitting flat reverse shots and for this reason players in the midfield of half backs might enjoy. Another think I noticed was that the paint finish seemed to last. I was using this stick for a solid week 5 hours a day and the paint/finish seemed to stay put. ●



The ideas man is

INTERVIEW
WITH

JAMILON MÜLDERS



ahead of his time

STORY BY SARAH JUGGINS
PHOTOS BY WORLD SPORT PICS







Our interview with Jamilon Mülders takes place just hours after the recent attack by a lone gunman on a shopping mall in Munich and the German women's head coach has been checking all his players and staff were okay.

It is the sort of detail that reminds you that this is a man who is about far more than just the process of coaching. Christoph Plass is head of the German Hockey Federation (DHB) communications team and he knows Jamilon well. "He never stops thinking about the team. There are millions of ideas in his mind all the time."

When Mülders took over the German women's team after their seventh place finish at London 2012, they were a team that was desperately in need of an injection of new ideas. Mülders reminds me that the team won the European Hockey Championships in 2013 but also admits that after the 2014 World Cup, where Germany finished eighth, things reached a low point. "It was clear that we had to change. It wasn't just the past two years, we needed to dismantle a way of doing things that goes back 20 years. And I don't believe you will see the results until Tokyo 2020."

For Mülders, the players had to be at the heart of the

change but it would need time. "I decided to let things take their course for two years following London, the team needed to get to know me and I had to learn about them. There was a big difference between the team that won the Europeans and the team that turned up for the World Cup and I had to understand what was happening."

The first change that the new head coach implemented was to reduce the amount of strategy that the players had to cope with. He wanted to make the game simple again. Then he began to change the mindset, something that he says has been one of the most difficult things to do.

"The players were used to being told what to do. It was an autocratic system. I wanted to step back and give the players responsibility. Some grabbed the change positively, others found it very difficult. Some have managed to turn their negativity around, others have chosen to leave the group. Culture change is a long process."

The process of change has been ongoing for the past two years, with Mülders and his team clearly sometimes struggling to find their feet with the new approach. To onlookers it could sometimes seem as if Germany were



in danger of imploding; even Plass admits that he was sometimes confused by what was going on. "There would be new leaders, players would be working in different groups on certain tasks, it was always changing – as an onlooker on the sidelines it could be confusing."

For Mülders it was all part of the ripping down of one system and building the team back up from a base level. It was also about creating a structure that had far more professional back-up than the German team had enjoyed before. This included a full-time manager in the shape of the efficient Julia Walter, a full-time strength and conditioning coach and an analyst who would sit with the players and go through games and their performance to a degree that had never happened before. "Players were not only taking responsibilities for their actions but they were getting much clearer information about their performance and their impact upon the team," says Plass.

The 2015 Hockey World League Finals in Rosario, Argentina, provided a pivotal point in the transformation of the team. "We were super lucky that we finished third because between games we had a lot of serious talks and it was exhausting," says Mülders. "We stripped things right back and were very honest with ourselves. If we had lost, then the players might not have believed in the changes we were making, it is easier to get people on

board when you are winning." For Mülders the target for a complete German revival has always been Tokyo 2020. He is realistic about the time it will take to implement and settle the changes to the team but, as he says, "if we can get to the quarter-finals in Rio, then it all depends on who our opposition is."

How Germany perform in Rio is important for future plans. Mülders is on an indefinite contract and has his sights clearly set on 2018 and 2020 [World Cup and Tokyo Olympics] but, as he says, a lot of investment has gone into the team in the past 18 months; whether that will continue is always open to question. "It would be a real shame if we had to step back because funding was reduced. It would take a long time to recover from that. I hope that the powers that be see the long term. We should not go down the route that football has taken where success has to be instant."

But for now Germany has every right to be feeling optimistic about 2016. In the past few weeks the team has played matches against all the team ranked above them and have only lost to the Netherlands. The bronze medal at the HWL Finals gave the team the confidence that only winning can impart and a belief in their new approach has invigorated this team.

So much so that one veteran campaigner, Julia Muller,

planet HOCKEY

magazine

CAUSE WE KNOW YOU LOVE IT,
CAUSE WE KNOW YOU LIVE FOR IT,
WE BRING THE GAME TO YOU
ENJOY IT... YOUR WAY...



planethockyemag.com

USA SPORT CONNECT

LOOKING FOR A SPORT SCHOLARSHIP IN THE USA!



