



**AUCKLAND ICE HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION INC.**

**2024
ANNUAL REPORT**



Auckland players at the 2024 Under 12 Jamboree in Christchurch



Auckland Steel – 2024 NZWIHL Champions



West Auckland Admirals vs. Botany Swarm – 2024 NZIHL Semi-Finals

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2024 Board of Directors

President:	Carl McIntyre
Vice President:	Timothy Butterfield
Director of Learn to Play	Kelly Schultz
Director of U12 League:	Philip Keen
Director of Bantam League:	Lester Easton
Director of Junior League:	Stephanie Palmer
Director of Adult Hockey League:	Aaron Somerville
Director of Women's Ice Hockey:	Jenn Jones
Director of Officiating	Tyler Haslemore
Director of Player and Coach Development:	Cameron Stephen
Director of Administration:	Wayne Curtis
Director of Marketing & Communication:	Michael Domigan
Secretary:	Mary Alice Simon

2024 Non-Executive Positions:

General Manager:	A.J. Spiller
Head Coach:	Justin Daigle
Referee-in-Chief:	Doug Thompson
NZIHF Delegates:	Michael Domigan Wayne Curtis

President's Report

Gratitude to Members and Players: I would like to express my sincere thanks to all our members and players for their contributions to our club. Whether it's helping tie up skates at a learn to play session, volunteer coaching on-ice, or being one of many event support crew at NZIHL and NZWIHL games, your support doesn't go unnoticed and is a key part of our continued success.

Auckland's Continued Growth: I'm pleased to report that AIHA continues to see sustained growth, with all our leagues in healthy positions – and in some cases waitlists to participate! The junior age groups continue to see year on year growth, with high player retention rates from the U12 to bantam and junior categories.

Celebrating Success: Congratulations to the Auckland Steel, 2024 NZWIHL champions and inaugural winners of the Goulding Cup. Congratulations also to the Auckland U18 representative team also won their national championship.

Cohesive Governance: I extend my sincere gratitude to our fellow Board members for their unwavering support and collective efforts. The Board is in a healthy position, with cohesive governance and a shared vision for the future of our club.

Looking Ahead to 2025: As we wrap up this year, we look forward to a busy 2025 and the challenges it will bring. Player registrations will open in December, and we are optimistic about continued growth and success.

Carl McIntyre
President

Vice President Report

I would like to take this opportunity express my sincere thanks to the rest of the AIHA board, our hockey families, referees, score keepers, coaches, players etc. Their contributions to this year's hockey season continues to be a key part of AIHA's success.

A big shout out to Justin & A.J. for the structure they have set up to manage our coaching teams and leverage the resource available to them in a way that has diversified and added many hockey opportunities for all age allowing Justin and A.J. to focus on many other areas.

Personally, a great deal of my time is focused on participating through the season as one of the coaching team. I find this a very rewarding and a great learning process to understand youth development.

The quality of hockey opportunities and developmental growth of our teams and players continues to be a driving force in building a world class hockey program. It continues to provide very healthy growth for AIHA year to year.

A few notable events outside of coaching which I very much enjoyed being a part of this year's and I would like to give a shout out too, include:

Dunedin Youth Development Camp – This development camp was special in that it had a strong goalie focus/expertise for our coaches, giving us additional tools and resources to help develop goalies throughout the season.

I believe this has paid off sensationally. I did an analysis of a 9 x U15 rep goalies from 2024 and compared their performance to 9 x U15 rep goalies from 2023. SVS% improved by 12%, an average of 74.71% in 2023 to 86.74% in 2024. GAA improved by an average of 1.75 less goals scored per game in 2024 over 2023.

Bantam League Watch Party – We tried this last year (2023) with just one team, but this year we opened it up to the entire U15 / Bantam age group. This year's party featured a box hockey contest, hockey trivia, tocos and the semi-final for the Swarm vs Admirals game at Botany.

We had over 60 family and players attend. I estimated the Bantam's families help boost the attendance for the game between 40 and 60 tickets.

It was encouraging to see the bantam's chip when they were at the game and help Auckland's U18 rep team raise 5k worth of raffle tickets. I would like to send a shout out to Stephaine for making the raffle a viable product.

