



Hockey: *Hockey Australia*

'Hockey Australia is committed to the highest level standards of competition, coaching and technical support and opportunity for participation'.¹

The history of the game

Hockey is believed to be one of the oldest sports in the world. Hockey-like games involving sticks and balls and known as 'paganica' (Romans), 'hurling' (Irish) and 'shinty' (Scots) have been played for thousands of years.²

Hockey is now played on every continent, with 114 nations affiliated with the International Hockey Federation (FIH). FIH conducts major world tournaments and oversees the activities of the five continental federations who conduct regular qualifying tournaments through which national teams can progress to compete in events such as: the Olympic Games, the World Cup, the Champions Trophy and the Commonwealth Games.

Hockey is a sport that can be played by people of all ages and all levels of ability as a healthy and social activity. The achievements of Australia's national men's and women's teams (the Kookaburras and Hockeyroos) have made the game one of Australia's most prominent non-professional sports. This is never truer than in an Olympic Games year, when hockey's public profile blooms and its media coverage escalates.

History of hockey in Australia

The British Army has been credited with the spread of hockey throughout the world, but in Australia's case, the British Navy deserves the honours. In the late 1800s, the British Naval officers stationed in Australia taught the locals the game of hockey and laid the foundations for the sport.³

The South Australian Hockey Association was formed in 1903, while Victoria and New South Wales formed their own associations in 1906. Clubs sprang up in Melbourne and Sydney and hockey rapidly became an established sport in Australia.

The Australian (Men's) Hockey Association came into being in 1925, while the Australian Women's Hockey Association formed in 1940 and affiliated with the All England Women's Hockey Association. Australia was made a member of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) in the same year.

Hockey Australia

Hockey Australia is the national body responsible for the leadership, management, development and promotion of the sport of hockey at all levels throughout Australia.

Its vision is for the sport to be 'accessible to all Australians, that is well run and managed at all levels so that participants have the opportunity to pursue their best and be an integral member of the hockey community'.⁴

The organisation, formed in November 2000 following the amalgamation of the Australian Hockey Association and Women's Hockey Australia, is a full member of the International Hockey Federation (FIH). It comprises membership of all eight states and territories, who administer the sport within their jurisdiction. Each state association is comprised of regional associations, which in turn are made up of clubs. In some states, clubs affiliate directly with the state body.

While the hockey season at club level is held during winter, competitions are contested year-round, both in its traditional outdoor setting and as a modified indoors game. The Australia Hockey League (AHL) is the most prestigious domestic hockey competition within Australia, while national championships offer opportunities for inter-state competition. An indoor national championship is also played. At the club level, Hockey is a well-established sport in regional and metropolitan Australia.

At the junior level, both clubs and schools embrace modified entry level programs such as 'Minkey', 'Hook in2 Hockey' and 'Half field'. These offer opportunities for children and adolescents to learn and enjoy hockey and fulfill their potential in the game.

The AIS Hockey Unit, established in Perth in 1984, has also been a significant factor in the game's development and innovation, particularly at the elite level, and has contributed to the impressive record of its mens teams.

Increasing participation

While hockey is one of Australia's prominent national sports, Hockey Australia understands the need to develop strategic planning and information systems in order to implement long-term programs for the enhancement of the game.

As such, Hockey Australia commissioned Street Ryan and Associates (who also conduct an annual census for the AFL and Cricket Australia) to conduct the first national hockey census in 2004, which was repeated in 2005. The census will be an increasingly important information system for game development, setting targets, and monitoring successes and trends for the long-term enhancement of hockey in Australia.

The census was compiled with the cooperative efforts of Hockey Australia, the state and territory affiliates, as well as many clubs and associations. These organisations helped in recording, and/or estimating the number of programs, teams and registered players within their state/territory for each hockey program area: club hockey (encompassing junior, youth, senior and veterans classifications); school hockey (encompassing primary and secondary schools); modified programs (including 'Minkey'), and; summer and indoor hockey.

