

Spotlight

Taumarunui Squash Club

After struggling with getting consistent junior numbers for a few years to making the decision to not have a junior programme, Taumarunui have had 18 juniors turning up week after week.

One of the many highlights for the club has been the inclusion of a girl with Down Syndrome, 'it has been great having her join in and have a great time with all of the other kids. The inclusivity of the Squash Stars activities makes it really easy to have everyone involved in a session'.

The success this term has encouraged Taumarunui to run it again in Term 4 and look at ways to engage the wider community in squash moving forward.



Update

It is exciting to see our first clubs wrapping up their first term of Squash Stars. The challenge now is how we retain these new juniors and hopefully their parents.

We have had over 700 registrations for Squash Stars which is incredible for the first term and we hope that these numbers will continue to grow as we move forward with the Squash Stars NZ brand.

Feedback will be asked for in the next few weeks, so keep an eye out for this.

Q&A

We are coming to the end of our Squash Stars programme, how do I keep these kids engaged in squash?

Trying to remove as many barriers as possible to enable them to continue playing once the programme has finished for the term is important. The following are things that you can do to try and encourage continued participation:

- Ensure they are aware of how to become a member – giving them access to the courts. Possibly offer a discounted membership.
- Encourage purchasing their own gear or ensure the club has equipment that they can borrow when they want to hit. Direct them to places in which they can purchase equipment such as the Squash NZ shop.
- Buddy them up with someone else in the club that they can connect with and go down to the courts together.
- Offer another programme next term, next year or over the school holidays – let current participants know the plan.

Tips and tricks

To keep each of the individuals in a group engaged, try to provide variations/progressions within the activity that they can move through in their own time. This not only allows them to challenge themselves at a level in which they feel comfortable (and therefore hopefully experience success) but it gives them autonomy in the way they move and play. Examples of variations:

- Movement types
- Throwing or striking (hitting)
- Type of ball (size, bounce, firmness)
- Different targets
- Solo or with a buddy

Stay in touch!

If you have any questions you want answered about anything Squash Stars, or have successes you want to share, please contact Emma at emma@squashnz.co.nz.