



Southern United Hockey Club Inc
Men, Women, Masters & Juniors

Southern United Hockey Club – President's 2024 Report

The Southern United Hockey Club, (SUHC), its constituent sections, teams and individual members had so much to celebrate during 2024, too much to list here with each achievement having already been acknowledged and celebrated by the club in various ways.

However a highlight of the season which we will all benefit from and share together was the completion of the replacement synthetic surface and underlay which was achieved in near record time prior to Christmas. The early anecdotal evidence suggests that the surface itself is playing even better than we might have normally expected at this very early stage of its lifecycle. A special thank you to all of those members and club office bearers who have made this possible with their prudent planning and financial management over the past twelve years.

In touching on our Office bearers above, I wish to extend the club's sincere gratitude to the members of Southern's 2024 Committee of Management (COM) for their dedication and tireless efforts over the past year. Those people are Helen Ward, Anna Jennings, Marlene Lothian, Deb Ghuliani, Suzie Styles, Ben Grant and Steve Duffield.

A special thank you to Ben Grant and Suzie Styles who have both chosen to stand down from their roles as Head of Junior Section and Head of Masters Section respectively after many years of service in these roles. Their outstanding commitment and contributions have been instrumental in managing their respective sections and helping our club navigate the challenges of COVID-19 in recent times. Thankfully both Suzie and Ben have agreed to continue to assist our club in substantial roles outside of the Committee of Management.

A huge thank you to all of our club's volunteers, whether they be age co-ordinators, managers, umpires, coaches, social committee members, canteen operatives and all of those other roles that essentially go unseen. Without each of you we cannot continue to function efficiently and effectively as a club.

From an elite-level coaching perspective, 2024 marked a period of transition and renewal, with our highly successful Premier League coaches, Jesse Workman and Matt L'Huillier, concluding their tenures as head coaches of the Men's and Women's sections. We extend our sincere gratitude to Matt and Jesse for their outstanding contributions over the past decade which have brought significant success to the club. We wish Matt all the best in his future endeavours.

We were very pleased that Jesse accepted the Women's Section Head coach role ensuring continuity and expertise in our coaching team into the 2025 season. Additionally, we were delighted to welcome Neil Hodgson as our Men's Section Head Coaching role for the 2025 season. For those unfamiliar, Neil has a very extensive Men's and Women's coaching record and was until most recently the MCC Men's Premier League coach, highlighted by MCC winning the 2023 Men's Premier League Premiership.

A significant post season highlight is the Junior Section having launched an off-season individual development program delivered by the very highly regarded John Mowat, which has been made available to EVERY junior representative of our club. To date, 80 players have either completed the program or are scheduled to do so by the end of March. The program has proven highly successful and will be used as a basis for ongoing individual development in the years to come. Thank you to Jill and Roger Arnold for launching, managing and co-ordinating this program with the assistance of Ben Grant, Gaya Kumaringam and Mick Nixon.

At Southern we pride ourselves on being a fun inclusive club promoting positive language and behaviours and ensuring that LGBTIQ+ people feel welcome to come and play. You cannot underestimate the value that being accepted and able to play a team sport has on people and we are proud to be able to do this.

Our club are very proud supporters of the Hockey Victoria/Proud to Play Stand Out Cup, entering 2 teams in 2024, and a whopping 4 teams in 2025 – including winning the A grade competition just last weekend! A big shout out to Eve Hunter who has organized and promoted the Stand Out Cup for our club over the past 2 years and to all of our members who were involved. Last weekend's event was a fantastic experience enjoyed by the 30 Southern players and friends who participated.



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Our club is in a stable and strong position leading into the 2025 season. We anticipate growth in player numbers and teams across the junior, men's, and women's sections—a reflection of the dedication and hard work of everyone involved in our club.

We all look forward to sharing even more positive experiences together as part of the Southern community during 2025 and beyond.

Ross Walker

President – Southern United Hockey Club



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SUHC Men's Section Report 2024

2024 has been another fantastic year for the Men's Section at Southern United Hockey Club. With seven weekend teams and three Monday night teams, we have continued to grow and strengthen our presence across all levels of competition.

The highlight of the year was undoubtedly our Premier League Men securing the premiership! Against all odds, they went through the finals series as underdogs and delivered a thrilling grand final victory. A huge congratulations to the team and coaching staff, including Jesse Workman in his final year as Men's Coach, and Brian Paxton, whose leadership and dedication were instrumental in this incredible achievement.