The census only includes formal participants in organised competitions and programs. It does not include hockey matches or competitions arranged by organisations other than hockey clubs, associations, or schools, nor does it include participants in social/informal hockey activities.

The census does not record the number of Indigenous participants nor those from a cultural or linguistically diverse background. However, Hockey Australia's Operational Plan states one of its aims is to: 'determine a method of recording Indigenous participation to club

involvement’⁵. Perhaps when this is resolved, the information can be included in the annual census to assist to the organisation to develop strategies and programs for these groups.

At a state level, the Hockey Queensland Remote and Indigenous program has tried to accumulate as much relevant data on skill-based participation, education and training and community assistance as accurately as possible.⁶

Who plays hockey?

Hockey Australia has 106,623 registered players from 808 hockey clubs across the nation.

The 2005 Australian Hockey Census produced in November that year, reveals that there were 177,127 participants in regular Australian hockey competitions and programs. In 2005 there were:

- 93,617 participants in winter club hockey competitions,
- 15,505 participants in summer club competitions,
- 9,068 club participants in indoor hockey,
- 47,794 participants in school hockey,
- 11,143 participants in modified programs, including: *Minkey*, *Hook in2 Hockey*, and half field hockey.⁷

	CLUB HOCKEY			School hockey	Modified programs	Total
	Winter competition	Summer competition	Indoor hockey			
Australian Capital Territory	2,935	432	935	733	660	5,695
New South Wales	33,209	4,235	3,156	16,765	1,434	58,799
Northern Territory	720	1,423	0	0	97	2,240
Queensland	13,697	1,500	500	6,844	2,607	25,148
South Australia	8,138	4,100	490	3,960	1,324	18,012
Tasmania	3,253	1,159	0	1,788	1,218	7,418
Victoria	16,685	1,658	1,442	14,038	1,103	34,926
Western Australia	14,980	998	2,545	3,666	2,700	24,889
Total	93,617	15,505	9,068	47,794	11,143	177,127

Note: Any differences between the sum of each column and row and the stated total are due to rounding.

There were an estimated 7,713 winter hockey club teams in 2005 in Australia, of which:

- 3,372 (or 43.7%) were senior teams,
- 3,917 (or 50.8%) were junior teams,
- 424 (or 5.5%) were veterans teams,
- 3,936 teams (or 51.0%) were male teams,
- 4,323 teams (or 56.0%) were in country regions.⁸

Game development

The objectives of Hockey Australia's Game Development Team are based on recognition (creating awareness and opportunities to participate), recruitment and retention.

While youth development is obviously a key focus, the development team have identified several initiatives within Indigenous and Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) populations to be undertaken during 2006-07, which are outlined in the Operational Plan.

The team plans to 'explore opportunities to target Indigenous populations'⁹ and to 'establish links between clubs/associations and Indigenous communities'.¹⁰

They also plan to: 'explore opportunities to target Culturally and Linguistically Diverse populations'. To do this, they aim to 'target groups from 'traditional' hockey playing nations' and 'establish links between clubs/associations and CLD communities'.¹¹

Hockey Australia's Manager - Game Development, Brendan Denning, said: "These action statements obviously require a more detailed level of planning and analysis, which will occur during the next 12 months as part of our increasing participation strategies".¹²

This report will outline work currently being undertaken in these areas, but first it will focus on Hockey Australia's new program to introduce people to the game.

Hook in2 Hockey

Hook in2 Hockey is Hockey Australia's new Targeted Sport Participation Growth Program, which is run in partnership with the Australian Sports Commission.

Hook in2 Hockey replaces its predecessor *Take It On!* and is designed to be a safe and fun introduction to hockey. The program incorporates the 'Game Sense' approach to learning, which involves participants learning how to play hockey by being involved in small-sided games that replicate the skills and tactics used during a game of hockey.

Hook in2 Hockey can be run over six to eight sessions. The last session is known as the 'Carnival', where the group is split into small teams and a round-robin event is held. The focus of this session is on maximum participation and fun for all those involved.

