

The Bottom Line

**Q E II UNDERWATER HOCKEY CLUB
 NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2004**



My Word!

And then they were gone – the Worlds have departed our fair city and left behind a number of people who can now re-connect with their families after

spending a substantial amount of time away from their loved ones, buried in various Worlds-related matters.

It has been a most successful Championships for New Zealand teams with Gold medals won by the Elite Open and both U19 teams, Silver to the Elite Women's team and Bronze to both of the Masters teams.

I have been asked to thank everybody who gave up time to volunteer at the event and congratulate you all on contributing to it running so well. The athletes were quite impressed with the friendly and helpful nature of the volunteers, as too were the officials.

So it's back to normal for the Club, although Tuesday nights are now going to be co-ordinated by Gary Kearns and Ian Barker with a skills/training session until 9pm then game-time in two courts from 9 till 9.30pm. This will give the schools teams and anyone who needs to brush up on their skills ample time to do so (as the session was initially intended).

Matt Toohey is organising the South Islands teams for 29th May in Invercargill, so contact him as soon as possible if interested – phone 372-3394.

Bryn has Club t-shirts (\$10 each or two for \$15), he also has CMAS-produced PC /Mac-based CD's (\$40) with everything you need to know about underwater hockey. They're awesome – phone 352-0047.

Coral Dolman has snorkel mouthguards (\$5 each) Email her at purpledreamer@hotmail.com or phone her at 383-2221, or on her mobile 027 224 4053.

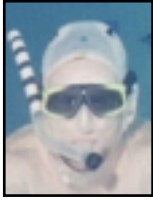
Moosh

Revised Saturday Roster 4-5pm

It is important that you make it to the sessions you have been assigned to. If unsuitable, make provisions with another member to swap their slot (please do not involve Hamish to sort it out).

Please note: the 24 April session will be 3-4pm and the 15 May session will be 3.30-4.30pm.

17 April	Mark Heberd, Penelope Spencer	21 August	Brendan Maxwell, Coral Dolman
24 April	Matt Toohey, Sam Broad	28 August	Mark Heberd, Penelope Spencer
1 May	Alan & Nicole Brown	4 September	Matt Toohey, Sam Broad
8 May	Jeff Bartels, Matt Neale	11 September	Alan & Nicole Brown
15 May	Ian Barker, Sam Pipe	18 September	Jeff Bartels, Matt Neale
22 May	Lars Jacobsen, Ian Soutar	25 September	Ian Barker, Sam Pipe
29 May	John Dunlop, Steve Brown	2 October	Lars Jacobsen, Ian Soutar
5 June	–	9 October	John Dunlop, Steve Brown
12 June	Glenn Clark, Chris Glasson	16 October	Glenn Clark, Chris Glasson
19 June	Ray Hall, Aaron Hannah	23 October	Ray Hall, Aaron Hannah
26 June	Gary Kearns, Pete Thomson	30 October	Gary Kearns, Pete Thomson
3 July	Adam Coates, Murray Greig	6 November	Adam Coates, Murray Greig
10 July	Aaron Hannah, Pete Thomson	13 November	Aaron Hannah, Pete Thomson
17 July	Steve Lee, Dennis Chen	20 November	Steve Lee, Dennis Chen
24 July	–	27 November	Aaron Smith, Julia Jenkins
31 July	Aaron Smith, Julia Jenkins	4 December	Bryn & Cassandra Thompson
7 August	–	11 December	2 volunteers required
14 August	Bryn & Cassandra Thompson		



Playing the 2-1-2-1 Formation

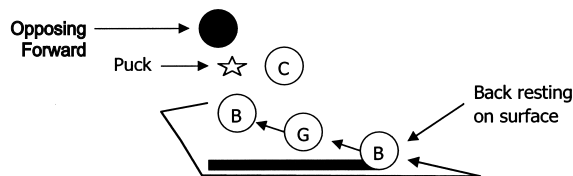
Some very useful information submitted by **Ben Huggins**

The formation I will be covering is 2-1-2-1. This essentially means we have 2 forwards, a midfield (center), two strongish backs and a competent 'goalie'. For this formation, all players need to be hard on the puck, and not give away possession without a fight. This formation is not difficult to play, as long as the whole team tries hard.

Forwards – These players are the attacking part of the team (duh!). when the team is on attack, they swim fast, strong and hard into opposition territory, creating problems for the other team. In defence, they stay forward of the backs, but continue to hassle the opposition. Forwards work in a pair, and the pair work together.

