



# FIVE YEAR STRATEGY 2021-2025

December 2020

We may be 53 years old, but La Trobe University Hockey Club continues to grow and evolve every season.

To manage this change, we must define who we are and where we want to be. With more than 21 teams, it's easy to be caught in the day-to-day operations and lose sight of the big picture.

Strategy is just a fancy word for focus. We can't do everything, but this is our ambition, and focus, for the next five years.

**Zac Martin**

President

December 2020

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**DEFINING WHO WE ARE**

# WHO WE ARE

## COMMUNITY HOCKEY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY

We are a social, community-based club who prioritises our members over anything else. We lay the foundations for success by striving for affordable fees, top-class facilities and offering competitive hockey, however we do not prioritise pursuing Premier League over the support of all members.

We invest just as much effort and budget into recruiting social players, attracting families, and creating an off-field culture of camaraderie where life-long friendships are made.

We are proud of our partnership with the university, which provides unique opportunities for members and allows us to offer the lowest fees in Melbourne, so no one misses out. We are stronger in the community through our affiliation with La Trobe University.

# OUR VISION

## CLUB VISION

**TO BE THE HOCKEY CLUB  
OF CHOICE IN THE  
NORTHERN SUBURBS**

## BOARD & COMMITTEE VISION

**TO BE THE MOST EFFECTIVELY  
GOVERNED GRASSROOTS  
SPORTS CLUB IN AUSTRALIA**

# OUR VALUES

## HOCKEY FOR EVERYONE

We are a community club. It's why we encourage both competitive hockey and social hockey, and why we offer the most affordable fees in Melbourne. We're inclusive and progressive. We work hard to ensure all feel safe and welcome. As the university likes to say, "There are no outsiders at La Trobe."

## STUDENTS AT HEART

We were all students once. This keeps us young, open-minded and willing to challenge when required. We take hockey seriously, but not ourselves. It's why we have a framed set of salad servers in the clubrooms (read the plaque). We run a professional operation, but that doesn't mean it has to be boring.

## EFFORT OVER TALENT

We reward those who turn up, over those with natural talent. Hard work, on and off the field, is more important than excellence. This informs our selection policy right through to our volunteer recognition.

## GOOD PEOPLE ONLY

We attract people who build our culture, not take from it. We don't have time for unnecessary politics and there is zero tolerance for anti-social behaviour. When you with us, or against us, you get a fair, tough game, irrespective of grade.

# 2025 OBJECTIVES



# FIVE YEAR OBJECTIVES

By the end of the 2025 season, we will have been successful if we:

1. Build a new pavilion at KP Hardiman Reserve.
2. Promote Seniors to Vic League 1, and Under 14s & 16s to Shield.
3. Double our Juniors section to 244 members.
4. Maintain a Net Promotor Score of +60.
5. Remain the most affordable hockey club in Melbourne.

# #1 BUILD A NEW PAVILION AT KP HARDIMAN RESERVE



CONCEPT FOR KP HARDIMAN REDEVELOPMENT

With the field redeveloped in late 2020, we turn our attention to a new pavilion, with modern facilities suitable for our growing and diverse membership.

We allow for a second ground, but acknowledge it will not be feasible until 2025 – 2030.

## #2 PROMOTE SENIORS TO VIC LEAGUE 1, AND UNDER 14s & 16s TO SHIELD



We may not be a Premier League club, but it doesn't mean we can't offer competitive hockey.

As of 2020, our Senior Women sit in Vic League 1 while our Men sit in Vic League 2. Our Under 14s play Pennant and our 16s play District.

To attract and retain members, we must promote our teams to Vic League 1 and Shield, then remain there.

Should our Women's 1s find themselves with an option to play Premier League, we will meet as much of the League Entry Criteria as possible.

# #3 DOUBLE OUR JUNIORS SECTION TO 244 MEMBERS



While there are opportunities to grow Masters, and Senior Women, our focus is Juniors.

In 2019 the club fielded 122 juniors from Hookin2Hockey through to Under 16s.

By 2025 we aim to double this to 244.

This is an ambitious target, but a strong Juniors program strengthens the whole club. It becomes a pathway to nurturing young talent into Seniors, and attracts additional revenue, funding opportunities and volunteers.



## #4 MAINTAIN A NET PROMOTOR SCORE OF +60



At the end of each season, our member survey will ask: "Would you recommend La Trobe University Hockey Club to a friend interested in playing hockey?"

This is a Net Promotor Score, a proxy for member satisfaction, on and off the field. It measures Detractors (scoring 0 to 6) and Promoters (9 or 10). The final score can range from -100 to +100.

Our scores in 2019 and 2020 were +25 and +63 respectively.

Our objective is to maintain a +60 average across the next five years.

## #5 BE THE MOST AFFORDABLE HOCKEY CLUB IN MELBOURNE



We are proud to offer the lowest hockey fees in Melbourne.

This is benchmarked on the membership fee for a player in Under 12s and a player in Seniors, assuming no discounts.

As of 2020 (excluding COVID-19), these were \$195 and \$425 respectively.

To deliver on this five year strategy, the club must invest. We balance this by committing to offering the lowest fees while maintaining a profit each year. This will require reducing costs and increasing revenue from other sources.

