

HANDBOOK

THE SALVATION ARMY
AUSTRALIA SOUTHERN
TERRITORY
SPORTS MINISTRY



*Building bridges and connecting
people to the local church*

PREFACE

This document is to respond to the request of the Territorial Program Planning Council to develop a Sports Ministry Policy for the Territory. The intention is to develop thinking beyond the traditional boundaries of sport in The Salvation Army as Basketball / Netball competition and to look at ways that ministry is developing through sport and the opportunities to holistically use sport in its many options.

This 'handbook' is a developing resource from which we as an organisation can capture the exciting possibilities that sports ministry has to offer. It is prepared to encourage and stimulate the potential ministry opportunities when connecting sport with Church.

This handbook has been prepared by Major Lyn Cochrane
Southern Territory Sports Ministry Co-ordinator

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PHILOSOPHY

Australia is a sports mad nation. Very few nations throughout the world can state that 96% of its population is interested in sport. This means that at any given time in a school classroom – only one child doesn't want to go out and play sport, or in a Corps setting 2-3 people don't want to know about sport. We are indeed a sports mad nation.

Many Australians see it as their one great escape in life – the crowds, the stories of human struggle – the triumphs and tragedies.

Until a few years ago the Church and Sport were poles apart. But today, the profile of sport has never been higher, the challenge to the Christian community has never been greater. We need to capture the opportunities to bring sport and the Church together and present the gospel of Jesus.

The Salvation Army has led the way in using sporting associations to bring people together. The challenge is, to effectively use this tool to bring people into their own personal relationship with Jesus and connect them with the body of the Church.

SPORT, LEISURE OR PLAY?

Sport may be defined as a way of using time in a combination of physical and mental skills, and more often this is associated with competition.

A definition of *Leisure* in its simplest form may mean free time. However, it expands to other activities – to cultural pursuits, recreation, entertainment, hobbies and social activities. It is even suggested that leisure is a higher quality of life – a state of the soul or wellbeing.

To *play* suggests a spirit or mood – an attitude of the mind. This could be developed further as *play* has the distinguishing traits of light-heartedness, high spiritedness, enjoyment, and celebration.

The Christian Church in recent times has begun to rethink the ethics of play and we now are reminded play is at the heart of God himself and that God has placed a spirit of play into His creatures. God created people to play - as well as work and worship.

The theologian J. Moltmann(1926) argues that an appropriate theology of work must include an appropriate theology of play. Work must encompass freedom for self presentation and thus playfulness....In the seriousness of work also belongs, in a human sense, the relaxed joy of existence: "Let it be!" (*On Human Dignity*, ET, London and Philadelphia, 1984,p41; cf. *Theology of Play*, ET, New York, 1972).

Whilst endorsing the God given gift of play we need also to acknowledge the potential for abuse of play through addiction to play, compulsive competitiveness in play, excessive spending and wasted resources, time wasting, and abandonment of duty to name a few.

'there is a time for everything, including laughing and dancing' (Ecc 3:4)

A Christian view of leisure begins with creation. After God performed His work of creation 'he rested, and was refreshed' (Ex.31:17RSV) Jesus also follows this example when during his busy public years he found times of retreat. A Christian leisure ethic is rooted in an ethic of responsible pleasure, to have an ability to enjoy life outside of work and obligation. Jesus' redemptive purpose is to enable people to have 'life...to the full' (Jn 10:10) and this comes to us all as part of God's purpose for us all.

The abuse of leisure through immoral activities and self indulgence needs to be carefully avoided, but we should each take this gift and use our time wisely in responsible pleasure.

There are many analogies in the New Testament drawn from sport and comparing to the Christian life that help us in our journey through life. But as in life too, sport can be abused and lead to sin. We need to guard against it becoming a false religion, unsportsmanlike behaviour, 'win at all cost behaviour', deceit, time wasting, gambling just to name a few.

Stuart Weir in his book *'What the book says about Sport'*, (p42, Oxford 2000) suggests that the following elements must be included when developing a theology for sport.

SPORT IS -

- a gift from God
- part of god's creation
- an opportunity for worship
- an opportunity to love one's neighbour
- a testing ground
- an opportunity for witness
- important but not all important
- not the source of our significance as people.

DEFINING 'SPORTS MINISTRY'

Sport is a worldwide activity engaging people at all levels in all walks of life. From the spectator level through to participation and to the elite sporting level, there is opportunity to intentionally reach out to people and share the good news of the Gospel.

Sport is culturally relevant and therefore gives opportunity to reach out to people of all nationalities in a multicultural society.

Sporting personalities can reach very high profiles, even to the point of being worshipped. When sports personalities become Christians and model Jesus they can have a platform that is a very powerful tool for God.

Therefore a definition of sports ministry could be –

“ Sports Ministry is a strategy that engages people in an environment where they are comfortable – sport in its many forms. Ministry opportunities are created by building communities, reaching out to people in all walks of life in a holistic way, taking opportunities to share faith, communicate the gospel and disciple people in their Christian walk.”

It is important to remember that Sports Ministry is a strategy. There needs to be some intentional purpose so that there is more than Sport – activity, to develop the relevant opportunities for ministry.

INCARNATIONAL THEOLOGY AND MISSION STRATEGY AS A FOUNDATION FOR SPORTS MINISTRY

Sport Culture

Sport, in general, but also in many cases each sport, is a sub-culture within our society. It's where people spend their time and disposable income, develop needs-based community and mutual caring, and derive meaning and identity, etc., just as ethnic cultures do in their own distinctive ways. This level of cultural affiliation cannot be ignored when considering sports ministry in our society.

For example, is starting a ministry with skaters really a sports ministry or is it a cross-cultural mission? Skating has followed surfing in developing and sustaining its own sub-cultural identity that the majority of skaters subscribe to. To complicate matters, there are several sub-cultures with skating, which use the same public and recreational spaces, but are very different and rarely mix together. So a sports ministry to skaters has quickly become more complicated because of the cultural issues involved. To begin such a ministry, do you study how to do sports ministry, or are cross-cultural mission studies more appropriate, or both?

Another example worth considering is a weekly 'court' sport, such as volleyball or basketball, where the participants may or may not be as enmeshed in the culture that surrounds their sport. Some participants will spend much of their time and resources in the culture of their particular sport, while for others their once-a-week involvement is the extent of their interest, perhaps not even for the sport itself, but for social reasons. Then again, there are also people who are involved in many sports and for them sport in general is a significant part of their cultural makeup compared to someone who is not involved at all either as a participant or spectator. These factors will also affect the kind of ministry and mission that may be undertaken under the 'banner' of sports ministry.

Biblical Basis: Incarnational Theology and Mission Strategy

Thanks to John D'Alton for allowing me to use this material which comes out of reflections from over 20 years of Frontier Servants ministry in many different cultures. – The following are excerpts from an article, the full version is available @: www.frontier.com.au/neotribal/train/incarn/incarnation1

John 1:1 and 1:14 contain an amazing idea- that the eternal Word took on human flesh i.e. "incarnated" and lived among us. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory..."

Jesus Christ didn't have to do this, but he chose to enter our world as one of us. Not only did He come as a human - God in human flesh, but also "...being

found in appearance as a man, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." This is pretty incredible.

The incarnation was a massive leaving behind and giving up, and entering into a completely different situation (culture). Was He the typical blond-haired and blue-eyed person you often see in paintings? No, the Word took on a particular flesh for a particular situation - Jewish flesh, hair colour etc. That meant He didn't stand out as strange. He fitted in to the culture. In fact, Jesus incarnated so perfectly, they didn't even believe He was anything other than just a man!

Jesus commanded the disciples to follow this model: "...as the Father has sent me, so I send you." Incarnation is therefore foundational to Biblical mission. Historically, missionaries have done radical incarnational things- Hudson Taylor etc took on Chinese clothing, culture, and thought forms to reach China. William Carey used Hindu words for God and salvation etc.

But within Australia, Christians often forget to think like missionaries. It is too easy to see various subcultures as 'all evil'. Ordinary Aussies think Jesus is cool but... they don't want to have to change into some weird freak culture to follow Christ. But like the early church, if they can stay Roman, Greek or Jewish, in all ways not sinful, and follow Christ while staying within their culture, then many will.

It's time for Christians to move out of our comfortable culture in church, and empty ourselves like Christ did. We must "incarnate" into different subcultures and like Paul, start transformed communities of faith. We can't wait in church for people to come to us; we have to follow Jesus out there to where the people are. It's the way of Christ - can we afford not to follow His model?

