

District Dribble

The Newsletter of the Northern District Hockey Association

June 2008

President's Piece:

I hope everyone is enjoying the hockey season as much as I am. Our junior and senior teams are performing admirably on the field and all players and officials are representing our club with pride.

There are a few important events coming up on the calendar such as the Trivia Night so come along and support the club and have some fun. Who knows, you could play a part in club history on the night. I wanted to also thank our principal sponsors Just Hockey, Pennant Hills Bowling Club and Paul Taylor Physiotherapy for their ongoing support of the club. Paul's business cards are at the canteen. Grab one when you are there next.



I also wanted to thank our trainee junior umpires for their effort so far this season. The standard of umpiring has been very impressive and it is very promising that many of our juniors are looking to obtain badged status. Best of luck with that.

As we near the latter half of the season I would ask that your children bring a friend along to one of their games. If they do this, see your team manager who will award your child and their guest a free legendary ICE CUP. You never know, we may just have budding champion hockey player waiting to get hooked!

Best of luck for the remainder of the season. See you around the fields.

Larry

Junior Teams Report:

We have reached the half way mark of the season and all teams are performing well. The U11Gold has had their first win of the season after being close for a few weeks, hopefully over the second half of the season they can get some more wins and move up the table. The U11White are currently 4th and the U11Blue are 5th in the B pool. Both teams have played well and results have been close all year whether it's a win, draw or loss. The three U13 teams are also going well, the Gold team is 2nd in the A pool and improving each game. In the B pool the White and Blue teams are equal 4th on points but just outside the top 4 on goal difference and are both in the mix for the semis. So far slight bragging rights are with the White team after they beat the Blues 3-2 in Rd 4, I'm sure both teams are looking forward to the next meeting in Rd 11.

Our U15Blue team are 4th in the Nth Area comp and improving each week. The U15 Metro has had a solid start to the Sydney wide U15 comp and is placed 6th on goal difference with 3 wins and 3 losses.

Keep checking the website for results, match reports and things going on in the club. If you have any ideas or news, please let me know and it can be shared with the whole club.

The team photos are being organised, I will let the managers know when these will occur.

A special thanks to all team coaches and managers who are doing a terrific job.

Good luck to all teams over the rest of the season, remember the most important thing is to enjoy your hockey and try your best each week for yourself and team.

Eileen – Junior Convenor

U9 Report

The club has been running an U9 hockey program for our youngest hockey players for several years. In 2008 we made the change from Saturday mornings to Friday evenings 5.30 – 6.30pm; this move has been extremely well received. We have 26 ND U9's participating in the program each week and 10 -12 from Gordon for a total of 38 kids.

The children enjoy a group playtime before separating into age groups for games. In their groups the coaches, aided by parent helpers and junior players impart years of experience to these budding future hockey players. After participating in skills training, the night concludes with mini games.

The program would not be as successful without numerous parents and juniors helping on the night. Also the women's sides of the club are running the BBQ as a fundraiser, which is proving a popular end to the evening.

Eileen – Junior Convenor

NDHA TRIVIA NIGHT * * * August 9th * * *

Have you got your tickets yet? Don't miss a great night of fun and prizes. You can even win prizes without answering a question! Only \$15 per person. Parents of Juniors, Women's, Men's, Past Players.



Pennant Hills Bowling Club – 7 for 7.30pm start till midnight.

Tickets are available from the Canteen at the hockey fields.

Women's Report:

It was very exciting to see the Sydney North women's competition expanding to a total of 23 teams with the addition of four Manly teams. We graded our teams to reflect how we anticipated the competition to be set up, with either 3 or 4 grades. We were therefore very disappointed with the announcement by Sydney North that there would only be two divisions this year.

Unfortunately ND1, ND2 & ND3 were all placed in Division One, which consists of 11 teams. ND4 & ND5 were placed in Division Two, which consists of 12 teams. We have been advised the competition will be divided into 3 grades after 11 rounds, but not before some of the teams in Division One have sustained significant losses. Unlike the women's competition, the number of teams competing in U18's has decreased. It is very disappointing to only have four teams competing this year. The girls are working very hard on improving their skills at training, as is evident when watching them play.

After 7 rounds the teams standings are:

Div1 -: ND1 3rd 2 points behind leaders Manly1 & UTS 1 (last years Grand finalists)
-: ND2 5th
-: ND3 10th (with a bye in hand)
Div2 -: ND5 6th
-: ND4 12th
U18's 4th

Each week the coaches take time out of their very busy lives to prepare drills for training and attend games. Unfortunately there has been a very poor turnout to training most weeks. We are only asking you to commit to one hour every Tuesday night. We would ask all of the women make an effort to attend training. We understand that for some people it is impossible due to work, study or other sporting commitments. Those who have been attending training regularly will testify how much their skills have improved. Games would be enhanced if there were a better turn up to training.

Julie Osborne

July Holiday Hockey Clinic – SportsLink Australia



A series of 2 day clinics will be held in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, Perth and Brisbane during July 2008. These clinics are designed for current players and will give everyone a fantastic opportunity to improve on their skills, plus learn new techniques and develop their game knowledge.

SYDNEY (Cintra Park) - 15th/16th July

Camp coaches include FIH & AHL coaches, plus a range of other AHL players and top level coaches.

All clinics run from 10am - 4pm both days, and are open to players aged 8 - 18 years. Players will be grouped according to their age and ability, with separate programs for the varying groups. Cost is just \$160. All participants go into the draw to win a Gryphon stick valued at over \$200.