Auckland YDC – As this development camp has been running for a few years now, it is obvious the organisers have worked out all the scheduling and rough edges of the camp. It was by far the best YDC that I have participated to date.

I look forward to 2025, continuing to be an active participant in the AIHA hockey community.

Timothy Butterfield
Vice-President

Finance Report

Review of 2023

With the 2024 AGM being held 3 weeks after our financial year ending 31st October 2024, we start by looking back at the 2023 financial accounts.

The 2023 financial year represented a significant year for AIHA coming off the back of 2022 and the Covid seasons prior where finances were often tight and always uncertain.

Our 2023 registration and membership numbers were the highest we have ever had as a club. The year was also very successful with receiving charitable funding totaling \$164k from the following organisations:

- Four Winds Foundation	Ice time
- Pub Charity	Ice time
- Grassroots Trust	Ice time
- One Foundation	Ice time
- Lion Foundation	Ice time
- TAB	Ice time
- The Trust Community Foundation	Ice time
- Dragon Community Trust	Ice time
- New Zealand Community Trust	Salaries
- The Trust Community Foundation	Salaries
- Dragon Community Trust	LTP equipment
- Trillian Trust	LTP equipment
- Trillian Trust	Super League jerseys

Review of 2024

The 2024 financial year built on 2023 with AIHA forecast to make a surplus. The financial accounts are currently being reviewed and will be signed off by the board of directors in due course.

AIHA received charitable funding to the amount of \$136,441.66 towards:

- Four Winds Foundation	Ice time
- Pub Charity	Ice time
- Grassroots Trust	Ice time
- One Foundation	Ice time
- Lion Foundation	Ice time
- New Zealand Community Trust	Salaries
- The Trust Community Foundation	Salaries & ice time
- The Trust Community Foundation	Salaries & ice time
- TAB	LTP equipment
- Dragon Community Trust	LTP equipment & ice time
- Dragon Community Trust	LTP equipment & ice time
- Trillian Trust	Jerseys

A.J. Spiller
General Manager

AIHA General Manager Report

Thank you to the AIHA Board of Directors for their continued support and effort to provide the best ice hockey experience for all our members across all ages and leagues.

Special thanks to our staff including Head Coach, Justin Daigle and Marketing Manager, Michael Domigan. Their countless hours of work at often unsociable times go above and beyond.

A big thanks to all officials, coaches, managers, parents, volunteers and players at all ages for making ice hockey the coolest sport in Auckland, it wouldn't be possible without all of you.

Season Highlights:

Learn to Play – a total of 225 kids registered in Learn to Play which is the highest that registration number has ever been.

Super League – this league continues to grow, despite a large number of players moving up to the Bantam age group this year, which is great to see.

Bantam & Junior League – we continue to see strong retention rates as players move up leagues in these age groups.

AHL – another great season with player numbers and at waitlist of players, despite adding a new team to the league this year.

NZWIHL – Congratulations to the Auckland Steel winning the 2024 NZWIHL Championship.

NZIHL – The Admirals and Swarm battled it out in a semi-final in Auckland.

I look forward to seeing this growth continue as we move into 2025.

A.J. Spiller
AIHA General Manager

AIHA Head Coach Report

The 2024 season was a huge success from my perspective. It is probably the fastest a season has come and gone since I have been involved. As the saying goes, time flies when you're having a good time.

Our learn to play programme continued to chug along. While we didn't experience the continued rate of growth we may have expected we did remain consistent and stable in our attendance numbers. AJ will touch on the specifics and data. We will be looking at the Saturday Learn to Play slot and attempt to bolster the resource and attendance at that session specifically for 2025. We also added several new coaches to our learn to play/super league programmes. We had a total of 19 coaches involved on our Monday and Wednesday Avondale sessions. We had 15 coaches involved in our Thursday and Saturday sessions. A big shout out to all of our coaches who help us out. They have all done an amazing job and the quality of our programme is a reflection of the time and energy they all put in.

