



WA MASTERS STATE HOCKEY: COACHES PACK

2021 Coaching Guidelines

Abstract

The WA Masters Hockey Committee (WAMHC) has developed the Coaches Pack as a resource to provide guidelines and assistance to WA Masters State Coaches.

Please contact WAMHC for any queries regarding this document.

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WA MASTERS HOCKEY COMMITTEE: COACHING GUIDELINES

RATIONALE

WA Masters State Team Coaches in partnership with State Team Managers are crucial to the performance and development of the players in their team. WA Masters Hockey has a proud history of participation and successful performance in both men's and women's national hockey tournaments and we wish to continue this tradition by continuing to provide resources and coaching support to all our State Team Coaches.

COACHING RESPONSIBILITY

This Coaching Package is provided for WA Masters State Team Coaches, 'the Coach', to indicate the Duties, Responsibilities and Functions of the position and to facilitate efficient administration and liaison with the WA Masters Hockey Committee (WAMHC). This file and [WAMHC policies](#) that guide it are subject to change at the discretion of WAMHC. Any queries or clarifications should be directed to WAMHC.

To access coaching resources and information, go to the **WA Masters Hockey** website (<https://www.wamastershockey.com>) and create an account. It is a straightforward process, select the **Create an account** option when you first reach the web site.



Once your appointment as Coach has been confirmed;

- Contact your Manager to establish your partnership and parameters regarding team organisation, selection, player management, communication, and training
- Read the WAMHC policies and procedures
- Familiarise yourself with the Hockey Australia (HA) tournament rules, policies and procedures (e.g. [Team Official Code of Conduct](#))

The Coach is responsible to the:

- WAMHC for compliance with WAMHC policies and procedures
- Team Manager on technical matters relating to the tournament
- Team to enhance performance, development and results

To support the Coach, the WAMHC is responsible for;

- Ensuring appropriate policies for selectors, coaches, managers and players are in place, made available and correctly applied.
- Reviewing and making recommendations regarding any conflicts

STATE TEAM SELECTION PROCESS

The [WAMHC Selection Policy](#) must be followed. All determinations or clarifications of this policy may be provided by the WAMHC at their discretion.

The Coach is an active participant in the selection process of the State Team.

SELECTION COMMITTEE AND POLICY

The Team Selection Panel for each age group has at least three (3) selectors including the relevant Coach and a WAMHC representative. Please read the WAMHC Selection policy - <https://www.wamastershockey.com/index.php/main-policy-and-procedures-page> for further details.

The WAMHC will select a Chair of the Selection Panel for each age group. Where there is an impasse regarding a player, Coaches have a deliberative and casting vote in selection decisions made by the Team Selection Panel, except in decisions regarding his/herself as player/coach or when there is a conflict of interest.

SELECTION TRIAL PROCESS

As a Selector, the Coach's role during the trial process is to;

- Liaise with the Team Manager regarding player lists, preferred positions, player availability and injuries/ fitness to play
- Assist in and facilitate the selection process as part of the Selection Panel
- Attend all WA Masters Hockey Committee nominated trials for your age cohort, (or weekly competition games / Country Week games)
- Communicate your preferences to the selection panel regarding playing style and structures
- Maintain confidentiality of selection panel discussions and decisions

TEAM SELECTION AND RATIFICATION

State players and teams selected by the Team Selection Panel are subject to ratification by WAMHC committee and the Hockey WA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and subsequently announced on the HWA / Master's websites. Go to <https://www.wamastershockey.com> or <http://www.hockeywa.org.au/> .

The Coach and team selection panel should recognise that all players selected for a State Masters Team are expected to be of a playing level that the Coach can readily integrate into the team. There is no requirement to select players of unsatisfactory standard even if the team is short.

ALIGNING VALUES AND GOALS

The Hockey WA [Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020](#) vision of ‘hockey for all’ underpins the key objective of the WAMHC to encourage and facilitate the sport of hockey for both men and women in WA. The core values described in the Strategic Plan, and which inform the work of WAMHC, coaching staff and all off-field teams (OFT) are;

- **Inclusive participation** for all to achieve their full potential
- **Transparent** and regular engagement to encourage dialogue and **continuous improvement**
- Work together to ensure **enjoyment** and **belonging** for all
- Striving for **excellence** through **innovation** in all that we undertake

As the coach, consider how you will;

- Align your coaching strategy and plan with these values
- Articulate these values to your players and team
- Reinforce these values through coaching behaviour and action

All team officials and players commit to the [HA Code of Conduct](#) prior to participation in the tournament. Discussion of this document is an opportunity to reinforce your own team values and code of conduct.

