

Midweek Ladies Free Coaching

The decline in player numbers of Midweek Ladies at Sunnyhills Tennis Club over the past few years was something one of our enthusiastic female members, Sarah, wanted to address as the older ladies were retiring and the younger mums were off to work. Though we had offered free coaching sessions to new members earlier in the season, we needed to try something different to attract new women to playing tennis.

Sarah met with our Head Coach and Club Manager with a proposal, and they agreed the club would fund some free sessions specifically targeted to women to come and learn the basics of tennis with the hope that they would eventually become club members. To entice them, she designed a beautiful, pink-themed poster in both English & Chinese, advertising 8 free one-hour sessions. No membership or experience was required, all racquets and balls would be provided, and light refreshments were offered after each session.

Initially Sarah was thrilled when the first 2 or 3 people got in touch – she thought this might actually work! Excitedly she shared it across East Auckland on local community Facebook pages and Asian social media channels and the response she got was staggering: 157 enquiries from women all over Auckland who were keen to try tennis. The 20 spaces initially offered became 40 when the club decided to secure a second coach. Then to accommodate as many ladies as possible, we went from one session to three sessions per week (Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays). Ultimately, we ended up with 117 women taking up the free 8-week coaching programme.

At the conclusion of the 8 weeks, we made a special offer to those who wished to continue their tennis journey. This included discounted private group coaching and a reduced membership rate for the remainder of the tennis calendar year. We also offered to facilitate matching women in small private coaching groups, thus reducing the financial commitment of private 1-on-1 coaching.

The success of this targeted approach was attributed to removing all the barriers to learning tennis: no financial commitment of a membership, no costly expense of a racquet, learning with other women of a similar skill set in a safe and supportive environment and multiple days per week to choose from.

Another contributing factor was that we were very fortunate to have the support of our amazing existing Midweek Ladies who tirelessly baked delicious morning tea treats, who came to the courts to encourage the new ladies and feed balls multiple times per week. Everyone felt the comfortable, welcoming environment that was created and as a result many new friendships developed amongst the participants and members.

Today over 30 of these women have either joined the club or are taking private coaching. We are confident that as open day approaches and the weather turns warmer again, we will see even more ladies become members at Sunnyhills.

Upon reflection, Sarah says the absolute highlight for her was on a recent Wednesday morning: all 6 courts were full of existing Midweek Ladies playing on half the courts while the other half of the courts were being used by small groups of women who were taking coaching and laughing with their new friends. To her it felt like a club open day and she was so proud of what we had achieved.

At the club AGM last month, Sarah received the Enterprise Award from the Senior Committee to applaud her efforts, recognise her dedication and service to the club and thank her for stepping up to make a difference to Sunnyhills Tennis Club.



Top picture is Wednesday (original group) on week 1 and bottom picture is week 8



Sarah created some amazing tennis-themed treats for the ladies!



Coaching in action



Friday group



More coaching



Ladies Tennis


SUNNYHILLS
TENNIS CLUB

8 weeks
FREE coaching

Wednesdays 9.30am-10.30am
21 February - 10 April 2024

racquets & balls provided
no membership or experience necessary
wear comfy athletic wear & sneakers
learn how to play tennis, make friends & HAVE FUN!

8周的免费训练
提供球拍和网球
不需要加入会员和网球基础
穿着舒适的运动鞋和服装
学习如何打网球，交朋友，和享受乐趣！



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