



Gloucester City Hockey Club

C/o The Riverside Sports & Leisure Club
St. Oswalds Road
Gloucester, GL12TF
www.gloucestercityhc.co.uk
info@gloucestercityhc.co.uk

23rd December 2018

Dear *Gloucester City Hockey members, friends and family of our great club,*

I am delighted to be writing to you as we enter into our mid-season break coming off the back of what I can only describe as an outstanding first half of the season, both on and off the pitch.

PERFORMANCE

The collective performance of every single Men's, Ladies and Junior's team has been incomparable and quite simply, exceptional. The Ladies 1s are 3rd and the Ladies 2s, 3s and 4s are all winning their leagues. The Men's 1s are 3rd, the Men's 2s and 3s are 1st and 3rd respectively in their leagues. The Men's 4ths have won 5 of their 8 matches. Notwithstanding, the performances by the various junior teams have been quite simply, extremely impressive. I don't wish to repeat anything enclosed in our Ladies, Men's and Junior's Captains Reports save to say how incredibly proud we are of every single player. Thank you for the effort and extremely hard work to achieve this success.

Off the pitch, the club has enjoyed the fruits of countless hours undertaken by volunteers to create, and launch a new website (<http://gloucestercityhockey.co.uk>), merge to a new and integrated database and initiate the beginnings of a regular social media footprint publishing our core message why GCHC is a great club and why new members should join? **#EXCEL, #BEGIN and #BELONG**

MEMBERSHIP

At the end of the 2017/2018 season our amended and published affiliated members totaled 257 between the age of 5 and 46+. I am pleased to report our mid-season membership figures have increased to 317. Whilst the direction, and step change of our membership is pleasing, our club is only as good as the members and continued growth across all age groups, in particular the junior section and between the age of 16 and 25 years of age. In line with our strategy and that of English Hockey, it has never been so important that in order to maintain the growth in our membership we continue to pride ourselves on being a friendly, welcoming and social club. As Chairman, I remain mindful we have only just began our forays developing strong community connections, and to this end we have not even begun to access the wider community in order that we can provide different ways to play hockey that meet all players' needs. I urge everyone; never ever pass up an opportunity to spread the word across every community, **COME AND JOIN GCHC**. Help us make the club great.

CULTURE: CHARTER OF EXCELLENCE

It is not by accident that we find ourselves enjoying the fruits of our labour. Group culture is one of the most powerful forces on the planet. We sense its presence inside successful businesses, teams and thriving families, and we sense when it is absent or toxic. We can measure its impact on the bottom line in business, and in sport we are starting to understand how this transcends to the score. I ask you to reflect briefly on the performances I describe above. Whilst we all want a strong culture and recognise it works, knowing how it works is often misunderstood. To that end I am immensely proud to recognise the beginnings of a long term sustainable culture and the utterings of core values. To all the volunteers, coaches, managers, captains, officials and team architects leading the way; continue to **build safety** in the teams, **share vulnerability** and most of all, constantly check in to ensure we are all focused on our **common purpose**, making GCHC great.



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HONOURS' & HIGHLIGHTS

On an individual level I am proud to confirm Brian Stokes has been selected for the England Masters 70s+ squad for the forthcoming home internationals and the European Championship in 2019. Congratulations Brian. The club also wishes everyone else still currently involved with England, Wales and Ireland Masters trials every success. **#EXCEL**

Congratulations to Mark Readstone who has been awarded his Level 2 umpiring, Simon Thompson, Laura Bucknell, Richard Allot, Charlotte (Lottie) Thompson and Nuala Coleman being awarded their Level 1 umpiring. These are outstanding achievements for at times, a thankless and very difficult job our wonderful game is not possible without. **#EXCEL**

Furthermore I want to congratulate the many junior players whom have been selected to attend the Performance Centre in Bristol, JDC and JAC. **#BEGIN**.

On a team level, whilst Anna Brogden's note describes what an amazing first half of the season it has been for the Ladies section, I wanted to reflect in particular on our Ladies 3s. A special word of praise is deserved for a team that has won ALL 10 matches and amassed a whopping 45 goals. Keep up the great work ladies. **#EXCEL**

Finally, GCHC ran its first summer and autumn Children Camps this year. Our sincere thanks and appreciation goes to all those involved organising, volunteering and coaching. They are the start of great things to come with some wonderful feedback. Furthermore, I should like to express our sincere gratefulness and appreciation to Messam Associates for sponsoring both events and making these possible. **#BEGIN**

**If I have omitted anyone or achievements in error please be sure to let me know to include these in the next newsletter.*

PLAYING KIT

The design of our new home and away kit has been signed off. Further too much research and many meetings with suppliers and manufacturers it is decided the club will proceed in a partnership with Raging Bull [**subject to any final contractual issues*]. In the meantime we are currently awaiting both men and ladies sample playing kits to be delivered early January in order that can we finalise any last minute design issues and importantly collate our initial order. The new kit will also include 'off-field kit' for training and matches.

