



GUILDFORD HOCKEY CLUB

AFFILIATED TO SURREY HOCKEY ASSOCIATION AND ENGLAND HOCKEY
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AGM 2021 – Director of Hockey Report – 2020/21

Notes from AGM speech:

Good evening everyone.

Fittingly today marks 364 days since we started the 2020-21 season on June 15th 2020. What a year it has been. So firstly, a huge thank you to Mike and Jo who have written detailed reports of the Men's and Women's seasons. Neither of which have yet finished with the Men's O40s and Women's 1st XI both playing big Cup matches this weekend, as well as our GU14 and U16 teams playing National Cup QF games at the end of the week.

Last year I talked about making Guildford Hockey Club a Great Place to Play. This remains the cornerstone of my role at the club.

So, what does that look like? I thought to show you I would take changes to our club's coaching over 4 years as an example.

SLIDE ONE (p 17 of presentation slides)

Over 4 years adult coaching will treble. Professional junior coaching will see a 6-fold increase. We will deliver ten times as much hockey in the community in September 2021 compared to the same month in 2018.

Now one of the great things about Guildford Hockey Club is the culture of volunteering and support. it looks a bit like this...

SLIDE TWO (p 18 of presentation slides)

And this is without the time that goes into administering each junior and senior side; the phone calls, emails, Teamo notifications and pitch side conversations.

Coaching is a good example of how we are improving players' experience of hockey. As well as the quantity of coaching, we are pushing the quality of what is delivered on the pitch. In three years over 200 people at the hockey club have taken part in coach development sessions delivered by England Hockey or by the club itself.

Something we are planning to expand next year as access to pitches and indoor space makes meeting more straightforward.

As well as coaching, our priorities for existing members next year include:

- Improving the quality and availability of umpires and umpire training.
- Adult skills sessions on top of weekly team training.
- Creating an appropriate balance of young players and adults in each adult team.
- Delivering opportunities for all players in junior age groups to play and train in squads that they feel a part of.
- Getting back into the bar.

Guildford hockey Club is a thriving, growing club. Growth is not our aim; it reflects a club that is doing a good job.

Our size allows us to deliver more hockey and better hockey. And this involves change.

SLIDE THREE (p 19 of presentation slides)

Next year the way we run hockey at Guildford Hockey Club is changing from 3 sections to 5. As well as Women's, Men's, and Junior hockey we will have a 4th section dedicated to our local community.

This delivers hockey to schools across Southwest Surrey, provides Flyerz Hockey for all disability groups, coaching for the Surrey Youth Games and coach education in the community.

The 5th section will begin this September when we will be the first club in England to deliver a complete programme to replace County and Performance Centre hockey for players ages 8-18. We are calling this our Future Stars programme and it will complement our junior section. A full presentation about what this looks like, how it reflects England Hockey's New Talent Programme and what it means for the wider club is available online.

So why does this matter to you? Formalising our community and talent programmes will let us co-ordinate different sections of the club more effectively. It will allow us to deliver great hockey for everyone because a successful club looks like a club where every section, every squad, every team and every member can thrive.

I am really proud of Guildford Hockey Club – I feel like an imposter saying that in a meeting where I share the screen with people who have spent so long here – but it is exactly what it sets out to be; a welcoming, supportive, club that is a great place to play...and I can't wait to start the new season



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A few more thoughts on the season...

A Covid-affected 2020/21 Season

The 2020/21 season began on 15 June 2020...and is still going! The pandemic that started towards the end of the 2019/20 season unfortunately cut right across our plans for 2020/21. It meant that our biggest ever summer plans for 2020 could not happen.

We did, however, get onto the pitches every time the government and England Hockey rules allowed with covid-safe 1-2-1 sessions and small groups and eventually with some larger group training and matches from August. Another lockdown towards the end of the calendar year meant that the leagues never really got going again but we innovated and moved to online fitness, online camps, online mentoring sessions and online skills sessions.

We were able to re-start the season on the pitches from 28 March (when we are usually finishing the season) and provided the equivalent of the January to March hockey in the 8 weeks from end of March to 23 May. It was great to be out there again.

And for summer 2021 we have plenty of summer activities for all: adult sessions, junior sessions, Flyerz, summer leagues, EH Championships, summer camps and summer tournaments. And we hope to get back to having a normal season come August and September.

Growth of player numbers

Despite the inability to have a “normal” season, player numbers grew with 100 new Junior members and dozens of new adult members across all 14 teams and Back to Hockey.

Expansion of programmes

We began Flyerz Hockey – this is a programme designed for all people with disability; their friends and family members can join in, too. We’ve welcomed 1200 people onto hockey camps and trained 35 Young Leaders.

Our plans for schools coaching could unfortunately not happen because of the pandemic but this will happen next season.



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Behind the Scenes Planning for 2021/22

Adult hockey is growing with 8 women's and 10 men's teams in 2021/22. To support this we are increasing training time, pitch access and coaching provision and are providing opportunities for members to practise umpiring.

The Junior Section is growing and GHC is launching an ambitious Future Stars programme to deliver coaching to players in the England Hockey Talent Pathway.

We are working to become more closely connected to the local community with Flyerz Hockey, coaching in 12 local primary schools and 20 schools in total.

Moving from Three Hockey Sections to Five Hockey Programmes

From: Women's, Men's, Juniors

To: Women's, Men's Juniors, Future Stars, Community Hockey

This is an exciting time in hockey and at GHC. I look forward to the rest of the summer and next season.

Dan Fox

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