

CLUB TENNIS

Tennis Clubs have come a long way over the past 30-40 years. In the late sixties and the early seventies Tennis was very much a seasonal sport played mainly on grass courts and mostly a secondary activity for the majority of club members.

In order to provide more playing time for members, the first development was the introduction of hard courts. Next came the introduction of Lights. Then it was the introduction of all weather surfaces. Many clubs rebuilt or refurbished their Club Houses at the same time. More recently clubs have gone as far as building in-door facilities. Forty years ago, there were no indoor courts in Ireland. Now there are more than 40 covered courts in the 32 Counties.

Fitzwilliam have had indoor courts since the seventies. Castleknock, Carrickmines & the Belfast Boat Club are private clubs that have more recently covered some of their courts. There are also a number of Commercial Clubs like Westwood and David Llyod with indoor facilities.

So what's next?

Active Clubs are the linchpin to the success and the growth of any sport. A successful Tennis Club is a club that aims to satisfy the needs of all its members including, seniors, students & juniors. Some clubs make the mistake of only organizing activities that is of interest to the committee. If a committee is socially orientated then social activities is all that happens in that particular club. Likewise, if a committee is made up of primarily parents of the children in the club, then junior activities is all that happens.

Committees need to be aware that people become involved in sport for a variety of reasons.

Reasons for participation in Sport or physical activity are listed below

- To meet new people and make friends
- To participate in competition
- To play for fun
- To learn the game or improve their skill level
- To play a regular game of tennis with the same partner
- To get fit and to remain healthy
- To use the club for social reasons.

Clubs also need to be conscious of the fact that in some areas they are in competition with other Tennis Clubs and certainly in all areas they are very much in competition with other sports.

Once the Club Management are aware of the members needs, they can organize a variety of on and off court activities including graded competition, coaching, social play and

social events.

KEY PERSONNEL

A specialist in tennis is key to ensure there is continuity from year to year and all the programs run smoothly.

A tennis committee will always put in office as their treasurer, a person who is good with figures and keeping records. They usually put in place someone who has the expertise from his or her profession like an accountant or a banker.

In the same way, the person who volunteers for the secretarial post is a person who has worked as an office administrator or who has some experience with keyboard skills, filing, dealing with phone enquiries etc.

The person put in charge of the on court programs has to have a lot of knowledge about all the diverse programs that need to be in place in order to meet **all** the members needs.

A Director of Tennis is key to the success of the program.

The appointee doesn't necessarily have to be a high level player or a Coach. A retired person with good management and interpersonal skills would be ideal for the job once he or she is willing to attend a short Training Module in On Court Tennis Programs.

This Module is part of the Tennis Ireland Level 2 Coaches Award and will be available in 2007 as a stand alone Module for potential Directors of Tennis.

For those clubs who decide to go down this road, in order to get the best effect, they need to make sure a job description and a contract is drawn up. (See sample attached).

Raising money to finance the post

There are a number of methods that can be used to raise the necessary funds to finance the Post and we have listed some ideas below.

- Levy on subscription
- Charge on coaching programs
- Charge on competitions
- Local Business Sponsorship

8 COURT PROGRAM DURING SCHOOL TERM

TIME	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6-8am	Private Lesson- 1 Court	Private Lesson- 1 Court	Private Lesson- 1 Court	Private Lesson- 1 Court	Private Lesson- 1 Court		
10m-12pm	Ladies organized play- 6 Courts 2 courts left for casual play	Ladies Coaching – 3 Courts 5 Courts left for other play	Ladies organised play – 6 Courts 2 courts left for casual play	Ladies Coaching 3 Courts 5 Courts left for other play	Ladies organised play – 6 Courts 2 courts left for casual play	Internal Senior and Junior Competition – 6 Courts	Internal Senior and Junior Competition – 6 Courts
12 – 3 pm	Private Coaching and Casual play	Private Coaching and Casual play	Private Coaching and Casual play	Private Coaching and Casual play	Private Coaching and Casual play	Internal Senior and Junior Competition – 6 Courts	Internal Senior and Junior Competition – 6 Courts
3 – 7pm	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Internal & External Senior and Junior Competition – 6 Courts 2 Courts for casual play	Internal & External Senior and Junior Competition – 6 Courts 2 Courts for casual play
7-11pm	Club night – 8 Courts	Internal competition 5 Courts Graded coaching – 3 Courts	Club night – 8 Courts	Internal competition 5 Courts Graded coaching – 3 Courts	League Training 6 Courts		

