


DECO2014

Assignment 1

Appendix

SOLI3202
EFER0647
SKEL0496

1 Role Discussion

 **Assigned Roles for Assignment 1** ☆ 📁 ☁ Saved to Drive

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EMMA

- Interviews
- Expert Research

SOPHIA

- Editing
- Interviews
- Submitting/Organising

SYDNEY

- Recruiting
- Expert Research

ALL

- ☐ Background Research
- ☐ Create Problem Statement
- ☐ Create Research Objectives
- ☐ Preparing Content for Primary Research (Interview Questions)
- ☐ Affinity/Thematic Analysis
- ☐ Everyone do 1 persona and UX Journey Map based on 1 AD
- ☐ Potential Steps

2 Initial Research Into the Brief (Pt 1 of 2)

DELVING INTO THE INITIAL PROBLEM SPACE

WEEK 1: HW/RESEARCH

Barriers for people with disabilities in participation in sports and recreational activities:

- **Impairment**
 - General Disability:
 - "Typical barriers for disabled people to participate in sport include a lack of awareness from those without disabilities on how to include them in sport [2], lack of opportunities for training and competition, accessible facilities causing physical barriers [3], and limited resources [4]. Negative social attitudes are sadly another common barrier in sport, causing social isolation and impact on emotional and physical wellbeing [3]."
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9915882/#:~:text=Typical%20barriers%20for%20disabled%20people,and%20limited%20resources%20%5B4%5D.>
 - **General barriers for people with disabilities:** "(1) barriers and facilitators related to the built and natural environment; (2) economic issues; (3) emotional and psychological barriers; (4) equipment barriers; (5) barriers related to the use and interpretation of guidelines, codes, regulations, and laws; (6) information-related barriers; (7) professional knowledge, education, and training issues; (8) perceptions and attitudes of persons who are not disabled, including professionals; (9) policies and procedures both at the facility and community level; and (10) availability of resources."
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10845523/#:~:text=Studies%20have%20found%20significant%20differences,engaging%20in%20sports%20%5B11%5D.>
 - Physical:
 - Functioning difficulties (joint/movement issues) makes it hard to fully participate
 - Pain, though mobility movement can also relieve pain
 - Difficulty participating in team sports - can lead to isolation
 - Team sports are often not made to accommodate those with a physical disability as it is usually just a modification for a single person (not an excuse)
 - The physicality of some team sports can be dangerous for those with a higher risk of injury
 - Visual:
 - Games/Recreation must be auditorily based
 - Often hard to orient oneself, where are things in relation to myself?

- Makes it hard to participate in and keep up with team sports, especially sports that include throwing/catching/kicking a ball
- Thoughts: games with lots of physical touch, planted objects, and auditory help assists with to grounding
- Cognitive:
 - "inclusive clubs require a balance between a focus on sporting skills and performance with managing the needs and characteristics of the players and the inter-relationships among them"
<https://www.mdpi.com/2673-7272/3/1/5>
 - the need to personalise the training regime paired with careful assessment of the members' current level of proficiency
 - Support from trained personnel is very helpful and many times necessary
 - Really important and valued to build relationships, teams, etc. which is hard to achieve in a place that is under equipped (facilities, trained staff, accessibility)
- **Social Barriers and Infrastructural Barriers**
 - Getting to sporting/recreational activities can be hard if there are no accessible routes
 - (According to my Australian sports class) sports are Australian culture; It is how kids grow up, make friends, form relationships, identity, culture, etc.
 - How does this then affect people with disabilities who can't participate?
 - How can we accommodate to build disability into our recreational and sporting activities?
 - How can we re-envision traditional forms of movement to include physical/visual/hearing/cognitive disabilities?
 - Health and Disability: In our society, someone who has a disability is seen as inherently unhealthy.
 - How do we reframe our view of what it means to be 'healthy'?
- **Why is this research important?**
 - Almost 20% of people in Australia live with a disability, but only one in four of these participate in sport.
 - 75% of Australians with disability want to take part in sport but feel there are limited opportunities.
 - 12.5% of people with severe/profound impairments participated at least once in sport in the previous 12 months. In the same period, 65-70% of the general population did.
https://www.paralympic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ParaSport_Facts-final.pdf
 - "Australian and international research shows a positive relationship between sport and physical activity participation and health and wellbeing outcomes for

2 Initial Research Into the Brief (Pt 2 of 2)

people with disability, including: cardiovascular and musculoskeletal health; social engagement; increased self-confidence; increased opportunities for independence; making friends; increased fitness; increased technical ability; improved communication skills." -

<https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/kb/persons-with-disability-and-sport/benefits-of-sport#:~:text=Australian%20and%20international%20research%20show%20confidence%3B%20increased%20opportunities%20for%20independence>

- While these benefits are similar to fully able bodied individuals, it is significant to note for disabled people as they are statistically less likely to be active due to many factors including enormous physical, social, and attitudinal barriers.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15895533/>
- It is good to note that those with disability are at greater risk for developing health problems associated with sedentary living. so it is important to be active
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15895533/>
- Adults with a disability are 9 times more likely to report both cardiovascular diseases and diabetes than those adults who are not living with disability.
https://www.paralympic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ParaSport_Facts-final.pdf

WEEK 1: RESEARCH DONE IN CLASS

Research for Disability Issues in Sports/Recreational Activities

- "(1) barriers and facilitators related to the built and natural environment; (2) economic issues; (3) emotional and psychological barriers; (4) equipment barriers; (5) barriers related to the use and interpretation of guidelines, codes, regulations, and laws; (6) information-related barriers; (7) professional knowledge, education, and training issues; (8) perceptions and attitudes of persons who are not disabled, including professionals; (9) policies and procedures both at the facility and community level; and (10) availability of resources."
- Mainstream media
- Physical:
 - Functioning difficulties (joint/movement issues) makes it hard to fully participate
 - Pain, though modily movement can also relieve pain
 - Difficulty participating in team sports - can lead to isolation
- Visual Impairment:
 - Games/Recreation must be auditorily based
 - Often hard to orient oneself, where are things in relation to myself?

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10845523/#:~:text=Studies%20have%20found%20significant%20differences,engaging%20in%20sports%20%5B11%5D>
<https://in-sport.eu/output-6/challenges-and-tips-concerning-sports-and-physical-activity-for-people-with-disabilities-or-chronic-conditions/>
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0749379704000297>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15895533/>

Research for Barriers for Everyday Fitness & Physical Activity

- Lack of time
- No family and friends with shared interest in physical activity
- Lack of motivation
- Lack of resources/equipment (i.e. expense or travel)
- Feeling uncertain or uncomfortable
- A lot of sedentary behaviour involves screen time
- Almost half (44%) of working-age adults spend much of their work day sitting
- People who have the highest activity levels are those for whom it is part of their everyday working lives
- In developing countries, more people still have physically taxing jobs but as they become more economically prosperous, their activity levels fall
- Sedentary behaviours such as sitting and television viewing contribute to health risks both because of and independently of their impact on physical activity
- Health-related behaviours and disease risk factors track from childhood to adulthood, indicating that early and ongoing opportunities for physical activity are needed for maximum health benefit
- While the ill effects of chronic disease are manifested mainly in adults, it is increasingly better understood that the development of these conditions starts in childhood and adolescence
- Evidence for both direct and indirect health effects of physical activity has been reported, and the need for ongoing participation in physical activity to stimulate and maintain the chronic adaptations that underlie those benefits is well documented
- Individuals can be motivated to overcome internal barriers (fatigue, lack of time, cost and age) through social support and emphasis on exercise benefits
- External barriers (weather and lack of pavement or park) can be reduced by raising awareness of existing infrastructure
- In a sample of Australian adults, commonly perceived barriers to physical activity were lack of time, interest and enjoyment, and some participants identified social and self-esteem factors

<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/getting-active/breaking-down-barriers-to-fitness>
<https://www.health.gov.au/topics/physical-activity-and-exercise/about-physical-activity-and-exercise>

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/sep/21/get-up-stand-up-including-exercise-in-everyday-life-healthier-than-gym-says-study>
[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(17\)31634-3/fulltext?elsca1=tlpr](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(17)31634-3/fulltext?elsca1=tlpr)
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK201497/>
<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-022-13431-2>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5968958/>

Research for Disconnection between Mind and Physical Body/Natural Biological Responses

- Well-being: Social vs emotional vs physical vs mental
- Disregulation of hormones, serotonin, mental awareness etc from a lifestyle influenced and heavily reliant on technology/urbanisation? for example, if we need to figure out the sum of two relatively large numbers together, we often open a calculator app or search for the answer - our natural ability to think critically and respond to things in our environment is limited within a society shaped by technological advances
- Environmental threats to mind. Psychosocial conditions that relate to the individual's perceptions of the social and physical world.
- "Feelings of pure loss might lead to depressive disorders, while feelings of pure danger might lead to anxiety disorders," explains Ronald Kessler, a professor of health care policy at Harvard Medical School. "And feelings of loss and danger might lead to both simultaneously." Either alone or in combination, psychosocial and physiological stressors can interact with a genetic vulnerability to alter brain chemistry and thus alter the individual's mental health. - *How can we diversify, alter or broaden our physical experiences with these sensory, emotional or psychological types of stressors? (exposure therapy, show others and address these technological dependencies)*
- Unlike cancer or heart disease, which have clearly visible endpoints, mental disorders yield vague behaviours that vary widely among individuals. "They're defined mainly by thoughts, behaviours, and feelings," Susser says. "We don't have biological measures on which to rest our diagnoses."