14 Points for incarnational ministry into any culture:

(from www.frontier.com.au/neotribal/howto)

- Become an "insider"- join the culture, be where the people are.
- Give up your "outside" culture behaviour, eg. religious language.
- Stop trying to "get people into church".
- Develop a role within the culture so that people respect you.
- Meet lots of people and learn what they think about.
- Learn to appreciate and embrace the good things in the culture.
- Challenge the evil, use the "grey" and affirm the good.
- Learn to think and feel like a native of the culture- become one without sin.
- Work out what is "good news" in that culture.
- Work out how people will follow Jesus in that culture.
- Share your faith in culturally appropriate ways.
- Resist the urge to import other church cultures into the scene.
- Let new Christians in that culture work out what "church" means for them.
- Work as a team so you change the culture rather than losing your faith in it.

Incarnational mission to sports cultures

The implications of incarnational theology and mission strategy will range from sport being a part of the cross-cultural consideration in faith and mission among sporting participants, to a particular sporting culture being the primary cultural consideration for you to incarnate with the gospel, and in either case, faith and mission then finding new expression from within that each unique sub-culture.

Put more simply, sport may be part of the cultural 'make-up' of a person or group you wish to reach with the gospel, or it may be their entire identity; including language, dress, recreation, socialization, values, meaning and even faith. Being interested in, or providing opportunities for, sport so we can make contact with people and eventually convince them to come to and be involved in church culture is a mission strategy proven over a substantial time to be ineffective at best, and a complete failure and misrepresentation of the gospel at worst.

Sports Ministry within The Salvation Army

Given the increasing affluence in our society, and the commercial value of sport and recreation, there is a place for The Salvation Army to provide access to these activities for people who would otherwise be financially or socially excluded. This provision is an important demonstration of love that is 'good news' for a segment of our society, and part of the invitation by Jesus to experience "life in all its fullness". It is an expression of 'point 9' of the 14 points for incarnational ministry into any culture (above).

Otherwise, mission and ministry to sporting cultures should be one aspect, with many expressions, of a wider missional strategy to bring the gospel to all Australians through incarnation of the gospel into any and all sub-cultural groups. This happens when we go (in small teams) and incarnate the cultures around us, and re-interpret the gospel from within their framework and allow them to find expressions for their 'own-culture-bound' faith.

(The paper above on Incarnational Ministry has been prepared by Chris Warren of Eastern Victoria DHQ)

SO WE ASK THE QUESTION ‘WHY SPORTS MINISTRY?’

- It is effective
- It is Biblically based
- AND it works.

Sport can be a tool for discipleship – competition is a great classroom as it allows participants to live out what they learn. Through participating in a team, and actively engaging in Bible study together the team or individual is able to apply what they are learning. This to many can be a great challenge.

Sport gives opportunity for fellowship –relational evangelism is possible through a myriad of opportunities. This is not only so for those who may be playing sport, but to supporters or parents / children involved in teams. It must be remembered that this is long term, but is a great way for the bigger church to break down into smaller groups and then to help the church to reach out into the community.

Sport is a source of support – this is done through small group ministry in and around teams.

Sport is useful to teach servanthood – through volunteering and service opportunities people learn what it means to serve Jesus and the Church

Sport trains leaders – People are trained in leadership in many ways though participating in sporting teams

Sport holds people together – through difficult times, a link with a sporting team may be the only connection with the church.

Sport can be a conduit for God’ call – through participation in sports ministry and actively involved in service it is possible that people may be lead on to full time service in ministry.

Sport is a mission tool through Major events outreach – as people explore the many opportunities to be involved in mission teams they develop their own skills in evangelism, which in turn is taken back to their own congregations.

Sport is a cross-cultural opportunity – sport is an international language that can be used in today’s multicultural society.

Sport is International – Christians will gain access to places in years to come that were closed doors in the past as the Olympics go to Greece and China. The church needs to be ready to seize this window of opportunity.

Sport is healthy – and is a useful tool in working with people who are marginalised and disadvantaged by building confidence and self-esteem

SPORTS MINISTRY IN THE AUSTRALIA SOUTHERN TERRITORY.

1. SPORTING ASSOCIATIONS

Basketball is coordinated through associations in Victoria (53 teams), South Australia (40 teams) and Western Australia (48 teams) on Monday nights. Volleyball matches are held in Melbourne Central (predominantly teams from Social centres) and Eastern Vic (9 Corps teams) on Monday nights. Netball is held on Saturday afternoons in Melbourne Central Division. Cricket is held in season in Victoria and South Australia.

An observation of the degree of 'ministry' that occurs through these associations will vary for each group. However it is apparent that much energy is needed just to get the organisational structures in place. The amount of intentional sports ministry is reflected through the work of some individuals and through particular Corps who see the valuable opportunities to reach out to participants.

There is also variance in the levels of competition and codes of behaviour. Volleyball is played at a more social level, with less emphasis on skill and more on the team and relationship building and the benefits in participation.

There is some intentional outreach occurring through these associations; particularly to make the presentation or celebration times an opportunity for evangelism.

There is numerical growth in each of our associations and each is financially independent.

Statistically Basketball is on the decline in Australia, however the Salvation Army associations all run at maximum capacity and in Victoria is the largest private basketball association.

2. ANNUAL SPORTING CARNIVALS

The Interterritorial Basketball/Netball Carnival is held over a one-week period each July in rotation between NSW, VIC, and SA, WA. On average 30 – 34 teams participate and the participants fund the event. Some monies are gained through sponsorship.

The annual Inter-territorial cricket carnival is rotated through participating divisions and is held in the period Christmas to New Year. The participants also fund this event.

The ministry of events such as carnivals comes from the team aspects – the relationship and leadership developments that occur to make such a big event

happen. There is also opportunity for evangelism through Church parades and daily devotional periods.

3. SKATE PARKS

'The Shed' is a fully established Skate Park and operates as part of the Cranbourne Corps outreach. The local council owns the building but the Salvation Army owns all contents in the building. The Shed is open to the public during the week for a full program of activities.

The model of sports ministry at 'The-Shed' steps out of traditional thinking as much of what is done is relationship building where the staff and volunteers look for ministry opportunities at each activity they do.

The activities are seen as 'the church' – not a stepping-stone to the church. Kids come to pay and skate – what right do we have to impact on their time? However through the dedication of the volunteers and staff, relationships are built that opens doors to opportunities for ministry.

Of particular impact is the Monday Night Kids club – a learn to skate club where intentional outreach occurs through a subsidised program. Up to 100 kids attend this each Monday night where a team of volunteers work and a more deliberate and intentional sports ministry program is possible. A 'positive lifestyle' message is delivered through this program.

Visit www.salvationarmy.org.au/theshed for more information.

Further developments of 'skate park' outdoor arenas are developing and another model is seen in WA at the Gurd's Café and Skateboard park (Karratha Corps)

4. CAMPING PROGRAMS

There is a number of Corps & Divisions offering specialist camping programs – surf camps, adventure camping, wilderness camping, and day adventure sports. In recent years we have seen the introduction of recreation modules into the Creative Arts camp, which could be further developed.

5. STATE YOUTH GAMES

This is an annual event organised by The Churches of Christ and in recent years opened up to other denominations. It is held the June long weekend and is 3 full days of sport and camping. At the last games there were 3 Salvation Army groups involving over 100 young people.

6. SPORTS INTEREST GROUPS

Some specialist groups have been developing –

Eg: Motorcycling club in Eastern Victoria Division. & Golf days at a number of our corps.

Further development of this could be through groups that meet in regular competition coming together for an annual competition eg. Indoor bowling groups. One day we might even see *'The SALVO GAMES'*

7. KIDS GAMES

We are only beginning to explore the possibilities that this new program has to offer bringing together kids, sports, churches and bible teaching.

8. SENIORS PROGRAMS

Sporting endeavours of our seniors should not be forgotten as a number of Corps has operated very successful indoor bowling groups. Gentle exercise and walking groups are also 'springing up' across our territory.

9. SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Social Centres are leading the way when it comes to Sports programs and the importance of sport in the lives of their clients. Through a program called Reclink we can see a range of sports activities – cycling, football, basketball.

The measure of success of these programs can often be seen in the individual now having a reason to get out of bed each day – however how much more could be achieved if the church supported these programs and through chaplaincy added the vital component that would make this sport 'ministry' to the whole person.

Brunswick Corps lead the way in integrating sport through Corps and Social program links in an effective way. One of the driving forces behind what happens in the Melbourne Central Division is the terrific opportunity sport has for building community amongst those who are social isolates.