I will be the first to empathise with the length of time the process has taken getting to this position; however I do urge continued patience where the new kit is very much in line with our ethos, to deliver an affordable 'wow' factor kit, develop local partnerships and a sustainable delivery of supply for new members and seasonal requirements. Please keep an eye open for a separate and more detailed update on the kit early January.

SPONSORSHIP

It seems a wonderful opportunity at this point in the year to once again make a pledge to any private person or businesses in the Gloucestershire area to **contact me** in regard to **sponsorships or donations**. GCHC is run purely by volunteers for its members. At the start of this season we made a bold commitment to make GCHC great again. This is neither a quick fix nor an easy journey to ensure sustainable change for our future as a club. With sponsorship we can achieve this success both quicker, and achieve a wider spectrum of success, for example junior or senior tours, underwriting



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children camps in the school holidays, purchasing specialised training equipment, employing coaches, subsidising kit and as Chairman I stand by my previous correspondence that I am determined to maintain my personal momentum seeking both sponsorship (and donations) towards any opportunity where the club ultimately enjoys the benefits of owning its very own *appropriate and sustainable facilities*. **Please contact me** with any donation or sponsorship. These go a long way towards our vision, for you the members.

VOLUNTEERS & COACHES

As always we are constantly seeking coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, new umpires and volunteers. Any amount of help would be gratefully accepted now, and thinking ahead towards the new season in August 2019 where in order to enjoy, sustain and deliver continued performance both on the and off the pitch we need your help and expertise. Please contact me if you can help.

POLICIES, RULES & REGULATIONS

➤ **FIH Rule Changes**

Further to the FIH's announcement on 18th December regarding changes to the rules of hockey from 1st January 2019, England Hockey confirms that no changes will be made to the domestic game during the remainder of the 2018-19 season. England Hockey reports that in recent years they have strived to apply a consistent set of rules throughout all levels of the sport. In normal circumstances they do not implement rule changes mid-season apart from where there are potential safety implications which require swifter action. The changes proposed by the FIH have far reaching implications for the grass roots of hockey and therefore they intend to seek clarification on the rationale behind the decision as well as understand the potential impact of the rule changes amongst participants and officials at all levels.

For information; the FIH has announced the following significant changes:

- Match timings to be quarters, to mirror international game
- Removal of Player with Goalkeeper Privileges (PwGKP)
- Amendments to Attacking Free Hits and Defending Free Hits within the 23m area

GCHC will communicate more about this in early 2019 after learning England Hockey's revised position.

➤ **New League Structures**

At the March 2018 board meeting, England Hockey agreed changes to the structure of the Investec Women's Hockey League and Men's Hockey League. The changes will be implemented in the 2019-20 season. These changes are the first step in adapting to the evolving landscape of the Hockey Pro League (and international player availability) and requests from clubs to review the domestic structure. The most recent consultation (February 2018) strongly supported an interim restructure to the leagues. Please note the changes will be revisited again after the Tokyo Olympics (and after two years of the Hockey Pro League) with a view to further developing the structure to support domestic hockey to progress for years to come.

To better understand the structure I strongly recommend you liaise with your respective Club Captain's and or contact me where I am happy to forward the England Hockey document describing these changes.



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➤ **Travel and Subsistence**

Please note GCHC policy on paying for fuel when travelling to away games;

- Players are entitled to claim 15p / mile for AWAY games ONLY.
- Mileage can NOT be claimed for attending training, home games and or any other purpose save for discussing any unusual requirement with your club captain and or the Committee BEFORE the event.
- All mileage is calculated from Riverside Club to the game and return irrespective of your starting / ending location.
- Players are only eligible IF they are transporting themselves plus two (2) players / officials' directly involved in the game the driver is involved in (e.g. a combination made up of player/ player / coach / umpire / manager).

Please note this policy will be reviewed at the Annual General Meeting in May 2019. Please be sure to attend if you wish to debate any revisions in the best interests of GCHC and its members.

