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Two thumbs up for outstanding new astroturfs

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Two brand new blue astroturfs at NWU Hockey are now officially in use with numerous clubs and schools having tested the new surface this past month to critical acclaim.

These two new astroturfs meet the International Hockey Federation standards. They are part of an almost 8-month long project to improve and sustain the quality of hockey at NWU to bring international hockey tournaments to Potch in the future.

According to the NWU hockey manager and women's hockey coach, Shaun Hulley, the new astroturf is everything the club has wanted.

"The facilities were handed over to us on 8 March. Since then, our Varsity Cup squad has tested the turf and I can tell you it is really smooth and plays like a dream. The new facilities provide us with a new marketing tool as well," stated Hulley.

NWU Hockey ran numerous u.16 and u.18 hockey clinics for school during the autumn school holidays. They were well received as players had the chance to learn from the best and test the quality new turf to their great delight.

"We had about 50 teams in the first u.18 clinic and 30 teams in the u.16 one. The clinics run for five days with coaching in the morning and afternoon. We have added more matches so the schools can be game ready for the season ahead," explained Hulley.

The first major competition that will bring teams to this excellent facility will be the 2019 Varsity Hockey tournament in May when the best hockey women will battle for Varsity supremacy.

"This time, we will go the extra hurdle in the competition but we will need to graft really hard. I expect a lot of local support during the tournament and it promises to be a fantastic one," added Hulley.

Next up will be the Africa Cup in August with two more possible international events in the pipeline for 2020 and 2021.

"These are exciting times for NWU Hockey. We want this to be the best hockey venue in South Africa and with accreditation on both the A and B turf, we can host big tournaments with matches taking place simultaneously. This facility will not be a white elephant as it will be open to schools, hostels and clubs to train on. It is amazing that the local players can experience such a world-class turf in their own backyard," he added.



The NWU hockey player, Mitesh Makan, gives invaluable hockey advice to Tshegofatso Makena, Jessica Ford, Alice de Barros and Genevé Nel during the u.16 hockey clinic that NWU Hockey hosted on the brand new astroturf in March. Photo: Wouter Pienaar