

## **“G” AND “LG” HOCKEY IN THE NETHERLANDS**

### **Country**

The Netherlands

### **Initiative**

“G” and “LG” hockey: hockey for players with a learning (G) or physical (LG) disability, that are not wheelchair dependant.

### **Contact person**

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### **Philosophy**

One of the important action points in the KNHB strategic plan is “The integration of able and disabled hockey players within our hockey clubs” and “the provision of structural activities and support for G- and LG-players”.

### **Project start**

Dutch hockey club “Zoetermeer” started in 1993 with a G-hockey activity for young people with a learning disability. Hockey club “Push” from Breda started in 1996 with a LG-hockey activity for young people with a physical disability.

The KNHB started to support these activities from 1999 onwards. In order to create nation wide interest in G- and LG-hockey the KNHB set up a working group that serves as a sounding-board for these development plans.

### **Activities**

#### **• Practice sessions**

Weekly practice sessions at the club. At the moment (Nov 2010) there are 62 clubs that offer G-hockey and 12 clubs that host LG-hockey (from which 2 clubs that offer G- as well as LG-hockey).

#### **• Friendly matches**

- a) between G- and LG-teams of different clubs
- b) between a G- or LG-team and another youth team within the club

#### **• Annual tournament**

KNHB organises 2 national tournaments per year: one outdoor, one indoor. Clubs also organise inter-club tournaments, often to celebrate their G- or LG anniversary.

• **Hockey introduction sessions at special schools**

Coaches of hockey clubs that give hockey clinics at special schools or at rehabilitation centers. During these clinics youngsters with a learning disability get introduced to hockey and after the clinic they can follow a few practice sessions at the club.

• **Social activities**

Participation in the youth events, organised by the club.

**Target group**

“Geestelijk” (mentally) and Lichamelijk Gehandicapte (physically) disabled people who are wheelchair independent. Most clubs offer activities for young people in the age group 6 – 18, but more and more seniors (especially in the G-group) are getting involved as well.

Wheelchair hockey does also exist in the Netherlands and is since 2010 organised by the KNHB.

**Number of participants**

727 LG- and G-players divided over the 76 clubs.

**Format**

6 a-side games on quarter size synthetic pitches (outdoor) or normal size indoor pitches (36 x 44 meter), played with the regular KNHB mini hockey rules. At LG-hockey the field gets shortened by a few meters, depending on the level and the mobility of the players. Equipment is as per normal, except for the ball: at LG-hockey the players play with a slightly lighter mini hockey ball.

There are a few adapted rules:

- when a team leads with more than 3 goals, the winning team needs to pass 3 times before scoring
- players with some severe physical disabilities (visual / motor) wear bibs and get a protected status.

These players will not be able to play without this special status. The status means that they are allowed to take a max. of 10 steps from their own playing half or 5 steps from the attacking playing half without getting tackled. This protected player can only be tackled by another protected player.

**Approach**

An integrated approach is used: the activities take place at the hockey club. If there are enough numbers, G- and LG-players play separately.

**Teaching / coaching**

By qualified hockey coaches, preferably assisted by people that have experience with the target group.

The number of coaches and assistants depends on the level of the group, the level and experience of

the coach and the homogeneity and level of dependency of the team. Sometimes a group can train independently, where in other cases a 1 on 1 approach is needed.

The number of coaches and assistants in comparison to the number of players is average 1 on 4.

### **Administration**

At club level: club administration; at national level: project coordinator of the KNHB

### **Support from NA and other institutions**

KNHB support:

- flyer which explains G- and LG hockey
- poster
- step by step plan for clubs that want to start G- and/or LG-hockey:
  - what is needed?
  - is it feasible within our club?
  - recruitment of players
  - coaching
  - recruitment of volunteers
- introduction clinic at a club that considers to start hockey for this target group (conducted by the KNHB together with an experienced club)
- courses and workshops for beginner coaches (practicaly & theoretical)
- DVD which explains and promotes G- and LG-hockey
- manual with background information
- umpiring/game leaders card with rules

### **Financing**

The club activities are paid by the club and by the participants (they pay an affiliation fee). For subsidies these clubs can approach the local government, companies and service clubs like the Lions. The national activities are financed by the KNHB and supported by the “Steunpilaren” and the “Collecte Fonds Gehandicaptensport”.

