

The first ten years of Queensland Women's Hockey Association - 1923-1985

(Source: Extracts from the original Minutes books)

*"A meeting of the Women's Hockey Clubs of Brisbane was called on 23 March 1923 in the Normal School with the object of forming a Queensland Women's Hockey Association" - **AND SO IT BEGAN.***

The original minutes show in the title the term 'Ladies' changed to 'Women's', and the aims as -

- (a) To promote a living interest in the game in Queensland*
- (b) To improve the standard of play*
- (c) To encourage and maintain a true sporting spirit in our University, Schools and other public institutions".*

Representatives to the Association were drawn from the seven competing Teams:

University
State High
St Andrews
Federal Taxation

By 13 June 1923, the committee chose to have the fee set at "one guinea for this year; and in order to raise funds it was decided that a dance should be held in St Andrew's Hall."

On 22 February 1924, the first Umpires Committee was formed because of the onerous task of providing Umpires for every match.

At a Committee meeting held 25 March 1924, *"letters were read from the Secretary of the All Australian W.H.A asking the Q.W.H.A to join up with the Association in inter-state matches. Also from the Secretary of Tasmania W.H.A regarding the sending of an All Australian Team to tour South Africa".* Neither of the letters received favourable replies, due to lack of finances.

Within the text of the Second Annual Report, a strong sense of discipline was emerging; *"Several items of interest which were noted during the year were:*

- (1) the habit of shouting while on the field and it is hoped that this year a rule be in force that no shouting while on the field be observed, as to say the least of it, is very far from etiquette". - the second item was a suggestion of a uniform (costume) to be chosen "with different bandanas and ties ... "*

The minutes of 8 April 1925 explains in detail how the organisation of the Association was moving along at a fairly rapid pace. Rules were put in place for elections; Treasurers expenditure; Umpires duties and rule interpretation meetings; provision of equipment; Country Team affiliation; member registration and transfers; media relations; and amalgamation with QHA.

Clubs of the Association had grown and were:

University
St Andrews
High School
Old Girls
Enoggera
Hemmant
Valley
Taxation

The first Queensland Team travelled to Launceston, Tasmania in 1925. The selection committee comprised *"three old players"*.

Six matches were played with Queensland having no success. It seemed more practice was required prior to the trip. Moreover, the other noticeable feature in the Team "was the lack of weight in our players, compared with the other teams, and it was only too evident that a light player, (unless she be an exceptionally clever hockey player) is not much use in a State Team".

Publicity was advanced with the "Press Correspondent" giving accounts of the matches ... weekly in the Thursday and Saturday 'Sports' and later on in the Wednesday 'Daily Mail'.

Funds were expected to be raised during the year from an Association dance and concert. However, serious losses occurred as players did not sell or dispose of tickets to their friends. However, *"the music, decorations, supper and floor, all were of the best"*.

The fourth Annual General Meeting held 11 March 1926, discussed amongst other business *'that a State Selection Committee be formed consisting of three non-players not vitally interested in any particular Club if possible and that one, at least, of that committee be a women'*.

Later in this year, the acceptance of Kenilworth as a member of the Association was agreed (pending payment fee of 10 shillings and sixpence).

Other Clubs formed by now included Commercial, Wynnum and Association. Each of the Clubs had agreed to finance members of the English Team for their proposed visit in 1927.

Stanthorpe was also requesting affiliation. For Queensland to affiliate with the All Australia Association, the cost was set as two pounds two shillings.

An approach was made to Mr Berry (Coach) and Mrs Davies (Chaperone) on behalf of the State Team, and as morning practices has begun, *"it was decided to purchase a ball for there requirements"*. *Mrs Davies was unable to accompany the Team south, so should an approach to Miss Connah be rejected, "the Captain and Vice-Captain should shoulder the responsibilities"*.

The result of these approaches saw Mr Farley as the State Coach, and Mr Berry as consulting doctor.

The credit balance of the Association by 2 August 1926 was fifty-six pounds one shilling and four pence, with twelve pounds three shillings and four pence estimated as the State Team Manageress expenses.

