



4.000 years of Hockey, and still going strong!



...well, not quite so long in the case of Grand Masters, but nevertheless it is impressive how many players of age 60 and over throughout the world are still actively engaged in playing hockey.

As my term of office as Past President on the Executive Board of WGMA has come to an end, having previously been part of the initial Task Force formed to set up the current organisation before becoming President from 2004 to 2014, I would like to express how much pleasure it has given me to see WGMA develop from its early beginnings to the successful, harmonious and well-run organisation it is today. My successor, Wim van Noortwijk, and I have the same feelings as to how the the organisation should be run to make our tournaments the success they have proved to be, with the recent GM World Cup tournament in Newcastle, Australia being a shining example.

Without the energy and enthusiasm of the early pioneers like Ted Jones (AUS), Bernard Verbunt (NED), Doug Morrice (SCO), Johan Herbert (Alliance/BEL) and Didi Wolter (GER), among many others, it would have been impossible to achieve the progress we have made till now. Also Adrian Stephenson, who acted as Hon. Secretary from 2008 onwards, fully deserves the praise he has received for the outstanding support he has given to me and Wim during his period of office.

We have seen the Grand Masters movement expand from its early beginnings in the 90s through to official recognition of WGMA by FIH in 2006, and further increase in member nations from small beginnings to the current 20, plus Alliance International H.C., Southern Cross and England LX as non-national members, with no doubt more nations registering in the future. The establishment of an FIH Masters Panel in 2012 was also an important step in providing closer coordination between WGMA, IMHA and FIH in overseeing masters hockey throughout the world.

I was delighted to see that our members attending this year's Congress in Australia gave full support to the Board's paper The Way Ahead, confirming the importance of WGMA maintaining its own unique Grand Masters identity in the world of masters hockey.

I would like to wish the current Executive Board of Wim, David Ewing, Adrian, Jaap and Dave Ferguson as well as our VPs who represent all corners of the hockey world, the best of luck and success in the continuing development of Grand Masters hockey around the globe.

Finally, I would like to quote the very apt saying used by England's LX club to describe WGMA hockey : "Chasing tomorrow's horizons with yesterday's legs".

I hope to see you all at our future tournaments, where I hope to play as long as my "yesterday's legs" will allow me!

Here's wishing you all the best of health, fitness and happiness in the coming years, and continuing enjoyment in the world of Grand Masters!

Kind regards,

Peter Child

Former President WGMA

June 2016