Links for Research

WHO Article on Importance of Physical
https://www.who.int/health-topics/physical-activity#tab=tab_1

The relationship between physical, mental and social well-being

- <https://www.kmvt.com/content/news/The-relationship-between-physical-mental-and-social-well-being-571335331.html>

<https://in-sport.eu/output-6/challenges-and-tips-concerning-sports-and-physical-activity-for-people-with-disabilities-or-chronic-conditions/>

Challenges and tips concerning sports and physical activity for people with disabilities or chronic conditions

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36164803/>

Athletes with intellectual disability: The effects of cognitive deficits and sports practice on bipedal standing balance

3 Focused Background Secondary Research (Pt 1 of 4)

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT RESEARCH

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/vision-loss-and-sport>

- Sighted people can assist in multiple facets i.e. organizing transport, setting up equipment asking how they can best help the person who is blind or has low

<https://blindsportsaustralia.com.au/>

- People with visual impairment have greater difficulty in accessing physical activity and sport, and a lack of social interaction is also associated with a risk of exclusion.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8744778/>

- Visually impaired people suffer from impairment that restricts their perception of their environment and limits, to some extent, their acquisition of psychomotor skills and also, to some extent, their mental, social and physical health
- Regardless of the cause of blindness, there is no feedback from the environment, affecting psychological health, personal autonomy, attitude and life in society, with various alterations in the perception of one's own body in space, alterations in body adjustment and basic motor skills [7], inducing new comorbidities, such as a sedentary lifestyle, that usually lead to obesity or being overweight, adding another risk factor for the cardiovascular/pulmonary system
- Although there are no specific studies on this subject, several authors mention the importance of including blind people in exercise programmes in order to prevent the appearance of new pathologies that may affect their state of health
- In addition to this situation, another frequent conditioning factor is the restricted access to sports programmes or targeted exercise for this population group, either due to the lack of dissemination of information or lack of knowledge about architectonic facilitators.
- In the case of visual sensory impairment, its commitment is related to the limitation in functions related to motor qualities such as: balance, stability, postural control and muscle strength, among others, which, ultimately, end up affecting their independence and functionality and limiting their participation in society and performance in their daily activities.
- However, when talking about sport and disability, it is necessary to take into account not only the physical benefits but also the psychosocial benefits. As mentioned above, the practice of physical activities has been shown to be beneficial for the creation of close emotional bonds, the development of social skills and/or social reintegration.
- Because adults with blindness are four times more likely to be impaired in performing activities of daily living and five times more likely to have limited mobility than people with adequate visual acuity, regular physical activity has been found to improve functional independence, prevent the risk of falls and improve social relationships, resulting in a better quality of life
- The low motivation of people with disabilities to engage in physical activity may be due to a lack of knowledge of its benefits, as well as the constant external blocks derived from those prejudices and barriers imposed by society

- In fact, it can be concluded that the social perception of people with disabilities is the most influential factor in why they do not participate in physical activities
- it has been shown that people with blindness tend to be less physically active than sighted people due to the insecurity of not recognising their environment and being influenced by other socio-demographic factors such as age, gender and type of blindness
- it is necessary to take into account that blind people have similar physical abilities to sighted people; the big difference is that they show a limitation for learning due to acquired or congenital alterations in the visual system.
- Therefore, it is necessary to look for other learning strategies based on the experimentation of other information channels, such as the tactile, auditory, proprioceptive, kinaesthetic and affective senses, without leaving aside the motivation towards motor activity due to the fear of the unknown, which can lead to the rejection of the practice of physical activity
- Finally, all these themes stemmed from these central issues: the lack of disability-inclusive responses and preparedness for the care of people with disabilities, the disadvantages of physical activity before and during the pandemic, emergencies and the disadvantages experienced by people with visual impairment.
- Most children and young people with visual impairment want to do more physical activity and sport but lack motivation due to the lack of accessibility
- For inclusion to be real, participants with visual impairment within clubs must be autonomous and have control over the support they receive or need to receive
- it becomes important to explore how we can alter the way physical activity and sport is constructed in response to needs, rather than excluding those with differences
- Inclusive physical activity, physical education and sport rely heavily on the training of professionals
- Visually impaired people value as an inclusion factor that the people who attend them as technicians and those who share the activity have an attitude and an interest in the knowledge of people with disabilities.
- The lack of accessibility in facilities, activities and physical activity and sports programmes makes visually impaired people feel less accepted and adapted for because they cannot perform like the rest of the participants, increasing this feeling of rejection in people with multiple disabilities.
- Another factor is that the professionals have knowledge and control over the physical activity carried out. To these are added the personal predisposition as a facilitating element for social success and the elimination of exclusion factors

3 Focused Background Secondary Research (Pt 2 of 4)

- Many sports rely on blind/visually impaired people to have a fully sighted buddy with them which can be a restriction - hard to be independent, enforces dependency on able bodied people
- People with visual impairment will be more motivated if, within the activities, they feel they are included and there are positive personal interactions that satisfy their personal needs for recognition of competence, autonomy and personal relationships, which are fundamental elements for social inclusion

<https://typeset.io/questions/what-are-the-problems-facing-people-with-visual-impairment-44ect1mi3c>

- Children with visual impairments may be marginalized and left on the sidelines in physical education programs, leading to a negative perception of their abilities and limited opportunities to develop motor skills and participate in sports
- visually impaired individuals face challenges in locating the ball and other players, making it difficult to participate without adaptations such as customized balls equipped with sound devices

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25028476/>

- Six hundred forty-eight of the invited participants (13%) completed the questionnaire, and 63% of the respondents reported sports participation.
- Walking (43%), fitness (34%), and cycling (34%) were frequently mentioned sports.
- Costs, lack of peers/buddies, and visual impairment were negatively associated with sports participation, whereas higher education and computer (software) use were positively associated.
- The most important personal barrier was visual impairment; transport was the most important environmental barrier.
- Active participants also mentioned dependence on others as a personal barrier.
- The most important personal facilitators were health, fun, and social contacts; support from family was the most important environmental facilitator.

Living with vision loss guide (understanding the target audience)

Our Living with Vision Loss guide covers the range of supports and a handy step-by-step checklist.

Supports include:

- Emotional, peer-to-peer and social groups with others with lived experience.
- Equipment and technology that enable them to do daily tasks independently.

Technologies that can help you (ie white canes, smartphones to help you read menus or identify colours, magnifiers,

library tools etc.)

- Strategies and equipment to use the home safely.

Occupational therapists can suggest small changes in your home allowing you to still use every space safely. They can show you tips such as using tactile features on kitchen equipment, ways to reach your front door, adding colour contrast to find cups easily and organising wardrobes and cupboards.

- Services for babies, children and young people.
- Training and support to travel independently.
- Government funding and subsidies.

Low vision or blindness life hacks:

<https://www.visionaustralia.org/services/helpful-resources/individuals/life-hacks>

Problems to research

- Approximately 30 to 40 percent of all blind adults experience difficulties in each of these five functional activities: bending, walking, standing, lifting, and walking up steps.
-

3 Focused Background Secondary Research (Pt 3 of 4)

3.1.1. Health and Fitness

First, participants spoke about how important running was for their health and fitness. Erin (runner) summed up the health and fitness benefits by saying: "So, there's definitely the physical health benefits [that like I think](#) all runners benefit from. Same for mental health benefits." Both Becca and Stephanie explained that running started out as a way to be active and stay in shape but quickly transformed into valuable mental health benefits.

3.1.2. Friendships

Aside from health and fitness, the runners and guides described the greatest benefit of running as friendship. Each runner and guide detailed the bond they formed with individual runners or the sense of community they experienced in a running group.

3.2. Barriers

The most substantial barrier experienced by the blind runners was the challenge of finding sighted runners to serve as guides.

3.3. Advocacy

The runners and guides spoke about the importance of advocacy when running recreationally and in races.

3.4. Communication

Communication was discussed by both runners and guides as an important tool for success in running recreationally and competitively

According to our findings, the participants' involvement in running helped them to create life-long friendships and relationships. Both runners with visual impairments and sighted guides reported numerous physical and mental health benefits that they contributed to running, such as fitness, increased energy, enhanced mood, and positive relationships with others that may positively contribute to their perceived health-related quality of life [\[31\]](#). Promoting the benefits of running may encourage individuals to get involved in the welcoming sport.

The theme of barriers highlighted the lack of guide runners. The lack of sighted running guides may be an international phenomenon, as Alcaraz-Rodriguez and colleagues (2018) [\[35\]](#) found that there is a shortage of sighted runners who are willing and trained to be guides in the trail running community in Spain. This is similar to findings by Lieberman et al. (2019) [\[19\]](#) in their study examining the experience of running guide dog handlers. Participants chose to get a running guide dog as they continued to have issues finding guides to run with. The specific barriers experienced by participants in Lieberman and colleagues' 2019 study [\[19\]](#) were the time the guides had to run, pacing, and communication. The barriers to running in our current study

were similar, spanning the time it takes to find guides on a regular basis, guides wanting to run their own races rather than guide someone, and the need for constant advocacy; these barriers are exhausting for runners with visual impairments.

