



SPORTS ACCREDITATION ONLINE

BY CATHY REID

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The Australian Sports Commission's Coaching and Officiating unit is in the final development stage of its new internet online service to national sporting organisations, coaches and officials — Sports Accreditation Online.

The system provides access to accreditation and training program details, plus a wide range of educational resource material.

Colin Lane, General Manager of National Programs at the Australian Sports Commission, initiated the development of Sports Accreditation Online and believes it is a strong IT foundation for the future of the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme and the National Officiating Accreditation Scheme.

'Sports Accreditation Online will provide valuable information to around 70 national sporting organisations, their state counterparts and more than 175 000 coaches and officials. It will add significant benefits to being an accredited coach or official,' Lane said.

Use of the internet to upload accreditation data streamlines the system and enables sporting organisations to implement new business systems. This avoids multiple handling of data and reduces the workload of both paid staff and volunteers.

'National sporting organisations will be able to stay abreast of their approved accreditation programs and the expiry dates for those programs, as well as keep track of any programs under review. Numerous reports will be available to national sporting organisations on the number of accredited coaches and officials they have,' according to Lane.

One function of Sports Accreditation Online enables individuals to update their

personal contact details or link back to the national sporting organisation's database for that to occur. Coaches and officials will be able to access their accreditation status and print off their own certificates.

An integral part of the new approach is to provide coaches and officials with additional educational resources to keep them up to date with national and international developments.

Initially individuals will get access to the last four years of the publications *Sports Coach* and *Officiating Australia*. Both these resources will be regularly published online and added to the library of articles that can be searched by category. The online library will expand to include other resources such as audio and video interviews and information.

The Coaching and Officiating unit will provide six-monthly statistical reports covering coaches and officials from all sports involved in the accreditation schemes. Over time this will enable sophisticated statistical analysis to be undertaken by the Australian Sports Commission and national sporting organisations to gain a better understanding of the trends in these sports.

It is hoped that in the future the university sector may be able to assist in that analysis.

Sports Accreditation Online has been developed in partnership with national sporting organisations. It was first raised at the 2006 National Coaching and Officiating Directors' Conference in Melbourne and this was followed by a series of three prototyping sessions over the next 18 months.

'A trial has been underway with four national sporting organisations since January 2008 and this gives us confidence that it will work when we take it out to all sports, coaches and officials in July this year,' said Lane.



For more information on enrolling in a coaching course, checking your National Coaching Accreditation Scheme status, updating your contact details, or general information on coaching in Australia, visit the Coaching and Officiating web site at ausport.gov.au/participating/coaches/.

The Australian Sports Commission is the Australian Government body responsible for developing and funding Australian sport through the implementation of the Government's sport policy, Australian Sport: emerging challenges, new directions. It was established in 1985 and operates under the *Australian Sports Commission Act 1989*. Its national leadership role is achieved through seven operational areas: Australian Institute of Sport, Sport Performance and Development, National Sports Programs, Community Sport, Corporate Services, Commercial and Facilities, and Finance. The Australian Sports Commission forms part of the Health and Ageing portfolio.

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COACH'S CORNER

On your game

TONY WYND, MANAGER, COACHING AND OFFICIATING,
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Does a coach who has been coaching for ten years have ten years experience or one year's experience ten times? A coach can work for ten years and still be the same coach they were when they started. In contrast, a coach who has evolved and developed within the same time will have ten years experience.

There is a distinct difference between filling the role and developing in the role. It is not just about the length of time you have coached, it is about how you coach, and what you have done to improve, develop and keep up to date with your sport and the people you are coaching. The National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS) aims to keep coaches current through the process of re-accreditation. Sports participating in the NCAS are required to have updating policies for each level of coach accreditation, outlining the activities coaches must complete in order to hold a current accreditation. This system provides an impetus for the coach to improve their skills, but essentially the drive to develop and mature as a coach has to be innate.

Activities that coaches can undertake to maintain and develop their coaching skills include:

- observing
- mentoring
- self-reflection
- attending coaching programs
- coaching
- working with other coaches

- talking and listening to athletes and others, such as officials
- completing another level of accreditation
- reading articles on coaching
- attending seminars, conferences and workshops
- working with sports science professionals
- attending camps and competitions.

