

### **Hockey - BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR NOMINATING ATHLETES**

The Southern Sports Academy (SSA) is a non-profit organisation that assists young athletes in achieving sporting excellence. SSA supports athlete development in a holistic manner and recognises the value of education. SSA expects athletes to attend school or tertiary education, be meaningfully employed, or undertake other educational or training opportunities. Hockey NSW will be undertaking an annual pathways program specific to two age groups (U/16 & U/18). The RAS will form a major delivery arm of these Futures pathway programs on behalf of Hockey NSW in Regional NSW. The aim is to guide athletes through the athlete pathway and give them the support they need to progress to the next level.

#### **Who can nominate for the SSA 2025/26 hockey program?**

- The program will consist of two age groups. U16 and U18. Athletes must fall into one of these categories.
- Athletes must reside or attend school in the SSA catchment area.
- Athletes must be current registered members of their local association.
- Please note that all athletes, including identified state team-level athletes, must participate in RAS talent programs.

#### **Proposed Program of Events – Guide Only**

The SSA Hockey program will run from November 2025 to April 2026, with a presentation night scheduled for mid-2026.

- 1st November 2025 – Induction Day, Wagga Wagga. All athletes, returning and new.
- Training Days – athletes can expect fortnightly training days from November 2025 onwards. Athletes can expect to train at venues rotating between Albury, Wagga, and Griffith. Training may be held at separate venues, which will be discussed with selected athletes.
- Inter-Academy Camp – proposed weekend of 27 Feb-1<sup>st</sup> March 2026 - Bathurst
- Strength and conditioning training program.
- Mid-2026 – SSA presentation evening.
- The Regional Academies of Sport Academy Games, Tamworth (16-19<sup>th</sup> April 2026)

#### **How are selections made?**

- To be considered for selection, athletes must complete the nomination form before the closing date/time and attend the trial.
- Being part of a previous SSA squad does not guarantee selection.
- A detailed selection criterion is used, which includes physical attributes and capabilities, technical

competence, tactical awareness, potential to improve, competitive ability, individual application, coachability and behaviour, performance, and results at specific events.

- A list of selected athletes is placed on the SSA website, and trialling athletes are advised by email.
- Offers must be accepted by the due date, or they may be withdrawn and offered to another athlete.

#### What is expected of an athlete?

- If selected in a squad, SSA expects that this is the athlete's primary sport of participation.
- Attendance at ALL activities in the SSA program (including presentation evening). SSA aims to avoid clashes with higher-level events run by the State Sporting Organisation where possible. In certain circumstances, exemptions can be applied.
- Athletes are expected to adhere to the SSA Code of Behaviour policy, participate to the best of their ability, display exemplary behaviour, show enthusiasm, and maintain high dress standards.
- SSA athletes are expected to commit to improving their physical profile and should be aware that this includes undertaking physical activities and testing. Squad athletes are also expected to undertake a strength and conditioning training program.

#### What does the SSA program cost?

An athlete levy will be applied to the program. A 50% deposit will be required to secure a successful athlete's spot in the squad. The number of athletes in the team will determine the levy.

NEW squad athletes' compulsory uniform costs \$175\*

Inter-Academy Tour Events – TBC

Academy Games levy \$850 \*\*

\*Athletes returning to SSA are not required to purchase new uniforms unless their current items no longer fit or are damaged. Subject to expenditure /pricing variations

\*\* Subject to expenditure /pricing variations