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Field Hockey

HOCKEY CENTRAL: Hale, Westside Wolves to play for spot in Hockey WA Premier League women's grand final

Mitchell Woodcock | The West Australian
Thu, 1 September 2022 1:52PM[Mitchell Woodcock](#)

The Hockey WA finals begin this weekend. Credit: Mikaela Zuiderduyn



Hale and Westside Wolves will fight it out for a spot in this year's Hockey WA Premier League women's grand final when they clash at Perth Hockey Stadium on Sunday.

Hale clinched the minor premiership last weekend when they held on for a 1-1 draw against Lions, finishing one premiership point ahead of Wolves, who are coming off just their second loss of the season.

The last time the two sides met they played out a thrilling 3-3 draw, with Wolves scoring twice in the final term to come from 3-1 down at the final break.

Wolves will be hoping the penalty corner firepower of leading scorer Madi Ratcliffe, who finished as the season's highest goal scorer with 17, will help them finally defeat Hale after two failed attempts.

"We've been building up some good form heading into the finals series, and we are hopeful that we can continue the momentum to claim a win this week and have the next week off which will put us in good stead," Wolves captain Jemma Buckley said.

The losers will play against the winners of the elimination final between UWA and Vic Park on September 11.

In the men's league, reigning premiers Melville will have a well-earned rest as they watch their fellow four contenders battle it out in tough finals.

Reds will take on Hale, the former coming off a whopping 14-0 belting of Curtin in their final game of the season.

They've been boosted by the return of Kookaburras captain Aran Zalewski, while Brodee Foster is in great form, slotting five goals against Curtin to take his season tally to 31, second behind Hale's Liam Flynn (37).

The winners will take on Melville for a spot in the grand final.

"It's been a big year for us and we're keen to hit the field and take on this finals series," Hale's Josh Beltz said, as they look to rebound from a 3-1 loss to Fremantle-Cockburn.

"Anything can happen in finals and that's a focus for us - we're keen to grab this opportunity with both hands and give it a red hot crack.

"This season has been really tight and any team in the top seven or eight really had a chance this year to make it into the final five, so the competition on display is going to be very strong."

Victoria Park Xavier and UWA will play off in a cut-throat final, the victors to take on the losers of Reds against Hale the following week.

Hockey WA Premier League Finals Week One

(All Games Sunday, September 4)

Women's Semi final - 12:30pm - Hale v Westside Wolves

Women's Semi final - 2:15pm - UWA v Vic Park

Men's Qualification final - 4pm - Vic Park v UWA

Men's Qualification final - 5:45pm - Reds v Hale

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Field Hockey

Hockey Central: Melville, Reds prepare for another showdown in Premier League grand final

 **Mitchell Woodcock** | The West Australian
Thu, 15 September 2022 12:00PM[Mitchell Woodcock](#)

Reds' Jack Hayes, left, Melville's Tim Geers, right, ahead of the grand final. Credit: Mikaela Zuiderduyn



Another chapter in what is fast becoming WA hockey's biggest rivalry will be written when reigning premiers Melville take on Reds in a highly anticipated men's premier league grand final at Perth Hockey Stadium on Saturday.

For Reds it will be a chance to avenge last year's heart-breaking 1-0 loss to Melville in last year's decider, when James Day scored a late winner to end their title drought.

The champions head into the game as underdogs despite winning the minor premiership after Reds won the semifinal, again 1-0, just a fortnight ago.

Melville captain Tim Geers said he expected yet another thriller this weekend.

"Our last five games have all been separated by just one goal, so I expect it is going to be another tough arm wrestle," he said

"I think our styles when we play against each other are quite fascinating because we like to press and win the ball high up the field, and they like to sink numbers back, win the ball and counter.

"It sets up for a really tactical affair."

Reds are looking for their third flag in five seasons, but two-time premiership young gun Brodee Foster knows it's going to be a tough task.

Foster, who scored 31 goals this season, said Reds were wary of the star-studded Melville, who are one of the hardest teams to score against in the league, having conceded just 24 goals in 22 games in the home-and-away season.

"Having Andrew Charter in the net - Australia's best goalkeeper - he is bound to be hard to score against," he said.



Hale's Michaela Spano, Westside Wolves' Jemma Buckley, Reds' Jack Hayes and Melville's Tim Geers ahead of the Hockey WA grand finals.. Credit: Mikaela Zuiderduyn

"Even without him throughout the year they have conceded the least goals, so they are very well drilled defensively. We have both been there or thereabouts for the last couple of years or so.

"To win we have to beat the best, we are not too phased about who we have to play, we have a job to do."

Melville were forced to take the long route to this year's grand final, winning in extra-time 3-2 over Hale in the preliminary final.

Geers said the tough game could work in his side's advantage.

"Finishing on top can sometimes be a hindrance in finals series because if they win their first game they can go into the grand final having played one game in three weeks," he said.

"I think we are battled hardened from the game against Reds last week and take great confidence following the win against Hale."

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Field Hockey | Sport

Hockey Central: James Day scores match-winner again to lead Melville to consecutive men's premierships



Mitchell Woodcock | The West Australian
Sun, 18 September 2022 1:46PM | [Comments](#)

[Mitchell Woodcock](#)

Melville celebrate winning the 2022 men's Premier League premiership. Credit: Gary Day



James Day has broken Reds' hearts for a second consecutive year, scoring the winning goal to deliver Melville back-to-back men's premier league titles on Saturday.

After winning a one-goal thriller 12 months ago, short-corner specialist Day smashed the ball into the left upright corner to give his side a thrilling 2-1 victory at Perth Hockey Stadium on Saturday.

After a scoreless first half, it was Reds who scored the opener through young dynamo Brodee Foster.

Foster found some rare space in attack and smashed the ball into the bottom right corner past former Australian goalkeeper Andrew Charters to give his side a lead just two minutes into the second half.

For a while it looked as if it was going to be a repeat Reds' semifinal win from a fortnight ago.

Up stepped Ross Hall, who levelled the scores early in the final term when he deflected the ball from a short corner past Reds' goalkeeper Hayden Walker to bring the contest back to life.

Melville kept pushing and again won another short corner, which Day scored from with under seven minutes remaining to give them consecutive premierships, the first side to do it since YMCC's three-peat from 2013 to 2015.

"They're a really good outfit and it's always bloody hard against them," Melville captain Tim Geers told the broadcast after the match.

"The one message I said to our boys before the game was 'never give up on your mates and we've got 500 people on the hill who won't give up on us'.

"We thought we were a sniff at three-quarter-time and it was just going to take one goal to swing it back our way."

Hall said it was special to win consecutive premierships, especially against a powerhouse Reds side.

"We spoke about it early in the year and it is just unbelievable to find ourselves in this position," Hall said.

"It is always a tough battle with Reds. We've sparred with them all year and have only been separated by a goal in our past six matches.

"We knew we had to come out and want it more than them and the result will take care of itself."

Reds star and Australian co-captain Aran Zalewski was named player of the match.

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