Due to *"the diversity of Player pocket designs amongst Interstate players"* it was authorised that *"a small Q: be the correct design"*.

Plans were well underway for the English Team to visit to Queensland. Decisions were taken to receive the Team on *"the Thursday night train"* and that they should depart on the following Friday morning. During their stay, they were to play three matches - one against Queensland, one against Brisbane, and the other versus Country. Their entertainment would include an official welcome on Friday, a theatre party, motor trip and a dance, for which purpose it was decided that the QWHA should raise one hundred pounds.

The Coorparoo Hockey Club was accepted for affiliation in February 1927 and later in the same month, Wanderers Hockey Club and the Training College added to the numbers. The English Team would be in Brisbane from 19 July 1927 to 25 July 1927, and as the English Secretary had *"asked that the team be not overworked"*, it was requested that reconsideration be given to the match versus Tenterfield, since it was thought that at least two matches should be played in Brisbane.

It was also decided to hold a *"Country Week provided the clubs concerned were willing to pay their own travel expenses"*.

Also in February, an application from Kenilworth would be put at the next Annual General Meeting for the formation of a Country Association.

The Annual General Meeting held 28 March 1927 also saw a request from the then 'Board of Control' (Australia) for a decision to be made regarding the sending of an Australian team to New Zealand in 1928, and to South Africa for a British Empire Tournament in 1930. Queensland was not in favour of the New Zealand tour, due to expenses incurred by the visiting English Team, but that they would support the South African tour.

The Clubs of the Association in the Metropolitan Area were:

St Andrews
Taxation
High School
Enoggera
Commercial
Valley
University
Old Girls
Wynnum
Country Clubs were:

Kenilworth
Stanthorpe

At the 'All Australia' meeting, a resolution was proposed, *"That this meeting recommends that in view of the slow rate of improvement of Australian Hockey, this Association asks its more experienced players to study the science of the game with a view to perfecting themselves as coaches and umpires and of cultivating the game among young players"*

Some seventy years later, the principle remains the same.

The 1926 State Team competed in Adelaide and consisted of:

Goal	A Clarke
Backs	C Sulley, A Brew (vice-captain)
Halves	A Dent (captain), K Crain, G Ferguson
Forwards	G Spurgin, V Narin, D Hill, J Guthrie, P Buckland
Reserves	V Otago, C Hansen, A Johns
Manager	Miss Connah

The winners were Victoria, but it was noted that the Queensland standard of play had improved.

Team numbers were growing, and on 14 March 1927, the following gradings were accepted:

<u>A Grade</u>	<u>B Grade</u>	<u>C Grade</u>
St Andrews I	Old Girls	St Andrews III
Taxation I	Enoggera	Training College
Valley I	Wynnum	Wanderers
Varsity I	Commercials	Coorparoo
St Andrews II	Taxation II	Taxation III
High School I	Varsity II	Valley II

Play-offs for relegation have also begun.

The English Team was still to arrive, but was making requests such as fares from border and return to be paid immediately. List of Club finances showed:

Taxation	ten pounds
University	fifteen pounds
St Andrews	ten pounds
Wanderers	one pound

When put with some QWHA funds, a balance of eighty pounds was found and despatched.

At the next Queensland practice matches, players not only were requested to wear distinguishing numbers, but that State Team members should wear distinctive stockings.

The Annual Sports Day was being planned again, and appeared to take a high priority on the calendar.

The English Team visit was being organised to the last detail; accommodation at Atcherley House; a Mayoral Reception; afternoon gypsy team at One Tree Hill; Governors Reception and a motor trip. One practice and one game versus Queensland were decided (after all that previous discussion!). However, as the Inter-State Carnival for 1927 was in June, each State extended their stay in Melbourne, and played another game against England.

The 1927 Queensland Team was represented by:

A Clarke (captain), A Brew (vice-captain), D Augers, D Otago, G McNaught, M McNeil, C Hansen, G Deviney, P Hansen, D Drouyn, O Arrowsmith, V Nairn, A Small and P Buckland.

