

Henley Hockey Club 2013-14

2013-14 has been an outstanding year for Henley Hockey Club in terms of playing performance and satisfaction of members. In a climate where sports clubs are generally struggling for new membership, Henley Hockey Club has increased its number of players on both the men's and ladies' sides, whilst the Youth Academy continues to grow with yet another increase in the number of U18s taking part in hockey and progressing to the best teams at the club.

The reason for this increase lies in the committed and passionate volunteers that Henley HC is lucky to have and well over 3000 hours of volunteer time has been committed to ensuring the club provides a safe, friendly and successful environment for its members. Over 20 Youth Academy Coaches turn out every Sunday morning to provide fun and engaging sessions to over 300 young players, whilst Jeremy Clark, Trish Heggie and Catherine Brown provide structured and progressive coaching sessions for the clubs 2,3 and 4 teams. In Ian Heggie and Vicky Browne Henley can boast two of the most successful coaches that the club has seen and they are the envy of many of the other clubs in the area.

In addition Val Woods has done an excellent job organising and delivering a programme of Back to Hockey Sessions, a national initiative delivered locally to ensure more mature women are encouraged to return to a sport they once played. This is the third Back to Hockey Programme that Henley have run and there have been a number of new senior female players as a result.

From a playing perspective Henley ensure that young players from the Youth Academy are fully integrated into the senior teams. During 2013-14 30% of Henley's senior teams were made up from Youth Academy players, with the 1s and 2s both offering opportunities for U18s to be playing at a high level.

The ladies 1s this year finished 4th in Division 2 of the South League, only 2 divisions away from the National League, and registering their highest league position to date. They are also through to the final of the National Trophy in Nottingham at the end of April in an attempt to retain the title won last year. A feat never accomplished before by any team in this competition.

The men's 1s successfully gained promotion from their league to be competing again at Regional level. The promotion signifies the end of a four year period working to regain status in the Southern League.

It isn't only the men's and ladies 1st X1s who have been successful this year. All teams have played to a high standard and the Men's Masters side are through to the final of the National Over 40s Competition providing members with another opportunity to come and support their club at the highest level.

All in all a very pleasing year and one which makes me very proud to be Chair of such a vibrant and caring club.

Jen Buckham
Chair
Henley Hockey Club