MCD through its associations and through the local Corps share significant stories about personal impact on people because of their involvement in sporting teams, the team building and sense of belonging that comes from that.

10. CORPS TEAMS IN LOCAL COMPETITION

We have a number of Corps where SA Associations are not available and teams are entered into local sporting associations but registered as SA teams. We see this in the Geelong region where up to 8 teams have been registered in competitions in recent years. Keilor Corps also coordinate a very effective basketball association linking over 100 Corps people into the local competitions. Delacombe corps coordinates 5 teams in the local volleyball competition. As yet not all see the intentional ministry opportunities, but it is happening and the seeds are being planted.

11. INDIVIDUALS IN LOCAL COMPETITION

This is a commitment by an individual who sees the opportunity to use their sporting commitments to become involved in a team sport and become intentional about outreach. This is one to one relational evangelism.

12. SPECTATOR EVANGELISM

Being a spectator is a valid form of ministry – when people become intentional in purpose and together watch a sport either by going to the event or television coverage and use this to build relationships that can open doors to ministry opportunities. This is also relevant as parents & friends together on the sideline when part of a Corps team.

13. SPORTS MINISTRY YOUTH INTERNSHIP

Plenty valley Corps employ a dedicated Sports ministry Youth Worker (part-time). Youth internship could be a further development of this to access appropriate training for more Workers to develop their skills in this area.

14. CHAPLAINCY in SPORT

Currently we have Capt. Brendan Nottle, Chaplain to the Collingwood Football team. Recently appointed is Major Di Corkery as Chaplain to the Australian Women's Cricket team. This opens doors of opportunity and access to elite sports people and an opportunity for the Salvation Army to be involved.

Chaplaincy should not just be seen as elite sport, but also through the many people we have working with and supporting local level teams. The potential for officers and lay people to become 'official chaplains' at any level of sport is a new field of opportunity, which should be explored and encouraged.

MODELS OF STADIUM MINISTRY.

It has been seen around the world that the opportunities through sports stadium to develop sports based programs has grown. The Americans in particular have grown this style of ministry in a variety of Corps & Community based programs from sports centres attached to Corps to stand alone Community programs. In Australia we have a limited number of Sports Stadium Church Centres. The Baptist Church and Churches of Christ would lead the way in this, however, the Eastern Territory now have a 3 models of Stadium/Sports Ministry Centres.

THE PIONEERS - MODELS FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS

Example 1.

Lakeside – Perth Western Australia

This centre is owned and operated by The Baptist Church and has evolved over the last 10 years under the current Minister Pastor Phil Bryant. About 12 years ago the church was looking for land to build and in their search found the block where they built which was zoned recreational. The response was to build the stadium and develop their Church. In the beginning they did not know how and there were no other 'models' to draw on an Australian experience. But the Church together learned from their experience to build a Church, and today is seen as the forerunner in stadium style ministry. Currently 300 - 350 people meet in the morning service and, depending on the style of evening meetings 70 – 200 attend.

This is also the only Church with its own State Basketball team registered to play competition at the elite level. The benefit in this is that the Church now has direct access into the schools of their region for coaching clinics and using the Christian players on the team are able to deliver effective ministry in schools. The decision to enter the State league came about because they were losing many kids in their early teens to go to other competitions for a pathway to elite competition. It was decided that they needed to offer a quality-coaching program to hold kids within the centre and not lose them at critical points in their development.

The facility that the Church operate from, is owned by them (still some property debt outstanding - \$200,000 repaid each year) and is a 4 court Basketball Stadium and well equipped fitness centre. When Church is held the carpet is rolled out, the stage/sound equipment rolled out and chairs moved onto a court. This a labour intensive process and volunteers attend to this each time.

Out of Church activity time, the stadium court time is maximised with 100% usage in basketball, netball and some badminton competition. The stadium is now viable financially but has taken many years to develop and get to that

stage. The operation is still dependant on volunteers and the maintenance is performed using congregation members and working bees.

The difference in this Church to other Baptist Churches is that they are in a constant 'state of mission' – not a once a year event. It is statistically the fastest growing Baptist Church in Australia. Some 6,000 people pass through this Centre each week, 5,000 are non-believers

Example 2

Warrick stadium Perth WA

This 4 court Basketball Stadium is operated by The Church of Christ in Perth and is a different model in that is essentially a Community service model. The Centre was built in partnership with the council 11 years ago and along with the Sports Centre the Council operated a community service program. In recent years this has been also handed over to the Church to operate and so now the Church is responsible to the Council to operate the Community programs – art classes, exercise, budgeting, lifestyle programs. The most notable difference from the Lakeside model is that there is no Church base here. The intention was to own and operate a Community facility that would feed into local Churches and if viable, return money to the Church for mission. It was built as an opportunity for Churches to work together and as a model for leadership development.

The Centre has had a struggle to remain viable although now under a different management structure is reaching the goal of raising money to feed back into Church projects. It was built with a 15-year low interest loan repayment debt. Maintenance costs are part of the operating budget.

There is also a ministry to the prison using sport that is coordinated from this centre. The focus of the Centre is on Social and Community Sport.

Example 3

Dural – Sydney

This is a 'multi court' stadium of Church operated by the Baptist Church in the Sydney northern/hills area. It has 8 courts of different surfaces used for a variety of sports – indoor netball, soccer, hockey and martial arts. The most rapid growing sport at this centre is indoor soccer. Some 7,000 people pass through this centre each week. It is a very functional building with a range of smaller rooms as well as other buildings on the same site. Sunday worship is held on a court with seating rolled out and the stage/sound equipment built into the court area. It operates essentially as a community facility with thousands of people each week involved in sports activities. On Sunday morning it becomes a church for the day. The main difference in this facility is the court surface and structure. It is not a basketball stadium. Multi – sport is played and the maintenance requirements are different to a basketball stadium. The stadium operation is viable due to its size and court mix.

This is said to be a healthy and growing church. Financially the centre is viable and operates with high staff levels including pastoral staff.

Up to 500 people meet on Sundays for worship. The Church is now 10 years old and was built to respond to the community need for the facility and the Churches desire to have 'connections with the community' – this was seen in a sporting context. The centre is never empty – and the church is seeing people come through sport into the Church.

MODELS FROM THE SALVATION ARMY EASTERN TERRITORY

Example 4

Tweed Heads – Gold Coast

This facility is owned and operated by The Salvation Army. The Centre is an 'A' grade indoor venue in modern facilities. It operates basically as a sports and lifestyle centre with a range of sporting and other programs. Church life is a key component that is a vital part of this Centre. There is a growing Corps operating out of this facility.

The court surfaces are 'sprung floor' x 4 basketball courts, which cater for basketball and netball competitions. There are also conference facilities available for use, which is part of their function centre. Other programs offered from here, along with the sporting competition include

- Counselling service by qualified counsellors 2 days per week
- Toddler Time – structured play and parent support time
- Movement to Music – gentle exercise group for seniors
- Craft – informal and relaxed craft group

The establishment of the Corps was a church plant over 2 years ago. It came about as a result of much consultation and community demographic surveys and associated feasibility studies, which defined the need to be a basketball facility. The whole centre is seen as the Church – its focus is mission.

The centre has a Corps Officer and employs a centre manager, who together uses a team management model. The mission focus means that all they do is proactive – it is life skills and relationship based.

Unfortunately the business side does impact and the need to be viable brings its pressures. The building has had a debt, but recently the sale of some land means this debt is now clear. This will help in removing the Corps and Centre deficit in the new financial year.

Some of the particular concerns expressed by the officer related to the administration of such a centre, the staffs needs, cash flow problems and even

the maintenance requirements for such a centre. There was very large set up costs associated with the establishment.

He also talked of the need to not only run an effective sports stadium and to be 'kingdom builders' but the delicate way that was needed to marry the two goals. He felt sometimes he was so busy running a stadium- how could he do mission?

Here at Tweed Heads is an excellent model of how it can be done and there is a healthy growing church with 150 –160 people meeting each Sunday.

Example 5

Oasis Wyong – Central NSW Coast

This is a Salvation Army sports Centre operated as part of a multi faceted youth support program. The most interesting fact of this Centre is the work that has been done particularly with Youth. A key objective was to provide young people with opportunities to fully participate in the community.

The facilities provide for a sports complex, court chaplaincy, youth conferencing, employment training, a skate park, performing arts area and recording studio, auditorium gymnasium.

Adrian Kistan (Eastern Territory Sports Ministry Consultant) has said that this region had the highest youth suicide & unemployment rate in Australia. (This was also confirmed in articles published from Local government records) The work done from this centre and in this region has stemmed the tide and has been an effective agent for change.

