

**RECEPTION FOR THE
2024 HOCKEY AUSTRALIA MASTERS' NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS
SPEECH BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WEDNESDAY 18 DECEMBER 2024**

Good evening. I warmly welcome you all to Government House to celebrate the 2024 Hockey Australia Masters' National Championships.

I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their deep connection to land, sea and waters, and their ongoing commitment to community.

The Women's Championships were held in Sydney in June and the Men's were held in July at our Tasmanian Hockey Centre.

Both events were a success, with many players arriving in Sydney and Hobart to enjoy the competition and camaraderie.

Having been a hockey player, I appreciate the thrill of competition.

I am pleased to learn that the age divisions now extend from the relative youngsters in the Over 34 group through to the still competitive Over 70 and Over 75 age groups.

I understand the Men's Over 80 competition did not go ahead this year, but I hope that it will be resurrected.

Events like this are not small undertakings: they require a huge and often unpaid commitment from a wide range of people, from organising committees and working groups, to health support, and providers of food and, of course, the umpires and other game officials.

May I, on behalf of all players and hockey fans, extend our thanks to you all for your support.

For the Women's Masters' Championships, Tasmania sent one team in the over-40s age group. We also propped up South Australia with players in other age groups.

Impressively, our Over 40s team was undefeated during the preliminary rounds. We ultimately lost a very close final to Queensland, 3-2 in a shootout, after a 2-2 fulltime scoreline.

I am pleased to note that three Tasmanian women—Nicole Geeves, Belinda Page, and Marian Taylor—subsequently won Gold medals for Australia at the Masters' World Cup in Auckland and Cape Town. Nic Duffy also won Bronze. Congratulations to all.

We can now look forward to the Women's Masters' Championships, which will be held here in Hobart in September next year. I understand we are aiming for Tasmanian teams in most age groups.

For the Men's Championships, our Tasmanian teams put on a good show, winning Gold medals for the Over 50 Division 1 and the Over 55 Division 2 teams. We also won Silver medals for the Over 34 Division 1 and Over 40 Division 1 teams.

Our men also represented Australia at the World Cup, with:

- Ian McHugh, Sam McCambridge, Nathan Lawler and Khan Riley winning Bronze in the Over 35 team

And Silver medals going to:

- Phil Marshall and David Woolford (Over 40)
- Brett Withington and Adam Ellison (Over 50)
- Rowan Bridley (Over 55), and
- Peter Gaggin (Over 60).

This is an impressive outcome for our State. I congratulate each and all who played.

Thank you to everyone here tonight who helped to organise or support these Masters' events. Congratulations to the players, many of whom may be enjoying their hockey-playing twilight!

May I wish you all a safe and happy Christmas. And please enjoy your reception.

Thank you.