Super League went well again this year. Consistent attendance in the 80-100 range at each round of games. We on boarded many new coaches from the Learn to Play programme into the Super League. We had a total of 22 coaches involved and they all did a great job. Huge shout out to Phil and Lisa for all of their work in establishing what is an incredibly well-oiled machine.

Bantam and Junior seasons went well. We had 72 registered Bantams. Our largest number in my time with AIHA. Our Bantam coaches did an excellent job and were given a lot more responsibility this season. We introduced team specific trainings every second week which gave the coaches a chance to work with their team in a training setting and develop a sense of team culture and work on the specific needs they identified for their team. They did a great job and the players and coaches developed over the course of the 2024 season. I personally noticed an incredible improvement in the style of play of our players from the start of the season to the end. In the junior league we had 45 registered players. This was still a bit low for our liking but looking at the pipeline and the graduating bantams I imagine the Junior league numbers growing rapidly. A huge thank you to all of the coaches who contributed to making the 2024 season a success.

Auckland cup was a big success again. It was awesome to see the graduating U12's in the mix with the Bantams. They did incredibly well and we are seeing that the time spent in Learn to Play and Super League are preparing them well. I still think we need to add a stepping stone at some stage to make the jump from 3v3 cross ice to 5v5 full ice a little bit easier for players. That's a topic for discussion for another day and a bit further down the line but something I am passionate about making happen.

Our U15 and U18 rep teams went really well. Our U15 coaches ran off ice sessions again this year. We sent 2 teams as we have done the past couple of seasons. Both teams played very well and represented Auckland in an extremely positive manner based on the feedback from coaches, managers and parents.

I will let Aaron touch on the AHL. From my perspective I think we did a good job of maintaining parity and I am happy with the player placements and player assessments conducted at the beginning on the season. We added a new team in Division 1 (The Vikings) and we still ended up with quite a few waitlisted players. We may need to look at adding a team in Division 2 to make room for the onboarding of new players who make up the majority of our waitlist.

All in all, I think that the 2024 season was a success across all programmes and I want to thank all of the volunteers, coaches, managers and parents for contributing to the success we have as a club. Bring on 2025!

Justin Daigle
AIHA Head Coach

Learn to Play Report

AIHA had 225 registered Learn to Play members for the 2024 season.

Kelly Schultz
Learn to Play League Director

U9 and U12 League Report

The Super League had yet again a great season, for all involved. The season saw the Under 12 Ironman take out the final and take home the Super League trophy.

The 2024 season saw the Super League had five Under 9 and six teams in Under 12. Discussion needs to be had over the length of time the U9's spend playing. Some of the younger players find the length on the ice playing to be too long.

The level of play in both the U12 and U9 divisions has continued to improve over the years. As with last year boards report we need to continue to be conscious that with the growth of the sport there will be more players that are in the Super League for longer periods of time. Continued discussions are still needed with how to bridge the gap between cross ice hockey in U12 and full rink hockey that is played in Bantam.

Thank you to Centre Ice for their continued ongoing sponsorship of the player of the day certificates, it is greatly appreciated by the league, players, and parents.

The essence of both ice hockey and the Super League lies in the dedication of our volunteers. Your tireless efforts and unwavering commitment are the driving force behind player development and the accessibility of the sport for all.

We are immensely thankful for your invaluable contributions and early morning wake ups. Without the selfless dedication of the volunteers, the Super League would not be what it is today. On behalf of myself and all the players, we express our deepest gratitude for your active participation and the tremendous impact you have on the growth and success of the Super League.

Philip Keen
U12 League Director

Bantam League Report

Firstly a huge thankyou to A.J, Justin and AIHA (as well, parents, supporters and volunteers) for the support. Probably a key away from this season is, we continue to learn, understanding how to grow the ice hockey community - improving the environment to attract and retain players (while the following is a season summary, some items are being discussed with A.J and Justin at a deeper level)

2024 season once again had four teams in the bantam league – Sea Wolves, Hornets, Pythons and Panthers, with Sea Wolves winning the season final.

There was evidence of improved player and game development compared to previous years, with positive feedback from parents and supporters to support this (which is important). There is always work to be done around offside awareness etc, but comments were consistent around how entertaining (and fast) round robin games were this year.

