Community Cricket: Engagement of emerging Cricket communities into Coach Education and Development Programs

APRIL 2015

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to research and examine the various emerging cricket communities across metropolitan Victoria, specifically with the aim of learning about their experiences in coaching, as well as their current level of awareness and interaction with the Cricket Victoria Coach Education program. The emerging cricket communities were first identified through the Community Cricket Consultation meetings in September 2013, and July 2014. These emerging communities include over 2,400 new participants, primarily of Asian and sub-continental background which in the last 18 months have formed 45 new cricket clubs, and more than 50 teams. Furthermore, one new competition has been developed, and one new association has become affiliated with the Victorian Metropolitan Cricket Union (VMCU).

The make-up of these teams is largely Indian-Australians, which made up over 85% of the 2,400 emerging cricket groups since 2013. These teams were also made-up of players from Pakistan, Sri-Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Afghanistan and Sudan.

METHODOLOGY

The research for this report was undertaken using a range of methods including phone calls, face to face meetings, and an online survey conducted through Survey Monkey.

Over the course of a three week period Cricket Victoria spoke to

- Jay Mohan Padmanabhan - Wyndham Jags Cricket Club
- Sojjad Ali - Hazara Hemmings Cricket Club
- Geoff Gook - Western Suburbs Churches & Community Cricket Association
- Campbell Atkins - Wyndham City Council
- Abdul Razzaq - Monash City Health (assists with new Afghani arrivals and asylum seekers)
- Mark Keating – Chair of Victorian Metropolitan Cricket Union (VMCU), President of Williamstown and District Cricket Association
- Kate George – Sport and Recreation Development Officer Brimbank City Council
- Matthew Shawcross – Sunshine Heights Cricket Club
A short online questionnaire was also sent out to all the Asian social cricket teams formed in the last 18 months. The focus of this survey was to gather feedback on individuals’ current knowledge and interaction with coaching cricket and to gauge their awareness of Cricket Victoria’s coach education program, and any barriers to access these programs.

RESULTS

From the research conducted there has been a largely positive reaction from those interviewed. From the online survey conducted there were a total of 202 responses over a two week period. Those interviewed personally also provided exceptional feedback on the areas Asian social cricket can be developed from a coach education perspective, as well as the means in which Cricket Victoria can assist.

Of those surveyed online only 13% are currently coaching within their local cricket club or social group. Of those not currently coaching at their local level, 59% have a desire to want to become a coach. This illustrates that while there is not a significant number of people coaching cricket in these emerging cricket communities, there is a strong interest in wanting to develop the knowledge and skill-set required to do so.

This was reflective through discussions with people associated to these emerging clubs and groups. Jay Mohan Padmanabhan from Wyndham Jags Cricket Club and Sojjad Ali from Hazara Hemmings Cricket Club both maintained that there was a strong need to develop the number of coaches within their own emerging Asian cricket communities, particularly as participant numbers are increasing. Sojjad suggested that within his local cricket community the only coaching that players receive is from their own peers and their playing experience that they have.

Furthermore Geoff Gook from Western Suburbs Churches and Community Cricket Association outlined that at present the majority of new arrival cricketers come to training and matches and simply play the game; rather than considering the long term development of a cricket club, where a sound coaching structure is in place that can develop up and coming junior prospects. In addition Geoff suggested that these players believe that a good player will also equate to being a good coach.

Of those not currently coaching at a local level, it was identified that a lack of confidence was the predominant barrier to coaching for participants. This was reflective of 25% of respondents in the survey. This was an issue also identified in my discussion with Kate George, the Sport and Recreation Development Officer from Brimbank City Council. Kate used the example of her involvement with the Sri-Lankan Tamil community, who express ambitions to become cricket coaches, and share a strong passion for the game, yet are quite
reserved and shy in their nature. Cultural and language barriers also contribute to lack of confidence in attending a course, and becoming a coach and presenter.

A similar issue was discussed with Sunshine Heights Cricket Club Junior Co-ordinator, Matt Shawcross who is involved in bringing a number of Afghani and Sudanese youths to his cricket club from the school that he teaches. Matthew outlined that he was eager to further develop the knowledge and skills of these young cricketers by putting them through a Community Coaching course.