The current study also highlights the need for guides to advocate for the runners they guide in some cases. Being aware of the needs that runners with visual impairments often advocate for can enable race officials to prepare for and welcome runners and guides into the race community.

Effective communication between runners with visual impairments and their guide runners is interdependent, and collaboration is necessary for long-term success [\[40\]](#).

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research should include family members, coaches, friends, and colleagues to gain additional perspectives for triangulation. In addition, the researchers can add observations of runners and guides during practice and races. Additionally, future research can analyze the lived experiences of new and seasoned runners. Lastly, future qualitative inquiries can explore how runners with visual impairments and sighted runners become involved in the sport as an athlete or a guide.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT RESEARCH

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/vision-loss-and-sport>

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3 Focused Background Secondary Research (Pt 4 of 4)

- Although there are no specific studies on this subject, several authors mention the importance of including blind people in exercise programmes in order to prevent the appearance of new pathologies that may affect their state of health
- In addition to this situation, another frequent conditioning factor is the restricted access to sports programmes or targeted exercise for this population group, either due to the lack of dissemination of information or lack of knowledge about architectonic facilitators.
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- However, when talking about sport and disability, it is necessary to take into account not only the physical benefits but also the psychosocial benefits. As mentioned above, the practice of physical activities has been shown to be beneficial for the creation of close emotional bonds, the development of social skills and/or social reintegration.
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- In fact, it can be concluded that the social perception of people with disabilities is the most influential factor in why they do not participate in physical activities
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- Finally, all these themes stemmed from these central issues: the lack of disability-inclusive responses and preparedness for the care of people with disabilities, the disadvantages of physical activity before and during the pandemic, emergencies and the disadvantages experienced by people with visual impairment.

- Most children and young people with visual impairment want to do more physical activity and sport but lack motivation due to the lack of accessibility
- For inclusion to be real, participants with visual impairment within clubs must be autonomous and have control over the support they receive or need to receive
- it becomes important to explore how we can alter the way physical activity and sport is constructed in response to needs, rather than excluding those with differences
- Inclusive physical activity, physical education and sport rely heavily on the training of professionals
- Visually impaired people value as an inclusion factor that the people who attend them as technicians and those who share the activity have an attitude and an interest in the knowledge of people with disabilities.
- The lack of accessibility in facilities, activities and physical activity and sports programmes makes visually impaired people feel less accepted and adapted for because they cannot perform like the rest of the participants, increasing this feeling of rejection in people with multiple disabilities.
- Another factor is that the professionals have knowledge and control over the physical activity carried out. To these are added the personal predisposition as a facilitating element for social success and the elimination of exclusion factors

- Many sports rely on blind/visually impaired people to have a fully sighted buddy with them which can be a restriction - hard to be independent, enforces dependency on able bodied people
- People with visual impairment will be more motivated if, within the activities, they feel they are included and there are positive personal interactions that satisfy their personal needs for recognition of competence, autonomy and personal relationships, which are fundamental elements for social inclusion

<https://typeset.io/questions/what-are-the-problems-facing-people-with-visual-impairment-44ect1mi3c>

- Children with visual impairments may be marginalized and left on the sidelines in physical education programs, leading to a negative perception of their abilities and limited opportunities to develop motor skills and participate in sports
- visually impaired individuals face challenges in locating the ball and other players, making it difficult to participate without adaptations such as customized balls equipped with sound devices

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25028476/>

- Six hundred forty-eight of the invited participants (13%) completed the questionnaire, and 63% of the respondents reported sports participation.
- Walking (43%), fitness (34%), and cycling (34%) were frequently mentioned sports.

4 Research Problem & Objectives

RESEARCH PROBLEM & OBJECTIVES

- 1) Write clear research problem statement
- 2) Establish clear research objectives
- 3) Pick research methods

People with visual disabilities find it difficult to engage with physical recreational activities due to barriers in accessibility such as lack of autonomy, disability education, and social structures.

Research Problem:

People with visual impairments find it difficult to engage with physical sports and recreational activities.

To investigate the adversity faced by those with visual impairments regarding physical sports and recreational activities.

To investigate the experience of the visually impaired and how they engage with sporting and physical activities.

Research Objectives:

1. To understand the current experience of people with visual impairments in physical sports and activities.
2. To understand the social and institutional barriers that visually impaired individuals face while engaging in recreational activities.
3. To investigate the pre-existing structures and tools used by the visually impaired to accommodate physical activities.

Our 4 methods:

- Literature review - to base our primary research off of
- Interviews - Gain detailed insights, examples, and personal perspectives of those with visual impairments
- Surveys - Quantitative information to affirm qualitative findings
- Online Ethnography - Broad range of experiences

5 Participant Recruiting for Research



Sophia Littlejohn <sophiafittlejohn@gmail.com>

Fw: University of Sydney Research Inquiry: Individuals with Visual Impairments in Sports and Recreational Activities

1 message

Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au> Mon, Mar 18, 2024 at 8:22 PM
To: "sophiafittlejohn@gmail.com" <sophiafittlejohn@gmail.com>

From: Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:29 AM
To: Member Update <memberupdate@bca.org.au>
Subject: Re: University of Sydney Research Inquiry: Individuals with Visual Impairments in Sports and Recreational Activities

Hi Layal,

Thanks so much for assisting in our research! You can find our survey here: <https://forms.gle/VvPFVKi82vpHPLeCA>.

Here is the short blurb giving some context to our research:

"

We are doing this research as students from the University of Sydney in a User Experience Design course. From this survey, we hope to expand our knowledge on the lived experience of those with vision impairment and their interaction with sport to inform our final project/design solution. No personal data (i.e. names or email) will be collected for this survey, and will simply only be used to derive user insights. We are also looking for 5 individuals to conduct a 15 minute interview via Zoom. If you are interested in being interviewed or have any questions/concerns about the study please feel free to reach out to Sydney at skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au.

Thanks!
- Emma, Sophia, & Sydney
"

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns regarding the survey/interviews or if there is anything else I can help with dealing with sending the survey out.

Thanks,
Sydney

From: Member Update <memberupdate@bca.org.au>
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 10:51 PM
To: Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>
Subject: RE: University of Sydney Research Inquiry: Individuals with Visual Impairments in Sports and Recreational Activities

Hi Sydney,

Thank you for reaching out to BCA. We are happy to assist in promoting your research project amongst our members in BCA's Member Update.

To do so can I ask that you put together a short blurb providing as much detail as possible on the research you're doing.

Please mention points such as:

- Is the research part of a larger study? (who's doing the research and what will the data will be used for)
- Interview length and via which virtual platform
- Contact person for interested parties to contact
- Last date for those wishing to participate

Regards,

Layal

Engagement and Consultation Officer

Blind Citizens Australia

Phone: 1800 033 660

Email: layal.hage@bca.org.au

Website: www.bca.org.au



ABN: 90 006 985 226

BCA acknowledges the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We also pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders past, present, and future.

[Read our Privacy Disclaimer](#)

From: Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>

Subject: University of Sydney Research Inquiry: Individuals with Visual Impairments in Sports and Recreational Activities

Date: 3 March 2024 at 1:34:39 pm AEDT

To: "bca@bca.org.au" <bca@bca.org.au>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside Blind Citizens Australia. Please exercise careful judgement before clicking on links or opening attachments. Even though the email may seem legitimate, the sender's email account may have been compromised.

Hello,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Sydney Keller, and I am a student at the University of Sydney currently enrolled in a User Experience Design Studio class. As part of my research project, my group is conducting a study on the interactions and engagement of individuals with visual impairments or blindness in various sport and recreational activities.

In order to better understand the unique perspectives and experiences of individuals within your community, I am reaching out to ask whether any of your members would be interested in participating in a brief online survey and/or a 15-minute virtual interview.

If any of your members are willing to participate or if you could provide guidance on how to best connect with individuals who may be interested, I would be incredibly grateful.

Thank you for your time and consideration! Please feel free to reach out to me via email at skel0496@uni.sydney.edu if you have any questions or require further information.

Best,


Sydney

Blind Citizens Australia

Phone: 1800 033 660
Email: bca@bca.org.au
Web: www.bca.org.au
ABN: 90 006 985 226

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5 Participant Recruiting for Research



Sophia Littlejohn <sophialittlejohn@gmail.com>

Fw: University of Sydney Research Inquiry: Individuals with Visual Impairments in Sports and Recreational Activities

1 message

Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>

Mon, Mar 18, 2024 at 8:23 PM

To: "sophialittlejohn@gmail.com" <sophialittlejohn@gmail.com>

From: Carolyn Weston <cgweston@kinect.co.nz>

Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 4:34 PM

To: Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>

Subject: RE: University of Sydney Research Inquiry: Individuals with Visual Impairments in Sports and Recreational Activities

Hi Sydney,

Many thanks for your message.

I am sure we have some members interested in your research.

My personal experience with sports has been some years ago.

When I was at Homai College we played hockey and cricket.

