



4 September 2014

Dear members and friends,

Here is some information about what's happening at the Club. It follows the Board meeting on 1 September 2014, at which reports and updates were as usual presented through the CEO, covering activities at Management Group and operational levels and within the club's four Divisions.

- **Social Events.** Initial events will include:
 - Party on Friday evening 5 September 2014
 - BBQ on Saturday 6 September 2014
 - Party with DJ on the evening of Saturday 27 September 2014
 - Table Tennis night on Saturday 18 October 2014

The SAHC social diary is organic and developing. Please keep in touch through the club website (or twitter feed) and watch out for emails.

- **Trials/PLUM weekend.** The weekend of 5-7 September 2014 is combined club trials and PLUM tournament weekend. Please note that the Hockey Centre (John and Philippa Hurst) will have a stand on Friday and Saturday and probably Sunday, with kit and club clothing. This is what we have told the local press about the weekend:

This weekend hockey heads to Oaklands College when St Albans Hockey Club hosts 3 days of hockey activities. From 11.30am on Saturday 6 and 10am on Sunday 7 September, the Club's adjacent pitches will host the East of England's premier pre-season "PLUM" tournament. Two days of intense competition will involve fourteen men's and women's elite teams in action on each day, from clubs near and far. At the helm for SAHC are ladies' and men's Head Coaches, England and GB player Hannah Macleod and local hockey hero and England and GB manager Andy Halliday. After a summer of preparation and recruitment, Macleod and Halliday are joined for the new season by new coaches and players throughout the Club, together with development officers, college and schools ambassadors.

The weekend also sees SAHC's open-door trials and social events, as new and current players of all ages and levels are welcomed to Oaklands. From 6pm Friday 6 September there is an open session for all juniors (Years 7-12), followed by senior men's trials (7.30pm) with a BBQ and party in the clubroom. Saturday 7 September at 9am sees

parallel pitches in use for open sessions for younger colts (Years 1-6) and the senior ladies' trials.

- **Youth Hockey Masterclass: 15 September 2014.** We are now able to announce the date of the first in a series of monthly youth hockey masterclasses, led by our Hockey Development Officer, England, GB and St Albans player Ellie Watton. The first in the series will be the early evening of Monday 15 September 2014 at Oaklands. All of our youth members will be welcome to attend this session, meet Ellie and learn some new skills. All parents and members will be welcome to come along and watch.
- **Friends Reunited Saturday: 27 September 2014.** We will be inviting friends of the club who are no longer involved on a regular basis to come and join us at Oaklands for the afternoon and/or evening, to meet old friends and make new ones. We will ask everyone in the club to make contact with any former players, umpires, officers, coaches etc and invite them to come along. We have 9 home games that day, including both 1st teams playing afternoon games at Oaklands Pitch A. I will be inviting all Past Presidents, Vice-Presidents and Honorary Life Members. Please spread the word. We hope people will stay on and return from away games for the party in the evening in the clubhouse (see above).
- **Summer 2014 hockey camp.** The first SAHC (pilot) holiday hockey camp was held at Oaklands on 20 and 21 August 2014. It was a great success. Our thanks to Tash Humphris for organising the pilot camp. The camp coaches were Andy Bull, Tash Humphris, Hannah Macleod, Lottie Porter and Ellie Watton, with guest appearances by Andy (jazz hands) Halliday and Andy Bowskill.
- **October 2014 half-term youth hockey camp.** We are delighted to be able to announce that the next holiday youth hockey camp will be in the October half-term week (week of 27 to 31 October 2014) at Oaklands. Details being finalised and to follow soon from the Hockey Development Officer (Ellie Watton). Please spread the word and save the dates.
- **Pool Coaches Scheme.** We are now ready to launch this scheme, within Andy Bowskil's Hockey Division. The scheme will aim to match up available qualified coaches with participating teams within the club, whatever their level, who wish to have a pool coach for a home game at Oaklands. The coordinator will match team captains with available pool coaches. All those within the Club who have coaching qualifications and experience will be

invited to be Pool Coaches. Many thanks to Lexi Hamilton who has agreed to be the *Pool Coaches Coordinator* to set up this scheme. Lexi will be around at PLUM/Trials weekend to sign people up. Captains and coaches can contact Lexi at alexishamilton77@gmail.com.

