



CASE STUDY:

INNOVATIVE WAYS OF INCREASING
PARTICIPATION AND MEMBERSHIP

NORTH SHORE SQUASH CLUB



SQUASH
NEW ZEALAND

OVERVIEW

To some, squash is perceived as a sport that appeals only to a narrow demographic profile. Despite the well-known international successes of a number of Maori in squash, the sport continues to have higher participation rates in the New Zealand European population than it does specifically in the Maori, Pacific People and Asian populations. Based on current membership information the typical squash club member is predominantly aged between 35-55 years, male and of European descent. New Zealand's population and ethnic diversity is increasing, but there many barriers currently exist within clubs that are preventing different communities from getting involved in sport. The North Shore Squash Club have acknowledged the different ethnic groups within their area and have put some easy solutions into place which allows them to better cater to the different members of their community so they too can enjoy the game.

CHALLENGES

Cultural Differences

A 'one size fits all' approach doesn't work. Not being aware of different beliefs around religion, gender roles, food and alcohol, dress codes, and language can create barriers to participation.

Reasons

Being physically active means different things to different people. Some people are sports fanatics, while others may be health conscious, socially sporty, family focused, physically limited or just not into it.

Lifestyles

People all have different pressures in their lives such as family, cost, transport / location, work hours and body image.

SOLUTIONS

Leaders

The club identified a credible coach who had an understanding of the Asian sector. This mean the club were able to connect with and meet the needs of the groups which helped form initial relationships and resulted in greater participation.

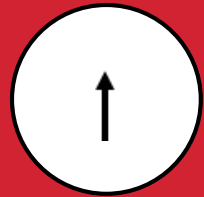
Scheduling Activities

Offering activities at suitable times that focused on the needs of the participants which allowed them to achieve their individual goals for why they choose to participate – not assuming that everyone wants to compete and socialise.

Support and Resources

The Regional Sports Trusts provide toolkits which help clubs to understand how to engage with their community. Sport New Zealand also have an Insights Tool which contains data about your area to help you to understand your community and better plan for the future.

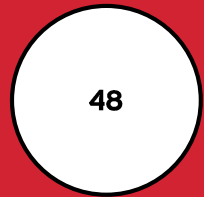
RESULTS



Membership diversity and sense of community.



A range of cultures participating and making friends across different ethnic groups.



New members and more social activity over past 12 months.

CONCLUSION

Changing demographics have the potential to significantly impact on the numbers and profile of people playing squash both now and into the future. Many cultures will either cluster or associate together, where cultural identify, support and language are familiar, but these people also want to integrate and be part of clubs and society. By taking practical steps such as providing information brochures in different languages, clubs can remove barriers to enable different groups to participate in our sport.

In Auckland there are over 150 ethnicities from all over the world. The North Shore Squash Club prides itself on being a welcoming club to suit all personal aspirations and lifestyles and offers a range of activities and options to meet the needs of their community. By taking a proactive approach to being inclusive, the club are quickly seeing the many benefits that ethnic diversity can bring to a community.