In addition to the coaching sessions, participants receive a Just Hockey 'Equipment Kit' consisting of a hockey stick, shin-pads and a ball. *Hook in2 Hockey* generates an income for a club or association as they retain a part of each participant's program fee.

Each club or association involved in *Hook in2 Hockey* receives a number of resources designed to allow them to run a successful program, these include: a step-by-step guide of how to conduct a program; promotional resources; leaders apparel and leaders Just Hockey 'Program Pack'.

Olympic gold medallists Angie Skirving (Hockeyroos) and Liam de Young (Kookaburras) are the official program ambassadors. Their role is to promote *Hook in2 Hockey* through personal appearances and promotions. Each state/territory also has a part-time *Hook in2 Hockey* Community Officer whose role is to promote the program to hockey clubs and associations.¹³



The program is proving highly successful with over 11,143 participants in the modified programs (including *Minkey*, *Hook in2 Hockey* and *Half Field*) in 2005.¹⁴

Indigenous Sports Program

The most famous Indigenous hockey player would have to be Nova Peris. She was the first Aboriginal athlete to win an Olympic gold medal, as part of the Australian women's hockey team in Atlanta in 1996. She also won two gold medals at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur in 1998, in the 200 metres and the 4x100-metre relay. Hockey Australia is working hard to unearth more 'Nova Peris' through their dedicated Indigenous programs.

Most states and territories continue to participate in the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) funded Indigenous Sports Program (ISP). Under this program Hockey Australia has achieved:

- an increased number of Indigenous Australians participating in hockey activities,
- an increasing number of accredited coaches and officials,
- an increase in the awareness of cultural diversity of Indigenous Australians among non-Indigenous sports administrators, and
- assistance to Indigenous clubs and sporting organisations to coordinate their services and programs.

In addition, the ASC's Indigenous Sporting Excellence Scheme (ISES) scholarships provide Indigenous sportspeople the opportunity to improve their sporting performance and assist them to reach an elite level. In 2004–05, of the scholarships provided by the ASC across all sports, there were seven hockey recipients.¹⁵

Hockey Australia's Brendan Denning stated in the 2004–05 Annual Report: "There is always more that can be done in some areas to ensure hockey is made more accessible to the communities. A majority of the participating states at the very least now have a foundation to build upon, and will be striving to ensure successful programs in the near future".¹⁶

Details of some of the latest Indigenous projects in Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory are outlined below.

Hockey Queensland

In 2000–01, as part of their development plan, Hockey Queensland established a committee to plan, manage, administer and implement programs to provide opportunities for the people in remote and Indigenous communities within Queensland.

Introducing hockey into isolated communities in far north Queensland was a huge challenge for the organisation; sport and recreation opportunities are limited in these regions and many children had not even heard of hockey, let alone knew how to play the game.

The Remote and Indigenous Communities Hockey Program came about as a result of Hockey Queensland staff identifying the lack of knowledge of the sport in the Gulf of Carpentaria and Cape York regions, and the enormous growth potential that this presented. The project was made possible thanks to special initiative funding provided under the Queensland Government's State Development Program, which is administered by Sport and Recreation Queensland.

The program aims to assist communities to create self-sustaining participation and competition opportunities and provide flexibility when required to modify competition structures to meet local needs.

The project team thought it best to link the introduction of hockey with existing sporting events in the region. They first arrived in the Gulf region with sticks and balls in hand for an introductory skills session during a regional schools basketball carnival at Kurumba. The links with events such as this have continued to grow as part of an eight-week annual development program, covering everything from participation initiatives in schools to providing education and training for prospective coaches.¹⁷

Projects are conducted throughout three regions: the Lockhart River Community – Northern Cape York; Mornington Island, Doomadgee and Normanton in the Gulf Savannah, and; the Palm Island Community – North Queensland.

