

GHC Tour to Polo Club de Barcelona 2016 – Initial Information

Background

This December will be the sixth time GHC participate in this annual youth hockey tournament. Officially known as the *Torneo Internacional de la Inmaculada "Marga Monegal,"* this is the tournament's 30th year; it attracts the top clubs in Spain and many from across Europe. In the past we have seen teams from Italy, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Russia, to name a few. More than eighty teams will be participating across four age groups of boys and girls and the Polo Club are hoping to welcome over 1000 players this year.

The [Polo Club](#) has produced 49 Spanish Olympic players and their top ladies and men's teams compete in Spain's top league. In the past they have hosted the Hockey World Championships and the Olympic Qualifiers; they also host one of Europe's top club tournaments every year in January (The Kings Hockey or *Hockey Reyes*). The *Inmaculada* is the youth version of the *Reyes* tournament which has been running for 67 years.

This year GHC are participating with 5 teams – 3 boys teams and 2 girls teams. Exceptionally this year the tournament is four days long starting on Thursday at noon. The Polo Club agreed that we could arrive on Friday for the usual three days to avoid issues with missing too much school and to contain costs. All teams will have 6 matches, 2 per day. We will have 3 matches on Friday, 2 on Saturday and everyone gets a final on Sunday.

I hope your player will enjoy the tour.

Flights

The group flight is:

Friday 0655 EZY8571 from Gatwick arriving Barcelona 1000

Sunday 1945 EZY8578 arriving to Gatwick 2105

Luggage

All airlines allow one cabin bag per person: not to exceed 10kg and total dimensions of 56cm x 45cm x 25cm. Hockey sticks are not allowed in the cabin and must be in checked luggage.

In past years, most players stuffed their hockey bags with everything they need for the weekend (most suitcases are not long enough to fit a stick though you may have one that works in case your player's stick bag is not a larger model).

In the interest of keeping costs down, we have paid for checked luggage for the players but have made an assumption that parents can share with their child or travel with carry-on luggage only (it is only two nights and most of the time is spent at the hockey club).

Easyjet charges £20 each way for checked luggage and we can keep the overall cost down by combining checked luggage.

Transfer to hotel

A large coach has been organised for those arriving on the group flight. There will be space for accompanying parents but you **MUST** complete the online form (GHC weblink) so we know you are travelling and will/may require transfer. If we need to add additional vehicles we may need to collect from those who have not been charged for this.

(A bus has also been organised for Thursday night travellers.)

It is most important that you complete the accompanying parents form so we can plan.

Hotel

We intend to stay at the [Hotel Rey Juan Carlos I](#) as we have for the past five tours. The hotel is adjacent to the Polo Club; it is not the cheapest of hotels but allows for easy transfer of players and kit between our accommodation and the tournament venue – this means a cost savings on transport and is a huge benefit in terms of convenience and safety. The Polo Club is surrounded by fencing and there are walking paths between pitches and around the club (site map below).

Players will be staying in rooms of two or three (mostly) with teammates. Room allocation will be communicated by team managers.

For adults accompanying the tour (coaches/helpers or not), you will need to book and pay your own hotel room at the negotiated GHC rate. A link will be sent once the hotel sends it through to us.

The hotel has been acquired by Fairmont and was renovated last year. The prices have gone up - we have done our best to negotiate as all coaches unanimously wanted to stay there for convenience/safety – the hotel and club are adjacent. The strength of the euro against the pound doesn't help but if anyone who is accompanying would like a more affordable option, the [Hotel Senator](#) is around the corner.

I can't yet tell you definitive rates for the JC hotel until they confirm for a final time but indicative is £125-30 for a single and £140-45 for a double. The Senator is around £75 for a single and £100 per night for a double (all breakfast included). There may also be cheaper options still in walking distance. On the map below, the Hotel Senator is located east of Pitch 3 (but one has to walk around the club and across two streets). Try also [Google Maps](#) to see the lay of the land.



Meals

A seriously complete breakfast buffet is included in the room price. Other meals are in the process of being finalised but will generally be as per the table below.

We will play three matches on Friday and may not have time to have lunch on arrival as we have done in the past – we will likely need to play a match and then the players will have lunch at the Polo Club as a team.

Please pack some **healthy food** for the **Friday morning travel** and some healthy snacks for the weekend will also be good.

