



Southern United Hockey Club

Junior Section

2009

Coaches Reports

U9's to U17's

Firstly, a Big Thankyou

Firstly, a big thanks must go out to all who have helped make this year so good for all our players.

Junior Committee

Michael Campbell – President

Sue Jones – Secretary, Umpiring co-ordinator and Canteen Convener

Chris O'Brien – Treasurer

Don Robbie – Equipment Officer

Deb Gardiner – Team Managers Manager

Julian Pratt – Junior Coaching co-ordinator

Alan Tilbrook – Vice President and Development and recruitment sub committee

Grade group Co-ordinators

This is an important position which helps the age groups function and deals with communication across the teams. A big thanks to this group as their help was crucial at the start of the year getting the teams together then managing issues arising during the season.

U17 – Don Robbie

Girls – Tim Cole

U15 – Alan Hughes

U13 – Rory Elston

U11 – Pam Durrant

U9 – Tamara Erbacher

Team Managers

This group, lead by Deb Gardiner kept the teams functioning week to week and were the key to things running well. A big thanks from the committee for all your emailing and communicating to everyone, collecting money and filling in match books.

Geoff Holland, Gail Steinfort, Raelene Plozza, Andrew Hesketh, Mara Symons, Vivienne Zoppolato, Sally Clapp, Kate McCutcheon, Cathy Lee, Jill Nelson, Rob Linnell, Di McCaughey, Franklin Athaide, Megan Gleeson, Dianne Exell, Richard Thompson, Julie Hickey, Petra Ephraums, David Rintoul, Kyle Malligan, Tracey Challis, Michelle Fernandez and last but not least, Katrin Schneider.

Coaches

This was one of the hardest areas to get right across all grades in the club. Coaches give up their own time to make sure our players have improved. We were lucky that several parents were keen this year to take on this role. We have some very good coaches in our ranks, who are making huge difference to standard of our teams right across all grades. Your coaches should be thanked and encouraged to continue in 2010. We need a least 28 coaches to ensure everyone has a coach.

Canteen and Ground Staff

Sue Jones (Farm Road) and Tina Halls (Dendy Street) were always there before everyone and were the last to leave. Some weekends that meant being there all weekend. Also all parent who help out in the Canteen during games.

Thankyou

Season Summary

What a season!!! We have had our ups and downs across the junior sections but there is a lot to show we are going in the right direction. The performances on the field showed we are in good shape to withstand what most others throw at us: grading changes, playing at the highest levels in all ages except one and mid-winter flu taking down so many. It is important not to compare this season with last year as players change each year. We are improving across the juniors on the two year Hockey Victoria age groups cycle. Example U17A grade were playing U15PA two years ago. U15A grade played U13PA.

Highlights are not just the three flags in U13's and U11's but the way so many players improved over the season and really showed how well they could play by season end. It was good to see all the girls teams, except one reached the finals, which is our best result as a club. The U13's, U11's and U9's are starting to show the rest of the competitions we are a real force to be reckoned with.

If you just reviewed the results of some grades you do not get a clear picture of what went on in the different age groups. We started the season with the shock that HV had removed all Pennant South grades to "improve hockey". This decision directly affected our 2nd teams in all age groups.

Our U17 mixed group were affected by players not continuing with us in 2009 due to the lack of PS grade and some going back to their original clubs. We still performed well in all grades without dominating as in 2008. It has been very pleasing to see so many of the U17 boys and girls playing in the senior section this year. Some even experienced top grade hockey in State league 1 and Women's State league 2. Congratulations to **Madeline Wilson** who has won Hockey Victoria's Fiona Hodges Award. This is awarded to the best and fairest female player, playing in the U17 girls division. We are proud of Madeline on winning this prestigious award. It must be noted this is the second year running a player from Southern United has won this award.

We were especially affected in U15's where our mixed teams either had the option to play in grades, either too high or too low for their skill level. We chose the higher standard which meant sometimes we were out gunned by some superior opposition. The players did not drop their heads and will be better for the experience next year. Many of this group and many girls also ventured into senior hockey and have shown great improvement through the year.

Our Under 13's age group has been the engine room of the club this year with 4 out of the 5 sides in finals with 2 flags to show for it. It is an age where the fun of hockey takes shape into a team game. This can be hard as we have welcomed many new players to this grade. The coaches and players should be commended this year for a great job and next year will be even better.

Our Under 11 Shield team out-performed their initial PA grading from HV by a long way. Starting 3 games behind everyone in A grade they took it up to all, finishing 4th. They nearly managed to take points off all conquering Camberwell. Our other two U11 teams showed great development whereby at season-end the Red team took out the South grade premiership. The keenness to improve and to prepare was shown on a cold and very rainy Thursday evening at Farm Road before their grand final when the kids just carried on while parents huddled for warmth undercover of the pavilion.

Finally our U9's have shown great promise. After struggling to marry coaches with training location the U9's have gone from strength to strength with so many stars to mention. Even though we spread our experienced players across the teams all really out-performed the competition. The club will continue to work hard to support this most important age group with a new Minky program in 2010 and working with HV to improve the competition set up.

Julian Pratt, Coaching Director

Junior Season Results per Team

Junior 2009 Winter teams final positions and finals information					
Team	SF	GF	Ladder Position	Notes	v 2007
17A			8th		+4
17S	1-1	1-3	2nd	Runners up	0
17S R			7th		0
17GA	0-3		4th		+2
17GS			5th		+3
15A			10th		+2
15PA			10th		+2
15S			7th		-1
15S B			6th		-2
15GA	1-1		3rd		+1
15GS	1-1		3rd		N/A
13PA	2-1	5-2	1st	MP + Premiers	+2
13E	6-1	3-0	1st	MP + Premiers	+1
13S	1-5		3rd		+1
13S R			5th		+3
13GA	1-4		4th		N/A
11A	0-5		4th		N/A
11S R	2-1	1-0	2nd	Premiers	N/A
11S			6th		N/A
9SR			5th		N/A
9SB			1st	Minor Premiers	N/A
9S			2nd		N/A

Performance Indicators	2007	2008	2009	
top 4	14	15	12	
Minor Premiers	1	3	3	
Premiers	0	2	3	
Runners up	2	4	1	
No. of teams	23	24	22	This is now a manageable number of teams
Ranking on teams	305	304	258	This number has been affected due to the
per team	13.3	12.7	11.7	loss of all PS teams in every age group
% in finals	60.9	62.5	54.5	Playing in higher grades has affected this %
% in GF	8.7	25	18	
% of Premiers	0	8.3	13.6	This is a good conversion rate of GF/teams

Umpires Co-ordinators Report

Many thanks must go to all the people who have umpired junior games this season. Without your help the kids wouldn't have had a game each week.

I would like to welcome and congratulate all of the new umpires who started their training this year: Ashleigh, Tim, Jack, Jett, Josh, Regan, Tyler, Daniel, Molly, Josh, Maddy and Megan. Most of these kids have done under 9's with a couple having their first game of U11 towards the end of the season. Well done everybody. To all our existing junior umpire's, congratulations on a job well done.

