



Mr. Gregory Smyth
China Hockey Group
4/F Yat Fat Building
44-46 Des Voeux Road Central
Central, Hong Kong

Ms. Joeva Lui
Leisure Manager (Sports Development)
for Director of Leisure and Cultural Services
1/F, Leisure and Cultural Services Headquarters
1-3 Pai Tau Street
Shatin, Hong Kong

June 2, 2021

Dear Joeva,

As a follow up to our email correspondence (please see Appendix B to this letter), I am writing on behalf of the China Hockey Group (CHG) as we wish to raise a number of concerns about the Hong Kong Ice Hockey Association (HKIHA) and the HKIHA's role in developing the sport of ice hockey in Hong Kong.

On November 14, 2020, Mike Kan (KAN Yeung Kit 簡揚傑), the 2018-2022 Chairman of the HKIHA, published a public video on YouTube with a number of accusations and misinformation. This video contained false statements about the CHG and has been subsequently taken down. A transcript is attached in Appendix A to this letter, and a link to a copy of the video.

In our view, the video raises concerns about the HKIHA, its professionalism, leadership, lack of results, and whether the ice hockey community is getting the right support from the government.

I am a 27-year resident of Hong Kong, who has contributed to the development of ice hockey in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area for decades, both financially, and in terms of resources, time, expertise and innovation. I am the Executive Director and Co-Founder of the CHG in a volunteer capacity, which is comprised of a number of hockey leagues and training programs. Together with other passionate hockey lovers, many volunteers, parents and enthusiasts of the sport, we have built the CHG on the simple principle of More Hockey, More Players, More Fun!

The China Ice Hockey League (CIHL) established in 2011, is Hong Kong's elite full contact adult hockey league. The Junior Tigers program is Hong Kong's premier youth hockey organization featuring the Island League (U7 to U16) and several Elite, Learn to Play and Learn to Skate programs. The CHG is also a Co-Founder of the Greater Bay Hockey League - the first cross border competitive league encompassing organizations from Hong Kong and Southern China. The South China Ice Hockey League (SCIHL) is an adult league for those seeking a more recreational experience. Our community programs work across the continuum of ice hockey development – from introducing children who have never heard of ice hockey to the sport, to bringing in top US and Canadian varsity collegiate talent to both teach the game of ice hockey to local players and raise the bar on the game. **The CHG has over 500 players registered across our junior and senior programs representing at least 50% of all hockey players in Hong Kong.** We firmly believe that for ice hockey to succeed in Hong Kong, there must be changes to the HKIHA, namely through an open election in 2022 in order to be more representative of the sport in Hong Kong.



To continue to grow ice hockey in Hong Kong, strong leadership is required and, while I am not interested in the Chair position myself, there are qualified people.

We have outlined our concerns below and included a number of questions for each concern that have been raised by several members, parents and players of the Hong Kong ice hockey community.

A) Does the HKIHA understand its role as a government-funded NSA to promote ice hockey in Hong Kong?

We cannot underscore the lack of professionalism demonstrated in Mr. Kan's decision to release a YouTube video slandering a foreigner running a hockey organization in Hong Kong who made a complaint against the HKIHA. Although the YouTube video does not name me, it is unmistakable to anyone who is part of the ice hockey community that the author is referring to me after watching the video. This is not appropriate behaviour for the sport's highest official in Hong Kong and reflects incredibly poorly on the HKIHA, LCSD, Hong Kong and the sport.

Mr. Kan's personal attack is wholly unjustified and it appears that any questions and/or criticism of the HKIHA elicits a personal attack as a response. Since 1994, I have been committed to Hong Kong ice hockey. Together with the other CHG Co-Founders, we have contributed significant financial resources to further the development of the sport in Hong Kong and, predominantly, for local Hong Kong Chinese players

B) What Corporate Governance policies does the HKIHA follow?

The video states that all the information related to the HKIHA can be found on the HKIHA website, but it appears there is no information on the voting membership, board nominations, attendance of individuals at board meetings or policies for inclusion and diversity. What is the exact mechanism to be elected as a full voting membership or to the board?

C) How does the HKIHA support or cooperate with other ice hockey organizations in Hong Kong for a coordinated national development effort?

There are concerned parents in the Hong Kong ice hockey community that they pay extra for top quality, but unsubsidized programs versus subsidized government programs that do not have the same level of development focus or coaching staff with high level hockey playing experience.

D) Why doesn't the HKIHA follow the successful model of the Hong Kong Rugby Union?

