

No. 3

MODELS OF CLUB INCLUSION

Case Studies

Cricket – Southern Pirates Cricket Club (Dandenong)

The Southern Pirates Cricket Club provides two very important initiatives that make it easier for young people of all backgrounds (including CLD) to join its club. The first of these initiatives is providing second hand equipment and uniforms to juniors, sourced from older players whose uniforms no longer fit or when equipment is no longer suitable. The second initiative is to waive membership fees of any family that legitimately cannot afford to pay. Each of these strategies has been highly effective in attracting and retaining CLD members and ensuring the long term survival of the club. In fact, these strategies have been instrumental in increasing the number of junior sides from one team three years ago to five teams this year.

Perhaps the major challenge encountered by the Southern Pirates Cricket Club has been in getting the parents of junior cricketers from CLD backgrounds involved in the sport. Although parents are generally happy to come along to presentation nights, they rarely become involved in any aspect of administration. Understanding by parents of the Australian sporting culture and the commitment involved in being part of a team has also been a challenge. Occasionally if a young cricketer from a CLD background has misbehaved, his parents will prevent him from playing cricket for some time.

A club representative said it was difficult to attract CLD parents to social events such as BBQs because many families cannot eat traditional Australian BBQ food such as pork sausages. Similarly, cultural and religious differences have made it difficult for the club to attract young women. In fact, there are currently no females at all playing for the club.

Another challenging aspect for the club is attracting young people from countries where cricket is not played. Young people from Sri Lankan, Indian and Pakistani backgrounds are naturally drawn to the club as cricket is played widely in their country of origin, however it is much more difficult to promote the sport to young people from other Asian and African backgrounds.

In the past, the club has sent volunteer coaches to schools with a high percentage of young people from CLD backgrounds. This has worked well in attracting new members, but the club is finding it increasingly hard to find volunteers to undertake this role during school hours and does not have the money available to pay coaches.



VicHealth

HEALTH THROUGH PARTICIPATION

Sport – access for all cultures.

Football – Parkside Junior Football Club (Maribyrnong)

Approximately 10-19 per cent of Parkside Junior Football Club's membership is made up of young males from CLD communities such as Sudan, Croatia and Lebanon. The exact number is unknown as the club does not record this information. To date the club has not developed any sports inclusion policies to attract CLD members as it has not had the time to do so. However, it is about to implement two programs in conjunction with the Western Region Football League.

The first of these is the *Good Sports Program*, targeted at both parents and players to provide information about acceptable behaviour related to participation in football as a player or spectator. The second program aims to educate players about the need to stamp out racism of sport and to provide a welcoming club environment for people from diverse backgrounds.

These programs have been promoted to players and their parents through the club newsletter and via coaches at football training sessions. The club itself will coordinate the program, using resources supplied by the Western Region Football League and the Australian Football League.

Some of the major challenges experienced by the club when working with young CLD males is that none of the families read their newsletter, hence miss out on information about social events, etc. Another key challenge in attracting young people from CLD backgrounds is their lack of familiarity of the sport. Despite running football clinics at local schools, soccer still appears to be far more attractive to this group because they are more likely to have played or had exposure to it in their country of origin. The club is working on an informal basis with existing players from CLD backgrounds to encourage them to bring their friends along to training.

Language is also another major barrier. Only CLD young people with relatively good spoken English have joined the club.

Tennis – Yarraville Tennis Club (Maribyrnong)

Located in Maribyrnong, the Yarraville Tennis Club has been successful in attracting up to 80 Vietnamese players (about 33% of its membership). The majority of these players are aged from their mid twenties through to around fifty years of age; 95 percent of them are male.

No policies or programs have been developed to attract CLD players as the club has not seen the need for such an action. What the club does provide is a welcoming environment for the Vietnamese community and encouragement to develop their tennis skills. The tennis facilities available are excellent and the location of the club is conveniently close to the homes of many of this group. Coaching is also available six days per week.

Whilst many of the Vietnamese men choose to play social tennis at the club, particularly on a Sunday afternoon, there are some who play up to five times per week. There are now two Vietnamese teams taking part in the Tennis Victoria Pennant; a tennis competition played throughout metropolitan

Melbourne. The success of these tennis players has inspired other Vietnamese people to join the club.

Yarraville Tennis Club promotes its facilities and programs through community and school newsletters. Occasional school clinics are also conducted. Word of mouth has been the most effective form of promotion to attract Vietnamese players.

One of the biggest challenges has been integrating the Vietnamese members into club activities. According to the club, the Vietnamese tennis players only want to play the game; not be involved in club administration or social events.

Tennis – Burden Park Tennis Club (Dandenong)

Located in Dandenong, the Burden Park Tennis Club has an estimated CLD membership of over 40%. Like all other clubs surveyed as part of this project, it does not collect information about the cultural backgrounds of participants.

