

Chairwomen's Report 2017-18

The 2017-18 season has been another competitive one. Results show there was some fierce competition in many divisions, not only for the top spot but also for second to fourth places, with one win, one point or the number of wins deciding places. It has been very pleasing to see new clubs continue to grow and develop whether they were new last season or this one. We tried to shorten the season for most teams, as I know many feel it is too long. This is something we will try to plan in the upcoming season.

The topic of divisions and promotion and relegation is always a hot one. We introduced one up and one down for the current season, but already the committee has discussed the divisions for the upcoming season and feels this may not be the only option. There seems to be a huge discrepancy between the levels in some of the divisions; three or four teams had a big points advantage over the rest. One recommendation is to increase the Premier to 8 and all other divisions to 10, which would mean losing the 5th division. No decision has been made yet, and although this suggestion would go against our one up, one down policy, please know that we do not take such decisions lightly and try to find the best solutions for Hong Kong hockey taking into consideration the current teams.

The HKHA has purchased new, specialized hockey boards for 5's but the logistics of storing, using and transporting them are still being resolved. This meant our tournaments this year may have looked a little different but I have had positive feedback. We have built in flexibility for next season as to when we hold the 5 aside by taking it out of the SF & OC festival of sport. We have discussed the best time of year to hold these and one option is to hold them at the beginning of the season as a warm up. Any suggestions on one day tournaments are always welcome.

Our National Senior squad has had another busy, and successful, twelve months. Their hard work is paying off as they qualified for the Asian Games, and brought back a trophy from the Asian Challenge. This win was a great boost to the team's confidence. The qualification for the Asian Games was a huge triumph, with the ladies winning some key games to finish the qualifiers as runners up. Now they look ahead to the Games in August with training games in Guangdong and competing in the Hockey Series Open in Singapore. We continue our goal of improving our Junior programme. A key focus for the latter half of the season was 5's, with the girls competing in a new, local youth 5's tournament, and the Youth Olympic Game Qualifiers in Bangkok. The girls were runners up in our youth 5's but the competition was tough at the qualifiers. Though the girls finished 8th, the experience was invaluable. We are hoping to reintroduce at least one junior team into the league to widen our pool of regular players and to increase their competitive experience. I would like to extend my thanks to Arif Ali and Amy Lip for their continued hard work and effort.

We have decided to propose a restructuring to our committee for next season to reflect the change in the nature of the work done by our office. Over the past few years, more of our operations have become online, from player registrations to match cards. This means that the job descriptions of the people working in the office has changed slightly allowing them to take on more responsibility. They are now able to incorporate some of the jobs covered by our registrar and umpire's secretary. There

has also been a change in the office in the past few months meaning one administrative assistant will deal with all league matters and one with all national squad matters. This will, hopefully, increase efficiency.

The outgoing Council would like to make the following recommendation to the 2018-19 Council and section committees. We are strongly suggesting this to improve our efficiency, and to make things fairer and more transparent in all areas of hockey in Hong Kong. In particular, it is hoped that the proposal leads to a Council that can make and implement policy decisions in the best interest of Hong Kong hockey as a whole without sub-committees either directly or indirectly fettering Council's decision-making process. The recommendation we are making is already current practice in most other National Associations around the world. It is that there be only one committee and all matters pertaining to hockey in Hong Kong be run by this committee i.e. the Council. This means that there would no longer be different section committees with separate byelaws, rules and budgets as we currently have. The Council would appoint various subcommittees purely to help Council on different matters such as all National squads, all leagues, development, and promotion and marketing. This may mean enlarging the size of the Council and inviting other members to contribute to such subcommittees. The finer details will need to be worked out and we recommend that the incoming Council put together a working party/committee together to work these out with the view of implementing it in the 2019-20 season. Although this sounds like a radical shake up, we hope, if done properly, any changes made will be for the better. The day to day running of leagues should not be adversely impacted and clubs would still have voting rights at the AGM but there would only be one AGM. The restructuring would be at a committee level only. If people have any comments please feel free to reach out and let us know.

This will be my last year as Chairwoman, though I will stay on the committee for another year to ease transition. I have enjoyed my time on the committee and have countless people to thank; people who have put in a lot of time and effort to help improve Hong Kong hockey. Thank you to them all.