As demonstrated not only by the number of ice hockey players in Hong Kong, but the addition of two new ice facilities opened this year, the demand for ice hockey has never been stronger. However, Hong Kong's National Senior Men's team ranking fails to show any improvement:

2020: 48 th of 54	2019: 46 th of 52	2018: 45 th of 48	2017: 44 th of 48
2016: 44 th of 50	2015: 46 th of 50	2014: 48 th of 49	

While the HKIHA may have the intention to develop ice hockey, it is clear that the organization is unable to improve Hong Kong's rankings in a meaningful way. We believe that if the HKIHA adopted similar policies as the Hong Kong Rugby Union, the rankings would be in the low to mid 20's within 3 years.

E) What is the HKIHA's position and policy on National team eligibility and selection?



Some of the issues raised about the HKIHA relate to a number conflicts of interest -- perceived or otherwise – involving the HKIHA. One example is that there is, at the very least, a perception that Hong Kong Senior and U18 Men’s National team members must play on leagues organized by Mr. Kan and his associates to qualify for Men’s team selection.

Another relates to a so-called “Junior National Team” in Hong Kong for U9, U11 and U13 level players which quite simply does not exist in other countries and it is misleading for the HKIHA to suggest that there is a “junior national team” and that there are criteria for selection.

This confusion and misrepresentation appears to create a culture of intimidation by the HKIHA. Families feel they need to sign up for Mr. Kan’s Gold Club in order to be eligible for “national team” opportunities at a junior level. At a minimum, there is a perceived conflict of interest between Mr. Kan’s role as the head of the HKIHA and as the head of member organization, in this case the Gold Club. Would it not be beneficial to the Hong Kong hockey community to have clear and transparent eligibility criteria in a similar as the Hong Kong Rugby Union (please see Appendix E to this letter)?

F) How does the HKIHA allocate government funding for player development?

As noted in B) the results of the National Senior Men’s team are not improving. There are opportunities for National Senior Men’s team members to develop their hockey skills consistently by playing in the CIHL, where they face off against US and Canada varsity university hockey players and players who have been in top major junior leagues in Canada on a weekly basis. The CIHL is the most competitive and only full contact league in Hong Kong which provides great training for the Senior Men’s team but few members participate. We understand certain players do not have the financial resources to play in the CIHL and as a result we have recently announced a subsidy program to waive fees for men’s National team players who are in financial need (please see Appendix C to this letter).

G) What is the HKIHA Development Strategy for Refereeing and Coaching?

As with any sport, proper refereeing and coaching are vital for development. The CHG has been keen to support the development of a bona fide referee program and we have been attempting to work with the HKIHA since 2016 on this matter. There is a growing list of referees but it appears that there is limited development and supervision of these referees. We also wish to express our disappointment with the HKIHA’s refusal to support the CHG’s attempts to develop officiating and coaching in Hong Kong when the HKIHA refused to write a letter of support for Mr. Marc Benedetti’s full-time work visa in spite of Mr. Benedetti’s clear qualifications and contributions to officiating. Mr. Benedetti is a Level 5 qualified referee, making him the highest qualified referee in Hong Kong. We were informed that a letter would not be provided because we would not permit Mr. Benedetti to referee for the HKIHA. This is false and we would be happy to provide WhatsApp communication with Leo Kan that makes this clear.

H) What are HKIHA’s policies and procedures for availability, booking and associated costs for the Skating Treadmill?

The CHG welcomes the addition of the skating treadmill, which we understand the HKIHA purchased with funding from the Home Affairs Bureau. While the CHG and other hockey organizations previously enjoyed the use of this valuable piece of equipment, the CHG has, in recent years, been unable to secure bookings for its use as the calendar is always full. The HKIHA has communicated that the National team players are using the treadmill extensively, but we have heard from players that usage is limited. However, the 2018 Budget Plan outlines treadmill training costs of HKD 281,153.10 for Men and HKD 350,062.50 for Women.



I) How does the HKIHA intend to address the present lack of an officially recognized IIHF League for Men's hockey?

The CHG and the HKIHA had discussed the possibility of making the CIHL Hong Kong's Official IIHF Recognized League that would qualify Hong Kong to participate in the World Championships. These discussions started in 2014 and we were advised that the HKIHA had submitted a CIHL funding proposal to the LCSD. We were subsequently informed by the HKIHA that all player and sponsorship revenue would have to be run through the HKIHA as mandated by the LCSD. Is this the LCSD's stated position and policy for all NSAs? We wish to ask if our submission was received and if yes, the next steps from the LCSD in this process. In May 2021, we provided another submission to the HKIHA requesting that the CIHL be Hong Kong's Official IIHF Recognized League (please see Appendix C to this letter).

J) What kind of support is provided by the HKIHA for the Women's Ice Hockey Association?

