



2023 YEARBOOK

University Juniors Hockey Club

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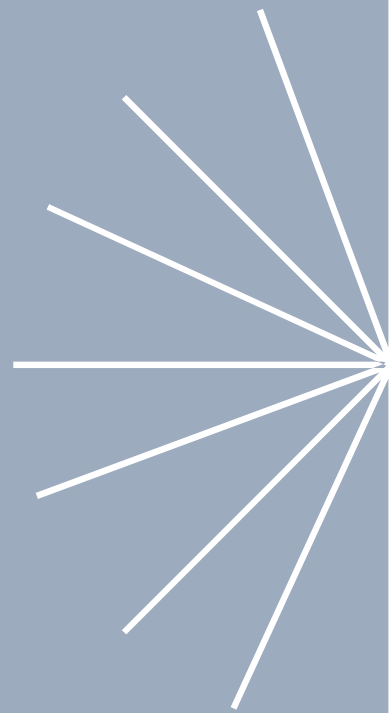


Yearbook Acknowledgements

University Juniors would like to thank Glenn Dando, our official club photographer, for his tireless efforts capturing our community in action.



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YEAR IN REVIEW

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CLUB POSITION

2023 was a year of success for University Juniors both on field and off field. Off field we again set a record for membership numbers with more than 260 joining the club. We also set new heights for player retention this year with more than 15 players hitting the five-year playing mark, we also had a first 15-year player milestone achieved with the last of the inaugural members, Aiden Hellyer being duly recognised at our club presentation day. These milestones were complemented by a return of some of our off-field social activities such as our Hin2H bake sale and the securing of some new club sponsors, in particular Signature Strata, our new main sponsor.

THE FUTURE

Well done to all players and parents and a big thanks to the support of the ANU club coaches for their guidance of players through the season. We look forward to another great year working with you in 2024.

SEASON RESULTS

This good off-field achievement was surpassed however by the performance of our juniors on the pitches. Starting with our youngest stars, the Hin2H cohort, the program was slightly down on recent records but made up for it in enthusiasm and talent. They showed their skills off by dominating the two Hin2H carnivals and I am sure there are a few senior club superstars amongst them.

Our U11 cohort improved dramatically through the year as well and whilst there were no titles in this group, the U11 Div 1 Girls team made a tight game of it in the grand final. From there the results got even better, our U13 Div 1 Girls team atoned for their Grand Final loss in 2022 by doing the minor and major premier double. It was dual success in the U15s, our U15 Div 1 Girls swept all before them doing the double as well, while the U15 Div 2 Boys joined forces with Central to win that competition as the Blizzard team. Coach Ben Ward did a great job initially coaching a team with a really wide spread of skills, then pivoting to the blended team and the politics and challenges that come with that.

Finally in the headline category it was success for both Boys and Girls teams. The Boys swept the comp as well – surviving a scare in the semi before dominating the grand final to take out the Div 1 competition. Our Girls after a tough year last year, had a great year. The girls were initially nominated as a Div 2 team but were promoted by Hockey ACT into Div 1 based on their strength and resilience. That didn't deter the girls who continued to turn up and compete each week with enthusiasm – that is why we treat them as the real U18 Div 2 champs.



OUR COACHES



TEAM REVIEW - HOOK IN 2 HOCKEY

This year's Hin2H season was blessed with fantastic weather and a great group of kids.

This year our group of around 60 kids were ably coached by Toby and Mark (the older kids) and Emma and Wayne (for the younger kids) but we also had some great support from parents helping out as well as some of our older players. This kids really enjoyed seeing the older players from the club there as it gives them something to aspire to.

This year we also enjoyed two Hin2H carnivals that were both well attended from our group and gave our kids an opportunity to apply the skills they were learning week in and week out.

Being involved in this group is always my highlight as President and I hope to see all of this group back with the club in 2024.



TEAM REVIEW - U11 BLUE DIV 2

In the thrilling world of sports, teams often fall into two categories: those who rely solely on their natural talent and those, like our U11 Blue squad, who understand the power of unity, determination, and the occasional cartwheel! While our win column might only show one victory, let's remember that numbers don't define us. This squad is all about enjoying the game, supporting one another, and soaking up valuable life lessons along the way.

Our players not only improved their individual skills but also fostered strong bonds, both on and off the field. The introduction of 'Susan,' our secret game plan, injected a new level of complexity into our gameplay. Every match felt like a high-stakes chess game, filled with brilliant moves and tactical mastery. We evolved from underdogs into fierce competitors, proving that together, we can conquer any challenge.

In hindsight, this season was about more than just wins and losses. It was a testament to the strength of our collective spirit, the value of never giving up, and the joy of celebrating each other's achievements. To the U11 Blue team, you've shown that age is just a number when it comes to determination and teamwork. As we look ahead, we do so with excitement, knowing that we'll continue to conquer challenges one cartwheel at a time. Here's to an incredible journey and the adventure that await us in 2024!