With a large no. of players moving up from U12, this provided sufficient cover during parts of the season when player no's fell off e.g during periods of illness, which has created issues in previous years. However when team rosters were full, quite a few players were a little frustrated they got less ice time. A team training was introduced/trialled every 3rd week to provide coaches and players with the opportunity to work closer as a unit. This was received with mixed results (by all involved). While many parents noted player combinations developed, player turn out in some teams was inconsistent due to various reasons e.g. scheduling conflicts with inline hockey affected attendance for some players...having a dedicated team training was beneficial, however can probably be done slightly different next season.

A huge shout to Garyth and Tim who continued to build out the dryland and rep training programme/sessions, the outcome of this work was evident in how well the teams played/performed at the U15 national tournament (results and player skill/playing development)

Again, Blue and White U15 teams completed at the nationals, with Blue making it to the final but going down to a very competitive and well drilled Dunedin Team. White was extremely unlucky not to be in final. There is always room for improvement, but both teams were very competitive and play well as a unit – once again hats off to Garyth and Tim, a good example of improved player development and team cohesion.

Something coaches and managers discussed, was the intent of having two U15 teams at the tournament e.g. are we there to win, develop depth or something in between. For next year this is something for us to discuss - a goal is wanting (retain) players to come back, but I think we could introduce a little more structure (clearer framework) around purpose and objectives for coaches (this would also be beneficial for parents) – especially for national tournament participation.

With larger no's starting to move up from U12's, and fifteen being the age where many young people lose interest in after school sports etc (due to lots of reasons), a focus next year could be on developing/implementing more strategies to maintain player interest and participation as they approach the U18 age group e.g. as there are only 4 teams, does the round robin become less competition (removing the results table) and more player/team development focused (acknowledge there may need to be something more required for the 10% of 'talented' players) with the emphasis on one game at a time (as opposed to winning and trying to be at the top of the table). The play offs and finals would then become the competitive part of the season.

Lester Easton
Bantam League Director

Junior League Report

In 2024 the Junior League had three teams: Ice Hogs, Mighty Pucks, and Outlaws. This season we included the Auckland Steel into the Junior practices and games, which provided an opportunity for the Junior teams to focus on team work and strategy and the Steel were pushed to find ways to stop the teams which assisted them with improving their fitness, as well as their speed.

The season ended with Ice Hogs beating the Outlaws for Gold. Mighty Pucks winning over the Steel on their final game. This year the Junior League would like to thank the head coaches Jeremy, Quinton, and Taylor as well as the managers and assistant coaches. It was great to have an admiral player step in to coach one of the Junior Teams, hopefully Taylor will return next year.

This year we also saw team trainings arranged throughout the season. There were mixed feelings about this, some trainings had a low turnout and players from other teams joined in on the team trainings. Players were not sure if they liked or disliked the team trainings but reported they thought there were a good idea.

In the Auckland cup Junior Teams were shuffled and upcoming Bantam players were moved into three new teams Hades, Poseidon, and Snipers. The Steel continued to play as the fourth team for Auckland Cup. Snipers walked away undefeated.

Overall the season went well, there may need to be some adjust to the team trainings but overall there seemed that the talent was evenly spread among the teams, making for good competition.

The season ended with the U18 Rep Team bringing home the Championship Cup in Dunedin for the second year in a row, with Cam, Kevin, and AJ's help. It was a well-deserved win with the team demonstrating improvements with every game they played.

This year we had successful fundraiser to support the U18 Rep Team earning enough money to pay for on ice training, a meal in Dunedin, and team bonding event at escape room. There is still some money left over that may potentially go towards 2025 or be given to the players who participated. Hopefully next year we will be able to have another successful fundraiser.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this last year great. Looking forward to 2025 and what the next season will bring us.

Stephanie Palmer
Junior League Director

Adult Hockey League Report

Another great season is coming to an end. The AHL finals all ended with clean sweeps in the finals. Both Prem and Div 1 top seeds won but Div 2, the second place seed took the hardware in a two game sweep as well. The league has good parity across each division, most teams having a chance to win on any given night.

