

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2012

### ON FIELD

As we close another season it is pleasing to be able to look back over the year and say that overall it was successful. All of the units of our club showed progress during the 2012 season and that success is directly attributable to the effort of our members both on and off the field. Our Men's unit finished the season spectacularly winning 3 premierships flags and the under 11 team that we weren't sure we would have the numbers to field played off in a grand final. Our junior unit as a whole progressed well, building on 2011 and our men fielded a 5<sup>th</sup> team for the first time. Our junior girls' team, including a number of newcomers, narrowly missed playing finals in this their second season and our women's unit continued along the path to a strong future, bolstered by the inclusion of most of our junior players.

Although we did fill most coaching positions easily, we failed to find a permanent, full-time coach for the under 15 south team. In saying that, I would like to thank Nick Alards and Paul Chaffey for donating what time they did have to helping our U15 South team, I personally appreciate your effort, so thanks.

We took a significant step this year by establishing our first "Minkey" hockey program. Minkey has been run for a number of years by some of Melbourne's most successful clubs and encourages young children in the 5-7 year age group to participate in our sport. We were fortunate enough to earn a grant from Casey Council that we put towards the purchase of equipment, and with the assistance of Just Hockey our Minkey program was up and running. I was very proud to introduce my brother, Gavin Davis, as our inaugural Minkey coach and our kids could hardly have asked for someone with a better understanding of hockey to introduce them to the basics. My thanks to Gavin for helping get this important program established.

Our top 3 Men's teams played and won grand finals – the best result in our club history. It is a real credit to the men's unit as a whole that they have created such a competitive culture within the space of just the past couple of years. Such a cultural change does not just occur, so congratulations to Matt Guastella and the coaches, captains, assistants and players who have done the hard yards and co-operated to bring about such an excellent result.

As is widely known, our women's unit is in a rebuilding stage which really does begin with providing a stable and nurturing development path for our junior girls. Our numbers have stabilised and we again fielded 3 women's teams. It is important that we continue to develop our women's program, from juniors through to seniors, in order that we provide a club with a development path for women and girls of all ages in our area to enjoy participating in our sport. To that end, all apart from a couple of inexperienced junior girls played in senior teams and it was good to see them supported and encouraged by our senior players. Well done to Stan Hatch, Andrew Harris, Michael Dale and assistants for their positive work this season.

The amendments we made in 2011 to our junior fees structure to allow juniors to play senior hockey at no additional cost has continued to encourage many of our juniors to play in our senior teams and contributed to the need to enter our 5<sup>th</sup> men's team. It also was instrumental in increasing the participation rate of our girls in senior hockey. Removing any obstacle in the path of our juniors on their journey towards senior hockey is the key to our development as a club. It should always be our goal to promote and grow a strong base of "home grown" players and nothing should give any of us more pleasure than seeing "one of our own" playing at the highest levels of our sport.

## ADMINISTRATION

Thanks to a change in committee and election structure in 2011, administration was generally more effective in 2012. Our committee numbers were stronger and I would like to personally thank those who devoted their time to making sure our club is always improving and creating an environment in which our players can perform to their best. Our elected treasurer, Chris Ferreira, resigned at the beginning of the year and I am extremely thankful to Linda Darby for agreeing to take on this important executive position and doing a great job in preparing the accounts for the season. On the topic of accounts, we were able to make a strong contribution to the "sinking fund" which goes towards the eventual resurfacing of our pitch.

Our approach is one of continual improvement. We will not resolve all issues in any single season, but we will strive to improve each year on the last and continue to encourage more members to assist with even small tasks. It is my aim as President to reduce the time individual committee members spend on administrative duties. As I have mentioned before, the days of the dutiful club servant spending countless hours around the club are diminishing and we need to find ways to spread the load among the broader membership.

There are a number of other people that I would like to thank for various off-field contributions during the 2012 season.