The CHG has been assisting the Women's Ice Hockey Association (WIHO) this year with coaching and it is our view that the women's game should be prioritized equally with the men's game. As diversity and inclusion are prominent global issues, we would like to better understand how women's hockey is supported in Hong Kong.

Summary

The purpose of this letter is to articulate a number of serious and interrelated issues involving the HKIHA. We are writing to request answers to these questions and, above all, to advocate for change in the HKIHA to benefit the development of ice hockey in Hong Kong.

Ice hockey is a wonderful sport enjoyed by increasingly more and more children and adults in Hong Kong. There is a lot of potential for Hong Kong to further develop and to succeed in this sport at an international level. Please see Appendix D to this letter regarding a recent interview on the potential growth of hockey in Hong Kong. However, for this to occur Hong Kong ice hockey needs an Association that leads with a strategic vision, acts with transparency and integrity, and works with its' members for the best of the sport. We wish to see success across the men's, women's and junior players and we wish to see government funds being spent wisely on the development of the sport.

The first step to achieving this is through an open HKIHA election in 2022.

We look forward to your reply.

Gregory Smyth
Co-Founder and Executive Director
China Hockey Group

CC: Mr. Thomas Wu - IIHF Council, Vice President
Mr. Vincent Liu – Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Director
Mr. Tak-Keung Yeung – Home Affairs Bureau, Commissioner for Sports
Mr. Ricky Man-Kin Chu – Chairperson, Equal Opportunities Commission
Mr. Tom Renney – Chief Executive Officer, Hockey Canada



Appendix A:

Translation of Mike Kan Video



<https://www.juniortigershockey.com/our-values/time-for-change/mikekanvideo>

A Person With The Ability To Be The President of the USA, Complained About Me!

“Today is 2020, November 14th. Today I want to talk about someone who can be the President of the United States, who has made a complaint about us. First thing, they said that we cancelled their membership after it expired only a few days. But that is not true as we have been contacting them since January 1st to pay for their membership, until the end of March. Within this period of time, we tried to send messages through WhatsApp but there was no reply. The last email we sent them, warned them that if they do not pay their fee, they will revoke their membership in April. They should know the situation very clearly.

Second thing, they accuse our Association for not being transparent. I do not know what they want to know but why not come and talk to me directly. Actually, all our information has been posted on our website. If anyone wants to find out about anything, it is all there. They are accusing us that we do not have the intention to develop Ice Hockey. Does that mean ‘he’ is the only one that has the intention to do so? He’s a foreigner. I am not sure what their intentions are.

They are also questioning where all the Government funding is spent. Of course you would not know. Why would I tell you? All they want to know is why can they not get the funding to organize a league and why can they not get any funding for an intern? In the past, we did hire an intern. We asked them to help hire one to help coach. Over \$100k a year, but when the intern arrived, he never listened or obeyed them. He only listened to him.

In regards to our league, he said that we did not give them any funding to organize. He has no intention to partner with us and his only intention was to ask us for the funding so they can organize the league but that is not possible. What we need are referees, coaches, scorekeepers that are all certified. But that is not how he does it. They just ask his own people

With jerseys, we get ours done for about \$300 or \$400 a set but they said they get theirs for about \$700 a set and it must be from that specific supplier. Because that is his buddy. In this situation, no one will approve of this.

They are also saying that we are not helping the Discovery Bay rink to get their license. But the issue with the DB rink is with their owner’s committee which did not give the approval. No one can help them. Ok, that’s it for now. See you again next time”



Appendix B:

From: Joeva LS LUI [mailto:jlslui@lcsd.gov.hk]

Sent: 30 November 2020 17:56

To: Gregory Smyth <greg@chinahockeygroup.com>

Cc: LM IP <lmip@lcsd.gov.hk>; Kit Sum LAI <ksulai@lcsd.gov.hk>; Anna WY LEE <awyalee@lcsd.gov.hk>

Subject: Inquiry for the Ice Rink and HongKong Ice Hockey Association

Dear Mr. SMYTH,

Thank you for your email dated 18 November 2020.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) provides subvention to “national sports associations” (NSAs) under the Sports Subvention Scheme (SSS) to support the promotion and development of sports in Hong Kong. NSAs may use the subvention to cover their personnel, office and programme expenses. HongKong Ice Hockey Association (HKIHA) is one of the NSAs receiving subvention under the SSS.

To ensure that the subvention allocated to NSAs is used properly, the LCSD enters into annual Subvention Agreements with individual NSAs. Under the Agreements, NSAs have the obligation to use the subvention to implement the planned programmes in strict accordance with the requirements stated in the Agreements. The Government and the Audit Commission may enquire into, examine and audit all records and accounts in respect of the subvention as well as their management and control procedures. NSAs are also required to respond and follow up on any corruption prevention advice rendered by the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the Government. In addition, NSAs have to disclose all information relevant to the subvention funding as and when necessary.

