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Coaching and Coach Development in New Zealand

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Abstract

For a small country with a population of 4.47 million (Statistics New Zealand, 2015), New Zealand achieves great success on the world sporting stage. One of the many contributors to this success is New Zealand's commitment to developing coaches with an emphasis on continuous improvement through the provision of ongoing learning opportunities for coaches (SPARC, 2006). To achieve this focus, and based on a Ministerial Taskforce findings that, "Coaching is in urgent need of support and development" (Ministerial Taskforce, 2001, p.10) Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) established a consultancy group to review and redevelop coaching. The consultancy group was comprised of a "coaching team" and "key players in coaching" (SPARC, 2004, p.5). An outcome of this consultation was the production of the New Zealand Coaching Strategy (SPARC, 2004). Based on robust discussion on many issues of how people learn and coaching development philosophies, the Coach Development Framework (CDF) was established in 2006. Since its establishment, the CDF has been guiding coach development in New Zealand, placing the responsibility for this development on the National Sporting Organisations (NSOs).

KEY WORDS: coach development, athlete centred, ongoing learning

34 New Zealand/Aotearoa (the land of the Long White Cloud) is an island country in the
35 Pacific Ocean comprised of two islands North (Te Ika-a-Māui,) and South (Te Waipounamu)
36 and numerous small islands with a population of 4.47 million (Statistics New Zealand, 2015).
37 Australia is its nearest neighbour. The five largest cities are Auckland (with one-third of the
38 country's population), Christchurch (in the South
39 Island), Wellington, Hamilton and Tauranga. New Zealand, as a Pacific nation, has a majority
40 population with European (69%), Maori (14.6%) and Pasifika (6.9%) people, as well as a
41 multi-cultural mix of immigrants, with Asians (9.2%) the highest (Statistics New Zealand,
42 2015).

43 New Zealand legislative authority is a cabinet which is led by a Prime Minister and is
44 organised into 11 regional councils and 67 territorial authorities for local government
45 purposes. Sport in New Zealand reports to the Minister for Sports and Tourism, the guardian
46 of sport in the country. Within Sport NZ, they oversee 92 National Sports Organisations
47 (NSOs) and 17 Regional Sports Trusts (RSTs).

48 **Coaching and Coach Development in New Zealand**

49 Within Sport NZ sits a governing body that oversees coach development. As of 2015,
50 two coaching managers in Sport NZ are dedicated to oversee this important endeavour. The
51 NSOs receive funding for coach development from Sport NZ. Each NSO is responsible and
52 autonomous in designing coach development strategic plans, including both community and
53 high performance coaching. The responsibility of training coaches rests firmly with the NSOs
54 and Sport NZ guides coaches in their strategic planning to meet the guidelines of the CDF.

55 There are also many regional sporting organisations (RSOs) who have a responsibility
56 of delivering, designing and governing the NSO coach development opportunities for their
57 local coaches. These RSOs respond to the needs of the schools and clubs in their regions, and
58 work with regional sports trusts (RSTs) to organise these learning opportunities. The RSTs

59 provide region-wide leadership, strategic direction and a single point of contact (including
60 coaching) for stakeholders in their region. In addition to the government funded coaching
61 organisations, there are tertiary coach education opportunities in the form of Bachelors,
62 Masters and PhD degrees.

63 In 1977, based on a seminar to establish a direction for coaching in New Zealand, an
64 agreement was made by the participants and the New Zealand Association of National Sports
65 Coaches (NZANSC) to form a national coaching body (Kidman, Hadfield & Chu, 2000).
66 From 1980 to 1983, NZANSC met annually and created and developed the Coaching
67 Association of New Zealand (CANZ). CANZ was recognised as a key coach education
68 deliverer at the 'New Zealand Sport Through the 80's Conference' in 1984. In 1985, CANZ
69 was identified as the key provider of coach education and a year later, CANZ level I was
70 implemented nationally. In 1989, the then Hillary Commission's International Sport Priorities
71 Board established that CANZ was a key service organisation for New Zealand coaches and
72 sport.

73 Subsequently in 1991, CANZ was reconstituted as an incorporated business called
74 Coaching New Zealand (CNZ). With the CNZ board as its governing body, the Hillary
75 Commission continued to fund CNZ and mandated the business to develop a multi-level
76 coach education standardised, accredited scheme. Until 1997, CNZ was the major coaching
77 body representing coaches and provided and organised delivery of a coach education
78 accredited scheme and opportunities for coach networking amongst coaches in New Zealand.
79 CNZ was disestablished in 1997, and the Hillary Commission became the governing body for
80 coach education.