NZ OWNED AND OPERATED
5 years experience in the NCAA

We will guide you through every step of the process and help make your dreams of becoming a Student Athlete in the **USA a reality.**

A scholarship to play sport in the USA while studying for your Bachelor or Masters degree is a unique opportunity that will **change your life forever.**

EMAIL US TO ARRANGE A FREE CONSULTATION

info@usasportconnect.com | www.usasportconnect.com



has committed to the national team for the foreseeable future. For Mülders this is a tremendous success. Muller was injured for much of 2015 and, at 30, could reasonably have been expected to turn her back on the new regime. Instead the former captain embraced the changes. "I am a hockey professional," she says. "So why not aim for the World Cup in London and the Euros in my new home country [Muller lives in The Netherlands]."

"I was not surprised," says Mülders, "Julia is a professional and she has a great strength of character.

She also has a great strength and conditioning coach in The Netherlands and is as fit as she has ever been."

This new look, supremely fit, self-confident Germany go to Rio on the back of a successful pre-tournament programme. The team comprises players with Olympic experience such as Muller, the captain Janne Muller-Weiland and vice-captain Hannah Kruger but with the exciting new talent such as Charlotte Stapenhorst and Nike Lorenz. Germany for a medal? You wouldn't bet against it. ●

EFFECTIVE GOAL KEEPING

BY JUDE MENEZES

THE UPRIGHT SLIDE/SMOTHER

THE SLIDE WHILE LYING PROSTATE ON THE TURF HAS BEEN USED EFFECTIVELY FOR MANY YEARS NOW. ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE TO THE SLIDE OR THE UPRIGHT SMOTHER/BLOCK THAT GOALKEEPERS CAN USE, IS THE UPRIGHT OR VERTICAL SLIDE/SMOTHER. THIS TECHNIQUE CAN BE USED TO PRESENT A BIG FRONT AND COVER GREATER SURFACE AREA WHILST STILL ATTACKING THE BALL. THE GOAL KEEPER WILL HAVE TO MAKE A DECISION WHEN TO USE THE SMOTHER AND WHEN TO USE THE UPRIGHT SLIDE. WOULD RECOMMEND THE SLIDE WHILE CONTESTING THE BALL AND THE SMOTHER WHEN BALL IS OUTSIDE THE CONTEST AREA. DECISION MAKING AND TIMING IS THE KEY TO ENSURE YOU GET THE DESIRED OUTCOME.

THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT TO REMEMBER IS THAT THE SLIDE IS CONTROLLED TO GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECOVER IN CASE OF SECOND PHASE PLAY.





AREAS RECOMMENDED TO US THE SLIDE

- ✓ Both sides of the baseline
- ✓ Crash ball deflections – either side, depending on the point of deflection
- ✓ As and when required

There will be times in a game when the goalkeeper is caught in no man's land, either too far to smother if they hold their position or risk getting beaten if they commit to the ball. It is at times like these where the goalkeeper makes a positive movement and slides to the ball and covers as much space as possible with their leg guards to prevent the ball squeezing through, while remaining upright and tall in the upper body with their gloves and stick ready for anything in the air. This provides greater coverage of the goal area and increases the chances of affecting a save despite not being in a great position.





GUIDELINES TO EXECUTE THE UPRIGHT SLIDE/SMOTHER

- ✓ Start slide on outside of leg guard (left foot for the right striker and vice versa)
- ✓ Cover the line of the ball to goal
- ✓ Make contact with the area from bent knee to end of shin – extend leg at point of contact to take the ball away from the striker(if contesting)
- ✓ Keep gloves/stick ready for any aerial deflection
- ✓ Be aggressive
- ✓ Keep bodyweight forward and going through the ball in a 50-50 contest
- ✓ Use non bent sliding leg to present a compact barrier
- ✓ Use hand left hand to push and get back up if sliding with a bent right leg and the opposite on the other side.
- ✓ Control on the slide is the key – get up quickly and always be prepared for second phase

The images of Black stick Olympic goal keeper Sally Rutherford depict how the Upright Slide/Smother can be used to make some great saves.
Practice, Practice, Practice and happy Sliding. ●







BLITZ & FURY

SEE OFF

SHARK ATTACK



An underwater scene with a bright sun or light source at the top center, creating a lens flare effect. The water is a deep blue, and numerous silhouettes of sharks are swimming in various directions. There are also several bubbles of different sizes scattered throughout the scene. The overall atmosphere is serene and aquatic.

Hockey Queensland
hosted their
5th Annual
Poligras Super League
over the June 10-12
weekend, and it was an
outstanding success.