8 COURT PROGRAM DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

TIME	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6-10am	Private Lesson- 1 Court	Private Lesson- 1 Court	Private Lesson- 1 Court	Private Lesson- 1 Court	Private Lesson- 1 Court	Private Lesson- 1 Court	Private Lesson- 1 Court
10Am-1pm	Ladies organized play- 3 Courts Summer Camp – 3 courts 2 courts left for casual play	Ladies Coaching – 3 Courts Summer Camp – 3 courts 2 Courts left for other play	Ladies organised play – 3Courts Summer Camp – 3 courts 2 courts left for casual play	Summer Camp – 3 courts Senior and junior competitions - 5 Courts	Summer Camp– 3 courts Senior and junior competitions - 5 Courts	Internal Senior and Junior Competition – 6 Courts	Internal Senior and Junior Competition – 6 Courts
1 – 6pm	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Internal & External Senior and Junior Competition – 6 Courts 2 Courts for casual play	Internal & External Senior and Junior Competition – 6 Courts 2 Courts for casual play
6-10pm	Club night – 8 Courts	Internal competition 5 Courts Graded coaching – 3 Courts	Club night – 8 Courts	Internal competition 5 Courts Graded coaching– 3 Courts	League Training 6 Courts	Casual Play and additional Coaching	Casual Play and additional Coaching

ON COURT CLUB DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

8 Courts

Programmes

Graded Competition – Social Play - Coaching

Senior Programmes During School Terms

Monday – Friday

10am –12pm

7pm – 10pm

Saturday – Sunday

9am – 8pm

Senior Programmes During School Holidays

Monday – Friday

10am –12pm

6pm – 10pm

Saturday – Sunday

9am – 8pm

Competition

- Internal competitions

Giving your members an International Tennis Number and organising appropriate graded competition is the best way of ensuring your club members will get the best out of the competitions they enter.

A variety of graded competition is important to keep the members going.

Round Robins:

The Round Robin is a popular internal competition. To ensure the event runs smoothly, like all competitions, a Referee needs to be appointed.

An entry form needs to be drawn up and circularised to the members.

The entries are placed into graded sections with 5 players in each section. A system is set up for contacting any one of the 4 opponents in your section and all players must play 4 matches in one month. Scoring systems can vary from full matches to 15 games. Where 15 games are played, a player gets the games he or she won in the box against his name. Example, 13-2, 8-7 or 15-0 might be results from 3 matches. A promotion and relegation process is put in place where the top two with the most points in each section go up to the section above and the bottom two are put down to the section below.

Team Tennis:

Team Tennis can be organised in a variety of ways. One example is where the men and ladies are mixed together to form a team of 4, 6 or whatever is decided by the organiser. The teams are put into groups like the world cup format and they play out the competition over a set period of time.

Club Championships:

Most clubs organise internal championships over the summer months involving, singles, doubles & mixed doubles events. Each event has a consolation event incorporated into the championships so the lower level players have an opportunity to compete at their own standard of play. Alternatively if the entry is big a number of graded events can be organised using the ITN as a measure of abilities.

- Leagues

The leagues vary in different regions but each Province has graded Leagues in place during the different seasons, Winter League, Floodlit League, Summer League etc.

