



# National Performance Centres for Hockey

## What is a National Performance Centre?

National Performance Centres (NPC) have been selected by England Hockey to work in partnership with the National Governing Body to deliver key areas of the Single System, including talent selection which support hockey's performance objectives. The centres will provide excellence in training facilities and the delivery of a high performance hockey programme for selected players aged 18-23 years.

The NPCs are essential in providing aspiring international hockey players with top quality coaching alongside specific strength and conditioning programmes. They will also provide support to athletes with physiotherapy, lifestyle and medical support and the development of their academic qualifications. Players will continue to play local club hockey and this will enable the sharing of high performance practice.

## Where will they be?

Four NPC's have already been announced, three of which will be established for a September 2008 start. The Yorkshire NPC will begin in September 2009. Discussions are also continuing with three other prospective NPC's and it is hoped that these may also eventuate in the future. At present, the four confirmed NPCs in alphabetical order are:

- **East Midlands NPC**  
(Nottingham Trent University, Loughborough University and Nottingham University consortia)
- **Hockey West NPC**  
(University of Bath, University of Bristol and University of the West of England-UWE consortia)
- **South Coast NPC**  
(University of Southampton, Southampton Solent University and the University of Portsmouth consortia)
- **Yorkshire NPC**  
(Sheffield Hallam University, The University of Sheffield consortia)

## What does this mean for the players?

Players nominated by England Hockey as potential International athletes will be given full details of all the selected NPC's, including the consortia institutions, academic depth and breadth, local club links, coaching and sport science structure, delivery and funding. An England Hockey nominated player who attends one of the NPC's will be classified as an 'NPC athlete' and will be funded by us to train in a performance environment. Whilst we want to support all of our future internationals through the NPC structure, we also recognise freedom of choice and therefore, any nominated athlete who attends a Higher Education Institute outside of the NPC structure will still be supported by England Hockey within their chosen environment. This could be via alternative funding or small scale coaching support (where centrally contracted coaching is available).



## What do the Directors of England Hockey think of the new NPCs?

David Faulkner, England Hockey's Performance Director thinks that the NPC's will provide our athletes with an opportunity to excel in a highly competitive performance environment with support that ensures that their educational aspirations are sustained. He commented *"At the same time, the NPC's will allow England Hockey to deliver daily technical input to enhance skill development and support the players with the highest quality in strength and conditioning, physiotherapy and lifestyle support. The club links are vital with these clusters for best practice to be shared and continually improve the all round performance environment of hockey in England"*

Sally Munday, England Hockey, Development Director said *"The National Performance Centres are a vital component of the Single System for hockey which will provide a consistent and equitable pathway for players involved in our sport. We have been extremely impressed with the enthusiasm and creativity of the NPC applicants and we are very excited at the opportunities that our talented hockey players will be given through this element of the Single System."*

## Where can I get further information?

For further information about NPC's, please contact Jane Powell, Performance Coaching Manager for England Hockey:

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