

College Sport

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One of the biggest challenges facing grassroots sport in New Zealand is a lack of volunteers; be it referees, administrators or coaches. Sport Tasman and the region's secondary schools are helping to bridge the gap by encouraging older students to take up coaching roles. As **Jonathan McKeown** discovers, the rewards are many and varied including NCEA credits and leadership experience.

Growing Coaches answers urgent call

In late June last year Growing Coaches was launched in the top-of-the-south. Sport Tasman hosted a workshop for 22 secondary-school sports co-ordinators, regional sport development officers and PE teachers from around the region.

The result of a two-year collaboration between Unitec Institute of Technology and Sport New Zealand, Growing Coaches is

designed to increase the number and quality of young sports coaches in what has been called a "vital" response to dwindling numbers.

Following the launch of Growing Coaches about 50 students from two schools, Rai Valley and Waimea College, have embraced the initiative. They have been given the opportunity to gain NCEA credits by

undertaking the Growing Coaches programme, as part of their NCEA Physical Education curriculum.

The programme has been aligned to NCEA physical education achievement standards and senior students will gain specific NCEA credits at levels 1, 2 and 3 for time spent learning and implementing coaching techniques.

In addition, thanks to funding

from Sport NZ and the commitment and continued support of a number of regional sport development officers, Sport Tasman has been able to offer colleges the opportunity to undertake sport specific coach training as an additional part of the initiative.

As a result, students from Waimea College, Nayland College, Nelson College for Girls and

Nelson Community College, have recently qualified as sports coaches.

This was achieved by undertaking introductory level coach education programmes in netball, rugby, football, basketball or hockey.

Julie Price, community sport adviser at Sport Tasman, said the programme could only be a positive force in the community.

"This has been a win-win situation for both the students and the sports codes as the students have gained more knowledge regarding how to coach their respective sports and the sports codes have gained more coaches," said Price.

"Sport Tasman hopes that more colleges and regional sports organisations will become involved as the year progresses."

FIND OUT MORE

For more information, or to become involved in the Growing Coaches initiative, please contact Julie Price, Adviser Community Sport, on 03 923 2322.