However in contrast, Mark Keating from the Victorian Metropolitan Cricket Union (VMCU) and Campbell Atkins from Wyndham City Council both suggested that within the Indian cricket communities there may not be as high of level of interest in coaching accreditation courses. Both were of the opinion that these groups are motivated by just playing the game of cricket socially, rather than joining established cricket clubs and forming coaching links through traditional means. Campbell suggested that the most effective means of targeting these Indian groups in terms of Coach Education may be through a specialised coaching seminar with a focus on Twenty20 cricket, the format these groups will play.

Other major barriers to coaching also included work and family commitments, and as a result not being able to dedicate the time to coaching at club level. This was a trend identified across a number of the clubs spoken to. Respondents also suggested that a lack of formal accreditation/qualification would also prevent entry into coaching.

In terms of Cricket Victoria’s Coach Education program, only 21% of survey respondents were aware of its existence. This illustrates that greater promotion of the Coach Education program, including accreditation programs and coaching seminars is required to a wider community; particularly to those who may not have regular access to e-mails and internet within these emerging cricket communities. This was an aspect particularly evident in discussions with Abdul Razzaq who assists with Afghani refugees and asylum seekers that are playing social cricket. Neither he, nor those involved in his social cricket group had prior knowledge of the coach accreditation process in terms of the Level 0-3 stages and what each level offers.

From a coach accreditation course perspective, 36% of survey respondents suggested that the registration fees were the biggest preventative barrier from attending a Community Coaching course. While 23% of respondents outlined that a lack of information from Cricket Victoria was also a major contributor to not attending a coach accreditation course.

This was particularly reflective during my discussion with Matthew Shawcross who suggested that the young Afghani and Sudanese youths involved within Sunshine Heights Cricket Club would most likely be unable to attend a Community Coaching course primarily because of the cost. He also outlined that a number of these youths would only be able to
attend a course if the venue was directly accessible via public transport, as well as requiring a language interpreter if there was to be an English-only speaking presenter.

Respondents of the questionnaire were also asked what else Cricket Victoria can provide to assist with the education, training and development of coaches within their local cricketing communities. A consistent theme amongst the responses was reduced registration fees for the Community Coaching course; however a number of people also suggested that more information can be provided to clubs in terms of coaching resources. Examples included having a greater range coaching clips available or one-page documents on teaching specific cricket skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that a greater understanding and awareness of the Cricket Victoria coach education program is needed within these emerging cricket clubs and social groups. Steps that can assist this goal to be achieved include:

- Development of a coaching pathway structure document outlining the opportunities that are available to coaches from junior club level to pathways and senior club/high performance coaching.

- Wider promotion of state/regional coaching seminars to these emerging cricket clubs and groups through means other than email and CV website. The majority of these Asian cricket communities will be missed through an electronic direct mail message if they have not registered with Cricket Coaches Australia and completed a Level 0 online Introduction to Cricket course; while quite a number also do not have regular access to Internet.

- Greater number of coaching resources available to these emerging cricket communities specifically related to the format of cricket that they play most commonly, Twenty20. This may include a greater range and variety of coaching clips, as well as information regarding Twenty20 tactics and captaincy, and coordinating training sessions effectively.
APPENDIX

Do you currently coach at your local cricket club?
Answered: 202  Skipped: 0

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tr>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>86.6%</td>
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Do you have an interest in coaching at a local cricket club?
Answered: 174  Skipped: 28

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<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tr>
<td>59.2%</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
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Do you have any prior experience in cricket coaching?
Answered: 196  Skipped: 6

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<th>Yes</th>
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<td>21.9%</td>
<td>78.1%</td>
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Barriers to coaching involvement

- Lack of confidence: 21.3%
- Prior bad experience in coaching: 11.7%
- Lack of cricket knowledge: 6.1%
- Concerns regarding cultural/language barriers: 12.7%
- Other (Work/Time Commitments): 48.2%

Are you aware of the Cricket Victoria coach accreditation program?

- Yes: 18.3% (22)
- No: 81.7% (98)

Barriers to participation in coach accreditation programs

- Cost of Course: 36.3%
- Lack of information from CV: 25.3%
- Language/cultural barriers with presenters: 13.7%
- Presenting in front of a group: 12.1%
- Other (Work/Time Commitments): 6.0%