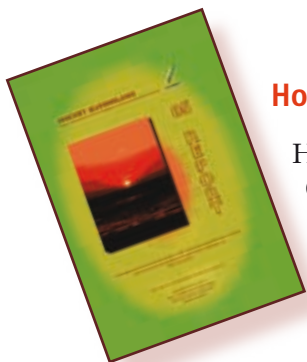
Coaching and officiating accreditation courses are delivered to each community. Skills clinics and squad training are also conducted by visiting development officers and links have been established with competitions, including: the annual Croc Festival at Cooktown, the Coral Sea Classic in Cairns, the Palm Island Hockey Cup Interschool Competition and the Karumba Hockey Festival. Hockey Art clinics are also conducted where hockey and local culture combine with hockey equipment being painted to reflect the culture of the community.¹⁸

Hockey Queensland approached the challenge by involving entire communities to gain acceptance for what they were doing. Gaining approval and support from Elders, parents and school teachers has been critical to the success of the project.

Hockey Queensland believes working closely with the local people from the ‘target’ communities is the key to the success of initiatives such as the Remote and Indigenous Communities Hockey Program. Following up on any promises that are made during this ‘integrated planning approach’ is vital, as is laying foundations which contributes to long-term sustainability. One vital consideration is to develop locally based coaches and administrators who can take over the management of development programs after they are up and running. Perhaps most importantly, persistence in the face of the many obstacles that arise is paramount to successfully implementing programs such as this.

The North Queensland Remote and Indigenous Hockey Development Program Manager Julie McNeil said: “We’re not just about showing the locals what hockey is and then going home. Getting them interested is one thing, but the main thing is working with the communities to ensure hockey can become sustainable over the long term”.¹⁹

During the course of 2006, the Hockey Queensland Remote and Indigenous program will continue to travel to various centres and conduct coaching accreditation courses, coaching clinics, umpiring clinics and representative team squad trainings.



Hockey Art

Hockey Art is an initiative of Hockey Queensland, run in conjunction with its North Queensland Remote and Indigenous Hockey Program. It aims to encourage community involvement and offer opportunities to expand horizons of thought, self awareness and self development through hockey, art, education and player development.

By combining culture, sport and art it is hoped that young people in Cape York Peninsula and the Gulf of Carpentaria Indigenous communities will feel more at ease when they take part in Hockey Queensland talent development clinics.

A number of these 'message sticks' are already on display internationally following presentations made by Hockey Queensland to organisations such as the Federation of International Hockey Council and the Beijing Institute of Sport.

"Through hockey, we have not only given children and adults the opportunity to try a new sport, we have also helped promote positive lifestyles and provided a new avenue for self-development," Ms McNeil said.

The program is made possible through the support of the Queensland Government, the Australian Sports Commission, Education Queensland, Sport and Recreation Queensland, ATSIC, Hockey Australia and Take it On.²⁰

Northern Territory Hockey

The Northern Territory Hockey Association Indigenous Sporting Development Program encourages all levels of the community to be involved in the sport. Through the assistance of Indigenous Ambassadors, the communities are able to learn the game in a structured, progressive environment.

Community Ambassadors are given the opportunity to continue on the development of hockey in their communities between visits from the development officer and Indigenous Ambassadors so they can run their own skills clinics and small competitions. Resources and equipment are updated in each community to ensure they are equipped to conduct their own activities.

The '*Hockey on the River*' program has been very successful within the Daly River Community. The main Daly River and Adelaide River communities are visited four times per year, and the outlying community of Pepperminarti is visited three times, to identify and educate community leaders. Hockey NT offers children from these communities the opportunity to attend Australian Hockey League games in Darwin, as well as a chance to compete in the NT Junior State Championships, either as a complete team or combined with a Darwin club.

Indigenous Ambassadors accompany the Development Officer to the Nhulunbuy region three times a year, with different communities visited each time. Community Ambassador training is provided to leaders identified in each community in an attempt to better service the region.

Young Indigenous hockey players, coaches and umpires are targeted under the Indigenous Ambassador Education Program to continue along the designated coaching and officiating accreditation pathways. These people coach and develop players within the communities and run programs in Darwin to aid the development of the identified community leaders. A Community Ambassador Workshop also identified leaders from each community to come to Darwin and interact with the hockey community.²¹

Hockey Western Australia

Hockey WA has introduced hockey to the Indigenous community throughout Western Australia through its Junior Recruitment Program and existing development structure.