The Centre established with government funding in response to the suicide figures is a great example of community development modelling of sports stadium. It is a good example of Corps integrating as part of social programs. There is a Corps Officer Manager and Officer chaplain. Sunday meetings have recently started to plant a Church as part of this work.

There is a network of social and support workers at this centre.

Example 6

Rockdale Corps – Sydney

This Corps in Sydney looked for a way to be 'reborn' just over 2 years ago and purchased a property that had been part of a shopping centre. The building now contains a Worship centre and multipurpose rooms and also 2 indoor sports courts.

The surface is a new surface and does not have the same labour intensity as basketball and allows for different sports to be played. Here they offer indoor netball, basketball, volleyball, but in this region soccer is the most popular.

The most interesting thing about this Corps is the location in a very multi-cultural area of Sydney. Therefore the most rapidly growing sport competition is the soccer. This means men, boys, fathers; families come in contact with The Salvation Army at this Centre. The Corps is soon to embark on positive lifestyle training programs and this will see a far greater use of all their facilities.

It is suggested that the centre is financially viable although only 2 courts in size - this is difficult to see as many of the costs are contained in the Corps/ Centre budget. The labour component is also disguised in the heavy use of the Corps Officer and volunteers in stadium & canteen management.

SO IS A 'STADIUM STYLE CHURCH' THE ONLY WAY TO DELIVER SPORTS MINISTRY?

In looking at the various models of stadium ministry the question to be answered is how does the facility link back to the Church? – This may not necessarily be the co-located Church but to the network of Church involvement. Based on the evidence, for a stadium model of Church to be effective somewhere, somehow the links must be made to the Church or in essence it is a community model that could be offered by anyone.

The question to be answered - is this our core business and what do we want to achieve in the building of the stadium? Of the 6 currently operating 'stadium style churches in Australia we see healthy growing Churches. However, have we fully explored the many opportunities for sports ministry in the existing church program? A building is not necessarily the only answer.

- The writer of this paper would recommend that any proposal for a stadium model of church ministry can only come out of a desire to grow a church through the sports centre. A proposal grown from a higher or divisional level without the ownership of the local congregation will lose its effectiveness and fail to meet its full potential.
- A stadium proposal must have ownership from a committed team who understand that this will be a long-term commitment as the church grows slowly through relational evangelism.
- The financial impact of such a proposal will also drain financial reserves in the short term, although this may turn around within a 2-3 year period when the centre maximises its usage and reaches a point of viability. This is also dependant on the level of property debt.
- When considering a proposal it may be identified that the beginnings of the proposal will respond to community development model with long term planning for a Church growth model. This however has with it the associated risk and would be a long-term commitment of personnel to achieve this goal.
- The opinion of those involved in Stadium models of ministry is that 4 courts is the minimum number of courts to be viable. For many with only 4 courts there are plans to expand and so long term planning for expansion is essential.
- The type and style of courts will depend on the desired outcomes for the sport to be offered. This of course will depend on the community needs surveys and other studies to determine the correct response in each area.
- We have seen through Salvation Army developments in Stadium ministry in Western Australia that a one-court facility will never be viable. The same infrastructure is needed for one court as for multiple courts – manager, cleaner, program etc. The viability comes by maximising the court usage. This takes time to develop and there are so many other influencing factors

For a Stadium proposal to be considered the following would be key components –

- A clear mission statement to establish its place in the church program
- Well defined goals so that it does not become ‘activity’
- The right people involved – a key team to lead the project
- With the right passion to see the church grow through sports ministry
- With the right planning – researched and developed through regional studies, demographic surveys and feasibility studies.
- Delivering the right program, identified in the right location
- With the right procedures for implementation.

But the real challenge for most Corps today is how can we establish links between our sports programs and the Corps family. How can we make a difference in peoples lives when their only connection with the Corps is through playing on a sports team?

WHAT NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN DEVELOPING A MODEL FOR SPORTS MINISTRY?

The following recommendations should be considered in any proposal to develop a sports program.

1. Defined need to establish such a ministry
 - a) need exists
 - b) corps supports the plan
 - c) DHQ supports the plan

2. Evidence that the plan is viable:
 - a) Financially - self sufficient, and shown through a business plan that includes public liability requirements.
 - b) Staffing – recommended that this not place additional burden on current staffing but that extra volunteers and staffing needs are met.
 - c) Safety – risk management assessment conducted and training and safety procedures are reflected in the business plan. All OH&S and legal requirements must be met.

3. Management structure that is functional (*MINISTRY MODEL*)
 - a) Clear purpose in mission and values (*FUTURE NOW*)
 - b) Demonstrates how relationships will be developed and people assimilated into ‘belonging communities’
 - c) Focussed on going ‘out’ to where people are, rather than simply on bringing them ‘in’.

First Things First –

So often when developing a sports program we put all our energies into the tasks related to getting to the program operating. We often forget the real important things.

Remember –

1. *Bridging Programs*: Events or Church services that are relevant to your sporting participants to introduce the gospel.
2. *Pastoral care*: Your players need to feel that they are valuable people regardless of their sporting prowess – introduce a club Chaplain
3. *Spiritual leadership*: make sure your coach/manager is a spiritual person, in tune with the goals and aspirations of your corps.
4. *Prayer*: Encourage the church to own its sporting ministry through prayer.

THE SALVATION ARMY AUSTRALIA SOUTHERN TERRITORY POLICY FOR SPORTS MINISTRY

Statement of purpose –

Salvation Army Sports Ministry exists to create belonging communities where people can explore faith issues whilst engaging in their passion for sport.

Statement of vision -

- That sports ministry will evolve with individuals and teams intentionally caring for people whilst engaging in sport activities.
- That disciples will be made as teams work and grow together whilst engaging in sports competition and activity
- That lives will be transformed as a result of ministry opportunities through sports events and evangelism
- That sports ministry opportunities will be developed to meet the needs of people of all ages and stages of life and play a part in reforming society through the positive values & relationships experienced through participation in sport.

Statement of outcomes –

1. Each corps and centre where applicable will have Sports Ministry representatives networking together and sharing resources and actively pursuing ways to disciple people through sports activities.
2. Each expression of sport activity will be represented with an accredited Chaplain
3. Mission team involvement in major sports events at regional, state and national level
4. To have developed models of ministry that are viable and effective.

Statement of rationale -

Sports Ministry is an effective and valid tool for evangelism and discipleship. For this to develop we need -

1. To develop education and training opportunities to equip people to deliver effective sports ministry.
2. To identify & develop key sports ministry personnel committed to long term sports ministry positions
3. To develop a sports chaplaincy network into all aspects of Salvation Army sports ministry.
4. To have trained and ready to respond mission teams for major events outreach.
5. To have developed 'models' of ministry to assist Corps and centres to implement sports ministry
6. To adequately resource effective models of sports ministry outreach

For local Corps, Centres and Divisions the following is important

1. To understand the theology of sports ministry.
2. Development of training and education for sports ministry.
3. Selection and development of Sports Chaplaincy network
4. Developed models of effective sports ministry

The Territory endorses the importance of sports ministry and encourages every effort made to build relationships with those engaged in sporting ministries. Leading people into a relationship with Jesus and fellowship in the local Corps/Centre is a high priority. The engagement in and fostering of healthy living through sporting activities for all ages is to be encouraged.

The Territorial preferred model for sports ministry is 'local initiative with minimal capital outlay and maximum mission engagement'. This is to be done through the creative use of our own community facilities and other available local community centres.

