NAME: CARWYN EVANS

UNIVERSITY NUMBER: 05002169

SCHOOL OF SPORT, PE & RECREATION

UNIVERSITY OF WALES INSTITUTE CARDIFF
A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE ECB NATIONAL ACADEMY: A GLAMORGAN COUNTY CRICKET PERSPECTIVE
Table of contents

Index of Figures

Acknowledgements  (i)

Abstract  (ii)

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction  1

  1.1 Academies as a concept  1

  1.2 ECB’s Response  2

  1.3 Strategy  3

  1.4 Glamorgan County Cricket Club  4

  1.5 Glamorgan’s Role in Relation to the ECB’s Objectives  5

  1.6 Aims  6

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Literature Review  7

  2.1 Introduction  7

  2.2 Australian Cricket Academy  8

  2.3 ECB World Class Plan  10

  2.4 Schofield Report  12

  2.5 Strategy in Cricket  15

  2.6 Cricket’s Strategic Plan 2005 – 2009  16

  2.7 Glamorgan Cricket Academy  18

  2.8 Conclusion  21
Chapter Three

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Rationale 22
3.2 Participants 23
3.3 Research Design 24
3.4 Instrumentation 25
3.5 Pilot Study 25
3.6 Data Analysis 26
3.7 Validity and Reliability 26

Chapter Four

4.0 Results and Discussion 28

4.1 Introduction 28
4.2 Objectives as a Club 28
4.3 Development of the County Game 30
4.4 Cricket for All 33
4.5 Successful Glamorgan Team 36

Chapter Five

5.0 Conclusion 39

5.1 Limitations 41
5.2 Recommendations 41

References 42
Appendices

Appendix A - Consent form 49
Appendix B – Interview structure 50
Appendix C – Ethics Approval Form 52
## List of figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure NO.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figure 2.1</strong></td>
<td>A basic strategic management cycle</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Cole, 1997)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figure 2.2</strong></td>
<td>Crickets strategic plan 2005-2009</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Collier, 2005)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figure 4.1</strong></td>
<td>The traditional sports development continuum</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Hilton et al 2001)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Chris Jennings for his guidance and continued support as my dissertation supervisor throughout this year. A mention is also needed to Thomas Hargroves for his direction, without his help over the last year the dissertation process would have been a lot harder. Thank you to all of the subjects used in the interviews, without them the study would not have been achievable. I would also like to use this opportunity to thank my parents for their financial support throughout my university life, without their encouragement none of this would have been possible. And finally a big thank you is required to Sioned Mair Lewis for her aid in proof reading my dissertation, and giving guidance when required.
Abstract
The aim of this study was to compare the strategic running of ECB National Academy with that of the Glamorgan C.C.C. Academy, to see if their running was similar. Interviews were carried out with four subjects including coaches and players who had knowledge of the Glamorgan Academy system. The interview structure have four areas of interest, which are objectives as a club, development of the game in the county, cricket for all and successful Glamorgan team. The interviews were recorded using a dictaphone which was then used to aid in transcribing the interviews when writing up the results and discussion section. The transcribed interviews were used to aid in the cross-case analysis which allowed for the data to be categorised into common principles or themes. Research findings showed that the running of the academies were very similar. On many occasions there were examples of the ECB National Academy using a strategy to develop cricket that Glamorgan C.C.C. also employed. The ECB have a plan in place called the ‘superstars of cricket’ which gets England players into school to raise the profile of cricket. Glamorgan also try and raise the profile of cricket in the schools by asking first team players to coach school children. This is an example of Glamorgan using the same strategy as the ECB. Research also found that the running of the Glamorgan Academy could be improved in order to achieve further success on the field. Enhanced organisation regarding performance indicators are required so that the performance of each individual player is monitored, therefore allowing Glamorgan C.C.C to develop players further if they are not performing to the standard required.
Chapter 1 - Introduction
1.0 Introduction

1.1 Academies as a Concept

The organisation and development of professional sport has evolved markedly in the last ten years. Many countries now put a large emphasis on elite sport development and aim to achieve excellence in order to be competitive and successful in the international arena. To achieve this aim, rival-sporting nations will strive to implement a sporting system that will scout, develop and then produce a finely tuned crop of future athletes. As a result those nations at the forefront of global competition have developed sports institutes and academies.