➤ **Subscriptions**

GCHC continues to offer the most affordable subscriptions out of the entire 800 hockey clubs in the United Kingdom. To that end we look for members to pay timeously to support our cash flow where the club has faced price increases this seasons including but not limited to pitch hire, lighting and match hospitality.

Please ensure your subscriptions are fully paid before Monday 14th January 2019.

If you have not paid by then, please note you will NOT be eligible for selection until these are paid.

Please note subscriptions will be reviewed at the Annual General Meeting in May 2019. Please be sure to attend if you wish to debate any revisions in the best interests of GCHC and its members.

WELFARE

The welfare of all our members continues to be of paramount importance. I should like to take this opportunity to remind anyone that should you wish to discuss anything of concern or have any questions, please contact Gill Hutchings our Club Welfare Officer. All enquiries and conversations are treated completely confidentially.

OUR SINCERE THANKS

Finally, the progress and success over the past five months would not be possible without the many people whom has dedicated countless hours of their time, and in some instances donations and sponsorships. In particular my special thanks to the committee members, captains and vice captains, managers, umpires, coaches, assistant coaches, parent helpers, helpers and anyone else I have overlooked in error. Making GCHC great is not possible without having great leadership across every area of the club and equally important, having inspired and effective people within the club. I urge everyone one of you to please consider how you can help continue the upward success of our great club in any way particular to you, albeit time, skills, donations or sponsorship.

Together we are making GCHC great. Together we are building a sustainable club for future generations to enjoy our great sport.



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I wish you a safe and restful period these coming weeks and a prosperous 2019.

Yours in hockey

Anton de Leeuw

GCHC Chairman
Mob: 07538 946 032

BACK TO TRAINING DATES – JANUARY 2019

Ladies 1s	Please liaise with Charlotte in regard to Indoor Hockey There is a practice match vs. Ladies 2s on Tuesday 8th January 2019 at Dean Close Regular training commences Thursday 10th January 2019, St Peters, 1900pm onwards
Ladies 2s	Saturday 5th January 2019, 1200pm, St Peters There is a practice match vs. Ladies 1s on Tuesday 8th January 2019 at Dean Close Regular training commences Thursday 10th January 2019, St Peters 1900pm
Ladies 3s & 4s	Tuesday 8th January 2019, Oxstalls Sports Park, 1900pm
Men's 1s, 2s & 3s	Thursday 3rd January 2019, Oxstalls Sports Park, 1900pm
Girls U16	Wednesday 9th January 2019, Oxstalls Sports Park, 1930pm
Boys U12-U16	Monday 7th January 2019, Oxstalls Sports Park, 1730pm
Juniors U12 Mixed	Wednesday 9th January 2019, Oxstalls Sports Park, 1830pm



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Message from the Anna Brogden (Ladies Club Captain)

Well, what a first half season! We go into the well earned Christmas break with ALL ladies sides in the top 3 in their leagues. The Ladies 1s are 3rd and the Ladies 2s, 3s and 4s are all winning their leagues. At the beginning of the season I asked the captains what their ambitions for season 2018-19 were, and it was to finish in the top 4....we are on track 😊

To make sure we keep the Ladies section on the right path, we had a review meeting last week - captains, managers, coaches. This was an opportunity to review performance and squads as it can be all too easy to be complacent. We really want to make sure we have the right people in the right squads to get the best results but also it is a matter of identifying our up and coming juniors, the future of the club to enable us to sustain our ambitions. To that end, we will be encouraging players to take opportunities to train with the team above them to hopefully make the transition easier to higher teams.

Also, given the high number of players coming through the club we are looking to start a 5th team. This takes a lot of commitment (it is not just about getting 11 players out on a Saturday but all the match day organising, training, extra umpires etc) and I hope you will support the club with this ambition

None of the above is possible without the hard work of the captains, coaches and managers who committ week in and week out to training, organising and leading the squads. So a HUGE thank you to them but also a HUGE thank you to the players - your dedication and enthusiasm (and the results!) make it worthwhile.

But, we are only half way through....we need to take what we have done in the first half of the season and repeat 😊

So, have a lovely Christmas break. Rest any weary bodies for a few days, eat some mince pies and then go for a run. Remember the pain at the beginning of the season when you were not fit? Lets not repeat that, keep the engine ticking so we can hit the ground running in January.

