



ACT Local Coaching Advisory Group forum

Summary report – September 2009

Compiled by McLaughlin Sports Consultancy



Table of contents

Section 1	Introduction	Page 3
Section 2	Background	Page 3
Section 3	Summary of key findings	Page 4
	3.1 – Force analysis summary	Page 4-9
	3.2 – Action plan	Page 10-1
Section 4	Conclusion	Page 12
Acknowledgements		Page 12

Section 1 – Introduction

The key objectives of LAGs (in each state/territory) are to:

- *Provide a forum for coaches to discuss the coaching issues / challenges (and recommended solutions) within their catchment area;*
- *Make recommendations on possible solutions to consider regarding current challenges faced by coaches and the coaching industry*
- *Focus on the “coal-face” coach and coaching issues*
- *Report on any other coach / coaching issues affecting coaching*

The following *summary report* is designed to highlight the key findings and recommendations to come from the ACT Local Coaching Advisory Group (LAG) Forum held in Canberra on 9 September 2009. The structure of the forums being held across Australia is outlined below:

- § LAG forum (open discussion to identify relevant coach / coaching issues and challenges, as well as relevant improvement strategies);
- § Networking break;
- § LAG meeting (targeting a limited number of key issues / challenges to come from the forum and developing a more detailed action plan to address these).

Section 2 – Background

Tennis Australia (TA) contracted McLaughlin Sports Consultancy (MSC), to assist in the planning and facilitation of the first round of LAG forums in 2009 (not including Northern Territory and Tasmania). MSC's contract also includes the preparation of a series of *summary reports*, guided by the feedback gathered in each of the forums.

This *summary report* has been designed to provide succinct information which is a true and accurate record of input from forum delegates, and it is hoped this will assist TA (Coach Development Department), the National Coach Advisory Group (NCAG) and Tennis ACT, to continue to improve the support services provided to the ACT Tennis Coaching community.

Section 3 – Summary of key findings

Based on information provided by the delegates of the ACT LAG forum held on 9 September 2009, a series of key findings have been outlined in the following sections:




- *Section 3.1 – Force analysis summary*
- *Section 3.2 – Action plan*

Section 3.1 – Force analysis summary

The 18 delegates who attended the inaugural ACT LAG forum were divided into three small groups to have open and frank discussions and to identify key issues affecting the Tennis Coaching industry in ACT. Delegates were also asked to provide possible solutions / strategies that they felt may address the issues identified.

Based on the information provided by each of the three groups within the forum, a summary of the forces currently driving the performance of Tennis coaching in ACT, along with the blocking forces slowing the progress of world class Tennis coaching in ACT, are presented in Table 1, below.



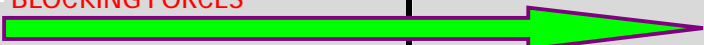
TABLE 1 – FORCE ANALYSIS SUMMARY

TENNIS AUSTRALIA FUNCTIONAL AREA	IDENTIFIED DRIVING FORCES 	Issues & challenges (Where we are now) IDENTIFIED BLOCKING FORCES 	IDENTIFIED STRATEGIES Where we want to be  (To address blocking forces & to maintain driving forces)
MARKETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sport of Tennis should be easy to promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Game for life - Healthy lifestyle (preventative health agenda) - Global sport - History of Australian success - Social / recreational pursuit - Australian Open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition from other sports (team sports) Lack of “year round” marketing Accessibility of the sport (high cost) Not enough kids know about Tennis and their access routes to the sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need a TA lead all year round marketing approach focusing on Tennis’ points of difference from other sports
COACH DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality coach development program (coaching courses, professional development and membership) Coach development workshops and LAG forums, etc Improved drive of coach development from a national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived competition between coaches (lack of co-operation) Volunteer coaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a system to recognise coaches (e.g. “high performing” coaches at each level within the NCAS framework, and / or “the coaching chain” system of recognising any coach who has had a significant impact on the development of quality players (e.g. nationally ranked juniors, professionals, etc) More examples / resources showing innovative, contemporary tennis coaching strategies / activities Better educate coaches about the TA player / talent development pathway and its requirements.

Please note: that this section is a summary of all the thoughts and ideas collated from the coaches participating in the LAG brainstorm session

TENNIS AUSTRALIA T12 AREA	<p style="text-align: center;">IDENTIFIED DRIVING FORCES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">→</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Issues & challenges (Where we are now)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IDENTIFIED BLOCKING FORCES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">←</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">IDENTIFIED STRATEGIES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">→</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(To address blocking forces & to maintain driving forces)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Where we want to be</p>
<p>GRASS ROOTS & TENNIS IN SCHOOLS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presence of modified tennis programs and equipment for beginners • Increased presence in schools • Increased grass roots participation • Tennis ACT increasing the focus of Tennis in schools • Aviva Hot Shots program • Tennis Fun Days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees for the Aviva Hot Shots program and other school based programs may be restrictive to school / student involvement • Lack of coaches using modified programs/equipment and other innovative and fun coaching methods • Cost of modified equipment • Lack of penetration of tennis in schools • Lack of “qualified” coaches delivering Tennis activities in schools • Ineffective club committee structures / activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train school teachers and coaches to OTC level at minimum to effectively implement the national Hot-Shots program in schools • TA and Tennis ACT to continue to form relationships with relevant department of education to increase the delivery of the national Hot-Shots Program in schools • Club administrator training program (e.g. marketing, event management, finance, facility management, etc) • A coordinated approach to club planning delivered via TA and / or Tennis ACT to allow clubs to more effectively link with Tennis ACT and TA and to improve the services they offer their members.



