



He who fails to plan, plans to fail... anon

With society going through such fast paced and radical change, sports clubs and organisations are facing serious threats to their future and are being forced to become more methodical in their approach to the management and administration aspects of sport; specifically planning.

It is a known fact that sports organisations are generally weak in this respect a fact that was verified by the local sports community at the Regional Sports Organisation forum in June. Since then Sport Wellington Wairarapa has had the privilege of working closely with organisation like the Wairarapa Tennis Association, who have seen significant decrease in their sport over the past ten years and now realise the importance planning plays in the sustainability of sport.

There are often many philosophies over the reasons organised sport is on the decrease, one of the most common is: that the youth of today lack self motivation etc. However a recent survey of Wairarapa secondary school students conducted by Whai Ora; pointed to the same factors that limit adult participation behind youth participation; i.e. time, money and employment.

A recent Tennis case study also verifies this; earlier this year the Wairarapa Tennis Association ran a secondary school tennis module. This module was so successful that within one year tennis has now become the highest participation summer code in colleges. Why? It met the market; low cost on weekday afternoons (secondary students work mostly on weekends). The most significant outcome of this is it proves society is not moving away from sport, rather sport is not adapting to be relevant and accessible to society.

Tennis is now working closely with Sport Wellington Wairarapa to develop a robust long term plan for the region that will not only endeavour to meet the market but will take a 'whole of sport' approach to the future direction of tennis in the region. This approach has proven to be successful around the world and it is a real privilege to work alongside organisations like Wairarapa Tennis, Bowls Wairarapa and Martinborough Rugby Club who are a few of the groups that have engaged in the process through the Sport Wellington Wairarapa workshops. These workshops are designed specifically to our regions needs but rely on what is proven to be 'best practice' around the world to provide direction.

I personally encourage all sports organisations to engage with our organisation to assist with planning for your sport; we understand the difficulties sport is facing and while we don't have a silver bullet to all of the problems, we definitely have the tools and resources to help your sport secure a more certain future. And it all begins with planning for: *"He who fails to plan, plans to fail"*.