# STRATEGIC PILLARS

# STRATEGIC PILLARS

To deliver on our objectives, the following five priorities have been identified:

**GROW**  
**REVENUE**

**BUILD**  
**JUNIORS**

**INVEST IN**  
**COACHING**

**DEVELOP**  
**OPERATIONS**  
**CAPABILITY**

**LEAD**  
**NEW FORMATS**

This is by no means an exhaustive list of what we'll do over the next five years. We will continue to operate the club, and do what we've always done well. These strategies are instead what we'll do differently.



# #1 GROW REVENUE

## *EXHAUST EXISTING & NEW OPPORTUNITIES*

We must be more ambitious in seeking new sources of funding, while growing existing ones. Focus should be given to sponsorship, fundraising, social events, canteen, Coterie and donations.

## *GOVERNANCE & PLANNING*

For each of the above revenue streams, annual targets should be set, with Committee members made accountable to deliver against these. Reporting and forecasting should continue to remain a priority for the Treasurer and Finance Coordinators.

## *TAKE BIGGER SWINGS*

We will invest and be willing to explore one major new revenue driver every two years as an experiment. What is the club's next Coterie?

## #2 BUILD JUNIORS

### *RECRUIT NEW JUNIORS*

Each year we will invest in marketing to drive recruitment of new players and bring more families into the club. We will heavily promoting our lowest fees, particularly compared to other codes. Along with marketing effort, we aim to reduce barriers for 'first timers' in terms of cost, equipment, confidence and skills.

### *PATHWAY JUNIORS INTO SENIORS*

We invest in Juniors as a means of also building the strength of our Seniors. Retention can be achieved formally, such as leveraging current 1s players to act as role models and establish relationships as mentors. This can also be achieved informally, such as social summer competitions open for all grades. We'll also focus on opportunities for Juniors to develop skills volunteering, coaching and umpiring to further embed them into the club.

### *IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE FOR JUNIOR AND PARENTS*

While facilities remain a challenge, the club should regularly seek feedback to enhance the physical environment and understand how the club can better deliver on the needs of families. To deliver this, we must attract more parents into volunteer positions, particularly on the Juniors Committee.

### *BUILD COMPETITIVENESS*

The club will upweight its investment to attract and retain the best Juniors coaches. We'll also identify young talent and nurture this, by providing additional training and mentor opportunities, and assistance into representative competitions.

# #3 INVEST IN COACHING

## *DEVELOP COACHING CAPABILITY*

With the newly established Performance Coach, the club will focus on building coaching excellence among our existing coaches. We'll achieve this through more collaboration between coaches, channels for feedback and clear objectives.

## *ATTRACT TALENTED COACHES*

The club will seek to recruit experienced external coaches. This requires additional investment, but also positioning ourselves as a club which provides an exceptional coaching experience through training, culture and opportunity.

## *NURTURE INTERNAL TALENT*

We'll identify future coaches (including within Juniors), and be willing to invest in their training, while establishing pathways and mentoring.

## #4 DEVELOP OPERATIONS CAPABILITY

### *GOVERNANCE*

We ensure this strategy is turned into action with each incoming Board setting clear annual objectives, and 'plans of attack' for the year ahead which ladder into the five year plan. The Vice President's role has been expanded to prioritise meeting League Entry Criteria (LEC) requirements, which while we may not be a Premier League club, is a level of governance we should aim for.

### *DIVIDE AND CONQUER*

Each year we become more ambitious, and each year we require more volunteers. We should be cautious of burnout of existing Committee members, continuing to recruit. This includes identifying future club leaders, and be willing to invest in their development, particularly to drive diversity and gender equity on future Boards. Sub Committees should also be established to deliver major projects, as well as appointing non-Committee members to assist in smaller projects.

### *INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY*

There are continuously new technologies to leverage which automates and improves our ability to deliver. The club should invest more heavily in these, particularly where administrative tasks can be reduced and those resources can be allocated elsewhere.

## #5 LEAD NEW FORMATS

### *SHIFT MINDSET FROM RESISTANT TO LEADERSHIP*

Sport in Australia, not just hockey, is evolving. Participants are increasingly looking for formats which are more flexible with less commitment. There is growth in social formats, shorter seasons and mid week games. In line with Hockey Victoria's 2021-2024 strategy, the traditional format will continue to be our primary focus, however the club should be more willing to explore alternative formats, and has an opportunity to be the club in the northern suburbs which leads this. This is also a significant revenue opportunity.

### *COMMENCE TRIALS*

The club should explore how to deliver trials during the earlier years of this five year plan, which includes solving our single-field capacity challenge. Programs which show success, both in terms of uptake and profit, should be exhaustively rolled out with an aim to be leaders by 2025.

# INVESTMENT & ROADMAP

## INVESTMENT

To deliver on this strategy we must invest.

However this should be balanced with:

- Maintaining the most affordable fees in Melbourne.
- Delivering a profit each year, even if only \$1.

To assist in this, the Foundation has been structured to make a small contribution to the club each year (roughly \$3 - \$5k). This is a significant change from previous years where funds flowed the other way.

## ROAD MAP

There's lots to be done. But you might be surprised what can be achieved over five years. Not everything needs to be implemented immediately.

Each year, the incoming Board should identify how much progress it can make toward the 2025 objectives, establish their own annual objectives and prioritise initiatives to deliver on these.