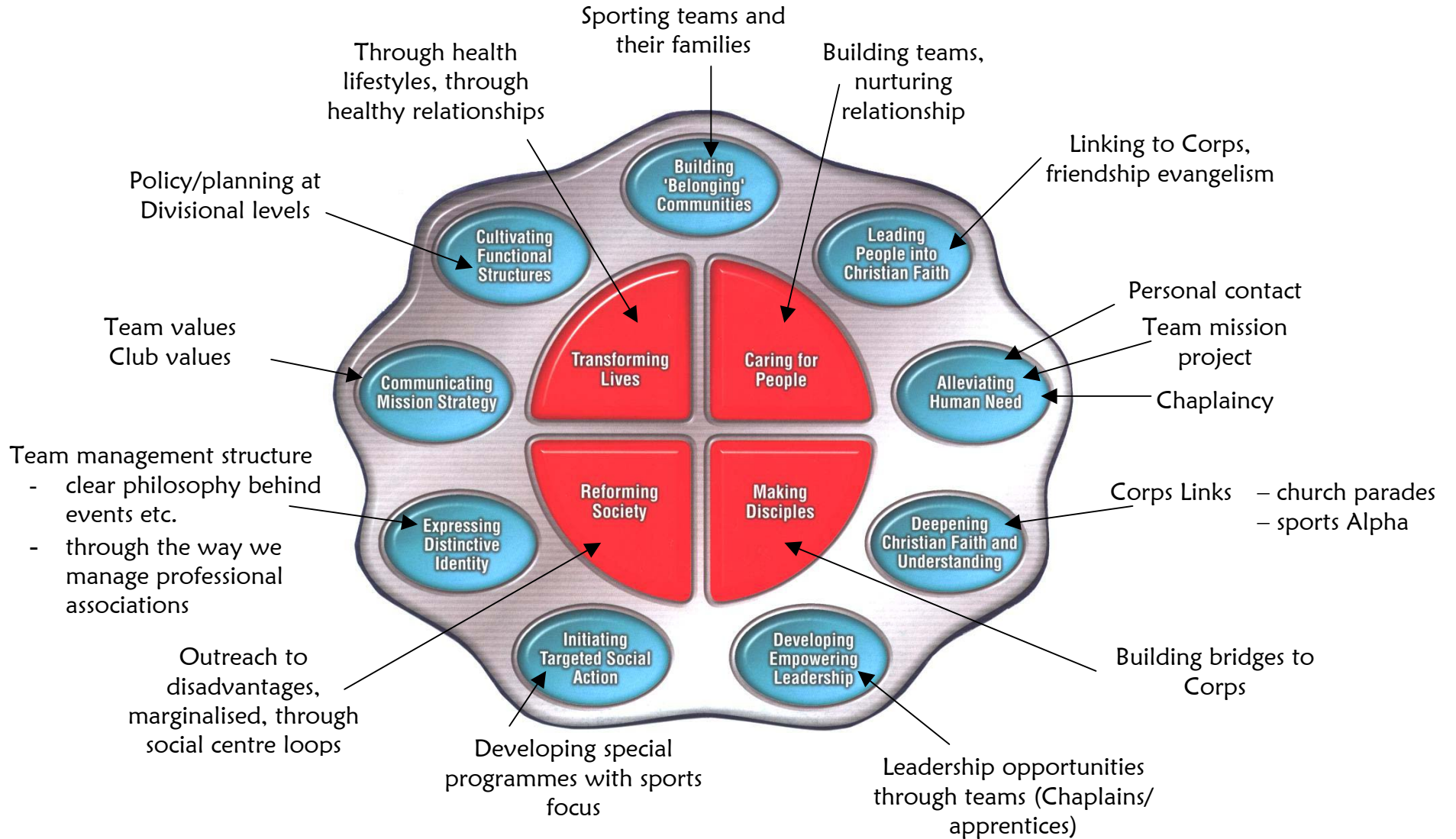
Endorsed by TPPC – 11 April 2003



SPORTS
MINISTRY and
'FUTURE NOW'



FUTURE NOW!



SPORTING CODES OF CONDUCT (see attachment 3)

The following codes of conduct have been developed from the Australian sports commission website. They will be helpful for you to consider as you develop codes that relate to your association and roles and responsibilities for all who take part.

A 'Fair Go' for young Australians

Australians are justifiably proud of the place sport has in their daily lives. But what is equally important to us all is the way the game is played and the manner in which our sportsmen and sportswoman conduct themselves.

Unfortunately, some people fail to live up to the traditional values of sport. Worse still, young people can be influenced and the rest of their sporting lives coloured by these experiences.

These Codes of Conduct identify a series of key principles on which young players, parents, coaches, spectators and officials should base their sporting involvement. If adopted, the codes will ensure that young people develop good sporting behaviours and have an enjoyable experience of sport, which will encourage them to remain involved throughout their lives.

The Codes of Conduct

Young people involved in sport have a right to participate in a safe and supportive environment. Australians are sport mad, we love our sport, however, this can at times create unpleasant situations. Over zealous parents, boisterous spectators, opinionated players and quick tempered coaches may need to be reminded of appropriate behaviour when involved in sport.

The Codes of Conduct provide a basis for fair play and encourage fun, friends and safe environments.

Taken from www.activeaustralia.org

The following codes of conduct have been prepared to be used and may be copied or adapted for use in Salvation Army sporting associations.

They include Codes of Conduct for:

- Players
- Spectators
- Parents
- Officials
- Coaches
- Administrators

DRUG & ALCOHOL FREE SPORT & HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

The Salvation Army supports healthy lifestyles and strongly encourages participants to engage in drug and alcohol free lifestyles. In the interest of health, comfort and safety of all patrons of our sporting associations the consumption of alcohol before, after or during events is not allowed.

Participants who may be showing the influence of alcohol consumption will be counselled and disallowed from participating.

The issue of drug use in sport is a much wider issue than the use of legal or illegal substance for performance enhancement. There are a number of support programs and agencies to assist in advising and counselling participants who have concerns.

For the health and safety of participants and spectators, all Salvation Army sport will be played in a smoke free environment. Most stadiums will have their own policy that will follow State legislation for smoke free environments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION –

www.smartplay.com.au

www.druginfo.adf.org.au

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Insurance

The current insurance crisis raises many concerns, particularly in relation to sporting events organised by Salvation Army Corps and social centres. Research into what is provided and what is needed in the current climate is essential. It is recommended that all leaders of sports activities understand the Army's insurance policy arrangements. There are issues around the public liability, personal accident cover, indemnity claim forms, risk management, education, training, workcover for employees (just to name some) that should be researched and understood.

When participating in any activities that present 'risk' the following points may be helpful.

1. Identify any risks
2. Assess the level of risk
3. have strategies to reduce the risk
4. Develop a risk assessment /management system for all activities
See attachment 2 for a proforma 'risk assessment'

Special event insurance can be arranged with – (or explored with your insurer)
Jardine Lloyd Thompson
Level 1/468 St Kilda Rd.
MELBOURNE 3004

Major Event Outreach

This is an exciting and growing opportunity for The Salvation Army to be involved. We have seen since the Olympics and More Than Gold the opportunities for raising the profile of the Salvation Army, working alongside other Churches in the community at major sporting events. Further planning and investigation is needed as to how best we can capitalise on these opportunities. Melbourne will be the focal point for our Territory and in particular Commonwealth Games 2006 with several other major events leading up to this.

Development of Prison Sports Ministry as a possible opportunity for outreach, is a ministry not yet reaching its potential and is worth consideration at some stage in the future.

GST Matters

Refer to your Divisional Business manager for clarification on GST Matters

Training & Education

Training & education opportunities need to be explored and developed for both lay people and officers. We should work in cooperation with the Eastern Territory in this, (through their Sports Ministry Consultant) and following research of what is available through outside networks to develop a sports ministry training package to best suit our needs. The training could be developed through the TYCM 'BackPack' training modules in the early stage and later to Cert. 1V / TAFE level through the education & Training department.

The development of a database of people with sports related qualifications that are be available to work within our programs across the Territory is needed. We have people in corps and they are unknown, or have links with people who could be available to respond to program needs. A database maintained for this purpose would be of benefit. The same database could be used to maintain a register and support for keeping the qualifications up to date eg. First aid, life saving, outdoor education.

An example of an important qualification – that is costly in isolation is first aid, but with a planned program of training and renewal the cost to the territory could be minimised.

The development of support networks for corps involved in Sports Ministry is essential for the ongoing nurture and development of such programs is essential. If you are not part of network you are encouraged to find one to be a part of it – or think of starting one in your area.

The question of Sport on Sunday?

This question may not be raised as an issue as often as it has been in the past. However, there still are issues that need to be thought through on the impact not only for the individual competing but on the congregation as a whole. An excellent article is available at:

www.christiansinsport.org.uk/sportingissues/sundaysport.html

The article written by Stuart Weir brings some balance with Biblical perspective in an attempt to answer this question.

ATTACHMENT 1

Sample Job Description - CORPS SPORTS CHAPLAIN

POSITION PURPOSE:

To develop relationships and connectedness with people involved in the Corps sporting programs and build bridges from sporting teams to the Corps.

