



Club Talented Player Programme Proves a Hit

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In term four 3 junior players from the Browns Bay Racquets Club and 4 players from the Belmont Park Racquets Club were offered the opportunity to participate in a talented player programme.

The programme was split into two areas – Squash skills and tactics and strength, speed,

conditioning, and agility training.

Manu Yam was employed by both clubs to provide the squash coaching and Calypso Sports & Fitness was contracted to provide the strength, speed, fitness, and agility training.

The players undertook 2 hours of training per week for 6 weeks. This involved 1 hour of squash coaching and 1 hour with Calypso Sports.

The goal of the programme is twofold. One is to provide a clear pathway for talented young players in the clubs who have been identified as having the potential and drive to succeed at a high level and secondly to provide players with a rounded (more than just squash) athletic training programme to aid their progress in squash.

Judging by the feedback from the players the programme has been a huge hit. All the participants want to continue next year. In fact many of them asked if the programme could be run twice a week during the squash season.

In 2010 it is planned to invite more clubs into the programme.



Back L-R: Gareth Ashton (Director Calypso), Siobhan Murray (BB), Thomas Hnederson (BB), Sion Wiggan (BB), Front L-R: Anneka Simmonds (BP), Henry Pyc (BP), Miguel Yam (BP), Rafa Yam (BP)



Mini Squash Proves a Hit among Southern School Pupils

During term 3 Squash Auckland ran 3 Mini Squash programmes in the southern region. Two programmes were run at the Franklin Squash Club and one at the Waiuku Squash Club.

At the Franklin Squash Club, pupils from Valley Primary School and Pukekohe North Primary participated in a 6 week mini squash programme. During the same period students of View Road Primary school were also participating in a 6 week mini squash programme at the Waiuku Squash Club.

In total over 70 year 5 and 6 students across the 3 schools participated in a series of squash games, coaching sessions and assessment activities designed to provide them with a fun and educational introduction to squash. For many of the children this was the first time they had ever stepped foot on a squash court or held a racket.

At the end of the 6 week programme children were awarded Mini Squash certificates. In total 77 students received the 1 Star Award, 40 received the 2 Star Award, and 13 received the 3 Star Award.

Auckland Coaches Triumph at SNZ Awards

In a triumph for the district, Auckland took two of the three coach of the year awards at the recent Squash NZ AGM on Saturday 21st November. Manu Yam (Belmont Park Racquets Club & Browns Bay Racquets Club) was presented with the Coach of the Year award for his contribution to coaching in the Auckland region.

Over the last 12 months Manu has been involved in squash coaching full-time, working for two clubs and assisting Squash Auckland in the delivery of participation programmes, school-club links programmes, and District programmes.

This year Manu has been involved in coaching: 2 junior club programmes, numerous women in squash programmes, junior after school programmes, college sport teams, school—club partnership programmes, Super champs & district squads.

Paul Cornish received the SNZ Junior Coach of the year awards for his work with the Devonport Club and his efforts in promoting junior squash on the North Shore.



Paul has held the role of Junior Squash Coordinator for the last 5 years at Devonport. In that time he has grown the junior membership from 4 juniors to over 60 junior boys and girls.

In addition he has put extensive work into coach development. The club now has 7 level 1 qualified coaches, 3 of whom are junior players.

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All are actively involved in the club's junior squash programme.

Paul was also responsible for the introduction of the Junior J grade interclub competition (JETS). What started as an interclub competition between Belmont and Devonport has now grown to incorporate over 140 players and 12 clubs across the region.

Congratulations to both Manu and Paul for their achievements this year.

Migrants Vital to the Future of Sports

In a recently published report from Massey University Professor of Sociology - Paul Spoonly – it is suggested that many of the countries traditional sports i.e. rugby, soccer, netball, could be relegated to minor sports in 20 years if they fail to meet the needs of immigrants. The full report can be downloaded from http://www.harboursport.co.nz/site/harsport/files/SPORT%20D/NewsCast/0911_ARPASS%20Immigrant%20Ethnic%20Research.pdf



SA Casual Player Survey Report and Findings is Released

This year Squash Auckland commissioned the services of research company Visitor Solutions Ltd to conduct research among a section of Auckland recreation centre's that housed squash courts.

