



CLUB RESOURCE KIT

Contents

Introduction	1
The Future of Sport in Australia	1
Why Does Your Club Need To Grow?	4
How Can You Help Your Club Grow?	4
Club Promotions	5
Planning a Promotion	6
Conducting your Promotion.....	7
Running a stall at a fair or council event.....	8
How To Keep People Coming back for More	8
Incorporating GC & AC Players	9
Templates for Club Use.....	10
Funding for Clubs	12

Introduction

This document has been developed to assist clubs in their ongoing quest to attract new members, increase their capacity to deliver programs and ensure the club's long term sustainability. It is being continually updated, so be sure to come back regularly and see what has been added!

If you think you could assist us by writing an article that you think is pertinent to this document, please don't hesitate to send it to Sally Harper at harperbateman@optusnet.com or Cathy Leske at croquetsa@bigpond.com

We hope you find some useful information within this document.

The Future of Sport in Australia

The following is a recent document posted by the Australian Sports Commission. It raises some really positive points that relate well to the development of croquet in Australia. Below is a summary of the main points:



“Exploring the Future

Australians love sport. It always has been and will continue to be part of our cultural identity. From playing catch in the backyard to the Olympic and Paralympic podiums, the majority of Australians play, watch and enjoy sport.

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) has partnered with Australia’s peak science agency, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), to jointly conduct research into the future of Australian sport. The sports played in Australia, as well as how and why we play them, are changing over time.

The research findings from The Future of Australian Sport report (the Report) will play an important role in shaping long-term policy, investment and strategic planning within government, the sport sector and broader community. The Report highlights six sports megatrends that may redefine the sport sector over the next 30 years.

A megatrend is defined as a major shift in environmental, social and economic conditions that will substantially alter the way people live. Megatrends occur at the intersection of multiple trends. A trend is defined as an important pattern of social, economic or environmental activity that will play out in the future.

Six megatrends have been identified within The Future of Australian Sport report, which will impact on the makeup of sport in Australia over the next 30 years.

- **A Perfect Fit** - Personalised sport for health and fitness
- **From Extreme to Mainstream** - The rise of lifestyle sports
- **More than Sport** - The attainment of health, community and overseas aid objectives via sport
- **Everybody's Game** - Demographic, generational and cultural change
- **New Wealth, New Talent** - Economic growth and sports development in Asia
- **Tracksuits to Business Suits** - Market pressures and new business models

A Perfect Fit

Individualised sport and fitness activities are on the rise (Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport, 2010). People are fitting sport into their increasingly busy and time-fragmented lifestyles to achieve personal health objectives.

Participation rates in aerobics, running and walking, along with gym memberships, have all risen sharply over the past decade, while participation rates for many organised sports have held constant or declined (Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport, 2010). People are increasingly opting to go for a run with headphones and a music player when the opportunity arises rather than commit to a regular organised sporting event.



Expenditure on healthcare as a proportion of total expenditure has been and is forecast to continue rising (Australian Government, 2010). Australians are becoming more health conscious. We are increasingly playing sport to get fit rather than getting fit to play sport.

From Extreme to Mainstream

This megatrend captures the rise of lifestyle, adventure and alternative sports which are particularly popular with younger generations. These sports typically involve complex, advanced skills and have some element of inherent danger and/or thrill seeking. They are also characterised by a strong lifestyle element and participants often obtain cultural self-identity and self-expression through these sports. These sports are likely to attract participants through generational change and greater awareness via online content (e.g. YouTube, Facebook, Twitter).

There is strong viewer demand for extreme sports videos on the internet and television. These sports are also finding their way into the Olympic Games with the most recent addition being BMX cycling introduced at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. International associations for skateboarding and rock climbing are making substantial efforts to have these included as Olympic sports in the future.