Where a player’s actions or behaviours breach the Code of Conduct, the Coach and / or Manager must inform the WAMHC immediately for its review and action as appropriate. The Hockey WA Member Protection Policy can be viewed here <https://www.hockeywa.org.au/infohub/policies/>

TEAM ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

Successful State Team Coaches create plans to help their team achieve the best possible results in the Australian Masters Championships and enhance player development and performance. By developing a coaching plan, the players, team and OFT understand the environment they will be competing within and the training they need to do to ensure they are competitive.

Your coaching plan may include ways to;

- create a positive culture and positive working relationship
- enhance player skills through teaching technical skills and techniques as required
- develop player capacity and potential through challenging the status quo
- focus on performance improvement in team structures and play.
- Leverage the rules and requirements affecting the tournament
- empower the leadership group to reinforce the positive culture and the coaching plan.

COACHING STYLE AND EXPECTATIONS

Every Coach has their own style. It is not necessarily about being right or wrong but embracing the role to do the best job you can. As an experienced coach and having observed the players selected, you are responsible for developing and communicating your coaching expectations.

Coaches are encouraged to delegate, engage team members by asking for their opinion and being open to suggestions if they make sense and are consistent with your coaching style. Your coaching plan provides the direction for the team to set goals and develop their own playing group standards.

Make your expectations clear regarding the standards expected of WA Masters players and establish team rules to maintain those standards.

LEADERSHIP GROUP

The coach is part of the Team Selection Panel which recommends the Team Captain and/or Leadership Group with advice from the Manager as required. Once finalised, their names must be submitted by the Chair of the Team Selection Panel to the WAMHC for ratification.

Some Coaches allow for player input regarding their preferred leaders. In addition to positive leadership attributes, hockey knowledge and playing ability, you may wish include a player from each playing line (e.g. defence, midfield, and attack) to form a balanced Leadership Group.

A well selected leadership group can;

- Promote a positive team culture and high performance
- Reinforce expectations of how you will work together
- Provide coaching support and timely comments on any player and team concerns
- Develop playing strategies, to include team, small group, and individual plays.
- Help you determine specialist roles and playing positions

COMMUNICATION

There are formal and informal communication processes to be aware of as a State Team Coach. The WAMHC State Coordinators, Jill Van Duuren (Women) or Naomi Noble (Men) will direct most of the formal administrative and tournament documentation to the Team Manager for actioning.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MASTERS HOCKEY COMMITTEE

WAMHC communicates with the OFT mostly via the Team Manager. Coaches are copied into these communications where relevant. Coaches will be given to access all relevant Master's Hockey forms and documents via the WA Master's Hockey website

<https://www.wamastershockey.com/index.php/main-policy-and-procedures-page> under the Policy & Procedures section.

The WAMHC Men and Women State Coordinators are the key point of contact for all OFT queries and advice.

- WA Women Masters State Coordinator, Jill van Duuren, 0401 469 733
statewomen@wamastershockey.com / jill.vanduuren@bigpond.com
- WA Men Masters State Coordinator, Naomi Noble, 0419 852 443
statemen@wamastershockey.com / noble-gould@hotmail.com

For team selection issues, communication is via the Chair of the Team Selection panel. Any communication or representations made to interstate authorities regarding interstate player

availability (where teams are short or for underage dispensations) are via the WAMHC State Coordinators only.

Coaches may also contact the WAMHC Chair where required.

- Chair WA Masters Hockey Committee, Scott Macdonald, 0419 189 180
chair@wamastershockey.com / scottmac97@me.com

MEETINGS FOR STATE COACHES AND MANAGERS

The WAMHC will schedule meetings for Coaches and Managers, prior to and following the tournament. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss processes and procedures, allay any concerns and give Coaches and Managers the opportunity to ask questions and share information for mutual benefit.

The WAMHC State Coordinators will provide you with the phone numbers and details of the entire OFT to assist you to access their support and advice.

WORKING WITH YOUR MANAGER

The Manager is responsible to the Tournament Director for issues relating to the tournament and should be familiar with the Hockey Australia Operations Manual. See <http://www.hockey.org.au/Officiating/Resources>

Talk with your Manager to clarify how you will work with each other and manage team communication processes. Traditionally, the Manager communicates directly with the team regarding administrative and organisational issues (e.g. booking turf time, player availability, team social events) which allows the Coach to focus on their coaching role.