Initially Broome (in the Kimberley region) was targeted, followed by neighbouring Derby, to allow for expansion of the program to include an inter-town competition.

Existing Development Officers in the Midwest, Southwest, Peel, Upper Great Southern, and Lower Great Southern regions also conducted school clinics at Indigenous schools or schools with a high percentage of Indigenous students within their respective regions.

In addition to the Indigenous support offered by the WA Department of Sport and Recreation, Hockey WA has established a partnership with Garnduwa Development Officers as a result of school promotional clinics conducted in Broome in June 2005.²²

Hockey South Australia

The Hockey SA Indigenous Sporting Program employs three full-time Development Officers to deliver a structured introduction to hockey to children in the rural and remote areas of South Australia. The program includes the development of Indigenous children/athletes either as a specific group or through classes at local schools.

The programs are mainly delivered in the Eyre Peninsula, Riverland and the Barossa Valley regions, and hockey skills and games at the annual CrocFest in Port Augusta.²³

'We're all playing on the same team' – Living in Harmony project

In 2006, Hockey Queensland received funding to conduct a *Living in Harmony* project from the Australian Government to promote community harmony at the local level.

The resulting Remote and Indigenous Hockey Program Harmony Day Project encouraged the hockey community to play a positive role to address issues of racism in the community, and promote community harmony between people and groups from different cultural, racial, religious or social backgrounds.

Five hockey associations registered to participate in the 2006 Harmony Day celebrations, including Mackay, Brisbane Women, Rockhampton, Cairns and the Gulf Sport and Recreation Association. As part of the Harmony Day celebrations, each association was invited to create a banner illustrating the central themes to Harmony Day, such as tolerance and teamwork.

Participants were also invited to enter a DVD competition, which featured their association showing their involvement in, and celebration of, Harmony Day. School students were also invited to take part in a Hockey Art competition.

Hockey Queensland also asked young hockey players to contribute their thoughts on Hockey Queensland's existing racial discrimination and vilification policy, to give young people a chance to voice their opinions on policies that directly affect them in their everyday life.²⁴

'Play the Whistle'

'*Play the Whistle*' is a new initiative aimed at encouraging competing hockey teams to play in the spirit of the game. This means demonstrating behavior outlined in the codes of behaviour set out by Hockey Australia (see below).

Teams that demonstrate the spirit of hockey are rewarded with points corresponding to their degree of fair play at the end of each match. These points are allocated by the umpires and technical officials and recorded on the match report. An award is given to the team with the highest number of points accumulated at the end of the championship.

This initiative is being phased in over several years, starting in the Australian Hockey League and filtering down to club competitions. During 2005, all national championships successfully conducted the award, and there were many examples of the concept being used in local competitions.²⁵

Codes of behaviour

Hockey Australia has implemented a Member Protection Policy to help protect the hockey community from harassment and abuse. The policy provides guidelines on what is expected of them under the codes of behaviour. These codes encompass players, coaches, managers, team officials and spectators. Under the policy:

Racial harassment is defined as 'harassment based on colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, cultural activity and sometimes religion'. Examples in the policy include:

- jokes in which race is a significant characteristic of the 'butt' of the joke;
- hostile comments about food eaten, dress or religious or cultural practices;
- inferences that all members of a racial or cultural group have particular negative characteristics, such as laziness, drunkenness, greed or sexual promiscuity;
- parodying accents.²⁶

Vilification involves 'a person inciting hatred towards, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of, a person or group of persons on the basis of race or religion by public act. Public acts that may amount to vilification include any form of communication to the public and any conduct observable by the public'. The policy states that 'racial, religious or other forms of vilification are breaches of this policy'.²⁷

Discrimination is defined as 'treating or proposing to treat a person less favourably than someone else in certain areas of public life on the basis of an attribute or personal characteristic they have' including because of 'a person's race or religious belief/activity'.²⁸

The players code stipulates to 'treat all players with respect at all times' and to 'refrain from using obscene, offensive or insulting language and/or making obscene gestures which may insult other players, officials or spectators'.²⁹ The code also outlines that players must adhere to Hockey Australia's racial vilification policy in its Member Protection Policy (which covers racial vilification, harassment and discrimination).