Those were well established sports for blind people in NZ. However one teacher who taught children who could read large print which I was one, made us play soft ball and what is now called netball.

I didn't find those games very accessible as I could not see the ball and I was no good at them.

When I grew up I played blind indoor bowls and whilst representing Otago at the National Champs, I met my future husband who was a sighted guide for the Wellington team so sports became more than just games but initiated my marriage and next month we will be married 48 years.

You will be glad to know there are some people in our group who currently participate in sports.

The closest I get to sports now is the gym.

I am currently in Napier as we attended our son's wedding yesterday.

I will pass on your message when I return home later in the week.

Carolyn.

From: Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>

Sent: Saturday, 2 March 2024 5:58 pm

To: cgweston@kinect.co.nz

Subject: University of Sydney Research Inquiry: Individuals with Visual Impairments in Sports and Recreational Activities

Dear Carolyn,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Sydney Keller, and I am a student at the University of Sydney currently enrolled in a User Experience Design Studio class. As part of my research project, my group is conducting a study on the interactions and engagement of individuals with visual impairments or blindness in various sport and recreational activities.

In order to better understand the unique perspectives and experiences of individuals within your community, I am reaching out to ask whether any of your members would be interested in participating in a brief online survey and/or a 15-minute virtual interview.

If any of your members are willing to participate or if you could provide guidance on how to best connect with individuals who may be interested, I would be incredibly grateful.

Thank you for your time and consideration! Please feel free to reach out to me via email at skel0496@uni.sydney.edu if you have any questions or require further information.

Best,

Sydney

5 Participant Recruiting for Research

From: Matt Clayton <Matt@blindsportsaustralia.com.au>
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 8:50 PM
To: Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>
Subject: Re: University of Sydney Research Inquiry: Individuals with Visual Impairments in Sports and Recreational Activities

Hi Sydney,

Thank you for your email and for reaching out.

I am happy to explore this opportunity with you if we can, how many people are you looking to engage with and over what kind of time frame?

We don't send out direct communications to participants in our sports, however we do connect with people through our social media channels and website, would this be a useful way to reach out to get people involved.

Kind Regards

Matt

Matthew Clayton
Chief Executive Officer
Blind Sports Australia

PO Box [8030](#) / [454 Glenferrie Road](#)

[Kooyong](#) VIC 3144

matt@blindsportsaustralia.com.au

www.blindsportsaustralia.com.au



Blind Sports Australia, pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge the valuable contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make to Australian society and sport.

From: Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>
Date: Sunday, 3 March 2024 at 13:53
To: Admin <admin@blindsportsaustralia.com.au>
Subject: University of Sydney Research Inquiry: Individuals with Visual Impairments in Sports and Recreational Activities

Hello,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Sydney Keller, and I am a student at the University of Sydney currently enrolled in a User Experience Design Studio class. As part of my research project, my group is conducting a study on the interactions and engagement of individuals with visual impairments or blindness in various sport and recreational activities.


In order to better understand the unique perspectives and experiences of individuals within your community, I am reaching out to ask whether any of your members would be interested in participating in a brief online survey and/or a 15-minute virtual interview.

If any of your members are willing to participate or if you could provide guidance on how to best connect with individuals who may be interested, I would be incredibly grateful.

Thank you for your time and consideration! Please feel free to reach out to me via email at skel0496@uni.sydney.edu if you have any questions or require further information.

Best,
Sydney

5 Participant Recruiting for Research



Sophia Littlejohn <sophialittlejohn@gmail.com>

Fw: Blind and Low vision Study

1 message

Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>

Wed, Mar 20, 2024 at 10:05 AM

To: "sophialittlejohn@gmail.com" <sophialittlejohn@gmail.com>

Interview scheduling w michele

From: Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>

Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2024 10:20 PM

To: Michele Watts <mishgwatts@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: Blind and Low vision Study

Hi Michele,

Amazing! Talk to you then. For reference my phone number is 0423300309.

Best,

Sydney

From: Michele Watts <mishgwatts@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 15, 2024 1:17:29 PM

To: Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>

Subject: RE: Blind and Low vision Study

Hello Sydney

10.30am Monday would suit.

My number is 0414466404

Thanks

Michele

From: Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>

Sent: Friday, March 15, 2024 12:59 PM

To: Michele Watts <mishgwatts@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: Blind and Low vision Study

Hi Michele,

So nice to meet you! Thanks so much for taking the time to participate. How's Monday any time 10:30-1:00 or 3:00-4:00 or 4:30-beyond? Please let me know if any of these times work for you for a 15-20 minute phone interview. Thanks!

Best,

Sydney

From: Michele Watts <mishgwatts@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2024 1:25:58 PM

To: Sydney Keller <skel0496@uni.sydney.edu.au>

Subject: Blind and Low vision Study

Sear Sydney Uni

I read in the Blind Citizens Australia email newsletter that you are seeking blind and low vision people to interview regarding sport.
I am happy to speak with you.
Michele Watts
0414466404

5 Participant Recruiting for Research

Emailed to:


- Vision Australia
 - **Next Steps:** sent on to proper department
- ~~— American Foundation for the Blind (AFB)~~
- Blind Citizens NZ (National email)
 - Individual Branches Contacted:
 - Southland
 - **Next Steps:** Carolyn Weston - will get back to us end of week
 - Mar 6, 2024 Emailed Carolyn survey link. Carolyn responded saying she forwarded on
 - Wellington
 - Wanganui
- ~~— Usyd Disability Collective~~
- Northeastern University Contact
 - **Next Steps:** Has a few contacts that can take survey (don't count on)
 - Mar 6, 2024 Survey sent onto Emma to send along to friends
- Blind Low Vision NZ
- Usyd Uni Sports and Fitness
- National Federation of the Blind (NFB)
 - **Next Steps:** Fill out research participation form (need survey/interview link)
 - Mar 6, 2024 Submitted Research Participant Solicitation Request Form
- Perkins School for the Blind
- ~~— World Blind Union Canadian Branch~~
- Canadian Council of the Blind
- American Council of the Blind
- Blind Citizens Australia

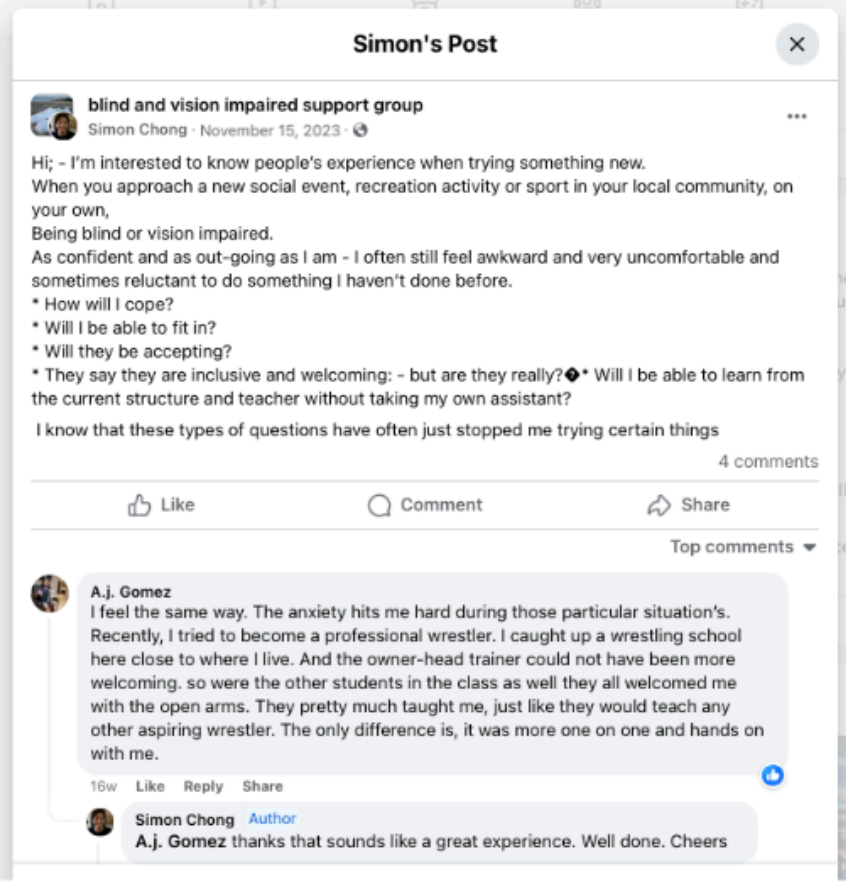
- **Next Steps:** Email back Layal with list of questions in email done and link to survey
- Mar 6, 2024 Emailed Layal survey
- Blind Sports Foundation (Australia)
- Blind Sports and Recreation NSW
- International Blind Sports Federation
- Blind Sports Australia
 - **Next Steps:** Contacted Matt, send over survey link Wednesday night to be posted on their socials and website
 - Mar 6, 2024 Emailed Matt survey to be posted on socials
 - Mar 13, 2024 Matt emailed back, posting to socials
- Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria
 - **Next Steps:** Call with Maurice Gleeson Mar 4, 2024
 - Called him: Email him wednesday with survey/interview + details
 - Mar 6, 2024 Emailed Maurice survey
 - Mar 12, 2024 Called Maurice, he gave me number of **Robert Fletcher**, on steering committee for blind tennis australia
 - Mar 12, 2024 **Robert Fletcher call: set up interview for Mar 13, 2024** .
Discussed connections (see notes below)
- Blind Spots Western Australia
- Blind Sports South Australia
- Mark Nitsberg (Family friend, did PHD research for assistive technology for the blind)
 - Mar 12, 2024 Reached out with survey, waiting to hear back