REPORTS TO:

The Corps Officer

Liases with section leaders and pastoral care teams.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- To give support and encouragement to all expressions of active and passive sporting people in the Corps.
- To facilitate seeker sensitive services with a sports focus on a quarterly basis.
- To encourage mentoring relationships through teams and corps people
- To build bridges between the sports program and Church life.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS REQUIRED:

- Good communication skills
- Able to maintain Confidentiality
- Honest character, high integrity
- A good role model
- Modelling servant leadership

GOALS

- To attend regular practice & game times with teams – Get to know the players
- To link players with appropriate people and groups in the corps
- To be involved in Sports focus social activities and facilitate regular Worship activities with a sports focus that encourages players to participate.
- To be good role model that encourages the players to see church as 'ok'.

ATTACHMENT 2
RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

SPORTS ACTIVITY RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

POTENTIAL RISK	CAUSING FACTORS	PREVENTATIVE MEASURES	RECOVERY	RISK LEVEL	COMMENT
What can happen?	What could cause it to happen?	How can I prevent it happening?	What do I do when it happens?	Rating High Med Low	Should this activity be considered, other notes
PEOPLE					
EQUIPMENT					
ENVIRONMENT					

**ATTACHMENT 3
CODES OF BEHAVIOUR**

**PLAYERS
SPECTATORS
PARENTS
COACHES
OFFICIALS
ADMINISTRATORS**

PLAYERS

Code of Conduct

Play by the rules.

Never argue with an official. If you disagree, have your captain, coach or manager approach the official during a break or after the competition.

Control your temper. Verbal abuse of officials and sledging of other players, deliberately distracting or provoking an opponent are not acceptable or permitted behaviours in any sport.

Work equally hard for yourself and/or your team. Your team's performance will benefit, so will you.

Be a good sport. Applaud all good plays whether they are made by your team or the opposition.

Treat all participants in your sport, as you like to be treated. Do not bully or take an unfair advantage of another competitor.

Co-operate with your coach, team-mates and opponents. Without them there would be no competition.

Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit, not just to please parents and coaches.

Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

Reproduced by permission of Australian Sports Commission



*Building bridges and connecting people
to the local church*



SPECTATORS

Code of Conduct

Remember that young people participate in sport for their enjoyment and benefit, not yours.

Applaud good performance and efforts from all individuals and teams. Congratulate all participants on their performance regardless of the game's outcome.

Respect the decisions of officials and teach people to do the same.

Never ridicule or scold a young player for making a mistake. Positive comments are motivational.

Condemn the use of violence in any form, whether it is by spectators, coaches, officials or players.

Show respect for your team's opponents. Without them, there would be no game.

Encourage players to follow the rules and the officials' decisions.

Do not use foul language, sledge or harass players, coaches or officials.

Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

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Building bridges and connecting people to the local church



Code of Conduct

Remember that children participate in sport for their enjoyment, not yours.

Encourage children to participate, do not force them.

Focus on the child's efforts and performance rather than winning or losing.

Encourage children always to play according to the rules and to settle disagreements without resorting to hostility or violence.

Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing a competition.

Remember that children learn best by example. Appreciate good performances and skilful plays by all participants.

Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities.

Respect officials' decisions and teach children to do like wise.

Show appreciation for volunteer coaches, officials and administrators. Without them, your child could not participate.

Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

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Building bridges and connecting people to the local church



COACHES

Code of Conduct

Remember that young people participate for pleasure and winning is only part of the fun.

Never ridicule or yell at a young player for making a mistake or not coming first.

Be reasonable in your demands on players' time, energy and enthusiasm.

Operate within the rules and spirit of your sport and teach your players to do the same.

Ensure that the time that the players spend with you is a positive experience. All young people are deserving of equal attention and opportunities.

Avoid overplaying the talented players; the just average need and deserve equal time.

Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of all players.

Display control, respect and professionalism to all involved with the sport. This includes opponents, coaches, officials, administrators, the media, parents and spectators. Encourage players to do the same.

Show concern and caution towards sick and injured players. Follow the advice of a physician when determining whether an injured player is ready to recommence training or competition.

Obtain appropriate qualifications and keep up to date with the latest coaching practices and the principles of growth and development of young people.

Any physical contact with a young person should be appropriate to the situation and necessary for the player's skill development.

Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

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to the local church*



Code of Conduct

Modify rules and regulations to match the skill levels and needs of young people.

Compliment and encourage all participants.

Be consistent, objective and courteous when making decisions.

Condemn unsporting behaviour and promote respect for all opponents.

Emphasise the spirit of the game rather than the errors.

Encourage and promote rule changes that will make participation more enjoyable.

Be a good sport yourself. Actions speak louder than words.

Keep up to date with the latest trends in officiating and the principles of growth and development of young people.

Remember, you set an example. Your behaviour and comments should be positive and supportive.

Place the safety and welfare of the participants above all else.

Give all young people a "fair go" regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

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Building bridges and connecting people to the local church





Code of Conduct

Maintain a clear focus of the mission and purpose of The Salvation Army sports programme.

Promote the benefits of drug and alcohol free sport and the positive benefits of living healthy lifestyles.

Involve young people in planning, leadership, evaluation and decision making related to the activity.

Create pathways for young people to participate in sport not just as a player but as a coach, referee, administrator etc.

Ensure that rules, equipment, length of games and training schedules are modified to suit the age, ability, and maturity level of young players.

Provide quality supervision and instruction for junior players. Give all young people equal opportunities to participate.

Remember that young people participate for their enjoyment and benefit. Do not overemphasise awards.

Help coaches and officials highlight appropriate behaviour and skill development, and help improve the standards of coaching and officiating.

Ensure that everyone involved in junior sport emphasises fair play, and not winning at all costs.

Give a Code of Conduct sheet to spectators, officials, parents, coaches, players and the media and encourage them to follow it.

Remember, you set an example. Your behaviour and comments should be positive and supportive. Make it clear that abusing young people in any way is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action.

Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

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Building bridges and connecting people to the local church



ATTACHMENT 4

SAMPLE LOGOS



LOGO DESIGN TEMPLATES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE
TERRITORIAL YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

ATTACHMENT 5

'Beating the Buzzer'

Some guidelines for your Church sports Program
A booklet prepared by Sports and Leisure Ministries

“Beating the Buzzer”

Introduction

There is no question that most effective evangelism begins in the local church. It is also certain that many Australians are tuned into sport. Sport is that great talking point, a constant leveller, the topic which unites people. Accordingly churches must make the most of this, and utilise sport for the glory of God.

However it is one thing to have a growing and vibrant sports program. It is another to use that sports program for effective evangelism. Some churches field twenty or more basketball teams. Others run numerous netball teams. Few however, use these teams effectively in communicating the message of the gospel. Churches with sports programs need to rediscover that their programs are much more than vehicles for health, fitness, social contact, and fun. They provide real opportunities to see lives changed for Christ.

Premiership Glory of God's Glory?

Each year when a season has ended and we reflect on the performances of the past year, we usually assess a season in terms of win and loss. The season finals have to be played and you either end up a winner or a loser. There does not seem to be an alternative these days. Teams, whether basketball, netball, soccer or whatever sport, reflect in this way. Evaluation is always a worthwhile task. The easier task is to reflect in terms of win/loss, to evaluate the 'scoreboard', to understand whether improvement has been made on the field of 'battle'. It is a much tougher task to evaluate on a spiritual level. This must become essential in any church sports program. What fruitful relationships were formed? Are team members closer to Jesus at the end of the season than at the start? Did your behaviour reflect that of Christ and the message of the Church? How was our team different, as a church team, from secular clubs? These questions need to be asked. They are tough and hard to gauge. However they are essential. It is one thing to have premiership glory, it is another to be on about God's glory!

Recovering the Vision of Days Gone By

Any churches begin sports programs with the right intentions. Health and fitness, social contact, good clean fun, are all vital ingredients. The primary focus though has been evangelism. However, over time those with the initial vision move on or drop out. Others get involved to make the program viable, and over time the primary reason for beginning the team or club is lost. Nothing sinister has occurred, just over time the program has lost its focus. Finally the program is out of the hands of the church, and it is a church programme in name only. Essentially it is nothing more than a secular service to the community. However, the vision can be recovered. It may be difficult, it may take time. Sporting programs offer a rich resource in community contact. Churches must regain the vision. As a former missionary once said, “Expect Great things from God; Attempt Great things for God.”

Wining Stories that make it worthwhile!

Many years ago now an impressionable teenager keen on sports got involved in a church sports team. He was new to the sport, and even 'greener' about the church. His background was purely irreligious. However, the sport he played came in a package. The sport went with the church, and over time relationships were born and friendships nurtured. Church attendance was required once a month during the season and as rules were rules, he went. Things started to sink in, impressions were formed, ideas seemed valid and meaningful. It all finally came to a head when that teenager lad one night knelt beside his bed and gave his life to the Lord Jesus.