Congratulations must also go to some of our more experienced umpires

Simon Waring who has just become badged

Simon Hall who has received his Beginners badge (this is the second level) and umpired the U17 Country Championships

Keenan Robbie who has also received his Beginners badge and umpired the U18 Women's State Championships, U17 Country Championships and the Junior State Championships. Keenan has also completed his Level 1 Technical Bench Course.

Hayden Jones, Simon and Keenan were rostered on by Hockey Victoria to umpire the Junior Finals.

Congratulations and well done.

Sue Jones

2009 Representative Players:

VPSSA State Team

Cameron Wilson

VSSSA U16 State Team

Olivia Finlayson
Nathan Gardiner

Hockey Victoria State Teams

U15

Girls, Kirsty Gardiner
Boys, Joshua Ephraums

U13

Girls, Emma Cole
State Goal Keeper coach, Lauren Stevenson

Hockey Victoria Development Squads

U15

Daniel Sweeney
Tom Symons
Liam Schinina
Molly Tilbrook
Freya Frajgman

U13

Loren Tyrrell

Indoor Representative Teams:

U14 State

Joshua Ephraums

U14 Bushrangers

Nathan Ephraums

Sharks Representatives:

Girls

U13

Kirsten Gardiner
Ashleigh Jones
Loren Tyrrell

U14

Josephine Campbell
Freya Fajgam
Madeline Rintoul
Molly Tilbrook

U15

Emma Cole
Jordana Lewis
Megan Linnell

Boys

Joshua Elston
Joshua Ephraums
Nathan Ephraums
Lachlan Whyte

Hayden Jones
Liam Schinina
Daniel Sweeney
Tom Symons
Reserve GK – Cameron Wilson from U13's

Ben Hughes
Jack Knight

2009 Trophy Winners for Southern United H.C. Junior Section

Best and Fairest and Coaches Awards

	Best and Fairest	Coaches Award
Under 11		
11A	Nathan Ephraums	Nicholas Lovich
11S	Charley Malligan	Cal McDonald
11S(R)	Riley Sawyer	Tom Siedle
Under 13		
13PA	Joshua Ephraums	Nathan D'Souza
13S(B)	Darren Idstein	Billy Roberts
13S(R)	Caine Simpson	Adam Westgate
13E	Isaac Rowland	Liam Eddington
13GA	Katelyn Waring	Sam Hickey/Alicja Gibert
Under 15		
15A	Benjamin Hughes	Tom Hamilton
15PA	Ned Dan	Sam Anderson
15S(R)	Shaun Lee	Georgia Winnell
15S(B)	Damon Kane	Zach Finlay
15GA	Emma Cole	Allara Zyberberg
15GS	Brittany Thomson	Kate Fogarty
Under 17		
17A	Chris Holland	Sean Cinquegrana
17S (1)	Tim Hesketh	Chris Niclasen
17S(2)	Jordan Morrish	Sam Aschoff/Matthew Watts
17GA	Madeline Wilson	Amy Beet
17GS	Louise Campisano	Orlanda Alldridge

2009 Perpetual Trophy Winners

The Lewis Family Award, Under 11 Mixed	Nathan Ephraums
The Mal Sundstrom Awards, Under 13 Mixed	Joshua Ephraums
The John Lonsdale Awards, Under 13 Girls	Kirsten Gardiner
The Phyllis Howe Award, Under 15 Mixed	Benjamin Hughes
The Joan Sydenham Award, Under 15 Girls	Emma Cole
The A. Veal Award, Under 17 Mixed	Lachlan Steinfort
The Sue McIvor Award, Under 17 Girls	Madeline Wilson

Special Awards

Junior President Award	Warren Davey
Hockey Victoria's Fiona Hodges Award, U17 Girls	Madeline Wilson

Minkey Program

The 2009 Minkey program for Southern United continued to build on the successful foundations of 2008 - when the program was first created under the leadership of **Mike Brooks**. Led by myself (**Michael Stansby**), and with the support from various parents along the way, we concentrated on the basics - fundamental skills, basic awareness of the game and having fun!

With a group comprising most weeks of some 8 plus kids, the ages and level of hockey knowledge and ability were quite varied - though one thing remained constant, they each seemed to enjoy coming down and participating. We had kids as young as 3 years old running around playing, through to those who will next year probably be looking to push up into the U9's.

For some of the kids in the program, it was about learning to hold a stick and push and trap a ball. For others it was a little more advanced - learning how to pass and receive balls, running into position and of course scoring goals! Having some guest players along too from our State League 1 team was a real thrill for the kids – and something I would encourage for the future.

Thanks to our wonderful playing group of kids - **Harvey, Dion, Dominique, Flannery, Will, Kate, Emily, Evie, Lulu and Silas**. I am also grateful to their parents for coming down each week on a Sunday morning and making this happen. Thank you finally to **Peggy Stansby** for her weekly support in running the class.

This is the next generation of players for the Southern United Hockey Club - what an exciting future that is for all of us.

Michael Stansby

Minkey Coordinator

Under 9's Red

Firstly I would like to congratulate all the Kids and their parents on such a fun and exciting year. Some weeks we filled a strong tough team, with 3 on the bench and plenty of rotation for the little ones legs, but other weeks we barely had the 7, but we always made it work. Andrew and I believe that the kids have come such a long one since we first met in April. It has been amazing watching our team grow as hockey players as well as people.

We started off the season strong with wins all the way until round 8, unfortunately, or fortunately depending on how you want to look at it our first loss was to another Southern United team. It's always a shame to lose, but it's not so bad when it's your own club. Lots of great things happened around the round 7, 8 and 9. We began seeing the difference between **Harry** and **Charlie**, without even a 2nd thought; we then began to wonder how we ever got them confused in the first place. Ah, but this is a place of learning. And I hope the kids have learnt as much from us as we did from them. Good luck to those going up to U/11's next year, lots of pre-season fitness training so you don't get tired when playing full field.

So in conclusion, to **Harvey, Pim, Charlie, Harry, Ben, Zara, Owen, Daisy, Ben, Sam and Ollie** Thank-you for such a fun filled year, I hope you all have the urge to return to hockey next year.

I would also like to take the time to thanks **Andrew**, for making almost everything training session on his Push bike, and even more importantly the ones that I couldn't make when I was training in the city. And a big thanks goes out to **Tracey** for team managing, if it weren't for your weekly e-mails I think we would have had no lollies or oranges, or worse, no kids on game days, so THANK-YOU. Also, thanks to everybody who helped out throughout the season, you know who you are.

See you all next year!!!

Traleen.... Aka TRAZ

Under 9's Silver

Great fun! Great Hockey! Great team! Great support from parents! Great singing! I reckon this team may like singing the team song almost as much as playing. As you have to win to sing, there is some real drive in this squad!

The joy of coaching any group is seeing them improve their hockey. The more they improve, the greater the coach's enjoyment. Luckily this team improved heaps during the year and the club can look forward to some strong junior teams based around these players.