PHOTOS BY
ANNETTE'S ACTION SHOTS
(ANNETTE ANDREWS)



The Poligras Super League has grown over the years to become a celebration of everything that's terrific about hockey. "Fierce, Fast and Furious", the competition sees 100 of the State's best male and female players competing for their zones as opposed to their traditional association teams, showcasing Queensland's best available hockey talent in the strongest standard of competition.

The weekend welcomes massive crowds who enjoy both the games as well as a number of events, including a huge welcome night that pays tributes to the game's often unsung heroes – the volunteers, along with the award winners from 2015.

On a cold, wet and windy Sunday afternoon, last year's champions the Brisbane Blitz and Brisbane Fury were both on the turf ready to defend their title again in 2016, with both South Coast teams as their opponents.

The women's final was first, where the Brisbane Blitz successfully defended their crown, defeating the South Coast Sharks in the best final game the women's event has ever seen.

Brisbane's Tiana Barrett opened the scoring in the first minute of the game to the amazement of a solid crowd at the State Hockey Centre. To their credit the South Coast Sharks fought back almost immediately to score an equaliser. The free flowing game continued to raise excitement levels when only three minutes later Brisbane found the back of the net through a direct shot by Aleesa Ferguson, providing a 2-1 quarter time score line in favour of the home team.

The second quarter saw both teams have scoring opportunities, but it wasn't until the 27th minute that Brisbane's Ferguson scored her second goal with a high deflection, with a great assist by Tiana Barrett.

Both teams had scoring opportunities at the start of the third quarter, but the Sharks were the ones to score off a penalty corner. Two minutes later, they struck again with another goal to Ambrosia Malone to tie the score up 3-3 at three quarter time.

After further missed opportunities by both teams it was Brisbane who found the back of the net in the 54th minute to give the tournament's Leading Goal Scorer, Aleesa

Ferguson, an incredible hat trick of goals, placing the Blitz ahead 4-3 with only five minutes to go in the game.

With their 'never say die' attitude, South Coast Sharks fought back yet again with two penalty corners right on the final siren, but could not convert, giving Brisbane a 4-3 victory and the title of Women's Poligras Super League Champions once again in 2016.

Blitz coach, Nikki Taylor, was quick to praise her team, "The girls showed determination and relentlessness to get themselves over the line today. They grew as a team over the entire weekend and their connection was great by the final game".

Directly after the women's final, the Brisbane Fury and Men's South Coast Sharks team were on the turf. It was a South Coast game to kick things off, with the Sharks continually on the attack, but the Brisbane defence was absolutely solid for the first half of the quarter. It took eight minutes before Oliver Crane maximised on the opportunities and put the ball in the net for the Sharks.

Both the second and third quarters saw very even competition and tempers flaring. The Sharks had a good chance to score with five minutes remaining in the second, but the quarter went by without another point on the board with Brisbane's defence again proving too strong. Brisbane's Aaron Weiss also kept the Sharks from scoring in the third quarter, with a spectacular save off a Sharks Penalty Corner. Brisbane were well on the attack at the back end of the third quarter, but the Sharks defence was as flawless as their competitors.

**FIERCE,
FAST &
FURIOUS**









The score was still 1-0 going into the final quarter, which showcased frenetic, skilful and highly entertaining hockey. It was Brisbane's game for the final stretch, but they just couldn't penetrate the Sharks defence for the first half of the quarter. Finally, with only four minutes to go, Jens Christensen smashed one into the net with a convincing field goal for his team to even the scores.

The Fury have a long and proud history of fighting until the very end, and they've earned the right to keep that reputation for another year with two more back to back goals in the 59th and 60th minutes to Robert Bell and Scott Boyde, awarding them another Poligras Super League title with a 3-1 win over the South Coast Sharks.

"The boys played well over the entire weekend," said Coach Gavin Hanscomb "and they wanted it badly at the back end of the last quarter. They got their momentum after the first goal and played four excellent minutes of hockey. The Poligras Super League is a great event and it's been a fantastic weekend".

The awards ceremony was moved under cover to end the weekend, where Corey Weyer of the South Coast Sharks and Ashley Fey of the Wide Bay Thunder were awarded the Player of the Tournament awards.



FIERCE, FAST & FURIOUS

Weyer declared the final game the toughest of the weekend for his side, "We are a young and relatively inexperienced team compared to Brisbane, so it was great to fight hard with my teammates and have such a close game. The highlight of the weekend was probably on Saturday though, where we had 2 wins against teams we've never beat before".

It was a big weekend for Fey, who was also awarded the Inaugural Female Indoor Player of the Year award on the Friday night.

The final day was live streamed by Hockey Zone and can be viewed at <https://livestream.com/accounts/3803976/events/5468915>.

