

Practice makes permanent



A permanent career in coaching may have come unexpectedly for Jeremy White, but five years down the track he has found his feet.

Dedication to coaching

When his coach Stuart Braithwaite was unwell and took a turn for the worse in 2006, Jeremy White stepped in to lend a hand. He continued coaching Braithwaite's athletes, but could not even begin to imagine what was in store.

"My coach was really sick, so I took on a more permanent role," White says. "It was only supposed to be until he got better. Unfortunately he didn't recover and passed away."

The heartbreaking circumstances were in some ways the catalyst for White turning his attention to a full-time coaching career.

"I took over and started my own business, but I have been trying to maintain the ethics and standards that he taught me, and many others, ever since," he says.

The business is called YT's Tennis Coaching and is based at the Glenbrook Tennis Club in Lower Blue Mountains in New South Wales.

Before this, coaching was a means to an end and helped White pay his expenses while he was travelling and competing.

"To be honest I never really decided to become a coach, until I was already doing it," he says.

White spends the majority of his time developing juniors aged 10 to 12 years old, however has also worked with juniors aged between 14 and 21 who have a national ranking, and

his motto is 'practice doesn't make perfect, practice makes permanent'.

"Players have to put the time and effort in if they want to achieve a good result. Hard work and dedication will trump natural talent in my opinion any day," he says.

"Another thing that someone told me that has stuck with me is, 'it's not about winning on your good day, anybody can do that, true champions find a way to win on their bad days'."

Playing memories

Having played tennis himself, White has experienced first-hand the dedication and sacrifice required to win.

He was eight years old when he joined his Dad on the road for a hit of tennis and before long he was in his first lesson with Braithwaite.

Endurance is one of the reasons White enjoyed competing and he recorded a lot of success when he was a junior.

"I don't have just one main memorable moment ... a few long three-four hour three set matches come to mind, some won, some lost," he says. "But winning the Pizzey Cup, a few tournament wins, I won 12s, 14s, 16s and 18s in Parkes and never lost a match there, all come to mind."

Setting an example

Some of the principles White's own coaches implemented when he was a junior left a lasting impression.

"As a player I used to love trying to beat my coach and I try to bring that same feeling for my players when I coach them," he says.

"I am a pretty high energy person so I like to think my enthusiasm and intensity rubs off on people.

"With my younger athletes sometimes rewards for completing exercises can help, but I don't do it all that often because sometimes that becomes all they expect. While with my more developed athletes I generally train with them to show that I understand how hard they have to work."

Knowing that he's played a role with the development of his athletes is rewarding to White and is the thing he enjoys the most about his job. "Sometimes it can be just seeing a student have fun or say to their parent 'did you see that?' The majority of players that I work with are tournament players so this is more results driven."

"But it is rewarding seeing your students do well in competition and win tournaments ... it's a great feeling."

In the long-term White's commitment to the Glenbrook Tennis Club will continue to



offer coaching opportunities for many juniors to come.

"I want to continue to build my business and later I would like to work with a few international students overseas and possibly tour overseas with a bunch of players," he says.

"But I know I wouldn't be the coach I am today without the two coaches that I had mentor me, so my appreciation goes to Alec Pero and Stuart Braithwaite."