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New Zealand Olympic Ambassador

Shea McAleese

Olympian number:

1057

Discipline:

Hockey

Position:

Midfield – Defender

Shea was born in Napier in 1984. He started playing hockey at Napier Intermediate School when he was 10 years old, and he has loved it ever since.

He was a well-rounded athlete at William Colenso College, excelling at hockey but also at soccer, rugby and cricket. When he was 17, he decided to focus on hockey, and he qualified for the New Zealand under-18 and under-21 teams.

In 2005, Shea debuted for the Black Sticks Men, the New Zealand men's hockey team, in a game against Pakistan at the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In 2006, he was part of the team that came first at the World Cup qualification tournament in Changzou, China. This earned the Black Sticks Men a place at the World Cup in Mönchengladbach, Germany later that year, where they placed eighth, but came home with the Fair Play trophy. That same year, Shea played in his first Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, Australia.

In 2008, Shea competed at his first Olympic Games in Beijing. The Black Sticks Men placed seventh, and Shea was a standout player. He scored two goals, one against Belgium and one against China. He was also in the team

Quick facts

Favourite food: Thai

Favourite movie: *Lord of the Rings* trilogy

Favourite music: Easy listening (to chill out to), dance (to pump up to)

Childhood heroes: My Dad and Ian Ferguson (watching him win Gold made me want to be an Olympian)

Current favourite athlete: Roger Federer

Most rewarding moment in sport: Every time I wear the black jersey and silver fern of NZ.

Talents other than sport: I believe that I can actually dance (but I can't)

Biggest injury: Dislocating my shoulder four times and then having a shoulder reconstruction

Biggest sacrifice: A settled lifestyle

Job outside sport: Co-founder and coach of Hockey365 Coaching (www.hockey365.co.nz)

Other fun facts: I enjoy anything and everything about sport! I want to go to Rio 2016!



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at the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games. The Black Sticks Men won the Bronze Medal, redeeming themselves for their disappointing campaign in Beijing.

Shea took part in the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup in Malaysia in June 2012. The Black Sticks Men won this tournament and were well prepared for the 2012 London Olympic Games. However, the Olympic campaign was disappointing for Shea and his fellow Black Sticks Men. They came ninth overall with a 3–1 victory over Argentina.

Since debuting for the Black Sticks Men, Shea has dislocated his shoulder four times. This was a recurring injury until he had shoulder surgery in 2008. He hasn't had any problems since. Shea has since become a key player in the squad, with impressive talent, determination and experience. He has clocked up more than 170 caps and scored more than 20 goals for New Zealand. He plays as a midfielder, but is also a skilful defender. His speed, vision and perseverance on the field frustrate his opponents – they find it hard to keep up!

Shea is also known for his leadership qualities. In 2010, he captained a new-look New Zealand side to the Four Nations Cup in England. In 2011, he was named the mainstay vice-captain of the Black Sticks Men. In February 2011, he had the opportunity to stand in for captain Phil Burrows and lead the team in tests against Belgium and South Korea. At the time, Shea said,

“It’s a real privilege to be named captain... It has always been a goal of mine to captain a New Zealand side and I’m humbled and honoured to have been given this opportunity”

(2 February 2011, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/sport/other-sports/4619099/McAleese-to-lead-NZ-mens-hockey-team>).

Since then, Shea has captained the Black Sticks Men more than 15 times. Shea is committed to developing himself as a national and international hockey player. Throughout his hockey career, he has played in the national hockey leagues in New Zealand, Australia, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. He currently plays club hockey in the Netherlands for HGC, sharing his time between Europe and the Hawke's Bay.

Shea has a Diploma in Sports Fitness, has done numerous short courses at the University of Auckland's business school and is currently doing a Bachelor of Applied Business Management with Otago University. Shea was appointed a New Zealand Olympic Ambassador in 2012.



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Career highlights

- 2012 London Olympic Games (Ninth)
- 2012 Malaysia Sultan Azlan Shah Cup (First)
- 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games (Bronze)
- 2009 Invercargill World Cup Qualifier (Gold)
- 2009 Salta World Champions Challenge (Gold)
- 2008 Beijing Olympic Games (Seventh)
- 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games (Fourth)
- 2006 Changzou World Cup Qualifier (First)
- 2005 Malaysia Sultan Aslan Shah Cup (Debut)

Honours

- 2011 Vice-captain of the Black Sticks Men
- 2010 Captain of the Black Sticks Men at the Four Nations Cup in England

Links

Shea McAleese's Olympic Museum profile:
<http://imuseum.olympic.org.nz/museum/athlete/profile/27180>

Shea McAleese's website:
<http://www.sheamcaleese.co.nz>

Follow the NZ Olympic Team here:

-  **NZ Olympic Team**
-  **@nzolympics**
-  **nzolympics**
-  **www.olympic.org.nz**



Official Olympic Sport

Hockey

Men's field hockey first appeared at the 1908 London Olympic Games. It was dropped from the Olympic Games in 1924, because there was no international governing body for the sport. After the founding of the International Hockey Federation (FIH, *Fédération Internationale de Hockey*), men's hockey reappeared at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games. It has featured at the Olympic Games ever since. Women's field hockey first featured at the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games.