The spectators code of conduct outlines that fans must: 'lead by example and respect all players, coaches, umpires and fellow spectators - physical or verbal abuse will not be tolerated' and 'display appropriate social behaviour by not using profane, demeaning or derogatory language, or harassing players, coaches, officials or other spectators'.³⁰

The code states that 'behaviour or conduct that is discrimination under any federal or state legislation is also discrimination for the purposes of this Policy'.³¹

The policy sets out the procedures to be followed in dealing with harassment and other forms of inappropriate behaviour in an effective, appropriate and timely manner. The policy provides a procedure for informal and formal resolution of complaints, the services of a Member Protection Officer throughout the complaint and a procedure for the appeal of such complaints.

Hockey Australia has advised that their 'soon to be revised' edition will include some 'stronger' policy statements.

Club development network

For these codes and policies to have effect at the club level Hockey Australia needs to ensure that they are disseminated effectively.

The 2005 Australian Hockey Census was particularly useful in this regard, highlighting its members/clubs most preferred type of delivery of this information. The census shows that 65 per cent of clubs prefer written information, followed by CD/DVD (54 per cent) and website information (52 per cent). Templates and seminars were the least preferred delivery method (31 and 38 per cent respectively).³²

This indicates that Hockey Australia is on the right track in the way it provides this information, as the policies are distributed in hard copy by officials and are available on their website and promoted through the Club Development Network run by the ASC.

Endnotes

¹ Hockey Australia *Operational Plan*.

² <http://www.hockey.org.au/hina/history.html>.

³ <http://www.hockey.org.au/hina/history.html>.

⁴ <http://www.hockey.org.au/hina/ha.html>.

⁵ Hockey Australia *Operational Plan*.

⁶ Hockey Queensland *North Queensland Remote and Indigenous Hockey Development Program Report 2005*.

⁷ 2005 *Australian Hockey Census*.

⁸ 2005 *Australian Hockey Census*.

⁹ Hockey Australia *Operational Plan*.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Email from Brendan Denning, 5 July 2005.

¹³ ASC's Targeted Sport Participation Growth Program - Hockey at www.ausport.org.au.

¹⁴ 2005 *Hockey Australia Census*.

¹⁵ Hockey Australia *Annual Report 2004-05* at http://www.hockey.org.au/images/nonpublic/HA_Annual_Report_2004_5.pdf.

¹⁶ Hockey Australia *Indigenous Sporting Development Program 2004-05*.

¹⁷ Hockey Queensland *North Queensland Remote and Indigenous Hockey Development Program Report 2005*.

¹⁸ Hockey Queensland *North Queensland Remote and Indigenous Hockey Development Program Report 2005*.

¹⁹ http://www.hockeyqld.com.au/specialProjects/remote_indigenous/HockeyProvesaHitintheGulf.

²⁰ Hockey Queensland *North Queensland Remote and Indigenous Hockey Development Program Report 2005*.

²¹ Hockey Australia *Indigenous Sporting Development Program Annual Report 2004-05*.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Hockey Queensland Harmony Day media release.

²⁵ Hockey Australia *Annual Report 2004-05* at http://www.hockey.org.au/images/nonpublic/HA_Annual_Report_2004_5.pdf.

²⁶ Hockey Australia Member Protection Policy Clause 8.7 and 8.8. P8.

²⁷ *Ibid.* P8.

²⁸ *Ibid.* P10.

²⁹ Hockey Australia players code of conduct.

³⁰ *Ibid.* P34.

³¹ *Ibid.* P10.

³² Hockey Australia *Census 2005* Figure 3.3. P16.