

Group assignment – badminton essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The aim of this report is to outline the basic talent identification and development programme of a chosen sport and examine whether its national governing bodies and relevant networking agencies provide a plurality of provision for their sport. As a group, we felt that it was important to select a sport that was part of the achieving excellence regime at the Scottish Institute of Sport with a helpful website. This would then allow us to gather a wealth of information and conduct interviews with the Scottish Institute of Sport.

We chose the sport of badminton, although badminton is not a sport any of us play, we thought that it would be good to assess a sport that we do not know much about, so that collectively we could critically examine our information gathered and provide a non bias assessment of their development programme. Badminton Scotland is the national governing body for the sport of badminton and provides a very systematic, progressive business plan and player development pathway. Badminton Scotland has many aims and methods in developing badminton as a sport and developing its badminton athletes.

Firstly Badminton Scotland aims to ' promote and develop badminton as a healthy, competitive and inclusive sport' ([www. badmintonscotland. org. uk](http://www.badmintonscotland.org.uk)). This involves getting more people active in general, as Badminton Scotland aids Sport 21 in reaching their targets of getting 60% of adults to take part in sport, but directly relates to increasing participation in the sport of badminton. To ensure this increased participation but also the development of more elite players, ' Badminton Scotland aim to ensure pathways exist from beginner through to medal winner as well as providing services that

reflect the needs and diversity of its members' (www. admintonscotland. org. uk).

These aims have helped Badminton Scotland produce a player development pathway (Figure 1) for badminton in Scotland. As Figure 1 illustrates there are clear stages: Fundamentals, learning to play, training to train, training to compete, training to win and finally peak performance. The opposite side illustrates the stages of growth and development of males and females alongside the facilities and squads that create a pathway for an individual to progress through. The first two stages aims to create mass participation and getting people involved from an early age but also adults through badminton clubs.

Figure 1 demonstrates that fundamentals begins in primary schools, as young as 2 years old, and here would be teaching basic motor skills with the aid of badminton equipment and as the children get older would progress into teaching them how to play and understanding the rules of the sport. The next stage of training to train is a focus on more talented individuals who have progressed from the schools and entered clubs or been selected for development or regional squads. Fewer athletes will reach this stage as more dedication is required and regular training needed to improve competitive performance.

The following stages, training to compete and training to win, are the beginning of elite level badminton with a select few being chosen for national squads and the area institute's support. At this stage, the athlete will receive specialist coaching, sport science support and enter elite

competition. We feel that Figure 1 shows a clear, progressive pathway for athletes to understand and progress through. We found that Badminton Scotland puts an emphasis on creating a thriving school badminton programme as well as developing a local and supportive club system.

Badminton Scotland has affiliation with many schools throughout Scotland which ensures these schools have facilities to provide badminton activity. This badminton activity gives children the opportunity to try and learn about badminton and hopefully enjoy badminton which would continue their participation and development in Badminton. The badminton school programmes are supported by Badminton Carnivals which Badminton Scotland provides with coaches, volunteers and funding from private organisations.

There are six badminton carnivals a year funded by Bank of Scotland's £75,000 investment (www.badmintonscotland.org.uk). Badminton Scotland gives every school the opportunity to send pupils to these carnivals and, as Figure 1 also illustrates, local badminton clubs can send young players to these carnivals to further develop their badminton skills. Badminton Scotland, through these school programmes and carnivals, aims to increase badminton participation of 8-15 year olds. Badminton Scotland also has affiliation with many badminton clubs across Scotland helping them provide top class facilities to promote and develop badminton and its players.

Talented badminton players, particularly youngsters from schools and badminton carnivals, are encouraged to join local badminton clubs to progress their development. Badminton Scotland ' aim to establish 34 local

authority clubs with over sixty members, ensure five more junior clubs are affiliated by 2009 and aim to increase overall badminton participation from children to adults from 5.3% to 6% (www.badmintonscotland.org.uk). By Badminton Scotland emphasising an increase in participation in badminton then they increase the number of athletes available to select from.

Hopefully, this will result in a higher standard of badminton participation, if the facilities and coaches are used correctly, and provide Scottish badminton with more talented youngsters to continue developing through the later stages of the pathway. Figure 1 also illustrates the early stages being progressive and as the individual improves they move to the next stage, for example a school badminton player may enter the badminton carnival and if he shows ability he may join a local badminton club.

We feel however that the higher and more elite levels of the pathway become very much like a cycle. Once you move into a development or regional squad and a national squad, as the arrows indicate in Figure 1, your progression becomes inter linked between different squads. For example you may play for your club and the national squad, you can play in both squads but if you are dropped from the national squad, you will continue playing for your club until you have retained the playing standard to be selected for the national squad again.

Tony Stanger (Talent Manager, SIS, 2008) stated, " If players are dropped from a development squad they can still go back into club level so this is where the system does not disregard the athletes that maybe do not develop at the same level as others. The system does not drop them so to speak but

takes a democratic approach for the interest of the sport and athletes". In this sense we feel that Badminton Scotland have put in place a progressive pathway that helps players develop and progress without ever fully dropping them from the system.