The most notable examples of successful sports institutes are the French Institute of Sport (INSEP- Institut Nationale de Sport et du l'Education Physique), founded in 1945 and funded by the French Ministry of Youth and Sport. The Institute also plays a leading role in elite sport development and research. Its graduates have been seen to propel France to major success, particularly in sports such as soccer, rugby and tennis (Sache, I. 2004). Likewise, the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), has produced a number of internationally recognised athletes and has been the catalyst in Australia’s emergence as a major sporting nation since the Institute’s birth in 1981. The AIS is an elite academy system where Australia’s most promising sports teams and athletes can prepare, train and receive expert coaching without having to worry about funding and finding accommodation (http://www.ais.org.au).

There has been some limited research studies related to the effect sporting academies can have on the performance of senior teams, especially in cricket. After thorough research Stahl (2000) believed that the Claire Fontaine French Soccer Academy was
the force behind France’s emergence as the number one soccer nation in the world. Further evidence of successful soccer academies has been found in English Premier League. A study by Conn, (2005) revealed that every current premiership club had turned out academy graduates under the age of twenty five.

The first Test playing nation to set up an academy was Australia back in 1988, and has since become one of the biggest forces in cricket. In an article in the Daily Telegraph, by Ruscoe (2001) it was reported that England opened their first national academy in 2001, 13 years after Australia had opened theirs. Ruscoe (2001) believed that cricket academies were the way forward in developing the young cricketers of the future. He stated that ‘England has always dragged its heels in setting up an academy and is the last established Test-playing nation to have one’ (Ruscoe, 2001). This is evidence that England had been slow in setting up an academy, and that the ECB had their critics.

1.2 **ECB’s Response**

The national cricket academy opened in 2001, but had no facilities to train the cricketers therefore the selected players were taken to Australia for the winter for expert coaching and analysis. The National Cricket Centre in Loughborough University costing £4.5m was opened in 2003, and is a joint venture between the ECB and Sports England. The facilities at the academy consist of an indoor cricket centre, outdoor nets and pitches, residential accommodation, and access to the English Institute of Sport (EIS) science and medicine support facilities. The facilities are regarded as one of the best in the world ([http://www.ecb.co.uk/news/training-begins-at-national-academy,346,EN.html](http://www.ecb.co.uk/news/training-begins-at-national-academy,346,EN.html)). Since the development of the academy, England
has received a mixture of results. Initial success has been replaced by some heavy and
disappointing defeats in both the test and the one day arena. This led to an overview
of the England cricket system in 2007, resulting in changes that are aimed for future
success.

1.3 Strategy

An early definition of strategy was provided by the American business historian,
Alfred D. Chandler (1962) who stated that ‘strategy is the determination of the basic
long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action
and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out those goals’. The strategy
therefore, is as much about setting goals and objectives as it is about providing a
means for achieving them. In cricketing terms, setting targets for a team to reach is
just as important as a way of achieving it (Bates, 2000).

In a summary for the ECB, Terry N. Bates (2000) states the National Strategy for
Cricket sets out the objectives to be pursued by increasing the number of participants,
in sustaining the interest generated at school and to raise the standard of cricket at all
levels. The ECB set out to do this by developing good facilities, raising sufficient
funding and ensuring that cricket was played through all the age categories up to
senior cricket (Bates, 2000).
1.4 Glamorgan County Cricket Club

Research carried out by A. Higwell (1988) showed that the Glamorgan C.C.C was formed on July 6th 1888 at a meeting of cricket officials in The Angel Hotel, Cardiff. Since 1921 they have been the only Welsh representatives in the English County Championship. They have been successful in this competition, winning in 1948, 1969 and 1997, along with national league success in 1993 and 2002 ([http://www.glamorgancricket.com/club_history.php](http://www.glamorgancricket.com/club_history.php)). In a report on cricket development, H. Morris (2000) described that to be successful in the county game Glamorgan need to have a cricket academy in place for the coaching and development of young cricketers in the county.

The academy was opened in 2001, and consisted of 16-19 year olds who are viewed to have the ability to go on and represent Glamorgan C.C.C first team. The academy not only concentrates on the technical side of cricket, but also the tactical, physical, psychological and lifestyle aspects of the game. Similar to the England National Academy, Glamorgan have set up a Cricket Centre to aid in the development of cricketers of all ages along with the senior team players. The state of the art facilities range from 7 net lanes with extended cushioned run ups, bowling and fielding machines along with video analysis equipment ([http://www.glamorgancricket.com/coaching_national_cricket_centre.php](http://www.glamorgancricket.com/coaching_national_cricket_centre.php)).
1.5 Glamorgan’s Role in Relation to the ECB’s Objectives.