NSAs are required to submit quarterly reports on their programmes, and annual accounts audited by certified public accountants. They are also required to

formulate and comply with a Code of Conduct, Accounting Procedures Guidelines and Procurement Practices and Guidelines to avoid conflicts of interest and to ensure due process is followed. The LCSD conducts regular on-site inspections of the subvented programmes as well as periodic quality assurance inspections to ensure the quality of programmes provided by NSAs, the adoption of proper accounting procedures and their compliance with the terms of the Subvention Agreements.

Once again, thanks for your inquiry. If you have further enquiry, please contact Ms Anna LEE at 2061 7638 for details.

Regards



Joeva LUI
LM(SDev)1

----- Forwarded by Joeva LS LUI/LCSD/HKSARG on 30/11/2020 17:03 -----

From: "Gregory Smyth" <greg@chinahockeygroup.com>
To: "Joeva LS LUI" <jlslui@lcsd.gov.hk>
Cc: "Anna WY LEE" <awyalee@lcsd.gov.hk>
Date: 18/11/2020 17:11
Subject: RE: Inquiry for the Ice Rink and HongKong Ice Hockey Association

Dear Joeva

Thank you for the note. I will split the email conversation into 2 emails and reply only to the HKIHA situation in this email.

Performance of HongKong Ice Hockey Association (HKIHA)

In regard to the unsatisfactory re-registration arrangement and the charges for issue of recommendation letter, we will remind HKIHA to maintain a good relationship with their affiliated members and ice hockey associations and offer their assistance as far as possible with an aim to promote the ice hockey sport. At the same time, we will also closely monitor the performance of HKIHA accordingly.

Can you confirm how the performance of the HKIHA will be monitored and what metrics are applied to said performance? I am unclear how the LCSD works with the HKIHA. Can you outline the relationship in detail? This will help our organization understand the election process, board membership, transparency and funding of the HKIHA.

Please advise on my meeting request with your team.

Thank you
Greg

From: Joeva LS LUI [<mailto:jlslui@lcsd.gov.hk>]
Sent: 06 November 2020 17:05
To: greg@chinahockeygroup.com
Cc: Anna WY LEE <awyalee@lcsd.gov.hk>
Subject: Inquiry for the Ice Rink and HongKong Ice Hockey Association



Dear Mr. SMYTH,

I refer to your conversation with my colleague, Ms Anna LEE of Sports Development Unit, on 29 October 2020 and would like to provide the below information for your reference.

Licensing progress of the rinks at Discovery Bay and City Plaza

The licence applications of the two rinks were actively handled by this Department. The licences would be issued once the applicants have complied to all the statutory requirements of various government departments, including but not limited to the Fire Services Department and the Home Affairs Department.

Performance of HongKong Ice Hockey Association (HKIHA)

In regard to the unsatisfactory re-registration arrangement and the charges for issue of recommendation letter, we will remind HKIHA to maintain a good relationship with their affiliated members and ice hockey associations and offer their assistance as far as possible with an aim to promote the ice hockey sport. At the same time, we will also closely monitor the performance of HKIHA accordingly.

Thank you for your comment and contribution for ice hockey development in Hong Kong. If you have further comment on the performance of HKIHA, please feel free to contact Ms Anna LEE at 2061 7638. You may also visit <https://www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/licensing/index.html> for information about Places of Amusement Licenses.

Joeva LUI
Leisure Manager (Sports Development)1
for Director of Leisure and Cultural Services



Appendix C:



Mr. Gregory Smyth
 China Ice Hockey League Limited
 4/F Yat Fat Building
 44-46 Des Voeux Road Central
 Central, Hong Kong

Mr. Mike Kan Yeung Kit, Chairman
 Hong Kong Ice Hockey Association
 Room 1023, Olympic House
 1 Stadium Path
 Causeway Bay Hong Kong

May 13, 2021

Dear Mr. Kan,

Subject: China Ice Hockey League (CIHL) – Official IIHF Hong Kong Ice Hockey League Recognition

I am writing to request that the Hong Kong Ice Hockey Association consider formal recognition of the China Ice Hockey League (CIHL) as the official ice hockey league representing Hong Kong.

This season, the CIHL marks its 10th consecutive season as the first, full-contact, elite ice hockey league in Hong Kong. With 60 players across four teams, the league includes the SAR's best players, players who have competed in both the Canadian Hockey League (the top junior league in Canada) and in varsity hockey in Canada (U Sports) and the USA (NCAA), as well as U18 and senior players representing Hong Kong.