More than Sport

The broader benefits of sport are being increasingly recognised by governments, companies and communities. Sport can help achieve mental and physical health, crime prevention, social development and international cooperation objectives (Cameron & MacDougall, 2000; Schmitz et al., 2004).

Sport for children and adults is an effective means of helping to reduce the rising rates of obesity and chronic illness. If managed appropriately, it can be an effective mechanism to help achieve social inclusion for marginalised groups and reduce crime rates. Sport can also build bridges to other countries and achieve overseas aid, peace, development and foreign policy objectives.

Everybody's Game

Australia and other countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) face an ageing population. This will change the types of sports we play and how we play them. There are indications that Australians are embracing sport into their old age. To retain strong participation rates, sports of the future will need to cater for senior citizens. They will also need to cater for the changed cultural make-up of Australia. Australian society has become, and will continue to be, highly multicultural. Different cultures have different sporting preferences and recreation habits. Sporting organisations will be challenged with capturing the interest and involvement of diverse cultures.



New Wealth, New Talent

Population and income growth throughout Asia will create tougher competition and new opportunities for Australia both on the sports field and in the sports business environment. Asian countries are investing heavily in sports capabilities and, especially in the case of China, have rapidly improved gold medal outcomes at the Olympics over recent decades (Hong et al., 2005). As disposable incomes grow, the populations of Asian countries are becoming more interested in sport. This may create new markets for sports television, sports tourism, sports equipment, sports services and sports events.

Tracksuits to Business Suits

Market forces are likely to exert greater pressure on sport in the future. In some sports, elite athletes have had considerable pay rises and large sponsorship deals. This has not occurred in other sports (McMillan, 2011). Sports with high salaries may draw athletes away from those with lower salaries. Loosely organised community sports associations are likely to be replaced by organisations with corporate structures and more formal governance systems in light of market pressures. The cost of participating in sport is rising and this is a participation barrier for many people.

For a more detailed description of the six sports megatrends that may redefine the sport sector over the next 30 years, view the [Full Report](#)."

Why Does Your Club Need To Grow?

Some clubs may be sailing along quite nicely, perhaps with a few dedicated members who enjoy the game, but don't see the need to exert themselves to obtain new members. The laws of natural attrition ensure that if nothing is done, then the future of the club is in jeopardy. What would happen to the club in the future if no new members are found? Is it desirable for the club to just close its doors? Of course not! It is possible that some members may think, "it doesn't matter, I won't be around then, it won't affect me", but would they be happy to accept that their attitude has contributed to a declining interest in our sport and even the closure of their club?

So we have established why it *is* very important that existing members adopt a positive, can do attitude for the most basic of reasons, and that is; why would you not want to share a game that you enjoy so much? How can anyone else possibly be enlightened by this fantastic game if you will not show them how?

How Can You Help Your Club Grow?

There is one short answer to this question, and that is **planning**.



A club committee should always spend 50% (at least) of its meetings dedicated to strategic planning and not administration. The club needs direction and goals and this is what the committee must spend time on, brainstorming and sharing ideas, developing them and working out how to put into action. It might involve meeting up with other clubs who have been successful in this area. You may ask for help from SACA. The club also needs to be professional, up to date with legislation and open to change.

The best way to formulate all of this is to create a **strategic plan**. There are a number you can use to make a start and then just edit to your own requirements. You can use the SACA strategic plan which is posted on the website under CroquetSA/Governance as a guide or check the Office for Recreation and Sport website www.recsport.sa.gov.au. There are many to read on croquet sites if you have a look. Your plan should include specific goals that are prioritised, realistic time frames and who is responsible for tasks that are set. A strategic plan is vital because it is the measure of the path you are taking to achieve your goals and it's a record of your success.