81 In the middle of 2000, a Ministerial Taskforce on Sport, Fitness and Leisure in New
82 Zealand was established to "re-examine the structure of sport in New Zealand" (Sam, 2005,
83 p. 212). The Graham report concluded in 2001 (Ministerial Taskforce, 2001), and indicated

84 that the sport, fitness and leisure sectors were in ‘crisis’ (Sam, 2003; Sam & Jackson, 2004).
85 One of the actions stemming from the Ministerial Taskforce was the restructuring of the
86 sport, leisure and fitness sectors, resulting in the establishment of Sport and Recreation New
87 Zealand (SPARC). Upon its establishment, SPARC used the Taskforce’s findings that
88 “Coaching is in urgent need of support and development” (Ministerial Taskforce, 2001, p.10)
89 as its mandate for change. The focus on coaching emerged in the form of a consultancy group
90 (selected by SPARC), which comprised a “coaching team” and “key players in coaching”
91 (SPARC, 2004, p.5). An outcome of this consultation was the production of the New Zealand
92 Coaching Strategy (SPARC, 2004).

93 Included in the SPARC’s coaching department in 2004, once the NZ Coaching
94 Strategy was implemented, existed two dedicated teams, one who focused on High
95 Performance Sport and another whose focus was community coaching. As a result of the
96 focus on community coaching within the NZ Coaching Strategy, the Coaching Manager of
97 SPARC, Paul Ackerley¹ organised a task force (working party, see Figure 1) to determine the
98 direction of coaching in New Zealand. The coach task force consisted of members from
99 National Sport Organisations (NSOs), coach development officers, academics in coaching
100 and sport psychology, and coaches. In an interview by Tania Cassidy to create an ethnodrama
101 of the situation, (see Cassidy and Kidman, 2015), the first author of this paper was
102 interviewed about this task force and the openness and acceptance of the diversity of thinking
103 being practised:

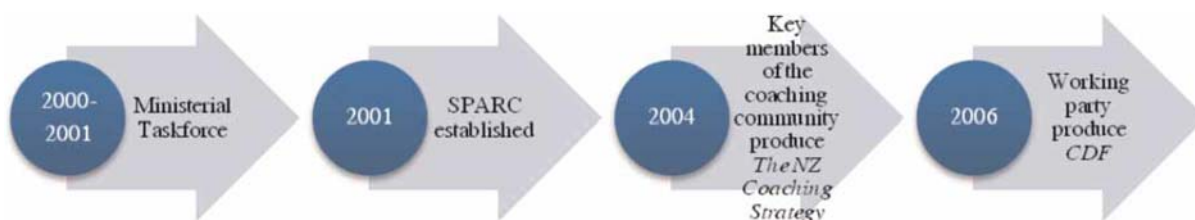
104 ...the fact that we had a clean slate, the fact that the education system is wrought with
105 problems, according to everyone on the working party. We had coaches who were
106 brilliant without accreditation and we had national coaches who hadn’t been through

¹ We dedicate this article to Paul who passed away before he saw today’s development in coaching. Much of what occurs within the current Coach Development Framework is due to Paul’s dedicated work. Thank you Paul.

107 the coach education system and were fantastic. The whole thing about the education
 108 system and the fact that you get a degree didn't mean you were a good coach. So
 109 therefore, Paul asked how could we develop coaches so that they were fantastic
 110 coaches and whether they have a qualification or not? That discussion was probably
 111 the essence of the problematic nature of the word education. If we keep calling it
 112 education, there is a connotation that there is an end point that coaches can get to and
 113 we don't want coaches to stop learning. We want them to value that they should keep
 114 developing for the betterment of athlete performance and human beings. It was a
 115 whole bunch of things. It probably started from being able to have a clean slate and
 116 being able to discuss openly. At some point we discussed well what is a coach.

117

118 Based on robust discussion on many issues of how people learn and coaching
 119 development philosophies, the Coach Development Framework (CDF) was established in
 120 2006.



