



END TO END PATHWAY

BACKGROUND

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The HP programme will enable well-balanced athletes and knowledgeable coaches with appropriate pathways to achieve international success.

SNZ is committed to “creating a High-Performance environment that is cohesive, inclusive, supports growth, and produces players capable of succeeding on the world stage.” To achieve this vision, we intend to further refine the SNZ end-to-end pathway that underpins our broader high-performance structure. A clearly defined end-to-end pathway will enable SNZ to identify, track and support athletes as they transition from District programs to a world-class professional squash player.

The end-to-end pathway will consist of five stages, which are not determined by age or events, but are instead defined by fundamental squash skills, pillars, support systems, progression through ranking systems, and maturity to train at the level that is required at each stage. A dedicated support system – including coaching and support services - will be responsible for delivering each stage of the pathway (these personnel have been identified below in italics).



THE FIVE END-TO-END STAGES

The five stages and their descriptors are as follows:

STAGE ONE: District Talent Base – These players will be identified at club/district level. They will show promising ability and be receptive to demonstrating good behavioural traits. These players will attend district trainings or squads and participate in both District and National tournaments; however, progress will not be limited to grading points and results alone, but the overall potential and coach recommendation will also be a key indicator of pathway progression.

(Club coach, District Coach, Parent, Experienced club player)

STAGE TWO: Development – These players will have the intention to achieve future results for NZ on the world stage. They will be identified through their performance and results at appropriate national events (including National junior open and District junior titles) and by demonstrating positive behavioural traits. These players will be involved in several SNZ national squads per year and may be invited to attend emerging pro training opportunities. The SNZ HP Manager will work with both the District coach and the athlete in the overall management of the athlete's program (which will include both face-to-face contact with the athlete and the coordination of the players program in conjunction with the players individual and District coach).

(District Coach, Individual Coach, National level Coach, HP Manager, Fitness advice/trainer, Senior district/national players mentoring/advising)

STAGE THREE: Emerging Pros – These players will be achieving results at National events, domestic PSA events and will be beginning to enter PSA events abroad. Their world ranking will be between 50-250 (M)/50-150 (W), which will be continuously improving. They will continue to develop – and seek out development opportunities - and demonstrate behavioural traits that are conducive to future international success. These players will participate in several national squads each year and engage in regular emerging pro training opportunities. The SNZ HP Manager will be heavily involved in the athletes' overall program (in conjunction with the players individual coach). The opportunity to base themselves abroad for limited periods of time will be explored to enhance training, experience, and WR progression. These players will be focused full-time on squash with possible part-time study.

(National level Coach, HP Manager, Individual Coach, Personal Sponsors, Ex-pro mentoring/advising, Fitness/Psychologist Coach)

STAGE FOUR: Pro – These players will be ranked between 10-50 (both men and women) and working towards podium success. The athletes will be highly likely to be based abroad for the majority of the professional squash season and have a WR that allows them to compete in all major series PSA events and win PSA Challenger events. The SNZ HP Manager will monitor athletes' overseas tournaments and training environment.

(National level Coach, HP Manager, Individual Coach, Personal Sponsors, Ex-pro mentoring/advising, Fitness/Psychologist Coach)

STAGE FIVE: HP Pro – These players will have a top 10 WR and be achieving podium placing. The athletes will be based abroad full-time, tracking toward or achieved CWG medals, compete in world series events, and achieve consistent quarter-final finishes at platinum PSA events. The SNZ HP Manager will monitor athletes' overseas tournaments and training environment.

(Individual coach, HP Manager, Higher level Sponsors, Ex-elite pro mentoring/advising, Sports Rehab/ Fitness/Psychologist Coach)

FUNDAMENTAL SQUASH SKILLS

The five 'Fundamental Squash Skills' are defined below:

The five skills are understanding length; tactical awareness; control the T and recovery; defensive and attacking play; and short game. Each of the five skills will be developed and finessed in each of the five stages of the end-to-end pathway. It is essential that all five skills are embedded and continually worked/practiced in order for progression through the pathway to occur. The athlete's club coach, early mentors, and later-career coaches are essential to embedding these skills into the athlete's game.

