

JUNE 2009

Special points of interest:

- 12 coaches attend Squash Auckland's inaugural coach development day
- Over 200 women involved in women in squash programmes
- J Grade Interclub continues to grow
- Panmure Squash Club Introduces Successful Box League for its Members
- Over 280 school children involved in school/club partnership programme squash in term 2

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Squash Auckland: Regional Grassroots Update

Coaching The Coaches



As part of Squash Auckland's commitment to the development of coaches in the region we invited all coaches who had passed or participated in a level 1 or level 2 coaching course in the last 18 months to attend a coach development day.

On Saturday 23rd May 12 coaches attended the inaugural Squash Auckland coach development day held at the Remuera Rackets Club.

The day began with a practical demonstration from Dave Clarke (ex N.Z. coach) who demonstrated the techniques and movements required for playing off the front foot.

Dave highlighted to the coaches the importance of being able to take the ball early and effectively off either foot. This is particularly relevant for players who are aspiring to reach the top level where the pace of the game today necessitates them having the ability to play the ball accurately under pressure off either foot, forehand and backhand.

The perfect demonstration of this skill was provided later by Shelly Kitchen in the pressure session with Paul Wright.

Next up was a seminar from Craig Lewis (Sports Psychologist) who looked at the

qualities required to develop great athletes. Of particular interest was his comment about the importance of helping athletes to understand *why* they are doing something in addition to teaching them how they do it.

The next two sessions were conducted by Paul Wright. Paul firstly demonstrated the skills and techniques required to conduct a group coaching session.

Next up was a pressure session involving our special guest, Shelly Kitchen who kindly gave up her time to participate in the day.

Fact

“Over 200 women have now participated in the women in squash programme”

Fact

“79% of programme participants were not members of a squash club”

Fact

“To date 28% of programme participants have joined a squash club”

Women in Squash Programme Reaches 200 Participants

Concerned about the lack of women playing squash, Squash Auckland decided to introduce a women in squash programme to try and encourage more adult women to take up or return to the game.

In November 2008 Squash Auckland piloted a 6 week programme consisting of group coaching sessions specifically designed for adult women. Clubs were

approached and asked to nominate adult women players they thought might be interested in coaching on the programme. Six women were identified and agreed to attend a Level 1 coaching course in March 2009.

Three clubs (Browns Bay, Belmont Park and Manurewa) and 26 women took part in the initial pilot programme. After a successful trial the programme was

officially launched in February 2009.

To date 10 clubs and 3 user pays facilities have run or are running a total of 28 programmes involving over 200 women, the majority (79%) who were not members of a squash club when they enrolled on the programme.

In addition 71% of the women were new to the game of squash.

To date 28% of programme participants have joined a squash club as members.

If you are interested in running a programme in your club, contact Steve Hodges, Development Manager, Squash Auckland on DDI: 623 7856 or email: development@squash Auckland.org.nz



Above: Titirangi Women in Squash Participants with coach Tanya Mitchell



Above: Browns Bay Women in Squash Participants with their Coach Manu Yam

School/Club Partnership Programme Takes Off in 2009

This year Squash Auckland launched its school/club partnership programme.

Designed to replace the micro courts, the programme is based on the internationally recognised Mini Squash awards programme.

The programmes' goal is to introduce primary and intermediate school age children to the game of squash via their local squash club.



Pupils from Royal Oak Primary with their Mini Squash 1 Star Certificates.

Thanks to funding received in 2009 from the ASB Trust, Squash Auckland are able to assist clubs in forming relationships with local schools to provide them with a squash partnership programme.

This year in term 2, 8 schools and 7 clubs were involved in a school club partnership

programme. Over 280 school children participated.

Primary school students are taken through the mini squash awards scheme with its graduated certificate programme, while intermediate school students progress through the SNZ Junior Skills Awards.

All students are regularly assessed during the course of the programme and awarded a certificate pertaining to their level of squash competence.

If your club would like to be involved in a school/club partnership programme contact Steve Hodges at Squash Auckland on DDI: 623 7856

What About The Girls? Browns Bay Takes Action!

In order to grow the women's game at senior level, we must increase the number of junior girls playing regular squash.

In terms of graded junior girls playing squash there is a major difference between female and male junior player numbers.

In Auckland at present only

29% of junior graded players are female.

This raises serious questions about the future of the women's game at the senior level. Without junior girls coming up through the grading ranks the region risks facing major problems in the retention of senior interclub

players and teams. Evidence of this already exists with a number of clubs struggling to field senior women's teams in a many of the grades.

Browns Bay is one club that has identified the problem and taken steps to try to alleviate the shortage of junior girls playing squash.

Fact

“Over 280 school children in the Auckland region are involved in a school/club squash partnership programme in Term 2”

Did You

Know?

“Only 29% of Auckland graded junior players are female”

What About the Girls? Continued

As part of their long term player and coach development plan, Browns Bay Racquets Club have committed to increasing the number of graded junior girls by at least 100%.

Currently they have only 6 girls on the grading list and only two of them are above J grade, including one who is not actively involved in the club at present. This leaves

them with 4 J graders and one F grade junior girl on the grading list.

Determined to improve the current situation, the club— with the help of trust funding— are providing junior girls aged between 10 and 16 the opportunity to participate in a free 6 week coaching programme. The programme runs on a Sunday afternoon from 12pm to

1pm. The girls receive group coaching on the basic strokes and court strategy from the club coach, Manu Yam.

Presently 6 junior girls aged 10 to 12 years are participating in the programme.

As the programme becomes more established it is predicted that this number will grow.

Weymouth Integrates Social Players Into Its Tournament

At the recent Weymouth B tournament a division was established for ungraded players.

The idea was to provide ungraded social players with an opportunity to experience competitive play to help them integrate into the clubs competitive programme, i.e. interclub teams.

Many of the players didn't have the time to devote to a 3 day event so the division was run in one day.

A separate court was set aside, and a separate prize pool was established.

This innovation is an excellent way to help integrate new players

“Most of the new members joining our club participate in our box league”

*Pam Gilbert
Manager*

JETS (Junior Emerging Teams Series) Competition Continues To Grow

What began on the North Shore as an interclub challenge between J grade players of two clubs (Devonport and Belmont Park) has now spread to include clubs across the Auckland region.

In term 2 of this year the event has grown to

include 16 teams from 9 clubs from the North Shore and South Auckland. In total over 80 J grade boys and girls are competing every week in regular interclub competition in their respective region.

It is hoped that in Term 3 clubs from the Central and West of Auckland will take

part.

The success of the event has ensured it becomes an integral part of Squash Auckland's junior competition pathway.

Currently work is underway to introduce a similar competition for F and E grade juniors

Helping New Members Fit In at Panmure Squash Club

Integrating new members into the activities of the club is a problem most clubs face every year. Lots of people join clubs but then the next year fail to renew. Why is this and what can clubs do to reduce the turnover of new members?

The first step is to understand why people join and why they leave. The two are inter-related.

Most people join a squash club because they want to play squash. Obvious you might say. But what is not so obvious is why a lot of clubs still provide limited opportunities for new people to play.

Sure there is club night and interclub, but most new members are not confident about playing interclub and

club night offers only limited opportunities for play.

What people want are regular playing opportunities. Panmure Squash Club have successfully addressed this problem by introducing a box league competition. With 14 boxes and over 60 players participating this has proven to be a winner for the club.