



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Footscray Hockey Club Inc.

Mclvor Reserve, Fogarty Avenue, Yarraville VIC 3013

footscrayhockey.com.au



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Another eventful year on and off the pitch at the kennel for our 90th year. The cut from 16 Premier League teams to 12 teams provided a challenge for our Men & Women to ensure that we remained competitive and held the grade which was achieved. The most outstanding on field achievement was the 4 shield premierships won by the junior section, a feat not achieved in Hockey Victoria history by any junior club.

The League and Shield teams would not have been able to succeed without the huge depth we have at Footscray Hockey Club and all our reserves, pennant, metro, district and masters grades are just as important and achieved outstanding results in their own right. FHC was selected as an U8 and U10 Hockey Hub venue in a new Hockey 5's based program, a huge success for our younger members. A notable mention to Men's Metro 1, who always have a September appearance, winning the flag again, the flag dedicated to Life Member Harry Swan, who sadly passed away this year.

Off field we aimed to ensure operations, events and projects were set up for success for the year and although we had budgeted for a loss, the final financial position was better than expected. Hockey Victoria cancelled a Kings Birthday Weekend tournament at late notice, the loss of a men's team and masters team impacted ground hire revenue and canteen sales. Although our membership numbers were strong as compared to other grades, we picked up many part time players and younger age group juniors.

Key Highlights:

- Celebrated Footscray Hockey Club's 90th year
- 2024 membership 592, (2019 602, 2022 630, 2023 600)
- West Gate Tunnel Project Grant 102k Spent: new scoreboard, grandstand seating and junior GK helmets
- Maribyrnong Council Project: LED lighting design stage - completed, waiting for funding
- Hosted Stand Out Cup tournament
- Met the 2024 Premier League Entry Criteria
- Record junior representation in Western Wildcats, HV Academy, Victorian State Teams
- Successful Inclusion Rounds NAIDOC, Men's Health Round, Women's Round, Pride Round, Men's Mental Health Round
- Social events Trivia Night, Ipod Shuffle Night, Drag Bingo
- 6 senior teams in finals, 5 junior teams in finals, 5 premierships flags, 1 runners up flag
- Expansion of volunteerism and volunteer sub-committees
- Best year to date for grant and sponsorship income to the club
- Held Premier League in the Men's section
- The FHC Summer Mixed competition - maxed out at 12 teams for the first time

2025 Plan

Looking ahead to 2054 the board will be working on the following projects:

- Ensuring our membership numbers match or exceeds 2024
- Continuing to review our success against the strategic plan 2023 - 2026
- Conscious board decision for NO increase to the 2025 fees due to the cost of living pressures and investigating other revenue sources to cover the rising costs of hockey fees, umpires and running the club
- Introduction of an additional 7th Men's team and an U18 junior team
- Launching the new uniform across all full fiend teams
- Establishing sub-committees and increasing volunteerism across all areas of the club
- Negotiating Council Lease Agreement and commencing plans for the ASF pitch replacement
- Fulfilling 2025 League Entry Criteria (including finishing top 10 in PL for Men and Women)
- Continued focus on Come and Try and delivery of HV U8 and U10 junior program
- Delivering the Stand Out Cup and Junior State Championships Tournaments

I wish to thank all the Board members for their many countless hours of dedication to the Club that we all love and aim to promote for the benefit of all members. Your time and energy are appreciated by me as Chairperson and by all the members. Thank you to all the coaches, team managers, coordinators, canteen volunteers and every single person who contributed to the betterment of the club.

I'd like to particularly give a shout out to Rod Fuentes for his continued support and efforts in the role of 'General Secretary', Rod is not continuing in the role, however he has advanced the club's social media platforms and internal documentation and processes. His skills in graphic design and the social media space have been unmatched and we are grateful that Rod will continue to head up the Social Media sub committee. Thank you also to Karen Johnstone for your support with the finances and to Sally Walsh our canteen manager for your continued work and all the extra hours you volunteer on top of your role.

All the best for the festive season and we hope to see everyone's smiling faces in 2025.