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122

123 Figure 1. The relationship between the Ministerial Taskforce, SPARC, The New Zealand
 124 Coaching Strategy and the Coach Development Framework. (Cassidy & Kidman 2010,
 125 p.310)

126

The Coach Development Framework

127 In development discussions, the members of the task force were in agreement (mostly
 128 based on coach experience) that previous orthodox coach education programmes in New
 129 Zealand had not worked. This is illustrated by the comment that, “in the first meeting there

130 was a real consensus around this [the CDF] isn't education, it is about development" (L.
131 Johnston, personal communication, as cited in Cassidy & Kidman, 2010, p.314). A common
132 perception, as to why the previous coach education programmes had not worked, was "that
133 many coaches negatively associated coach education with formal, classroom and theory
134 orientated practices that focused on the 'what' (knowledge) in coaching and not the 'how'
135 (skills) and 'why' (understanding)" (p. 314). This sort of understanding occurred from
136 coaches historically completing standardised, accredited courses where the learning was
137 minimal (Cushion, Jones & Armour, 2003). Thus, based on the influence of the task force,
138 there was a shift of thinking that focused on continuous ongoing professional development,
139 which valued formal and informal learning opportunities.

140 The outcome of this vision is illustrated in the CDF where it encourages coaches to
141 view their learning and development as ongoing and continuous, as well as being athlete-
142 centred, whereby understanding the athletes and their learning is a major principle. As much
143 research has suggested, the difficulty of coaches trying to apply what they learn in formal
144 environments in coaching (Cushion, et al., 2003; Cushion, 2006), the task force mandated
145 more application of knowledge to the context of individual coaching.

146 In 2006, the CDF was released to the National Sport Organisations (NSOxs) and
147 SPARC emphasised that the sports would be responsible for creating their own coach
148 development strategies. SPARC began to work with the sports to help develop a coaching
149 development strategic plan with the guidance of the CDF.

150 In 2010, another restructure of the national sporting body occurred and SPARC was
151 divided into two entities, both of which have coach development strategies, High
152 Performance Sport New Zealand (HSPNZ) and Sport NZ. The CDF largely remains
153 unchanged, but has been further clarified. In the current NZ Coaching Strategy (see Figure 2)
154 there exists a Coach Development Plan whereby Sport NZ has provided a framework for each

155 of four coaching communities (foundation, development, performance and high
156 performance). The coaching communities are explained below:

157 *Foundation Coaching Community*

158 (Supporting participants in the Learn stage)

159 Foundation coaches support participants enjoying their first experiences in organised
160 sport. The vast majority of the participants will be primary school aged children trying
161 out a range of modified sports in either a club or primary school setting.

162 *Development Coaching Community*

163 (Supporting participants in the Participate stage)

164 Development coaches support a wider range of participants including the young
165 people who continue in organised sport through the later years of primary school, the
166 secondary school students in both the school and club setting and the adults who
167 continue to play organised sport in a non-elite environment.

168 *Performance Coaching Community*

169 (Supporting athletes in the Perform Stage)

170 Performance coaches support that narrower range of athletes who have shown extra
171 ability and have moved on to some sort of district or regional representative sport at
172 either a youth or adult level.

173 *High Performance Coaching Community*

174 (Supporting athletes in the Excel Stage)

175 High Performance coaches support the athletes who have progressed to the top of
176 their sport within New Zealand and are now competing on an international stage
177 (Sport NZ, 2010, p. 6-7).

178

179



180

181

182 Figure 2.

183 New Zealand Coaching Strategy 2012-2020 (Sport NZ, 2012)

184

185 These communities serve as the backbone to coach development in New Zealand,

186 with a belief that coaches learn better in their context of understanding and practice. Based on

187 the communities, the following section provides some examples of coach development

188 implementation in New Zealand.

189

Implementation

190 National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) are the drivers of coach development in their

191 own sporting codes and create their own strategic frameworks, pathways and plans (for an

192 example, see <http://www.nzfootball.co.nz/index.php?id=853>). The NSOs fund Regional

193 Sporting Organisations (RSOs), or in some cases clubs or other organisations to manage and

194 provide learning opportunities that meet the intentions of their strategic plans. Regional
195 Sports Trusts (RSTs) play a key function in supporting NSOs and RSOs around capabilities
196 and also provide facilitation on the generic skills of coaching. RSTs are predominantly
197 funded by Sport NZ to fill this coach development role, among others.