Regardless of the activity, the essential thing is that coaches allow themselves time to enhance their skills. We each learn in different ways, so it is up to the individual coach to take advantage of opportunities to learn and develop.

Coaches can work together on this one; learning from one another or encouraging fellow coaches to learn and improve their skills is important. For some high performance coaches this approach is more structured, with the intervention, direction and assistance of the national sporting organisation, state institutes or departments of sport and recreation, or the Australian Sports Commission. For club coaches, it might be the work of a head coach, a coach coordinator or an experienced mentor to assist in this role.

Coaches need to take time out to develop their coaching skills, which can only benefit the people they are coaching. Creating an environment that encourages the learning and development of coaching skills is important. Having skilled and motivated coaches is an asset for any sport. Organisations at all levels need to value and support the ongoing development of their coaches.

Visit the Australian Sports Commission coaching website

ausport.gov.au/participating/coaches

COACH PROFILE: JOE HOAD

BY GRAHAM COOKE

Joe Hoad recalls the day, almost seven decades ago, when a stranger visited the family home in the Caribbean island nation of Barbados where his father worked as the manager of a sugar mill.

'I was 12 and he challenged me to a game of table tennis. He was very good and I had only been playing the game since I was ten, but I almost beat him,' he said. 'Afterwards he turned to my father and said, "You should send the boy down to Bridgetown to train and play. He could be a champion".'

'When he left I asked my father who he was. Dad said he was Mr Greenadge, the Barbadian champion.'

Table tennis has been part of Hoad's life ever since, rivalling his other great sporting love, cricket. Now 81 and living in Adelaide with his wife, Jean, he continues to be an active participant, coaching coaches, juniors and athletes with disabilities, among others. 'I have seen people playing with bats in their mouths, and a woman from Iran with a bat held in her toes, so I don't turn anyone away.'

It has been a long and eventful road. Young Hoad went on to win a string of major titles, including the championships of Barbados, the West Indies, Caribbean and South America, at the same time emulating his father, the first West Indies captain, by playing cricket for Barbados.

Cricket led him to England to play in the Lancashire League. While he was there he set a record that still stands — 202 not out followed by a full ten-wicket haul in the first innings during a match against Bromley in London. 'At the time I was trying to get some extra money together to get married, so I took up coaching in both cricket and table tennis,' he said. 'Coaching in those days was very different from today. I was on the staff of the Alf Glover Cricket School where I was mentored by the Somerset and England international, Arthur Wellard.'

'People would come in with problems in their batting technique and we had to bowl at them in the areas that would help them improve. I learnt a lot from Arthur about things like spin and swinging the ball both ways.'



Joe Hoad (second from right) with international coaches at Joe's coaching workshop.

'At about the same time I did a table tennis coaching course under Jack Carrington and Johnny Leach who were England's top players. That was my first actual certificate.'

Hoad eventually returned to Barbados, married and took part-time cricket coaching positions with local clubs. However, he began to realise that this was not the course he wanted his life to take. 'My job as a clinical psychologist was very stressful and I decided coaching should be my full-time career,' he said. 'Bob Jamison, the managing director of Coca-Cola in Australia, came to the West Indies with the Australian junior team and he said there were plenty of coaching possibilities in South Australia, so I took the plunge and moved the family here.'

He has never regretted this decision. There was coaching work for him in cricket and table tennis and after taking a postgraduate degree in sports psychology, he was asked to help with the West Indies team, which was then going through a bad spell in a Test series against Australia and South Africa.

Rewards came to him in table tennis, where he coached the Australian Paralympic Team from the mid-1970s to the Sydney 2000 Paralympics. Named South Australian Coach of the Year several times and awarded the Australian Sports Medal in 2000, he talks enthusiastically about the youngsters who he believes can take Australia to new levels in the sport.

'My best junior at the moment is a boy called Sam von Einem, the South

Australian under-13 champion, who learnt his tennis in Abu Dhabi,' he said. 'When he came to me there were a few minor faults to be ironed out and now he is going great guns. There is also a girl called Phung Nguyen, who is very promising.'