A good team needs a good manager to keep things straight. **Katrin** was a great team manager, unfortunately **Katrin** is not here for her round of applause as the Duggan family are holidaying in Germany. As the Duggan family contribute a third of our team, our numbers will look thin on presentation night.

We finished up second on the ladder with 102 goals for and only 20 against. The team played effective team structure with team members learning about positional play and passing, possession hockey. Up until the last game, we had the best defensive record in the league. It is hard for the coach to be unhappy with an 8-4 win in the last game, but the last minute goal to the opposition gave another Southern team defensive bragging rights.

Nicola Brooks - People say their kids never listen to their own dad as coach. Nicola Brooks, my little bundle of joy, is an exception (most of the time). Nicola has scored 6 goals and played left wing with enthusiasm but does like to do her own thing at training to at least partially prove the rule. Nicola has another two years in under nines..... other teams better watch out!

Jarrad Camille – Jarrad is being promoted to under 11s where his speed will prove a handful for any opposition. Jarrad scored a heap of goals at right wing and improved his trapping and cross passes.

Kester Duggan, equal youngest in the team and still six with three more years in under nines. Kester has shown great concentration, a good trap and improving foot work.

Luka Duggan, the tallest in the team and still one year in under nines. Luka has improved his strength over the ball and proven a flexible player who is as good in the forward line as he is at the back

Markus Duggan, equal youngest with his twin brother, may not look feisty but he has got it in him, as I found out at training one night. Markus scored his first goal in his last game and the cheer from the crowd is still ringing in my ears.

Mark Edwards, has shown an eye for goal as well as a head for defence. Mark has improved his trapping & dribbling this year and has one more year in under nines.

Brad Marais, also being promoted to under 11s next year, Brad has been a fantastic centre half and a great provider to the forward line, as well as knocking up a score himself. Brad has shown a sound understanding of the game which has enabled him to take a leadership role and assist others in the team with his calling & positional direction.

Craig Marais – this boy will give opposition nightmares for years to come with his eye for goal, turn of speed and close in skills. With two more years in under nines this year's 30 odd goals will be fifty plus next year.

Henri March – our last promotee to under 11s, Henri has shown a loving for full back but has been winkled up the field by the coach and looked the part on the half line and up forward.

Thanks have to go to **Lachy** Edwards for acting as assistant coach, getting on really well with the kids, turning up to help on Thursday training when I could not get back from Bendigo and singing with gusto. Thanks also to Chris Abaniel for running training for two teams in my absence.

Mike Brooks

Under 9's

This season has been full of highlights which many of us involved will remember for sometime. I'd like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to **Michele** our team manager who has done a fantastic job. To everyone who participated and assisted in training - it was most welcomed and much appreciated: **Helen, Ross, Ken, Donne, Kathy** (assisted at start of year), **Lauchy** and **Archy** (junior helpers) and **Mike Brooks** (Coach of the Silver team). All the kids have benefited greatly from all your support.

I would like to congratulate all the kids in our team for a fantastic unbeaten season. We had lots of fun and I am proud to say that everyone has grown so much and learnt a lot about hockey along the way. For those who likes statistics: we scored 156 goals, our biggest winning margin was 27 - 0 and we had three players in the top 10 for the most goals scored.

We have three players moving to under 11 next year whom I wish the very best - **Olivia** has shown everyone this year that she is capable of taking on anyone - watch this kid, quite **Charlotte** who started to believe she can when she scored lots of goals early in the year - very well done and **Derek** who found he could take everyone on from defence and score at our last game.

Carlin scored the most in the competition this year but his overall ability impressed everyone - he needs a bigger challenge for next year. **Zach** has thoroughly enjoyed and quietly progressed his ability - great passing has been his success. James on the other hand has been the backbone of our defence, his ability to read the game and stop any attack, then back himself - he believes.

To our youngsters - **Andre** who held our team's top goal scorer for most of the season was always looking to score some more - a so relax reverse shot at goal comes to mind. **Christian** has such natural talent that he made holding onto the ball look so easy - try to take the ball off him. Our opponents' coaches had plenty of praise for the little guy who took on anyone in both defence and attack, who can it be you ask, it's **Daven** of coarse - this kid is going places.

Lastly, to all the parents who provided great support to the kids - I thank you for allowing me to impart some of my knowledge about this sport I love and enjoy.

Well done kids – Yahhhoooooooooooo

Chris Abaniel

Under 11 South (Dendy St)

As my first year coaching, I couldn't have asked for a better team. Whether we won or lost, we had fun and of course, we always had more fun when we were winning. Unfortunately we didn't get our first victory until halfway through the season, but towards the end, we were formidable opponents. I am proud to say there was not one weak link in the team, nor one dominant player. Everybody had their strengths, but none as strong as our teamwork.

Annika, who always ran off the field with a smile, whose enthusiasm and dedication to practice resulted in a big hit that yielded the highest compliment from a ten year old boy –“You hit like a boy!”

Cal, whose tireless, pursuit of the ball and selfless play, drove the game all the way from the backline to the forward line, inspiring all those on the field and exhausting all those off the field.

Charlie, who became our anchor at Centre Forward, whose skill on and off the ball, opened up and created opportunities for everyone around her.

Darcy, who truly hit his stride once he found his strength as a full back, and wasn't afraid to try anything- even take on the goalie at full pelt, resulting in a spectacular tumble!

Georgia, who fearlessly took on any role, whether holding up the backline, feeding the ball through the middle, or being unafraid in the face of goal. She has the proud honour of being the first person to score on the team.

Grace, who was a tower of strength in defence, but loved to play forward, sealed a three – nil victory with the goal of the year, that had the crowd on their feet, screaming and cheering.

Hannah, who we adopted along with Nicole, whose talent for running down the wing, gave her teammates an enormous amount of opportunities in front of the goal, and really strengthened our attack.

Jake, whose presence always saved the day, and who was sorely missed at the end of the season.

Marco, whose enthusiasm kept him running until he was exhausted and tackling until well after the whistle blew, always gave his all- and had the bruises to prove it!

Nicole, who we poached from the 'A' side, whose addition to the team raised their game to a higher level, happily playing any position, and always playing it well, and not afraid to point out how we could do it better.

Patrick, whose confidence grew across the season, proved to be an invaluable part of our forward attack, bringing an unflinching persistence and a monster hit that had the goalies shaking in their pads.

Samuel, whose strong skills and confidence made him the backbone of the team, which sometimes drew him away from the forward line, but saved the day on numerous occasions.

Will, who was playing his first year, perfectly demonstrated how just going for the ball is half the game, yielding monster tackles and a couple of self described 'surprise' goals- especially surprising since he was playing a full back!

If they continue on with Hockey like I hope they will, they will all prove to be valuable assets in the future of the club.

Jenny Smith, Coach

Under 11 South Red - Premiers

The Under 11 South Red team had a good season this year. We began the season with some new players, some younger players, some older players and a few players which could have very easily played A grade hockey. I thought this was a good mix.

During the first half of the season the kids played some very good hockey. It was hockey which was very good to watch, and it also produced good results with us regularly winning by 3 or 4 goals.