We introduced the Vikings in Div 1, who were made up of new AHL players and players who've been moved up or down from Div or Prems respectively. The Vikings had a great season, finishing 3rd overall and fell short in the semis to a strong Jokers team.

In the Prem division we're seeing the juniors really making their mark as they've now permeated the stats sheet and a number of them in the top 15 scoring leaders. Great to see the new generation continuing to come through with the level of talent and skill they have shows a lot of promise for their future in hockey as well as AIHA.

The new AIHA jerseys are a hit and look amazing on the ice. This is a great move by the organisation as each team's look is unique and sharp.

We had little to no incidents this year. We've had a few incidents with abuse of the officials but they were isolated incidents and the offending player(s) acknowledged their fault and it wasn't repeated. For the most part all players across all the division shows great respect for their opponents as well as the on and off ice officials. It's really great to see how the Adult Hockey League is shaping up.

Results:

Prem Champs – Rampage

Div 1 Champs – Grizzlies

Div 2 Champs – Hawks

Aaron Somerville
Adult Hockey League Director

Women's Ice Hockey

The 2024 season started April for the Auckland women with four out of their ten allocated trainings over two weekends. We took this opportunity to invite some of the junior ladies to join us. It was great to see the emerging talent and meet the future stars of our game. We had good numbers welcoming players back from a season break including some new mums bringing new fans.

We enjoy continuing to be able to have a team in the junior league on Mondays and to have the opportunity to attend the Tuesday and Thursday training slots. There was a slightly different format this season with team only training scheduled in. This helped keep our larger squad together on ice with the added Wednesday and Saturday off ice gym sessions complimenting the on-ice trainings, we hope AIHA can continue to support these initiatives for the women's league.

Our Auckland Steel coaches Brittany Carol, Jeff Boehme with manager Yolanda Paulse were back to pick up from a successful 2023 championship win as if they had never been on a summer break.

Auckland hosted two home rounds for NZWIHL this season with good representation from families, fans and new faces picked up from online advertising.

This would be the time to thank the sponsors for the 2024 season, most of you being part of our greater hockey community and family businesses. We really appreciate your support. We are very grateful to have you. We are hoping to see you back in 2025.

With the above support added to the awesome effort and commitment from the team members Auckland Steel had an outstanding season and went through to the finals unbeaten in six games. Auckland Hosted two home rounds enabling us to play in front of family, friends and fans of hockey. It meant coaches could get more ladies dressed and on home ice. We had good attendance across the four games with the juniors grabbing the opportunity for some fundraising.

We headed off to Queenstown for the culmination of our season and to play for the inaugural Goulding Cup. The Auckland Steel smashed it winning both the playoff games they skated off with not only the gold but the biggest cup they proudly got to raise as championship winners of the NZWIHL season. Our own Kelly Shultz proudly watching us after her first successful season at the helm.

Congratulations to our under 18 NZ women's team selections and the eight steel ladies who just competed for the Ice Fernz in the Trans-Tasman with Brooke Patrone and Brittany Carol coaching. Great representation on and off the Ice.

Thank you to everyone who has supported or assisted the Auckland Steel in anyway shape or form in 2024.

Jenn Jones
Women's Ice Hockey Portfolio

Director of Player and Coach Development Report

Numbers and Retention:

Numbers continue to be very strong, particularly in our younger age groups. While the growing number of players presents some challenges, it also will help contribute to competitiveness and the overall strength of our players. AJ and Justin have done an amazing job of supporting and developing such a large group on the ice each week.

Online Learning Program from USA Hockey:

This year NZIHF continued the online learning program from USA Hockey, with many Auckland coaches in the process of completing the USA Hockey Level Two Coaching Certification. This program will greatly benefit all levels of coaches and help to improve the overall standard of ice hockey coaching in New Zealand. The focus of this certification is to ensure the highest level of delivery by coaches, checking for understanding, and providing the best feedback possible.

Regional Development Camps:

Auckland was well represented by both coaches and players at Regional Development Camps, concluding the Auckland Camp held in October. Once again, USA Hockey helped to provide challenging and engaging hockey for players and goalies, while continuing to develop coaching capacity within all age groups. It was amazing to see such a large group of emerging goalies take part in the goalie-specific sessions.

