Pathways to sport – Success stories

Darwin Triathlon Club / Triathlon NT

This document demonstrates the pathways to community sport and physical activity made available through the Australian Government’s Active After-school Communities (AASC) program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport:</th>
<th>Triathlon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisation:</td>
<td>Darwin Triathlon Club / Triathlon NT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>Darwin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date/Year:</td>
<td>September 2, 2012</td>
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<td>Pathway:</td>
<td>50 children participated over a 7 week program</td>
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Summary

The Active After-school Communities (AASC) program allowed for 120 children to experience the sport of triathlon in a fun, safe and inclusive environment alongside trained community coaches from Darwin Triathlon Club and Triathlon Northern Territory. While transitions into clubs did not occur immediately, the event was considered a huge success as it exposed children to the sport and gave them a great experience which will help to encourage them to join a club in the future.

The purpose of this initiative was to try to increase junior membership for the Darwin Triathlon Club (DTC). As triathlon is such a small sport in the Northern Territory with limited capacity to promote, the AASC program offered a great opportunity to expose triathlon to primary school-aged children. New coaches were trained to deliver the program, which benefited both AASC and DTC.

While the outcome of transitioning children into clubs was not achieved, this event serves as a stepping stone to achieving such goals in the future. In addition, it also demonstrates the potential opportunities for sports in regional Australia, where organisations can work alongside the AASC program to tap into a successful school’s based program and work together to increase their coaching capacity and junior participation.
Planning

The first step to planning this initiative involved meeting with DTC to discuss how the AASC program could help grow their junior membership. Regional Coordinator, Lee Wilson presented at a club committee meeting to discuss these benefits. After the meeting, the club agreed to contribute $1000 to purchase 10 bikes which could be used to deliver the AASC program. The remaining bikes were paid for using a Special Initiatives Grant (SIG).

In planning for this program, one of the barriers the club faced was around its coaching capacity. To overcome this problem, Triathlon Northern Territory agreed to conduct a joint Level 1 / CCTP coaching course which was delivered by Dan Atkins (TA), Tim Ellison (Cycling NT) and Lee Wilson (AASC).

Of the seven people who attended the CCTP course, two of those became coaches for the AASC program and since then, two have become registered club coaches for Triathlon NT and delivered senior and junior club training programs.

Implementation

The program ran at five AASC sites during Semester 2 with approximately 122 children being exposed to the sport of triathlon. The final session was conducted at the local pool where children were given the opportunity to put all their new skills into practice at the event.

Not all children who participated in the program took part in the final event, but those who did participate thoroughly enjoyed it.

Parents were encouraged to pick their children up from the event which gave them the opportunity to see them in action.

Outcome

120 children were exposed to triathlon during Semester 2, 2012

2 coaches were trained to deliver for the AASC program

2 coaches became club coaches for Darwin Triathlon Club

DTC received equipment to run AASC sessions which can also be used to offer potential new members the opportunity to try the sport before outlaying costs of new bikes.

Learnings

After the event occurred, Lee Wilson met with TNT to discuss how they could approach things differently in the future. In collaboration, they evaluated the ways in which they could deliver the program more efficiently in order to achieve the final outcome of transitioning children into the sport on a local level.
Feedback included:

The 7 week program is too long for children. A way to overcome this would be to provide children with a shorter program, or ‘taster’ sessions.

Given that the AASC program is a free initiative, why would they pay to join a local club?

Coaches who delivered in the program were from a private provider as club coaches could not deliver in the AASC time slot. These coaches did complete the course but had no direct link with the club. It was important to ensure these coaches understood the key outcome and they were very receptive to ensure club flyers were distributed to all children and parents.

*AASC Regional Coordinator Lee Wilson worked to establish this pathway for Northern Territory children into triathlon.*