Nicole Virtuoso
President

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Throughout the 2024 season, it was fantastic to see our off-field endeavours continue to increase and build awareness. In particular, the celebrations around our 90th season. A key highlight of the year was the Stand Out Cup that was hosted at FHC this year. Plus, the work our committee members put in to delivering on our annual Indigenous Round Family Event, Women's & Girls Round, Men's Health Round and Pride Round.

Stand Out Cup

Footscray was fortunate enough to be selected to host the 2024 Stand Out Cup earlier this year, an amazing initiative to showcasing unwavering support for the LGBTIQ+ community. This year's event boasted the highest number of team (51) and the largest attendance (400+) ever, creating an amazing atmosphere. FHC is set to host 2025 Stand Out Cup on Sunday, February 23. We look forward to another successful event.

Indigenous Round Family Day 2024

Another huge year for our fourth annual Indigenous Round Family Day! It was wonderful to see the day was well received by not only our hockey community but with our immediate local community. It was also great to the the Premier League games live streamed. A huge thank you Emma Robinson and Gabby Minett who lead and organised the committee, their contributions to the day and to everyone who attended the event to make it so successful. We also acknowledge and appreciate the First Nations People and Businesses who contributed to the day.

Social Media

Thank you to everyone involved in the social media team and, in particular, Nicole Virtuoso, Cindy Blay, and Rick Wiseman for their work in creating social media content to share with our members.

Looking ahead to 2025, we are on the lookout for volunteers to assist in capturing and creating new content for the club.

Acknowledgments

I'd like to acknowledge and thank all the sub-committee members for providing their time and efforts. Without our valued volunteers, our activities would not be as successful as they are. Thanks to Cindy Blay, Emma Robinson, Gabby Minett, Andrew Boyle, Rodney Johnston, Karen Johnston, Renee Boyle, Lisa Walters, Jye Walters, Andrew Wiseman, Greg Hopkins, & Amanda Braiden

What's happening in 2025?

We have such an exciting 2025 planned! We have the following events to look forward to, plus much more!

- Stand Out Cup – Sunday 23rd February
- Women & Girl's Round – Monday 5th May – Sunday 11th May
- Pride Round – Monday 16th June – Sunday 22nd June
- Indigenous Round (NAIDOC Family Day) – Monday 14th July – Sunday 27th July
- Men's Health Round – Monday 11th August – Sunday 17th August

If anyone would like to be involved in these events, inclusion or communications, please get in touch. Volunteering is the lifeblood of local sporting clubs, and we would love to have as many members as possible, not only in events but in all sections of the club.

Rod Fuentes
General Secretary

WOMEN'S DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Summary

The aim of the 2024 season was to rebuild in every grade while fielding 8 teams successfully, and that we did. Although only 3 teams in finals, all Semi Finalists, we hope to build in the coming years to see some more September action. The return, recruitment and the welcoming of many new members to the pre-season certainly was exciting for the pending season.

Alex Shirley in his third year of coaching a full season, powered away in developing the team and squad with many new faces. Harry Zac as a trusty team manager (definitely dressed in bright colours for the inclusion rounds) was of course behind the girls with gusto. A rebuild and development year for Reserves and Premier League with 7 junior debuts and one with 1 game under her belt in the Premier League Team and 5 junior debuts in Reserves! PL and RES fielded the youngest average aged teams since entering the league competitions 12 years ago – how is that for a bright future. Both teams were competitive and in finals contention throughout the entire season.

Premier League were consistent in their competition, after a turnover of experienced players and influx of younger players. They sat in the top 6 for 21 rounds, just missing finals only finding themselves in 7th spot after the last game of the season however this team exceeded expectations with such a young developing list. With Phil Frost's most welcomed return to the helm of RES and Amanda Braiden as the team manager the team finished 5th and bowed out in the first elimination final.