The team over the first 2/3rds of the season improved hugely with people like **Emma** and **Jackie** scoring goals which was very promising to see. The team was very steady for most of the season with a small hiccup just before finals. But the team then got back on track to finish 2nd on the Ladder, and then win our first final to make the Grand Final.

Our Grand Final was then against Mentone who had only lost 1 game all season, and our team put in a great effort with a good team effort to win the Grand Final 1-0, with a great goal from **Jack Erbacher**.

The team played very well all year and I am very proud of them. From the rock solid defence of **Luke**, to the right wing specialist in **Josh**. Everyone had a part to play in the team and they played it very well. With players all over the ground who a coach can rely on to play in any position and listen to what I am going to say it is very good. And a special mention needs to go out to **Oscar** who began in the goals from around halfway through the season and turned into a superstar improving every week.

Thanks everyone for a great season

Shane & Mitch, Coaching team

Under 11 A

Well what a season. We started the season in the Pennant A competition and after beating Doncaster in game 1 by 20 goals to nil and proceeding to score a further 25 goals in the next 2 games, the association decided to put us up into the under 11 Shield competition. From being 3 games behind the team had an incredible season, to eventually winning the last game of the year to make the finals in fourth place, where we came up against a very powerful Camberwell team that was just too good on the day at the hockey centre. What an amazing experience for a very young and talented squad. The squad was led by **George Katsaras** who was the Captain for the season, and he was a terrific leader both on and off the field, and he had a fantastic season in whatever position he played. Up front **Nathan Ephraums** was an absolute star, scoring some of the most amazing goals and dominating the competition. Also up front we had some very talented and skilled players in **Bryan D'Souza**, who scored some freakish goals, **Bill Campbell** whose game against Camberwell during the season nearly pulled off a win for us, and **Tom Durrant** who improved incredibly through the season, having a day out against Greensbrough scoring 3 goals. We also saw **Hannah Moss** have a great start to the season on the wing showing how much she had improved and **Laura Cox** who continually reminded us how much of a talent she is going to be in the sport. We started the season without a goalkeeper however thanks to **Shane Campbell** we borrowed **Nick Lovich** from the South team to play in goals for week 1. Nick had played 1 game in goals and **Shane** thought he showed some natural talent. Well wasn't that the understatement of the season. **Nick** played the entire season in goals and was clearly one of the best keepers in the competition, and one of the main reasons the team was so successful. In the backline we had the deadly duo of **Tom Youds** and **Calvin Martinz**. What a combination of talent and tenacity these 2 young boys showed, and really were the rock of the team in so many games. In the half line we had the "professor" in **Lachie McLeod** who played left half and played like he was in State League, and had an outstanding season. In the middle we had **Max Dalton** who is simply a machine the way he can run for the whole game, and was one of the best tacklers in the competition. We also had **Rhy Dyball** who showed some of the silkiest skills both as a half back and forward throughout the year. We were also lucky enough to have a young boy playing his first season of hockey in **Mackenzie "spike" Thompson** joined us from the South team who was simply dominating the South competition. **Macca** was fantastic playing as an inside forward and he has such wonderful skills and he ended up dominating the shield comp as well. For me this was the most rewarding and enjoyable season of coaching in my 30 years of coaching. To see the development of these young players and the way they went about the season was amazing, and it's clear the future of the Southern United hockey club is very bright. I would like to thank **David, Petra** and **Josh Ephraums** who helped tirelessly through the season, and were a great support, **Pam Durrant** for coordinating the u11s and **Tom Lewis** for his time assisting in coaching.

Rob Dalton, Coach

Under 13 Girls A

We had a wonderful team of 15 girls with very supportive parents. The team had a wide range of skill level from seasoned players to beginners which was fairly challenging in the A level.

All the girls must be congratulated for how they worked together and supported each other. We had lots of fun and giggles at training, however, all the girls improved a great deal over the season, whether it was in skill or confidence or both.

Many thanks must go to **Eliza's** dad **Morris** and **Katelyn's** dad **Simon** for coming to just about every training session to help out with the goalie, short corners etc. Also, a huge thank you to **Sam's** mum for being a wonderful manager making our job so much easier.

Eliza did a fantastic job in goals for her first year and even filled in for the 15's on a couple of occasions. **Sam** and **Alijca** were solid in defence and worked well together. We had several players who learnt how to play half back as well as forward which was great considering we had to rotate the players as much as possible. Our half backs were mostly **Ashleigh, Katelyn, Dana, Bethan,** and **Jacqui.** **Ashleigh** and **Katelyn** gave us strength in the middle as were able to get the ball through to our forwards. **Loren** played a hard working inner and was supported by **Kirsty** in the centre. **Jade, Rochelle, Tyrrian and Madz** were the speedy wings or inners. It was great to see the girls playing out wide or having the confidence to call as well as gaining in strength to tackle.

Well done girls on getting into the semi final and giving it your best shot. Congratulation to **Kirsty Gardiner** who is away for our junior presentation as she is representing our state in the U13 girls team at Coffs Harbour. **Kirsty** also was joined by **Loren Tyrrell** and **Ashley Jones** to represent the Sharks at the state championship in June, finishing 2nd, well done.

We look forward to seeing you all back at the club over the summer or next winter season.

Phoebe and Jacky, Coaches

Under 13 South Black

Overall the team had a successful year winning 7 games and drawing 2 and ending up 3rd after the minor round. We meet Dandenong in the Semi final but we lost that match but we did put up a really good fight.

There were some real success stories and some fantastic contribution from the players in the team over the year, firstly I would like to acknowledge our backline that did a superb job for us with some outstanding performance that kept us in the close tight games that we encountered during the year.

Darren, Tim, Billy and **Owen** who worked well for us in the last line of defence but also help develop a number of attacking plays. This group of players really combined well and contributed week in and week out.

Our half line which we rotated a number of players through also did an excellent job of carrying the ball up the field and linking with the forwards. **Stephen, Gabe, Daniel** and the **Bens** showed some excellent stick skills and towards the latter part of the season had improved considerably on their passing and positional play.

Finally our forward line consisting of **Cam, Kayle, Nick, Kos, Andrew, Flynn** and **Jameson** tried extremely hard all year to put the ball in the back of the net and towards the end of the year were working really well on their passing game and running into spaces, resulting in the creation of 20 goals being scored by the team for the year.

In summary it was a good year for U13 Black with the majority of players playing their first year of hockey and I hope they all enjoyed so that they will come back next year and build on the experiences and fun that they had this year.

I would also like to acknowledge the tremendous effort that **Diane Excell** put into the managing of the team during the year and I found her assistance extremely valuable.

Andrew Armstrong, Coach

Under 13 South Red

The Under 13 South Red team had a real roller coaster ride this season.

We started off as a very inexperienced group of players (and coach) who barely knew each other, and by the end of the season we became a team. This was largely due to the fact that most of our players showed up to our weekly practices and committed to improving as a team and as individuals.