For more information about the Poligras Super League and a full wrap up of the event visit <http://www.hockeyqld.com.au/Events/Super-League-2016>. ●




BRITAIN BYRON

THE
NEW
KID
ON
THE
BLOCK







The **Revolution Velocity** is a triumph of sports engineering. Made in Germany, the Velocity design is the result of an exhaustive 2-year development phase, where more than 200 different prototypes were put to the test. The final result is a revolution in hockey stick design.

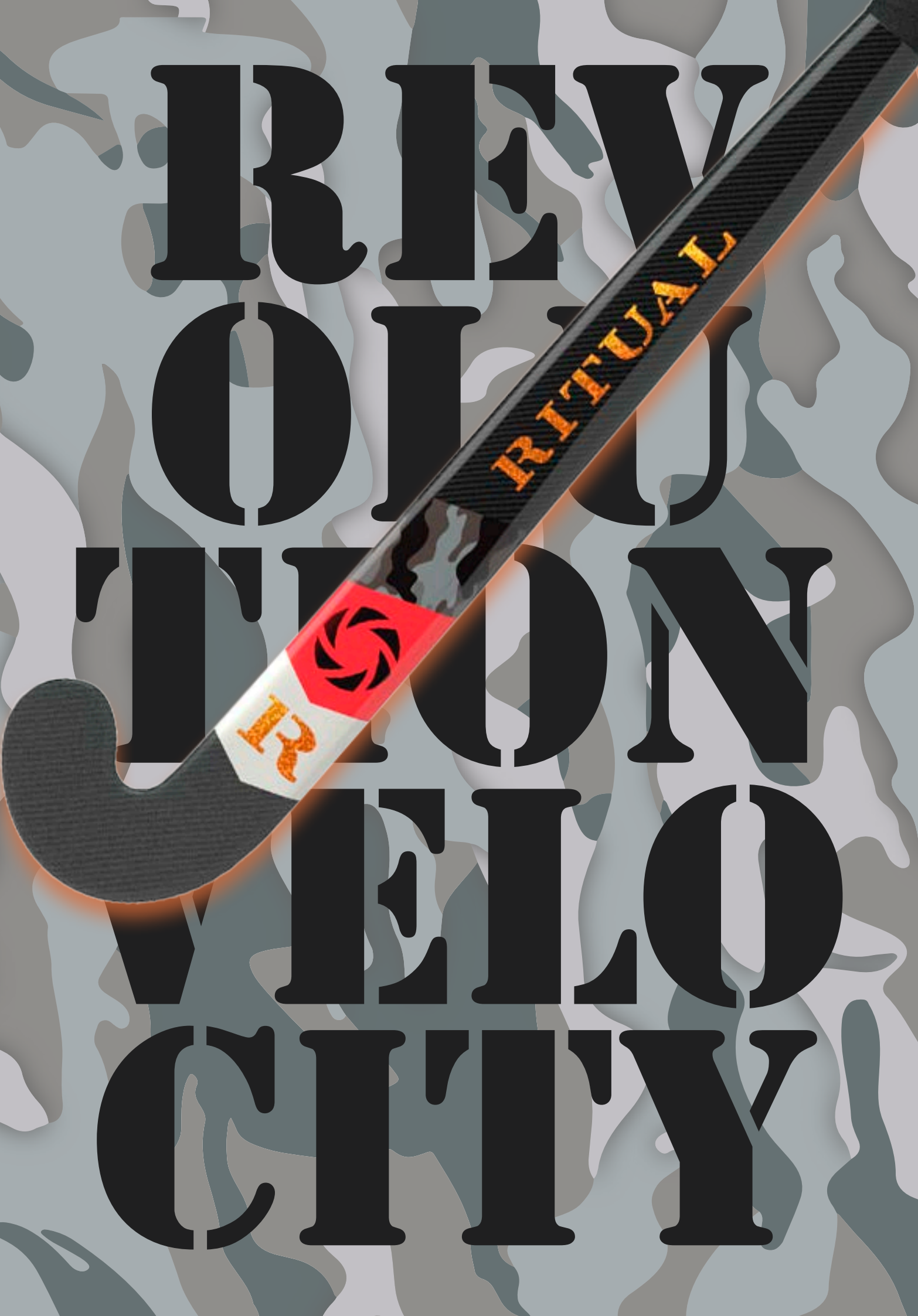
REVIEW

OF

THE

WORLD

CITY



An Australian designed, German manufactured revolution, built to precision standards. Aerospace foam core, robotically woven carbon and computer controlled RTM resin injection system. Lightweight, balanced, effortless.