'Marcus Gustafson, the national coach, is impressed with both of them and I try to use them as examples to pull the rest of the squad along. It is working in some cases, but we do tend to get a lot of drop-outs around Year 12.'

'Table tennis is a game where you have to make decisions in a tenth of a second with a ball coming at you with a lot of spin between 140 and 150 kilometres an hour from nine feet (2.7 metres) away, because that's the length of the table. So you have to learn the correct footwork, movement, stroke play and tactics, move on to new things but keep practising the things you do know.'

'Many kids find that's too much when they have important Year 12 examinations; they feel they must give up everything to cram. I tell them you don't have to play competition, but at least take a couple of evenings off in the week to train. Everybody needs to walk away from their main occupation once in a while.'

Hoad believes the future for Australian table tennis is bright. 'For years we could never get a player into the top 200 in the world, now we have players in the top 150 and a world junior champion. Our potential is as good as any country, but we do lack the funds to give our players the constant exposure to top international tournaments.'

UNDERSTANDING AND ENGAGING WITH THE NEW GENERATIONS

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Like most industrial nations, Australia is experiencing a rapid ageing of the population. In 1976, the median age of our population was 28 compared with 37 today and in a decade it will be 40.¹

The impacts of this increase across society are huge, as Australia is also experiencing the biggest generational shifts in six decades. The proportion of the population aged 15 years and under is projected to fall from 20 per cent today to around 14 per cent by 2051. Meanwhile, over the same period, those aged 65 years and over will double, increasing from 14 per cent today to more than 28 per cent in 2051.² Health measures are the best they have ever been, life expectancies are increasing and people are staying younger for longer. But what implications does this have for sport?

An ageing population leads directly to an ageing group of sports coaches and officials, progressively widening the generation gap between them and the younger players. With several generations mixing in the sporting sector (that is, the Baby Boomers and Generations X, Y and Z), there is a need for coaches to understand the generational differences and get the most out of this diversity. An effective understanding of the different values and perspectives of our younger generations will better facilitate communication between coaches and their players, as well as decrease the capacity for conflict. In order to achieve this, we must first acknowledge the issues that the emerging generation has brought to the fore.

Who is Generation Y?

Before we can coach and lead we must be able to understand and connect. Because the attitudes of those entering into organised sport have changed, we must alter our coaching approaches accordingly to better suit the morphing expectations of today's youth. The challenge is that we are all a product of our times, and heavily influenced by the culture, technology and social markers that were emerging during our formative years. These were different for the generation of the 1960s (Baby Boomers), the 1980s (X-ers) and today (Generations Y and Z).

Generation Y (ages 13–27) is the most educated, entertained and materially endowed generation in history. Having been raised and socialised in a highly technological world, they enjoy interaction and spontaneity but are suspicious and wary of contrived messages. Gen Ys want to be involved with passionate leaders who produce emotional experiences.

The important thing to remember with Generation Y is that they are not only at a different life stage to most coaches, but they have also been raised and educated in a very different era. Despite living through an era in competitive sport where Australia has hosted both the Sydney 2000 Olympics and Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games in quick succession, Gen Ys are more interested in the social aspects of sport. Furthermore, their expectations of a coach and their preferred styles of coaching have all been shaped by their times.

What do they want?

Though coaches need not react to every whim of a new generation, they cannot hold fast to the old methods and expect

the emerging generations to conform. These new sporting participants have had two decades of cultural shaping and there is little a coach can do to change this.

The ever-present generation gap is very visible when we attempt to coach Generation Y using our old methods. Traditional leadership stresses controlling, and they want relating. We focus on structure, they are influenced by style. We think framework, they think freedom. The answer is to take the time to better understand them, and then we are well on the way to being able to engage, coach and lead this emerging generation in new and innovative ways.

