

# Coaches & Managers

January 2008



*Most of the junior players have benefited from volunteers who have stepped forward to help with managing the teams, and I know that the coaches of these teams are very grateful for the help. I thought that it would be timely to remind coaches and managers of what they are expected to do, and how they combine to run the team during the season.*

## What is a Coach?

Well everyone has his or her own idea of what a coach is, so I do not really have to explain. But I guess it is important that we all recognise the task for what it really is – being a teacher and mentor to a team who want to perform as best they can.

A coach is “a person who instructs performers to do specific things”. When there is a discrepancy between what is required and what is performed, then the coach must know:

- What went wrong
- Why it went wrong, and
- How to fix it.

I am not going to tell you how to achieve these three points. There are far more experienced coaches out there who can help you do that (and I recommend anyone who is serious about coaching make the time and effort to use the resources available – such as the Orientation to Coaching and Level 1 coaching sessions, and the coaching classes run by Vicki Jansen). But you should at least keep notes of the game (even if only mentally) so that you can identify the first point! I personally make only a few notes at the game (being a bloke I can either write or watch, but not both!), but I spend a few minutes straight after the game writing down what was good and what was not so good. This can often be the basis of discussion at the next training session.

Preparation for the training sessions is important. There are many ways that you can go about this, but suffice to say that a lot of planning is needed. You usually have only a small amount of time for training (usually about an hour or so) and you cannot afford to waste it. So please make sure that you go to each session with a plan – training may not go completely according to the plan, but at least you know what you are trying to achieve.

Now we know where all the coach’s time goes, what can we do to keep things on the rails? Call in a manager!

## What is a Manager?

While a coach’s job seems to be reasonably easy to tie down, it may be a lot harder to define the role of the team manager. But one thing is for certain, the manager is *not* the dogsbody for everyone else – the manager is an integral part of the team and has the responsibility of keeping everything in order. I see the primary roles of the manager as:

- Making sure the team members know when training is on, and liaising with other teams to combine training sessions if required
- Making sure members know where and when to be for the next match (or umpiring, canteen duties, etc).
- Making sure that the team bag is in the right place, at the right time, with the right equipment (pinnies, balls, first aid kit, etc).
- Helping the coach plan the players’ positions for the next game.
- Keeping track of who plays where and when, and advising the coach if someone is not getting their fair time on the court (this is particularly important in the junior grades). Sometimes the coach likes to track this, but in my experience the coach should be looking at the team play, and not statistics.

As we can see, there is more to being a manager than some think, and it does take a lot of your time too!

## So – Who’s in Charge of What?

Obviously there is a lot of teamwork required between the coach and the manager, but if you want a simplistic view of who does what, try this:

*The coach runs the team during training and at the game, but the manager runs the team the rest of the time!*

*If you have anything that you would like to ask about, then please give me a call on 4960 9008 or 0409 783 046.*

*Nick Osborne*