The above literature does suggest that sporting academies and their strategic management do play a part in the success that countries and clubs have in different sports at senior level. When the ECB National Academy was opened, their strategic plan was to build a vibrant domestic game, have effective leadership and governance, gain enthusiastic participation and following among young people and build a successful England team. (Collier, 2005) As part of the ECB structure, Glamorgan C.C.C. is responsible that these goals are met in their county.

In order to consider if these goals are reached in Glamorgan C.C.C, a critical evaluation of the ECB National Academy in respective to Glamorgan County perspective is needed. The purpose of this study is therefore to investigate if the Glamorgan Cricket Academy has been successful since these strategic requirements were enforced. The study will research into the strategic running of the England National Academy and study how the strategic running of Glamorgan’s cricket academy compares to it. Results of this study will be valuable to coaches and players at the club because it will show if the cricket structure is successful in the county. If nothing is gained from sending players to the academy, it would be meaningless to carry on with the system as no success would come from it.

It is hypothesised that the strategic running of the academies were quite similar, as both have the intention of developing potential match winners into their first team. In terms of cricket development in Glamorgan C.C.C. it is hypothesised that they may find it difficult to develop cricket in all areas of their region.
1.6 Aims

The main aim of this research paper will be to attempt to answer the above question in a hypothetical nature. This will be done by interviewing coaches and current academy players. The interview will attempt to extract responses regarding the strategic management of the academy system. The responses given in the interviews will either support or query the hypothesis.
Chapter 3 – Methodology
3.0 Methodology

3.1 Rationale

The purpose of this study is to undertake a critical evaluation of the ECB National Academy in relation to Glamorgan C.C.C perspective. The aim of this study is to attain the perspectives of individuals who are involved with the structure of Glamorgan cricket development and will hopefully provide a vast amount of information on a number of key issues. Giddens (2001) points out there are a range of different research methods in existence, and which one chosen depends on the overall objectives of the study as well as the aspects of behaviour analysed. With this in mind it is decided that qualitative research is to be carried out in the form of an interview.

A qualitative approach will be used to carry out this investigation, as it is a type of research that will gain relevant, thorough and detailed information on the structure of the academy system. Qualitative methods of data collection are considered to be more adaptable (Haralambos and Holborn, 1995), and more capable of exploring multiple realities, thus producing data of a high quality (Allan, 1991). Quantitative approach is different as it emphasizes ‘the measure and analysis of casual relationships between variables, not process’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000 p.8). Haralambos and Holborn, (1995, p705) state that ‘compared to quantitative, qualitative data are usually seen as richer, more vital, as having greater depth, and as more likely to present a true picture of a way of life, of people’s attitudes and beliefs.’

Data will be gathered through interviews. This data collection process will allow information to be gathered on a variety of issues, and have clear advantages over questionnaires such as response rate. This is due to interviews being predominantly a
one on one interaction. Once complete the information is gathered, whereas questionnaires takes longer due to the fact they have to be sent away and it may take time in till they are returned or may not be returned at all (Thomas and Nelson, 2001). According to Burns (2000) ‘more people will be willing to talk and react verbally than to write responses to questions’. Bell (1999) notes the significance of adaptability through the use of interviews, stating that an interviewer is able to follow up ideas, explore responses, and investigate motive and feelings that would be concealed in a written response, such as tone of voice, facial expressions and hesitations.

3.2 Participants

Selection for the study was purposive, with regards to their specific levels of expertise and experience. The subjects participating in the study are academy players who have first hand experience of the system, the academy director who deals with the everyday running of the academy, and the performance director who has great knowledge on the structure of Glamorgan cricket.

Four samples are going to be used in this study. Despite this number being relatively small number of participants, adequate information will be gathered in reviewing the ECB National Academy in relation to Glamorgan Cricket. Another consideration when choosing the sample was the time and financial constraints of the researcher (Burns, 2000).
3.3 **Research Design**

After selecting the sample participants and agreeing to meet, a structured interview with probes will be developed. The interview guide will be devised following the review of literature, forming a list of the most suitable and meaningful questions, whilst allowing for in-depth answers. The questions will be open ended to allow the sample to give as much information as possible. According to Burns (2000, p.572), other than the subject of the question, there are no restrictions to the response or the content of the respondent’s reply. Burns (2000, p572) states that ‘Open-ended items form the essential ingredient of unstructured interviewing’. The interview has structure, making it easier to compare answers. This will make it easier to gather the results of the interview.