- Open events

There are a variety of graded open events organised in the regions and a calendar is sent to registered clubs every year and posted on the Tennis Ireland Website. Open Event Organisers usually send entry forms to the secretaries of the clubs where they wish to draw their entries from.

Social Tennis

- Graded American Tournaments
- Club night where players are rotated
- Timed Tennis
- Fun tournament with social evening

Coaching

- Ladies Morning
- Adults Evening
- League
- Individual

Juniors Tennis

A consultative process was conducted by the National Children's Office with a selection of Irish young people representing every County in Ireland. I have listed below barriers and reasons why young people drop out of sport.

The research also found that young people want to have a voice in the policy making of clubs especially the policies involving young people.

Reasons For Drop Out & Barriers

- Lost interest
- Times didn't suit
- Didn't like the leader
- Skill level not good enough
- Friends dropped out
- Didn't like the rules
- Felt I was too old
- Not nearby
- Didn't know anyone
- No transport
- Didn't know how to join
- Times didn't suit
- Too busy
- Didn't achieve success
- Cost
- Parents didn't approve
- Wasn't old enough

Juniors Programmes

Mini Tennis – Midi Tennis – Full Court

Junior Coaching Times During school Term:

- Monday – Friday 3.00pm – 7pm
- Sunday – 5pm – 8pm

All Coaching is conducted only on the courts allocated.

Junior Coaching Times During school Holidays

- In camps organised by the club or early morning semi private or private lessons

Junior Coaching Programmes

- Mini Tennis – u 8's
- Midi Tennis - u 9's
- Full Court – 10 years +

Mini Tennis

Facilities & equipment required

- 1 Tennis court
- Dividing net or barrier tape
- Rubber strips
- Cones
- Correct ball

Programmes

- Recreational
- Performance

Performance groups are selected based on the ability of the children, the willingness of the child to participate and the commitment of the parents

Coach to pupil Ratio

- 1 Coach to 8 children in Recreational
- 1 Coach to 6 children in Performance

Meetings of classes

- Recreational x 1 per week
- Performance x 3 times per week

Costing

- Costing needs to reflect that the performance groups meet three times and the recreational group meet once and of course the hourly rate of the Coach

- Every Club will have a different approach on this. Some will take in the fees and pay the coach an hourly rate. Some will charge the Coach for courts and lights. Some will set some of the coaching fees aside to pay a Co-ordinator or some will pay a head Coach a retainer for extra services such as administration, meetings etc.

Both Recreational & Performance programmes should happen at the same time in two different halves of the full court area. See the document on Mini & Midi tennis.

For example, between 3pm and 7pm from Monday to Friday, the one court can cater for 32 children in 4 recreational classes per day. Multiply this by 5 days and that makes a total of 160 children catered for between the hours of 3pm and 7pm, Monday to Friday. Bring in Sunday evening and a further 24 children can be catered for between 5-8pm.

The performance programme may only have 12 children in it. This means there would be 2 groups of 6 with both groups meeting 3 times per week. Eg. Monday, Wednesday and Friday group and Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday group.

This amounts to 6 hours of performance coaching per week in the other half of the one court. This means there would be 14 hours of time left for more recreational groups if the demand was there.

Competition

- Skill awards
- Mini Tennis Fun Competition
- All done on Saturdays and Sundays

The competition for the mini tennis kids should be once a week and organised by the Director of Tennis in conjunction with voluntary personnel and parents of the club. The performance groups should be entered in Regional fun days that are been organised and put forward for Regional Talent days that are been organised by the governing body.

Pathway

The Tennis Ireland Pathway outlines the appropriate capacities that need to be developed at the different age groups and is an excellent guide to follow.

Parents

At the start of every programme, a parents meeting is critical so that they can understand the club and the coach's approach to all the programmes. See the information for Tennis parents document attached.