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ouLAqPx4egEX1fTV2ubsMbJa7fAtbdfHsGI33rnyZ-U/edit?usp=sharing>

Link to Full Literature Review Document

7 Online Ethnography (Pt 1 of 8)

CONTENT EVIDENCE	
CONTENT TYPE	Facebook Post in Group
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Other blind individuals/people who have an understanding of solutions
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	<p>There are communities who are supportive to help blind people in engaging with physical activity.</p> <p>There's a lack of organised sports for blind people.</p> <p>Location of activity plays a larger role in accessibility.</p>
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	There's a lack of organised sports for blind people.
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	<p>https://www.unitedinstride.com/</p> <p>United in Stride is a service in the US that unites blind people with running guides</p> <p>Many comments on the original post offer their assistance as a running guide</p>

CONTENT EVIDENCE	
CONTENT TYPE	Facebook post in support group
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Other blind people
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Teaching structures can be difficult Although activities <u>say</u> inclusive and <u>welcoming</u> sometimes they're not.
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	Anxieties relating to acceptance and coping
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Found it effective when coaches/trainers were just more hands on

7 Online Ethnography (Pt 2 of 8)

CONTENT EVIDENCE	
CONTENT TYPE	Facebook Reel
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Other blind individuals
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Importance of feeling Commenters reported on the benefits of water sports to feel themselves in the space Visually impaired people must find sports that they're able to engage with
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	Lot's of these barriers are mainly to do with underestimating the abilities of blind people/awareness of their capabilities rather than outright discrimination.
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	

CONTENT EVIDENCE	<p>https://www.reddit.com/r/Blind/comments/yhj35l/should_i_even_bother_continuing_the_sport/</p> <p>jek339 · 1 yr. ago Homonymous hemianopsia</p> <p>I suddenly lost a lot of my vision a few years ago when I had a stroke. I was a competitive cyclist, but cycling was also my main form of transportation. I put in the time and effort to figure out adaptations that would still allow me to cycle with my visual impairment - for example, I have to take descents a bit slower, be really proactive about scanning, and lean into using my other senses (especially hearing and touch as you can feel disruptions in the air if someone is approaching). Ultimately, it hasn't significantly affected my ability to race or commute.</p> <p>If you like the sport and it's been a big part of your life, it's worth keeping it up and trying to figure out how to adapt. It'll definitely take time, but brains are pretty cool.</p> <p>4 ↓ Reply Share ...</p>
CONTENT TYPE	Reddit Post
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Original Post was asking for advice as someone who'd recently lost vision
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Vision loss can be super stressful and includes an adjustment period Takes effort to figure out appropriate adaptations for themselves and their sport
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	Sometimes they are their own barrier - mentally
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	

7

Online Ethnography (Pt 3 of 8)

	<div> <p>Terry_Pie · 5 yr. ago RP - Legally Blind</p> <p>To begin with, I am in Australia and things are a little different than in the US or Canada. That said, there are common elements that are applicable everywhere. I'll split my comments between involvement as a participant and involvement as a spectator.</p> <h3>Involvement as a Participant</h3> <p>I've always loved cricket and knew about blind cricket from my grandfather being involved with my state's blind cricket club before his retirement. I only became involve three years ago however because until about then the club trained and played out the north side of town when I lived in the south. It was also only a chance encounter that alerted me to the change in location.</p> <p>From my experience there are two main barriers to participating in an accessible sport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Location * Knowledge of the sport <p>Training and playing facilities need to be easily accessed by public transport, and ideally centrally located (unless your city can support multiple teams). Unlike able bodied players who will trek all over the city to play games, blind and vision impaired (VI) people don't have the option – or the money – to move around so freely.</p> <p>It's also the case that a lot of blind and VI people don't know the options that are available. This is particularly true for people who are VI and may have had little or no interaction with blindness services or wider blind community. There are several players that have become involved only because chance encounters (myself included). So its critically important that blind accessible sports promote themselves, both through blindness organisations but also in social media in general, spreading the word about their sport. Other activities involve fundraising BBQs (this might be an Australia specific thing), and building relations with sighted clubs.</p> <h3>Involvement as Spectator</h3> <p>When it comes to involvement as a spectator it all comes down to commentary.</p> <p>For example, cricket commentators on the TV more or less talk rubbish the whole time with a little bit of description of what's going on. On the radio however, they provide great description of all aspects of the game as it unfolds – that includes field placement, ball bowled, shot and placement, action in the field, and regular score updates. My understanding is blind people who attend live sport will either have commentary on the radio with them, or have a sighted friend or partner that will commentate the game for them. So, in short: good verbal description of what is happening.</p> <p>Other than that, to participate in live spectating venues should be accessible just as any other building needs to be.</p> <p>TL;DR: participation requires good location and promotion to generate interest; spectating requires good commentary and accessible venues.</p> <p>3 ↓ ↻ Reply Share ...</p> </div>
CONTENT TYPE	Reddit Post
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Volunteer in inclusive sport wanting insights from blind individuals
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT	Location and knowledge of the sport barriers Facilities need to be easily accessible by public transport and ideally centrally located



VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	<p>"I think the main barrier is lack of education and understanding of the numerous types of visual impairment"</p> <p>Some blind and visually impaired people don't know of the options that are available</p>
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	<p>Commentary to engage with sport as a spectator (although tv falls short but radio more accessible)</p>

7 Online Ethnography (Pt 4 of 8)

CONTENT EVIDENCE	https://www.reddit.com/r/Blind/comments/vnqn7v/what_are_some_good_sports_activities_and_hobbies/
CONTENT TYPE	Reddit post asking about hobby suggestions for young niece who is becoming blind
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Blind people who have experience with hobbies and sports
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	<p>"As partially blind I can tell you i've practiced swimming, horse riding, judo, rowing, showdown, torball and soccer ,whatever she wants, I think the only limit could be teams and structures nearby there"</p> <p>"My sister's SIL lost her sight and was really devastated by how her life changed. She's really depressed and isn't doing well. I'm thinking if niece gets into things that she can do sighted and easily transition to a non-sighted version of the same activity, that might help when she does lose her sight."</p>
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	<p>Adaptations to the sports specifically for blindness</p> <p>Having a guide/support personnel</p>

CONTENT EVIDENCE	https://www.instagram.com/p/B-AfZiwlj_U/?igsh=MWQycjJ5c3JjYWts
CONTENT TYPE	Instagram video by molly burke
TARGETED AUDIENCE	General Public/followers
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Downhill skiing as a blind person
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	People are surprised/confused by the fact that she and other blind people can ski safely and amongst sighted people in a traditional ski resort
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	<p>Blind skier vest</p> <p>Guide dog</p> <p>Sighted guide</p>

7 Online Ethnography (Pt 5 of 8)

CONTENT EVIDENCE	<div>  nymbhockey One of our players thought that blind hockey would be very depressing and slow but once he gave it a shot he learned that it can be as fast as most hockey games. John is a retired pilot and US veteran that travels about 3 hours each way to get to practice since there isn't a team by his home. Traveling isn't easy for the low vision living independently so we have to choose rinks that are convenient to mass transit. Thanks to all our sponsors and volunteers that give people like John the ability to play this great sport. (also see video where John explains himself)</div>
CONTENT TYPE	Instagram post by blind hockey team
TARGETED AUDIENCE	General public but also VI/blind people
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	John, who went blind later in life, assumed that blind hockey would be boring and depressing. Once he started playing, he realised it was much like traditional hockey and he took up the sport.
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	He had preconceived notions of what blind sports would be like as a life long sighted person. Those assumptions turned inwardly when John himself became blind and he assumed that he would find the sport unfulfilling and fake, limiting himself. Only when he was challenged by a blind hockey player did he start to become aware of the possibilities.
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Blind hockey as a tool for fun, exercise, socialisation

CONTENT EVIDENCE	https://wsvn.com/news/7spotlight/south-florida-athlete-competing-to-score-s-pot-on-usa-blind-soccer-mens-national-team/
CONTENT TYPE	Piece about blind soccer covered by local south florida news and aired on TV.
TARGETED AUDIENCE	General public
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Oseas, who grew up blind since the age of three, was exposed early on to blind soccer by his friends. Since then he has built his life around his playing,