TEAM REVIEW - U11 YELLOW DIV 2

The Uni Juniors Yellow team were a team of champions. For many it was their first time playing hockey and for others they were new to Canberra so it took some time for us to play as a team. But with commitment and passion we did.

A lot of the time we were short on players and sometimes we were tired from training before the game but we kept going and always tried our best.

Big shout out to the best team ever - Scarlet, Ruby, Hannah, Violet, Gus & Oscar, Mark, Eloise, Charlie and Dylan.



TEAM REVIEW - U11 BOYS DIV 1

2023 was a season of 'new' for the U11 Div 1 Boys- not just a new team being put together, but also getting a newbie of a coach. But even after their first game, I already knew these boys would make me, the club, and their parents proud, and they've proven that throughout the season. Their fighting spirit never ceased to amaze me - whether we were playing short or even if we had subs, this team always worked hard and fought for every game.

Because this is my first time coaching a team, I can very confidently say: you boys are the best team I've ever coached! 🥰 For real, it was heaps of fun to coach you guys, and I hope you learnt something from me because I definitely learnt a lot from y'all! It's been amazing watching you all grow into the team and players you are now, and you should be very proud of your incredible efforts this season.

Thank you all for a great season, and hope to see you all around the hockey fields again!

- Yleia



TEAM REVIEW - U11 GIRLS DIV 1

As a parent it was fantastic watching these girls develop over the course of the season. Most had played together before but we welcomed a couple of new players, Bridie and Ave, and they fit in like old friends.

Maeve's experience as a coach shone through as the season went on and the girls became more and more confident in themselves and each other. And they never stopped enjoying the game - even after a Grand Final defeat they were still positive.

Great job, Maeve and Girls.



TEAM REVIEW - U13 BOYS DIV 2

The Div 2 Boys were a pleasure to coach. They were always very attentive and were super keen to learn and develop their hockey skills. For a few in the team 2023 was a step-up to full field hockey and they did fantastic - players like Joel, Ryker, Tyrus and Max were everywhere. They were supported by a group of solid defensive players in Raff, Santi, Saad, Josh and Atticus with Dorito an impenetrable wall in goals. Finally we had our super rookies, Angus and Finn, who came into the team with very little knowledge but ended the season as fantastic hockey players.

Thank you to the support of the parents, particularly Greg who stepped into to coach when neededble.



TEAM REVIEW - U13 GIRLS DIV 2

AMELIA: Amazing, Majestic, Enthusiastic, Lovable, Indispensable, Aggressive

AVE: Amazing, Versatile, Enthusiastic

BRIDIE: Busy, Reliable, Identifiable, Dangerous, Intuitive, Enthusiastic

CHLOE: Calm, Helpful, Lovable, Outstanding, Enthusiastic

DITA: Determined, Integral, Tactical, Amazing

ELLA: Enthusiastic, Lovable, Lively, Amusing

ELOISE: Elegant, Lively, Outstanding, Incredible, Sweet, Enthusiastic

ELSIE B: Encouraging, Lively, Strong, Incredible, Enthusiastic, Brilliant

ELSIE O: Eager, Lively, Spacious, Indispensable, Enthusiastic, Outstanding

HANNAH: Happy, Aggressive, Nutty, Noisy, Amazing, Handy

LAKSMI: Lively, Amazing, Keen, Strong, Magical, Intuitive

MILLA: Magnificent, Identifiable, Lively, Loveable, Aggressive

MILLIE: Magnificent, Indispensable, Lively, Lovable, Incredible, Enthusiastic

PHOEBE: Patient, Happy, Outstanding, Enthusiastic, Brave, Energetic

POPPY: Powerful, Outstanding, Pleasant, Patient, Youthful,

STELLA: Spacious, Thoughtful, Enthusiastic, Lively, Lovable, Amazing

SAMMIE: Strong, Ambitious, Magnetic, Magical, Incredible

From the parents - Thanks to our wonderful coach, Ann. You built a TEAM amongst our girls, setting a great foundation for future success and friendship.



TEAM REVIEW - U13 BOYS DIV 1

It was a pretty challenging year for the Div 1 Boys, after losing a few players from ageing out and moving interstate, getting the balance of the team right was tricky. But this group of young men were up for the challenge week after week against some tough opposition.

Their commitment to training and developing their skills through the season was outstanding and I couldn't be more proud of them as a coach. The parent group was also super supportive of what we were trying to do with the group.

As a result of their commitment we made semis and as a testament to the resilience they showed we turned up to that game with a game plan to have fun and we did. It was my pleasure coaching you.