The basics

Field hockey is an outdoor team sport played with a ball and L-shaped sticks. The head of the stick is rounded on one side and flat on the other. Players can use only the flat side to dribble, control, pass, push, stop and hit the ball. Most players wear mouthguards and shin guards to protect themselves from balls or sticks.

A game of field hockey is 70 minutes long (two 35-minute halves). The team that scores the most goals in this time wins. If the score is a draw, and it is

a competition where a winner needs to be decided, the teams will play overtime periods. If it is still a draw, there will be a penalty shootout.

Each team has 11 players on the field at a time and five substitutes on the sideline. There are four different positions:

- attackers (forwards)
- defenders
- midfielders
- goalkeeper

Olympic matches

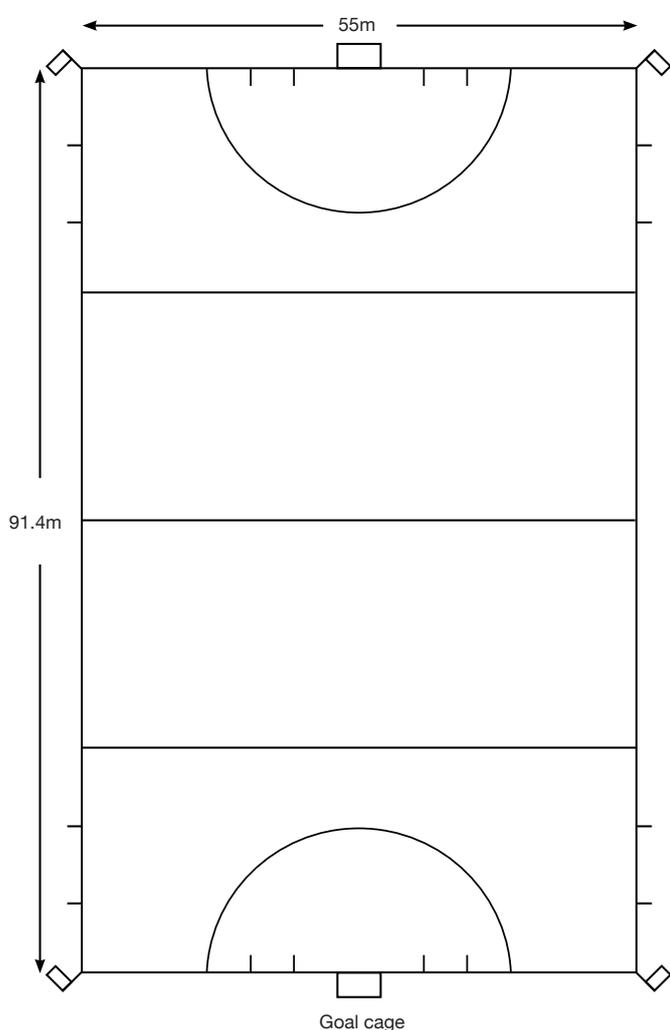
The FIH holds qualifying tournaments for the Olympic Games, because hockey is played in 118 countries. Twelve men's and twelve women's teams can qualify to compete at the Olympic Games.

- The twelve teams are divided into two pools: Pool A and Pool B. There are six teams in each pool. Each team plays against all the other teams in their pool.
- The top two teams in Pool A play against the top two teams in Pool B in the semifinals.
- The teams that don't win in the semifinals play each other for the Bronze Medal.
- The semifinal winners play for the Gold Medal. The team that loses earns the Silver Medal.



The field

Olympic field hockey is played on a field that is 91.4 metres by 55 metres. There are two open-front goal cages facing each other at opposite ends of the field. Each goal has a semi-circle marked in front of it – goals only count if they are scored from inside this circle. Since 1976, all international competitions have been played on artificial turf instead of grass.



Important points

Free hits are awarded to the other team when a hockey player is penalised outside of the circle.

If the defending team is penalised within the circle, the attacking team gets a penalty corner. Only five players from the defending team can defend the goal – the others have to go into the other half of the field. One player from the attacking team hits the ball in from behind the backline (at least 10 metres along from the nearest goalpost), and the rest of the attacking team try to score.

Penalty strokes are given to the attacking team when a defending player makes a deliberate foul to stop a goal being scored, or when they run too soon to defend a penalty corner. For a penalty stroke, an attacking player gets a shot at goal from a spot 6.4 metres in front of the goal.

Some of the rules hockey players have to remember to avoid penalties are:

- do not use hands or feet to control the ball – the goalkeeper in the circle is the only player allowed to use their hands and feet to stop the ball
- how to raise the ball in the air safely – players can't hit the ball into the air, but they can raise it by scooping or pushing it with their stick. It must not go above shoulder height
- do not use sticks dangerously – players have to be careful not to raise their sticks too high in the air or run with them dangerously
- do not hit the ball at or near another player
- do not obstruct other players – players must not use their body or stick to stop another player getting to the ball
- use the right side of the stick – players must only use the flat side.

