

SA MASTERS WORLD CUP 2020 UPDATE

21 August 2019

Changes to Selection Strategy

Wow, what a fantastic IPT! At one stage during the finals afternoon I thought that I was at the US Masters with the loud roars coming from the crowd. Congratulations to the Southern Gauteng Masters Hockey Association under the leadership of Mark Halgryn for a memorable and well-run tournament.

When we started the World Cup journey, we were upfront in our communication that it would be a learning experience for the SA Masters Leadership team, and that we would make the necessary changes should we believe that our objective of the sending best possible teams to the WC would be best served by such changes. The introduction of a second trial in Johannesburg was an example of our willingness to learn on the go. We are now confronted with a further opportunity to improve our process.

After having been approached by the Coaches to extend the selection deadline of the final WC squads, the SA Masters Executive has agreed to the changes to the selection process as set out below. The sentiment expressed by the coaches is that they would like more time to assess the players and felt that it would lead to a better selection outcome. The SA Masters Executive have always felt that there is an advantage to finalize the sides as early as possible, but after speaking to Andre, Debbi and the coaches we have reconsidered our approach. We are further motivated by the need to select two teams per Men's age category (45+; 50+; 55+) for the World Cup in Cape Town and for the Africa Invitational Series in November 2019 as prospects of international participation is limited.

Based on the above, our WC squads in the Men's section will be increased to a maximum of 36 including two new keepers (4 GK's in total). These squads will be divided into two teams for the Africa Invitational Series in November 2019 which will be used as part of the selection process. The aim is to select two WC sides from each of the age groups for the WC in Cape Town. The final selection will now be announced at the National Camp which has been pencilled in for end of February 2020. All the Ladies squads as well as the Men's 35+ and 40+ will largely be retained at the present numbers. The coaches will work with the full squad until the National camp at which time the final teams will be announced. The same rules regarding selection and dispensation remain applicable.

We apologise unconditionally for any inconvenience caused, but we do not believe that anybody has been prejudiced as a result thereof and we will be placing our coaches in the best possible position to select the best sides. We are aiming to announce the enlarged WC squads by next week.

For the Love of the Game

SA Masters Executive