



Western Australia Local Coaching Advisory Group Forum

Summary Report – October 2009

Compiled by McLaughlin Sports Consultancy



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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 Western Australian (WA) Local Coaching Advisory Group (LAG) Forum held in Perth on 5 October 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 WA, to continue to improve the support services provided to the WA Tennis Coaching community.

Section 3 – Summary of key findings

Based on information provided by the delegates of the WA LAG forum held on 5 October 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



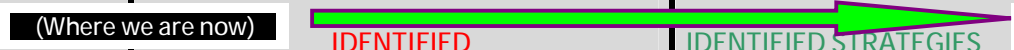
The 30 delegates who attended the inaugural WA LAG forum were divided into six small groups to have open and frank discussions and to identify key issues affecting the Tennis Coaching industry in WA. Delegates were also asked to provide possible solutions / strategies that they felt may address the issues identified.

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




TABLE 1 – FORCE ANALYSIS SUMMARY

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 FUNCTIONAL AREA	IDENTIFIED DRIVING FORCES (Where we are now)	IDENTIFIED BLOCKING FORCES (Where we are now)	IDENTIFIED STRATEGIES (Where we want to be)
MARKETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strong Tennis culture (past champions, etc) Entrepreneurial coaches Tennis is a sport for all (largest participation of any sport) and a game for life The 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) The cost associated with learning to play Tennis Lack of visibility / penetration in schools 	(To address blocking forces & to maintain driving forces) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need a TA lead all year round marketing approach delivered nationally, with a particular focus in schools and on attracting more coaches Proactive and coordinated marketing / communications with State Department of Education re the Tennis Hot-Shots schools program
COACH DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tennis coach career path (coaching is a great job) The new coach development program (coaching courses, professional development and membership) Improved drive and communication of coach development activities from a national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course dates and information not disseminated Time commitment required to complete courses (weekends not ideal) Perceived competition between coaches (lack of co-operation) Unprofessional club management / ineffective club / association committees Additional coach PD required Coaches not recognised as professionals / business owners Courses too expensive 	Provide more information on a tennis coach traineeship / apprenticeship system <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) Continued dissemination of relevant coach development information / opportunities and the provision of more such opportunities Better educate coaches/clubs about the TA player / talent development pathway <u>and</u> the new TA Coach Education pathway. TA and Tennis WA to add greater value to being a qualified coach

TENNIS AUSTRALIA FUNCTIONAL AREA	IDENTIFIED DRIVING FORCES 	(Where we are now) IDENTIFIED BLOCKING FORCES 	IDENTIFIED STRATEGIES Where we want to be 
			<i>(To address blocking forces & to maintain driving forces)</i>
GRASS ROOTS & TENNIS IN SCHOOLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hot Shots modified Tennis program Many clubs provide more than Tennis programs (e.g. member services, social activities, life skills, a community hub) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of coaches using modified programs/equipment and other innovative and fun coaching methods Cost of modified equipment Other sports, school work, etc Clubs making it difficult for coaches to grow the game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tennis WA to promote and deliver a standardised junior /schools program (e.g. Hot-Shots Program). TA and Tennis WA to develop relationships with the department of education to increase the delivery of the national Hot-Shots Program in schools TA to develop and encourage the use of standard form contracts to be adapted by clubs and coaches TA to develop and implement a club quality assurance program and recognise and promote those clubs who achieve the standard set Club administrator training program (e.g. marketing, event management, finance, facility management, the club – coach partnership, etc) A coordinated approach to club planning delivered via TA and / or Tennis WA to allow clubs to more effectively link with Tennis WA and TA and to improve the services they offer their members.

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TENNIS AUSTRALIA FUNCTIONAL AREA	IDENTIFIED DRIVING FORCES 	(Where we are now) IDENTIFIED BLOCKING FORCES 	IDENTIFIED STRATEGIES (To address blocking forces & to maintain driving forces) Where we want to be 
INFRASTRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court surface variety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of multi-surface court facilities (e.g. clay, grass in winter and indoor courts) Local Councils inhibiting facility development (e.g. erection of lighting, new courts, etc) Difficult nature of identifying, applying for and accessing State Government facility related funding Too many clubs Coaches being overcharged for court usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tennis WA to work closely with WA Department for Sport and Recreation regarding the planned re-development / development of possible Tennis facilities. Tennis WA to be fully aware of all relevant State Government (and other) facility related grant opportunities and promote these to the associations / clubs. TA and Tennis WA to encourage Councils to include the TA Club / Association quality assurance program indicators (yet to be developed) within their selection criteria when leasing courts and facilities

