



CASE STUDY:

INNOVATIVE WAYS OF INCREASING
PARTICIPATION AND MEMBERSHIP

CAMBRIDGE RACQUETS CLUB



SQUASH
NEW ZEALAND

OVERVIEW

The Cambridge Racquets Club, in active pursuit of higher engagement in their junior squash programmes, developed new school-club links in order to attract more juniors and their parents to the club. They targeted an intermediate school that had electives for an hour and a half each week and a primary school within walking distance to the club. Squash Waikato's SportsForce Development Officer linked in Sport Waikato's Project Energise team, the District Coordinator, Kiwi Sport Funding and also helped the club work with two other squash clubs who were also part of the greater Waipa Squash Development project. The result has been a huge success with not only high community participation but great club membership conversions too.

CHALLENGES

People

A number of coaches are volunteers so finding coaches who could turn up for every session during school hours was tough. The new Club Manager hadn't seen the Kiwi Squash programme before either.

Funding

Having funding available to purchase the equipment kits and coaching resources that could be used by both the club and the schools involved.

Engagement

Finding schools that could link to the club during school hours. In previous years this has proven to be a more successful way of getting higher participation.

SOLUTIONS

Paid Coach

A coach was paid to ensure a reliable and professional image was displayed when dealing with the schools.

Funding

With the support from the SportsForce Squash Development Officer, Kiwi Sport funding was secured via Sport Waikato to help pay the coach and to purchase both the complete Small Nix and Big Nix equipment kits to offer both programmes.

Support

SportsForce supported the Club Manager and the schools to follow the Kiwi Squash implementation plan – which they are now confident and committed to rolling out together in future years.

RESULTS

154

Students took part in the 8 week Kiwi Squash programmes (30 at club and 124 at school).

9

Teachers trained from two different primary schools.

15

New club members signed up.

CONCLUSION

The Cambridge Racquets Club's Kiwi Squash junior programmes are now sustainable in the schools, with teachers trained and parents asking to be involved. After the 8 week programmes, each school had their own Big Nix tournament. The club then invited school families, teachers and the Cambridge community to their 'have a go' day - 30 people attended. 15 new members signed up with more interest in the pipeline. Both schools are already booked in for next year with Cambridge Middle offering squash in terms 1 and 2 with an option to join their new 'AIMS Games Squash team', which will train at the club after school in term 3.

Now that the Club Manager and schools are familiar with the Kiwi Squash programme, they will now be able to spend more time targeting the parents and teachers. Plans are under way to offer them the Squash Waikato Adult Squash Start coaching programmes and link teachers to the club with a teachers social night.

A key learning the club experienced was to make sure something special was provided to the Kiwi Squash families to link them to the club. A \$35 three month membership was subsequently offered which proved more effective than an annual membership in the first instance.