Have a good one and see you all in the New Year

Anna Brogden

Message from James Burrows (Men's Club Captain)

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!! I am pleased to report that the Men's section has arrived at the mid-way point in very rude health indeed, showing a resilient side after last season's difficulties. Team-by-team:

The 1s sit 3rd in Conference North, with promotion remaining very much a target. Aside from two tough defeats against a strong Bristol Uni side, the team has matched up well against all opposition in the league.

The 2s have dismantled all that has been put in front of them, and currently sit top of The Marches 1, ahead of Lansdown A on goal difference despite having started the season on -3 points due to a penalty carried over from last year. In fact, one of their toughest challenges so far has come from...



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...The 3s, who have had perhaps the most remarkable season of all the teams. despite being without a regular captain, and having avoided relegation by the skin of their teeth last year, the side is currently 3rd in The Marches 1 having lost only their first game of the season to Newent and to the two sides above them! Their extraordinary form even included a 3-2 win over Bourton & Sherborne despite playing with no GK!

The 4s, free from the shackles of league hockey, have enjoyed a successful first half of the season too, winning 5 of their 8 friendlies against the various teams they would have played against within The Marches 2.

Away from match days, too, there have been great improvements. Intensity levels at training throughout October and November have been at a level not witnessed for a number of years, although this comes with a caveat as there has been a noticeable drop off in the past few weeks – hopefully this is just an indication of people needing a rest! These intensity levels are what have helped to get us where we are in the leagues, and must return in January in order to maintain these positions!

As has already happened within the ladies section, a full review of squads is planned ahead of the new year with the aim of ensuring that those players who have regularly impressed in the first half of the season continue to get opportunities to progress.

An area of continued frustration has been our inability to find further coaching support to Mark Portnell. Mark has done and continues to do a tremendous job, at first with the entire club training sessions and then more recently with specific focus on the first team, but additional support is desperately needed in this area to help build on the standards that Mark has set.

I'd like to finish by saying thank you – thank you to Rich Mobberley and Matt Puddy for restoring and maintaining the winning standards of the 2s; thank you to Rich Brogden and David Blakey for the organisational efforts in ensuring the successful continuation of the 4s; thank you to the parents of numerous juniors and partners of numerous seniors for their support of not just their own interests but the teams as a whole; and a huge thank you to each and every player that has represented the club to such a high standard so far this season.

Enjoy the three-week rest over Christmas – performances so far suggest it is well-earned! – and I look forward to seeing everyone on Thursday 10th January as the first official club training session of 2019!

Buzz (James) Burrows

Message from Trevor Done (Junior Club Captain)

As we are half way through the season, it's a great time to reflect on how we're progressing.....as ever the Junior section continues to thrive, with higher than ever numbers across the club.

Before we can review on how we are doing, we need to understand our purpose, below is what we drafted as a club in the summer;

1. Create a pathway for all junior players to keep them in the game for life
2. Create a challenging and fun environment to allow junior members to grow and develop as hockey club members



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3. Allow specific development paths for those that want to play at both competitive and social environments
4. Provide opportunities for club members and parents to contribute and impact the development of the junior club
5. Be open to new innovations and ideas for developing hockey and the junior section of the club

I am delighted to say that we are making great progress on many of the key areas that we wanted to focus on;

As such we are seeing many junior members both boys and girls attending training with age groups and also seeing many of our juniors now being invited to senior training. I am also delighted that many of our juniors are now experiencing competitive hockey, whether that be at Glos HA organised festivals, Avon Junior Hockey League, Badgers or into senior sides within the club.

Training has seen the largest step change improvement across the junior sections, we have a significant number of volunteers coaching, but not only do we now have a good number of coaches, we have some excellent expertise on hand to help develop the players. I am so pleased with the improvements that we are seeing in the players week on week, all the hard work is truly paying off. Many thanks to all the coaches and volunteers, you truly have made an amazing difference, the improvements across the players and teams is so evident for all to see.

Now the one area that remains a concern, is with 'Management' and admin support for the sides. We have some volunteers that organise the teams [understand availability, communicate meet times, kit requirements] for some of our teams, we run 9 teams across the junior section and do need further help from anyone that has a small amount of time to help coordinate a team for the coaches, if we are going to continue to grow our club, develop the players and offer the competitive opportunities for all in 2019.

On that note, I plan to run a small presentation on our future vision, progress we are making and how people can get involved in Jan – look out for a note on this in the new year.

Lastly, enjoy your well-earned break over the festive break, we start back on the 9th Jan.....and we have a lot to live up to and improve on from the first half on this season

Trevor Done

