

Interview with Mr Peter Langsford, Academy Director, St Kentigern's College, Auckland

In my office, 10.30am Thursday 13th April 2006

It did not take long for me to realize that what St Kentigerns has set up is quite unique and worth outlining in some detail. It is unique in two main aspects

1. it is promoted and operated by a private company in partnership with the school
2. It has negotiated Memoranda of Understanding with various tertiary providers to achieve the best outcomes for the students.

The Academy offers training and development in Golf, Tennis, and Cricket, involving about 30 students who may come from all levels of the school and from overseas. Students either apply for selection to the academy or are sort after by the staff who identify their latent skills in the particular sport.

Involvement of recognized sporting achievers as training providers and coaches is essential to the successful marketing of the model.

The Academy programme is based on 80% practical skills development and 20% Sports Understanding... Psychology, Fitness, Biomechanics, with particular emphasis on the specialist sport the students have selected.

The Academy programme dovetails into the normal school curriculum by having classes during morning periods for Academy members and two or three other 'option subjects' chosen from the school's curriculum plan. Where these option subjects have classes in the afternoons they take priority over the Academy programme. ESOL classes are provided for non-English speaking students.

The Academy occupies the students between 1.30pm and 5pm daily, either in classrooms allocated by the school or out at venues which develop their practical skills in their specific sports. The coaching/training staff who are employed by the company are recognized top performers in their particular sport. Equipment and resources are also provided and owned by the Academy Company but may be utilized by the school on a negotiated basis.

The key to funding the Academy is in its global marketing and sponsorship plan as well as student fees. The recognition gained by the Academy internationally can only grow as top performers take their place on the world stage and develop for themselves successful, financially rewarding lives based on their own sporting prowess. For others who choose not to make a living from their sport they have virtually guaranteed access to tertiary institutions who offer courses related to sports involvement and understandings such as physiotherapy, sports medicine, and other sporting/coaching diplomas both locally and internationally. I thank Peter Langsford for his time and his generous sharing of information so that other schools may be better informed and possibly able to adopt his programme in a similar way.

His email contact details are: langsford@xtra.co.nz