A Clarke was selected as goalkeeper in the first test against the English Team on 6 June 1927.

On 20 June 1927 *"the long looked for and eagerly awaited English Team arrived in Brisbane"*. A full account of the trip exists in the original minutes book.

Finally, Queensland played England. *"The match was played before New South Wales v Queensland rugby league match with a gathering of 35,000 people. The combined rugby leagues has guaranteed the QWHA two hundred pounds from the gate takings. Although the score was 15-2 Queensland played a fine game, but not nearly as scientific as the English players"*.

"By arrangements with the English Team, four of its members were left in four of the Australian States, to act as Honorary Coaches to the State Associations ... for one month". Queensland was delighted to have Miss Cussons as their English Representative.

The QWHA credit balance as at 17 October 1927 was twenty-three pounds seventeen shillings and seven pence.

Atherton has joined the Association.

By May 1928 the St Helens Team has also joined, and relevant paperwork has been forwarded to Cairns and Pittsworth for their inclusion as a Sub-Centre. A proposed trip to Atherton was cancelled due to lack of finances, but fifteen pounds was given to Miss A Clarke *"to journey to Atherton"* to Coach.

The State Team was preparing to travel to New South Wales for the Inter-State clash. Queensland instructed its delegates to Australia to agree *"to the affiliation of Canberra Association as a temporary arrangement"*.

The Queensland uniform was to be changed from poplin to flannel, until it was realised that flannel was *"too hot for matches here"*.

The Team was:

A Brew (captain), D Drouyn (vice-captain), P Buckland, J Guthrie, V Nairn, B Douglas, A Small, P Hansen, V Arrowsmith, J Campbell. Manager - Miss A Clarke.

Scores: NSW 7 - 2, SA 6 - 0, VIC 6 - 2, TAS 6 - 1, WA 5 - 2

"Queensland did not win any matches, and New South Wales and Victoria drew the premiership". C Hansen was chosen in the Australian Team.

QWHA was requested to raise one hundred pounds to defray the association costs of the Australian Team tour to South Africa and England in 1930. As it was Queensland turn to host the 1930 Inter-State Carnival in Brisbane, it was felt too onerous to raise the quota and hold the Carnival. The Queensland entry into the Carnival was postponed to 1931.

At the October 1928 Annual General Meeting, when it was found that a quorum was not present, *"five University players were requisitioned from a lecture to make up the quorum"*.

"Mr Berry though enthusiasm was lamentably lacking in the QWHA eg. Pupil referees went on the field without knowing the rules - some did not turn up - the off-side rule was particularly badly misconstrued. Another point showing lack of enthusiasm was the fact that there were no spectators at the final match of the season ... He said that players should play in one position all the time. - Mr Berry was thanked for his remarks".

Country week was to be run in conjunction with the Sports Day in 1929. Two new clubs, Laurels and St Kilda had joined QWHA. An approach was to be made to not only Brisbane Rugby League, but also Ipswich Rugby League, for a Hockey match to be played as a curtain raiser *"with a view to interesting the public in the game of hockey"*.

On 26 March 1929 it was *"proposed that steps be taken to form a B.W.H.A apart from a Q.W.H.A so that definite proposals may be put before the Country Teams during Country week"*. B.W.H.A was not formed until 1933.

Atherton decided not to affiliate this year. Kenilworth paid ten shillings and six pence for their affiliation. QWHA paid twenty pounds to City Council *"ground rent"* and two pounds four shillings wages for Marchant Park which was to be used for Hockey games. Grounds at the 'Domain', Graceville and Nundah had been a constant cause for concern in the past. The Grounds Committee and the President and Secretary was to *"interview the Cricket Association (re a lease of Marchant Park) to arrange an interview with the City Council"*.

A record of the Stanthorpe and Kenilworth Associations history was minuted at a special general meeting held 6 June 1929. The matter of Brisbane forming was becoming a great concern to QWHA Treasurer, as was Country Week being played outside Brisbane.

