World Cup 2018 Barcelona

Summary of O70's Feedback

Preparation & training: -

1. Did not think that the 70's had sufficient preparation, in that we never played together until we reached Barcelona.
2. Some sessions were very poorly attended and there was no coach. We need to know the training dates months in advance. We never had the opportunity to play together in preparation for the World Cup. Very few players were match-fit for one match never mind 7 games.
3. Training was a good help in improving skills.
4. Training sessions good but dependent on numbers in attendance. Practice games needed for the squad.
5. We need to give out more detailed training programmes to players and require them to report their progress regularly.

Selection: -

1. This needs to be done in time for people to ensure availability an we need to have some flexibility in people's willingness to take part. We need to be sensitive to players' difficulties in financing all events.
2. Late call offs don't help and players not available for games when we got there!?
3. We never seem to get a regular "best side" out for tournaments. This is probably due to costs.
4. Squad should have been named earlier and games arranged.

Communication: -

1. Very good. I really like the idea of age group dedicated coordinators.
2. Coordinated information-sharing before the tournament was excellent and very thorough.
3. A lot of effort went in to being positive and constructive, but more effort could have been put into being more direct and getting to the real heart of shortcomings.
4. Excellent from Sandy. Excellent web site run by Ian.
5. Sandy did all he could but information from the management committee seemed sporadic and late at times. Needs to be looked at?
6. I understand the frustrations of organisers in the lack of speedy replies to e-mails. We may need to text more?

Travel & Accommodation: -

1. Where air travel is involved, selection needs to be as early as possible to allow people to get the best deals.
2. Barcelona accommodation was OK but the travel to and from the games was a negative.
3. Whilst the hotel was fairly-good, accommodation and food wise, we could have done with a pool. Most of the other teams had this or were in beach side hotels.
4. The price was very good, but the hotel was too far away from the playing facilities.
5. Accommodation excellent at competitive rates but too far to travel to the grounds.
6. Travel was too much, too much time and energy were taken up with travelling. If possible arrange for the hotel to have a pool.
7. Travel to and from Barcelona was excellent. Travel between hotel and venues was excellent and allowed teams to mix more easily.

Game day programme and match preparation (inc Physio support):-

1. I thought the physios were excellent, hardworking and supported by all the teams. Would be willing to pay extra to have their support at all major tournaments.
2. The programme was very unsuitable for Masters hockey. Playing three games in three days TWICE! Would be asking too much of athletes at any level!
3. The physios were magnificent. They were the reason I played every minute of every game. A real golden find.
4. Apart from the travel, once at the pitch Murray and the physios did a sterling job in getting us ready in plenty of time for the game.
5. The 70's programme schedule was ridiculous, and our thin squad ran out of legs.

Game briefing and de-briefing:-

1) One coach for all teams was over-stretching it and resulted in him being unable to attend all the games.
2) Game briefing by the coach was good and concise, debriefing did not really occur.
3) Due to hotel, pitch locations and lack of appropriate meeting room, the briefing was a bit "on the hoof" but it covered the bases and, if you were listening, was a good game prep. There was no real debrief.
4) With the lack of numbers and few fit players, the clarity of who played where and what was to be done there was very important.

Post-match Activities: -

1) No real comments, the team seemed to mix well.
2) Limited because of the travelling.
3) The Polo Club did not seem keen on us using the main lounge/bar area and the staff, there and at the Dinner were not helpful to the point of being rude!
4) Nothing organised for all the squads as a unit, other than the very expensive Tournament Dinner option that not many went for. Individuals went out in their own groups. Some players were in different hotels.
5) The Polo Club set up was….OK. Late games at other pitch found that the place was closing-up when the game finished.

Any other constructive comments & suggestions:-

1) Realistically, the size of the event in Barcelona had reached saturation point, but it would be sad if countries wanted to join in, could not do so, or had to go through a qualification process. This would also lead to calls to do away with the tournament section. I think the way forward will need to be to reduce the number of age groups in a single event or stagger the event over a longer period.
2) If we are to compete with the up and coming Irish and Welsh, let alone the top hockey nations, we must make big changes now.
3) We must copy the Irish and Welsh agenda and have a coach for each squad. If we must increase subscriptions to do this, then so be it!? £20 is cheap to play for any club. You pay 3 times as much and more to play for England!?
4) For Barcelona the Welsh had their Hotel booked in November 2017. In a hotel walking distant from the Polo Club. Their squad selection was completed by December 2017!
5) We need to know what's going on months before, so we can all arrange travel at good rates, book holiday time and sort the finances.
6) Methods of fundraising/funding should be looked at to ease the cost for the club and players.
7) Bigger, fitter squad for O70's. Injuries/illness took their toll.
8) I would suggest that once the training schedule is set-up all those wanting to be considered for selection should be required to attend at least 50% plus 2 of the planned training sessions and that they should attend at least two of the training sessions prior to any major tournament. I know this is asking a lot of players south of the border, however I am more than willing to commit to such a regime.
9) Onwards and upwards!

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