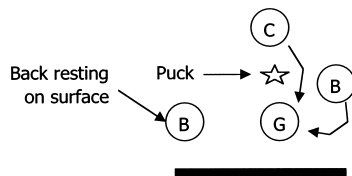
Centre – This is a pivot position. The primary job is to continually change the direction of the puck to feed both forwards as much puck as possible. This player is basically a link between the forwards and the backs. The midfielder never goes to the wall, because he should always be in the middle of the play, ready to receive the puck and pass it on, changing the direction of play or disrupting the opposition.

Backs – Both are semi-attack and semi-defence. They must support the forwards in attack, constantly passing the puck forwards and sideways to make use of as much open water as possible. In defence they must break up any attacking move of the opposition. Both need to link well with the goalie, with whom they should often rotate. When defending their own goal, the two backs and goalie begin a three way rotation, with the player furthest from the puck on the surface and the other two on the bottom.



If the goalie gets the puck, then the onside back rotates in behind the goalie. The offside back maintains position. Forwards tend to be played in front of the puck with the centre / midfield being level with the puck in the centre. The forwards and centre are waiting for the backs to feed them with the puck. However in a defensive position, the midfield is diagonally back from the puck (on the 45 degree), with the offside forward level.

If the goalie has the puck, the offside back must maintain position and the outside back must quickly rotate behind the goalie. With the mid or offside forward level with the puck.

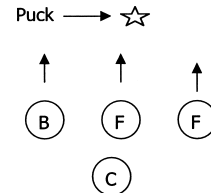


When the centre / mid goes to the surface, it is important that the midfield position is filled. This can be filled by either the goalie (in which case the mid temporarily becomes goalie) or the offside forward if in defence.

On the Strike:

Normally, forwards will position themselves opposite the puck ready to start with the other forward and back on either side. When swimming out the onside back goes out level with the forwards, the mid always being directly behind in the middle, the other back and goalie being behind.

It is important to remember that when a strike is being taken, both forwards go for the puck, and help each other out. One forward does not strike, while the other one lags behind, along with the midfield.



Feel free to ask myself or Mark Heberd about equal pucks and advantage pucks down at the pool some time.

General Formation Rules:

Whichever formation is played, it makes sense to say that the more players we have on the bottom, the better we will do. It is quite vital that we always have three people on the bottom. One player with the puck or going for the opposition with the puck, a second player available in open water for the pass, and a third player backing up the team members on the puck.

1. Think – always watch the game. Try and anticipate where the puck is going.
2. On the surface – *Sprint* to get into your position. Others are relying on you.
3. On the bottom – Ask yourself; "Can I do anything useful in the next five seconds?" If not, go to the surface, get a quick breath, and go back down.
4. *Every* member of the team must support the other. Pretty simple. Nobody swims with the puck on their own!
5. Play in pairs. That way you can support each other. A pair can be two forwards or a midfield and a back, but they can still work together.
6. When with the puck – If your team members are doing as they should, you can pass in three directions. 1 pass to the side, 1 pass forwards and 1 pass backwards.
7. When your team member has the puck – make sure he can make *all* three of those passes.

Attackers (Forwards and Midfield Players) should practice:

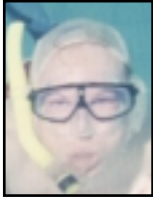
- Dummying / Side-stepping.
- Putting your body where you don't want the puck to go (when on defence).
- Flicking puck forwards onto defenders stick-side and swimming onto it.

Defenders (Backs and goalie) should practice:

- Spiking
- Covering the attackers non-stick side (to prevent dummy).
- Forcing a pass and doing a wide turn to prevent the opposition getting past.
- Keeping possession by turning before swimming off.

Ben

"The trouble with doing something right the first time is that nobody appreciates how difficult it was"



Underwater Hockey Sticks

An epic three-part mini-series by *Matt Neale*

Part 2: What shape is yours?

Welcome to Part 2 of this thrilling series of articles. In this episode we delve into the intricacies of why some sticks are shaped the way they are, and why most of us get it horribly wrong.

One of the cool aspects of our sport is that we are pretty much free to choose any design of stick, as long as it fits into two (basically) very simple rules:

1. It has to fit into a certain sized box.
2. It cannot encompass more than half the circumference of the puck.

This rule is fantastic, yet at the same time, a terrible thing. It means that Simon Superstar, an elite player with a modicum of woodworking skill can create a masterpiece of sporting equipment art – a stick that oozes class, skill and has it's own theme music and fireworks.

But it also means that Joe Sixpack, who's been playing for a week and has piece of scrappy plywood and a chainsaw sitting on top of his beer fridge, can also make his "masterpiece" over a few drinks on a Saturday afternoon.