- **Trinidad & Tobago visit.** Friday 29 August 2014 was Caribbean night as the club played host to touring sides from Queen's Park HC, Trinidad & Tobago. Many thanks to Matt Leedham and Kate Rudlin for responding at such very short notice to the SOS we received, and for organising this event. Many thanks also to everyone who helped out in any way, including the taxi service to and from the station.
- **Physical features at the club.** We hope you will notice new features around the club and pitches, including (with special thanks to the following): the table tennis table (Kate Rudlin), photo boards (Julie Bowskill), balcony clock (Nigel Strofton) and other pitch-side features to follow which I will not spoil by describing (Andy Forshaw). We are delighted also to announce the wonderful news that two new pull-up display posters have been generously sponsored by Debs and Geoff Hayward, with the artwork and design work generously donated by John and Jo Pritchard. They have arrived already. Our thanks to everyone involved.
- **Euro-Masters: August 2015.** We can confirm that the men's European international Masters competitions for the age brackets 40-45, 45-50 and 50-55 will be hosted at the Club on 21-28 August 2015. The delivery committee for this event is chaired by Benny (Helen Anton) and more details and calls for help will come in due course from them. We will be asking members and friends to rally round to help make this event a success.
- **Fixture Card.** The fixture card content is currently being prepared with all the usual information, with information kindly being collated and formatted by Peter Chasney and Adrian Stephenson. It will be produced as a printable e-booklet, which can be sent out as an attachment or link accessible from the website. The Board has decided that we would like to avoid the cost (saving in excess of £500) of a hard copy print run, by using the fixture card as an e-booklet and printing it up as necessary. Our feeling is that the time is right to see this as a prudent saving of an avoidable cost, but we will review the position in the light of any reaction to this decision.

- **CSR fund-raising.** Important work (led by Peter Hazell) is proceeding with Corporate Social Responsibility fund-raising, in line with the demonstration Peter gave at the AGM on 22 May 2014. Final preparations are underway. Please say if you can help with ideas or suggestions.
- **Accounts/EGM: 25 October 2014.** Because the AGM was so early this year (22 May 2014) the meeting was not in a position to adopt the accounts. Accordingly, we have convened an EGM for 25 October 2014 at 7pm and we hereby (and by the Notice accompanying this letter) give:

Notice Of An Extraordinary General Meeting. There will be an EGM at the Club House, Oaklands , St Albans on Saturday 25th October 2014 at 7pm.
Agenda: (1) Presentation of the club's 2013-2014 accounts (2) Vote on the resolution that: '*The members approve the club accounts as presented*'. Notice dated 4 September 2014.

- **Vacancies.** We are still looking for the following:
 - a *Photographer* to be around Oaklands on Saturdays and take photos;
 - a *Results Coordinator* to collect all match results and organise e-information;
 - a *Press Reporter* to write up a weekly news report for publication in our local newspapers.

These are open to all. They would be suitable for players, friends, parents, or keen younger members of the Club. Please get in touch if you are interested.

- **Subs.** Membership forms have now been sent to all playing and youth members. It helps enormously if subs can be paid promptly (at the early-bird rates) and with minimal chasing-up. We are prioritising the earliest possible collection of subs, and clearing of subs debts hanging over from last season (I will be writing to people personally about this). Your help in relation to subs is very much appreciated. We will look to club captains and team captains for a strong lead and thank them for it. We greatly appreciate the fact that those organising the 1st team squads have already initiated collective squad commitments to making prompt arrangements during September 2014 for payment of all players' subs. Don't forget, there is a £50 full subs reduction for *Gold Partners*: see the *Members & Partners Booklet* on the website.
- **Tangerine Army.** Online registration for the *Tangerine Army* has begun and thanks to everyone who has signed up or signed someone up already. We will now need to build this database up. We have told all parents of youth members, all Vice-Presidents and Honorary Life Members that we are auto-

enrolling them (unless they decline) to the TA, since this TA database will be our principal means of keeping people informed.