This year, we also celebrated one of the largest memberships in the history of our Men's Section. This is a testament to the hard work and commitment of our coaches, team leaders, and the Men's Committee, who have created an environment that welcomes players of all levels and fosters both development and success. We strive to build an amazing culture within our section, where every player feels valued and supported. Our goal is to develop all members, regardless of skill level, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to grow, improve, and enjoy the game. This inclusive approach has been key to our continued success and strong sense of camaraderie.

As we look ahead to 2025, we are excited to build on this momentum and continue growing our men's program. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making 2024 such a memorable year.

Here's to another great season ahead!

Steve Duffield

Men's Section Leader



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SUHC Masters Section Report 2024

The Southern United Masters section entered two teams in the HV Monday night Masters competition in the 45 and over age group (B & C Grade), and three teams in the HV Wednesday night Masters competitions (Women's 35B and Men's 50A & 50B). In the future the club will be expanding the masters team offerings to include a 60+ team on a Wednesday night.

All teams played some great hockey, everyone was enjoying being on the pitch with friends, and we always enjoy a bevie or two after the games with the usual banter and good-natured sledging.

We had 3 out of 5 teams in the final's series. Our 50B men were Minor Premiers, and our 50A & 35 Ladies ended up 4th on the ladder. Unfortunately, all 3 teams were narrowly defeated in their semifinal matches.

Thank you to all the team managers, I appreciate all your support in organising the teams each week.

A big thank you to our regular umpires Hamish Layzell, Eve Hunter, Cai Henzell, Chris McMullen and anyone else that helped out. You all did an awesome job and although we don't always show it during the games, we all do really appreciate the efforts you make to be out there to officiate and allow us to play the game we all love.

For season 2025 it looks like we will have a few more players taking the field as we recruit some more parents into the master's ranks. We have applied for a venue-based 50+ team to play each Monday at Hawthorn and will look to start canvassing players to apply for a 60+ Wednesday night team in the coming years.

As a club we need to be working hard to make 2025 a year that continues to build a positive culture and encourages all people to come along to play some hockey in a team that they feel comfortable in. It is important that everyone feels welcome, that we show respect to all players & officials and most important of all, that we strive to have fun each game, win, lose or draw.

After at least 12 years leading the master's section, I will be handing over the reins to Roger Arnold. I will continue to support Roger in his new role as Head of Masters Section and look forward to his leadership of the section as we try to expand the team offerings in the coming years.

I want to thank everyone for their support and guidance over the past 12 years, it's been a privilege being able to have an impact running our great club. I look forward to concentrating my volunteering efforts on the hockey shop and continuing to have fun playing with the master's teams well into the future.

Suzie Styles,
Masters Section Leader



SUHC Junior Section Report 2024

As the 2025 winter season approaches, the SUHC Junior Section is well placed to continue to improve results, offer a safe and inclusive environment for children to learn hockey and provide players to the senior sections.

The 2024/25 summer saw a renewed focus on junior development with a revised junior academy program overseen by John Mowat. The Southern United Hockey Club endeavors to provide an elite junior hockey program and experience that caters to all skill levels, from beginners to pennant levels through to our numerous representative squad participants. We were pleased to see several of our players make various Victorian representative teams.

Over the last summer we fielded 9 teams in indoor competitions and were happy to welcome 3 premierships including the U14 Shield, U14 Pennant and U16 Girls teams.

In the 2024 winter season we fielded:

Teams in the Under 8 and Under 10 Hockey Victoria venue based competition based at our own venue;

3 under 12 mixed teams;

3 under 14 teams – 2 boys and 1 girls team;

4 under 16 teams – 1 boys, 1 mixed and 2 girls teams;

2 mixed under 18 teams;

We have again taken the game of hockey and the SUHC name to schools and students through our Hockey Roadshow visits with a resulting in-flow of new talent to our Hookin2Hockey and Stick2Hockey program.

In the coming year we welcome Kylie Crebbin as indoor coordinator, Miyuki Imirichi as treasurer, we have appointed new coaches and are grateful for the return of our numerous team managers, age coordinators, coaches and umpires. I thank them for all their hard work on behalf of the junior section.

Many thanks are also owed to the many parents who step in to manage, help, volunteer and also take their children to the games.

To the players – we hope that we have created an environment in which you enjoy the game and continue to play it in the senior club.

Farewell to Ben Grant; his years of service to the junior section have included navigating through unprecedented challenges and rebuilding post covid, we are well placed to build on his momentum and we thank him for his efforts.

Michael Nixon
Southern United Hockey Club

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Commented [BG2]: List out indoor achievements.

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