Congratulations to Steph Thompson who was a finalist for Umpire of the Year at the Hockey Victoria Awards evening. Alannah Hibbard in the Hockey Club Melbourne Squad, Rosie Villagra is representing Adelaide Fire as one of their internationals in the Hockey One National Tournament. Laura Milford represented Victoria in the U21s, Jaime Lam in the U18s, Ruby Gorton, Erika Digney & Mai Lorenzen in the U16s and Freya Hudson, Hannah Mannix and Matilda Gorton in the U14's. The U17 Hockey Club Melbourne Futures Squad Jaime Lam, Ruby Gorton and train on Mai Lorenzen. We have a stream of young state players coming through and multitudes more knocking on the door right behind them, together with our valued senior members – our future looks extremely bright.

Tahlya Sleep led Pennant A 4th (Semi Finalists). Julian Pratt coached Pennant B in a solid year finishing 5th, Pennant C led by Hadyn Darrah 6th, Pennant D coached by Rodney Johnstone 7th, Helen Morton led PE finishing 7th, Metro 1 finished 4th and bowed out of the semi finals in shootouts 4 - 3.

Since being a Premier League Club, we have been close in donning the highest goal scorer in the competition. This year it was achieved by Monica Singh attaining the highest goal scorer in the whole Reserves Competition and Nicole Virtuoso highest goal scorer for Pennant A competition. Congratulations and they would both like to thank the entire team for creating such goal scoring opportunities.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to all those who contributed to the administration support and social support. Karen Johnstone, Angela Thompson, Sue Milford, Rick Wiseman, Heather Shaw, Amanda Bradfield, Amanda Braiden, Liam Braithwaite, Cindy Blay and Lynda Thomas.

Thank you to our terrific team managers, Harry Zac PL, Amanda Braiden RES, Molly Feble Stevenson, Christy Jeromson PB, Nicola Erasito PC, Warren Ward PD, Scarlett Fitzpatrick PE, Sharon Pollard M1.

Thanks to our sponsors who have committed, we hope you are back on board in 2025.

Looking Ahead

We look forward to next season, consolidating the 2024 results and striving for better results in 2025.

Thanks again to everyone, have a great 2024 festive season.

Nicole Virtuoso
Women's Director

MEN'S DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Summary

The Men's section reduced our presence across the grades for the 2024, for the second year in a row, fielding 6 teams instead of the 7 we have had in previous years. Every team held the grade which was a focus to ensure the success of the club. Whilst the injection of young talent continued to grow, we had stable and strong senior players continue to drive improvement and build on the culture the Men's section had set out to achieve.

From a performance perspective every team held their grade which was pleasing, the key highlights were the Metro 1 team going for their 'threepeat' back to back to back in winning flags (their 4th premiership in total), and our PB team making the finals, semifinalists.

Premier League, coached by Mitty (Dan Mitchell) in his third year at the helm made significant inroads to developing our own home grown players within the squad. Coupled by his junior development role for both junior boys and girls, is able to create a long term plan for the success of the men's section. PL finished 9th and it came down to the last 6 rounds to ensure survival, Assistant Coach Paul Schram and Team Manager David Braiden.

The Reserves team were very competitive the whole season, although finishing 12th this did not reflect the improvement by the squad. Reserves was coached by JT (Jordan Tamblyn), Assistant Tung Le, Team Manager Paul Jones. Premier League team

Pennant A finished 8th under coach Mitch Ryan , Pennant B 4th and bowed out in Semi Finals under the keen eye of Hadyn Shaw, Pennant D 5th with Chris Hyslop taking the helm, Metro 1 finished 1st under Anthony Santoro and were the Major and Minor Premiers of the competition, coming away with the only senior flag for the club!

Congratulations to Oscar Allan for being awarded a PL All Stars Medal at the Hockey Vic Awards. U18 reps David Linert, Baden Jones, Lachlan Toussaint, Angus Le, Ashton Schram. U16 reps Lachlan Toussaint, Ashton Schram, Jack Tamblyn, Tom Templeton, Charlie Gunn, Mason Sutton, Seb Dabner, Will Buckland. U17 HCM Futures Angus Le, Ashton Schram, Baden Jones, Charlie Gunn, Charlie Keating, Lachlan Toussaint with Train Ons Emerson Marshall, Jack Tamblyn, Sebastian Dabner.