The Manager will also liaise, on the Coach's behalf, with WAMHC and pass on all relevant information relevant to the Coach and the players.

PLAYER SURVEY

Each year WAMHC conducts a player survey for feedback on each team's Coach and Manager performances.

Survey questions ask players to provide feedback on areas such as; hockey knowledge, quality of training, ability to build relationships, allocation of player positions and game time, attitudes towards winning, ability to communicate effectively, and effectiveness of game plans. Previous player surveys suggest a Coach's ability to communicate effectively with the players and the Manager is one of the most important aspects of the role.

De-identified feedback is provided to Coaches and Managers where pertinent.

WA Master's website and social media

Check the WA Masters website regularly for the latest news. Go to <https://www.wamastershockey.com/>

Nominate at least two selected representatives from your team to post to the Team Facebook page on a regular basis. Permissions to post to the Facebook page are obtained via the WAMHC. See <https://www.wamastershockey.com/index.php/state-teams> to access your team's Facebook page. Allocating a team member to upload game results and goal scorers during the tournament to the WAMHC Facebook team pages assists WAMHC recordkeeping.

Apps such as Whats App, Doodle poll, TeamSnap and others can also be handy for organising team events or sharing news. Most teams set up their own shared media platforms.

MASTERS TOURNAMENT

The details for the respective 2021 Masters Hockey tournaments to be held in Newcastle are;

- Women's Tournament – Thursday 23 September – Saturday 2 October 2021
- Men's Tournament – Friday 24 September – Saturday 9 October 2021

TRAINING SCHEDULE

The WAMHC recommends teams are finalised at least twelve weeks prior to the tournament. As Coach, in consultation with the Manager, you will need to establish the team's training schedule, and any team meetings or social events. For the Women's state teams, country players need some consideration given the extra travel, loss of playing time and costs they incur to attend trainings in Perth.

An ideal training schedule should;

- Outline the program for training and skills development in the lead-up to, and during, the tournament
- Acknowledge player capacity to train, consider season playing commitments, geographical locations, school / public holidays
- Be published in advance

TRAINING PROGRAM

Preparing your players for the challenges and impacts of tournament hockey, is a key aspect of coaching Masters hockey. The nature of the Master's State Teams mean that you will be coaching players of different ages, with varied levels of fitness and a wide range of hockey experience.

The training program may be impacted by several factors which may include;

- Player availability and access to training (e.g. injuries, country players, international playing commitments, club hockey playing times, finals)
- Turf availability and times for training (e.g. during season bookings are normally very early morning)
- Player motivation and commitment (e.g. playing, training, coaching commitments)

Player commitment and availability for training should be established early by the Coach. Many of the Master's players can provide advice regarding their own fitness, training intensity and playing

schedules. This advice assists Coaches to tailor a training program that caters for individuals needs and minimises the risk of injury. In taking account of all factors, Coaches will set their minimum requirements for player attendance at training, expected levels of fitness and the commitment required from their players and team.

If a player cannot meet reasonable training session requirements for whatever reason, the question of how committed they are to team success and whether they should consider withdrawing should be discussed with the player and / or leadership team. Going to a tournament under prepared is likely to lead to disappointment, injury or resentment from other team members. An uncommitted or unfit player impacts on the potential for success of the team. Not meeting training requirements could also have an impact on future selections given that attitude, commitment and coachability are within the selection criteria.

Key aspects for effective training programs are those that;

- Prepare players to be at their peak performance for the Masters' Tournament
- Include activities and practices appropriate for the skill level and fitness of the participant
- Build awareness of game play strategies (penalty corners, long corners, defensive free hits, attacking free hits, rotations etc)
- Develop individual player skills, fitness and potential
- Developmental progression from session to session
- Consider and reinforce player safety

Training programs for Masters should build upon the expertise of the players selected and bring them together as a team by using a mix of training strategies from training drills to games. Scratch matches are an opportunity for the Coach to communicate and develop the player's understandings of attacking and defensive patterns of play expected. They also build each player's understanding of other player capabilities in competitive situations.