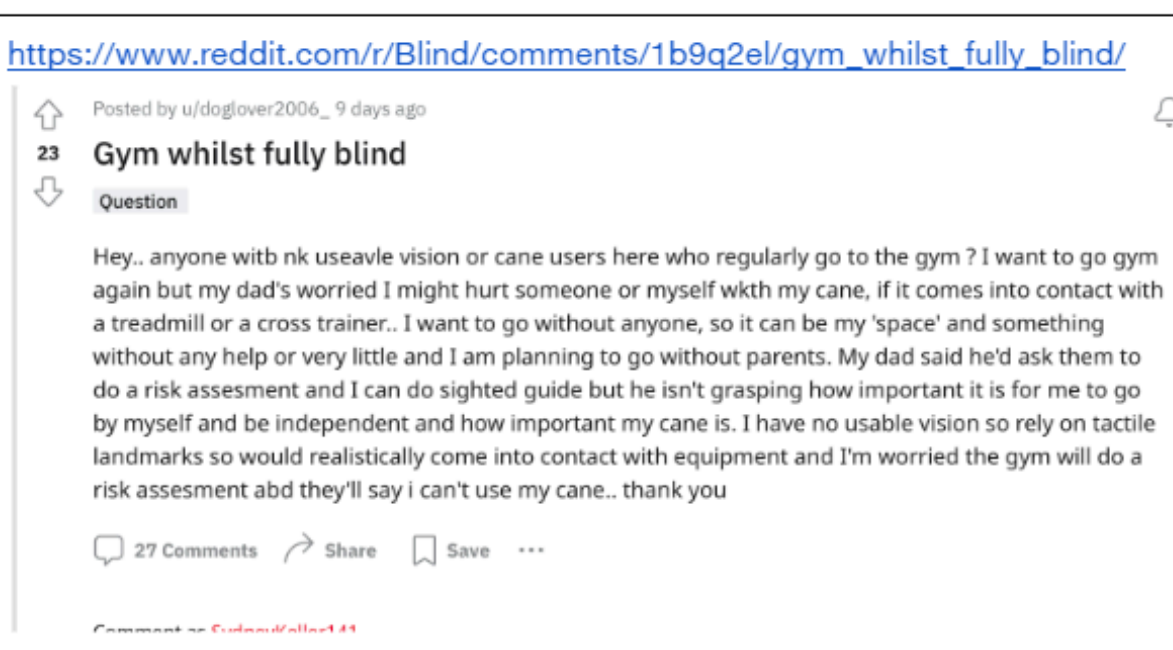
IMPAIRED...	educating, and spreading blind soccer. The sport fills his life and seems to give him purpose (<u>hes</u> trying to make the US paralympic team).
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	Oseas teaches adaptive technology to students who have recently gone blind. When he tells them about his playing abilities, they are often surprised, asking how it is possible. For those who didn't grow up blind it is harder to get into blind sports for two reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lack of knowledge that blind sports exist so don't know to look- Inner belief that since they are now blind, they cant play sports
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Blind soccer which uses differing rules and tools such as verbal communication of location, blindfolds, bell ball, sighted goalie

7 Online Ethnography (Pt 6 of 8)

CONTENT EVIDENCE	<div><div>https://www.reddit.com/r/Blind/comments/1bg7kuo/accessible_sports/</div><div><div><div>↑</div><div>1</div><div>↓</div></div><div><div>Posted by u/Expensive_Horse5509 1 day ago</div><div><div>Accessible sports</div><div><p>So I am an extroverted nerd which is a weird combination in and of itself that effectively means my life consists of sitting around and socialising and sitting around and reading... pattern is that I'm fairly lazy and absolutely HATE sport and have always tried to get out of it in any situation.</p><p>I always assumed it was a personality/interest thing but recently found out that having no hand-eye coordination skills and being vision impaired are correlated (yes, I am aware that it is entirely idiotic of me to have not realised that sooner but I was born vision impaired so I had nothing to compare my vision to). I also found out that it's not normal for fully sighted people to have a panic attack at the thought of playing a sport with a ball in fear of being smashed in the face.</p><p>Recently I decided that sport could be a fun thing to do as it kills two birds with one stone- it's good for your physical health and allows for another opportunity to socialise. Due to having an insane schedule I can't really go to any activities specifically for vision impaired people but was wondering if anyone could recommend their favourite accessible sports? Do you have any tips for not being smashed in the face (or body) by a ball? Is there any activities that specifically build hand eye coordination or is it just something you have to live with? I just want to do something recreationally so I guess general advice that doesn't align with strict rules of a given sport would be both appreciated and workable. For context I'm relatively fit (I swim and walk a lot) so I'm open to pretty much anything that is vision-impaired friendly.</p></div></div><div><div>4 Comments</div><div>Share</div><div>Save</div><div>...</div></div></div></div></div>
CONTENT TYPE	Reddit post on the Blind forum
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Other visually impaired/blind people
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Scared of traditional ball sports, doesn't want to get injured, but still wants to participate in sports for socialisation and exercise.

SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	<div>Find it hard to participate in traditional team sports</div> <div>Have anxiety about getting injured</div> <div>Because of a lack of ability to join sports, it is hard to socialise and meet new people (both blind and sighted)</div>
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	<div>Many comments offered swimming, rock climbing, and martial arts as options.</div> <div>A few mentioned that they know coaches in these fields who are VI, possibly giving a role model and comfort in knowing others have gone first</div>

7 Online Ethnography (Pt 7 of 8)

CONTENT EVIDENCE	https://www.reddit.com/r/Blind/comments/1b9q2el/gym_whilest_fully_blind/ 
CONTENT TYPE	Reddit post to Blind community forum
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Other blind/VI people
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	<p>Wants to be active and go to the gym, but his dad has some worries about injuring himself or others with his cane.</p> <p>Wants to be independent and have the gym as a space to himself, but is worried he won't be able to navigate through and may be dangerous.</p>
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	<p>Navigational issues in a new space with heavy equipment.</p> <p>Wanting to join an able bodied sport and not knowing where to start to ask for accommodations</p> <p>Many comments say that the dad's idea of a risk assessment is unnecessary - points to a disconnect between sighted parents who don't understand their child's full capability and their blind children who want to be independent.</p>
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VI...	Cane, sighted guide, guided walk through of gym by staff to orient

CONTENT EVIDENCE	https://www.reddit.com/r/Blind/comments/yhj35l/should_i_even_bother_continuing_the_sport/ 
CONTENT TYPE	Reddit post from Blind community forum
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Replying to a post about playing sport as a newly blind person
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Lost her sight later in life and thought she was no longer able to ski. Didn't do it for years and deeply missed it as well as just getting outside and doing something, anything. Finally reached out to a disability ski organisation and hasn't looked back. The experience may be somewhat different, but the joy and passions still there
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	Recently blind/VI people don't know and aren't part of the blind sport community and believe that since they are blind now they can't participate in it any more (inner ableism)
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Sighted guide, disability sport organisation

7 Online Ethnography (Pt 8 of 8)

CONTENT EVIDENCE	https://www.reddit.com/r/Blind/comments/yhj35l/should_i_even_bother_continuing_the_sport/
CONTENT TYPE	Reddit reply on Blind community forum
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Replying to a post about blind sports engagement
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Feels discriminated against because people doubt her ability to play sport as a blind person.
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	<p>She attributes the discrimination she faces to the lack of education/understanding sighted people have for the variety of types of visual impairments.</p> <p>Assumption that blind people can't do sports - If people were educated, accommodations could be made and blind/VI people could play sport to their full potential</p>
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Accommodations in sports (ex: blind tennis, hockey, judo, etc)

CONTENT EVIDENCE	https://www.reddit.com/r/Blind/comments/quz6zp/tips_for_staying_active/
CONTENT TYPE	Reddit post
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Blind people who have suggestions for sport activities
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	"Cool thing about martial arts is that you'd be a part of a group or at least a pair which could be good if your sight-loss is making it hard for you to maintain a social life."
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	Lack of awareness for options for blind sports and physical recreation
PRE-EXISTING STRUCTURES AND TOOLS USED BY VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	Blind communities online to get questions answered and suggestions

CONTENT EVIDENCE	https://www.reddit.com/r/Blind/comments/x88jkl/im_volunteering_as_a_running_guide_for_the_blind/
CONTENT TYPE	Reddit post
TARGETED AUDIENCE	Blind people knowledgeable about blind running/has experience using a guide
CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED...	<p>Each person has a preference</p> <p>"I have been a running guide for several years now and love it. As others said, everyone has individual preferences so be sure to ask. The more universal things that have been helpful for me are; be aware of and alert your partner to cracks in the pavement/ branches if you are trail running, if you're using a tether, it's best if you both avoid excessive jewelry, and be prepared for passing large groups/ people who run in a line across the entire lane. Have fun!"</p>
SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS THAT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS FACE...	

8 Survey – Planning & Usability Testing

SURVEY

<https://ala.ca/resource/tip-sheets/blindness-visual-impairment#:~:text=Typical%20adaptations%20in%20blind%20sport,%2C%20equipment%20alterations%2C%20and%20more.>

Pre-Screening Requirements

- Legally Blind (Sydney talked to Maurice Gleeson re making sure to clarify participants)

Research Objectives:

To understand the current experience of people with visual impairments in sport & physical recreational activities.

To understand the social and institutional barriers that visually impaired individuals face while engaging in sport & physical recreational activities.

To investigate the pre-existing structures and tools used by the visually impaired to accommodate sport & physical activities.