### **Challenges so far**

The people that are involved with this target group have a varied background (being a parent, brother or sister, teacher, club people). It's a challenge to make and keep all these different involved people enthusiastic and to make new people and clubs interested in this activity. But it's a challenge well worth undertaking, as hockey as a TEAM sport is of vital importance (and fun!) for this target group.

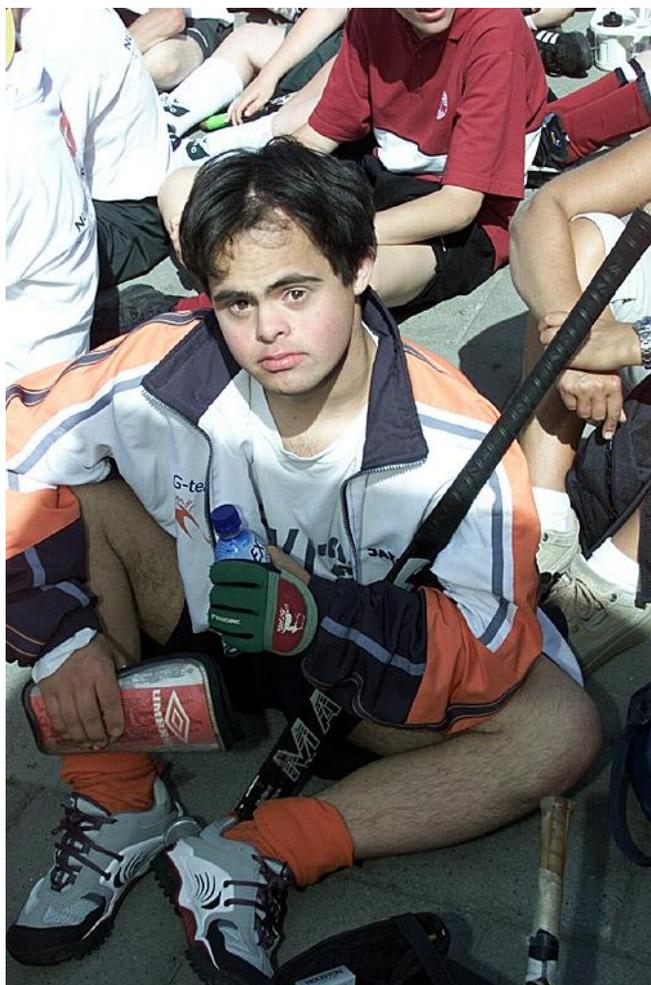
### **Future activities**

A working group (with representatives from the KNHB, the Dutch Sports Federation for people with a

disability and the clubs) has been established to develop supporting materials and initiate activities to promote and further develop G- and LG-hockey in the Netherlands.

### Tips for NAs

- take the following motto as starting point: “Normal what can be normal, adapted that needs to be adapted”
- find out upfront if a G- and/or LG-group fits within your club: check if you have enough volunteers, pitch capacity, enthusiastic parents, experienced leaders, etc
- inform all members of the club about the new group before starting and publishing the activity
- start when you have a few players; don't wait till a whole team (6 players) is filled. Promote the activity well within the region – the experience teaches that soon more players will join





## **“E” AND “H” HOCKEY IN THE NETHERLANDS**

### **Country**

The Netherlands

### **Initiative**

“E” and “H” Hockey: hockey for players with a electric wheelchair (E) or a hand moved wheelchair (H).