With a fairly solid start to the year, some good competitive games were played, until we lost (all be it happily) 3 of our more able players to the East side. The team responded very well to the loss and quickly found some worthy replacements to step into the gaps.

Caine our goalie had a stellar season in goals, ably assisted in the back line by **Rees, Marcus, Campbell** and **Alex** who all developed into one of the best defensive units in the south competition. **Ashwin, Callum T, Jimmy & Aidan** gave the team excellent drive out of defence and provided opposition teams with a tough challenge to break through. Up front we had **Liam, Jayden, Callum and Adam** causing plenty of headaches for the opposition defence. Also, a special mention for **Macca** who helped us out in many games.

A big thanks to **Richard Thompson** for managing the team & thanks to all the parents, grandparents, friends and siblings for supporting us during the year.

John Leighton, Coach

Under 13 East – Minor Premiers and Premiers

The team started off brilliantly by winning the first 9 games of the season and everyone was feeling like we were unbeatable. On round 10 and 12 we drew against TEM and Essendon and the guys stepped it up again by winning the rest until round 17 which saw our only defeat for the year.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the semi-final which we won 6-1. **Liam and Hugh** scored 2 each with **Sterling and Theo** scoring 1 each. The grand-final was well contested and this time our defence held the opposition out by keeping them scoreless and our forwards added the pressure by scoring 3 unanswered goals. A brilliant pass from **Liam to Chris** on the wing saw our only goal in the first half with **Sterling and Hugh** scoring again to seal the match in the second half.

Much has been said about our attack but our defence consisting of **Cameron, Isaac, James and Oscar** kept most teams scoreless throughout the year as they did in the final. **Nick, Matt, Regan and Stuart** enjoyed being rotated between defence and attack and contributed well to our total tally of goals.

I'd like thank **Rees and Callum** who contributed greatly to our finals campaign when a couple of our players were not able to play – well done.

On behalf of the team a huge thank you goes to **Megan** - our team Manager. Her brilliant communication and organizational skills was much appreciated by everyone.

Lastly – thank you to all the parents for your support and I hope you enjoyed the experience as much as the kids did.

I would like to wish everyone a great summer and hope to see you all next year at the club.

Go for Gold.

Chris Abaniel – Coach

Under 13 Pennant A - Minor and Premiers

With enough kids to have 4 teams in the U/13's we were blessed for choice during the pre – season selection and training sessions, resulting in 4 balanced teams with a good blend of talent. Early signs were that the P.A team would be made up of first and second year players, and boys and girls of each age group.

The main principles the team operated with were;

- No training, No playing;
- Behaviour on and off the field;
- Team and game plans must be followed at all times;
- Follow the first 3 principles and you will be rewarded with equal game time.

With support from the parents and the kids we achieved all of the above and that was “The Coaches” main aim for the year, to set a standard and rules that would not be relaxed in anyway, but maintaining an enjoyable and educational environment for all players, parents and spectators.

Equally enjoyable was watching the parent group come together and constantly get involved in the process, and apart from the odd minor hiccup, everyone supported to the entire process, which now can be carried forward into other teams and age groups.

But all this can only work if the boys and girls selected for the team are sensible enough, well mannered in the first place, and deep down inside have the desire to learn more new skills and game structures so that they can play them out at a levels that is normally seen in much higher grades.

The U13 PA's did this and it resulted in;

- **Representing Southern United.** Consistently had opposition coaches commenting on the teams behaviour, sportsmanship and style of play. A lot of the time this team was responsible for improving other teams simply by having played them. Many team's that played and lost to us, went out and won the next week. Now that's a sign of a good team.
- **Positions.** All kids played in more than 4 positions for the year, many of them ending up playing in positions that they never thought they would.
- **New Styles of Hockey.** They played brand new styles and structures that included sweepers and dual right, centre and left halves, as well as 3 and 4 forwards.
- **Minor Premiership,** after being in the top 4 all year they won this in the final Home-Away game. That was a fantastic effort.
- **Grand final berth,** yet again a controlled effort that was a result of backing the coaches' plans and playing as a united team with a team plan.
- **The Grand Final Victory,** having got an early lead and playing superb team hockey, the opposition finally got their act together and came home with a rush. Extra time could not separate the teams and it was down to strokes. **Loki's** dreams came true, his mates did the rest.....and goodnight, thanks for coming.....Southern United are your Champions for 09.

You simply can't fit anything else into a U13's year of hockey. They, the kids have experienced everything there is to in one season. They are now ready to do it again.

Good Luck and Thank You from James and Michael.

Under 15 Girls South

This year's U15 South team was made up of experienced players and those new to the game. We had a mixed season with equal numbers of wins and losses (and 2 draws), making it to 3rd spot on the ladder and qualifying for the semi finals. The game was played in foul weather and we played our best against Mornington, holding them to a draw. Unfortunately, since they were higher on the ladder, this was the end of our season.

Our captain, **Brit**, led by example - fast and competitive and made sure everyone was warmed up before the games with innovative warm-ups. Our solid back line consisting of **Kate** and **Lana** kept the team in line and were rock solid in defence. The goalie position was rotated amongst the players, until we discovered **Miff** the Magnificent, who took on the role with gusto in the later stages of the season and saved many goals. Speedy players, **Jordana**, **Courtney** and **Findlay** did many great breakaways, ably supported by **Fran**, **Maddie**, **Rebecca**, **Rachael** and **Pascalle**. **Emily** was dynamite on the left post and one of our leading goals scorers, along with **Findlay** and **Courtney**. Thanks to our coach **Julia**, who often ended up at games in her thongs having come straight from the pool! Also thanks to **Phoebe** for stepping in and helping out when **Julia** was unavailable. Finally, a big thanks to the parents who braved the cold and willingly supplied oranges, lollies and loads of encouragement.

Di McCaughey, Team Manager

Under 15 A Girls

The U15's are a terrific bunch of girls. I know I say that every year, but it's still true! We finished 3rd and made finals. That says we played good hockey, but sometimes we didn't get the full reward for our efforts. Still, that is part of the learning process and with 8 of the 13 regular players in this year's A grade team in their first year of U15's, next year is an exciting prospect.

The girls gelled together well as a team, enjoyed the highs, overcame the lows on and off the field and played some fantastic hockey, in particular in rounds 17 and 18, against Camberwell and Hawthorn. Unfortunately we didn't convert a penalty stroke awarded at full time against Camberwell leaving the score at 2-2. Their goal keeper employed a very effective put off strategy... she cried buckets and had to be consoled by her captain and the umpire before the stroke!! But we followed up our good form the next week with a resounding 5-0 win over Hawthorn. That was another fantastic team effort with everyone contributing, playing our team game with confidence and showing off the things we've learned. It was a fitting end to the home and away season and a good lead in to our Semi Final re-match with Camberwell. Unfortunately all our games against Camberwell were a draw, so we "lost" our semi 1-1 after extra time.