Whilst not all the U14 reps play seniors yet, would like to acknowledge Hayden Bourne, Max Dolence, Jake Robillard, Archer Sutton, Jacob Young, Felix Brophy, Will Burch, Jake D'Agostino

The future looks bright in the Men's section and we appreciate every single senior player who contributes and continues to put in every year.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to all those who contributed to the administration support and social support. Karen Johnstone, Sam Cutrale, Sue Milford, Rick Wiseman, Heather Shaw, Chris Henderson, Liam Braithwaite and Amanda Braiden. Thank you to the men's section team managers Graeme Veitch, Adrian Randal, John Mason, Lisa Walters, Paul Jones and David Braiden.

Thanks to our sponsors who have committed, we hope you are back on board in 2025.

2025 – The Year Ahead

Into 2025 we are working towards consolidating player numbers and looking to recruit to enter a 7th team back into the competition.

Our recruitment campaign for 2025 is well under way. We're also excited about the prospect of what the 'home grown' youth element of the Men's section look to be promising for the future, exciting times ahead without a doubt for the Men's section.

We're on the lookout for support in some 'sub committee' areas of the Men's section. If you're interested in supporting on the administration side of areas such as: selected team announcements, chairperson of selectors, Pennant D/Metro 1 + 7th team coordinator, team management, uniform order management or just general support, please reach out to me directly at mens@footscrayhockey.com.au. Any and all offers of help will be gratefully accepted!

Go doggies!

Col Keating
Men's Director

JUNIOR'S DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Overview

Our 2024 season has been one of change, development opportunities and success that has been building over the last few years.

Our FHC Juniors section had 230+ members in 2024 across our Under 6, Under 8, Under 10, Under 12, Under 14 and Under 16 teams. We welcomed many new families to the club and we hope they have felt included and supported being part of the Footscray HC community.

We continued our successful local school roadshows and come and try sessions, to introduce more potential players and families to the wonderful sport of hockey. Nicole Virtuoso has been running these programs for many years and we thank her for her hard work here. A massive thank you to our coaches who help run these school roadshows. We saw over 100 participants attend our Come & Try sessions over 2024 and over 2000 participants were seen during local school roadshows. We are fortunate that many are now continuing their hockey journey with FHC.

Our Mini Bulldogs (Under 6's) are a fan favourite around here, we love seeing them develop their hockey skills under the experienced coaching from Julie-Anne Sheehan (JA) and her assistant coaches, Shirena Patel and Chiza Karla. Our mini bulldogs enthusiastically developed their understanding of being hockey ready, close dribbling, short passes, trapping, protecting the ball and the concept of protecting the goals. Thank you to our Under 6 Coordinator, Catherine Titley, for keeping our coaches and families informed and welcoming new families to the club.

There were changes made by Hockey Victoria in the Under 8 and Under 10 competitions with the introduction of Hockey 5's Saturday games and Carnival Days, which many of us were apprehensive about, but has been hugely successful for the development of our younger players. FHC was selected as a hub venue for several local teams to play games on a Saturday morning.

Under 8's Head Coach, Phil McAlinden was instrumental in getting us ready for Hockey 5's and building on the basics of hockey with dribbling, short passes, trapping, shooting, defending, protecting the ball and team work. We had four Under 8 teams that each had a coach and team manager - Esme Titley, Jen Ruzicka, Callum Wickson, Matt Ayris, Paul Mongonmery, Tom Newman and Carl Cooper, a very big thank you all for stepping in to allow for our Under 8 cohort to run smoothly. Thank you to our Under 8 Coordinator, Nicole Virtuoso, using her experience to allow for Under 8 to run smoothly.

