

CROQUET VICTORIA Inaugural publicity officers workshop

Tuesday 22 October 2019

10.00 am

Facilitator Kate Patrick welcomed all attendees, introducing Greg Bryant CNZ Sports Development Officer.

10.05 am Meeting separated into three groups to discuss the following topics:

- 1 **Why use social media?**
- 2 **Recruiting junior players**
- 3 **Following up the *Hit for Health* video with allied health practitioners**

10.25 am **Report back from three groups:**

- 1 **Why use social media?**

The following questions were asked during this small group discussion:

Q: Has our use of social media lifted the profile of croquet out in the community?

A: *Yes, but we are chiefly communicating within the croquet community, although we have become familiar with croquet in other countries. Should make use of TV/radio/local newspapers more, community websites/Facebook pages.*

Q: What type of activities should be posted to a club/region/state Facebook page?

A: *There was general agreement that posts related to social/recreational/non-competitive croquet should be confined to club Facebook pages, and regions and state should concentrate on the sport of croquet.*

Q: Does your club use its Facebook page as a communication tool or to publicise croquet?

A: *Those who were in this group considered that their club chiefly used their Facebook page for internal communication, but did not see this as problematic. All conceded that we need to make more effort to share posts with non-croquet playing friends.*

Q: Have guidelines for what can/cannot be posted been considered?

A: *Privacy and the Croquet Victoria Electronic Communications Policy were discussed.*

Q: What photos are good to use?

A: *We need to be more creative in photos that are posted, not just 'grip and grin' or bent over a mallet. Photos of young people playing croquet were always well received.*

Q: Are we publicising croquet as a sport or as a recreation?

A: *The group recognised that the recreation activity can lead to the competitive sport.*

Q: If your club doesn't have a Facebook page, do you have access to help?

A: *Regional Sports Assemblies for country clubs was mentioned.*

- 2 **Recruiting junior players**

Ellie Norris advised the group how the junior program had been established in Casterton.

As follows :

The group was asked why Junior Croquet was being discussed at a Marketing & Publicity workshop.

Answer: It is the most powerful marketing tool the Casterton Croquet Club has ever had. Everyone is on board when a club develops young players.

Development schedule.

- A policy of 'zero tolerance' to bad behaviour was established.
- All Casterton club members voted to proceed with the program.
- A sub-committee of 6 was established (volunteers)
- Working With Children Certificates were organised for everyone who was to be involved in coaching the juniors
- The Primary Schools were targeted for recruits... Active April was used as a marketing tool
- Registration Forms were printed

- Saturday morning was agreed to. 10am – 11.30am. School holidays exempt.
- 2 categories. Under 10 and 10 & over
- A green fee of \$2.00 pp was agreed to. The program had to be affordable.
- Sponsorship achieved. Foodworks provided vouchers
- Monthly Foodworks Competition
- Grand final competition with vouchers and trophy in both categories
- Grandparents Day annually
- No special equipment was used. Regular 3ft mallets were used by all juniors. 2 different weighted mallets were available.
- Grants were applied for (successfully) for embroidered shirts and caps for junior players
- Regular Newsletter sent to juniors (this year electronically) to promote their commitment to the club.
- The Club affiliated juniors in 2018 when Under 21 Nationals were scheduled in Adelaide in January 2019. 5 juniors attended.
- 4 juniors attended SA Under 21 State Championships in October 2019.
- 1 junior travelling to Perth in January 2020 to compete in the Under 21 Nationals.
- Some Juniors now practicing after school

3 **Following up the Hit for Health video with allied health practitioners**

Twin City Croquet Club read a report on their engagement with Health Focus (local Allied Health Clinic).

Personal contact with an Allied Health professional was considered the best approach taking the videos on a USB drive.

Speak to fellow club members to ask them to contact their own health professional, taking the videos on a USB drive if possible.

Health officers at local hospitals could be targeted, to bring exercise groups to a croquet club.

10.45 am

Greg Bryant, Croquet NZ Croquet Development Officer

What has Croquet NZ been doing to grow croquet in NZ? Has the image of croquet in NZ changed? Specially interested in focus on younger players.

Timeline for Greg's position:

- 2010/11 Sport Development Officer established
- 2013 - began part-time
- 2015 - now a full time position, funded by grant monies

Major tasks during this time frame:

- drafting job description
- setting up infrastructure
- align club objectives with state objectives, pick one or two objectives and work with clubs to achieve these
- establish 'red flag' - if a club had less than 10 members per lawn then they were recognised as struggling
- understand what each group is looking for, meet those needs eg kids like to play with their peers, want to learn skills, discover what their skills are
- retention rates are about giving members what they want, provide a quality experience
- recognise that club membership model is changing - play as you play model with non-members paying a relatively substantial contributions
- from above bullet point, treat social players as social players, no benefits, promote benefits of affiliation
- current programs in NZ contributing to 15% nett growth
- recognise external/internal influences
- establish external partnerships to increase public awareness of croquet
- work towards sustainability/credibility

- develop regional responsibility
- rewrite coaching programs - not what to coach but how to coach, coaching program now player centred
- schools sports curriculum - create interschool competition, then kids come to clubs
- participation of current non-participating in sport

Concerns

- recognition that there was virtually no nett club membership growth, new membership replaced those leaving
- recognition that a large number of clubs were struggling - age/image of croquet
- social players questioning affiliation fee, players need to appreciate that they are getting something for their affiliation fee, part of Marketing & Promotion to promote affiliation
- social players access the benefits of the sport but don't contribute to the development of the sport

Strategies

- use of current 2% youth members to change image of croquet
- volunteers can do what a Sport Development Officer can do
- need structure to bring kids together/provide a reason to come back
- by 2025 CNZ KPI is youth membership 5%
- all CNZ Under 21's play Association Croquet
- send posters to clubs
- create templates for club news editors
- change coaching philosophy/create enthusiasm in club
- roll out of youth program specifically timed to school year
- regions take care of junior/youth squad
- scholarships pay for club affiliation for youth squad, pathway to World Championships

11.55 am

Q&A. Changing the image of croquet: the new Croquet Vic strategic plan 2021 - 2025.