	U12	U14	U16	Parents
Lunch Friday	Team Lunches at Centenary Hall (Polo Club)			Own arrangements
Dinner Friday	U12 dinner hotel	Barbecue and Disco at Polo Club at 22.00		Dinner at Polo Club at 22.00 TBC
Lunch Saturday	Team Lunches at Centenary Hall (Polo Club)			Own arrangements
Saturday Afternoon	Afternoon snack at Polo Club from 17.00			
Dinner Saturday	Dinner buffet at Hotel for whole GHC group - timing tbc			
Lunch Sunday	Packed lunch TBC			

Insurance

Hockey is a contact sport and a hockey tour requires a special level of cover (not covered by normal travel insurance). Players, coaches and managers will be covered on a hockey tour insurance policy. All others will be responsible for their own travel insurance.

Conduct

Our main aims for young hockey players participating in this tour are to challenge our top players and teams in their hockey and to give our top players the experience of being a Junior International (having fun goes without saying). Guildford players are known for their good behaviour on and off the pitch and we expect this same level of conduct during the tour.

The players and teams will be autonomous – while we encourage parents to come along and enjoy the experience, all players who come on the tour are on tour with their team and are expected to be engaged with their team during the weekend and to be responsible for their own kit. The Coaches and Managers will direct them. Help from parents will be appreciated as needed but please remember that it is the children/teams who are on tour.

And, of course, we will treat our opponents and umpires with respect.

Hockey

Well done to your player for being selected. Our top teams do well in local competitions and we find this tournament each year to be a stretch for our teams and a good start to preparation for the business end of the season back home.

Spanish hockey is much more physical than what we are used to and sometimes the rules (or the application of them) seem different. Coaches, please remind/explain. A few things that have caught us out in the past include:

- Using the stick to pass the ball to a teammate so he can take the free hit – the oppo player (and umpire) assumed that this was the free hit being taken but our team thought they were passing the ball in order to *start* the free hit (kick or push the ball with a hand to be sure there can be no mis-interpretation of when the free hit is being taken); the oppo player intercepted and scored from this in the final :-/
- Stick over shoulder wasn't allowed in our games previous to last season but was in Spain (should be ok now that we all do it regularly); another instance of our guys thinking something should have been blown but the oppo got on with it and scored :-/
- Expect a few pushes and a bit more than shoulder to shoulder (more for the boys than the girls)
- And don't be surprised if the oppo coach insists on standing on the pitch during the match while coaching (including in the D while we were attacking); probably something more for the U12s than the older groups – take in the cultural differences ;-)
- The Polo Club provides the umpires – some are young players and some are more experienced (including our friend Alex who umpired the Barcelona Olympics – even the final I think). It can be frustrating to not agree with decisions or not understand why something was blown or not blown – but they are in charge and will use cards as we found out two

years ago when our captain and next best player were sent behind the goal (!) on yellow cards (with one then promoted to red when he said 'thank you'). Please be respectful at all times (and we still won that match against the home side!).

A schedule of play will be produced by the Polo Club – we will probably only receive this a week ahead of the tournament and this will be communicated to all. In past years Guildford parents and players have supported all Guildford teams as much as possible – there will be non-stop hockey on offer during the three days and we appreciate the support.

Coaches, beware that despite coming from furthest away, the Polo Club like to put us in the opening matches against their A sides on the Friday afternoon. I gather it is an honour to open the tournament against the home teams. We should be flattered (but then need to get the players turned around from being travellers into hockey players as effectively as possible).

Cost

The cost of the tour for players includes:

- Flights
- Transfers between airport and hotel
- Hotel including breakfast
- Meals
- Team registration fee for the tournament
- Insurance

The cost per player is £415.

We have worked really hard to try to contain the costs and this is only £5 more than last year despite a fall in the value of the pound, the tournament fee going up and the hotel prices having increased. Thank you for your patience while it was all being sorted out.

Detailed payment instructions (amount to be paid) will be issued (there are a few different price points for various reasons and I will let you know yours). Please make a BACS transfer by 12 November:

C Boulanger
TSB
30-18-25
10789260

Contact Information during the tour

It is pleasing to have so many GHC officers and parents accompanying. For those who are not able to come along, please contact me with any issues you have during the tour. I will be watching as many matches as possible and will be in close contact with the coaches and managers.

Melinda
+447507559090
melinda.rock@btconnect.com

Christophe (DBS checked for GHC and has been helping organise the tour behind the scenes will also be on duty in case for whatever reason my phone may not receive your call)
+447792932882

England Hockey have been informed of our tour once again this year and are happy with the arrangements in place for safeguarding and well-being during the tour. You will know that Michelle Fussell is our Club Welfare Officer. She has given guidance and advice on international tours; this is the fifth time we are running this tour.