198 In Auckland, four RSTs work to support the numerous NSOs and RSOs in New
199 Zealand's most populous city. In 2008, the four RSTs in Auckland agreed to combine their
200 coaching outcomes and funding from Sport NZ and formed the Greater Auckland Coaching
201 Unit (GACU). GACU provides programmes, support and resources for coaches and for
202 organisations committed to improving the quality of their coach development processes.
203 GACU also plays an important leadership role in advocating for the development of coaches
204 in Auckland. The GACU team is comprised of one director, four coaching advisors (one is
205 based in each of four regions in Auckland) and one communications administrator. The four
206 coaching advisors are a key link in creating alignment between the Sport NZ Community
207 Coaching Plan (see Figure 2) and coaches who are at the 'coal face' and work with athletes.
208 Their role is twofold: they are coach developers, running workshops/seminars for coaches,
209 mentoring coaches and providing resource support for coaches and; are the key coach
210 development contacts for the RSOs and NSOs in Auckland. These advisors also support
211 sports clubs, secondary and primary schools.

212 David Keelty (second author), is based in the North of Auckland and works for the
213 Greater Auckland Coaching Unit (GACU). The following three projects or programmes
214 discussed are examples of the work that David is leading and/or supporting in his role at his
215 Regional Sports Trust (RST) North Harbour. David works across three of the four coaching
216 communities outlined in the Sport NZ Coaching Plan (foundation, development and
217 performance coaching communities). The fourth coaching community example is presented
218 subsequent to Dave's examples.

219 **Foundation Community Example**

220 Through KiwiSport² funding, NSOs, RSOs, clubs and schools can apply to RSTs for
221 funding to provide sporting and coach development opportunities to help young people (5-18
222 years old). To provide these opportunities, the GACU advisors monitor KiwiSport funded
223 schools, specifically their coach development opportunities. One strategy used to support
224 organisations around the quantity and quality of coaching for these projects is a GACU-
225 initiated KiwiSport minimum coaching standard that all coaches must complete. The purpose
226 of this project is to monitor the quality assurance for sport being delivered to young people.
227 The minimum standards include five actions that coaches who receive KiwiSport funding
228 must achieve which actions include: attend a coach development workshop; complete an
229 online safety module; sign a Code of Ethics; be observed coaching; and be police vetted.

230 **Coach development workshop.** All KiwiSport coaches must attend a workshop that
231 covers important topics to help them understand how to work with young people. The topics
232 covered are based on research by the advisors about best practice and is also based on
233 feedback from previous coach development projects. The ‘standardised’ workshops are two
234 hours in length, and are generic in content so coaches from a variety of sports can attend
235 together in their foundation coaching community. The networking with other sports is seen as
236 one of the strengths of the minimum standards process, as it allows for ‘cross-pollination’ of
237 ideas among coaches of different sporting codes (Kidman & Penney, 2014). Through the 5+
238 years of implementation, GACU has adapted the content and delivery of the workshop to
239 continue a focus of ongoing learning. There are some consistent themes that continue in the
240 workshop: time on task for participants; growth and development of young people and the
241 implications this has on coaching; encouragement of teacher involvement in school-based
242 sessions; and safety.

² Kiwi Sport is a New Zealand government funding initiative to support sport for school-aged children.

243 **Online safety module.** For the foundation coaching community, coaches complete an
244 online safety module housed on the GACU website (see
245 <https://www.gacu.co.nz/wizard.cfm?supplier=gacu&module=safetynet>). The online learning
246 tool takes about 20-30 minutes to complete and covers aspects of safe practice that coaches
247 need to consider, including physical and emotional safety of athletes and injury management.
248 The tool is interactive, with different types of activities that focus on a safe environment. The
249 resource also includes links to other websites to give coaches a chance to further expand their
250 knowledge.

251 **Code of ethics.** In addition to this online safety module, KiwiSport-funded coaches must
252 sign the Sport NZ Coaches' Code of Ethics, which outlines the expectations and behaviours
253 that are appropriate for coaches, including:

- 254 1. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every individual athlete as a human being;
- 255 2. Maintain high standards of integrity;
- 256 3. Be a positive role model for your sport and athletes and act in a way that projects a
257 positive image of coaching;
- 258 4. Maintain professional responsibilities;
- 259 5. Make a commitment to providing a quality service to your athletes;
- 260 6. Provide a safe environment for training and competition; and
- 261 7. Protect your athletes from any form of personal abuse. (Sport NZ, 2015)

262 **Coach observation.** The RST, Harbour Sport (North of Auckland), has two coach
263 advisors who observe KiwiSport coaches in action. This process of each observation
264 involves:

