



Sport History

Hockey

Origins and the sport today:

While the history of sport involving a stick and ball dates back more than 4000 years, the first hockey club was founded in Blackheath, England, in 1861. Influenced by hurling in Ireland, shinty in Scotland and bandy in Wales, the Amateur Hockey Association was formed in Great Britain in 1886 – nine years later, Wales played Ireland in the first hockey international.

Introduced to the Olympic program at London 1908, it appeared sporadically at the Games over the next few decades before the International Hockey Federation (FIH) was formed in 1924 with representatives from seven national associations: Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Spain and Switzerland.

The move from grass to artificial turf in the 1970s provided a huge boost for the sport, improving speed of play and appeal to larger audiences. The Hockey World Cup takes place every four years, with the FIH Champions Trophy between World Cups and Olympic Games.

Hockey at the Commonwealth Games:

Field hockey is a core sport at the Commonwealth Games, meaning it has to be included in the program, and made its debut at Kuala Lumpur 1998. The other nine core sports are aquatics (diving and swimming), athletics, badminton, boxing, lawn bowls, netball, rugby sevens, squash and weightlifting.

Thirteen countries have taken part in Commonwealth Games hockey competition, with Kenya (Kuala Lumpur 1998) and Barbados (Manchester 2002) the only countries to make just one appearance.

Australia has enjoyed almost total dominance, with nine out of a possible 10 gold medals across the men's and women's tournaments at the Commonwealth Games. However, the Australian women could only win bronze at Manchester 2002, with India taking gold and England silver.

While the men's finals have generally been won convincingly by Australia, the women have provided some more closely-fought action. Their most recent two finals have gone to penalty stroke shootout, with Australia defeating New Zealand at Delhi 2010 and Australia beating England at Glasgow 2014. The Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games final also went to extra-time, with India beating England 3-2.

Hockey in Australia:

The Australian Hockey League (AHL) was formed in 1991 and encompasses the men's and women's game. It is considered one of the most competitive national field hockey leagues in the world, despite its non-professional nature. Competing in the AHL is a prerequisite for Kookaburras (men's national team) and Hockeyroos (women's national team) selection.

The most successful teams in the men's league are the Queensland Blades and WA Thundersticks. For the women, the league has generally been dominated by the New South Wales Arrows, Queensland Scorchers and WA Diamonds.

Midfielder/striker Jamie DWYER is considered one of Australia's finest players, winning Olympic gold at the Athens 2004 Games and bronze at Beijing 2008 and London 2012, along with three Commonwealth Games gold medals. DWYER was also named IHF World Player of the Year in 2004 and 2007.



**Gold Coast Hockey Centre
(GHC)**

Hockey



Mark KNOWLES has been captain of the Kookaburras for many years and was named World Player of the Year in 2014. But Ric CHARLESWORTH is considered by many to be the most complete player of all time, with his career spanning 20 years before he retired at the Seoul 1988 Olympic Games – he also coached the men’s and women’s national teams.

In the women’s game, Madonna BLYTH has won gold at three Commonwealth Games and is only the fifth Australian to play 250 games for her country. Alyson ANNAN was a skillful midfielder with an outstanding goalscoring record, who won two World Cups, two Olympic gold medals and five consecutive Champions Trophy titles.