Hotel Rey Juan Carlos 1
Avenue Diagonal 661-671, Barcelona, Spain
+34933644040
[Hotel Rey Juan Carlos I](#)

Real Club de Polo de Barcelona
Avinguda Doctor Mananon 17
08028 Barcelona
Tel +34 933640499 (Main) or +34 934480400 x 210 (Hockey Section Office)
[Real Polo Club de Barcelona](#)

Consent Form

Please complete the Consent form in the link you have been sent by email: passport information, EHIC, contact details and medical information, (allergies and medication). If anything changes regarding the medical information before the tour please ensure this is communicated to the [trip organisers](#) and your coach/manager.

Friday morning 9 December!!!

Please make sure your son or daughter has following on Friday morning:

- Passport
- EHIC
- A small amount of spending money (for drinks and snacks) in £ and euros

Dress and Kit

Players please travel in your kit (and try not to spill anything on it on the plane). It will be easier for coaches/helpers to identify players while we travel through airports if we are all in GHC kit – and it will look very smart:

- GHC white Adidas playing shirt
- GHC Adidas Hoodie/sweatshirt
- GHC Adidas tracksuit bottoms
- Trainers

Restrict casual wear to a minimum as the only time they will wear this is for the Saturday evening dinner – the rest of the time players will be in playing or training kit. Players need 3 pairs of GHC socks, probably 6 pairs of underwear and spare socks for off pitch play. Players need to look after their bodies/kit on tour – there is no relying on a parent to wash the kit so spares of the essentials are essential! If we need to organise a laundry one evening, we will.

Away shirts will be provided.

Please get as much of the [new GHC kit](#) as you can so we all look our best on tour – it will be well worth it.

Packing List

Please remember that part of the tour is about seeing what it is like to be an International Hockey player and this starts with looking after themselves including, importantly, changing to fresh clothes between matches and drying off wet or sweaty clothes and shoes between matches and days.

GHC Adidas hoodie/sweatshirt – to be worn on flight

GHC Adidas Tracksuit bottoms – to be worn on flight

GHC white playing shirt – to be worn on flight

Trainers – to be worn on flight

1, max 2 sticks

Mouthguard

Shin pads

Hockey shoes x 1pr

Water bottle - EMPTY!! for the purposes of getting it through airport security

Cricket box (short corner defenders)

3 pairs GHC socks

1 pair of under shin pad socks (breathable)

6 x Underwear

Spare socks for training / in between matches

White shorts x 2 (boys – **GHC Adidas ones please**); Navy skort or skirt x 2 (girls)

Waterproof top/warm jacket (it can get cold late afternoon/evening),

Lightweight towel to put in stick bag in case of rain (hasn't rained for the past five tours)

Vaseline for knees

Medical kit (plasters, antiseptic cream etc)

Casual shoes x 1 pair (optional)

Pyjamas

Saturday evening casual clothes

Toiletries

Alarm clock (phone if you would like but please note it is the player's responsibility to keep track of their own property – there are safes in the rooms)

Coaches/Managers will bring:

- Facemasks for defenders
- First aid kit
- Away Team shirts

Hand Luggage Restrictions

A reminder that a cabin bag must not exceed 10kg and can have total dimensions up to 56cm x 45cm x 25cm.

Please note that any **toiletries that are going to be carried in hand luggage must be in plastic bags** as per the following. Not doing this will slow us down going through the security check and a player may arrive in Barcelona having had his or her toiletries confiscated (and with unimpressed roommates after a day of hockey!).

Security update - The Department for Transport has announced that EU passengers may carry a limited quantity of liquids i.e. gels, lotions, pastes, liquid cosmetics, foams and foodstuffs in their hand baggage when going through airport security checkpoints. All liquids must be in **individual containers not greater than 100ml capacity and must be placed in one transparent, re-sealable (such as ziplock) bag (only one bag per passenger), no larger than 20cm x 20cm in size.**

Past Tours and Questions

In the past we have done an information session for parents and players. I would be very happy to do this for the U12s at BW on a Friday evening – we could meet briefly before training if that works for people. 6.30 on either Friday 18 or 25 November...

I am happy to be at the club and Charterhouse on Friday evenings and at the club on Sundays to speak with any parents who have questions about the tour. Also feel free to [email](#) or phone me **01483 416925**. A glimpse of past tours:

[Barcelona 2015 Tour Report](#)

[Barcelona 2014 Tour Report](#)

[Barcelona 2013 Tour Report](#)

Many thanks and looking forward to it,

Melinda