Under 10's Head Coach, Mark Wiseman, was excited to further develop our Under 10 players basic skills and game play strategies. The new format of Hockey 5's for U10's gave all children a chance to make an impact every game. The improvement of skills and confidence grew every game, which was wonderful to see. We had four Under 10 teams which each had a coach and team manager, Greg Robinson, Claire Manning, Tim Steer, Cheryl Hill, Fiona Collie, Luke Matthews, Mark and Giulia Wiseman, big very big thank you. A big thank you to Pauline Warren and Lynette Gilchrist for supporting the Under 10 cohort as the Under 10 Coordinators, keeping everyone informed and on track.

We had a few fun Wednesday evenings with our Under 6, 8 and 10 players and families for BBQ night, Pizza Night and more. Big thanks to all those helping out and making sure things ran smoothly, especially our coordinators.

Hockey Victoria made changes this year to the Under 12, Under 14 and Under 16 competition structure by consolidating to one Shield competition with the removal of Shield B, this has had a knock on effect to the level of competition in the pennant grade.

We were successful in gaining entry grading for 6 Shield teams, across Under 12 to 16 for girls and mixed (boys). Our Shield teams were incredibly successful this year, winning 4 Shield Premierships for Under 12 Girls, Under 14 Girls, Under 14 Mixed (Boys) and Under 16 Boys. We are the only club in Hockey Victoria known history to achieve 4 Shield Premierships in Juniors. Our Under 16 Girls finished 4th on the ladder and our Under 12 Mixed (Boys) finished 6th on the ladder.

Congratulations to all the shield coaches this year in developing their players skills, team and game structure to the standard required in Shield. Thank you to all the Coaches Under 12 Girls - Damien Toussaint, Under 12 Mixed (Boys) - James Gilchrist & Arun Broadhurst, Under 14 Girls - Melanie Sanders, Under 14 Mixed (Boys) - Ngaire Smith, Under 16 Girls - Nicole Virtuoso & Maddie Bezzobs, Under 16 Boys - Nigel Toussaint.

We are incredibly fortunate to have the number of junior players at our club that this year we entered five pennant teams - Under 12 Girls, Under 12 Mixed (Boys), Under 14 Mixed (Boys), Under 16 Girls and Under 16 Boys. The gusto and love for hockey that the pennant teams played with, is something I admire. The pennant competition was very challenging, but we could see the development across our teams as the season progressed.

Thank you to our Pennant coaches for all the hard work you do in keeping our teams developing and having fun, Under 12 Girls - Aisling & Beck Grey, Under 12 Mixed (Boys) - Dylan Peacock, Under 14 Mixed (Boys) - Isaac Grimes, Under 16 Girls - Siobhan Hannon & Jessica St Clair, Under 16 Boys - Jim & Melissa Morton.

We would be lost without team managers across our Under 12 to 16 teams, they communicate about all things FHC and team level communication for training, game day availability, changes and vital game day lollies and fruit. A huge thank you to all of you - Kylie Feely, Suzie Grosz, Simone Barlow, Andrew & Monika McKellar, Darren Bradbury, Linda Wotton, Damien Brain, Michelle Doolan, Cathrine Titley, Russel Wickson, Briana Finlay and Sam Brown.

Our success in fostering learning and growth in our juniors umpire group continues this year, under the guidance from Melanie Sanders. This year we brought on 10 new umpires to learn the ropes in the Under 8 and Under 10 competition and more experienced umpires moved to Under 12 and Under 14 games.

The interest in Indoor Hockey has been one of the largest this year and we have entered 6 teams across Under 12, 14 and 16, Shield and Pennant. Thank you Melanie Sanders for driving interest in Indoor Hockey for our Juniors over the last few years, our number of indoor players is reflective of this.

Our 2024 FHC number representing Hockey Victoria State and School Sports Vic teams continues to be strong with 38 FHC juniors playing hockey at a state level and a record 76 FHC players playing in Junior State Championship (JSC) competition. More recently, we had 8 FHC representatives selected in the HCM Futures team. Congratulations to all the players selected and we hope the experience has been positive for you all.