By August, Toowoomba was requesting affiliation, and in October the Far Northern Hockey Association was seeking affiliation - both requests were accepted.

Various entertainments were written of in all minutes. With the exception of Tours, other sports and social functions seemed to take a higher priority than Hockey.

1930 saw *"the Neptune Ladies and Overells Ladies Teams asking for affiliation"*. Due to the success of *"The Popular Hockey Girl Competition"* the bank balance of three hundred and two pounds eleven shillings and two pence was particularly healthy, however a great deal of concern was expressed as to whether Queensland would contribute to the *"quota"* for their representatives to travel in the International Team.

"A letter from Bundaberg ... in which a Hockey Club from that Town wrote seeking information re joining our Association". Also Townsville wanted particulars, as did *"The Kelvin Grove Hockey Club"* - Bundaberg later advised that they would not affiliate *"as they were unable to send a team to Country week"*. Cairns was *"leaving 26th May arriving 28th will be in Brisbane for 12 days with 17 members"*. Brisbane was billeting Far Northern to help out, but only 15. The Brisbane Team for Country week was to wear *"the costume be Royal Blue tunic, white shirt, black bloomers, shoes, stockings and shin pads"*, and that a *"poinsettia on a white shield be worn on the emblem"*.

At a meeting held in May 1930, the Maryborough Old Girls Grammar School Club was seeking affiliation. As QWHA *"is aware of the fact that Maryborough was the first Club to play the Game in Queensland"* they would be delighted to have them join the Association.

The Queensland Team was selected as: *"Campbell, Skodder, Arrowsmith, Deviney, Whitehead, Ross, Spurgin, Drouyn, McLucas, Nairn, Dent, Reserves - M Lovett, Beirne, Mann"*.

Mackay advised, *"that they had played a match against the North, which resulted in a loss of 5 - 0, but thought that altogether they had managed to give a fairly creditable exhibition"*.

Both Mackay and the Gordonvale Hockey Club requested a match against *"the Team going North"*. The touring team was to be known *"as the South of Queensland team"* and it was *"specially recommended that while on tour, the team obey the manageress until on the field, and then the Captain"*.

"A protest was received from Tax 4 and Kelvin Grove re the shortness of their match on Saturday last owing to the Umpire presumable anxious to catch a certain train".

By August, the Northern trip had been completed. A full account was read and recorded at the meeting. The match in Mackay was played on rough grounds but the umpiring was good. The second half was played ten minutes short *"in order to catch the Townsville train"*. Although a game was played in Townsville, of most interest seemed to be the entertainment. After arrival in Cairns and a *"theatre party at night"*, the next day the Team left for Atherton. *"Our goalkeeper missed the train, the station master held the train back for a few minutes. Luckily an inspection party was leaving later by rail motor, and Williamson was able to travel by that and catch the party up at Kuranda"*. After playing in Atherton, Cairns and Gordonvale, the team returned to *"Brisbane on 6th August"* - they had departed 23 July 1930.

The Annual Report of 1930 showed QWHA as having 6 teams in "A", "B" and "C" Grades, with 3 Country Centres Kenilworth, Stanthorpe and Toowoomba as members. *"During the season applications for affiliation were received from Maryborough, Townsville, Pittsworth, Rockhampton".*

"17 meetings were held: 15 ordinary Committee meetings, 1 Special Committee Meeting, and 1 Special General Meeting".

"Four fields were allotted to the QWHA, two at Marchant Park, 1 at Graceville, and 1 at Nundah. The field at Nundah was only used a few times and was in such a bad state that it was decided to do without it".

Umpire exams continued to be held. One in March and one in July. Mr Bye had contributed to *"setting the papers and correcting them"*. Of the 150 marked, the results were very good.

"Queensland was very fortunate in having a visit from a New South Wales Team". Several games were played, with the game "Queensland played at W'Gabba as a curtain raiser to Soccer. This was a most exciting match which was won by Queensland 1 - nil. This happened to be our first Interstate match held in Queensland and our first Interstate victory".