Over time his two younger brothers came to faith as well. Years later all three still walk and talk with the Lord.

And what of that impressionable teenager? He is now the Youth Pastor of the Church!

First Things First!

It seems that the traditional sports of Netball, Basketball, Aussie Rules, Rugby, and Soccer are played all year round these days. Across the country thousands of people are competing, some of whom are in church teams or leagues. At the beginning of a season there is a rush to nominate teams, finalise uniforms, communicate programs, collect subs, and register players. Much attention and detail are given to these things in a frantic rush to commence the season. However, we fail often to put the real important things in place – bridging programs, pastoral care, spiritual leadership, and prayer.

We need to get it right. Here are some 'other' vital things to put in place:

Bridging Programs: Events of Church services that are relevant to your sporting participants to introduce the gospel.

Pastoral Care: Your players need to feel that they are valuable people regardless of their sporting prowess. A club chaplain is a good idea.

Spiritual Leadership: Make sure your coach/manager is a spiritual person, in tune with the goals and aspirations of your church.

Prayer: Encourage the church to own its sporting ministry through prayer.

Bridging the Gap between Sport and the Church

In the blue corner you have the sports program. In the red corner, the church. Too often it is a no-contest. No contact is ever made. But wurlery that is the very reason you have a sports program?! Here is what some churches do to integrate people into the church. Maybe there are some ideas here for your church.

Link Teams with Youth Leaders

Churches with Youth ministries try to connect their youth leaders with their sporting teams by way of a coach or manager. The relation contact is there, and the invitation to Youth Group or Church!

Appoint a Club Chaplain

Put in place someone who can be regularly involved with the sports program and available on a spiritual level. With the appropriate profile and regular attendant at practice and games, the opportunities for ministry become significant over time.

Hold a Sports Quiz/Sports Evening

A Quiz, a panel of guests, some video footage, some prizes, footy handball or kick (Footy Show style), a good compare, and you have the ingredients for a top evening. Such an event, well publicised, can become very fruitful!

Celebrity Sports Dinner

With the right facility and caretakers, seek out a well known Christian sporting identity and hold a sports dinner. Again make it fun, climaxing the evening with a testimony from the Christian Sportsperson. Activate your church to invite people and encourage the members of your sporting teams

Coaching Clinics

A coaching clinic with a Christian sporting personality can also be a useful event. Link this with a testimony or a special service. On a more involved level you may run a pre-season camp with specialist coaches and speakers.

Special Services

A special sports service, focussing on the particular sport you are involved in can be a real winner. Contemporary music, video clips, and an interview with an elite sports person can be a very effective event. Video clips of the sports person involved or video interviews from Christian athletes can be powerful tools.

End of Season Break-up Event

Utilise your end of season with a special evening or service. That end of season trophy is always a great drawcard for kids. The appropriate guest speaker can make a real impact.

Constantly Seek out Resources

Resources are available to help you – books, tapes, videos. You have to keep your eyes open and your ears to the ground. Moreover you must ask others what is available. That is what SportsNet is about, linking churches with sporting programs in order to share resources and ideas. Ask your SportsNet State Coordinator to link you in.

Sports Ministry: A Working Model

One of the keys to effective evangelism is building relationships. Getting people involved in each other's lives brings about an openness often to issues of faith. In Adelaide, a metropolitan church has recognised this, and put a strategy in place to accomplish it.

Trinity Baptist Church in Adelaide has ten basketball teams.. its Youth Worker, Peter Yaxley, and others decided to take a hard look at where their sports ministry was headed.

Firstly, they resurfaced their basketball courts and put in new high quality rings and backboards. The sports committee decided that each team must have a coach, a manager and a 'carer'.

The 'carer' was a new concept that they introduced to serve the team in practical ways and be a Christian witness to both players and parents. The carer is just any Christian person in the church who is willing to be involved and pray. Peter's primary task in this aspect of his work is to build on the carer concept. The aim is to have regular carers at prayer meetings and training sessions. Carers will be given some basic people helping skills. But as Peter says, "Prayer is a vital part of the sports ministry".

Peter goes on to outline ideas he is implementing to further build relationships between the church and the sports teams:

Adopt a team – People in the congregation are given details of a team and encouraged to pray and support that team. They liaise with the team carer for prayer needs.

Christianity Explained – The youth Bible study group have been taught "Christianity Explained" with the aim of teaching others, discipling or just using the method in witnessing.

Social Nights – Quiz nights, bush dances, videos of games and the like help build relationships.

Youth Services – "Seeker friendly" services. Using creative ministries rather than the traditional style.

Trophy Presentation Night – At Trinity last year, a mime artist performed, the Creative ministries team performed a drama and each player was given a “The Challenge Never Ends” New Testament.

“Get the focus right”, is the message. We must be about the work of the Kingdom.

Formalising Your Sports Ministry

It would not be an exaggeration to suggest that most of our sporting programs are run by the ‘seat of our pants’. We may have an idea in our minds about what we are out to achieve, however we never have formalised it and put it down on paper. Accordingly, we are often like a ship without a rudder, and over time we are lost at sea.

The Smoke Rise Baptist Church in Stone Mountain, Georgia USA, has done the hard work and put their ministry aims and aspirations down on paper. In a succinct training manual they have dealt with the major issues for their basketball ministry. The table of contents reveal what they believe to be important for their ministry to run effectively.

The sections include:

Introduction of the Ministry and its Goals

Practice and Game Day schedules

Ministry Philosophy

Spiritual Development

Coach Curriculum

Parent’s Information

Communications

Skills and Drills

Medical Emergencies

Items of note in the manual include the ministries three-fold purpose of (1) outreach, (2) fellowship, and (3) development of the individual. The coach must be a caring one with a strong Christian witness, and players are encouraged to be involved in other church programs. Participation is stressed, along with good sportsmanship. It is vital that every person feels a joy in victory or responsibility in a loss. Both must be accepted graciously.

Moreover, coaches at Smoke Rise have to sign a contract. Coaches agree to be motivators, teachers and Christian role models for their players. Their responsibilities include praying for their players, being the first to arrive and the last to leave from practice, conducting regular devotions with the team, playing all players during a game, prying with the team pre and post match, leading all players in congratulating opposition members and officials, and holding a post-game huddle to discuss aspects of the game from physical and spiritual points.

Spiritual and devotional manuals come with the manual. They are called “Time Out” and are used during practice to bring a spiritual lesson to the players. Other studies are included, and a certificate that can be reproduced to highlight the ‘Player of the Week’ (not necessarily awarded to the best athlete performance). Parents also have a code of ethics to adhere to, encouraging healthy interacting with child, officials and coach.

It is a comprehensive and demanding manual. Certainly it is food for thought!

Real Ministry to Your Sporting Teams

The Adelaide 'Advertiser' on July 16th, 1997, ran the headline, "Religion loses broad appeal." It went on to state that less and less Australians are adherents to the Christian faith. Clearly the church is struggling to being in people, particularly the young. The old avenues, like Sunday School have struggled for years. *However sports will bring them.* While this is true, it will only bring them *near* – not *in*. Only real ministry, demonstrated with real personal relationships will bring them across the 'bridge' and into your church.

It has been said that 'Kids don't *care* how much you *know*, until they *know* how much you *care*!' Young people will see tight though any attempt on you part to say on thing and do another. You have to demonstrate a personal interest in their life off the sporting arena before they will be convinced that you care for more than their sporting skills.

Here is a plan of action for a coach or manager who is about reaching people for Christ...when time is limited:

- Get to know your players.
- Encourage more than you correct.
- Let them read your life.
- Use prayer and devotion time.
- Carry a Bible.
- Teach the Scripture in creative ways.
- Teach God's plan of salvation.

Get to know them.

You want players to know that you believe life is more than just sport. In order to convince them of this, you have to take an interest in the part of their lives that does not include the sport they play. What are their other hobbies? Which school do they go to? What about their family? What about their parents? Who are their best friends? Spend time talking and listening.

Encourage more than you correct.

Our young people are corrected and criticised from the time they wake up until they close their eyes at night. Dare to be different! Although there will be a need for correction, make a point of highlighting the positives.

Let them read your lives.

Remember that players will be watching the way you relate, react, and talk. Players will read your life by what you do much more than by what you say. Even though you should be careful about what you say to the umpires!

This is the beginning of bring people in. Ultimately, the life of Christ in you is the drawcard. Never lose sight of this. He is the goal and the purpose of our sports ministry.