First established in 2011, the CIHL has been committed to elite level play since its very first game. That commitment to excellence is demonstrated throughout the league structure and in the integrity and excellence demonstrated by each and every person in our league – players, general managers, referees and our back-of-house operations. The league has, over the course of a decade, built strong relationships throughout the hockey community, both in Hong Kong, in the Greater Bay Area and abroad.

The CIHL anchors a number of successful ice hockey initiatives, which helps to further expand the reach of the sport in Hong Kong, and which has contributed positively to the increased level of play. Some of these initiatives include:

- A highly successful intern program, which brings university-educated, varsity ice hockey players to Hong Kong to live and work in Hong Kong, while also coaching youth hockey
- Adopt a School and the Big Assist Programs which provide opportunities for children to gain exposure to hockey and for unprivileged children to learn to skate and play
- The Junior Tigers hockey club, an expansive and inclusive junior ice hockey club that offers recreational and competitive hockey programmes for boys and girls ages 4-17
- Cross-border and international tournament play
- Refereeing, coaching and mentoring

China Hockey Group
 4/F, Yat Fat Building, 44-46 Des Voeux Road, Central, Hong Kong
www.chinahockeygroup.com



As a league, the CIHL serves as the key training and development platform for elite ice hockey in Hong Kong, and particularly for the Hong Kong National U18 and Senior Men's teams. The CIHL serves this role because it is an elite, full-contact ice hockey league and because the high quality of play provides opportunities for National team players to gain regular game experience at a level required to compete on an International stage. The CIHL has recently launched a development subsidy for Hong Kong Men's National Team ice hockey players. Please see attached press release for further details.

Please see attached recent screen shot of the CIHL feature on TVB Pearl:



<https://youtu.be/447a2Ga6C1>

The CIHL has firmly established itself as part of Hong Kong's sporting community and is supported by a number of Hong Kong businesses, along with the several hundred families that are part of umbrella China Hockey Group (CHG) family. Founded by long-time Hong Kong residents and entrepreneurs Gary Lawrence, Rick Siemens and I, Gregory Smyth, the CIHL not only demonstrates excellence in Hong Kong ice hockey, but is also a sustainable, reliable and respected league, which has and continues to play a significant role in the development and growth of hockey in Hong Kong.

We would be pleased to discuss the CIHL in further detail and would be happy to provide any additional information.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,




Gregory Smyth
China Ice Hockey League
Co-Founder and Executive Director

CC: Mr. Thomas Wu - IIHF Council, Vice President
Mr. Vincent Liu - Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Director
Mr. Tak-Keung Yeung - Home Affairs Bureau, Commissioner for Sports

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CHG Launches Subsidy for Hong Kong Men's National Team Ice Hockey Players

The China Hockey Group (CHG) launches a new Men's National Team ice hockey subsidy program to further develop the sport in Southern China.

Hong Kong, May 13, 2021 -- CHG's new subsidy program is aimed at ensuring that Hong Kong Men's National team players receive the on-ice development and elite game play they need for success. Open to all Hong Kong Men's National ice hockey team players, the Hong Kong National Team subsidy program will waive China Ice Hockey League (CIHL) fees for players in financial need, providing Hong Kong Men's National Team players with the opportunity to develop their skills and game play in the SAR's premier league.

The CIHL was first launched in 2011 as Hong Kong's first elite, full-contact ice hockey league and over the past decade has remained the city's best league with top talents, including those who played varsity hockey at Canadian and American universities, competing in the league. The elite league, which is part of the CHG family, has always welcomed Hong Kong Men's National Team players, and this new subsidy removes any financial barrier to participation.

The aim of the subsidy is to provide Hong Kong Men's National Team players with consistent opportunities to play high-level ice hockey against elite competition, ultimately helping to strengthen their development ahead of international competition. The subsidy is part of the CHG's extensive community development portfolio which seeks to grow and develop the sport of ice hockey in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area.

"We are delighted to launch the subsidy initiative and invite Hong Kong Men's National ice hockey team players to participate," CHG co-founder and director Gregory Smyth said. "This subsidy removes any financial barrier to joining Hong Kong's top league and we are excited to offer Hong Kong's National Team players with this opportunity.

"The CHG is willing to extend its extensive expertise and fill a gap in the Men's National Team development program. We firmly believe that for the Hong Kong Men's National ice hockey team to succeed, players need to be developing their skills by playing high-quality, elite ice hockey in the city's best league."

Applications for the subsidy are now open, with the subsidy beginning from the 2021-2022 CIHL season. For more information about the Hong Kong National Team Subsidy Program or to apply, please contact CIHL commissioner Grant Phillips at grant@cihl.com.