Providing opportunity through training to practise set plays in passive and competitive situations is an important part of tournament preparation. Coaches need to ensure all players are aware of positioning and actions required for set plays such as attacking and defensive penalty corners, long corners, free hits, penalty shoot-outs and develop alternatives as required. Players should be made aware that the set plays, positions and tactics practiced beforehand at the pre-tournament training sessions may be changed at any time during the tournament to meet challenges as they arise.

The intensity of Masters Hockey games (now played with four quarters of hockey) has increased and requires Coaches to ensure they have multiple choices available if players with specialist skills for set plays are off the field due to player rotations. Masters training programs are a unique opportunity for Coaches to increase the pool of players who can perform specialist skills.

Designing a program that also incorporates Goalkeeper development coupled with training for Penalty Shootouts is also important given that many of the Grand Finals results are determined in this way.

GAME SCHEDULE AND TRAINING ALLOCATION

The Team Manager completes all player entry and registration requirements for the tournament. The WAMHC State Coordinators will forward the Tournament Draw and pre-tournament training allocation to the Team Managers and Coaches for your feedback and comments for improvement. This is usually within a very tight timeframe. Coaches may wish to consider the suitability of the training time with respect to team arrival times and scheduled first game.

RULES AND INTERPRETATIONS

You will have access to the [HA Tournament Regulations \(Outdoor Updated March 2019\)](#) regulations and specific Championship documents via the WA Master's Hockey website <https://www.wamastershockey.com/index.php/main-policy-and-procedures-page>, under Policy & Procedures section. Tournament rules and interpretations are communicated at the State Managers Meeting prior to the start of the Tournament. Generally, Coaches can also attend this meeting and provide some input for decisions if required. Decisions about how finals are conducted are usually dependant on the number of teams in your pool.

You can obtain a printable copy of the FIH Rules of Hockey 2020 via the [Federation of International Hockey \(FIH\)](#) website or download the [FIH Rules of Hockey 2020](#) App directly onto your mobile device.

GAME PREPARATION

Coaches work with their Manager and leadership team to create an environment that enhances the ability of players to prepare mentally and physically for each game. The OFT team work together to determine the most efficient pre-game schedule to ensure the team is adequately informed, prepared and on time.

The timing of pre-game team meetings and pre-game warmup routines will vary according to the location of your accommodation, and scheduled game time. It is worth checking the facilities at the tournament grounds, as change-rooms can vary a lot (e.g. size, access to whiteboards) for pre-game talks. As a rule, during a tournament, teams cannot access allocated change-rooms until after half time of the preceding game.

Coaches may choose to hold pre-game meetings offsite, prior to travelling to the ground. The purpose to the pre-game meeting is to help the players prepare to play the game. Knowing how individual players like to prepare can also assist your decision making as the Coach about the levels of activation or motivation required in these meetings.

The pre-game travel and warmup routine is a critical component of team preparation. Coaches may ask specific players to conduct activities such as the team warm-up / cool-downs, pre-game drills, goalkeeper warmup, equipment and first aid management and even the organisation of rest day activities. Distributing responsibilities across the leadership group or team allows the Coach to focus on their role of encouraging players to be mentally prepared and motivated to play their best game.

Pre-game warm up routines may include at least 10 - 30 minutes of running and stretching activities to assist players to prepare for increased levels of activity. An effective warmup routine may include;

- 5 – 10 minutes of moderate aerobic activities such as jogging, running, skipping and side stepping etc.
- 5 – 10 minutes of dynamic stretching to warm up muscles and joints to help reduce the risk of injury
- Activities that enhance coordination and help mental preparation e.g. partner activities, crossing bodylines etc.
- Hockey specific activities that prepares joints / ligaments for full ranges of movement e.g. high squats to practise getting low for the game etc.

Generally, your team will have at least 20 to 30 minutes between games to complete your pre-game hockey drills and set plays. Coaches need to factor in various interruptions to this timeframe such as time out for turf sprinklers, lag time of previous team leaving the dugout, weather conditions (if extremely hot or wet), captains toss, captains talk, team chants.

Coaches may develop a pre-game hockey routine that is repeated each time or varied each game according to team performance in previous game. Allowing for a minimum of 20 minutes of turf time, pre-game hockey drills may include;

- Short passing and trapping exercises (gradually increasing distance) to focus eye and footwork
- Long hitting and trapping exercises (e.g. for defenders - round the back)
- Short passing / dribbling in constrained space (e.g. for midfielders 3 on 3)
- Goalkeeping / goal shooting drills / practice (e.g. for attackers - deflections,)
- Practice of penalty corner set plays / penalty strokes
- An activity to focus the whole team

Just as important as the warm up routines, is allocating at least 10 minutes following the game for a structured team cool down. A light team jog and static stretching of all the major muscle groups will assist player muscle recovery and repair. There may be opportunity depending on the tournament location for teams to use ice baths / spa baths at the hockey grounds. This is normally organised by the team Managers at an additional cost. Some teams elect to visit the nearest beach or swimming pool to assist player recovery.

