



HORSHAM HOCKEY CLUB

THE CRICKETFIELD, CRICKETFIELD ROAD, HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX
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Chairman's Report – 55th Season 2023-24

Dear Members

Welcome to my sixth AGM, and overall a promotion led season of hockey.

Horsham Hockey Social Highlights

This season saw the return of social activity:

- Our Club Day once again started of the season with multiple social events, a quiz, a barn dance and team curry nights filling the social calendar this year.
- Back at the club our end of season dinner sold out with 150 attending a successful night
- And our Hugh Thomas Presidents day once again incorporated some Junior Section awards and a new VP dinner for past players. This is building into a nice closing day.

Adult Section Highlights

- L1's came 9th – relegated from National League after a tough season
- L2's came 5th – after a tough start they picked up pace and finished very well
- L3's came 1st – promoted after a great season scoring 80 goals
- L4's came 1st – promoted which is great after coming 11th last season
- L5's came 4th – up one place on last season with more junior players coming into the team
- Hotstars finished mid table with the team getting stronger each week

- M1's came 8th – some tough matches and lacking goals they ground out some good results
- M2's came 1st – promoted with over 125 goals they are looking strong
- M3's came 2nd – promoted after last year's 3rd place, excellent mix of youth and experience
- M4's came 4th – up on last years 7th place with a big squad, next year promotion maybe
- Hotshots – A great season winning their Sussex development league

Junior Section Highlights

The section has approximately 200 juniors ranging from 4-17 years old, and is going from strength to strength with some wonderful, talented and committed children in our club. Once again, we have participated in training, friendly matches, tier league games, festivals, tournaments, camps and masterclass sessions. The focus has always been on having fun, despite the weather, alongside core skills, teamwork and match play.

Some highlights for the season are

- U10 girls are runners up at the Ron Easton tournament (west) and through to the finals day on 14th April. The girls came runners up at the Sussex In2hockey and made the regional finals on 21st April
- U12 girls were runners up at the Ron Easton tournament (west) leading to finals on 14th April coming 6th against some tough regional teams.
- U14 girls won their SE Tier 3 league
- U16 girls won their SE tier 3 league
- U10 boys had two mixed ability teams going well at festival hockey finishing 1st and 2nd
- U12 boys are the west Ron Easton champions and are playing in the finals on 14th April. Also won the Sussex In2Hockey tournament and made the regional finals coming 5th.
- Many players representing Sussex between the age groups of U13 – U18 and two are now at EH Hockey academy level

2024-25 Season targets

Our plans for the coming season are as follows:

- Ladies' 1s to regroup and strengthen their squad
- Men's 1s to continue to strengthen their squad under a new coach
- All other adult teams to retain league positions and build up squad strengths
- Add a new Men's 5's team for development of juniors, adult players & back to hockey

- We are looking at adding weekly Masterclasses on a specific skills each week
- Seeking a Junior Head Coach and additional coaching support
- Continue to incorporate a Coach development program for all junior volunteers with England Hockey providing the training

Pitch developments

Horsham continues to pursue a solution to find a permanent home.

Currently, we remain based at Christs Hospital with good support from BCS and a growing awareness of the club. We are planning to meet with the School COO to discuss closer co-operation after successfully hosting the South East Regional Finals for U10 and U12's.

The Golf and Leisure proposal is due before HDC planning committee on May 14th and we are awaiting the decision. The expectation is a rejection and an appeal will be lodged immediately. The advice is that there is no material basis to reject it and HDC rejected a CH scheme that won on appeal, so HDC have a record of losing appeals. We just can't be sure where this will end up.

I attended a Council meeting and asked about support for our scheme which is now on public record. They acknowledged they are working to support us. We are now in touch directly with Councillors who have committed to meet directly with me in May to explore our needs and plans. I have also now received a wider range of Councillor email responses all acknowledging awareness of HHC needs and the inclusion into the HDC playing pitch strategy as a club in need.

We remain committed to finding a solution, we have momentum but the wheels turn slowly.

Club development activity

- Our new kits has settled in with quite a strong take up
- Our social media continues to improve and regular work from Ems is making this into a very strong asset to the club
- Inflation continues to affect our budgets and with no real commercial income this feeds directly through to membership costs.
- We are presenting a variety of finance budget options for members to consider as a result.

As always, we need to say a huge "thank you" to all the people who work tirelessly to ensure the success of the Club: Both club and team captains, coaches, managers, umpires, committee members, event organisers etc.

You have not only supported increasing levels of Hockey activity like the regional finals and social events, but also the Barns green marathon and Horsham Sports club event.

Two special mentions this evening, firstly for CJ for holding down Ladies Club captain and Club secretary roles this season. And Secondly for Rachel, for her work everywhere as colts co-ordinators and pitch booker, umpire co-ordinator and organising the junior coaches in absence of a junior head coach. Both your efforts are amazing and the Club could not operate without you.

Thank you all.

Chris Poland

Chairman