

BACK TO HOCKEY CASE STUDY
BASINGSTOKE HOCKEY CLUB



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WHY DID WE CHOSE TO RUN SESSIONS AND WHAT WERE OUR AIMS?

In 2011 we had four ladies teams and a strong batch of juniors who were approaching the age for adult hockey. As part of our overarching club development plan we took the decision to enter a 5th team into the Hampshire leagues for the 2013-14 season.

The purpose of adding a 5th team was to have a development team to cater for the rising demand. With predicted numbers quite tight to cover five squads the club decided to promote and run Back to Hockey sessions pre-season in July and August 2013 to recruit more women.

Our aims from the Back to Hockey sessions were:

- To have at least 10 women attend each Back to Hockey session
- To financially break even
- For those players who attended sessions to have fun and recommend Back to Hockey sessions to their friends
- To get at least 3 Back to Hockey players playing regularly in league activity
- To be able to field five squads each week (13+ players) each week in 2013/14 season



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PROMOTION AND SET UP

With the support of England Hockey and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council we were set to run a summer programme throughout July and August 2013.

Before we started we promoted the sessions heavily via our club website, Facebook, Twitter, Hockey Nation Portal, the council's communication channels and with support from the local Basingstoke Gazette.

Our sessions ran on a Tuesday night between 6pm and 7pm and were attended by a whole host of volunteers including; the ladies section captain, Youth Development Manager, 4th and 5th team captains and a pool of qualified female coaches and senior players.



THE OUTCOMES FOR OUR CLUB

We had 32 women participate across a 6 week programme with an average of 20 players per week. In addition several 'returning players' took the opportunity to brush up their skills after maternity leave.

Several of our 4th team players came along to sessions which really helped to integrate new players into the club and also meant we could play full pitch games.

Eight of the 32 players are now playing regularly for the 4th and 5th teams and one has started playing for the 3rd team. In addition to this between 5-10 other women from the Back to Hockey programme have started to come to training as they enjoy it and/or they want a little more time to develop before playing for a team next season.



WHAT WERE THE BEST BITS?

The women attending really enjoyed it and keep coming back! We also have a new volunteer skill set at the club which we are already tapping into.

The level of joined up working has really brought the ladies section of the club together as well as becoming more integrated with the youth section.

It's great to see the progress of the Back to Hockey players continue to grow. With the start of the season the first Back to Hockey player scored a goal for the ladies 3rd team in October and a Back to Hockey player won player of the match for her defensive play in a her first 4th team game.



ADVICE FOR OTHER CLUBS

- Make Back to Hockey part of your clubs wider development plans with clear objectives for it that fit your overall club plans.
- Recognise that players will have different levels of fitness and ability, ensure you have a pathway for everyone to continue their hockey in a way which works for them and can be accommodated by the club.
- Make sure you have good people to lead and support the programme, and that the right people are involved to ensure integration into the club. Involve your female coaches if you can and put your senior players on the rota to attend to provide encouragement and support.
- Keep the costs to the participants down to something minimal – recognise the value to the club and try to secure the money to finance the sessions from funding or in-kind support.
- Ask for feedback and continue to measure and monitor the outcomes.
- Talk about it, write about it, tweet about it and post it on Facebook. Take lots of photos!
- Make sure your club is welcoming and the sessions are fun.



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TELL US YOUR BACK TO HOCKEY STORIES...

Is your club running Back to Hockey sessions? Tell us your Back to Hockey story and it could feature as one of our Back to Hockey case studies!

- Perhaps you have a great story about an individual player who's joined your Back to Hockey sessions?
- Maybe you've found a unique way to promote your sessions which other clubs could replicate?
- Have Back to Hockey sessions increased the number of women at your club?

Send us your stories and accompanying photos, videos and press clippings to:

jason.ocallaghan@englandhockey.co.uk



CREDITS

Thank you to Basingstoke Hockey club for providing us with their Back to Hockey story.

We would also like to thank the following people:

- Kate Whitworth, Nicola Burridge and Duncan Rounding for their photography
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