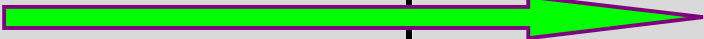
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TENNIS AUSTRALIA T12 AREA	IDENTIFIED DRIVING FORCES 	Issues & challenges (Where we are now) IDENTIFIED BLOCKING FORCES 	IDENTIFIED STRATEGIES Where we want to be 
INFRASTRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current availability of court and club facilities • New court development projects (e.g. Lynham Precinct) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of multi-surface court facilities • High cost of leases / coaching rights • The cost of building new facilities is high • The low commercial rate of return on courts in comparison to other types of sport and recreation facilities 	(To address blocking forces & to maintain driving forces) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TA and Tennis ACT to work closely with Sport and Recreation Services ACT and the National Hockey Centre regarding the planned re-development of the Lynham Sports Precinct (and other possible facility developments). • TA and Tennis ACT to support clubs in negotiating the development of improved additional court facilities (e.g. Golf Creek Country Club, etc).

Please note: that this section is a summary of all the thoughts and ideas collated from the coaches participating in the LAG brainstorm session

TENNIS AUSTRALIA T12 AREA	<p style="text-align: center;">IDENTIFIED DRIVING FORCES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">→</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Issues & challenges (Where we are now)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IDENTIFIED BLOCKING FORCES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">←</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">IDENTIFIED STRATEGIES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">←</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(To address blocking forces & to maintain driving forces)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">→</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Where we want to be</p>
<p>ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some quality private coaches operating excellent programs • The tennis ACT High Performance Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of a TA defined and driven, and ACT Tennis delivered, player / talent development pathway • Lack of communication / link between junior development, performance and high performance coaches and their programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better educate coaches about the TA player / talent development pathway and its requirements at each stage. • TA / Tennis ACT to educate coaches and clubs re T-12 and relevant strategies being implemented by TA. • TA and Tennis Australia to promote, encourage and support the delivery of nationally driven programs in the ACT. • TA to look to pilot specific national programs in the ACT, monitor the success of the initiatives and use this data for the benefit of Tennis in the ACT and nationally. • TA and Tennis ACT to continue to build relationships with the ACT Academy of Sport in an attempt to increase the support received for local high performance players.

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TENNIS AUSTRALIA T12 AREA	IDENTIFIED DRIVING FORCES 	Issues & challenges (Where we are now) IDENTIFIED BLOCKING FORCES 	IDENTIFIED STRATEGIES Where we want to be  (To address blocking forces & to maintain driving forces)
TOURNAMENTS & COMPETITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in pennant numbers (i.e. highest since 2002) Some increased flexibility in tournament structures to better suit the needs of players at all stages of development (e.g. X-Point) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players have to be competent before they can participate in competitions / tournaments Point system used in tournaments Lack of flexible, fun, innovative, modified tournament structures to meet the needs of various player groups within the Tennis player development pathway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More cohesive and nationally developed flexible / modified tournaments formats to meet the specific needs of players at each stage of the TA player development pathway (e.g. PGA Schweppes Junior Shootout Events, etc)
COMMUNICATION/IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased availability of information from TA (e.g. coach development department publications, access to staff, access to the NCAG, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ineffective information and communications technology systems in place (registrations, ratings, national and international points, etc) Unclear or poorly communicated TA goals re coach development, grass roots participation, athlete development pathways, etc Lack of communication between coaches and TACT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved, centralised ITC system to effectively manage relevant data (e.g. rankings, registrations, tournaments, coach qualifications, updating activities, etc) Continuation of the development and dissemination of coach information strategies such as the TA Player Development Update and Coaches World Newsletters, etc.