- Sunnii Wright for your tireless and extraordinary efforts with our junior unit in 2012
- Michael Randall for your efforts in organising the men's teams throughout the year and for getting us invaluable exposure in local newspapers
- Zena Rhyne for taking over the coaching of the girls U15 team and doing a much better job than the last coach (me) and for your efforts on our committee
- Caroline Houston for your efforts as our first Women's Vice President
- Lawrie Edwards for your efforts as our first Men's Vice President
- Joanna Shields for your work in fundraising
- Kath Shields for your efforts in producing our newsletter
- Matt Hollway for your work in fundraising
- Heath Patterson for putting your hand up to organise fundraising
- Michell Patterson for doing all of the stuff Heath put his hand up for
- Jeff Reidy for being "Minister for Everything" at our club for so long that we named the "Club Person of the Year" award after you
- Tanya Anderson for your work in promoting our club to the local schools
- Tanya Gibbons for your assistance with junior fundraising
- Fiona Young for your assistance with registrations at the beginning of the season
- Linda Darby for taking on the role as treasurer when I really needed you and with such gusto
- Aaron Tams for volunteering yourself for the web master role
- Rebekah Hodson for your work in organising the Shoot Out Cup at the beginning of 2012
- Paul Chaffey for your work umpiring and umpiring development
- Cameron Ritchie for your work umpiring and umpiring development
- Joanne Davis for your assistance when I needed it and for putting up with me during the year (really could be talking about any year)

In recognition of his role as "Ambassador for Everything" at our club, I was approached with the suggestion that we name the senior Club Person of the Year award after Jeff Reidy. After presenting

the idea to our committee it was unanimously agreed that the award be renamed the "Jeff Reidy Club Person Award". Congratulations Jeff on an honour richly deserved.

Finally, it is important that I recognise the efforts of Julie Harriman who last year took over the running of the canteen and cleanliness of our clubrooms. In that time, Julie has ensured that the clubrooms and the canteen are always in excellent condition and her efforts allow us to look far more house-proud than our actions sometimes deserve. Your successful nomination as the "Jeff Reidy Club Person of the Year" is well deserved.

### THE FUTURE

It is our task now to build on the past, on the success that we enjoyed in 2012 and look toward a strong future. We have just completed the most successful season in our club's history and it is incumbent on all of us to continue to look forward. We enter 2013 as a "Vic League 1" club and nothing will give me greater pride than to one day watch our first "Premier League" game (whilst cooking a BBQ of course). With a sensible approach there is no reason that a kid joining our club today cannot expect that with hard work he or she cannot be playing in that team – it is our job to deliver on that dream.

Our focus as a committee will remain on providing structures and stability that ensure our players and coaches can concentrate on player development and on field improvement. We will remain focused on junior recruitment, junior and senior development and stable administration. We have worked with Hockey Victoria in 2012 to improve the way we develop our sport in the Casey area and I thank them for their efforts. As a part of our continued commitment to local development, we recently coordinated with Hockey Victoria, a local awareness campaign that resulted in 100 school aged kids joining our "Hook in2 Hockey" program. The program will run over 10 weeks leading up to Christmas. To see so many new kids really enjoying their hockey experience has been wonderful to see. Thanks again to James Liggins, Cam Atkins and Andrew Skillern at Hockey Victoria for their work in promoting our sport in Casey.

On a personal note, while I have enjoyed the year as president, professional pressures have meant that I was unable to contribute as much as I would have liked during the season. I was, this year more than any, more heavily reliant on the people around me and I would like to thank them for their ongoing support. I thank the outgoing committee for their significant contribution to a very successful year and look forward to working with what already looks to be a strong committee in building a successful 2013 and beyond.

## JUNIOR UNIT REPORT 2012

What an outstanding year for me, this was my first year as the VP for the junior hockey club and I have had a really wonderful experience with everyone in the club.

On our registration day came and we had over 30 new children sign up this included our Minkey program. We had approximately 120 children registered for this year.

We had our first Minkey program which ran for most of the hockey season we had 18 children participate, we will be looking at running more programs next year but they will be Hook into hockey programs as we can get Hockey Victoria involved. We will run them through school terms which would be 10 week programs.

We had 3 teams in the finals this year U13 South and U15 Pennant boys was knocked out in the first round of the finals. U11 South team won runner up in their division. Our U9 finished on top of their division which was fantastic.

Coaches for 2012 was fine we had a couple of changes before the season began, the only let down was we did not have a full time coach for our U15 south team which was very hard on that team. 2013 is looking really good at this stage I have confirmed coaches for these teams – U16 Pennant Boys, U16 Pennant Girls, U16 South team , U14 Pennant team and U12 South team which is a great start.

After this season there are some programs that I want to look at, I have spoken to Hockey Victoria about letting me know when they have a coaching program beginning, I have a couple of people interested in participating. Also have been looking at goalie training Hockey Victoria have a program in November that is for U15 and U13 so I am going to talk to a few kids to see if they want to do this training as we had new goalies this year. We also are trialing a skills academy in October to December to concentrate on our U9,U11 and U13 children who have just started hockey or are looking at improving their skills.