We've had success in our results, but my primary goal each season is to teach the girls how to play team hockey. I challenged them at the start of the year to play the same team structure as our top women's teams do. The girls met that challenge and more. Just as important, the girls have enjoyed their hockey, each other's company and become a close knit team. They developed their own pre-game warm-up routines too. My favourite was Duck-Duck-Goose by the light of our mobile phones at Dendy St before the lights came on! The star studded line-up in my team this year was: on the forward line, **Lillie "Speedster" Callow** – 6 goals, **Jett "The Scud" Edwards** – 11 goals, **Tab "Terrier" Timms** – 7 goals and **Taryn "Twinkle Toes" Clothier** who weaves her way through crowds with the ball on the end of her stick! In the midfield we have **Allara "The Machine" Zylberberg** who runs hard all game with balls (and opponents) bouncing off her like she's made of metal, **Molly "Skills" Tilbrook** – a class act who gives her all, **Emma "The General" Cole** – captain courageous who leads by example, **Megan "MeL" Linnell** – with a keen eye for the tackle and an accurate corner hit. On the half line we have **Peta "Perfect" O'Brien** – the perfect utility player, **Jo "Cool" Campbell** – cool on the field and our social secretary, **Hayley "Junior" Clothier** – who works hard every game. In deep defence we have **Megan "MB" Brooks** – harder to get around than a brick wall and **Madie "The Magnificent" Rintoul** – our keeper and vice captain who rises to the challenge of the big games.

Six of our U15 Girls group gained selection into Sharks teams this season. In U15's **Emma Cole** was selected as Captain and was joined by **Megan Linnell and Jordana Lewis**. In the U14's were **Molly Tilbrook, Jo Campbell and Madie Rintoul**. Congratulations to **Emma Cole** on her very deserving selection in the U15 Girls State team, and to **Molly Tilbrook** for her selection in the U15 Development Squad. As I write **Emma's** State team is in 2nd place with 1 game to play before finals. Even though we so much recognised talent in our group, the rest of the team is also very talented and I'm certain if more of our girls had tried out for Sharks we would've had even more representatives.

Everything we've achieved this season could not have been done without the support of parents and club officials, so a big thank you from me to **Julia Kantor & Phoebe Willcock** who coached the U15 South Girls, **Di McCaughey** their team manager, the junior committee and the club umpires. My biggest thanks go to **Rob "Go Saints" Linnell** who's done a magnificent job as our team manager and my assistant coach **Tim "Surfer" Cole** whose advice and assistance has again been invaluable. Tim also took on the role of co-ordinating all 5 Girls teams in our junior section and organized the 2 games against the visiting English girls from Arnold School.

Congratulations to all the U15 Girls on a fantastic season! Good luck to those moving on to the challenges of U17's next year, and I look forward to seeing the rest of you going further next season and progressing through the senior ranks too.

Lee "Big Kid" Beet, Coach

U15 South Black

This season hasn't been without its challenges but I must congratulate the core group of players who have put in a great effort week in and week out.. We have had some great wins over the season and everyone in the team should be proud of the way they have conducted themselves...A big thank-you to all the parents for your support and helping with transport and providing the much needed oranges and snakes...

Damon Kane had his first year playing hockey and showed great tenacity and with each game his skills improved, also **Damon** had a secret weapon off the field, **Imogen** his little sister was wonderful in her role as cheerleader and really spurred the team on... **Zach Finlay** had to overcome some real issues to get back to playing goal keeper and didn't let an appendicitis slow him down, not even a fall from his bike could keep him out for more than one game. Zach has made some brilliant saves even the ones aimed at his head. **Nick Durrant** gets a special mention he played in a couple of positions but really found his feet (along with the ball at times) in the role of fullback, **Daniel Sykes-Turner** found defending as well and during the second half of the season teamed up with **Nick** providing a solid defence..

You think you would be safe at training but our original full back **Adam Nelson** was on the wrong end of a fly ball and had donated a bottom tooth in aid of his Dentist who needed a new car.. He was glad to get back to playing, as it seemed to be safer than training.

GI or Callum Day as his mum prefers him to be called was instrumental in scoring a number of goals and assisting with a great many from the wing position.. **Forest Marlon Gump** was sick of hearing the cheer squad yelling at him to 'run Marlon run'.

He did run and he did score and teamed up with **Ben Amiet** on several occasions to score some great goals...Ben had great speed around the court even though at times he was looking a bit blue in the face...nothing that a shot at goals couldn't fix.. **Callan Brown** (that's the Scottish spelling) feared that Ken would glue his hands to his stick instead he glued himself to his opponents and shut down several key opposition players, popping up for a couple of goals himself. **Tom Fisher**, also had to overcome injuries during the season but won the award for most oranges a mum has cut up for any one game...We thought the Fishers might have shares in a Mildura citrus farm.. Tom was terrific on the field and had a great work rate...**Simon Dunkley** joined the team late in the season and fitted into the team really well. We welcomed another player who was so enthusiastic, which we hope was due to the commitment to the team not the energy drinks before the game!!

Special thanks to **Steven Fletcher** who played 3 games with us before he had to retire from Hockey because of injury..

Also to all the players who filled in from our other Under 15 sides a big THANKYOU from the coach and the team...

Ken Nelson, Coach...

Under 15 South Red – The Season That Was!

After an interesting start to preseason getting to know a lot of kids I hadn't met before, it quickly settled down to a fairly even and quite often entertaining set of training sessions.

At first, we tried to make the two South teams as even as possible so that there wasn't a "3rds" and a "4ths" scenario. All of the players quickly settled into the teams chosen but trained all year as a group which meant that filling in for the "other" South team was easy. To their credit, the kids involved made this very easy for me as a coach. The spirit shown by the two South Teams when they played each other was fantastic and culminated in a pizza night afterwards both times.

The Red team were made up of a collection of personalities that made the whole year very enjoyable from the coaches perspective. From **Jack, Sam, Joey** and **Chris**, who you have to listen to, right through to **Regan, Jordan, Cameron** and **Georgia**, who would just listen to the others with a quiet grin on their faces. **Shaun** with his cheeky grin and ever present smile, **Ben Mole** with his throw away lines, **Tyler**, our very own energiser bunny, **Nicholas**, another quick to smile & **Ben Davey** who had to put up with the coaches rant after every training and game!

They tried their best in most games and rarely let each other down. Some of their best games were losses, but in losing earned the respect from other teams for trying so hard, especially being short nearly every week. Numbers were the biggest problem we faced as there was a constant list of people unavailable due to either sickness or camps. We were looking for fill ins each week and we got to see some talented U13's as well. Our season began well and as the competition altered due to teams coming in and out, it became apparent that we weren't going to trouble the top teams too much. To their credit, the kids went out each week with a great attitude and were never defeatist.

Special thanks go to **Georgia, Tyler, Regan** and **Cameron** for trying hockey for the first time and wanting to play in this team.

A very enjoyable season largely due to the kids involved. They are the reason I enjoy coaching and recommend it to everyone to try! I shared as much as I could with them about how to play the game which I expect some to take into U17's next year and others to build upon in U15's next year.

I hope to see you all around the club next year!