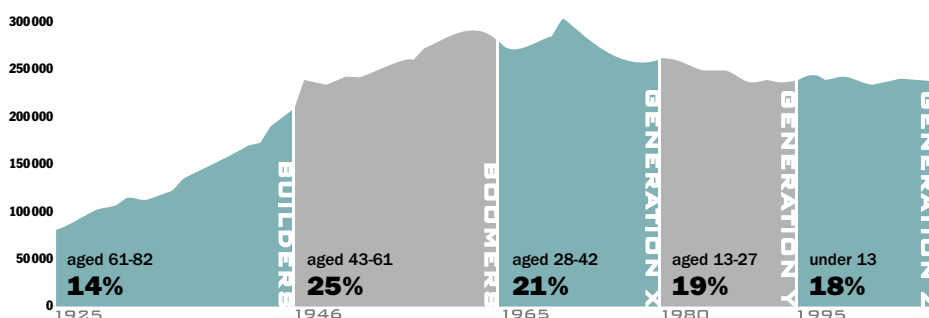
Generation Y's preferred coaching style is simply one that is more consensus than command, more participative than autocratic, and more flexible and organic than structured and hierarchical. Gen Ys want to create a culture where interaction can take place, where those of different ages can mix and, thus, where intergenerational perspectives are shared.

In short, Generation Y wants the four Cs: **c**haracter, **c**ommunication, **c**ooperation and **c**ompetence. They are primarily concerned with social connection, being entertained, having fun, and being presented with life-enhancing experiences (character). Their ideal coach is someone who values the exchange of ideas and creates an environment of transparency and respect for the team (communication). They want a coach who is willing to listen to their ideas and opinions, and happy to oblige with public displays of affirmation and positive reinforcement (cooperation). And finally, Generation Y wants someone who is experienced, friendly and who will take the time to get to know them (competence).

The stats and facts

In a 12-month period over 2005–06, two-thirds (66 per cent) of Australians aged 15 years and over reported taking part in sports and physical recreation. These participation rates were even higher for Generation Y, reaching just under 75 per cent. The age-specific rates of those who participated in sports and physical recreation up to twice a week were also highest for Generation Y (46 per cent). Furthermore, over half (55 per cent) of those aged 15–17 years participated in organised activities.

Figure 1: Australia's generational profile



Source: McCrindle Research/Australian Bureau of Statistics

This figure, however, declined to 41 per cent and 33 per cent for those aged 18–24 and 25–34 years respectively.³ So how can we keep Generation Y interested in organised sport?

Looking at the main reasons for participating, nearly half of younger Gen Ys (45 per cent) indicated enjoyment as their top priority, while one-quarter (26 per cent) were more concerned with their health and fitness. In contrast, these figures were the opposite for older Gen Ys, with just under one in three (30 per cent) citing enjoyment as their top concern, while more than half were primarily interested in their health and fitness.⁴

When asked about their motives for not participating, 40 per cent of older Gen Ys specified insufficient time due to work or study commitments, while nearly half of younger Gen Ys (47 per cent) simply reported a lack of interest. For the latter, research suggests that sport and physical recreation fails to compete for children's time when compared with more passive activities such as watching television, reading for pleasure and playing electronic or computer games.⁵

So in summary, when it comes to participating in organised sport, Generation Y is clearly expressing their desire to have fun, to build new and lasting friendships, and to be empowered by their coach.

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INTERMEDIATE COACHING GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Intermediate Coaching General Principles are a series of educational modules for coaches who have moved beyond the beginner level of coaching and want to enhance their skills and knowledge to improve athlete performance.

The general principles of coaching are central to the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme, and from 2008 the new Intermediate Coaching General Principles program replaces the former Level 2 Coaching General Principles. The program covers the skills of coaching, such as people and program management, safety, and teaching/learning processes. It also includes a simple introduction to sports science concepts such as sport psychology, nutrition and physiology.

The program is practical and applied, and coaches will receive training in how

to apply sports science concepts to assist their coaching.

For more information on the Intermediate Coaching General Principles program, go to the Australian Sports Commission's Coaching and Officiating website (www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/coachofficial/generalprinciples/coaching) and for details about the delivery of the Intermediate Coaching General Principles contact your state coaching and officiating centre (see page 8).

A supporting manual *Intermediate Coaching* is now available through ASC Publishing for \$25.00. To order, just telephone (02) 6214 1795, email pubs@ausport.gov.au or visit the ASC Publishing website (ausport.gov.au/about/publications/catalogue).



HOW TO MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE

Understanding what motivates people, especially young people, to be involved in sport will help a coach provide a fun, enjoyable and supportive training environment.

What motivates young people to play sport?