Please note: that this section is a summary of all the thoughts and ideas collated from the coaches participating in the LAG brainstorm session

3.2 – Action Plan

TABLE 2 – SEPTEMBER 2009 ACT LAG POST FORUM ACTION PLAN

TENNIS AUSTRALIA FUNCTIONAL AREA	Key Issue	Aim	Strategy	Resp	Time
MARKETING	Lack of a nationally coordinated, year-round marketing approach which penetrates the ACT markets	Provide an opportunity for all people to play tennis	Provide an update to TA coach members through a range of mediums re: proposed by the Tennis Australia Marketing Department.	TAMD	2010
COACH DEVELOPMENT	Lack of transparency and cooperation between private coaches, and between private coaches and the ACT high performance program	An effective transition for players progressing through the player / talent development pathway (i.e. moving from a junior development coach, to a performance coach, to a HP program coach, etc)	Conduct planning and information forum/s to outline to all coaches the design of the TA player / talent development pathway, the new TA coach education pathway and the equal importance of each stage in a player's development.	TAAD/TA CD	2010
			Implement a "high performing coach" recognition program in the ACT and nationally, to recognise the role coaches have played in players' development (i.e. if a player reaches state / national / national level, each coach who has played a role in their development is recognised and thanked by TA). This is recognising all coaches within the "coaching chain".	TACD	2010
			Facilitate regular ACT LAG forums and use these to focus on core coach education needs.	ACT LAG and CDC	2010
COACH DEVELOPMENT	Lack of career pathway/direction for coaches	Provide a career pathway for coaches	Provide an update on the TA traineeship / apprenticeship program to provide industry recognition and an enhanced professional coach career pathway.	TACD	Dec 2009
COMMUNITY TENNIS	Ageing / diminishing volunteer infrastructure	Promote the Master Club Professional qualifications	Encourage coaches to consider taking on an increased role within the club/facility and up-skill by undertaking the Master Club Professional qualifications	TACD	2010
		Engage and educate the volunteers within clubs/centres	Inform TA coach members of the on-line learning for volunteers (via CoachesWorld)	TACD and TACTD	2010

TENNIS AUSTRALIA FUNCTIONAL AREA	Key Issue	Aim	Strategy	Resp	Time
COMMUNITY TENNIS	Lack of a nationally developed and locally coordinated quality program being delivered in schools	Greater penetration of tennis in schools and the delivery of a nationally standardised program	Inform TA coach members of the revised ATHS Tennis in School pilot	TACD	Dec 2009
			Accredit and promote "Tennis Hotshot Providers" who are trained to deliver the program.	TACTD	2010
			Train teachers to a minimum standard OTC to allow them to deliver aspects of the program in house	TACTD	2010
COMMUNITY TENNIS	Need for a co-ordinated approach to facilities	Co-ordinated approach to facility development	Inform TA coach members of the Facility Development Framework	TACD TACTD	Dec 2009
			Tennis ACT to maintain communication with Sport and Recreation Services ACT and Hockey ACT re the re-development of the Lynham Sports Precinct and other potential facility development initiatives.	Tennis ACT	2010
COMMUNITY TENNIS	Modified tournament and competition structures	Increase the number and depth of engagement of active players	Inform TA coach members of the various resources available re: modified tournament/competition formats	Tennis ACT	2010
ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT	Talent Development program	Further promote the TA talent development philosophy/program	Further inform TA coach members of the TA position on Talent Development	TACD and TAAD	2010
COMMUNICATION	Ineffective ITC systems	Improved, centralised ITC network for coaches	Inform TA coach members of the ITC solutions which TA is addressing (via CoachesWorld)	TACD	2010
COMMUNICATION	Unclear of TA goals	Promote TA's T12 strategy	Inform TA coach members of the TA T12 strategy (via CoachesWorld)	TACD	Dec 2010
COMMUNICATION	Lack of communication between Tennis ACT and coaches	Develop effective communication strategies between TACT and TA coach members in ACT	Develop a communication plan between TACT and TA coach members in ACT.	TACD ACT LAG TACT	2010

Key:

TACD – Tennis Australia Coach Development; TAMM – Tennis Australia Marketing Department; TACTD- Tennis Australia Community Tennis Department; TAT&E – Tennis Australia Tournament and events; TAAD – Tennis Australia Athlete Department

Section 4 – Conclusion

The inaugural ACT LAG forum held in Canberra on 9 September 2009 raised a myriad of issues and strategies, all of which, if implemented, would improve Tennis coaching in ACT. Although this is the case, “Rome was not built in a day” and the action plan contained within this report is focusing only on the core issues raised by the ACT LAG forum delegates, which can realistically be progressed between now and the next ACT LAG forum. The action plan within this report will provide invaluable information to Tennis Australia and in the next ACT LAG forum; delegates will be informed as to the progress made in relation to the plan. *It should be noted – it is intended that the ACT LAG Forums will be held approximately 3 times per year.*

Tennis ACT and Tennis Australia take this initiative very seriously and we hope you will continue to proactively support the development of tennis coaches through your positive involvement in the next LAG Forum.

Acknowledgments

McLaughlin Sports Consultancy is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the success of the inaugural LAG forums in 2009. MSC would like to thank the ACT LAG members and forum participants who gave of their time to share a wide range of views and experiences in an attempt to provide relevance to the process at all times. This dedicated group will have a large impact on the implementation of the action plan within this report and on the future development of the tennis coaching industry, both in ACT and throughout Australia.



Mike McLaughlin
McLaughlin Sports Consultancy