The key area where I wanted to focus was ensuring all players had opportunities to develop their skills as hockey players. We were able to start this by opening up our Bulldogs Hockey Academy, formally WEHA, to all our players across Under 12, 14, 16. There were over 80 players that attended the sessions, designed and run, by Daniel Mitchell (Mltty) and Ngaire Smith, alongside supporting Junior Coaches and Premier League players. This program was well received and we will run this program again in 2025. There are further development opportunities that will be offered in Technical sessions during the season for Under 14 and 16 players.

2025 – Juniors Focus

- Building clear development pathways and growth for all juniors players, enabling depth in our juniors section.
- Supporting the development for our Junior Coaches.
- Continued focus on development of new and current junior umpires.
- Building a positive experience for all junior players and families.
- Building a strong sense of club pride and connection for new and current players and families.
- Build hockey engagement in our local community.

Acknowledgments

This has been my first year as Junior Director and I have to thank Melanie Sanders, Nicole Virtuoso, the Board and many others for all the time and support provided in learning the ropes.

A huge thank you to all the coaches, coordinators, team managers, umpires, canteen & retail volunteers, parents and families for the support over this year. The (often) invisible work that you do to support our juniors must be acknowledged and celebrated, we appreciate you.

Junior players, thank you for always putting in 100% effort in training and games, we love seeing that bulldog spirit in all of you.

A huge thank you to my family, Nick, Daniel and Kieran, for the understanding and support with me taking on this role.

Cindy Blay
Junior Director

MASTER'S DIRECTOR'S REPORT

We had 5 teams on the field this year with the continuation of a Women's 45s side but unfortunately we didn't have the numbers to enter a Women's 35A Grade team.

It was reasonably successful season this year with two out of 5 teams making the finals and the Women's 35B team making it to the Grand Final.

Many thanks and gratitude to all the team managers and captains this year – Tony Grey (45 Mens) supported by the What's App King – Brendan Grimes, Geri Karla (45s Women), Sabrina Kinlough (35B Women), Heather Shaw (60s Men) and Marty Babb and Damien Toussaint (50A Men).

Again a big thanks to Nicole Virtuoso for her support throughout the season. A big thanks also to the other Board members for their work this year – they are an amazingly committed, hard-working and generous group and we should all be very thankful for the visible and invisible work that they do to. Members should be reassured that the FHC is in good hands.

Thanks to the one and only Sam Cutrale for helping to coordinate Masters games umpiring on Monday and Wednesday nights at FHC – we appreciate all of the work Sam does behind the scenes to ensure that we have good umpers on the pitch, especially during the cold, wet months and even when he's overseas.

A special thanks to James and Taela who umpired most of the home Masters games this year – we are very grateful for your support and reliability, week in, week out. A very special thanks to Heather Shaw who was always able to find an umpire at the last minute when the regular umpires were not available. Thanks Heather – I appreciate you and your support.

We celebrated a number of wonderful milestones this year including Vanessa Smith's 400th game, Gary Marshall's 900th game, Matt Gale's 600th, Giulia Wiseman's 500th game, Bryon 'Bozza' Robertson's 400th game and Karen 'Kaz' Johnstone's 400th game.

Congratulations to all those players on such amazing achievements and their long-standing commitment, contribution and loyalty to FHC and the game of hockey.

FHC AUSTRALIAN AND VICTORIAN MASTERS REPRESENTATIVES

Congratulations to the following FHC Men's and Women's Masters' players who represented Victoria in 2024 and to the players who won gold at the Nationals this year.

MEN – GOLD

- Alex Grosz - 40s Div 1 – GOLD
- Nigel Toussaint - 45s Div 1 - GOLD

MEN'S VICTORIAN MASTERS REPS 2024

- Alex Grosz, Mark Wiseman - 40s Div 1
- Nigel Toussaint - 45s Div 1
- Phil Frost - 60s Div 1
- Ron Shadbolt, Norm Hibberd - 65 Div 2
- Neil Coster, David Sinclair 75s

WOMEN'S VICTORIAN MASTERS REPS 2024

- Katherine Wilson - 45s
- Teri Burke - 50s
- Carrol Burt, Jo Torr - 65s
- Geri Karla - 60s

GOLD & SILVER @ MASTERS WORLD CUP

Congratulations to Neil Coster (Cosi) and the Australian 75's team for winning silver at the World Cup in Cape Town, South Africa. Finishing top of the ladder, they were beaten in the final by a polished England team.