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TENNIS AUSTRALIA T12 AREA	IDENTIFIED DRIVING FORCES (Where we are now)	IDENTIFIED BLOCKING FORCES (Where we are now)	IDENTIFIED STRATEGIES Where we want to be (To address blocking forces & to maintain driving forces)
ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talented athletes • Well qualified / highly skilled coaches • Positive re-vamp of the national player development pathway • Quality, quantity and commitment of coaches in WA • Proactive qualified coaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult sport to learn quickly • Lack of coaches in regional areas • Lack of communication / planned linkages between junior development, performance and high performance coaches and their programs (i.e. lack of effective feeder system for better players) • Costs associated with training and competing • Lack of funding outside of the academy structure • Pushy parents (ugly parent syndrome) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better educate coaches about the TA player / talent development pathway and its requirements at each stage. • TA / Tennis WA to educate coaches, clubs and associations re T-12 and relevant strategies being implemented by TA. • Tennis WA and Tennis Australia to promote, encourage and support the delivery of nationally driven programs in WA. • To investigate the implementation of "regional clubs" to support the development of talented players within the system
TOURNAMENTS & COMPETITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some increased flexibility in tournament structures to better suit the needs of players at all stages of development (e.g. hot shots matches with modified equipment) • Committed volunteers • Positive competition between clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient deliver of flexible, fun, innovative, modified tournament structures to meet the needs of various player groups within the Tennis player development pathway • The high costs associated with playing in tournaments • ITN system is a concern • Pennant season is too short • Not enough matches / tournaments • Negative competition between clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cohesive and nationally developed flexible / modified tournament formats to meet the specific needs of players at each stage of the TA player development pathway (e.g. PGA Schweppes Junior Shootout Events, Hot-Shots competitions, fast tennis, different time slots, social events, family tournaments, etc) • Re-introduction of premier competitions to the tournament calendar

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3.2 – Action Plan

TABLE 2 – SEPTEMBER 2009 WA 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	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 coaches, and between coaches and the Tennis WA / TA performance programs	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.	TACD	2010
			Implement a "high performing coach" recognition program in WA 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 annual WA LAG forums immediately prior to Tennis WA and TA planning activities.	TACD and Tennis West	2010
			Tennis WA to facilitate Regional Advisory Groups Forums to feed information into the WA LAG	CDC	2010
			Increase the number of TA coach education courses delivered regionally	TACD	2010

TENNIS AUSTRALIA FUNCTIONAL AREA	Key Issue	Aim	Strategy	Resp	Time
COMMUNITY TENNIS	Ineffective club committees	Improve the professionalism and effectiveness of clubs / associations	Inform TA coach members of the on-line learning for volunteers	TACD and TACTD	2010
			TA and Tennis West to promote club performance benchmarking tool to clubs to identify the areas where clubs need assistance and create action plans and targeted resources.	TACTD	2010
			TA to develop and disseminate Tennis specific Club Development Training Resources	TACTD	2010
COMMUNITY TENNIS	Different / various programs being delivered in clubs and 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	2010
			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	2010
			Tennis WA to maintain communication with the WA Sport and Recreation re the re-all funding and potential facility development initiatives.	TACTC	2010
COMMUNITY TENNIS	Modified tournament 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 and Tennis WA to run modified tournaments	TACTD	2010
ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT	Talent Development program	Promote the TA talent development philosophy/program	Inform TA coach members of the TA position on Talent Development	TACD and TAAD	2010
COMMUNICATION	Unclear of TA goals	Promote TA's T12 strategy	Inform TA coach members of the TA T12 strategy	TACD	Dec 2009

Key:

TACD – Tennis Australia Coach Development; TAMD – 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 WA LAG forum held in Perth of 5 October 2009 raised a myriad of issues and strategies, all of which, if implemented, would improve Tennis coaching in WA. 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 WA LAG forum delegates, which can realistically be progressed between now and the next WA LAG forum. The action plan within this report will provide invaluable information to Tennis Australia and in the next WA 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 WA LAG Forums will be held annually.*

Tennis WA 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 WA 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 WA and throughout Australia.



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