265 Step 1: Observe 1st session.

266 Step 2: Observe 2nd session.

267 Step 3: Meet with coach to give feedback and discuss what was observed.

268 Step 4: Observe 3rd session.

269 Coaches observed will have several contexts to follow. For example, a coach may be
270 working with seven year olds in session one, and then 12 year olds in session two. The
271 advisor does not meet with these coaches until after the second session so they can increase
272 the quality of feedback by gathering further information. The purpose of these observations is
273 not to assess the coaches, but to provide feedback and encourage them to reflect on their
274 coaching. The reflection aspect has an expectation that coaches will use this feedback in their
275 next session and deliver a better quality learning environment. Two examples of written
276 observations for two foundation community situations are provided below:

277 *1st Example:*

278 *Two classes working together (around 52 children). Children were split in 2 groups*
279 *to play softball with 28 kid as fielders and 24 as batters. This resulted in long waiting*
280 *queues, with significant amounts of time between each involvement in the game.*

281 *Children in the field very rarely involved. Equipment used was one bat and one ball,*
282 *more equipment available on the side of the field not being utilised.*

283

284 *Great questioning. Great environment, especially considering the challenges of the*
285 *weather and no hall. There were long queues (5-6 children), with more balls*
286 *available. Coach needs more control of class, children a bit lively. There was a long*
287 *time doing the same activity, and the children got noticeably bored. Great game, but*
288 *too many children per team. More equipment could have been utilised to reduce the*
289 *number and increase opportunities of practice. Teacher wasn't involved throughout*
290 *the session so how can they continue the development when the coach isn't there.*

291

292 *2nd Example:*

293 *There are two coaches for this team.*

294 *In terms of group management:*

295 *Both coaches showed good level of confidence delivering and good control of*
296 *children's behaviours. Is good to see that two different coaches have a similar*
297 *management style to manage/control children. Additionally children response in a*
298 *well manner to this.*

299 *In terms of content:*

300 *Both coaches showed that they know what they are coaching and key points to teach.*
301 *Some Fundamental Movement Skills were taught as part of the technical skills. Use of*
302 *analogies to teach techniques/rules was useful and well received for children.*

303 *In terms of class environment:*

304 *The two coaches have the skills to create a fun, safe and participative environment*
305 *during their sessions.*

306 *To improve:*

307 *"Teacher involvement" is an area that they should be improving in some way, is a*
308 *Kiwisport goal and also an opportunity for sports to educate/up-skill teachers that*
309 *shouldn't be missed. Please let me know if you need support in this area.*

310 *I want to acknowledge that during this observation process, the two coaches showed*
311 *highly professional attitude during delivery and keeping the communication open and*
312 *clear. Additionally, due to their passion and commitment during their delivery the*
313 *rapport created with children and teachers was great. As example, I received great*
314 *comments and feedback from teachers about Touch Rugby's sessions and coaches.*

315

316 *Finally I would like to encourage them to keep using their expertise as coaches to*
317 *change and/or adapt sessions or activities (if required) to meet children's needs and*

318 *level of skills. Sessions plans are a guide that must be flexible and adaptable as every*
319 *class/child is different.*

320

321 **Police vetting.** Coaches are police vetted to ensure they are appropriate to work with
322 young people. This service is offered by Harbour Sport (an RST) when the coaches' sport or
323 club cannot perform the vetting directly with the New Zealand Police. The New Zealand
324 Police check each coach's background. If the check comes back with an issue, that person is
325 not allowed to coach.

326 The minimum standards process starts every school term, with the coach development
327 workshop held in the first 1-2 weeks of the term, and the rest of the minimum standards
328 requirements completed after this workshop. If any of the minimum standards are not
329 achieved within that term, a follow up email is sent to both the coach and the organisation
330 they represent to outline what is still required to coach in a KiwiSport project. If after another
331 three weeks that still hasn't been achieved the coach is withdrawn from the project.

332 **Development Community Example**

333 In 2012, Harbour Sport in alignment with GACU, introduced the Coach Support
334 Initiative (CSI) pilot project with a focus of improving the leadership, planning and alignment
335 of coaching in secondary schools. The KiwiSport investment in CSI helps increase
336 participation numbers and skill levels of secondary school students. By working top down
337 with senior management to develop the school coaching culture and bottom up by directly
338 supporting the coaches themselves, CSI coaching leaders contribute to coach development.
339 Addressing coaching throughout the whole school, these leaders provide a variety of
340 development opportunities, support and advocacy.