### **Contact person**

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### **Philosophy**

One of the important action points in the KNHB strategic plan is “The integration of able and disabled hockey players within our hockey clubs” and “the provision of structural activities and support for players with a disability”.

### **Project start**

Wheelchair hockey started in the Netherlands in 1974. Demonstrations were given at Mytyl schools, sometimes in a mixed team with a variety of wheelchairs.

After a few years the sport had grown big enough to set up leagues. E- and H-hockey was played seperately, but in the same indoor hall.

For E-hockey only players were allowed that were dependent on their wheelchair in daily life. All others (including those without a disability) could participate in H-Hockey.

After a few more years this combination of 2 sports in 1 hall was not possible anymore, as the numbers outgrew the venue!

E-hockey nowadays (Dec 2010) is played in 5 leagues (5 levels), with 60 teams from 27 clubs.

H-hockey is played in 7 leagues (levels) with 50 teams from 22 clubs.

Some clubs have E- as well as H-Hockey.

Three Belgian clubs participate in the Dutch E- and H-Hockey league.

Before 2010 E- and H-Hockey were organised under the umbrella of GSN: Gehandicaptten Sport Nederland, an organisation covering all sports for people with a disability.

Since 2010 E- and H-Hockey fall under the umbrella of the Dutch Hockey Association, the KNHB.

## **Activities**

### **• Practice sessions**

Weekly practice sessions at the club.

### **• League**

Each team plays a league with 12 games per league season, spread over 5-6 tournament days.

There are 22 E-Hockey tournaments en 10 Hockey days per season.

The tournament league days are organized by different clubs spread all over the Netherlands, under the umbrella of the KNHB.

H-league contains 7 levels: Super League, Hoofdklasse, 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> klasse.

E-league has a national Superleague and “Hoofdklasse” league and 4 regionally organized competitions level 1-3.

The champions of the Superleague are the Champion of the Netherlands.

League champions promote to the next level and the lowest team in the league demote to a lower level.

The leagues are organized by a regional co-ordinator in co-operation with the KNHB.

### **• National Team activities**

The National E hockey team exists since 1990 and participates in European and World Cups.

In 2010 the National H Hockey Team was established, with the aim to participate in international tournaments, European- and World Cups.

In order to build a high level national squad a talent identification and training programme is being put together.

### **• Annual tournament**

KNHB organizes each year a national tournament (Dutch Cup) for H & E-hockey teams in Utrecht.

Clubs also organise inter-club tournaments

### **• Recreational activities - friendly matches**

Friendly matches are organized:

a) between teams of different clubs

b) H-hockey: between teams of disabled and teams of abled players. The abled players (family, students, club members) also play in a wheelchair.

### **• Hockey introduction sessions at special schools**

E/H-hockey specialists conduct hockey clinics at special schools or at rehabilitation centers. Similar clinics are offered to hockey clubs. During these clinics youngsters or rehabilitants with a physical disability get introduced to hockey. After the clinic they can follow a few practice sessions at the club.

### **• Social activities**

Participation in tevents, organised by the club.

## **Target group**

E-Hockey is played by people who are in daily life dependent on an electric wheelchair.

H-hockey is played by able and disabled people.

## **Number of participants** (Nov 2010)

E-Hockey: 480 players;

H-Hockey: 300 players, from which approx. 100 U18s, 50 teams from 22 clubs (7 klassen)

## **Format**

### Format H-Hockey 5<sup>th</sup> - 1<sup>st</sup> league and regional E-hockey league:

4 a-side games, three field players and one goalkeeper.

Field size: 20x10 m with the goal between the back boarding.

Goal size: 2.20cm wide, H-Hockey 40 cm high, 40 cm deep and E-Hockey 20 cm. high and 40 cm deep.

Match time: 2x15 minutes, 5 min rest, no time outs

GK area: goal keeper area from the middle of the goal with a radius of 1.50 cm. Only the goal keeper can touch the ball in this area.

