

Inline worlds qualifier set for New Plymouth

New Plymouth will host the Inline Hockey Asia-Pacific IIHF world championship qualifier in April.



PHOTO: ANDY JACKSON/FAIRFAX NZ
Inline hockey on show in New Plymouth in April.

Senior men's inline hockey teams from New Zealand, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia and India will square off in a round-robin style tournament from April 21 to April 25 to determine who will qualify and join 15 other teams for the IIHF Inline Hockey world championships in Slovakia in 2017.

The draw for the event has been confirmed with New Zealand set to play Malaysia on the opening day which will be played at the New Plymouth Roller Sports Club arena at East End.

“On behalf of New Zealand Inline Hockey Association, I am delighted New Zealand has been selected to host the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) inline qualifier,”

said chairperson Barbara Baker.

“Hosting this event is significant for our sport. It offers a great opportunity for our senior men to compete on the international stage in front of a home crowd.”

Canada are world champions taking out the title against host country Finland 4-2 at the last IIHF world championship in Tampere, Finland, in 2015.

Of the world championship qualifier participants, New Zealand has only met Japan previously when competing in the 2012 IIHF Inline Hockey world championships in Division 1. In pool play, New Zealand beat Japan 3-2. Japan reversed the result winning 3-2 in the playoff round. Neither team placed in the top four.

Singapore, India and Malaysia are new contenders for qualification to play in 2017.

This is the first time New Zealand has attended a qualification since hosting the event was held in New Plymouth in 2012 with visiting teams from South Africa and Chinese Taipei.