An interview time and date is then required to be arranged with the sample participants at a location that is convenient with them. With the interview taking place in the location of their choice, it will allow them to relax and speak freely and honestly (Oppenheim, 1992). The purpose of the study will be explained to the participants, and it will be made clear that this study required their total co-operation and honesty. A consent form (appendix A) will be given explaining the purpose and importance of the research. The important part of this letter will be assuring the participants that their interview is strictly confidential and, allowing them to relax and speak freely, along with their signature that allows the interview to be carried out (Thomas and Nelson 2001).

The interviews will be conducted over a two-week period. All the interviews will be recorded using a Dictaphone, to safeguard the interview, provide a faultless data
source, and provided an opportunity to review the data as often as necessary (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

3.4 Instrumentation

The fundamental principle of qualitative interviewing is to provide a framework which allows respondents to express their own feelings in their own terms (Patton, 1999, p. 337). The use of an interview guide (Appendix B) will be employed to ensure that each of the interviews follows a similar pattern. ‘An interview guide is prepared to ensure that the same basic lines of inquiry are pursued with each person interviewed’ (Patton, 1990, p.339).

3.5 Pilot Study

‘A pilot study is important as it helps to elicit methodological and procedural flaws in research design’ (Thomas and Nelson, 2001, p.267). The main purpose of the pilot study is to test the questions to ensure that they are written in a manner that is easy to understand and follow a clear reasonable sequence. According to Oppenheim (1992, p.47) ‘Piloting can help us not only with the wording of questions but also with procedural matters such as the design of a letter of introduction, the ordering of question sequences and the reduction of non-response rates’.

The pilot study is carried out before the interviews. This will provide information on the value of each question. The response to the pilot study will result in an adjustment to the questions if required, and will contribute in developing a more efficient interview. This process will also identify any potential faults from the research that would hamper the effectiveness of the questions. The pilot study will be conducted on
the director of cricket with Cardiff and Glamorgan UCCE as he had the relevant experience and knowledge to be able to answer the questions posed. From this study, alterations will be made to some of the questions in the interviewing guide if required.

3.6 Data Analysis
Miles and Huberman (1994), defined data analysis as three linked sub-processes, data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. Once the interviews are conducted, they will be transcribed, which enables them to be re-read as often as necessary. A cross-case analysis will then be carried out by devising a consistent system for categorising data set according to a set of common principles or themes. This enables the data to be compared in order to establish the range of generality or specific findings (Miles and Huberman 1994). The process continues until no further links can be located thus achieving theoretical saturation (Patton, 1990) upon which conclusions can be drawn.

3.7 Validity and Reliability
Validity and Reliability refer to two key concepts that ultimately asses the truthfulness of a study. Thomas and Nelson (2001, p.181) note that validity is ‘the true degree to which a test or instrument measures what it is supposed to measure’ whereas Veal (1992) states that ‘Validity is the extent to which the measure truly reflects the phenomenon’. According to Gratton & Jones (2004, p.85) ‘reliability generally refers to the consistency of the results obtained’. This means that if the same study was done over and over the same results would be evident. All these considerations must be kept in mind when carrying out the research, as any successful study requires being both valid and reliable.
Bias is another problem which may affect validity and reliability. In order to minimise the bias, an interview guide is utilised ensuring research maintained consistency (Burns, 2000). The review of literature is current to the most recent literature available on the subject, making the questions relevant and valid. The interview is to be carried out on a pilot study on an expert in the field, enabling him to explain any unclear questions which in turn will make the study more reliable. The sample study is to be carried out on relevant participant associated with the structure of Glamorgan cricket. By using an interview guide the method shall be consistent as the same questions are going to be asked to all of the subjects.
Chapter Five - Conclusion
The aims and objectives of this study were achieved as the findings showed that the running of the ECB National Academy was similar to that of the Glamorgan Cricket academy. Both academies have a structure in place that try and develop cricketers to the best of their ability. Research findings indicate that the academies try and work together. Glamorgan C.C.C coaches are all ECB qualified coaches therefore their coaching techniques are heavily influenced by the ECB.

Research findings on many occasions showed that the strategic running of the Glamorgan C.C.C. academy was following in the same footsteps as that of the ECB National Academy. An example of this would be that the ECB National Academy have specific coaches that concentrate on developing biomechanical, psychological and live skills of the players. This was also evident in the Glamorgan Academy where they have coaches who concentrate on the same subjects. It was hypothesised that Glamorgan C.C.C. may find it difficult to develop cricket in the whole of the region which is basically Wales, but research found that everyone has an equal opportunity to be scouted up by Glamorgan. Development Officers that are working in their regions ensure that players who have got the talent get an opportunity by Glamorgan.