Young people are motivated to participate in sport for a variety of reasons including ego; pride; overcoming fear of failure; the challenge of competition; a desire and determination to succeed; the feeling of achievement from perfecting a skill; and acknowledgment from peers, coaches and family.

Research has shown that young people highly value the intrinsic rewards gained from participating in sport. Rewards such as learning a new skill, or merely being involved in sport with their friends, mean more to young athletes than the extrinsic rewards of receiving trophies or prizes.



Ways to motivate

Recognise achievement

Recognition of effort, especially when it comes from a coach, parent or senior player, is a significant factor in motivation. Ensure that you recognise athletes' achievements in a variety of areas, not just performance (for example, recognise regular attendance at training). Strategies can range from a simple 'well done' or a pat on the back, to using incentive schemes.

Set goals

Success or failure should not be determined by the scoreboard, nor by the number of competitions won. Provide opportunities for all athletes to experience success by setting short and long-term goals for the individual and the team. Examples of goals include trying to achieve a certain score in a game, a personal best performance or getting to training on time. Make sure you recognise when goals are achieved.

Provide leadership opportunities

It is important to provide opportunities for leadership and to expect athletes to assume responsibilities. The responsibilities should start off small and may increase over time. Acknowledging efforts through leadership motivates further success. Examples of leadership opportunities might include asking a player to demonstrate a skill or be the team captain for the week.

Be consistent and enthusiastic

Young people are often heard to say: 'I hope the coach is in a good mood today'. This indicates that the mood of the coach affects how young people enjoy their sport. The environment a coach creates, what they say and how they say it, should be consistent, caring and enthusiastic.

Provide challenges

Small-sided games allow for maximum participation by young people and therefore provide greater enjoyment. Team composition may be regularly rotated to match ability and ensure competition is even.

Vary your practice programs

A variety of practice routines and activities will reduce the possibility of boredom. Challenging young participants to invent a game to practise a particular skill can also be very successful.

Be organised

A carefully planned session increases the coach's confidence and this effort will rub off and help motivate players. Make sure there is enough equipment available for the number of participants involved. Waiting in long lines or watching the more talented athletes dominate the equipment can lead to boredom and disruptive behaviour.

Make practice fun

Most young people take part in sport for enjoyment and fun. Ensuring that they have fun encourages them to maintain their involvement. Try modifying the rules of your sport to ensure laughter (for example, a game of touch football where the players can only walk or use the non-preferred hand, or dog paddle relays in a swim session). Do not ignore the contribution a few laughs can have on motivational levels.

ONLINE LEARNING

Learning online is not the traditional environment for coach education; however, with over 20 000 coaches enrolled in the Beginning Coaching General Principles online course, this form of learning is striking a chord with Australian coaches.

The online course was released in January 2007 and has provided a perfect opportunity for coaches of all ages to undertake coaching education on their own terms, at their own pace and free of charge.

The course has assisted many national sporting organisations to encourage their entry-level coaches to access online education prior to a more traditional face-to-face course culminating in gaining their accreditation. It has also provided community coaches with the chance to undertake some coach education to improve their skills, which can lead them to accreditation with their chosen sport.

The online course is divided into five modules and the user-friendly format involves a series of case studies, questions, fact sheets and assessment questions. People have six months to complete the course from the time they enrol. The success of the coaching course has led to the development of an officiating online course.



The online Introductory Officiating General Principles course is designed to assist beginner-level officials and covers three modules of training — self-management, managing the competition environment, and people management. As most people in sport take on more than one role, even coaches might find the officiating online course of benefit.

Both the coaching and officiating online courses can be accessed from the Australian Sports Commission's learning portal (<https://learning.ausport.gov.au>), where some 'taster' pages can be viewed before enrolling.

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Intermediate Coaching General Principles



Are you coaching at club or regional level? Do you want to learn more about improving athlete performance and how to become a better coach?

The Intermediate Coaching General Principles includes a simple introduction to sports science concepts and further information on coaching pedagogy.

The program is available to complete either in a workshop or by correspondence through your state or territory department of sport and recreation.

Find out more about the Intermediate Coaching General Principles at ausport.gov.au/participating/coaches/education/courses

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