1

UNDERSTAND LENGTH - There are a number of different types of lengths: attacking, defensive, weighted, and general. The player will understand the subtleties of each of these lengths and understand when to use one over the other. This will be developed through coaching, match play and video analysis.

2

TACTICAL AWARENESS - Reading the game is essential to future international success. The player will learn how to have a heightened awareness of the court in order to anticipate the shot, pattern of play, and court position. This will be developed through coaching, match play and video analysis.

3

CONTROL THE T AND RECOVERY - Understanding when to deploy an attacking or defensive T-position is essential to achieving on the world stage. This will allow the player to close down rallies, speed up the pace of the game, and position themselves to recover all shots. This will be developed through coaching, match play and video analysis.

4

DEFENSIVE AND ATTACKING PLAY - Turning defence into offense is critical at the highest levels of squash. Understanding how and when to do this will be a central aspect of players achieving future success. This will be developed through coaching, match play and video analysis.

5

SHORT GAME - The modern game of squash has evolved to include a high proportion of short game activity. Developing the skill set to play the ball short (alongside consistent length) is required to compete against the world's best players. This will be developed through coaching, match play and video analysis.

PILLARS

The following five pillars have been identified as critical to international squash success:

PHYSICAL - Aerobic fitness, anaerobic fitness, speed development and agility, muscle endurance, range of movement, core strength and injury prevention/recovery/treatment.

SQUASH SKILLS - Skill adaptability through development of grip, swing, racket preparation, adaptability and control, footwork, reading of the game, awareness of opponents strengths and weaknesses and development of game plans.

MENTAL - Self-control, confidence, ability to think through critical points, inner drive, emotional control, resilience.

ENVIRONMENTAL - Personal responsibility, life balance, study/work, communication, planning, organisation

BARRIERS - Bespoke to each athlete, but include things such as injuries, competition schedule, family sickness, and slow development.



SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The following five support systems will act as a 'reservoir' to the athlete. At different times, the athlete may need one or more of these supports in order to enable them to progress along the pathway, and some services will be critical to individual athlete success.

SQUASH NZ - The SNZ HP Programme offers athletes sports science, training facilities, sports psychology, nutrition, performance plans, mentoring, and a broader high-performance environment through which to excel in.

COACHING - Coaching provide the players with foundational techniques, tactics, a positive squash environment, and a love for the game. For professional players, coaching is critical to developing the finer details of an athlete's game, including understanding opponents' weaknesses, strategy, and overall program design.

EVENTS - Competitions are necessary to provide players with experiences against other players, development opportunities, and the chance to achieve domestic and international ranking points. These events include district competition (interclub, tournaments, teams' events), national events, PSA events, world championships and Commonwealth Games.

FUNDING - Funding is critical to achieving domestic and international success. Various funding streams include sponsorship, prizemoney, family/club support, fundraising, grants (individual, club, district), promotion. SNZ's best squash players will receive and HPSNZ funding to allow them to travel the world and compete in international events.

SUPPORT NETWORKS - Networks and mentors serve an important component in athlete development. It offers positive communication and advice, maintains positive mental health, and provides appropriate squash and life guidance.



SNZ FOCUS AREAS

SNZ, Districts, and individual coaches' responsibilities are canvassed below. These have been defined by SNZ and HP stakeholders.

The District Talent Base stage will be managed by the Districts, with SNZ support. In conjunction with the District, SNZ will design squad programs for the Districts to deliver. Programme benchmarks and protocols will be aligned with the national program, and limited player mentoring support will be provided by SNZ. The strength of the relationship between the District and SNZ will be critical to the success of this Talent ID/Foundation stage. Ensuring all coaches are adequately skilled and trained to a national standard to deliver these programs will also be a key ingredient to its success.

Both the Development and Emerging Pro stages will receive the greatest resources from SNZ (including coaching support, support services, monitoring and mentoring). The primary focus will be on player retention, development and performance throughout these stages. This will be achieved by pooling SNZ resources into these categories, developing strong relationships with the athletes and districts (including the personal coaches of athletes) and supporting the players through tailored programs, programme benchmarks and feedback. SNZ will have a strong relationship with the player and their primary support network.