About the China Hockey Group

The China Hockey Group (CHG) is a family-focused group of ice hockey leagues, training programs and community initiatives that are geared at developing both the sport of ice hockey in Hong Kong and Southern China as well as the concept of student-athletes, where sporting goals are achieved alongside educational pursuits.

The CHG is comprised of a number of hockey initiatives. Established in 2011, The China Ice Hockey League (CIHL) is Hong Kong's elite adult hockey league. The Junior Tigers program is Hong Kong's premier youth hockey organization featuring the Island League and Learn to Play and Learn to Skate programs. The CHG is also a co-founder of the Greater Bay Hockey League - the first cross border competitive league encompassing organizations from Hong Kong and Southern China. The CHG also organizes and manages the Greater Bay Championships, Asia's best ice hockey tournament covering multiple weekends and age groups. The South China Ice Hockey League (SCIHL) is an adult league for those seeking a more recreational experience. The BHL, a youth ball hockey league in Hong Kong, is an initiative proudly supported by the CHG.

In addition, the CHG Hockey Shop is the exclusive South East Asia distributor for Warrior hockey equipment, and also the reseller for Bauer hockey equipment in Hong Kong & Macau, and offers services including skate sharpening, skate baking, and custom fittings.

For more information please contact:

China Hockey Group
info@chinahockeygroup.com



Appendix D:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nd4xuZEXSLA>

 **Hong Kong Spoken Word Festival**
April 12 · 🌐

Do you follow ice hockey? Well, Paul Mclean and Chris Ivany just call it 'hockey'. If you are a long time hockey fan or a newbie to the sport, these two hosts with their engaging banter make listening (and maybe even learning) about hockey a treat. Come hear them LIVE with their guest Greg Smyth on April 15 live at the Fringe Club.

Tickets: <https://www.ticketflap.com/hkspekenwordfestival2021> ✓
Website: <https://www.acrossthepondhk.com/> ✓
RSS: <https://www.acrossthepondhk.com/atp> ✓ ... See More



ACROSS
THE POND





Appendix E:



The Hong Kong National Teams

At the pinnacle of Hong Kong Rugby, Hong Kong's National Teams are overseen by General Manager of Rugby Performance David 'Dai' Rees. The teams include men's and women's fifteens and sevens as well as U20 men's and women's in both codes of the game.

Under Dai's leadership, the national teams have continuously flourished, pushing to new levels of performance and results in both Asian Rugby and at global World Rugby competitions.

This section covers biographies of our national squad members as well as key management in the Performance Department. In addition, you can learn if you qualify to represent Hong Kong.

To follow the progress of our senior national team and national age grade squads, please refer to the Fixtures & Results for each.





COVID-19 HKRU RETURN TO RUGBY READ MORE

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WANT TO PLAY PROFESSIONAL RUGBY IN HONG KONG?

The opportunity of a lifetime awaits: fulfill your dream of becoming a pro player in one of the most exciting cities in the world.

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ARE YOU HONG KONG QUALIFIED?

If you can answer yes to EITHER of the following questions, you are officially qualified to play professional rugby in Hong Kong:

- **Were you born in Hong Kong?**
- **Were any of your parents or grandparents born in Hong Kong?**

The Hong Kong Rugby Union are currently seeking young, talented, Hong Kong-qualified rugby players from around the world to join a professional rugby set up in the City of Lights. Selected players will have the opportunity to play in a highly competitive semi-professional league, make rugby their full time job, train amongst a team of experienced athletes in an elite sporting environment and possibly be selected to represent the National Hong Kong team.



JAMES CUNNINGHAM

Captain of Hong Kong XV's
Born in HK, raised in Australia
HK Qualification: Born in HK
Former teams: Manly Sea Eagles, Northern Suburbs Warringah Rats, North Harbour Rays, AU

[INFO HERE](#)



MAX DENMARK

Winger for HK XV's and prop for HK7's team
Born in HK, secondary school in UK
HK Qualification: Born in HK
Former team: Millfield, UK

CLOSE



ROBBIE KEITH

Equity Derivatives Broker,
Flyhalf for HK XV's team
Born and raised in UK
Qualification: Parents born in HK
Former team: University of Durham, UK

[INFO HERE](#)



KEITH ROBERTSON

Cathay Pacific Pilot, former
Flyhalf for HK7's team
Born and raised in HK
HK Qualification: Born in HK, HK permanent resident
Former team: University of Nottingham, UK

[INFO HERE](#)



MAX DENMARK

Winger for HK XV's and prop for HK7's team
Born in HK, secondary school in UK
HK Qualification: Born in HK
Former team: Millfield, UK

[INFO HERE](#)



RUSSELL WEBB

Fly half for HK7's team
Born in HK, secondary school in UK, university in USA
HK Qualification: Born in HK
Former team: University of California, Berkeley, USA

[INFO HERE](#)



TYLER SPITZ

Centre for HK XV's and 7s team
Born in HK, raised in Australia
HK Qualification: Born in HK
Former team: Eastwood Rugby club, AUS

[INFO HERE](#)



Do you qualify to play for Hong Kong?

