



CASE STUDY:

INNOVATIVE WAYS OF INCREASING
PARTICIPATION AND MEMBERSHIP

SQUASH WAIKATO



SQUASH
NEW ZEALAND

OVERVIEW

As a follow up from the 2015 Waikato Show, 7 of the Waikato Squash Clubs got together to collectively promote squash and make it easy for people to try their hand at the SportsForce Squash 'Have a Go Arvo'. A total of 20 adults and 13 juniors picked up a racket and took up the challenge, most of whom had never played before with some coming back after years of absence. To help make the day a success, a network of club volunteers assisted throughout the afternoon from providing coaching tips to taking part in an exhibition match. After exposing a number of people to the sport, the challenge for clubs was not only to convert the leads to members, but to create a welcoming environment for members to attend the club.

CHALLENGES

Perception

Squash Waikato wanted to overcome the perception that squash is a difficult sport to get involved in, especially for juniors and adults who had never played before.

Promotion

Getting the information out to the relevant target markets regarding the opportunities that are available for them and the value that squash offers.

Club buy in

Having all the Waikato clubs working together to recruit new players to the sport.

SOLUTIONS

Event

A show was held that included the opportunity to try squash, talk to others, gather information and win giveaways – to remove some of the barriers to participation.

Marketing

All of the organisations got involved in promoting the event. From putting articles in school newsletters, to websites and Facebook pages and event flyers.

Expectations

Clubs were able to join in with the project if they were able to provide two volunteers (half a day) to manage the microcourt, offer a club flyer outlining details and put up a free annual membership as a giveaway.

RESULTS

23

New members as a result of the event and follow-up.

7

Clubs combining to promote squash.

145

Leads to contact from the show.

CONCLUSION

The SportsForce Squash 'Have a Go Arvo' proved to be not only a popular event, but a successful one too. Those who attended all had the opportunity to go in the draw to win a racket and membership, as well as the chance to try squash and collect information about what is available in their local communities. Although free memberships were given away and a number of leads established, the clubs soon realised that they still needed to phone (not email) the individuals to convert them to regular attendees. Similarly, beginners found it daunting to attend club nights. The clubs found that running a special night for club members to bring a friend (member get member method) helped overcome this as it was easier if the new players knew there were others in the same situation.