You can register on line or get more information from: www.sportslinkaustralia.com.au

Northern District Website



The Club website is www.ndhockey.com.au It is updated regularly with Club information, team draws, results and match reports, contacts, links, uniform information and much more. Add it to you website "Favourites".

Premier League Games – Norwest Strikers

Next Home Game:
Saturday 5 July, 3.30pm vs Bankstown

To check game details go to:
www.sydneyhockey.com.au then Competitions – Mens – Premier League 1st Grade – Fixtures

Hockey at the Beijing Olympics

Australia's Men's and Women's teams have qualified for the Beijing Olympics. Hockey matches are being played from August 10 – 23.

The Pools for the Men are:

Pool A – Germany, Spain, South Korea, New Zealand, Belgium, China

Pool B – Australia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Britain, South Africa, Canada.

The Pools for the Women are:

Pool A – Netherlands, Australia, China, Spain, South Korea, South Africa

Pool B – Argentina, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Britain, USA

Umpires Corner

This Month we are going to talk about obstruction; both stick (check) and body. To keep it simple, the rules can be divided into TWO main groups: The OBSTRUCTION Rule, and everything else.



OBSTRUCTION:

20 years ago, obstruction was all about forcing the player in possession of the ball into an obstructive position and relying on the umpire to see it, whistle it and give you possession of the ball. Now, the intent is to protect the ball carrier's possession of the ball.

Once in **controlled** possession of the ball, a player can move in any direction **other than bodily into another player**. This has implications for both the player in possession, the "carrier" and the tackler. The tackler has the right to move towards the carrier to attempt to dispossess the carrier. To avoid that tackle, the carrier can move around her opponent, can even move her body and stick to take the ball further away from the tackler but she can't charge into, or over the tackler.

To attempt a successful tackle, the tackler must be seen to meet certain criteria:

1. Be within *playing distance* of the ball
2. Be *committed* to the tackle [ie actually moving in such a way to intercept the ball]

3. Be in a position to actually make a play on the ball without interfering in any way with their opponent's body or stick. (see Stick Obstruction below)

Always remember, there is a difference between the actual Rules and things you remember your coaches saying to you over the years. "*Never two on a ball*" is a coaching guideline to avoid third party obstruction but there is no rule that **prevents** two players from the same team moving against an opponent in possession of the ball. Similarly, there is no rule that says *you can't tackle from behind*; just remember that if you do tackle from an inferior position, especially from the left of the your opponent, should you interfere in any way with the opponent's body or stick, or even worse, be hit by the opponent's stick on her follow through, you are obstructing and should be penalised.

Stick Obstruction:

The rule says that a player can't hit at, hook, hold or in any way *interfere with an opponent's stick*. The Rule also says that a player cannot interpose her stick between the ball and the stick of a legitimate tackler.

Basically, you have to play the ball to make a successful tackle. If you make contact with the ball and maintain that contact, especially on the fast Astroturf surface, the odds are that the player you have skillfully dispossessed will obstruct you. So it's very important for umpires to understand the stick obstruction guidelines and to get sufficient practice in **watching where and how the stick attempts to play the ball** to determine stick obstruction correctly.

Lunge tackles used to be a great favourite of fast, strong players to grab the ball off an opponent. The lunge tackle usually relies on a slightly off from front-on angle so you can angle the ball of the carrier's stick and when your stick knocks the opponent's stick out of the way, you grab the ball quickly and establish your own possession.

Except that this is obstruction. By knocking the ball away from the opponent, you are actually pushing the opponent's stick away as well and since you haven't yet demonstrated CONTROLLED POSSESSION of the ball, you haven't made a clean tackle no matter how many male coaches tell you that you have!

The most common mistake made in a block tackle is not getting the stick as flat to the ground as possible. Unless the tackler is lucky and plays

the ball with the head of her stick, what usually happens is the ball is completely missed but the tackler's stick is left partially off the ground and therefore OBSTRUCTS the oncoming player's stick.

Another common mistake is for the tackler to swing or hit at the ball in an attempt to tackle the carrier. The inevitable follow-through action of the tackler's hitting/swinging action may certainly connect with the ball – ***unless they completely miss and hit the carrier's stick*** - but this type of uncontrolled tackle usually takes the carrier's stick away too. And this is obstruction and should be penalised.

Third party / "Shadow" Obstruction

As already stated, the carrier is obliged to move around her opponents and the tackler has the right to stand her ground if her tackle fails and she has not gained possession. A third party, ie a team mate of the tackler can create an obstruction if she stands too close to the tackler which severely limits the running or passing options of the carrier and that limitation allows the third party person to gain possession of the ball. For example, an attacking carrier in attempting to bring the ball into the circle is tackled just outside the circle by a half, whose tackle fails and she stands her ground. The carrier attempts a reverse drag dodge, ie moving to her right, but the defending back moves up immediately behind and to the left of the half which limits the forward movement of the attacker. She cannot run through an opponent – she must move around. This gives the defending back the opportunity to gain possession and pass the ball away from the circle. This is also penalised for one player running interference for another, subject to ball speed, and distance concerned. Many players attempt to force an obstruction by pushing the ball past a defender, then running around/through them. Unless the attacker has a realistic chance of regaining the ball, and the defender has moved into their clear path, then no penalty should be awarded.

Short Corner:

Why do Umpires blow their whistles?

So they can catch up!