Practice Planning & Delivery:

Building on key learning from last year's USA Hockey development camps, this year's weekly training plans continued to focus on the five key principles:

- Is it FUN/Engaging?
- Does it look like the game?
- Is there constant decision making?
- Are there lots of puck touches?
- Is it challenging?

For junior/bantam groups, coaches continue to have a much bigger role in planning practices and selecting appropriate drills. Individual coaches had the opportunity to plan and run ice sessions, building more ownership and leadership across our team of coaches.

Triple Star National Training Program:

Off ice training has already started for players involved in the U18/U20 men's and women's teams, as well as the Ice Blacks and Ice Fernz. We will also be looking for opportunities to get players together on the ice before respective competitions start.

Cameron Stephen

Director of Player and Coach Development

Director of Officiating

In 2024, we celebrated significant milestones in the ongoing development of our officiating team.

This season, we welcomed Ryan Hisson back to the NZIHL, and Brooke Patron had a fantastic first season as a referee in the league. Aidan Todd also excelled in his first season as a linesperson, performing so well that he was selected for the Auckland semi-final games.

Additionally, it's been encouraging to see our younger officials, like Hayden Potter and Skyla MacDonald, continue to progress and refine their skills.

We are, however, bidding farewell to two valued team members, Joe Shave and Michael Linehan, who have relocated overseas. Their contributions have been invaluable, and we thank them for their dedication. We hope to see them back in the future.

I'd like to extend a special thank you to Doug Calder, our Referee in Chief, who has worked tirelessly behind the scenes on recruiting and developing officials and supporting the smooth operation of our leagues. I'm also grateful to all our Auckland Ice Hockey officials for their hard work and dedication this season.

In terms of recruitment, we made notable strides this year. The Level 1 officiating workshop held at the start of the season brought in new talent and helped set a solid foundation for their development. Despite this progress, there is still a need to establish a structured development pathway for officials. It has become increasingly clear that such a pathway would benefit from leadership at the national level, ideally led by the NZIHF and implemented consistently across regions.

This year, I also moved overseas and am now based in London for the foreseeable future. As such, I will not be standing for the role of Director of Officiating again. It's been a pleasure working with such a committed Board, whose members work tirelessly to grow and support our sport.

In closing, I would like to emphasise the importance of our recruitment and education initiatives, which are essential to sustaining the future of our sport in Auckland. By fostering a supportive environment and continuing to prioritise officiating development, we can ensure a bright future for hockey in our region.

Thank you again, and best wishes to the Auckland Ice Hockey Association for continued success.

Tyler Haslemore
Director of Officiating

Director of Administration Report

Player numbers in Auckland grew again for 2023. Below is a list of all AIHA players, in accordance with the NZIHF's registration formats.

Auckland 2024

	Male	Female	Total
LTP Only (Any age)	176	49	225
U12 (2013 - Present)	92	12	104
U15 (2010 - 2012)	64	17	81
U18 (2007 - 2009)	36	5	41
U21 (2003 - 2006)	34	6	40
Senior (Any - 2002)	307	39	346
Total Players	709	128	837

	Male	Female	Total
LTP Only (Any age)	174	48	222
U12 (2012 - Present)	98	17	115
U15 (2009 - 2011)	47	10	57
U18 (2006 - 2008)	35	6	41
U21 (2002 - 2005)	34	7	41
Senior (Any - 2001)	296	36	332
Total Players	684	124	808

Wayne Curtis
Director of Administration

Director of Marketing & Communication Report

Learn to Play

2024 saw another year of impressive growth for our learn to play age group, and we continued with our tried and tested strategy of social media advertising to generate trials and enquiries.

NZIHL & NZWIHL:

Fan attendance at NZIHL and NZWIHL games increased slightly year on year, with a slight reduction to overall advertising budgets for both seasons.

We continue to see very low attendance rates at NZIHL games from AIHA members and we'll continue to work on offers and new initiatives to encourage them to support their club and the game we all love.

Thank you to our dedicated events team volunteers who give up anywhere from 4-6 hours of their time on game day to help make these events happen.

Michael Domigan

Director of Marketing & Communication