The purpose of the research was to provide information to Squash Auckland as to why user-pays participants (namely casual squash players) are not joining affiliated squash clubs and to provide recommendations on how Squash Auckland can engage with these players with a view to encouraging them to become an affiliated member of a squash club.

Here is a summary of some of the key findings:

- 6 recreation centers participated in the survey.
- 88% of respondents were not members of a squash club
- 24% stated they had been a member of a squash club in the past.
- 76% of respondents would consider joining a club
- Social and financial were the two main benefits casual players perceived they would get by joining a club. Few people cited grading or competition as a benefit to them of membership.

The Key Motivators for playing squash identified by the survey respondents were:

- A social, fun sport
- Getting physically fit
- Flexibility

This last point is a very important motivator for the casual player.

Casual players value the flexibility of being able to play when and how often they want. In addition flexibility in how they pay for the privilege of playing is very high valued by this group.

Many don't want to make the commitment required or to pay the cost of full-time membership of a club.

Potential Barriers to Engaging Casual Squash Players:

1. Commitment and Competition focus.

Many non-members view clubs as being primarily focused on competition. In contrast non-members just want to play squash for fun.

2. Very competitive sport.

Many non-members view squash as being very competitive and requiring a high level of skill. For some casual players this may have some appeal, but for most this is a significant barrier to entry into full-time club membership.

In light of these findings, what can clubs do to make membership more appealing to the casual player?

Suggestions:

1. Provide flexibility & variety in your product offerings

The reality today is that an ever increasing number of people today do not want to make the commitment required to become a full-time club member. Increased demands on their time due to work and family conspire to limit the time people have available to participate in regular

sport's activities, particularly competition.

To overcome this clubs need to provide a range of playing and participation options. Social competitions and participation programmes such as Business House, Box League, one day fun tournaments, Women in Squash, Discovery Squash are just a few examples of programmes that have proved very popular among non-members, new players, and leisure players.

Continually trying to sell the same old products (interclub and 3 day tournaments) harder is not a long term recipe for success. This is evidenced by the continual decline over the years in people playing senior interclub.

2. Flexibility in membership

A Traditional membership requires a person to make an assessment of the estimated value they are going to receive prior to consumption. In contrast a casual, pay-as-you-play option significantly reduces this risk perception because the value received is instantaneous i.e. the player pays then plays shortly afterwards.

If a club can provide a membership offering that reduces this risk perception, then it is reasonable to assume that uptake within the casual squash population is likely to be more favorable.

Some of the programmes mentioned above provide examples of how this could be done.



Regional JETS Update



Once again a team from Browns Bay came out on top in the Northern JETS J grade interclub competition. This makes it 5 wins in a row for Browns Bay.

The winning team – The Bucaneers (photo left) – was, at the back from left to right:

Declan James, Fraser Sabine
At the front from left to right:
Louie Mills, Adam VanDriel, Chad James

In the southern Zone JETS competition Howick were triumphant in a close fought final against a team from Franklin. The final score was 8 – 6 with the final going down to the last match to decide the winner.

The triumphant Howick team was:

Hamish Van Rynbach (standing on the left of the photo right), Mitchell Farmer (standing on the right of the photo right), Clayton Stocker, Kimberly Wong, and Kirsten Wong



In an upset result in the southern zone JETS F grade division, Number 5 seed Robbie King a J1 graded player from Howick beat Number 1 seed and E2 player Frazer French from Franklin. Frazer had never lost to Robbie before and with a big difference between their respective gradings this was a major upset.

Of the other placings, Scott van Lieshout (F grade), Franklin came 3rd, Mathew Thomas F grade), Franklin came 4th, and Jacob Sims-Dummett (J1), Franklin came 5th.

Pictured left is F grade division winner Robbie King, Howick (right) and runner up Frazer French, Franklin (left)