One weakness with this strategy is that some regions may have more cricketers than other regions, therefore some development officers may have more cricketers to look at than others. Research found that there was no evident measure of how the officers run the development system, therefore some cricketers may be lost because of poor management.
Chapter 5 Conclusion

It is targeted in Glamorgan that by 2011, 80% of the first team players will have come through the academy system (subject 3). If this happens it is a great achievement by the academy. One weakness evident by setting this target is that it could be reached easily with cricketers that are not able to compete at county level.

Research found that there were no performance indicators in place for the developing players to try and hit. For example, a batsman averaging 35 runs per innings for the season, or a bowler to take on average one wicket a game in the season would be a good benchmark for the players to try and hit. As a result of this strategy players coming through the system who may look to have the talent to compete at county level may not be performing and therefore not worthy of their place in the team.

The research findings have shown that the fundamental structure at Glamorgan C.C.C. is similar to that of the ECB National Academy. But to further develop their young cricketers it is advised to review their structure and implement performance related targets for the academy players to aim at, in doing this it will give motivation to the player to try and hit these targets, and it will allow the club to monitor each player individually and evaluate if they are performing to the standard that is required.
5.1 **Limitations**

Due to time and financial constraints, the researcher was limited in relation to the sample size. Even though the sample size was very knowledgeable on the area of research, a larger sample group might have given an even broader view of events, than was achieved in this study. Due to this research being carried out in the off season of cricket, interviewing the appropriate people was restricted due to them being away in pre season training and therefore required adequate time management in order to interview the subjects when it best suited them. The inexperience of the interviewers’ technique was a limitation. A more experienced interviewer may have been able to extract more vital information from the subjects, but it’s a learning process and the interviewer will have benefited.

5.2 **Recommendations**

Further research into cricket academies could concentrate more on County Cricket Club academies and relate it to the ECB National Academy rather than just the Glamorgan academy. This may be beneficial in showing if the structure of other academy systems is similar to that of the ECB National Academy, or if they are different in any way. Regarding Glamorgan C.C.C. further research could be carried out on the structure of the academy system, concentrating on its running and development of young cricketers. Investigating into how the club monitors the success of individual players may also be beneficial to the club.
References

Referencing

Academy Achievement [on-line]


Glamorgan C.C.C. Club History [on-line].

Glamorgan C.C.C. National Cricket Centre [on-line].

Glamorgan defend new stadium cost [on-line]
http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/cricket/counties/glamorgan/4159464.stm [assessed 23rd January 2008]


Redmill, F. (2002) Quality in cricket demands quality in management. TN, USA


World Class Plan [on-line]  www.ecb.co.uk/world-class-plan/ [accessed 18th November 2007]
Dear participant,

My name is Carwyn Evans and I’m a final year undergraduate student undertaking a dissertation on the strategic running of ECB National academy in relation to Glamorgan cricket at the University of Wales Institute Cardiff. The aim of this interview is to gain an insight on your personal experiences into the running of the Cricket academy in Glamorgan.

Interviews will be taped, and the tapes shall be held in a raw data box to be accessed only by teaching staff at the School of Sport PE and Recreation. The completed interview will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Participant’s names will not be included in the presentation of results, which will ensure the protection of the participant’s identity.

Participation is completely voluntary, and participants are able to withdraw from the interview any time.

I ___________________________(sign full name) give my consent to the researcher Carwyn Evans to analyse the information given in the interview for research purposes only.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation.
Appendix B
Interview Guide

Q1. What are your views on the development of the game in your time at the county?

Q2. In the development of the academy players what would you say is the main objectives the club has in place?

Q3. Would you say that the academy system has been successful since its opening?

Q4. Has the structure of the ECB National Academy influenced the running of the Glamorgan academy in your opinion?

Q5. Apart from the academy, in what way does Glamorgan try and develop Cricket in Wales?

Q6. Would the club side that academy players play for aid in their development?

Q7. What incentives are given to the players for playing well?

Q8. Would you say that everyone in Wales has an equal opportunity to be scouted by Glamorgan?
Q9. To further develop Cricket in the area are there any coaching programmes that aim to develop cricketing skills of children in schools?

Q10. What measures are taken to develop crowds and general interest in the game?

Q11. What benefits does playing for the second team and minor county teams have in the development of young cricketers?

Q12. What do you believe will bring further success to the club?

Q13. What part would you say the current academy players have in the future of Glamorgan Cricket?

Q14. Are there any other issues you feel are relevant that haven’t been discussed?

Thank you for your time

Carwyn
Appendix C