We have just started our Hook into hockey Olympic program, we had 85 children sign up on the first night which has been a fantastic achievement, we may probably lose a couple along the way but Hockey Victoria at this time are still promoting our hockey club through the program at the schools in the area. I am hoping that we can get some of these kids to come down for the registration day and sign up for our teams in 2013.

Our junior registration day for next year is 17th February 2013.

I am really excited about 2013 and am looking forward to what may come our way next year.

Thank you

Sunnii Wright

## MEN'S UNIT REPORT 2012

A more successful season for the men's unit of the club we couldn't have wished for. Our numbers were up, adding a fifth team for the first time, and had more juniors involved with senior hockey than we have had. With the top 3 teams not only winning premierships but more importantly gaining promotion. Sensational news that our 1sts have deservedly been promoted to State League 2, for the first time in the club's history. This has been a work in progress, we have gone and recruited the right people, as in experienced players, who would not only be a benefit themselves, but be able to lift the skill and commitment levels of our players. The results are there for all to see. The improvement of the younger boys coming through is fantastic.

Congratulations to Matt Guastella who has done a tremendous job in his first coaching job, and the boys have thrived on his enthusiasm in the job. Hopefully Matt keeps going around and am sure that he will. Also, congratulations to his support team including Matt Gittus in his first year as captain of the 2nds who put his hand up when others wouldn't. Michael Randall who has done a unbelievable job again with the thirds, but also the running of the 4ths and 5ths, and as well as this workload, Michael needs a huge thanks for the media exposure he gets this club every week. It is not an easy job, but he's certainly a natural with some of his game commentaries he has produced this year. Great reading.

Though we have had success, there is a down side to the season. The lack of commitment from the men's senior unit to help with the junior section of the club was very disappointing. This year was probably the worst by far. We can have all the success we like, but it is only short term and a waste of time if we don't put that through to our juniors. Again commitments were made preseason but not followed through. The junior unit does a fantastic job but unfortunately most are parents with no hockey experience, and they are screaming for help. We need guys to put there hands up. Remember, someone coached you.

## WOMEN'S UNIT REPORT 2012

2012 was an interesting season for the women's unit. Unfortunately the unit as a whole did not enjoy as much success as we would all have liked, however progress has been made in some areas, and we may be able to reflect on others as areas to work on for next year.

Preseason began with several new faces and a couple of older ones who were welcomed back after injury and maternity leave! There was a much needed focus on fitness and Debbie Jacobs, who is now a qualified personal trainer, kindly agreed to volunteer her time to whip us into shape with some PT sessions – thanks Deb! Although there is always room for improvement the sessions were enjoyable and achieved real results, giving us a good foundation to build upon from the start of the season. Training proper started once weekly on a Tuesday night. This was a change from last year, when the women trained twice weekly on a Tuesday and a Thursday. However, due to poor attendance last season on a Thursday night as time wore on, this session was dropped and the focus was on Tuesdays. Stan Hatch kindly volunteered to coach the first's team and Andrew Harris did a great job giving up as much time as he could around his own commitments to the men's unit to coach the seconds. A third team was fielded after some discussion amongst the committee – there was a concern that we may have insufficient numbers to fill this team on a regular basis, particularly as the team had a history from the previous season of regularly only just scraping together the numbers or having to play short. The decision was made to enter this team in the competition, and although members did not commit to training on a regular basis Michael Dale deserves credit for his part as team manager, phoning around and rustling up players week in, week out. Overall the team has been a valuable resource – many of the junior girls have stepped up to the mark and have played games in this team at a senior level, helping to develop their skills and expose them to seniors hockey from a young age. In fact, we had juniors playing in all the senior women's teams this season, and the general consensus was that there was a good degree of improvement seen in their playing throughout the season. This is an important part of club development.

Unfortunately there is no avoiding the results....which were poorer across the board than we would have liked. In spite of this, over the season the firsts improved as a team and the seconds suffered several defeats in close matches which could have gone either way. The thirds had a larger pool of players to draw from than initially expected, with more experienced players able to guide the juniors.

Off the pitch the women's unit contributed to the club through the organisation of several successful fundraising events, With the help of Michelle Davis and several other members of the fundraising team several bake sales were held during the home rounds, and the inaugural Casey 'Ladies Day' was held to celebrate the women's division of the club and its supporters. Every dollar raised is a step closer to a new pitch, and thanks to all the women and juniors who donated their time and efforts towards fundraising this year.