

Presidents report

This year has been a challenging year for South African Underwater Hockey. We successfully delivered our two of our 3 flagship national tournaments — **Senior Nationals**, and **Interclubs** — with **attendance levels remaining consistent with last year's numbers**. **Junior Nationals** was disappointing as we had to cancel the tournament on day 2 due to milky water and dangerous playing conditions. While stability is positive, it is clear that the time has come to begin implementing meaningful changes to strengthen growth, participation, and long-term athlete development.

The Executive Committee experienced several important transitions. We formally **bid farewell to Eleanor**, who concluded her long and dedicated service as **Women's Representative**. Her contribution to the women's programme has been invaluable, and we extend our sincere appreciation. We also **welcomed Helen** into the role, bringing fresh energy and perspective to the women's portfolio.

The **Tournament Officer** position also changed hands, and we are pleased to welcome **Wesley** into this role.

The **COS team for Age Group — Disney and Manfred** — delivered outstanding work, ensuring smooth coordination and strong support for athletes and coaches. For the Elite programme, **Manfred** currently serves as COS. We are actively seeking the right candidate to fill the **Elite Ladies COS** position following **Jack's resignation**.

International Tournaments

South Africa proudly sent **four teams** to the **2024 CMAS Age Group World Championships in Türkiye**, achieving a **silver medal in the Men's Under-24 division**. This remains a highlight of the year and a testament to the dedication of our athletes and coaches.



We also had a group of Elite ladies that travelled to Portugal to play in a tournament. The feedback is positive and this is a positive step in building our ladies hockey up again.



Referee

We also had 4 South African refs represent SA in turkey. Michael de Villiers was tournament ref with Jack Van Blerk, Jedidja van der Walt and Bennie Naude.

The feedback was positive with the South African refs making us proud.

Jack went on to represent SA as a referee at the Asia cup where he was the tournament ref



Strategic Focus Areas for the Coming Year

The upcoming calendar year will place strong emphasis on **improving communication** between the Executive, provinces, and clubs. Strengthening these channels is essential for alignment, transparency, and effective development across all levels of the sport.

We also intend to **revive the Hockey Academy**, with a renewed focus on **talent identification, player development, and coach education**. This initiative will support long-term growth and help reinforce the national pathway.

Additionally, we received a promising proposal for the **Apex Program**, designed to help athletes bridge the gap between **junior hockey and elite competition**. This programme has the potential to become a critical stepping stone in our high-performance pipeline.

Other exiting news.

There is currently some work happening on the ability to live stream competition games. If you have not subscribed yet, please subscribe now.



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