



KIWISPORT TO SUPPORT SQUAD6 IN AUCKLAND

By Amy Williams

Bowls is a fast growing sport for youths and the recent approval of Kiwisport funding by the Regional Sport Trust Alliance is a step towards more young people playing the sport.

The Regional Partnership Fund is aimed at encouraging partnerships between schools, clubs, local and community groups to get more young people involved in organised sport. Kiwisport's support will grow bowls participation numbers and membership base, and help to ensure the future of the sport. Squad6 was run as a trial programme over the last year, and the funding from Kiwisport has led to a confirmed 600% growth in expected participation numbers for the coming year.

Squad6 is a structured 4-6 week competition where students compete in teams of 6. Squad6 is aimed at students that have never played before, and is a great way to introduce young people to the sport. It is intended to be a stepping

stone in the process of getting young people involved in Bowls, and will lead to students moving into full club memberships and high performance teams. Auckland Bowls Collegiate Committee Chairman Howard Sandler has been instrumental in the success of Squad 6 in Auckland, and has worked tirelessly to ensure that students enjoy their first introduction to bowls. Riki Burgess, Harbour Sport's Sport Development advisor says that Squad6 is a fantastic programme for college kids, particularly having a big impact on kids that are not interested in the more physical sports. He says the way the sport and social components of the programme interact are great, and it is a programme that has good pathways to lead into high performance.

Working with Regional Sports Trusts will help the sport of bowls beyond just youth membership. Building a successful partnership will help to ensure that Regional Sports Trusts view bowls as a sport that is worth investing in in the future. We

are grateful to The Regional Sports Trusts for their support, and look forward to working with them in the future for the success of bowls and the health of Kiwi kids. Burgess thinks that the regional approach is a particularly effective model, and is a great example of bowls working with RSTs to bring benefits to the community.

Delivering Squad6 also involves cooperation between clubs and Auckland Bowls, as well as with Kiwisport. Auckland Bowls is responsible for introducing the concept to schools but it is club volunteers that actually run the programme. These volunteers are chosen because of their enthusiasm for growing bowls as a sport and their ability to deliver the programme in a fun, structured environment. Their support is invaluable for the success of the programme and many thanks go all our volunteers.

Pictured below: Students enjoy Squad6 in Northland.