Survey Questions:

- 1) How old are you?
 - a) -18
 - b) 18 - 24
 - c) 25 - 34
 - d) 35 - 44
 - e) 45+
- 2) Were you born legally blind?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
- 3) How frequently do you engage in sports/physical activity in a week?
 - a) <1 hours
 - b) 1 - 3 hours
 - c) 4 - 6 hours
 - d) 6 + hours
- 4) What type of sports/physical activity do you engage in? (Check All That Apply)
 - a) Walking/Running
 - b) Team Sports
 - c) Weight Lifting/Strength Training
 - d) Swimming
 - e) Yoga
 - f) Other:
- 5) Do you adapt the sport/physical you engage with in any way? (Check all that apply)
 - a) Audible equipment
 - b) Support personnel
 - c) Equipment alterations
 - d) Rule adaptations
 - e) Other:
- 6) (Optional) What tools, if any, do you use to participate in these sports?
 - a) Short answer

7) What is the main challenge to participating in sports as a blind person?

- a) None
- b) Social (ex: social biases or stigmas)
- c) Mental (ex: anxiety, stress)
- d) Physical

8) (Optional) Would you like to add any comments to your answer above?

9) Visually impaired people are generally excluded from sports & physical activity.

- a) Likert Scale

10) Visually impaired people are pushed to be dependent on sighted people to participate in sports & physical activity.

- a) Likert Scale

11) (Optional) Is there anything else you would like to add?

tutor feedback:

- think about what data ur recieving when writing questions
- will this validate what ur interview is asking
- what happens if they say no? what if they physically cannot engage but are interested? consider every single answer that could come from each question
- make sure questions are casual
- don't assume ever, what if they don't use tools but a question makes them embarrassed because they don't? what if the wording of the question prevents them from talking about tools they like but can't afford etc? or a tool they know someone else uses

COORDINATING RESEARCH

Reachout Notes

- End of next week/beginning of week after
- 15ish minute interviews, only need about 4-6
- Send out a general survey for any people who have a visual impairment

Official Email

Subject: University of Sydney Research Inquiry: Individuals with Visual Impairments in Sports and Recreational Activities

Dear _____,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Sydney Keller, and I am a student at the University of Sydney currently enrolled in a User Experience Design Studio class. As part of my research

8 Survey – Planning & Usability Testing

5:01 5G 74

Done docs.google.com AA ↻

What is your main challenge to participating in sports or physical activity? *

☐ None

☐ Social (ex: social biases or stigmas)

☐ Mental (ex: anxiety, stress)

☐ Physical

☐ Other: _____

⚠ This is a required question

(Optional) Would you like to expand on your answer above?

Accessibility Shortcuts

Colour Filters

VoiceOver ✓

how strongly you agree or disagree with

Cancel

Adaptations made after testing survey with screen reader:

Changed “18-24” to “18 to 24”

Changed “ex” to “example:”

Changed Likert scale to multiple choice questions cascading down.

SURVEY

<https://ala.ca/resource/tip-sheets/blindness-visual-impairment#:~:text=Typical%20adaptations%20in%20blind%20sport.%2C%20equipment%20alterations%2C%20and%20more.>

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To investigate the pre-existing structures and tools used by the visually impaired to accommodate sport & physical activities.

Survey Questions:

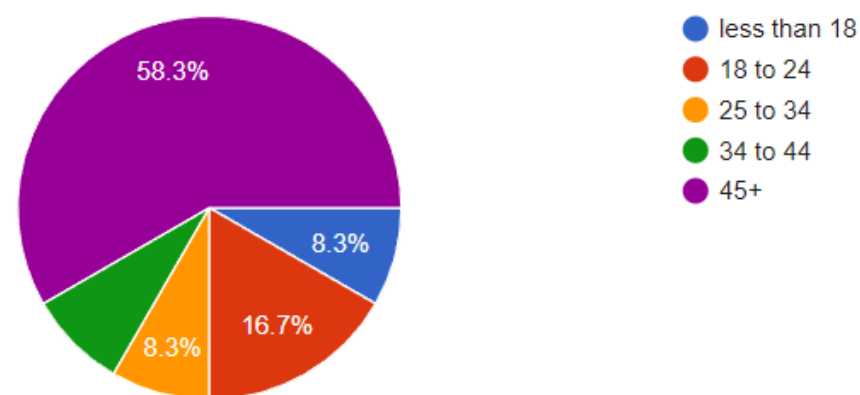
- 1) How old are you?
 - a) -18
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 - b) Support personnel
 - c) Equipment alterations
 - d) Rule adaptations
 - e) Other:
- 6) (Optional) What tools, if any, do you use to participate in these sports?
 - a) Short answer

8 Survey – Raw Results

How old are you?

12 responses

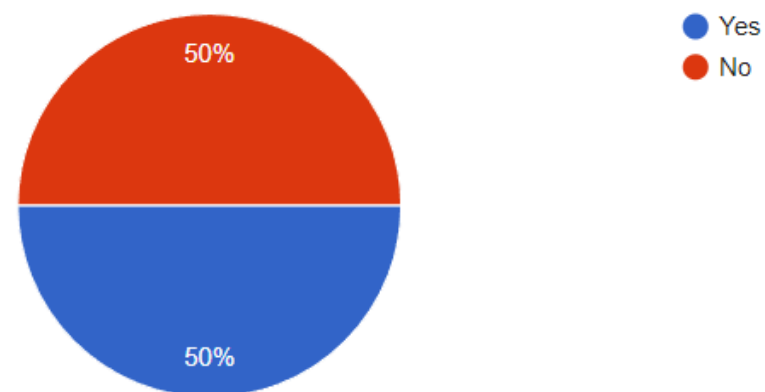
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Were you born legally blind?

12 responses

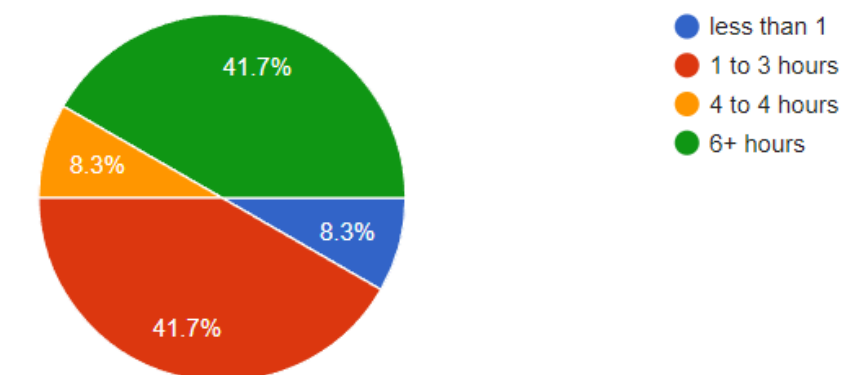
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How frequently do you engage in sports/physical activity in a week?

12 responses

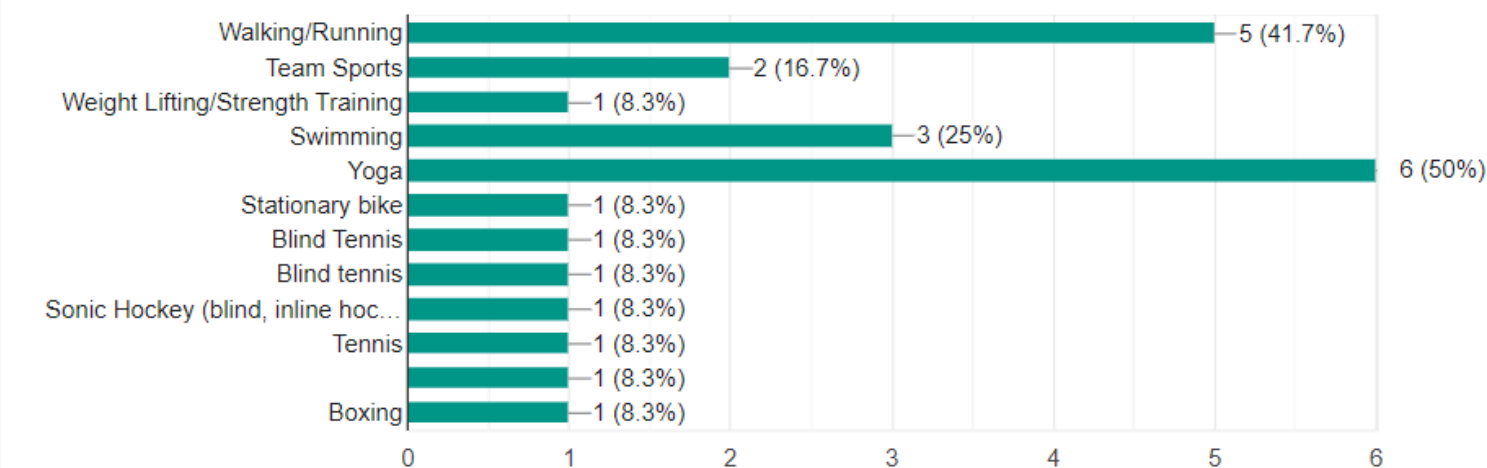
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What type of sports/physical activity do you engage in?

