

# WA Master's Hockey 2020 Annual Report

## Charter

*The WA Master's Hockey Committee ("WAMHC" or "Committee") is a committee of Hockey WA directly responsible for providing Hockey WA:*

- *policies and processes by which the local Masters competitions are run, including recommendations for team Divisions and player Permits.*
- *policies and processes by which the Coach, Manager, Selectors and Players of each Masters State team are selected and all other matters relating to WA teams participating in State Championships.*
- *strategies to improve the recruitment and retention of Masters players.*
- *investigating opportunities to promote Masters Hockey within WA.*

## Chairman's Report

The WA Masters Hockey Committee Members holding office in during 2020 and their portfolio responsibilities are:

- Jill Van Duuren – State Women's Representative and HA Women's State Delegate
- Naomi Noble – Men's State Representative
- Sinead French-Bluhm – Finance
- Peter Andrews – Secretary and Men's Local Competition
- Suzi Wood – Assistant Women's State Representative and Women's Local Competition
- Cameron Robinson – Communications and Technology
- Stacey Hamilton – Country Sub-Committee Chair
- Jean-Marie Rudd – Assistant Chair
- Scott Macdonald – Chair and HA Men's State Delegate

I acknowledge and congratulate all Committee members for their enormous enthusiasm, energy and considerable contributions throughout the year.

Four members of the current Committee:

1. Peter Andrews;
2. Jill Van Duuren;
3. Cameron Robinson; and
4. Suzi Wood,

have each completed their elected three-year term. All retire by rotation and offer themselves for re-election to the Committee at the 2020 Annual Meeting, along with several new Nominees for Committee membership.

As the Charter specifies, the Committee has significant advisory and operational responsibilities. In its advisory capacity, the Committee provides advice to Hockey WA management and staff on a wide range of local competition issues and policies, and the development of Master's Hockey for the hockey community. Its operational responsibilities encompass the selection of coaches, managers and players to participate in the annual Masters National Championships for both women and men.

This year Covid-19 prevented there being National Championships which were to be held in Queensland and all international competitions were also cancelled due to Covid-19. It was recently announced that the deferred international Master's World Cups due to be played in 2021 have been cancelled.

Consequently, the Committee had a quieter year than normal as the significant logistical arrangements in sending typically 18 teams to the National Championships were not needed this year. Next year the National Championships are planned to be held in Newcastle, NSW as a "Mega" event for both women and men at the same time and venue for the first time.

## **Local Competition**

We were extremely lucky this year to be able to hold Local Competitions at all. After a lot of consulting with clubs and this Committee plus surveys of players, a modified season was held with modified finals. Anecdotal feedback is that most were just happy to be able to play and catch up with teammates and opposition alike.

Encouraging players who are reaching the age of eligibility for Masters Hockey to consider continuing their participation and transitioning them to Masters Competitions is a primary objective for the Committee. Hence, it was pleasing to see more weekend Masters Hockey matches conducted on artificial turf in both the Men's Over 40 Division 1 and Over 50 Division 1. This was the result of the efforts of this Committee over several years and with the co-operation of Hockey WA. This year for the first time the finals for those two grades were also held on artificial turf.

The mid-week competition played on artificial turf does have some success in this regard but the traditional weekend grass fixtures are a barrier to many who wish to continue to play only on artificial turf. As time goes on this barrier is increasing with many players having spent very little time playing on grass and likely no grass time in senior ranks. The Committee considers that the availability of Master's turf competitions is a key factor in transition younger players to Masters Competitions. Increasing Masters participation on turf is a focus of the Committee and we will continue to look for more opportunities to do so.

Last year we mention that a follow up survey would be conducted early in the season. However, with Covid-19 and constraints with Hockey WA it was both not possible and it did not make sense to conduct the survey during a heavily modified season. Our current intention is to conduct a survey towards the end of the 2021 season assuming a regular season next year.

The content will be similar to the survey conducted in 2017 so that the effect of these changes and potential other areas of interest or concern of the local Masters playing group can be collected and analysed. WAMHC will notify clubs well in advance, minimum several weeks, of the distribution of the survey. WAMHC will distribute any findings and recommendations to clubs for comment as part of a consultation period prior to any implementation of change that might be indicated by the results of the survey.

Men's Masters participation continues to grow. 86 teams took the field in Men's Masters Saturday afternoon competitions, an increase of 10 teams compared with 2017, and eight teams participated in the Over 40 Midweek Division on Monday night a decrease of one from 2017. This is an outstanding result given the Covid-19 impacts around the world this year.

35 teams took the field in four divisions of the Women's Wednesday night Masters Competitions, the same number as 2017 and 2018.

Western Hockey Masters ("WHM") is a Masters Men's only club with around 230 members who play on turf at PHS on Wednesday afternoons throughout the year in three divisions with a total of 12 teams from Over 50s up. WHM also runs a social Over 65s competition on most Saturday afternoons at Perry Lakes grass fields. I am extremely supportive of the efforts of this organisation; they are increasing participation and retention in our sport in creative ways.

### **Awards and Australian Masters Championships**

Normally, this report would detail the efforts and performance of our State Masters teams, National Teams' selections and awards earned. However, as already noted there were no National Championships this year so nothing to report.

Organization has already begun for next years combined Championships in Newcastle.

### **Women's State Over 35 Teams Country Tour**

Earlier in the year there was a recruiting focused weekend tour for the Women's State Over 35's Team to Narrogin. The aim was to showcase Women's Masters Hockey in the region and to encourage more players to nominate for State Masters Teams. Several games were held along with coaching clinic and socialising opportunities - from all accounts successful and well received. A great thanks to Stacey Hamilton for the enormous effort she put in organising and participating in the tour. There are plans for another tour next year to a different regional location.

### **The State Masters versus Hotspurs**

Another interesting event that occurred this year for the first time ever was the All Stars Challenge. Conducted after the season on Sunday 11 October 2020 as precursor to the open North versus South challenge, Women's and Men's Hotspurs versus State Masters Teams matches were held. The general consensus was that these matches were of a high standard and very entertaining.

Thanks, in particular to Cameron Robinson and Naomi Noble for their efforts in getting the State Masters Teams organised for the event.

## **The Challenge Competition**

A further notable event on the weekend of 7/8 November 2020 was “The Challenge”. This was a two-game test between WA State Teams (metro based) and our WA Country State team counterparts. Conducted in four age groups from 60 to 75 the weekend was from all accounts a great success. The Committee jointly sponsored the event with our WA Country equivalents. Thanks go to Naomi Noble and Peter Andrews for the great efforts they went to in getting this event and the State Teams organised. Plans are already in place for an expanded Challenge event for early next year.

## **Committee Outlook**

The Committee makes a significant contribution to the development of Masters Hockey in WA to meet the needs of participants. This work is undertaken entirely by volunteers.

The Committee could not deliver these results without the support of Hockey WA and I would like to acknowledge and thank the Hockey WA Board, CEO Stuart Gilsenan and the staff of Hockey WA for their considerable assistance throughout the year.

The Committee has been very stable throughout 2020, operating with an unchanged Committee of nine. The appointments elected at the 2019 General Meeting maintained or increased the diversity of participation in Committee decisions by age, club affiliation and strengthening the Committee’s skill set.

WAMHC will elect the new Chair from their peers at the first Committee meeting of 2020.

I have no doubt that WAMHC will continue to have a strategic focus on the creation and nourishment of an environment and culture which continues to increase the number of players and to improve the experience for all of those players participating in the game of hockey at all levels.

Scott Macdonald  
Chair  
WA Masters Hockey Committee  
9 December 2020