An elite level stick 100% focused on performance.





KEY SPECS

525g Weight

400mm Balance Point

24mm Bow Height

250mm Max Bow Point

HEAD

45° angle

116mm length

24.5mm thick

Silica face

HANDLE

30.4mm thick

New Vapor Pro Grip

AntiShock+ Foam

CONSTRUCTION

100% Carbon





WHAT'S

OUT

2016
STICKS

THERE



GRYPHON TABOO STRIKER

PROFILE: T-Bone = 23.8mm bow at 225mm

CONSTRUCTION: High processed carbon, high chemical resistance Kevlar and rearranged fiberglass.

FEATURES:

- Made to International Player Specifications
- Gryphon Unique Resin Matrix
- Aramid Protection System
- Stiff feel with a light and responsive touch

HEAD SHAPE: Extended Maxi

WEIGHT: Light

LENGTH: 36.5", 37.5"



ADIDAS W24 COMPO 1

"The attacking shape excels in ball control and slapping, suitable mostly for your attacking midfielders"

PROFILE: 24mm curve at 250mm

CONSTRUCTION: 70% Carbon/ 25% Fibreglass/ 5% Other

FEATURES:

- CARBON DUALROD is used within the stick. This consists of applying two carbon rods filled with foam into the stick. This results in a high power output due to better energy transfer whilst also increasing the shock absorption capabilities.
- TOUCH COMPOUND assists the players when it comes to 3D skills and precise striking. The material supports the contact between the hook and the ball, allowing the player to have better control when playing.
- Reinforced main impact areas improve durability and the stick comes with an adigrip fitted as standard
- The new shock red/sun glow colourway is more neutral than previous models and the updated material configuration will provide optimal performance to match the looks

HEAD SHAPE: Maxi 45 degree Head

WEIGHT: 535g



MALIK PUNK

"Mid-range stick for players who love a soft touch and still like to pack a punch"

PROFILE: Dribble Curve

CONSTRUCTION: 80% glass fibre, 15 % Carbon and 5 % Aramid

FEATURES:

Stand out pink logo type against the outer layer of carbon

The Malik DC shape is a constant winner with players of all levels with fantastic balance and great control plenty of power as well as being perfect for dribbling and 3D skills

Soft Touch compound

HEAD SHAPE: Maxi 45 degree Head

WEIGHT: 530g



STX 600

"It was designed by Dutch National team player Jeroen Hertzberger to maximize drag flicking"

PROFILE: 24mm, low bow (less than 300mm)

CONSTRUCTION: 95% carbon, 5% Aramid

FEATURES:

- low bow shape creates the momentum needed for drag flicking and increases ball control
- maxi toe features an increased receiving area and emphasized sweet spot, which are excellent for reverse stick control,
- built for the advanced player with 95% carbon construction,
- karakal grip technology

HEAD SHAPE: Maxi

WEIGHT: 560g for size 36.5"

LENGTH: 35.5 (US only) 36.5, 37.5 (Intl)



Have your **cake** and **eat** it too!
With a mortgage from New Zealand Home Loans

And we are not talking about crumbs. We could help you save tens of thousands in interest costs and be debt free years earlier. *

Sound too good to be true? Well it's not.
We are 100% New Zealand owned and our goal is to show you how to save money on your home loan.

For a **FREE consultation**
please call **Mike Hallwright**
on **09 524 2350** or **027 493 8563**

I will quickly tell you how
much you could save.



**WITH EVERY NEW CLIENT WHO JOINS US FROM THIS ADVERT,
WE WILL CONTRIBUTE \$100 TO YOUR HOCKEY CLUB.**

New Zealand Home Loans, 81 Parnell Rise, Parnell, Auckland

**Subject to normal lending criteria.*

Catch one if you can.

The powerful Golf R Wagon Wolfsburg Edition.
Only 40 in New Zealand.



Golf R Wagon Wolfsburg Edition

\$79,900*

- 300hp (221kW) of pure power
- 4MOTION all-wheel drive
- Limited Edition black 19" alloy wheels
- Carbon Nappa leather upholstery
- R sports suspension with adaptive chassis control

For a high performance headturner only 39 other people will own, look no further than the Golf R Wagon. It's got power, practicality and can accelerate to 100kph in a blistering 5.1 seconds. But you'd better get in quick – this limited edition car is selling out faster than it drives. Test drive one today at your local Volkswagen dealer.

Call 0800 Volkswagen or visit volkswagen.co.nz
to book a test drive today.

*Plus on road costs. Model shown includes optional extras.



NZ Olympic Partner since 2012