The Workshop reviewed the 'Image' goals of the Draft 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.

General agreement on the vision:

To extend the public recognition and the development of croquet as a sport and a recreational activity for people of all ages and abilities.

Publicity Officers to contribute to draft of Image section of the Strategic Plan.

Wayne Worlidge, Maria Harvey and Terri Manwaring agreed to review templates/resources

Consensus - Publicise croquet as a sport

12.30 am – 1 pm Lunch

1.00 pm

Small groups:

- 1 Draft resources for publicity officers - online tool - awaiting final version from Ellie Norris after amendment with suggestions from workshop.
- 2 Takeaway ideas from the workshop
Each attendee was asked to name one task they would undertake when they returned to their club.

1.50 am

Report back

2.20 am

Feedback sheet: collated and attached.

PUBLICITY OFFICERS WORKSHOP
Tuesday 22 October 2019
Summary of feedback

22 answers were received. Some people did not answer every question.

1. How would you describe your experience of today's workshop?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The issues discussed were relevant to me			2	16	5
I can see how I could cooperate with other croquet publicity officers in the future			8	13	1
The workshop format worked well		1	2	16	4
The workshop went on too long	3	11	7	2	
I could see and hear the speakers		3	7	11	2
Catering was suitable			2	15	4

2. Best thing about this workshop

Many mentioned more than one.

New ideas	15
Networking	13
Greg Bryant's presentation	10

Typical comments:

Greg Bryant. Hearing what other clubs do re Come and Try, Active April.

Talking to people from other clubs. Greg's talk.

Social media – need to be more informed. More targeted in selection of images. Greg Bryant from NZ. Great example of success!

Meeting other club members, discussing problems they were having. Listening to Greg talking about the NZ Croquet Marketing and how they're going about it.

Meeting of people with like minded interests.

Ideas about publicity to go back to the club with. Enthusiasm of other attendees. I will follow up our local media outlet with story ideas.

The ideas that have been brought forward as to how to promote croquet and hopefully we can get more people into the game.

Highlighted ideas that would / might (!) work. Need to follow up not "leave in the cupboard".

The coverage of opportunities.

Small group discussion at the beginning as that was my focus and purpose for attending.

3. Suggested improvements for future workshops

None	4
More clubs attending	4
Screen	2
More time for discussions	1
Australian guest speakers	1
Get feedback on outcomes	1

Sound	1
Shorter	1
Pre-circulate documents to be discussed	1
Opportunity to sit in on other groups	1

Typical comments

Larger screen for presentations – it was difficult to read some of the information. Thank you, I really enjoyed the day and the opportunity to attend the workshop.

Reposition the TV screen to minimise reflective light.

Make it 10 to 1.

Regionally based, perhaps generate increased attendance.

It possibly needs to involve more clubs from all over Victoria to be involved.

Feedback on progress made by clubs after having attended this workshop.

Guest speakers that continue the development of croquet throughout Australia not just Victoria. Greg was SUPERB!!!

I thought the workshop worked well. Some workshops could be longer. Speakers to stand at the front [not always audible].

Continue with asking what club publicity officers can do to support state's efforts to lift image of croquet.

If we are to review documents and give constructive feedback, provide them prior to the workshop for pre-reading.

4. Possible topics for future discussion

Clubs to report successful recruitment strategies	5
Outcomes of this workshop	1
Expand on topics of today.	1
Streaming	1
Social networks/Facebook for social players	1
Sponsorship	1
Social media reports from clubs	1
Media promotion of croquet	1
Streaming as opposed to TV coverage	1
Practical help by Croquet Victoria	1
All Ability Croquet	1
Coffee creche and croquet	1
Contact with MPs	1
Impact of new club in area	1

5. What take away ideas for publicity might you implement at your club? Could Croquet Vic help?

Social media	3
Juniors	3
Community contact	3
Grants and funding	2
Allied health	2

Press contact	2
Non-specific	2
Focus on membership	1
Focus on promotion / publicity	1
Web management	1
Brochure	1
Poster template	1
Council contact	1
Signboard	1

Typical comments:

How to get more junior players, and keep those who do come to Come and Try days.

Try to coordinate regional clubs and introduce a junior competition. Make better use of publicity materials provided by VCA.

Package an experience and offer it. Youth programs – staged implementation.

Publicity Officers' committee.

Ramping up club social media. Poster distribution to local medical facilities. May wish to contact Croquet Vic for social media assistance.

Improvement to management of our website.

Possible brochure.

Templates for posters / information.

Local Council and Newspaper alertness to croquet in Brimbank.

Contact newspapers more often.

Follow up local Council contact. Get Committee to look at videos – discuss individual members distributing on USBs. Investigate becoming a member of community radio station.

Getting club members to promote croquet by visiting places – libraries, community centres, service clubs etc.

Contact with service clubs – forward monthly newsletter to them.

Calendar was a good idea.

Make sure that our club name is clear visible and modern. Contact teachers and local businesses for sponsorship and promotion activities.

Communication with other sources of sponsorship and grants for different equipment etc.

Funding would help.