341 It is now widely acknowledged that coaches occupy a central and critical position in
342 the athletic setting and sporting experience of athletes, with many possible 'spill-over' effects

343 into other areas of athletes' lives (Jones, et al., 2003; Reinboth, Duda & Ntoumanis, 2004;
344 Smoll & Smith, 1981). GACU believes there is a direct relationship between improving the
345 quality of coaching, and improving the level of participation in sport of young people.

346 The CSI project has a number of core principles which are based on New Zealand's
347 Coach Development Plan, which include:

348 1. Quality coaches are key enablers of participation in sport. Recent research out of
349 the United Kingdom studied the impact coaching has on participants (Hopkinson,
350 2014). A key finding from their research was "significant proportions (between
351 66% and 72%) of young people say being coached has increased their enjoyment,
352 passion and commitment to sport, as well as the time they spend playing" (p. 18).

353 To take that a step further, the research also highlights a link between the quality of
354 coaching and young people's enjoyment of playing sport.

355 2. Coaches who feel valued and supported in their roles are more likely to continue to
356 coach. Across schools in New Zealand, the majority of coaches are volunteers so
357 SPARC's research (2008) offers sound advice for organisations working with
358 volunteers. Key findings from their research suggest quality volunteer management
359 needs organisations to:

- 360 • take into consideration the amount of time volunteers give up and recognise
361 this;
- 362 • provide expectations and roles/responsibilities to all volunteers;
- 363 • develop family-centric strategies and systems to retain volunteers; and
- 364 • communicate regularly with volunteers.

365 If an organisation only focuses on its own interests, and does nothing to support
366 and value its volunteers it is at risk of losing them.

367 3. Strong advocacy and leadership is critical to the success of coach development in
368 schools. This belief is supported by SPARC's volunteer research (2008), which
369 indicated volunteers prefer being part of an organisation that has strong leadership.
370 Without strong leadership volunteers may be uninspired and unsure about what is
371 expected of them and may eventually lack commitment, which will see them
372 disengage. Organisations should have a dedicated leader to support coaches;
373 someone who is passionate about the positive impact coaching can have on their
374 school. Sport NZ's evidence highlighted where there is strong coaching leadership
375 there also exists strong coaching communities (SPARC, 2008)

376 Each participating school in the CSI project receives funding to employ a Coaching
377 Leader, whose role is to provide strong leadership and advocacy for coaching. They
378 effectively become the hub of coaching in their respective school by writing and
379 implementing a coach management plan. Each of the school's coach leader is supported by a
380 project leader in the school who provides guidance of best practice and facilitates the
381 capability development of the school coaching leaders via workshops, networking and
382 individual mentoring.

383 **Results of implementation of CSI.** A quantitative evaluation of the CSI initiative
384 (2012-2013) was completed by Harbour Sport and the CSI group to determine the success of
385 the CSI project within schools. Interestingly, The CSI project has increased participation of
386 students/athletes from 4,535 in 2013 to 6,813 in 2014. The number of coaches developed
387 through this programme has also increased two fold (from 389 to 699).

388 Other qualitative evaluation suggests further successes in the CSI project, namely:

389 1. Five schools have implemented new coaching culture policies, designed to
390 improve the experience of the athletes at these schools.

391 2. Links have been developed among these schools and other sporting
392 organisations e.g. RSOs, NSOs, professional sports franchises, primary schools,
393 intermediate schools and tertiary education providers. These links have
394 developed for a variety of reasons, ranging from coach recruitment,
395 development and shared resources.

396 3. There has been a steady increase of uptake by Auckland schools, where 24
397 people are now working in the coach development space in Auckland. This
398 number is a significant investment into coach development as a result of
399 growing the reach of GACU out into the Auckland coaching community.

400 The success of the Harbour Sport pilot influenced the implementation of a second
401 CSI project based in the Waitakere (West of Auckland) region. Nine secondary schools
402 invested in the West Auckland project. In 2014, there were 14 secondary schools
403 participating in the project.

