

Work as hard as your athletes



Brett Lennard caught the tennis bug early and never looked back...

A life-time passion for tennis first started at the Crib Point Tennis Club on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, when Brett Lennard was seven years old.

“Mum and Dad were both very active club members. Dad was the Club President and I used to tag along to their weekend social and pennant competitions, bugging them to hit with me every time there was a free court,” Lennard says.

But it was the anticipation and excitement of going away with family or friends to a country grass court tournament at Charlton and Maryborough that’s remained a vivid memory for him.

“We used to pitch the tent right next to the tennis centre. Everyone was so friendly and the tournament was always extremely well organised. They also made the best chicken salad rolls on earth,” he says.

Later down the track Lennard realised that he enjoyed having direct working relationships with people and helping them out.

“It took me a while to figure out that I could combine my passion for tennis and the desire to bring people together and earn a living doing it,” he says.

This awareness pushed him to look into becoming a tennis coach and Lennard opened his tennis business Rising Star Tennis Academy in 1998.

More than 12 years down the track and the Rising Star Tennis Academy operates in three clubs/centres in the Australian Capital Territory, including Old Parliament House Gardens Tennis Centre, Forrest Tennis Club and North

Woden Tennis Club.

“Our business model focuses on grassroots coaching through to players training in our High Performance Academy. We have hundreds of players currently moving through our three Tennis Australia Hot Shot stages, red, orange and green,” Lennard says.

“We are hopeful there are a few that may go on to do special things with their tennis but more hopeful that they are all still playing the game in 50 to 60 years time, then we can be really proud of something ... but we try to ensure that all our players both young and not so young feel like rising stars.”

With this in mind, Lennard further developed his skills, attaining his Tennis Australia Club Professional qualification, then his Tennis Australia Master Club Professional qualification in association with Deakin University in 2007, but he believes that engagement has the power to leave a lasting impression.

“We would hope that our coaching teams’ love of the game may resonate through our coaching program and that our passion for the game may also become theirs,” he says.

“We also encourage our players to understand that tennis is a game that should be played and not just practised. To encourage this we offer a plethora of social and competitive tennis options.”

In March 2011 Lennard was awarded the ACT Community Sportstar Award for coaching and his commitment and dedication was further recognised with a Coach of the Year Award for 2010 in the Australian Capital Region at the Tennis ACT Annual Awards and he was also presented with the Australian Tennis Award in Coaching Excellence – Club in 2010.

“Wow. It’s not often you get a tennis coach speechless,” Lennard says. “It was a great honour. To be a finalist [in the Australian Tennis Awards] I was pretty proud and then to come away with the big gong, I was extremely proud and happy.”

Lennard has found that putting in the hard yards on court as a coach is the best way to further push his athletes.

“Our more experienced athletes are working particularly hard and the best way I have found to inspire them through this process is to work just as hard as they are, inspiration through perspiration,” he says.

Rising to the challenge of working with a diverse range of players with different needs, wants and goals is something that Lennard looks forward to everyday.

“But I still have so much to learn. This game is always changing, the people who play it are always different so it is important for me to look for new and different ways to meet these challenges.”



Brett Lennard wants all his athletes - young and old - to feel like rising stars.