

## **BHC Juniors Annual Report 2022**

### **Highlights**

**Banbury Club Festival 2022**

**U8/U10/U12 Growing participation and good quality coaching**

**U16 Boys Winning the league**

**Hosting competitive U12 tournaments at Bloxham**

**Hosting U8/U10 match days at Bloxham**

**U16 Boys league winners**

### **General Overview**

This season we have seen growing participation across the Junior Section and notably in the youngest age groups on Sunday mornings. As the Juniors have been able to play more fixtures, festivals and tournaments through the season we have seen the player grow in confidence and connect as teams.

There has been a core team of volunteer coaches and managers who have made the season possible. Increasing participation in junior coaching from the Senior section of the club will be a priority for next year

We hosted the Banbury Junior Festival and the In2 Hockey Tournament this year, both a success and with learnings for next year as new organising team developed. We will be establishing a Junior Committee for next season to help the Junior Section develop further

### **U8/U10**

Great engagement from players, parents and coaches. Sunday's at Bloxham have been busy with growing numbers of juniors enjoying the sessions. It has been wonderful to see the increasing participation of the 6-7 year olds at the sessions.

### **Under 12 Boys & Girls**

Good league structure for U12 they played a lot, big squads and great commitment throughout the age group.

### John Woodhouse - U12 Boys Report:

A loyal and ever available core of 7-12 boys made up the match day/tournament squad and all bar the 'In2Hockey' tournament hiccup, they were magnificent.

The highlight being the Witney tournament, at Cokethorpe School, in January. We only had a basic 7 players and were the only team in the tournament without a goalkeeper; yet the boys put

in a superb performance to, of the 6 matches, win 4, draw 2 and in the process only concede 1 goal.

Though just as important, the most pleasing aspect for me is how a group of boys, some complete strangers to each other, truly gelled as a formidable hockey team by working together, encouraging each other and exhibiting determination to do their best whilst also being magnanimous in victory, but gracious in defeat.

Mums and Dads, it has been an absolute pleasure to guide your boys through the 2021-22 season of U12s hockey. Thank you all for your support during the matches, ferrying the boys to and from both training and the fixtures; special mention to Rob Strand for his much welcome match day pitch side assistance, Stuart Armstrong for his Tuesday training masterclasses, Lyndsey White for her amazing work in making our Bloxham based tournaments such a success and James Clement, our Junior Section Chairman, for his invaluable support.

### **Under 14 Girls & Boys**

Great participation and consistent coaching with Stu and Longy but unfortunately a lot of matches were canceled.

### **Under 16 Girls**

- Won 3, drew 1, lost 1 – 22 different juniors played at least one Sunday match with a core group of 13 playing regularly

### **Under 16 Boys**

- Won their league
- Good engagement at training, mixed ability.

**OHA Junior Funding** – We have secured some additional funding for the Junior Section and Stuart Armstrong will stand as our representative on the Oxfordshire Hockey Association Committee next season.

## **Challenges**

### **U8/U10 League Structure**

Next season we plan not enter our U8s and U10s in the league set up. We found this last season to be hard to coordinate. It caused issues for parents especially those who have children in multiple age groups and there was a lot of traveling. We missed training sessions too as we don't have the coaching staff to be in multiple locations.

We have spoken with a group of other clubs (Wallingford, Oxford, Bicester) and we are in agreement to return to the agreed club festival format. We would like to go back to holding the 5/6 festivals as we did before and if we all got out dates early, we could arrange them to fit with the U12/U14 games potentially.

### **Cancellations**

U14/U16 both sides girls and boys were entered into Tier 2 league which was well suited on ability, but it meant some clubs were less concerned / organized about fulfilling fixtures. U14G - several fixtures were canceled and similar for U16B. U14B/U16G played more games but still struggled to get the bigger clubs to commit.

### **Coordination**

The new league structure has been difficult to organise and at times confusing. Next year we hope the communications will be easier with the experience gained from this season.

### **Number of Coaches**

There have been a dedicated group of volunteer coaches through the season, but numbers of coaches remains an issue, particularly on Wednesday Nights. On one occasion training had to be canceled due to lack of coaches. Securing more volunteers from senior players and parents will be a priority for next season

## **Festivals**

### **Banbury Junior Festival**

The festival was held later in the season due to COVID uncertainty. The day was a success with many juniors enjoying some great quality hockey. Thanks to all who volunteered to make the day run so well. Next season we will revert to the December date for the festival and will form a festival committee ahead of the season.

### **In2Hockey Tournament**

Event went well and the food stands were certainly very busy, big thanks to everyone who helped.

- Some of the arrangements with Bloxham School were problematic, notably parking and the condition of some of the facilities. We are working with the school to ensure things run smoothly next year.
- The timings were good on paper but felt compressed on the day – next time we will spread the games and leave a bigger gap for the changeover between age groups
- There was an issue with games sticking to central timing resulting in one U10s game being cut short – it had no impact on the overall results but was frustrating for the players and very frustrating for the coach

## **Engagement**

We have seen good numbers through the age groups this year and recognise the opportunity to promote the Junior Section further in local schools. For example, we are considering the idea of offering coaching to local primary schools or 'trial days' where new players are invited for free, fun and engaging sessions to encourage and recruit.