Warren Davey - Coach

Under 15 Pennant A

The U15 Pennant A side started the year in U15 East following Hockey Victoria's decision to remove the U15 Pennant South Competition for the 2009 season. Much to the delight of the players, the new competition structure resulted in some big wins; the first two matches resulted in double figure winning margins.

In light of these results Hockey Victoria promoted the team into Pennant A after round 4. The standard of hockey vastly improved and the team responded to the challenge well despite not having a settled line up for most of the year. In the end we had 29 players that took to the field over the season.

Mornington and Geelong lead the way in the competition all year and we found out what it was like to be on the receiving end of some big losses. However, the team stayed positive going into every game and we got some good results on the board. During the season the coaches noticed a great improvement in team work as well as individual players skills and that allowed us to collect 4 wins and a draw on our way to finishing in 9th position on the ladder (out of 12 teams).

The team won 2 – 1 against Brunswick in the two games we played and also managed a strong win against Camberwell, however I would rate our win against MCC as the winning performance of the year. Both teams were evenly matched however we managed to get an early goal on the board. For the rest of the match we traded goals with MCC and it is a credit to the composure of the team that they respond each time MCC drew level, winning the match 3 – 2.

The players have learnt a lot and benefitted greatly from playing most of the season in the higher Pennant grade. I would like to congratulate all the players who contributed to the Pennant A team (apologies if I missed anyone):

- Adam Nelson
- Alex Butler
- Chris Silvers
- Thomas Wegner
- Luke Johnston
- Christopher Shand-Gost
- Ned Morris
- Nick Durrant
- Hayden Jones
- James Mccutcheon
- Joshua Ephraums
- Thomas Burgess
- Samuel Anderson
- Sam Schiphorst
- Tristan Brown
- Lachlan Eddington
- Lachlan Edwards
- Liam Wegner
- Matthew Kingsford
- Ned Dann
- Marlon Grunden
- Rees Leighton
- Dechlan Hamilton
- Jack Warner
- Joshua Elston
- Katelyn Waring
- Kirsty Gardiner
- Steven Hunt
- Shaun Lee

Thanks again to everyone who supported the players and had a role in getting the Pennant A team on the field this year. A further mention to our terrific team manager **Kate McCutcheon**, who's effort and enthusiasm lead to the successful organization of our team.

Tom Florence & Lachlan Marshall, Coaches.

Under 15 A

This year's U15A squad had a difficult year, with the side coming up against very good competition every week and finding it tough to match that standard consistently, both within the games themselves and throughout the duration of season. However, whilst this may have been the case overall, the team showed patches of great hockey and learned a lot, which is an encouraging sign coming into next year when the vast majority of our squad become 'senior' U15's.

We progressed through the season adding lessons learned and battles lost in equal tally. Each week proposed a new challenge and new skill to be honed and our players have been the better for it. Our backline, namely; **Freya Fajgman, Jack Knight, Liam Wegner, Matt Kingsford, Tom Symons and Tom Hamilton** learnt quite quickly the importance of communication, channelling and 'protecting the inside' – which became something of a season long mantra when things got tough. The way we were able to compete and hustle later in the season with many sides that were in the four or just outside, speaks volumes about just how much we took this lesson to heart.

Our Midfield was also tested, but I think came through the year with a lot of promise. Guys like **Ben Hughes, Daniel Sweeney, Jarni Blarkkarly** and **Liam Schinina** competed and even won their positions most weeks towards the end of the year. They began to realise that they could in fact control and dictate the terms on which they played, which is exciting for the clubs future.

Our forwards and strikers also learned a lesson or two about how to value possession at the top level, because it doesn't always come easily. **Patch Clapp, Lachie Eddington, Tom Wegner** and **Ben Wilson** worked hard to present in front of their defenders and work the ball up the ground in the right fashion. The guys lifted their intensity and were a dangerous combination come the last few rounds of the year, where we scored 6 goals in the last 4 rounds against good competition, including the final premiers Camberwell.

Overall, whilst the year started poorly I think the players continued to develop themselves into very good hockey players. It's a testament to the players dedication to getting better and developing themselves that we are able to say that. I'm proud of the way all players stuck the season and continued to learn as much as they could from their experiences on the ground and I look forward to seeing these lessons learned blossom in the near future.

On a personal note, a big thank you to the coaching crew for the year; **Tom Florence, Lachlan Marshall, Graham Wilson, Warren Davey and Ken Nelson** who made such a big difference every week. A big thanks to **Sally Clapp**, who as my team manager for the year kept the wheels turning more than she could know. Finally, I would like to save my biggest thanks for **Alan Hughes**, who in his role as U15 coordinator has pretty much seen it all this year and took much of the pressure off with his astute management. Thanks to **Alan**, I was able to focus on coaching, which is not always a fait accompli in the world of junior coaching. Thanks **Alan** for your hard work both this year and last. I wish you all the best for years to come.

Steve Hopkins, Coach

Under 17 Girls South

This remarkable team of girls were a pleasure to coach. They brought plenty of enthusiasm, high spirits and self belief to every game and training session.

The team finished fifth, only narrowly missing out on a place in the finals which was a great achievement given our struggle each week to field a team. A couple of new members to the club decided not to play after only 2 rounds leaving us with a list of 10 players. As is the nature of the U17 age group each week a few players were unavailable due to school camps, productions and formals, but the challenge of playing short-handed was embraced by the girls who always worked hard to cover the extra ground.

Our highest goal scorer, **Louise Campisano**, offered some defensive relief at round 12 by inviting a friend from school to join us as a goalie and give us a list of 11 players. **Lauren Pap** assimilated quickly despite the late start and brought much relief to the rest of the team who had been rotating the goalie position. **Lauren** was assisted by senior defenders, **Holly McCarthy**, **Orlanda Alldridge** and **Sarah Filipou**, who were all consistent performers and leaders of this team. These girls dominated 1 on 1 situations and helped direct the play in front of them.

We were fortunate to have one of the fittest sides I have ever coached. The tireless work rates of our midfield players; **Rebecca Johnson**, **Elena Zoppolato** and **Ellen Nougher** were inspirational and provided support both to the defence and attack and saw us run games out better than any other team in the competition. **Louise** and **Kathryn McKenna** perfected their positions as strikers always standing in key outlet areas and working around the post in the circle.

Rotating between our half and forward line (dependant on the amount of players we had each week) was **Jaz Warke** our youngest player, playing above her age division and newcomer **Sophie Toogood**. **Jaz** blended without issue despite her age and improved her game significantly as did **Sophie**. I hope both these girls keep playing next year and continue to develop and improve as they did this season.

We hope that all the girls who finish their junior careers this season continue to play in the senior ranks of Southern United Hockey Club. Their field play and their wonderful attitudes would be sorely missed by us and by the rest of the club if they weren't around.

Also, a big thankyou to the under 15 and under 13 girls who assisted us by doubling up on games throughout the year; **Jordana**, **Findlay**, **Frances**, **Peta**, **Kate**, **Brittany** and **Ashleigh**; your efforts prevented us from numerous forfeits throughout the year and were much appreciated.