Well done to all of those players – it certainly should make us proud that we have such amazing representation at a state and national level.

Men's 60Bs

This team had a very successful season in 2024, making the finals but unfortunately losing in the semi to Brunswick 2-1. The 60s finished with 7 wins, 4 draws and 5 losses. This was a massive improvement on the 2023 season – less injuries, some gutsy wins, tonnes of experience and Heather's management all contributed to their success.

Men's 50As

This team struggled to win games this year despite maintaining a positive attitude, an excellent endeavour and work rate in each game and support of each other. Finished 6th with only 2 wins, 1 draw and 13 losses.

Many thanks to the core guys for their commitment this year – many of our best games were with the bare 11 and against the top, in form teams. When this team has a full strength team, they can beat anyone. Thanks to Marty Babb for taking on the TM role.

Damien Toussiant Masters Director

RETAIL REPORT

Canteen

This year the canteen came away with a \$47k profit which was a little less than expected due to less tournaments being held at FHC.

This wouldn't have been possible without those who completed their canteen duty and the many volunteers who put their hands up when we required the extra help for tournaments, school bookings or the occasional weekly shift that needed to be covered.

A big thanks to Sally our canteen manager for keeping things running, clean and tidy and being there to supervise our volunteers.

Thanks also to all those that volunteered in the canteen throughout the year especially Tanya Wischnewski, Macy Gorman, Heather Shaw, Dave Sanders, Graeme Veitch and RJ it was greatly appreciated.

Hockey HQ

A big thanks to Jenny Hilton, Merryn Brown & Janet Harper for helping keep HQ opened on training nights in 2024.

With the delay of introducing our new uniform for 2024 for our 90th year as a club it has meant that HQ came away with a small loss.

With the new uniform being released for 2025 see socials for try on dates and further information.

A reminder that all funds raised by the Retail section go towards covering the costs of running our club / teams which therefore helps keep the cost of our fees down even with the increase in umpiring costs.

With next year being the last year of my 3 year term as Retail Director my aim is to ensure that when things get handed over to a new Director that the processing/volunteering time has been reduced and I will continue to consolidate areas and complete a handover manual to make the transition easier.

Karen Johnstone
Retail Director

GROUNDS

Special thanks yet again to all members who have supported the board to maintain this great facility and in particular to -

- Graeme Veitch
- Phil McAlinden
- Nick Dabner
- Dave Sanders

2024 saw increased usage of FHC for -

- Summer Comp and FHC Mixed Monday Night Comp
- Winter Senior and Junior seasons
- Primary and Secondary School Games and Finals
- Partnering with local soccer and cricket clubs to facilitate pre-season training
- Local gyms utilising the fields for testing and specialist sessions
- Lacrosse Australia utilising the fields for Australian selection trials
- State Schools Victoria Trials and Training
- Hockey Club Melbourne Futures Trials and Training
- Hockey Victoria High Performance Training for Juniors through to Masters
- Range of Key Events hosted by FHC in Pride Round, Indigenous Round etc
- WEHA Academy for FHC juniors

2025 sees all of the above again plus the return of -

- JSC
- JCC

2024 projects delivered -

- Giant LED scoreboard on ASF Pitch - delivered with funding from WGTP
- Aluminium seating on ASF - delivered with funding from WGTP
- Watering system – water leak repaired and FHC still with the best water pitch in Melbourne outside of the State Hockey Centre at Parkville

Key 2025 and Beyond Projects -

- ASF Pitch Resurface Project
- ASF Dugout Upgrade
- Electric Patio Heater proposal to Bunnings Footscray
- ASF rear fence upgrade for security and safety of park occupants
- Polytan Goal repairs and maintenance
- LED lighting upgrade to provide better and safer lighting and also significantly reduce power costs
- Carpark security lighting and cameras for volunteer safety

Andrew Boyle
Grounds Director

PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

As we finished the 2023 year and rolled into 2024, I was armed with all the necessary member feedback and details from the Strategic planning workshop, to draft our first post covid Strategic Plan. The task turned out to be a long and detailed process, of which I am now pleased to roll out for members viewing and for the incoming Board to set our immediate objectives and goals.