TEAM REVIEW - U13 GIRLS DIV 1

2022 ended in a heart breaking grand final defeat for the 13 Div 1 Girls. Many of the same team were back for 2023 and they were out to make up for that loss. Just as in 2022, they were the stand out team throughout the regular season, always playing at a high standard with a disciplined game plan.

They came through a semi-final against a fractious opponent before atoning for 2022 with a stirring win in the Grand Final. Congratulations to Adam and the team: Gin, Diya, Nev, the Goulburn super-sisters Hannah & Clara, Ari, Gwenyth, Maeve, Ava and Edith. A particular shout out to Sadie, who was out injured for a chunk of the season but kept connected and supporting her teammates.



TEAM REVIEW - U15 GIRLS DIV 2

The under 15's girls had a very strong and solid start to the season with some fresh faces and familiar people. Much like many new teams we took some weeks to adjust and learn each other and our individual play styles but when we came together at the end of the year we proved we were able to compete and show we were a force. The girls all had massive improvement from our first game. What makes me proud the most was how well the girls connected with each other, not just their friends but to our new players as well.

Thank you to Bec for managing this year, I greatly appreciate everything you did for the girls and myself. Whether it was providing the snacks each game, the communication and advice for myself.

Well done girls, you've made me proud to coach you.



TEAM REVIEW - U15 BOYS

The 15s Boys had a bit of an adventure in 2023. At the start of the season it wasn't quite clear where the team would play but the boys didn't let this distract them from their training and development.

After a tough first few games in the first division, the 15s comp combined and we started to see some results from our efforts on the training field. Mid season, the comp split again and we joined forces with Central as a Division 1 team, the Avalanche, and a Division 2 team, the Blizzard.

The Avalanche team were pretty competitive, making semis and the Blizzard went undefeated to win that competition. Coaches Jarrod Brooks and Ben Ward did a great job initially coaching a team with a really wide spread of skills, then pivoting to the blended team and challenges that come with that.



TEAM REVIEW - U15 GIRLS DIV 1

What a fantastic year for the U15 Div 1 girls. We finished the round games with the minor premiership which was an awesome achievement. The girls also won the grand final ending as premiers for the season! Congratulations girls! You put in a huge effort over the season which paid off.

We had a team full of players where no one wanted to play fullback. And we had so many players who played amazingly there! So thanks to everyone who was put there and helped the team stay strong. Our attack was also strong and we scored 44 goals over the season; we only conceded 9. We changed the girls around during the season so that they got experience playing a range of positions including those they hadn't played before, and they all did fantastically. We had a focus on working together as a team, and the passing we saw in their games was evidence of this. Everyone got players player votes over the season demonstrating that each player was valued by their team mates. We loved the great sportsmanship they all showed on the field.

Many of the girls doubled up with games each weekend playing U13s, U15/2s or U18s as well. It was great this year to see many of the girls at the start of their senior hockey careers playing in the senior women's comp, including for our senior university clubs UC and ANU.



TEAM REVIEW - U18 GIRLS DIV 1

The 18 girls had a very unique season this year, we started the year strong in 18/2s. After a mid-season competition merger, we were moved into Div 1. While we had some very challenging games the team really stepped up to the challenge and benefited from the more structured and experienced oppositions. We ended up drawing against a Div 1 team and then beating one which is a great effort from where we started. The team's improvement over the season has been amazing, they didn't give up and they always worked together as a team and had great sportsmanship. In the semi-finals, we played against Central who was top of the table, in our first game against Central we didn't get the ball in the circle, and while this game ended in a loss we scored a great goal which shows how much the team had improved.

While the season ended with much more difficult games than what we would have had staying in Div 2, the improvement and experience this season is only going to lead to an even stronger team next season. I really enjoyed coaching this team and I hope to see everyone who isn't graduating next year!

A huge thank you to Leanne for managing the team and all the work you put in this season. Thank you also to all the families for their support



TEAM REVIEW - U18 BOYS DIV 1

The final team to review for the 2023 season is the Div 1 18s Boys team. Unlike previous years, where the club had two teams in the 18s comp (one combined in Div 2), this year we put all our eggs into one basket and set out to win the biggest prize in junior ACT hockey - a Div 1 18s title. Whilst the Club has achieved that in the girl's comp, we hadn't yet in the Boys.

It is fair to say that we had a very willing group of hockey players up for the challenge with a squad of 18 through the season. That squad size brought with it some flexibility to deal with injury and absence but it also meant getting the team playing cohesively was a challenge. Coached ably by our coach of the Year, Nathan, the team did just that, coming together to play an attractive brand of hockey through the year. There was a slight wobble in the semis, where Marist pushed us more than expected but our Grand Final was a dominant performance to cap off a strong year.

Congratulations to Nathan and the Boys and now the pressure is on to defend our title in 2024.