We believe this is vital for a country with the population size of Scotland as the more people Scotland can keep in the badminton development system, the more talented athletes are available for selection but also badminton as a sport can develop and flourish. Badminton Scotland recognises how important the role of the volunteer is in developing Badminton as volunteers act as coaches, umpires, court officials and even tournament organisers. Badminton Scotland aims to increase, by 12%, the number of volunteers actively supporting badminton by 2009 (www.admintonscotland.org.uk).

To increase the number of volunteers, Badminton Scotland works with partners including Badminton England, universities and local city councils to focus on areas such as recruiting volunteers, retaining and rewarding volunteers. Three courses are provided every year for volunteers to be trained in areas covering coaching, court officiating and umpiring. Badminton Scotland also tries to improve and regularly update their communications, such as websites, to allow individuals to learn, inquire and contact Badminton Scotland easily.

This is crucial for developing the sport of badminton as not only are Badminton Scotland focusing on developing players, there is an emphasis on improving coaching and officiating badminton by creating an officials pathway. Dan Travers (High Performance Badminton Coach at SIS, 2008)

explained that, “ the current talent identification process is underpinned by a highly regarded cutting edge coaching system, and training and competition structures are aimed at producing a continuous stream of young players sufficiently talented to lay a foundation for future success”.

By improving coaching and officiating this will in turn improve player development as they can receive more thorough coaching and understand the sport fully. Badminton Scotland also works alongside local authorities to increase the number of affiliated badminton clubs, focusing on preventing the decline of participation and membership in badminton. These local authorities help deliver such programmes as the badminton carnivals, badminton programmes for the disabled and actively promote badminton in their local facilities and region.

This aids Badminton Scotland’s aim of providing badminton for people of all ages and abilities but also develop players’ skills and creating better competitive players. There are also a number of private organisations that help fund and support Badminton Scotland, such as: Bank of Scotland, Yonex, National Lottery, Sport Scotland, Scottish Institute of Sport and Sport and Culture Glasgow ([www. badmintonscotland. org. uk](http://www.badmintonscotland.org.uk)). These private organisations provide funding so that Badminton Scotland can deliver these badminton programmes, training courses, events and varying squads for badminton development.

The Bank of Scotland helps nurture young talent by providing the Bank of Scotland Shuttle awards which keeps young badminton players involved and enjoying badminton. They also hold the Bank of Scotland Junior Badminton

Championships which provides talented young badminton players top competition against players similar in standard and can be very useful for identifying future elite level players, as both Scottish internationals Gordon Thomson and Imogen Bankier played in this competition. Badminton Scotland has a process of governing, monitoring and assessing their operations in relation to their development pathway and business plan.

The chief executive oversees the operations of the administration team and management committee as their roles include: bidding for further funding, planning future procedures within given budget and securing sponsorship. At the end of every year an annual strategic review is produced, reviewing the progress of the development pathway and business operations. Along with this review, all Badminton Scotland staff are required to provide a written report of their section; this includes coaches through to administrative staff.

These reports identify whether targets are being met, any improvements are needed and may identify individuals who should progress further in the development pathway ([www. badmintonscotland. org. uk](http://www.badmintonscotland.org.uk)). These reports are analysed and along with the strategic review can help implement any necessary changes, hopefully over time this system will lead to a consistently efficient pathway to develop badminton athletes but also the sport of badminton. The development system that Badminton Scotland has put in place has some notable differences compared to the very successful system that China has in place.

China has been the dominant nation in the sport of badminton, for example the world women's champion has been from China since 1983 except in

1993 and 1999 (www. badmintoncentral. com). The national governing body of Chinese badminton is the Chinese Badminton Association. The Chinese system has a badminton training centre in every province with one national training camp which are funded for by the government, unlike in Scotland, as the Chinese government wants to directly produce as many elite level medal winners and world champions as they can.

Past champions are recruited as coaches for these training centres to provide intense, top class coaching in very well equipped facilities. Promising players are recruited at a very early age and inducted into the system through the provincial training centres and the state funds for their development in badminton. Only the most gifted athletes progress so if an athlete fails to progress any further, they are dropped from the system, lose their funding and another athlete is pushed through the system in their place (www. badminton-information. com).

This is a very harsh system for the athletes that do not make elite level badminton however in Scotland every individual is actively encouraged to continue in their development as varying rates of physical maturity may cause some young talent to emerge later than others. Obviously Scotland has an immensely smaller population compared with China but Badminton Scotland has put in place a clear, progressive pathway that enables continuous badminton as well as high quality development. A country the size of Scotland needs to encourage badminton activity and use methods of retention to keep badminton a popular participant sport.

The affiliation with schools, clubs and local authorities has greatly increased the opportunity available for children, young adults and adults to play badminton. The private funding enables Badminton Scotland to increase the quality of facilities to improve the standards of play and train coaches to a very high standard to further produce talented individuals. Figure 1 shows the many squads available for athletes to be a part of; from development squads, regional or national squads and the top class athletes can get further support from the area and Scottish institutes of sport.

Badminton Scotland has created an efficient business plan to receive funding, attract volunteers and enable more facilities to cater for badminton at all levels of ability. These facilities and coaching need to be used in the proper way and remain at a constant high standard for the development programmes to be consistently effective but Badminton Scotland has a systematic approach to allow badminton to flourish within Scotland and hopefully produce elite athletes to compete at the elite level of badminton.