Creativity on and off the Field of Battle

There are certain players in elite sports who have an extra special dose of creativity. Gavin Wanganen in AFL, Ricky Stewart in Rugby League, Shane Warne on the cricket field, are all able to make something out of nothing. When the ball is in heir hands you expect something to happen, and it invariably does. Just recently on my travels, I spotted a fellow sports minister at a basketball stadium with a video camera. Upon inquiry, I discovered that he was taking forage

of the sporting teams in his church to show at a coming Quiz Night. I thought, 'How creative!'. Not only did the video taken provide a drawcard to the event planned, but also provided numerous opportunities for fun and fellowship on the night.

What sort of creative things can you do to build bridges from your sporting teams to the church. Got a video camera?

Who Me? A Coach?

Sporting teams need coaches. Certainly junior teams do. It is a tough job, but it is also the role that can provide the most impact and influence in the lives of young people in the sporting arena. Tom Landry, the legendary former coach of the Dallas Cowboys and a committed believer, speaking of the discipline a coach must set for professional athletes said, "The job of a coach is to make people do what they don't want to do, in order to be what they have always wanted to be". The role of the coach within a church setting involves a further dimension – influencing lives for Christ. It was encouraging to read that a survey of basketball coaches from a church league revealed this as one of the primary reasons why they coach.

When asked why they coach the top three answers were:

Enjoy working with young people.
Chance to influence spiritual lives.
Love of the sport; desire to teach it.

This was great to hear. Sport must be kept in perspective, and not become a god itself. So, what about your coaches, what are they in it for?

SLM SportsNet

SportsNet is about linking churches that have sports programs for the purposes of sharing resources and promoting effective evangelism. As a church with a sports program, ask yourself the question, "What are we achieving?" "What are we about?" It is one thing to have a growing and vibrant sports program. It is another to use that sports programme for effective evangelism.

SportsNet is a new innovation for SLM commenced in 1996, linking Australian churches that have sports programs for the purposed of sharing resources and promoting effective evangelism. SportsNet, in other words, is a networking process whereby those involved in sports programs link together to learn the various resources and techniques in that vital step. Used effectively, the end results are sports programs in churches which produce disciples.

Being a Winner

SLM understands that effective evangelism begins in the local church. It also understand that most Australians are tuned into sport. Sport is that great talking point, a constant leveller, the topic which unites people. Churches need to utilise this. Sport can be that great bridge between selfish living and faith. Churches across the nation are realising and rediscovering this. But we need to help each other. This is what SLM and SportsNet plan to do. We want each church with a sports program to be a winner in the key arena – the spiritual one!

SLM Tools for Your Trade

Resources are vital in your pursuit to reach people for Christ through your Sports Program. SLM has the following for you use:

Books

“No Orchestra, No Trumpet”

The story behind the Quiet Miracle of Australia’s Sports Ministry. (By Mark Tronson), \$9.95 + \$2.50 post.

“The Gods of Sport”

Sports Stars converted to Greatness (by Rich Chapman and Ross Clifford) \$11.95 + \$3 post.

Magazines

“Sport Focus Australia” Quarterly, full-colour, glossy magazine - \$3.95, Box 6044 Highton VIC 3216

Videos

“Athlete Testimony Videos” Compilations from the various Christian Television programs SLM has initiated. Telephone (02) 9529 6061

Manuals

“Coaching Basketball” – The complete guide for the Recreational Coach. Telephone (08) 8278 5613

Smoke Rise Baptist Church Basketball Manual. Read one church’s philosophy of sports outreach and codes of practice. Telephone (08) 8278 5613.

Sports Clinic Manual -‘Communicating the Gospel to Sports-Mad Australians’ by SLM’s David Tyndall of Sydney. \$10.00 per copy (Phone (02) 9899 5749).

Each Other

One of the best tools is each other. No doubt we can learn from each other in how were gong about our sports ministries. So if you would like to know more and network with others, don’t hesitate to call (08) 8278 5613.

All other enquiries contact the SLM National Office, PO Box 229, Moruya NSW 2537.

Telephone (02) 4474 3554, Fax (02) 4474 4869. Email mtronson@sci.net.au

Website: www.ozemail.com.au/~sportsmin

Don’t Be Afraid to Be in Touch

Please take the opportunity to be in touch with your local SportsNet Coordinator. There is a SportsNet Coordinator in each state ready and available for a chat. Churches from all over the nation are linking into SportsNet, and finding that they can learn from others doing the same things/

It is tough out there to run an effective sporting program, and we know that we can’t do it all on our own. We need to understand that we can help each other.

So feel free to be I touch – whether you have exciting news, or if you are struggling like mad and you are not sure where to turn next. Trust us, there is someone we can always put you on to who can give you a hand, an idea, a way out!

South Australian State Coordinator:

Rev. Brandon Chaplin

Pastor Bellevue heights Baptist Church

Telephone: (08) 8370 2623 (work) (08) 8278 5613 (Home)

Email: repower@adam.com.au

Beating the Buzzer

Six times in eight NBA seasons the sporting world celebrated and acknowledged the amazing athletic prowess of Michael Jordon, team leader of the rampaging Chicago Bulls. He confirmed in the minds of those who know that he is the greatest basketballer of all time. For others, is adds to their argument that he is the top sports athlete of our day. Whatever the case, Jordan's career reveals and amazing ability to make decisions under pressure and to go through with the courage of his convictions. In is career he has made no less than forty-four game winning shots, twenty-two of those in the final ten seconds of the game. It shows a high degree f self-belief, courage, and clear decision making.

No doubt we all can learn from Jordan, as we minister in the power of Christ!

ATTACHMENT 6

Commencing a Sports Ministry in the Local Church Roger Oswald

Note taken from the Sports Ministry conference in Colloroy 1999
& Ace Conference Oct 2000

Commencing a Sports Ministry in the Local Church

Assuming the pastor/minister is open to commencing a sports ministry, how do I start?

1. A God-Given Vision
 - communion with God
 - passion and perception
 - availability and commitment
2. Selling the Vision
 - to leadership
 - to a ministry team
 - to the laity
3. Merging the Vision
 - Church Mission Statement
 - Sports Ministry Mission Statement
 - Fellowship
 - Evangelism
 - Discipleship
 - Assimilation
 - building partnerships within the ministry unit
4. Building a Team
 - RECRUITING
 - advisory team
 - coaches, coordinators (directors) and officials
 - support personnel
 - TRAINING
 - personal stimulation/discipleship
 - shepherd/coach training
 - leadership development
 - training clinics
5. Developing a Programme
 - determine interest through a congregational survey
 - identify resources
 - finances
 - facilities
 - personnel
 - leadership
 - participants
 - designing the programme
 - recreation/leisure
 - wellness/wilderness
 - leagues/tournaments
 - events

- outreach
6. Promoting the Ministry
- educate the church (personal testimony/example)
 - motivate the church through
 - pulpit
 - display
 - telephone
 - direct mail
 - media
 - promotional events
 - small groups
 - advertisement
 - keep the church informed
7. Maintaining the Ministry
- be faithful to your goals
 - quality produces quantity
 - facilities
 - equipment
 - uniforms
 - schedule
 - officials
 - parity/equity in competition
 - administration
 - communication
 - evaluation
 - protect the competitive environment
 - appreciation
 - rewards
 - forms and record keeping
 - necessity of on-going evaluation and adjustment

Gentle Warnings

1. Pick one event and do it well
2. Start small
3. Gradually expand the ministry
4. Stay faithful, focussed and be willing to prune programmes which are not successful

Visit the following website to download manuals:

www.churchsports.org

ATTACHMENT 7

WEB PAGES

www.sportsoutreach.org

with links to a range of Christian Sports ministry expressions INCLUDING 'KIDS GAMES'

www.goodnewssports.com

An Australian web page with information and links to sports ministry in Australia. Link to Sport and Leisure Ministries – the Australian sports Chaplaincy network.

www.asf.org.au

Australian sports foundation – providing solutions for community sport.

www.christianinsport.org.uk

A UK developed web site that has heaps of articles to answer questions on life and sport.

www.salvationarmy.org.au/theshed

Home page for the skating park attached to Cranbourne Corps

www.thecentre.org.au

Home page for The Salvation Army Tweed Heads Community Church a stadium based church in the Eastern Territory

www.churchsports.org

A website of practical how to's

www.christianitytoday.com/sports

Web page for sports spectrum magazine for heaps of sports stuff (American)

www.thegoal.com

Christian sports people tell their stories

Drug info pages

www.druginfo.adf.org.au

www.smartplay.com.au