404 **Issues regarding implementation.** Engaging adult coaches and employing the
405 coaching leaders have been two issues in the implementation of the CSI. The biggest
406 challenge faced for each school involved is engaging adult coaches in development
407 opportunities. Predominantly, there are two reasons cited in the evaluation of the CSI
408 programme: 1) there is a prevailing attitude within the schools that “we can’t ask too much of
409 our coaches, as they are already giving up their time to coach”. With this attitude, coaching
410 leaders sometimes choose to hold back development opportunities to ensure their coaches
411 don’t feel overburdened and; 2) adult coaches are choosing not to attend development
412 opportunities. The lack of attendance was not determined by the evaluation, but based on the
413 advisors’ experiences, have been noted as a lack of time and too many work commitments,
414 family commitments, don’t see the value in attending, are anxious or are worried about

415 attending. The challenge of addressing these two reasons are being reflected upon going
416 forward in 2015.

417 The second major issue is the Coaching Leader position is a part time role (depending
418 on the school). The most number of hours a Coaching Leader is employed at a school is 20
419 hours with the least number of hours being six per week. Consequently, the roles are rather
420 transient, with the people filling these roles often using them as a stepping stone into more
421 full time employment in the sporting industry. Another significant challenge for the project is
422 keeping quality people in the coaching leader roles so the impact is sustainable. As stated
423 above, a fundamental principle of the CSI project is where there is strong coaching leadership
424 there also exists strong coaching communities. For there to be strong coaching leadership
425 there needs to be a leader who has built relationships with key people, a leader who has built
426 trust, and who has gained respect from the coaches within their school.

427 **Performance Community Example**

428 In 2013, GACU piloted a coach development programme targeting coaches in the
429 performance community called the Coach Advance Pilot Programme (CAPP). This
430 programme is a 12 month programme that involved four all day workshops, each with a guest
431 presenter and specific topic to cover in a workshop/seminar environment. The application
432 process included coaches submitting a five minute video answering a few questions about
433 themselves as coaches. Initially there was no limit to the number of coaches who could be
434 part of the programme as this was the first time in Auckland a generic coach development
435 programme was targeted for the performance coaching community. Initially, the intention
436 was to test how many coaches would actually apply.

437 Eight coaches applied, with seven invited onto the programme. Two coaches were
438 from netball, two from rugby union, and one each from cricket, triathlon and basketball. In
439 addition to the four all day workshops throughout 2013, coaches completed video reflections

440 on their application of the workshop learnings into their own coaching environments. At the
441 final workshop, coaches evaluated the programme. A typical example from one of the
442 coaches highlights the impact of the programme for him:

443 I just wanted to say thanks to everyone who has been involved with the programme
444 this year. To Andy and the amazing team of ring ins, you were all sensational. You
445 never struggled to generate new ways of thinking in us all, take us out of our comfort
446 zone and get us all to challenge our and others ways of thinking and doing. (interview,
447 rugby coach)

448 The success of the CAPP sparked Sport NZ's interest and led them to invest in a
449 national programme, called Performance Coach Advance (PCA). This programme was rolled
450 out nationally in 2014, with 24 coaches in Auckland, 18 coaches in Wellington and
451 Canterbury, and 12 coaches in Waikato and the Bay of Plenty. The application process was
452 adapted and modified where coaches were to be nominated by their NSO, before submitting a
453 letter outlining why they wanted to be involved in the PCA programme. The underlying
454 philosophy of this national programme is one of action learning (Revans, 1982). The
455 programme is designed to follow a cyclical process, moving from act – reflect –
456 conceptualize - apply process. PCA aims to introduce coaches to this process and to
457 encourage them to value ongoing learning.

458 Added to the four day workshops are four forums where the coaches meet to discuss
459 learning from the workshops. After research on a similar high performance coach programme
460 in New Zealand (see Kidman & Penney, 2014), an emphasis on Communities of Practice
461 (CoP) networking is practised. The intention of the 'community of practice' is to enable
462 coaches to lead and control the discussion and content within their particular coaching
463 communities.

464 Each coach in the programme also chooses someone from a list of support staff
465 created by the programme leader, whose role is to guide and support the coaches through the
466 development programme. The coaches meet with their support staff member every month or
467 so, using the coach's reflective journal as basis of their discussion. The support staff member
468 also observes the coach in action in both training and event situations, consistent with an
469 action learning philosophy (Revans, 1982).

470 **High Performance Community Example**

471 The fourth Sport NZ coaching community is the high performance sport coaching
472 community which sits in a separate organisation called High Performance Sport New Zealand
473 (HPSNZ). HPSNZ has a focus on coach development through their designated coaching
474 community. HPSNZ's coaching strategic plan aligns with the New Zealand's Coach
475 Development Plan (see Figure 2).