- **Partners.** Members and friends will know that the Board approved a scheme of *Partners* who choose to support special initiatives for youth hockey and our 1st team squads. Everyone should have been sent the *Members and Partners Booklet*. The *Booklet* and all relevant forms are accessible on the website www.stalbanshc.co.uk under “members & partners”. The *Booklet* describes our pledges to our Partners and how their revenue will be used. We are offering a £50 reduction on the early-bird full Sub for *Gold Partners*. This initiative is only in its early stages, but we are delighted to be able to announce that we already have the first 12 *Gold Partners* pledged to sign up. Can you join us?
- **Club clothing.** We previously announced that the club policy as adopted by the Board is that: “*Excluding tours, St Albans HC branded clothing should be official clothing arranged through the club’s management group*”. We have explained that there were plans through management group for a new range of affordable club-branded official clubroom clothing, for the new season. We are about to launch this. Initial samples are expected to be available on display for the Trials/PLUM weekend, together with price lists and order forms. If the clothes are a success, we will hope to expand the range of available items. They will also in due course be displayed on the website and in the clubroom. We hope this will be fully supported and a big success. Our thanks to Dawn Forshaw, James Champion and John and Philippa Hurst for making this happen.
- **Schools Ambassadors.** Mike Lloyd (Head of Development) hopes soon to be able to announce the appointment of one or more SAHC *Schools Ambassadors*, who will visit local schools and introduce children to (or encourage students in) the sport of hockey, but also leaving flyers promoting our Sunday colts sessions and holiday camps.
- **Mission/Objectives.** The Board decided that it would be a good discipline to seek to agree a mission statement and club objectives. A standalone version is attached, but the text is also here:

MISSION STATEMENT. St Albans HC aspires to be a thriving, expanding regional hockey hub, supporting playing, spectating, coaching and officiating activities for all levels and ages; with Oaklands as a vibrant and welcoming home; building partnerships with schools, colleges, universities, disability groups and the wider community; and promoting participation, leadership and excellence.

CLUB OBJECTIVES

1. **PLAYER BASE.** The club aims to provide challenging and enjoyable hockey to both genders, all age groups and all levels of ability. As part of this, the club aims to:-

- have Ladies' and Men's teams playing at the highest levels of both outdoor and indoor hockey.
- provide a coordinated coaching and playing structure for youth players, including a defined process to develop youth players into adult sides as soon as appropriate.
- promote disability hockey.

2. **COACHING.** The club aims to make coaching available to all members, and to develop coaches and umpires from within the club.

3. **SOCIAL.** The club aims to develop a vibrant social aspect to the club.

4. **FACILITIES.** The club aims to provide first class facilities for the playing and non playing aspects of the club.

5. **REGIONAL, NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL HOCKEY.** The club aims to be leading participant in regional and national hockey matters, and to be one of the premier locations for regional, national and international hockey events.

6. **LOCAL COMMUNITY.** The club aims to be an active contributor to the local community, including the development of links with local schools.

7. **FINANCES.** The club aims to maintain a robust financial position. In order to support our other objectives and keep subscription levels at reasonable levels the club aims to substantially increase the proportion of non-subscription income.

8. **MANAGEMENT.** The club aims to operate efficiently, supported by timely and open communication.

- **Halliday/Bleby's NOW Pensions Mountain Dribble.** Andy Halliday and John Bleby (GB assistant coach) are setting out to dribble/juggle hockey balls up and down the highest 3 peaks in the UK (25 miles, 11,000 feet of ascent and descent) within 24 hours on 30 September. They are raising funds for the charities *Wellchild* and *Access Sport*. Please chip in and support them if you can. It would be wonderful to see the Club's members and friends getting behind this, and every little will help. Go to:
www.virginmoneygiving.com/team/NOWPensionsMountainDribble
- **Finally.** We are currently looking into (a) the possibility of a Club ball 2015 being held at Oaklands (Holly Parsons) (b) on-site childcare arrangements with Oaklands for parents to leave young children under qualified supervision while they play (c) some general club indoor hockey sessions (d) level 1

umpiring courses to take place at the Club (e) level 1 coaching courses to take place at the club (f) the setting up of the Sounding Board Group recommended in the 2013 Report on Structural Arrangements for the club (g) the next steps for disability hockey (Sarah Mobbs) (h) a *Coaches Forum* (Mike Lloyd) and of course (i) more social events (Copeland Hewitt, Sophie Lamb, Kate Rudlin and others). Many other initiatives continue to emerge and progress.

Once again, there has been a lot to keep you informed about. The Board thanks all members of the Management Group, the CEO, the club captains and the Heads of Divisions for their wonderful work, much of which is described above. We would all wish to thank all those who continue to help our club in any way.

Please do not hesitate to raise any ideas or issues with us. There is a role for everyone, so let us know if you would be interested in finding a new way to get involved.

Mike Fordham QC (President)

4 September 2014