To play for the Hong Kong National Team, please download the documents below and fill out the specific areas:

- [Application for the Confirmation of eligibility to play for National Teams](#)
- [IRB Declaration](#)
- [HKRFU Travel Record](#)

You are required to provide the following documents as well:

- Copy of Passport
- Statement of travel records from the Immigration Department HKSAR
- Copy of Hong Kong Identity Card

Please Send the completed forms and supporting documents to:

Performance Department
Hong Kong Rugby Football Union
Room 2001, Olympic House,
1 Stadium Path, So Kon Po, Causeway Bay,
Hong Kong



APPLICATION FOR CONFIRMATION OF ELIGIBILITY TO PLAY FOR NATIONAL TEAMS

(To view the full eligibility criteria as stipulated by the IRB, please go to <http://www.irb.com/Laws/Regulations/home.htm> and download Section 8 .)

1. 1. Personal details of Applicants:-

(a) Name and contact address;

(b) Date of birth;

(c) Place of birth.

Subject to IRB Regulation 8.2, a Player may only play for the senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team, the next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team and the senior National Representative Sevens Team of the Union of the country in which:

a) he was born: or

b) one parent or grandparent was born: or

c) he has completed thirty six consecutive months of Residence immediately preceding the time of playing.

If you are claiming eligibility through (a) above, please go to Question 2

If you are claiming eligibility through (b) above, please go to Question 3

If you are claiming eligibility through (c) above, please go to Question 4

2. Do you possess a birth certificate showing Hong Kong as your place of birth?

If yes, please provide a copy of the same and attach to this form. Go to Question

13.



3. Do you possess a birth certificate showing Hong Kong as the place of birth of one of your parents or grandparents? If yes, please provide a copy of the same and proof of lineage, and attach both to this form. Go to Question 13.
4. State all relevant periods of residence in Hong Kong in the past [six] years. This must be supported by a "Statement of Travel Record" from the Hong Kong Immigration Department, which can be downloaded at <http://www.immd.gov.hk/cht/ml/id697>.
5. In respect of any periods spent outside Hong Kong in the past six years please explain the reasons for these absences (this might include for example residence elsewhere; vacations; study overseas etc).
6. Do you possess a Hong Kong Permanent Identity Card? If so, please provide a copy of the same.
7. If you do not possess a Hong Kong Permanent Identity Card but you possess a Hong Kong identity card please state:-
 - (a) when application was made for a Hong Kong identity card?
 - (b) when it was granted?Please provide a copy of the same.
8. If you possess neither a permanent Hong Kong identity card nor any other Hong Kong identity card, please:-
 - (a) explain why you do not possess one?
 - (b) state whether you have applied or intend to apply for one?
9. Please state all periods of employment in Hong Kong in the past six years and the name and address of your employers. Please provide copies of any contracts of employment.



10. During the period of residency relied upon in support of your application please state whether you were renting or own a property in Hong Kong. If so, please provide full details.
11. If applicable, please state when you consider you completed thirty six consecutive months of residence.
12. Please state any other matters which you rely upon in support of your application.
13. Have you played for the senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the senior National Representative Sevens Team of any other Union?

NOTES

1. Any decision to be made with regard to the applicant's eligibility will be assisted considerably by accurate supporting documentation. Please provide all such documentation in support of this application.

I confirm that the content of this application is true.

Signed _____ Dated _____



SCHEDULE 1

DECLARATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF A PLAYER TO PLAY FOR THE SENIOR FIFTEEN-A-SIDE NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE TEAM, THE NEXT SENIOR

FIFTEEN-A-SIDE NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE TEAM OR THE SENIOR NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE SEVENS TEAM OF A UNION

DECLARATION OF PLAYER

I _____ (Name) of _____ (Address) confirm that, I have read and understand the criteria for eligibility set out in Regulation 8 of the IRB Regulations Relating to the Game (IRB Regulations) and I hereby declare that I am eligible to play for Hong Kong Rugby Football Union because:-

Tick applicable box(es)

- I was born in the country for which fifteen-a-side senior National Representative Team or the next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team, or the senior National Representative Sevens Team of the Union for which I intend to play; or
- One of my parents or grandparent was born in the country for which senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the senior National Representative Sevens Team of the Union for which I intend to play; or
- I have completed thirty-six consecutive months of Residence immediately preceding the time of playing in the country for which senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the senior National Representative Sevens Team of the Union for which I intend to play.