Sarah Ashworth and Christie Trost, Coaches

Under 17 Girls A

The Under 17A girls finished the season in 4th place. Most would say this was exactly where we deserved to finish as we managed to beat everyone below us on the ladder every time we played them, but couldn't quite manage to beat any of the teams above us. Overall, it was a very positive season with all the girls improving their hockey and having a great time doing it.

Highlights of the season included:

- 2 games against Baw Baw. 2 tight wins against tough, aggressive opponents. These games were particularly pleasing as our girls have been criticised in the past for being 'a bit too nice'.
- Another German exchange student '**Mia**' who played a major role in our team in the first half of the season and was missed when she returned home.
- A very good effort in the final, one of our best for the season, the girls came away with a loss but knew they put their best in against the eventual premiers.

A very big thank you to one of the most organised team managers I have ever had the pleasure of working with. Also to her band of merry helpers that stepped in when **Mara** decided to find a very dramatic way of taking a break!

A very big thank you to one of the newest assistant coaches at the club, **Brooke Nelson**. The highlights of his nights at the hockey included warming up **Kate** the goalie by smashing balls at her and finding out all 'the goss' from the back seat of the car when we gave car fulls of girl's lifts to the game.

To finish I would like to thank all the girls for another really enjoyable season. In what was many of the girls last season of juniors I hope they had a good time and will remember their years of junior hockey fondly as they move on to the next phase of their hockey careers.

Tamsin Johnston, Coach

U17 South 2

Ninety seconds into the season, with the team being two down, we all were a bit shell shocked, and though we had 4 players coming off injured during the game, and it feeling as though we lost 14-0 or more, it turns out we only lost 7-0.

After this rude awakening to the standard of hockey we would be playing against, we tried to build on what we had to at least be competitive in our games. Thankfully, this first game was against the eventual premiers, who went through the season undefeated.

Throughout the season, our defence, led by **Sam, Matt** and **Jordan** held strong and their experience helped lift the game of the other defenders to a point where even if we had the ball in our defending 25 for the entire game, would only let in 2 or 3 goals.

Building the play, and controlling it up the field was our biggest issue for the year, with **Murphy** being the only consistent forward all year. With numerous long term injuries throughout the year to our more experienced players, it was the younger players such as **Dan** and **Lachie** who stood up and created the most opportunities for us. Learning to play new roles was vital as initially I had 6 full backs, and **Aaron, James, Jordan** and **Brad** both improved throughout the year and managed to put in some periods of outstanding play.

Thankfully, with an abundance of goal keepers in the grade, we took advantage of **Alex, Brad** and **Ben** in goals, who all did an outstanding job, and kept our losing games to a respectable score.

By the end of the year, our forwards were playing a much better game, both with making the breaks down the field, and controlling the ball once it was up the attacking end. Unfortunately, we panicked under the pressure of putting the ball in the net, and a lot of games that we could have won, resulted in draws or losses because we missed numerous easy chances.

Special mention to the new team plan 'don't do a **Bastiaan**,' which resulted in 2 or 3 goals as no one wanted to repeat **Bastiaan's** efforts of having an open circle, but instead running the ball into the left corner with no one near him.

Consistently throughout the season, we discussed intensity, as the competition had it every week, and we had players being way too passive. Thankfully players such as **Tom** and **Dan** learnt from their mistakes and put in as much effort as they could when they weren't coughing up a lung.

In the end, we finished with three wins and three draws, so hopefully if the boys had their time again, they would convert those draws to wins, and a few of those losses to draws or wins.

Chris Hughes, Coach

U17 South 1

2009 started with much promise with many players arriving for pre-season training sessions. The quality of players at our disposal allowed us to build one of the best sides the club has ever fielded in the U17 south grade.

Our aim was to develop individual skills and a style of team play that would better prepare the players for senior hockey at Southern United. It is important to emphasise to junior players that a disciplined and organised team structure is the foundation to a successful side.

We began the season well, and after trying players in different positions, settled on the nucleus of the side. Unfortunately many of the teams we played were unable to provide eleven players, and we invariably won these matches by large margins. It was obvious to us as the coaching staff that the players preferred the challenge of playing against full strength, quality opposition. Despite this setback the players continued to work hard with a view to improving to our goal of being the best team in the competition by the end of the season.

We played our first final against St. Bedes. It was a classic finals affair, a tight match with few chances. Although we played below our best, we managed to grind out a draw after extra time to secure a path to the grand final.

Although we were below our best in the semi final, the grand final against Greater Dandenong Warriors was a completely different story. Dandenong had set the pace all year, having conceded just four goals in an undefeated regular season. In easily the highest standard U17 South match we have ever seen, the boys hit their straps and showed their capabilities. Despite controlling large portions of the match we were unable to take the chances we needed to win the game. All in all it was a great match and Dandenong were that bit better on the day. Special mentions go out to **Tim Hesketh** for dominating his position at centre half and **Hayato Yamada** for his great goal and even better goal celebration.

We would like to thank our team Manager, **Andrew Hesketh**, for organising the lads and bringing the oranges. Most people didn't realise this but Andrew would regularly drive the 600kms to Mildura to procure the finest Australian oranges directly from the source. The oranges we had during the match against Doncaster at Dendy Street were the best oranges ever grown. A massive call yes but if you ate them you would say the same. We would also like to thank **Simon Waring** for umpiring for us when Hockey Victoria umpires were not provided.

Michael and Bob Sleeth, Coaching Team....

Under 17 A

It is hard to know quite how to reflect on season 2009. At first glance, there is an obvious hint of disappointment.

Grand finalists in 2008, we failed to qualify for September action this year and finished closer to the lower end of field than the premiership contenders. This was noticeably frustrating for the players, coaches and supporters, who knew the team's ability was not accurately reflected in its ladder position. Although inconsistent, our undeniable potential manifested itself in some memorable games this season.

Anyone that saw both matches against finalist Greensborough would have to agree. At home in Round 11, we led the ultra-talented Burras by three goals deep into the second half before a lapse in concentration allowed the visitors to scratch a 3-3 draw. The players showed similar grit in the corresponding Round 2 fixture, repelling a Greensborough attack that featured a few State League 1 representatives before eventually succumbing 5-2.

We went close in both matches against grand finalist Camberwell, pipped by a goal on both occasions, and should have done better against rival Frankston (one loss, one draw).

While scarce in comparison to last year, our four victories were an undeniable highlight.

We hit Kew in the first round and scrapped through for a 3-2 win at home after striding out to a three goal lead in the first half. Doncaster proved a happy hunting ground, smashing the cellar-dweller 5-1 in Round 4, and then 3-0 in Round 13. We snared three more points in an entertaining match against Altona in Round 9, which is probably remembered more for its splash of yellow cards than cracking goals

Although we only sang it four times this year, belting out the team song was our definitive highlight.

Thanks to the players and supporters for the season, we look forward to catching up with you all on and off the field in the future. And thanks in particular to **Geoff Holland** and **Gail Steinfort** - our team managers

Hunts and Tessa, Coaching team.