To ensure your club is professional and up to date, we strongly encourage **all** clubs to join **STARCLUB Development Program** which has been developed by the Office for Recreation and Sport to assist club development. The program offers templates, courses and resources to help your club and membership is free. If you would like to join, or read more about the program go to

<http://www.recsport.sa.gov.au/starclub/index.php>

Club Promotions

To promote your club, you need to be positive, upbeat and grasp every opportunity you can to keep your profile in the community up. There is no point in saying "come and play at our club because we desperately need members" because that is a negative statement. If you can be positive, you will reap the rewards. It is all about an ongoing commitment, not just a one off event.

The popular six week (or 10 or 12 week) program over the summer months during daylight saving where the community can play each other on a weekly basis or;
a one off event to celebrate something, which could be upgraded facilities, a club significant birthday, a member being chosen for a state or national team, opening in a new premises etc. This could incorporate a sausage sizzle or similar. Think about what other functions are held in your community, and what attracts people. More about this under Planning a Promotion section.

Who is your target market?

Depending on your geographical area, and the demographics of your location, it is important to identify who you are trying to attract to your event.



Have a think about who you want to come, is it teenagers? Is there a gap in leisure activities provided for this age group in your area? Did you know that croquet is a very strongly contested college sport in Europe, the UK and the USA? Perhaps you could market it as “The Intelligent Sport” or “Mind Games” being something different than something that doesn’t require a high level of physical fitness. Have fun with it!

Is it baby boomers? These people have often suffered injury through other sports or just don’t have the time for other sports and croquet is a gentle sport that they can participate in that may not require a lengthy commitment in their day. Games of Golf Croquet or Aussie Croquet can be played in a short amount of time, and they do not need to commit the whole day necessarily. Another selling point is the social aspect of getting together for a game and some social time afterwards.

Planning a Promotion

1. Decide upon a date and time about four to six months ahead. If it is a several week program, have the initial one at the weekend when everyone can come and then offer one evening during the week and another session at the weekend.
2. If it is a one off event being held for a reason, check that there are not conflicting events on the same day.
3. Decide on a title and theme eg 'Croquet with the locals' - 'Croquet Revival' - 'Croquet - it's anybody's game', or incorporate your event into some other important celebration. Decide how you will promote your event and get some quotes. Work out your financial requirements. If you need to apply for a grant, see the Funding for Clubs section below.
4. Invite important locals about 3 months before the event- e g :- the mayor, local member, local councilors, local personalities - school heads - local doctors, dentists , journalists etc. Make sure your RSVP is at least one month before the event, so you know who is coming and can advertise them as a drawcard.
5. One month before put up fliers or posters. If they are simple fliers they can be either printed professionally or just photocopied at your library. SACA can help you with template posters/fliers that can be personalised for the event. Remember where you have placed them so you can check on them and remove them when the event is over, or have them distributed by the many professional organisations that do this.
6. Contact your local newspaper/radio and advise what you are having, who is coming and ask for their support of your community organization. Radio stations will also read out community announcements if you send them one. Make sure it has your contact details on it. For help with media contact Director Sport Development or the



Executive director at SACA.

7. It's important to decide what sort of croquet you are going to teach – Aussie, golf, etc. It's very difficult to teach Association in a few lessons. Discuss with your coaches what will be taught at each lesson – they should formulate a program. Do not bend for individuals.

Conducting your Promotion

- When welcoming the visitors give them a name badge and get some personal details, all participants must register and give phone number/email.
- Make sure all club members have their badges on as well.
- Learning something new can cause embarrassment so developing some bonding within the group helps – allocate each group a club member/coach and keep them as a group.
- While the coach is teaching remember to praise them for their accomplishments; after half an hour they will have gain considerable skill. Make a note of those who have a natural aptitude, talk about club days, when would they like to play, would they like to bring some friends for a try etc.
- Develop a feedback form and ask all the visitors to complete it (samples below). You want to know why they came, what they liked, what they didn't like, and suggestions for the future. Forms for your use are at the end of this section. This will provide valuable information for your next promotion.
- A week or so after the promotion each group's club member needs to follow up the individuals in their group. This is a very important task; using the feedback analysis, ask their opinion about issues raised. Comment about their skills, potential and encourage them to come to club day or other events, build on the relation ship from the promotion day.
- At the next committee meeting discuss the promotion and the feedback, document what you have learnt about the process, what you can change and improve for next time
- Please forward a summary of feedback forms to SACA. This is valuable information that will be collated and forwarded to other clubs.



