



## North West Hobart Graduates Hockey Club (NWHGHC) Imports and Hosting Guidelines



### Purpose of hosting player imports

NWHGHC have benefited from hosting imports from various countries across the world. These imports bring not only a diversity of skills and experience to our hockey team, they also bring a different perspective and life experiences to share with our members who engage with them.

### Before considering an import

Prior to reaching out to international hockey networks seeking expressions of interest for import players in our A-Pool teams the following points must be considered.

- Are there suitably skilled or developing juniors that will be displaced by importing a player, if yes:
  - Consider the overall make up of players to determine if a specific field position/role is required within the team structure.
  - For our developing juniors (or seniors) - do they have the confidence and skill to take the next step in A-Pool without putting them in a safety risk situation or that is detrimental to their development pathway.
  - Is there a team strategy, such as rebuilding, player retention, premiership success or junior development benefits, that aligns with obtaining import(s)?
- Are there host families willing to bring an import into their family?
- Is there any sponsorship funding available to assist with travel costs?
- Is there an opportunity to import from the Tasmanian player pool rather than going interstate or international?

Should the import position being considered relate to a coach or other role within the club, it is important to consider those points above as they apply to the specific position.

### Managing junior player (and other player) expectations

Our junior program is extensive and members right across our club dedicate time and effort into the development of junior players. It is essential to ensure that realistic expectations are set for juniors as they strive to reach the highest level they can in their hockey careers. This may not always be premier league.

It is important that every opportunity is provided to our junior and senior players, to develop and to reach their full potential, this includes playing, coaching, umpiring or in an officiating capacity. Managing the expectations of our players and working to engage the diverse pool of skills and qualities is important in achieving the best outcomes for all parties.

An import coming into our club, without managing our own up and coming player expectations, can be damaging to player morale and loyalty, particularly for those players who have come through

the junior ranks from a young age. This does not mean an import should not be considered. A potential import should be assessed in their ability to support up and coming juniors and players to the next level through mentoring, skill development and coaching activities. Junior and senior players deemed on the fringe of A-Pool should be spoken to with respect and provided an overview of the plan for their development and the benefit of bringing in an import player.

With respect to the A-Pool player group that an import player is targeted to join, the respective coach is to communicate the strategy for the inclusion of such import/s into the team.

## Targeting the right imports

If an A-Pool coach determines an import player is required, notification of this decision must be provided to the President of the club prior to any arrangements being confirmed. The notification to the president must include and outline why an import is required and address the points listed within this document and the criteria noted below. This information is to be passed onto the committee as soon as possible to assist in managing player and parent expectations and concerns.

As a guide when targeting an import player, the following criteria should be met.

- The player skill set is to be equal to, or better than, our top 5 premier league players (or 1<sup>st</sup> grade if importing for a 1<sup>st</sup> grade player)
- The player must also offer other skills that benefit our club such as coaching, mentoring, umpiring, etc
- The player must be able to adhere to all policies adopted by our club, including those under the member protection policy.  
<http://www.hockey.org.au/Portals/2/PDFs/Committees%20&%20Governance/2015%20Hockey%20Australia%20Member%20Protection%20Policy%20V9%20%20FINAL.pdf>
- The player must complement our club culture. Remembering each player will have individual circumstances, needs and wants, and this should be considered on merit.
- The player must want to play for our club, not focus on wanting to earn money from playing. As a club we are not wanting to foster a “pay for play” culture with our imports. The intention must remain a purely “amateur” arrangement which necessarily involves some voluntary cost incursions by all individual parties involved.

If a coach or other role within our club has been identified as benefiting from an import then this strategy must be brought to the committee, along with the reasons for the need of an import, for consideration prior to any advertising or approaches being made. The above points should also be considered as they apply to that particular position.

## Issues for club and import consideration

There are a number of items that need to be arranged and considered prior to an import coming to our club:

- The player must have the correct visa and ability to earn money whilst in Australia e.g. working/study visa, appropriate passport expiry date? Alternatively, they must have independent funds sufficient to cover all costs whilst they are here.

- Will their visa enable them to be in Tasmania for the duration of the season, if not how long and how will this impact the team?
- If coaching, they will require a valid “Working with Vulnerable People” card.
- They will need club uniform to enable them to play.
- Medical / travel insurance must be valid for the duration of their stay at their own expense.
- Are there any sponsors (in addition to our normal sponsor funding) who are happy to sponsor an import and if so, what are their expectations in return for their investment?

### Points for families to consider when hosting an import player

- Consider the age of family members e.g. will a young adult wanting to socialize late at night on weekends fit with a household of younger children?
- Skype and familiarise yourself with the athlete for their compatibility with your family.
- Is there a language barrier and will this be an issue that you can or cannot manage?
- Have an “opt out” understanding if it is decided that the player or the family feel it will not be a good fit. – Work with the committee and A-Pool coaches to establish a backup plan.
- Vehicle usage and driver’s license?
  - If no license, or available vehicle for them to drive, is there readily available alternative transport? What is your home’s proximity to the Hockey Centre and other services?
- Access to wifi and mobile phone data for communication whilst the import player is here and for their communication back home
- Own room - they will need their own space
- Understanding Household rules and expectations (eg: laundry, cooking, bathroom and hot water usage, etc)
- Do they have any special dietary requirements?
- Pets? Do they have allergies etc?
- Have an open understanding with regards to finance and living costs.
- If player isn’t studying or working, have activities and options for them during the day.

### Reference material

Have a look at some websites dedicated to being a host family. Do some research prior to volunteering to become a host. There are some great benefits to hosting someone in your home, however, to be successful it requires some change and effort for you and your family.

<http://www.irstampedeaaa.com/housing>

<https://qut.studystays.com.au/homestays/pages/tips-to-hosting-an-international-student-in-the-home>

### Code of Conduct

Our club aligns with codes of conduct outlined in the Hockey Australia Member Protection Policy. All players, irrespective of their origin, should be aware of, and adhere to, the requirements outlined within this document and understand the expectations.