476 The Coach Accelerator Programme (CAP) (see [http://hpsnz.org.nz/coaches/coach-
478 accelerator-programme](http://hpsnz.org.nz/coaches/coach-
477 accelerator-programme)) is a principal coach development programme that sits within HPSNZ
479 and is designed to enhance and accelerate coaches' learning, aligning to the CDF as having a
480 long-term, ongoing development orientation. The CAP was established in 2009 with the
481 stated objective "to create New Zealand coaches capable of producing World, Olympic and
482 Paralympic champions within five years" (SPARC, 2010). Coaches working at the high
483 performance level, as defined by the National Sports Organisations (NSOs) apply for a place
484 on the programme and require nomination and endorsement from their respective NSO.
485 Selection involves a rigorous process, whereby coaches are nominated by their NSO, apply in
486 writing³ and are short-listed. Short-listed applicants participate in an interview that involves a
series of realistic role simulations (coaching, partnering interactions, decision challenges and

³ submitting a CV, nomination form and a technical programme

487 judgements) designed to reflect issues and situations typically experienced by a Head Coach.
488 The applicants then receive feedback about the application process.

489 Kidman and Penney (2014) undertook a research project to evaluate the pedagogical
490 strategies of coaches participating in the CAP. Drawing on data from interviews with
491 coaches, the programme manager and support staff, and from participant observations, it was
492 found a major contributor to the success of the programme was coaches as learners within a
493 community of practice. The strength of the CAP as a programme that was intended to
494 facilitate and support the ongoing professional development and learning of coaches, and lies
495 in the community and culture that has been established to date. The subtleties and
496 complexities associated with the learning relations and networks developed and emerging in
497 the context of the CAP was reported, but it is important to highlight “that amidst an
498 externally initiated and resourced programme, the community of coaches and support staff
499 have developed an internal dynamic that has been key to extending learning amongst the
500 members” (p. 27). From the findings, it was evident that “trust and shared values and
501 individual coaches’ belief in the capacity of the programme and community to assist in
502 advancing their coaching” (p. 27) enabled coaches to value the learning opportunities
503 provided in the CAP.

504 Some of the main challenges that coaches identified during the research were
505 administrative and organisational in nature. One such issue was relevance and meaning to
506 broader sport organisations and the ability to sustain such a programme with ongoing
507 structural changes that often impact on high performance sport.

508 **Coach Development Centre**

509 One other initiative that has been implemented into New Zealand coaching is the
510 Auckland based Coach Development Centre (CDC). The CDC has an aim to enable coaches
511 to have a place they can call their own, one where coaches can share ideas, develop and

512 discuss all aspects of coaching and connect with like-minded people. With the coaching
513 mission of Sport NZ “to inspire and enable coaches to provide athletes with the coaching they
514 need” (SPARC, 2004), the CDC is one way to provide the opportunity to meet this mission.
515 The CDC practises the philosophy of the CDF and provides a place where coaches can pursue
516 the ongoing learning through a multifocus, multisport environment enabling cross fertilisation
517 of ideas and growth in expertise. Critically, it makes sense to have coaches develop alongside
518 cutting edge knowledge so they can contextualise and reap benefits from that knowledge with
519 immediate effect. In turn, better developed coaches should be able to deliver more capable
520 athletes with greater consistency. The CDC is a partnership with GACU and AUT University
521 where they provide a dedicated network of organisations and people supporting the
522 advancement of coach development and engaging in a thorough implementation of the holistic
523 approach to coaching.

524 **Summary**

525 New Zealand coach development focuses on athlete-centred coaching, with an
526 emphasis for ongoing professional development and learning. This emphasis on coach
527 learning and development (formally and informally) has shifted from an international trend of
528 coaches gaining qualifications to one where the onus falls onto NSOs, rather than a
529 centralised body. Coaching in New Zealand was able to develop due to the nature of an
530 important Task Force that shifted from the notion of education to development. Much of what
531 is occurring in New Zealand follows the research on coach learning, where there has been
532 shown to be limited learning through formal educational opportunities.

533 The ongoing challenge is evident for providing athlete centred, coach led professional
534 development opportunities. However, Sport NZ, HPSNZ and GACU will continue to develop
535 learning opportunities with the CDF philosophical framework in mind. New Zealand coach

536 development strives for the link that Hopkinson (2014) suggests between the quality of
537 coaching and young people's enjoyment of playing sport.

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