Running a stall at a fair or council event

You will need:

1. Flyers about croquet (SACA can assist if you do not have any).
2. Some balls mallets and hoops
3. Someone prepared to demonstrate
4. And very importantly someone prepared to jot down names and phone numbers of those even mildly interested. This provides you will a list of individuals that can be invited to a come and try in the near future. Make sure you contact them, otherwise what is the point of being there!

How To Keep People Coming back for More

So you are doing the groundwork, getting yourselves known in your local community and promoting the benefits of the sport by way of promotional events, well done! All your efforts will be wasted if you don't follow through. It's not a hard sell, but persistency that will see your efforts rewarded. The individual approach works, just like old fashioned customer service.

Regardless of the method used to attract new players, the next hurdle is keeping them. New players are grateful for a chance to learn the game and give it a try. But as those who have tried to attract new players know very well, the first day of play is not enough. Getting them to come back for more, then to stay involved in their new sport and join the club is just as difficult. The candidates have to be invited back several times, coaxed and cajoled, babysat, and convinced they are welcome before they will commit or pursue it on their own. The promoters of croquet have to be vigilant and persistent.

At a minimum, new players should be given rosters of club members they can call for a game; those on the roster should, of course, be willing to be called, and be available often and willing to take new players under their wings. They could also preferably be somewhat high-handicap players, so the potential new player won't be intimidated in contacting them or playing with them. In addition to giving new players the club roster, they each should also be assigned a sponsor: a club member who has the time and is willing to make follow-up calls to invite them back to the court and try the game again. Many novices won't take the initiative to call on their own, but will be more willing to play again if someone else actually *invites and encourages* them. As well as asking them if they enjoyed the game, you could say that you really enjoyed playing with them!



Incorporating GC & AC Players

So many members comment how well Millswood club does this, so we asked Jane Lewis to put pen to paper to give members some insight into why it is so effective at their club. Here is what Jane has told us:

"Firstly we are one club only. No them and us or AC v GC. We are all equal members of the Millswood Croquet Club Incorporated.

We push that the club belongs to the members equally.

All Full Members pay the same annual subscription.

We have a six month Beginner Membership during which time players do not have to wear club colours and they can borrow mallets.

All *members are registered from the very beginning.*

All visitors are signed in and pay \$5 fee, but their lawn time and tea/coffee etc is the same as everyone else.

Because we are too many to play on the same days/times, we have the following playing schedule-

AC Tues. Am. GC Tues PM. Practice AM for all is Wed. GC Thurs AM (casual dress) Lunch/drink together. GC Sat. AM, AC Sat. PM

We have a combined BBQ lunch each Sat and an information sharing meeting between the two sessions. Mostly, the entire membership attends for the meeting and nearly all of the GC players stay for lunch and a large group of the AC players joins them.

All members know each other and take pride in this fact and the Saturday info meetings are really a large social event. The members really appreciate getting all the information about the club and all associated activities. They get to vote on all relevant issues.

We have evening social events about every 6 weeks, when spouses and friends join us. We have a great Social Convenor and these nights are a lot of fun.

We make a lot of socialising. The bar is always open and is our largest annual fund-raiser after the subs.

Although Tim keeps the bar stocked, everyone is in charge of the bar money, the BBQ money and the others \$\$ that come in on a regular basis. If you want change, sort it yourself – it's your club! This shows that all members are respected and trusted.

I know that it sounds trite, but we all try and make a big effort to say hello and goodbye to each other. It can really be quite a racket!