AND

- I have not played for the senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the senior National Representative Sevens Team of any other Union.¹

I have attached to this declaration relevant documentation² to prove my eligibility to play for the senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or National Representative Sevens Team of Hong Kong Rugby Football Union and I understand and accept that if I am found to have played for the senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the senior National Representative Sevens Team of a Union without satisfying the eligibility criteria set out in Regulation 8 of the IRB Regulations, and/or to have provided inaccurate information in this declaration then I and the Union concerned will be subject to sanctions.

Player's signature: _____ **Date:** _____



DECLARATION OF UNION

I Dai Rees (Name) the Head of Performance and National Head Coach of Hong Kong Rugby Football Union (Position and Union) hereby declare that the Hong Kong Rugby Football Union has made all such necessary enquiries in relation to the above Player's eligibility to play for the senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the senior Sevens National Representative Team of the Union. I further declare that the Union is satisfied that the information provided by the Player in his declaration is correct, that the documentation in support of the Player's declaration is valid and that the Player is eligible to play for the senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the senior National Representative Sevens Team of Hong Kong Rugby Football Union. I understand and accept that if a Player plays for the senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or the next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team Union or the senior National Representative Sevens Team without satisfying the eligibility criteria set out in Regulation 8 of the IRB Regulations and/or the Union has provided inaccurate information in this declaration then the Union will be subject to the fixed penalty sanctions set out in Regulation 8.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

1 If a Player has played for another Union's senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Team or senior National Representative Sevens team, this must be stated on this declaration form. For the avoidance of doubt, Players would only be eligible to play for a second Union if they can demonstrate that they allowed 36 consecutive months to elapse before they played for a second Union and that they played for that second Union before 1 January 2000. Any such Players should submit in writing the circumstances of such participation on a separate sheet

2 Players are expected to provide valid copy birth certificates or other relevant formal documentation in support of their declaration. Players may be requested to provide additional documentation as appropriate in support of their eligibility to play for a senior National Representative Team or the next senior National Representative Team of a Union.



The World Rugby U20 Trophy has become a focal point for the Hong Kong U20s Programme since its inception in 2014. This tournament gives the opportunity for players to be tested against their peers at international level as Hong Kong play the likes of Samoa, Fiji, Japan and Namibia on an annual basis. Qualification as the Asian Representative at the U20 Trophy comes courtesy of winning the U19 Asia Championships, which Hong Kong have achieved over the past five years.

The Hong Kong U20s squad is made up of graduates from the National Age Grade Programme and incorporates players who have been identified and engaged from overseas, usually having left Hong Kong for school/university.

At the most recent U20 Trophy, Hong Kong finished in sixth place, beating hosts Romania in pool play and finishing above the likes of tournament regulars Canada. The next addition of the tournament is due to take place in São José dos Campos, Brazil, from 9-21st July 2019.

Throughput into senior programmes is a key component and indicator of success for the U20s. To date, one third of players who have represented Hong Kong at the World Rugby U20 Trophy have progressed into full-time athletes in the senior men's programmes (HKSI Sevens & ERP 15s).

For further information regarding the Hong Kong U20s, please contact:

Stephen Dowse – Head of Elite Player Development – stephen.dowse@hkcrugby.com



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訓練時間 Training Period **2021年6月至7月**

報名費用 Enrolment Fee **\$320**

報名資格 Eligibility **年滿18歲或以上男女**
Male and female of 18 or above

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Women's National Sevens

The Hong Kong Women's Sevens team have been on a full time training programme based at the Hong Kong Institute of Sport (www.hksi.org.hk) since the end of 2013. Currently there are twenty players in the squad with 15 on fulltime contracts and 5 on part time contracts. The Hong Kong Institute of Sport provides a world class facility to support the Squad in their training.

- The Squad has achieved the following results:
- Darwin Sevens Tournament: 1st Place
- Hong Kong 7s 2014: 9th Place
- Women's World Series Qualifier 2014: 9th Place
- Asian Sevens Series Hong Kong 2014: 2nd Place
- Asian Sevens Series Beijing 2014: 3rd Place
- Asian Sevens Series 2014 Overall Placing: 3rd Place
- Margaret River 7s Tournament 2015: 1st Place
- Borneo Sevens 2015: 4th Place
- Hong Kong 7s 2015: 4th Place
- World Series Qualifier Dublin 2015: 6th Place
- Asian Sevens Series Qingdao 2015: 1st Place