

New Zealand Olympic Ambassador

Stacey Michelsen

Olympian number:

1180

Discipline:

Hockey

Position:

Half/Midfielder

Stacey Michelsen was born in Whangarei in 1991. She started playing hockey when she was just 4 years old. She has loved the sport ever since, playing in school teams throughout her childhood and teenage years. She plays for her home province, Northland, in the National Hockey League and has played club hockey in North Harbour.

Stacey is part of a strong hockey connection from Northland. Eight of the eighteen members of the 2011 Black Sticks Women's squad played hockey at Kamo Intermediate School. Of this group of players, Stacey, Charlotte Harrison, Alana Millington, Samantha Harrison and Ella Gunson were all selected for the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Stacey's potential as a hockey player was recognised at a young age. In 2007, when she was 16, she was chosen to compete for New Zealand at the Australian Youth Olympic Festival in Sydney. This festival is a significant stepping stone for young athletes and aspiring Olympians. Stacey was no exception; in 2009 she was selected for the Black Sticks Women, the New Zealand women's hockey team.

Quick facts

Favourite food: Salmon and avocado sushi

Favourite movie: *Puncture*

Favourite music: New Zealand bands the Earlybirds and Six60

Childhood hero: Luciana Aymar

Current favourite athlete: Novak Djokovic

Most rewarding moments in sport: Making the top four at the London Olympic Games in 2012. Winning a Bronze Medal at the Champions Trophy in 2011

Biggest injury: Lower back disc injury in 2010

Biggest sacrifice: Having to do part-time study and missing occasions with family and friends

Job outside sport: Student at the University of Auckland, studying Law and Commerce

Other fun facts: I have been playing hockey since I was four. I grew up in Whangarei. My favourite thing to do when I am not training or playing hockey is to spend time at the beach with friends and family.



Stacey quickly became one of the Black Sticks' key figures, as she is a skilful midfielder and is excellent at eliminations (taking on opponents one-on-one). She is known for her attacking approach, speed and superb ball skills.

Since joining the Black Sticks, Stacey has played in several successful campaigns. In 2009, she was part of the winning Black Sticks team at the Women's Hockey Champions Challenge in Cape Town, South Africa. She competed at the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games where the Black Sticks won the Silver Medal. In 2011, she played for the Women's Hockey Champions Trophy in Amsterdam, where the Black Sticks came third.

Stacey has achieved great success as a young athlete since debuting on the international hockey scene. By the age of 20, she had played more than 70 international games.

In 2011, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) named Stacey 'World Young Player of the Year'. She fended off tough competition for the award from Dutch pair Joyce Sombroek and Willemijn Bos, USA star Katelyn Falgowski and fellow New Zealander Charlotte Harrison. This award is a significant achievement for not only Stacey but also for New Zealand hockey, as she was the first New Zealander to win an FIH Player of the Year award.

Stacey was a central part of the Black Sticks' campaign at the London 2012 Olympic Games, her first Olympic Games. The Black Sticks made it to the semifinals, after winning their Pool B matches against Australia, South Africa and the United States, and drawing with Germany. However, they lost the bronze medal to Great Britain, who won 3-1.

Despite coming fourth, the Black Sticks made history in London by becoming the highest-ranked New Zealand women's side at an Olympic Games.

Stacey has earned a world-class reputation as a talented, motivated and focused hockey player. She is also valued as a leader in the sport. Stacey is the youngest member of the Black Sticks leadership group, which is made up of Stacey, Kayla Whitelock (née Sharland), Emily Naylor and Krystal Forgeson. In 2012 she was named a New Zealand Olympic Ambassador.

Her achievements and focus extend beyond the hockey field. She is currently studying law and commerce at the University of Auckland.

Career highlights

- 2012 London Olympic Games (Fourth)
- 2011 Amsterdam Women's Hockey Champions Trophy (Bronze)
- 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games (Silver)
- 2009 Cape Town Women's Hockey Champions Challenge (Gold)
- 2007 Sydney Olympic Youth Festival (Bronze)

Honours

- 2011 World Young Player of the Year, International Hockey Federation
- 2010, 2011 Female Under-21 Player of the Year, Hockey New Zealand

Links

Stacey Michelsen's Olympic Museum profile:
<http://imuseum.olympic.org.nz/museum/athlete/profile/28212>

Stacey Michelsen on Twitter:
[@staceymichelsen](https://twitter.com/staceymichelsen)

Follow the NZ Olympic Team here:





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

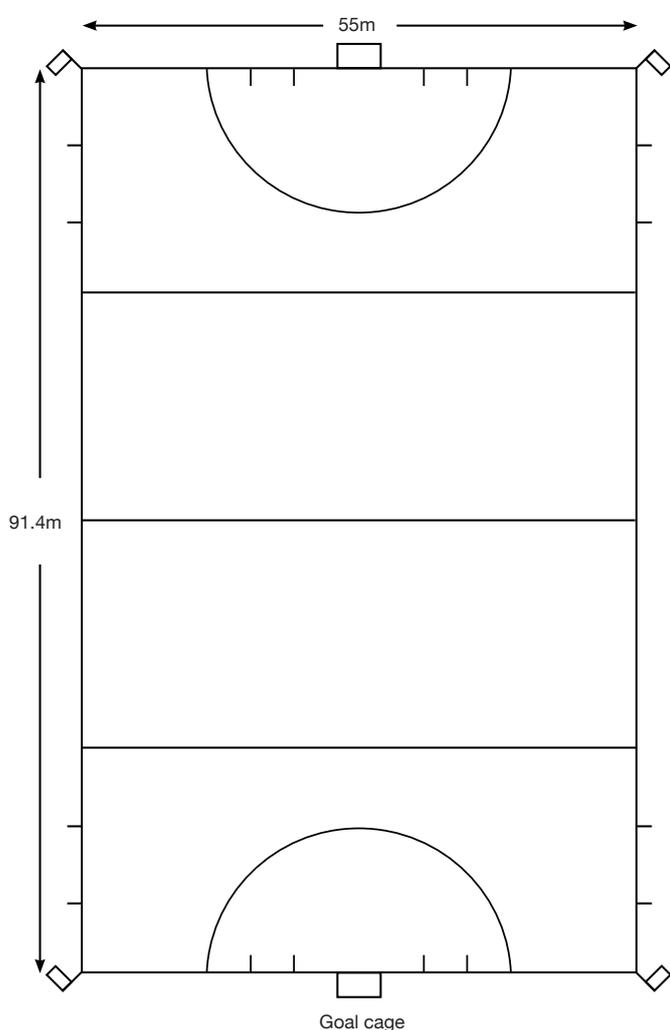
The FIH holds qualifying tournaments for the Olympic Games, because hockey is played in 118 countries. Twelve men's and twelve women's teams can qualify to compete at the Olympic Games.

- 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.