The WAMHC may organise team physiotherapists, masseurs, and doctors when available to support player recovery during the tournament.

TEAM STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS

As the Coach you will already have ideas of the team structures and systems you would like your team to develop. Coaches can draw upon the experience of other Master's Coaches, Masters State players, and work with their leadership group to review and make sure the whole team understands the;

- Key learning points for the team from each game played and / or observations re opposition's strengths and weaknesses

- Key game tactics and the outcomes for players / team to focus on
- Type of playing structure / variations to positioning / expected patterns of play
- Specific set plays and player roles for each
- Starting line-up and type / timing of rotations

Providing time for the team to come together or smaller groups (e.g. forwards / defenders) to meet, ask questions and discuss playing structures and certain scenarios builds understanding and greater chance of being applied. It can be helpful also at the start of the tournament to discuss any new tournament rules and go through some 'what if' scenarios (e.g. umpire interpretations, injuries, send offs), with your team to discuss possible responses and player actions.

GAME TIME AND ROTATIONS

Coaches as part of the Team Selection panel have usually selected a team of 16 field players. As such, Coaches must ensure that game plans and playing rotations are structured to ensure even playing time for all players across the tournament.

Balancing out the playing time for all 16 players ensures that you are protecting players from overuse injuries, fatigue and ensuring a fully fit team for finals. Lack of adequate playing time is one of the most common complaints from Master's players. This is often with due cause, given the financial imposts, extra training time and time away from work.

In compliance with WAMHC's commitment to player participation, the Coach must;

- Provide an even balance of playing time for all players
- Communicate how the rotations are organised and timed
- Be transparent about why and when you may need to change the rotations timings
- Protect players from overuse injuries and tournament fatigue

COACHING FEEDBACK AND RESULTS

At the end of the tournament, Coaches may be asked to complete a Coach's report or survey and / or attend a Coaches Review meeting. Your feedback provides WAMHC with valuable information to improve its policies and procedures to support Coaches, Managers and players. Any written feedback is treated as confidential to WAMHC.

INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE AND BEHAVIOUR

As the Coach you will be required to provide comment on any players who have breached the Code of Conduct or have been sanctioned (e.g. Red Card) during the national tournament. If this occurs, you will be reporting immediately to the WAMHC via the Men's / Women's State Coordinators as relevant.

AUSTRALIAN TEAM NOMINATIONS AND SELECTIONS

Nominations for Australian Masters teams generally occur prior to the tournament via an online process. This is a confidential process and players can elect to let you know whether they have

nominated or not. As a Coach, it can be helpful to know who has nominated for Australian selection and for what positions, so you can assist them in their quest for selection. The Australian Selectors watch each game which can at times impact on player performance or behaviour which Coaches may need to manage accordingly.

The WAMHC encourages all WA Masters Coaches and Managers to consider nominating for Australian selection themselves and encouraging their players to nominate to promote WA representation in Australian teams.

RESOURCES

There are many resources available for Coaches. The links below are for your interest and information only and are not officially recommended by WAMHC.

- [50 Goalkeeper Practices](#) Drills, progressions, and diagrams
- <http://lthd.fieldhockey.ca/en/drills>
- <https://www.hockeywa.org.au/infohub/coaching/>
- <http://www.hockey.org.au/Officiating/Resources>

Video based

- <https://www.youtube.com/user/fihockey/videos> The official YouTube channel of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) and the best place to get all your global hockey action! Subscribe and stay tuned for live coverage, games highlights and updates from across the world of Field Hockey
- <https://www.youtube.com/user/HockeyAustralia/videos> The official YouTube channel of Hockey Australia, featuring videos of the Kookaburras and Hockeyroos, top coaching tips, behind the scenes features, interviews and more.
- <https://www.sportplan.net/drills/Hockey/index.jsp> Coaching plans, ideas and drills. Requires registration.
- <http://www.ahockeyworld.net> Videos of skills and techniques