7 COURTS LEFT

Midi Tennis

Facilities & equipment required

2 Tennis courts

- Roll out Lines
- Duct Tape
- Scrim Tape
- Ideal Scenario- 2 courts marked
- Cones
- Correct ball

Programmes

- Recreational
- Performance

Performance groups are selected based on the ability of the children, the willingness of the child to participate and the commitment of the parents

Coach to pupil Ratio

- 1 Coach to 8 children in Recreational
- 1 Coach to 6 children in Performance

Meetings of classes

- Recreational x 1 per week
- Performance x 3-4 times per week. Ideally one of the sessions should be a private lesson taken on a public court if availability of club courts are under pressure
- Best children should be in the Regional Programme involving 6 hours training per week. This means that the children involved in the Regional may only need one private lesson per week

Competition

- Midi Tennis Competition with proper court markings and correct ball on Saturdays and Sundays

The competition for the midi tennis programme should be once a week and organised by the Director of Tennis in conjunction with the voluntary personnel and parents of the

club. The performance groups should be entered into Regional Match-plays that are organised by the branch and any open competitions available.

5 COURTS LEFT

Full Court Tennis

Facilities & equipment required

2 Tennis courts

- Cones
- Standard ball

Programmes

- Recreational
- Performance

Performance groups are selected based on the ability of the children, the willingness of the child to participate and the commitment of the parents

Coach to pupil Ratio

- 1 Coach to 8 children in Recreational
- 1 Coach to 6 children in Performance

Meetings of classes

- Recreational x 1 per week
- Performance x 3-4 times per week. Ideally one of the sessions should be a private lesson taken on a public court if availability of club courts are under pressure
- Best children should be in the Regional Programme involving 6 hours training per week. This means that the children involved in the Regional may only need one private lesson per week

Competition

- Variety of Full Court Competition on Saturdays and Sundays

The competition for the Full Court Tennis programme should be once a week and organised by the voluntary personnel and parents of the club. The performance groups should be entered into Regional Match-plays that are organised by the branch and any open competitions available.

3 COURTS LEFT

These courts should be set for the members or consideration for one court left aside for Private Lessons may be an option leaving 2 courts.

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10Am-1pm	Ladies organized play- 2 Courts 2 courts left for casual play	Ladies Coaching – 2 Courts 2 Courts left for other play	Ladies organised play – 2 Courts 2 courts left for casual play	Ladies Coaching – 2 Courts 2 courts left for casual play	Ladies organised play – 2 Courts 2 courts left for casual play	Internal Senior and Junior Competition – 3 Courts 1 Court for casual play	Internal Senior and Junior Competition – 3 Courts 1 Court for casual play
1 – 6pm	Mini, Midi Court Program – 3 Courts 1 court left for casual play	Full Court Program– 3 Courts 1 court for casual play	Full Court Program – 3 Courts 1 court for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 3 Courts 1 court for casual play	Full Court Program – 3 Courts 1 court for casual play	Internal & External Senior and Junior Competition – 4 Courts	Internal & External Senior and Junior Competition – 4 Courts
6-10pm	Club night – 4 Courts	Internal competition 2 Courts Graded coaching – 2 Courts	Club night – 4 Courts	Internal competition 2 Courts Graded coaching– 3 Courts	League Training 4 Courts	Casual Play and additional Coaching	Casual Play and additional Coaching

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10Am-1pm	Summer Camp – 2 courts 2 courts left for casual play	Ladies Coaching – 2 Courts 2 Courts left for casual play	Summer Camp – 2 courts 2 courts left for casual play	Senior and junior competitions - 4 Courts	Summer Camp– 2 courts Senior and junior competitions - 2 Courts	Internal Senior and Junior Competition – 4 Courts	Internal Senior and Junior Competition – 4 Courts
1 – 6pm	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Mini, Midi & Full Court Program – 6 Courts 2 courts for casual play	Internal & External Senior and Junior Competition – 3 Courts 1 Court for casual play	Internal & External Senior and Junior Competition – 3 Courts 1 Court for casual play
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