

GLOUCESTERSHIRE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

Player Pathway report for GHA AGM Wednesday 23rd September 2020.

At the start of the year in September a discussion took place over the role of the Committee regarding oversight of the Player Pathway activities. It was agreed that the Committee role was to agree the budget, but everything else would be the responsibility of the PP team. This would consist of James Doughty, Angie Pearce, Shaun Cullimore and Ian Harvey.

In respect of the cycle for 2019 - 20 season and the associated costs, it was agreed the target was to break even. However, at that time due to the associated costs and the numbers of players signed up it was likely there would be a small loss which could be mitigated if more players signed up at the last minute. The possibility of a small loss was accepted by the Committee. In respect of coaches; details remained to be finalised, but it was hoped to be able to use GoCrea8 for additional resources. The next cycle would have a full year budget established with the target of break even, this cycle to start with U13s / U14s DC in the spring of 2020.

Lastly there was a discussion about the difficulty of competing with other sports particularly in the boys and how often the training sessions conflict with those other sports. There was also concern again expressed over the purpose of the PP and whether it should be inclusive or aimed at developing the elite players. This was something it was felt could be addressed when the planning for 2020 – 21 took place.

At the December 2019 Committee meeting it was reported that 2 Development Centres (DC) at 12 weeks each and 6 Selection Centres had been run between March and November 2019. 435 players had been registered from nominations from 27 schools and clubs, 5 venues were used. 96 places were available for the end of season tournaments (a limit of 16 per squad), 143 players were selected to work in the AC squads prior to final selection. No paperwork was completed for the DC which put the effectiveness of the selection assessments at risk. No paperwork on player performance was collated for the first selection assessments (under 15s); the assessments were subsequently re-run successfully using a new process.

The conclusions from this were that there were too many players with too diverse skill-sets nominated. This invited the question whether the nomination system and process was effective and this led to a set of proposals for the next cycle as follows:

- a) Focus on the elite players that have the potential to play at AC and beyond
- b) Move to a single venue - Oxstalls
- c) Limit squad size to maximum 20 players - including keepers
- d) Have selection broadly complete by the beginning of September
- e) Send GHA selectors to the three U12 junior festivals in 2020 to recruit under 13s
- f) Increase the number of AC sessions from 6 to 9 from September 2020 to March 2021

As well as selection a number of other concerns had been identified.

1. Coach recruitment. Very little paperwork was available on the PPS (see below) for GHA coaches meaning that GHA had a risk of failing to comply with EH guidance. The process developed was that all coaches must now be registered as a coach on the England Hockey Player Pathway System and have mandatory documentation in place (DBS and Safeguarding). This was 90% complete as of the start of December 2019. 16 coaches were properly registered and new guidance for coaches had been drafted.
2. Full adoption of the on-line **Player Pathway System (PPS)** was implemented. It was found that there were some limitations on how the system works which we were slowly addressing in partnership with England Hockey.
3. At the December meeting it was reported that Finances were on track with no obvious indication there would be a loss .

At the February Committee Meeting the report covered the progress being made:

2020-2021 Season AC Selection Changes.

- In March 2020 the final training sessions would focus on which players should attend a DC in May and which players could go straight to trials in September.
- In May 2020 a 3 week DC would be run by GoCrea8 which will recommend players to attend AC trials in September
- In September 2020 AC trials would take place with all squads being in place by the end of September at the latest
- Squads would be limited to 20 players and all training was being planned to be at Oxstalls.

Other progress made was as follows:

- Independent assessors had attended 3 under 12 festivals and a core list developed of under 13 players that would be invited to the May DC and potentially the September trials.
- All the above was communicated to players, player parents, clubs, schools and coaches week commencing 17th February.

Coaches

All GHA coaches were reported as having been registered on the PPS with the majority of their documentation up to date. New guidance for coaches had been published and a process implemented to enable better visibility of which coach was on which pitch at which time.

Sadly all of this came to a halt in March with no further activities after the government ordered lockdown against Coronavirus on 23rd March stopped all hockey activities nationally. The outcome has been that plans have been shelved and new options have been developed. The latest situation is as follows:

Players

COVID-19 impacted the end of the season tournament for the U16/17 squads but all other squads did complete their final tournaments. The younger squads did very well and 25 players had been nominated for PC Assessment. The planned May Development Centres have been shifted to September. GoCrea8 will continue to have an involvement in delivering them.

The restart of the PC, AC and DC program looks likely to be in September. This will probably just involve GHA to start with as other counties have been impacted by not having their Development Centres in May or June. A full restart is being planned for January 2021.

Coaches

All player assessments were completed by the lead coaches by the 30th April - a huge thank-you to them for doing this. Coaches are being informally consulted on the practicalities

of moving to a single venue; kit is being collected and a stock take being taken; investment in new coaches kit is underway; new methods of tracking coach deployment have been implemented and the payment process simplified.

Next Season

The following principles have been agreed for next season

- a) Focus on the elite players that have the potential to play at AC and beyond
- b) Move to a single venue - Oxstalls
- c) Limit squad size to maximum 20 players - including keepers
- d) Have selection broadly complete by the beginning of December (depending COVID-19 developments)
- e) Player assessments and selection processes will be refined, based on what was used this season.
- f) A coaching programme will be developed in liaison with PC

James Doughty

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