

# JUNIOR'S REPORT

## Overview

Season 2022 has really been my first proper season as Junior Director. It has been a really interesting year, and losing the last two years of hockey has really been on show across all of our grades.

We've had kids start full field Under 14 Shield with only 10 games of Under 12's under their belt from last year.. We've had to re-learn our basic skills, right the way down to how our Under 8 and Under 10 programs are structured. We have been trying to balance Premier League club expectations, with learning how to play hockey again - and really - learning how to be around people again!

But I truly mean it when I say that watching the kids play on the weekends is one of my most favorite parts of this job. And you can see the improvement across all of the age groups.

The Come and Try program stated the year of strong, as Nicole says every year "It was our biggest year yet"

We have had a huge year of rep hockey with solid numbers of athletes selected in the Hockey Victoria Academy programs. We have had wonderful representation across Hockey Victoria teams and School Sports Victoria teams.

To start us off, Angus Lee has been selected in the Under 16 Boys Hockey Club Melbourne team.

Evelyn Boyle selected for the Under 16 SSV team with Angus selected as an emergency for the boys.

We had 7 athletes selected for the U15 nationals, Zoe Brown, Jaime Lam, Renee Mcalinden, Angus Le, Lachlan Toussaint, Sebastian Dabner and Jye Walters.

6 young athletes were selected in the 12 and Under School Sports Victoria team - Freya Hudson, Sage Toussaint, Hannah Mannix, Adi Sanders and Max Dolance with Emmy Wynn as an Emergency for the girls.

We had 7 athletes who have been selected for the Under 13 nationals - Ruby Gorton, Zoey Sykes, Jack Tamblyn, Renee Brown, Audrey Boyle, Charlie Hill and CJ Wickson.

The following athletes have been selected in the Victorian State Indoor teams who will compete in Queensland in 2023 - Angus Lee, Lachlan Toussaint, Ruby Gorton & Zoey Sykes with Jaime Lam as an emergency.

We had almost record numbers selected in Wildcats teams for the State Championships, 45 FHC athletes - and I am super keen to build on that next year.

The year wrapped up with 4 of our teams making finals and one narrowly missing out on goal difference.

Shoot outs were our enemy this year and I think all coaches have them at the front of their minds for next season!

U12 girls made it to the big dance and were toe to toe with Brunswick all game, only going down in sudden death shootouts. A huge effort and such wonderful composure from a team of athletes that range from 10 to 12 years old, lots of which are in their first year of full field hockey.

The year has ended with the introduction of the Western Elite Hockey Academy. Many thanks to Andrew Boyle, Dan Mitchell and all the coaches who have come together to improve our elite junior's skills and game play!

## **Acknowledgements**

Finally many thanks to:

- The FHC board
- The amazing Junior Coaches - the kids all adore you.
- The two people with the biggest workload, my Under 8 coordinator Erin and the Under 10 coordinator Kylie.
- The wonderful Team Managers
- The umpires that I beg every week and to my permanent umpires who followed their teams around the city for games
  - Charlie Keating
  - Ned Graham
  - Hunnar Sandhu
  - Elliott Thompson
  - Nikita Dhar
- Sally for her work in the canteen and Russ Wickson for just saying yes on a Thursday night when I can't be there.
- Absolutely everyone who I have tapped on the shoulder this year

And finally to my husband Dave and my daughter Adi, who just nod and smile and don't question my late training nights, endless board meetings, phone calls or late Friday nights when I get caught up watching games.

**Mel Sanders**

**Juniors Director**