You can only score if the ball has been touched by a player or by a wheelchair at the opponents half of the field. Interchange: every player can be changed until 2 minutes before the end of the game

### Hoofdklasse & Super League (2 highest divisions) E- and H-hockey

5 a-side games, four field players and one goalkeeper.

Field size: 24x14 m with the goal 2 meters from the back boarding

Goal size: 2.20cm wide, 40 cm high, 40 cm deep(H-Hockey) and 20 cm High an 40 cm deep (E-Hockey)

Match time: 2x20 minutes, 10 min break, time outs: 1 minute per team per half

You can only score if the ball has been touched by somebody at the opponents half or if the ball has been touched by a wheelchair at the opponents half of the field.

GK area: goal keeper area from the middle of the goal with a radius of 1.50 cm. Only the goal keeper can touch the ball in this area.

## **Rules**

### Rules H-Hockey

- Keeper area is only for the goal keeper – no players allowed
- All wheelchairs must be made as such that the ball can go underneath the chairs
- Foot boards need to be a minimum of 8 cm high
- Players are allowed to play with the stick underneath the wheelchair
- Referee balls are taken at the center of free spot lines
- A penalty is taken as free ball 5 meters from the goal
- During a penalty the goal keeper must be positioned up to 35 cm from the goal
- The goal keeper can also act as a field player and drive across the field and hit the ball

### Rules E-Hockey

See H-hockey: except:

- Each team needs to play with 2 T-sticks (a stick attached in front of the chair and has the form of a T). One T-stick holder must be a goal keeper.
- No Foot boards
- With E-hockey you're not allowed to play the ball higher than 20 cm

### **Approach**

H-Hockey and E-Hockey is played indoors, at separate or mixed H- and E-Hockey clubs or as part of existing regular hockey clubs (in total 6, with the aim to stimulate more regular hockey clubs to include H- en E-hockey).

### **Coaching/Umpiring**

There is no official coach accreditation system up yet, but this will be set up under the umbrella of the KNHB Hockey Academy. One coaching course has been organized as a more or less spontaneous activity – see attachment for the course subjects.

Coaches are all volunteers.

An official umpiring education structure has been set up. Each team that wants to participate in the league needs to bring a qualified umpire. Each 16 year old that wants to play needs to pass the basic umpiring exam, if he/she is physically able to do this. He/She can write this exam in a wheelchair.

Official umpiring courses have been facilitated.

### **Administration**

At club level: club administration; at national level: project coordinator of the KNHB

### **Support from the National Association and other institutions**

Since 2010 wheelchair hockey gets supported by the KNHB. Before that it fell under the umbrella of GSN: Gehandicapt Sport Nederland.

### **Financing**

All people are volunteers and each club raises funds to play matches. Additional support is received from advertising and sponsors

- KNHB financial support for:
  - everything around the National Team (training, travel, outfits, etc.)
  - KNHB project manager & talent identification/education consultant

- umpires of the highest leagues: they receive a travel allowance
- education & training programmes

### **Challenges so far**

- to get international co-operation & recognition (especially for H-Hockey)
- the people that are involved with this target group have a varied background (being a parent, brother or sister, teacher, club people). It's a challenge to make and keep all these different involved people enthusiastic and to make new people and clubs interested in this activity. But it's a challenge well worth undertaking, as hockey as a TEAM sport is of vital importance (and fun!) for this target group.

### **Future activities**

- a working group has been established to develop supporting materials and initiate activities to promote and further develop E- and H-hockey in the Netherlands.
- a consultant has been appointed for talent identification & development
- ongoing development of the national teams
- international co-operation, matches & tournaments

### **Tips for National Associations**

- find out upfront if the set up of a E- or H-hockey group in your area is feasible: check if you have enough volunteers, pitch capacity, enthusiastic parents, experienced leaders, etc.
- start when you have a few players; don't wait till a whole team is filled. Promote the activity well within the region – the experience teaches that soon more players will join
- adapt the field size to fit the abilities, age and level of the players