Burden Park has developed a number of successful strategies to attract young people from CLD communities. The first of these involves providing uniforms for players. This strategy was initiated in response to the fact that many new players could not afford or did not turn up in appropriate tennis attire. The tennis club approached the local RSL, who then agreed to cover the costs of uniforms as part of a sponsorship arrangement. The provision of uniforms has also created a sense of 'team belonging,' according to the club.

The second strategy involves the development of a voluntary transportation roster. Parents who are able or willing to provide transportation to and from tennis venues place their name on a roster. The third strategy developed by Burden Park Tennis Club involves the translation of information about its annual open day into three different community languages. Flyers are then distributed to local shops and schools. The annual open day generally attracts one or two new members from CLD communities each year.

One of the major challenges involved in providing tennis opportunities to CLD communities for Burden Park is the reluctance of parents to get

involved. Poor English language skills have been identified as the main reason for this. Similarly, lack of exposure to tennis in the potential player's country of origin is cited as another key obstacle. This lack of exposure to tennis not only means that the young person may not understand the rules of the game, but they are unlikely to have learned the skills required for the sport. Therefore when they start tennis, they are beginners, even though they may be somewhat older than other beginners at the club. This can prove to be a frustrating experience for them. Approximately five years ago, language seemed to be a significant barrier, however the club believes this is not such a deterrent any longer.

The location of the Burden Park Tennis Club (in an area with a significant CLD population) is considered to be a key reason why it attracts such a high number of people from CLD backgrounds. Also, the fact that the club offers social tennis is a major drawcard, particularly amongst Asian residents. However the most effective way of attracting young people from CLD backgrounds is through word of mouth and allowing young members to bring a friend along.

Burden Park Tennis Club is considering approaching a number of key ethnic groups to offer court hire for social tennis during the day.

Volleyball – East Side Hawks Women's Volleyball Club (Dandenong)

The East Side Hawks Women's Volleyball Club, situated in Dandenong, currently has six players from CLD backgrounds (or just under 10% of its membership). The majority of these young women from CLD backgrounds were born in Eastern European countries, such as Croatia, where volleyball is strong. The club's coach has strong connections with the Serbian and Croatian communities and a number of committee members are from Eastern European backgrounds. In addition, there are also a few girls of Asian descent playing volleyball at the club.



In order to attract young women to play volleyball, the club currently operates programs that are open to all young women at both the Gleneagles and Hallam campuses of Eumemmerring Secondary College. These programs, which attract an average of 25 young women per session, are coordinated by the club president (who is also a teacher at the school). Of the young women from CLD backgrounds who participate, a few tend to join clubs once the program has ceased. The major challenge with this program relates to integration. Because the school is relatively small and there are clearly defined friendship groups, anyone who is not part of the friendship groups involved finds it hard to feel like they are part of the team.

In order to overcome this challenge and to diversify its feeder base, the club intends to implement a primary school program in November of this year. This program will target girls between 9-11 years of age in 12 local primary schools. It is not expected that friendship groups will be such an issue in this age group.

Netball – Dandenong West Netball Club (Dandenong)

There are currently two teams with nine players in each in the Dandenong West Netball Club. Of the 18 children involved, 14 are from CLD backgrounds. Ages range from 10 to 13 years.

A teacher at the school developed the two teams following the success of the school's inter-school netball competition. A third team will be created for next year's competition. The club is part of the Dandenong and District Netball Association.

The major challenge experienced by the teacher in charge of the teams is communication with the families of the netballers. A strategy adopted by the teacher to counteract this challenge is to read notes to the children, ensure that they understand what it written and then ask them to translate the note for their parents.

Lack of parental support has also been an issue. To date the teacher in charge has not requested much of the parents, but will be placing bigger demands on parents next year for assistance with transportation. The teacher believes that many of the parents of the CLD young people do not understand netball, nor are they very interested

in the game. Cost has not been a major issue for players and the fact that students play in their school sports uniform has ensured that uniforms have not been problematic.

A major success of the program is the enthusiasm of students and the fact that they turn up to every game. Teachers at the school have noted improved teamwork and sporting skills of players, as well as an increase in confidence and self-esteem.

Soccer – Dandenong City Soccer Club (Dandenong)

The Dandenong City Soccer Club representative surveyed believes there are currently 38 different nationalities playing soccer at the club.

The club doesn't offer specific programs for young people from CLD communities, however it does implement a range of strategies to both encourage and support CLD groups. The club has recently introduced social events such as BBQs after games in a bid to be more welcoming to existing and potential members and their families.

The club feels that, due to the trauma young people from refugee backgrounds have experienced in recent years (such as detention camps, wars, etc.), many of the young people are withdrawn and introverted and find it difficult to communicate effectively with coaches and players. In an effort to address this issue, the coach monitors these young people on a weekly basis and offers one-on-one assistance as required. Interpreters are used to assist when language is a barrier to communication.

Three more generic barriers identified by the club include lack of funds of some families to pay fees; lack of transport by some families to attend games; and the inability of some families to afford soccer uniforms and equipment.