The Pro and HP Pro stages will be athletes based overseas with limited support and guidance provided by SNZ (when compared to the Development and Emerging Pro stage). The athletes primary support network will likely be based abroad and SNZ will demonstrate its commitment to the athlete through funding, medical treatment, and personal support. The SNZ HP Manager will monitor overseas tournament results and training environment.



KEY FOCUS AREAS for stage of the end-to-end pathway

The fundamental Skills, Support Systems and Pillars are embedded in the 5 stages of the end-to-end pathway. The key focus areas for each stage are identified below.

DISTRICT TALENT BASE

- All district coaches approved SNZ coaches (and ongoing coaching support and development opportunities)
- Individual coaching
- Access to group opportunities to train
- District coach program support
- Appropriate competition schedule
- Parent education
- District squad and National HP program to feed into.
- Connection between District coach and SNZ HP Manager
- Player support in the form of coaching, mentoring and possible financial support in the form of district funding.

DEVELOPMENT

- Athlete inclusion in well-functioning SNZ National HP Squad program (national squads).
- Focus on athlete development.
- Preparing for international competition.
- Strong domestic PSA circuit.
- World ranking experience phase can be achieved purely by competing in domestic PSA events.
- SNZ HP Manager relationship with athlete, District Coach, and individual coach (encouraging support network).
- Structured training program that is monitored by SNZ HP Manager.
- Individual and group coaching
- Athlete support demonstrating S&C, nutrition, training and event scheduling and periodisation training, mental skills and match analysis
- Load and outside squash management strategies in place
- Purposeful daily training environment

EMERGING PRO

- Preparation for international competition and NZ representation.
- Development of players into the professional sector.
- Progressive ranking movement.
- Going deep in higher events. (please note, this ranking bracket will begin incorporating itself into the “HP Pro stage”)
- Complete engagement with SNZ National Squad Programme.
- Strong relationship between SNZ HP Manager, athlete, and athletes’ personal coach (encouraging support network)
- Athletes train at top 20 pro level once they commit to PSA
- Regular coaching – NZ and overseas
- Overseas familiarisation trips for training/leagues/ coaching from for 2-3 months stints at a time.
- Athlete support demonstrating S&C, nutrition, training and event scheduling and periodisation training, mental skills (including regular fitness testing that drives the program development)
- Program monitoring by SNZ HP Manager
- Fully functioning daily training environment
- Match Analysis support
- Ranking/results momentum critical to retaining support network to stay in the game.
- Understanding of what it is to operate on tour effectively and accepting ‘Pro-life’.

PRO

- Developing elite performance capability at major series events.
- Athletes ranked 10-50 in the world (not generally expecting CWG individual medal success)
- Players predominantly based overseas.
- Coaching support – overseas base and events
- Athlete support – trainer, sports psychologist
- Match analysis
- Strong support network (including with SNZ)
- Athlete Life services post squash career.

HP PRO

- Athletes consistently achieving podium placings on the world stage.
- Athletes ranked 1-10 in the world
- Coaching support at major events
- Specialist overseas coaches
- Overseas base
- Athlete support – trainer, sports psychologist (someone they trust to talk to)
- Match analysis
- Sponsorship management
- Strong support network (including with SNZ)
- Athlete Life services post squash career



MANAGEMENT OF DELIVERY

	District Talent Base	Development	Emerging Pro	Pro	Hp Pro
DAILY TRAINING ENVIRONMENT	CLUB	CLUB/HUB	HUB	INT	INT
DELIVERY MANAGEMENT	DISTRICT	DISTRICT/SNZ	SNZ	INT	INT
SQUADS	DISTRICT	DISTRICT/SNZ	SNZ	INT	INT
SUPPORT SERVICES	DISTRICT	SNZ	SNZ	INT	INT

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

PILLARS



FUNDAMENTAL SQUASH SKILLS - TO SUPPORT ABOVE

Understand Length | Tactical Awareness | Control the T and Recovery | Defensive and Attacking Play | Short Game