But that's getting back to what the first article was about (quality), this time we want to know what to choose for our stick design.

If you're reading this, you've probably been playing hockey for a while and have no doubt used a wide range of sticks, from what you can dig out of the club gear bin, to something you knocked up on a weekend afternoon, through to custom made ones you borrowed from the superstars after following my advice in the first article.

So now it's time to get a custom one of your own – something that complements your playing style, something that's going to allow you to perfect your skills...

Well, there are a few things that you'll need to be thinking about that will directly influence the design of your stick...

The Puck

Which puck are you going to be using most often? The heavy, stable "NZ", "Parore" or "Worlds" puck, the light, fast and skittish "Aussie", "Oreo" or "South African" pucks, or the light, stable, rubbery resin ones.

If your answer is the heavy stable one – you ought to go for a straight or slightly curved leading edge with a decent (17 degree) bevel.

If you're going for the Aussie-style puck – you are best going for something with a moderately curved leading edge and a slight (9 degree) bevel.

If it's just general club play, then something with a slightly curved leading edge and a 12 degree bevel will see you in good stead.

The reason for the curved leading edge is to stabilize an unstable puck by spinning it as you flick. (Look up "gyroscope" in the dictionary or google for it.)

The reason for the bevel is that a more of an angled bevel means less effort in lifting the puck off the floor for a flick, at the expense of some control.

Playing Position and Style

Your playing position, and your playing style is a good guide as to what style stick you should be using. So here are some extreme and overly general generalizations.

Forwards & Midfields

These positions require similar styles of play, and tend to

benefit most from having a smallish stick that allows freedom of movement, and some tricky little skills.

Sticks to look at: Ray Hall's, Matt Neale's.

Backs & Goalies

As a back or a goalie, you'll need something a bit grunter for punching out of the mess of players around the goal, or for munching it up the wall, check out Brendan Maxwell's or Mark Hebbard's sticks for good examples of these.

Gallery of Shame

And now for a bit of light relief, the "Gallery of Shame", these are the worst examples of sticks, and a good place to start for seeing what NOT to do...

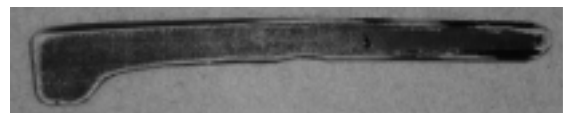
The "Hollowtech" stick



This is simply quite funny, what in the name of whatever, is that huge hole there for? Aerodynamics?

It's so aerodynamic, a puck could nearly fit through there, and the inversely curved leading edge means flicking is going to all but impossible. In its favour, it's actually not too badly made, although it is HUGE!

The "I'm sure this starred in a porn movie" stick



This thing doesn't look so bad on paper, but up close, it's awful, the hook is bad, the sharp corner at the end of the leading edge means you'll get hosed if you ever try to roll the puck around the end of the stick, and inside flicking or even turning, is just not going to happen. Nasty.

The worst stick in the history of hockey!



AHAHAHA!!! AHAH! HA!

You want to see this in real life, it's even funnier, it's in the gear cage.

Till next time.

Matt

We will all be wishing Dave Whyte the best for a speedy recovery after his hip operation last wednesday. Obviously, we will also be thinking of Pam and the girls during his recovery period. The poor things!

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Outside Hockey

The Mount Cook to Christchurch Race 'the bloody good race' was held February 27-29 with our very own Nicole Brown entering in a school team of eight.

The event includes running, road cycle, mountain biking (which i did) and kayaking from Mount Cook, making our way through to Christchurch over the three days, stopping to camp at Sherwood Downs and Mount Hutt Retreat. Our team did not have a kayaker because she got an injury before the race and had to pull out, however there was an option of doing bike stages in place of it which we did.

The first day we had perfect weather then after that all turned to cold, drizzly conditions but was so much fun still. There was such an awesome atmosphere – people were so friendly and interested in how everyone was going. You didn't have to be really competitive but just had to enjoy the race and complete it– which we did!

Even though it was a lot of hard work and was quite daunting at times (when i got lost in the middle of nowhere) it was all great fun and I honestly can't say a negative thing about it and seriously recommend it to everyone!

After the whole team crossed the finish line there was prize giving and heaps of spot prizes and what was the absolute icing on the cake for the whole event for me was winning a brand new kayak!!! I was absolutley shocked, and yes, a bit emotional. You could definitely say this has been one of the best experiences of my life and now I guess I'm doing it next year with kayak and all!

Nicole