The importance has become even more evident as we celebrate a history making successful junior season (a HV record to win 4 Shield premierships in the same year), whilst having a disappointing senior's season, with our top Men's and Women's team combining for an 8 year low in terms of win/losses.

We must grab the opportunity and ensure that we continue to support and develop our talented youth and support them with prudent recruitment to enable us to sustain our position as a Premier League club for the next generations. The future is right there in front of us, the envy of other clubs, so let's not waste it!

Facility upgrades continued into the new season with the junior training area fencing upgraded and new spectator seating erected courtesy of the Westgate Tunnel Project Neighbourhood funding. It took a long time, with many setbacks along the way, but we unveiled our new electronic scoreboard late in the season (more WGTP funding). We are excited to fully explore its electronic capabilities for the 2025 season.

As mentioned last year, a new leasing structure has been introduced by Council, which will replace our previous 'peppercorn' arrangement we have had for years. Whilst we are awaiting the first draft to be presented to us for comment, we are also mindful that our two next biggest future capital works projects will come at great cost, that being pitch lighting upgrades and replacement of the ASF playing surface and dugouts. We will ensure that our strong relationship with the Council is maintained, and we look forward to working with them and establishing our facilities planning schedule to meet our upcoming needs.

Whilst my focus this year was directed mainly with the Strategic Plan, Grant successes were minimal in 2024. We were, however, successful in obtaining grants of \$700 for three of our junior U/16 State representatives to assist with travel expenses. We will be contacted in December to see whether we have been successful in obtaining a similar grant for eligible U/14 athletes.

Grant applications are a time-consuming process left to few. As always, if there are any members or parents who have time and possess a skill in document writing, who would be interested in assisting or leading up a Grants sub-committee, please contact me.

Thank you to all the 2024 Board of Directors for your continued hard work in ensuring we provide the best voluntary support and leadership we can, in representing the members of our Hockey Club. We are a large, successful club, run mainly by the extraordinary efforts of a small percentage of our members. We strive and will continue to encourage all others to become involved and assist where you can to work towards jointly, the continual success and prosperity of our Hockey club.

If unopposed, I will be happy to fulfill my final year of my three-year term next year, making it the 5th year in this position. I will, however, not be seeking re-election for the 2026 season, so I would be happy to share any knowledge or answer questions from anyone next year that may have an interest in continuing to assist with the growth and development of this great Hockey club.

Greg Hopkins
Planning and Performance Director

SPONSORSHIP REPORT

Sponsorship Report

In 2024, we successfully retained our major sponsors: Hardimans, QUBE, Yarraville Club, and Yarraville Footscray Bowls Club. Additionally, we were pleased to welcome Frasers Property/Bradmill Yarraville as a new major sponsor.

Our Player Sponsorship Program was another highlight, with support from 45 different individuals and businesses. This initiative has not only provided valuable backing for our players but has also helped to strengthen our connections within the broader community, a positive step in fostering long-term relationships.

The 2024 Sponsors Day was well attended, showcasing the club's vibrant spirit and community engagement. Looking ahead, we aim to host this event on a game day, utilizing both fields to further highlight what makes our club so special.

For 2025, my goal is to maintain strong relationships with our current major sponsors while attracting new sponsors. We aim to develop mutually beneficial partnerships that can further enhance the club's offerings and align with the sponsor's goals—a key area identified for improvement.

I am excited to continue in my role as Sponsorship Director for a full season and remain committed to building the club's sponsorship base. If you have any leads or contacts who might be interested in becoming a major sponsor, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly.

Thank you for your ongoing support, and I look forward to another successful year for our club.

Liam Braitwaite
Sponsorship Director