The Australian Team had played matches in South Africa and had won most of the provincial games. Australia were beaten in the first three tests against England, Scotland and South Africa but had a draw 1 all against South Africa in the fourth test. The Qld Association had given their two international players *"a cheque each for thirty-six pounds and the tanks of the Assn. Are due to the Clubs who work extremely hard to get those Girls off"*.

The Association moved briskly into 1931. So many of the questions raised are still questions today e.g. "Should a coach be a State Selector". (To this question, it was *"pointed out that in her (Mrs Bage) opinion it was a tremendous advantage for 1 selector, to know all about one teams play"*).

A letter from NSW had suggested that *"more time be spent on lectures and umpiring hockey and less on entertaining during Interstate Week"* - Interstate was to be played in Queensland - because of this all the business to be discussed at the March meeting was held in abeyance, except that a reply was to be written to Central Queensland Association *"re playing for trophies"* stating *"that a trophy in any shape or form was definitely not allowed by the Association"*. Bundaberg advised they were changing their *"shoes from white to black"*.

Australia wrote to QWHA requesting them to advise if Queensland would still hold the Interstate Carnival, with Victoria and NSW accepting the invitation, WA and SA unable to attend and no reply from Tasmania, thereby making 3 States. Queensland voted to hold the games in Brisbane. A full account is minuted.

By the end of the year, Mr Bye had tendered his resignation, the Interstate was over, funds were in jeopardy, but many more Centres had affiliated - Kenilworth, Pittsworth, Rockhampton, Ipswich, Mackay, Stanthorpe, Maryborough, Yarranlea, Gatton, Toowoomba, Bundaberg, Beaudesert and Proston. Club affiliation had new Teams from Taxation, Metropolitan, Clayfield, YWCA Social Institute, McWhirters and Kelvin Grove. Teams such as Valleys, High School, Old Girls etc seemed to no longer be formed.

For the first part of 1932, all was much the same, although Bundaberg and Rockhampton advised they were not affiliating and it appeared that Queensland were not being kept up to date by Australia when the Hockey rules changed. Queensland would travel to Tasmania for the Interstate Carnival, and Country Week continued.

The Annual Report for the 1932 season noted that no new Clubs had affiliated, Wanderers and Teachers Training College had disbanded.

"A" and "B" Grades had two divisions, with Taxation I winning unbeaten to St Andrews as runner-ups in Division I, and Taxation II and Neptunes, first and second in Division II of "A" Grade. "B" Grade Division I was won by Metropolitan I and YWCA I runners-up, and Division II by Clayfield I and Taxation IV. "C" Grade was won by YWCA III.

The Association held 16 meetings with *"fair"* attendance at all myriads of sub-Committees continued to be formed, and a majority of original members still held office.

Numbers of fields were increasing, Umpires exams well attended with good results, Kybong had joined the Country Centre, and Kenilworth had won the Country week. A Brisbane based team played a combined Country Team at the "*No 2 oval at the Exhibition grounds as a curtain raiser to the men's hockey match Qld v New Zealand*".

Queensland beat WA 4 - 1 at the Interstate Carnival in Launceston, and against NSW they won 3 - 1, with a 1-1 draw against SA. These were the first wins at an Interstate Carnival by Qld.

Mrs G Spurgin was chosen as "*left wing*" for the "AA" Team.

Beyond the "best table decoration", gold watch raffles and other entertainment or social events, the new "*Revue*" idea was a big money spinner.

The Hockey magazine was discontinued after its first edition as it "*proved to be too much for Miss Hansen (who was in charge)*".

"For five years Mr Bye has put his whole heart into Women's Hockey and the success of this years Queensland team shows that it has not been altogether in vain. His services in coaching, selecting, umpiring and lecturer, have been invaluable".

The last meeting of the year was 5 November 1932. The next meeting was held 23 January 1933.

- and so began The Next Ten Years