



Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) President Sultan Azlan Shah launched the AHF-MHC Hockey Academy on May 9, 2011 at its proposed site beside the Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey Stadium in Ipoh. The launch was held in conjunction with the closing ceremony of the Academy's inaugural course – The AHF course for young umpires.

The brain child of Sultan Azlan Shah, the decision to establish the Academy, was taken at the 54<sup>th</sup> AHF Council Meeting in May, 2010. The decision came in the wake of the desire of member nations to accelerate the growth and development of the game in Asia and the urgent need to reverse the slipping world rankings of Asian teams. The AHF set up an ad hoc committee with Dato' Abd. Rahim Md. Ariff as Chairman and Tan Sri P. Alagendra, the AHF Secretary-General as an ex-officio member.

The Committee's recommendation to establish the Academy in Ipoh, Malaysia and the choice of the site adjacent to the Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey Stadium created a lot of excitement and enthusiasm amongst AHF members. The continental hockey fraternity viewed the venue as a natural catalyst for the growth of the game in Asia. The Sultan Azlan Shah Invitational Tournament, an important tournament in the FIH calendar is already bringing world-class hockey to Ipoh every year and tying up the annual tournament with the work proposed for the Academy was too good an opportunity to miss. The MHC too looked at this development as a great opportunity to work with AHF to further promote the game in Malaysia and also create a new growth centre for the sport in Ipoh. The MHC has shown its seriousness in this project by adding its name to the Academy which is known as the AHF-MHC Hockey Academy.