If a wheel starts to get wobbly, we fix it right away.

We have a strong "pastoral care" commitment so that no-one goes AWOL for too long before we check on them.

Like any other club, we can't keep everyone happy all of the time, but we believe that we keep most of them happy most of the time.

It all is common sense really, but actually takes a lot of work and dedication from the whole group."



Templates for Club Use

XXXXXXXXXX CROQUET CLUB

Welcome to our croquet club. We hope you enjoy our program.

Please provide the following information to assist us in managing this event

Name.....

Address

.....

Phone.....Email

Emergency contact

Emergency phone

Age range: (Below 25) (25-35) (35-45) (45-65) (65-75)

(Over 75)

Why did you decide to try croquet?

Modify this form to suit your clubs needs



..... CROQUET CLUB

Please take a few moments to complete this survey

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied
Overall satisfaction					
Location					
Time of day					
Length of session					
Content					
Coaches					
Organisation					
Would you recommend this event?					

How can we improve this event?

.....

.....

Thank you, for feedback is valuable to us.



Funding for Clubs

Most sport clubs operate with limited finances and need to raise additional funds through fundraising, sponsorship or grants because they in general tend to be under-resourced. Therefore, securing additional financial support is an important responsibility facing the management committees of many of the organisations. Furthermore, sport clubs operate in an environment characterised by increasing expectations of members and participants, less reliance on government, and more competition for the leisure expenditure of the public. For most sport clubs, alternative sources of funds are required to expand the range, and enhance the quality, of their services as income generated by the usual day to day operations will generally be insufficient.

Sponsorship: Is a business deal between two parties in which both parties benefit from the arrangement.

Fundraising: Is the art of getting money for specific projects or club activities. A traditional means of raising additional funds is internally through the club members and their family and friends. There are many novel ways to raise funds beyond a club raffle and selling chocolates.

Grants: Grants are funds received from statutory, voluntary or philanthropic agencies. They are usually given by such agencies in order to pursue their own objectives and strategies. Therefore the chances of obtaining a grant often depends on how a Club's project fits into the overall philosophy and specific criteria and conditions established by the grant agency.

Your local council is the first entity that is there to support you and your sport, because *your club is a great asset to the local community*. Take some time to read their strategic plan on their website and then you can refer to how you are aligning yourself to not only your own strategic goals, but theirs as well. It is well worth developing a close relationship with the officer at council responsible for active participation in the community. Invite them to the club, to events and keep them informed of all the good work you do. Ask them for support and assistance, that is what they are there for. Mention that your strategic goals align with theirs, (you need to research this) as they will be very supportive if you can show that you are both striving for the same thing! Councils will also have funding for facility improvement, capital works and programs. Most councils will have a document you can ask for or download which outlines all the grants and sponsorships they offer. Your council can also often loan marquees, help with publicity, help with signs etc.

Other funding is available through:

Funding opportunities for equipment, facilities or programs through Office for Recreation and Sport *Active Club Program* can be viewed here

<http://www.recsport.sa.gov.au/funding-scholarships/index.html#Clubs>



Other funding available can be split into two main groups, equipment/facilities funding and promotional program funding.

Club One funding is by way of small (up to \$500) or large (up to \$5000). Sponsorship through the Club One Program can be viewed at www.clubone.net.au . This is for clubhouse items and equipment eg fridges, tables, chairs, computer, mallets, balls, mowers, furniture etc.

Office for Volunteers supplies grant programs for items/equipment or training of volunteers. You can view information about this here www.ofv.sa.gov.au

Funding for Come N try Programs can be sought from *Active Club* program through Office for Recreation and Sport (as above), and your local council will have funding for this also.

Used Personal Computers can be sourced from the Premiers Department Donation Program.

<http://dpc.sa.gov.au/smart-state-pc-donation-program>

This website is a “grant finder”, check it out for the latest grants that are open:

<http://community.grantready.com.au/>