12 responses

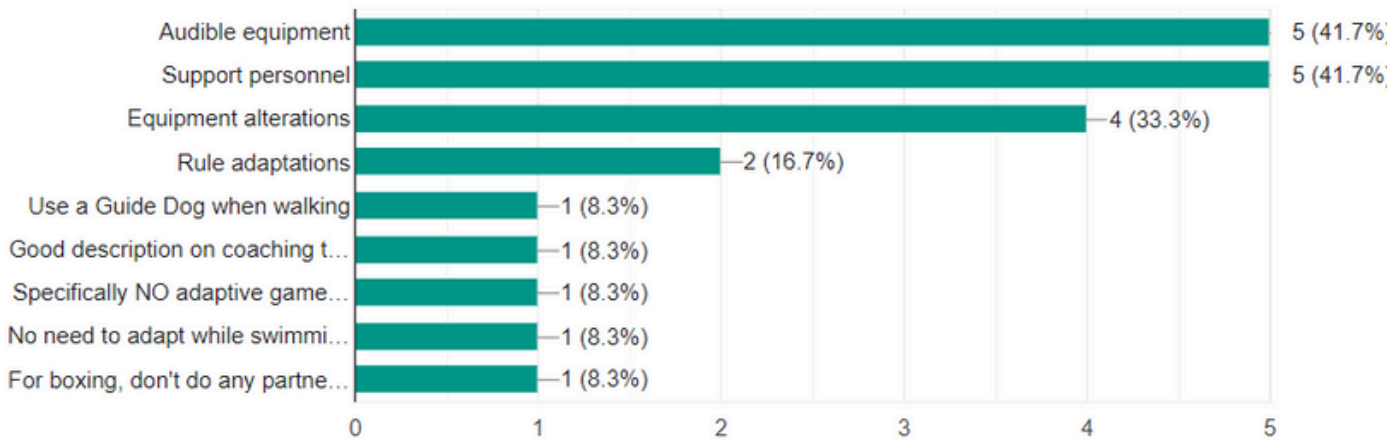
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8 Survey – Raw Results

Do you adapt the sport/physical activity you engage with in any way? (Check all that apply)

12 responses



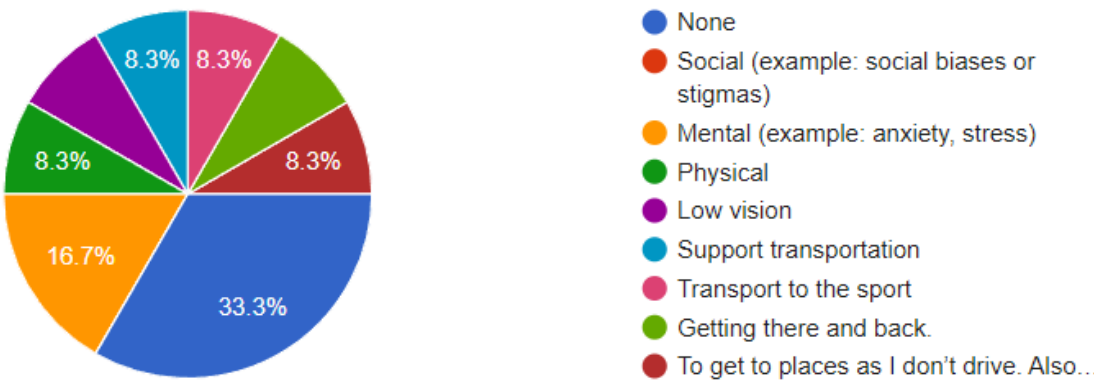
What tools, if any, do you use to participate in these sports/physical activities?

8 responses

- Racket, balls
- Yoga mat, resistance band
- Regulation hockey equipment...
- Audible ball, racket, tactile base line
- When i walk I use my guide dog. Swimming is always with someone else. I never go to the beach on my own. It's too dangerous.
- H
- White stick to get around. A colourful mesh swimming bag to hold equipment in one place.
- iPhone, airpods, apple watch (with specific apps). If running in nature/dark/places i don't know, a guide

What is your main challenge to participating in sports or physical activity?

12 responses



(Optional) Would you like to expand on your answer above?

6 responses

- Getting to the venue sometimes inconvenient.
- Due to my impairment i have to rely on others for transport, i cannot drive and if the sport is taking place in a location i cannot reach by foot or is taking place in another town it is difficult for me to participate.
- My only disability is my blindness. I don't have any other physical or mental disabilities stopping me from doing any physical activity.
- I have no family or supports . There are so many things I want to try . Just getting any services in my area is "almost " impossible . So I walk with my can , I only got 4 hrs of cane training . VI people are stuck with zero support .
- Other medical conditions means I randomly experience fatigue, where mind is fully engaged and willing but body doesn't want to move, end up with a very slow shuffle walk. This is dangerous outside of the house with a white cane, e.g. nearly impossible to cross roads.
- I did

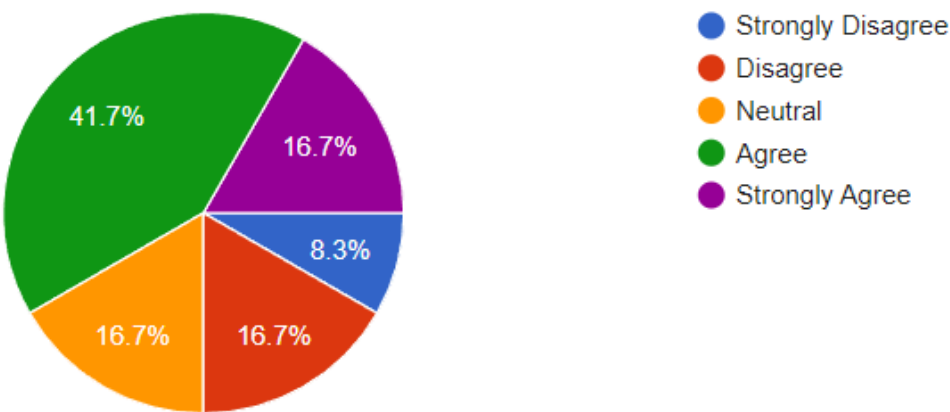
8 Survey – Raw Results

For the questions below, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

Visually impaired people are generally excluded from sports & physical activity.

12 responses

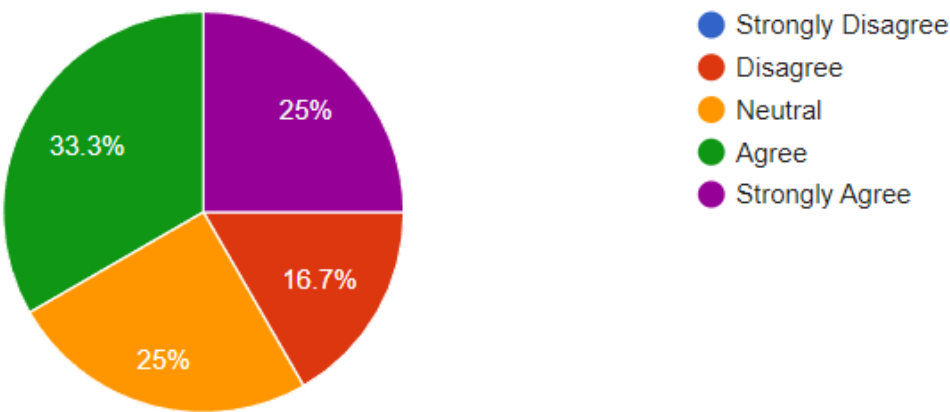
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Visually impaired people are pushed to be dependent on sighted people to participate in sports and physical activity.

12 responses

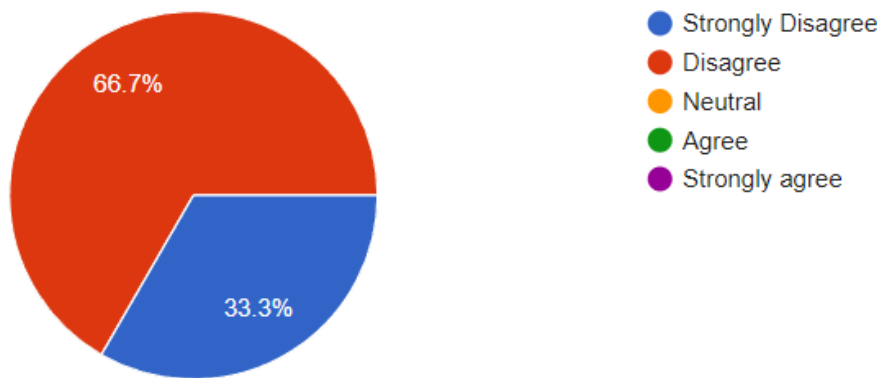
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Sighted people are educated/knowledgable about blind sports.

Copy

6 responses



(Optional) Is there anything else you would like to add?

7 responses

Sighted people make money by supporting people who could be independant

For running in the park need a guide. Blind tennis volunteer is required.

I am the sighted Coach of four players, ages 18-55... these answers are their aggregate profile... you may contact me at U.S 915-252-1678, Blindhockeymooses.com or on Facebook.

When blind people educate sighted people on blind sports they usually take interest in that particallar blind sport.

I wish someone could focus on just building a support for VI in general . I live in a very racist and ableist part of the US I have has doors closed on me and accused of faking blind . My Uber drivers complain they think they might need to help me with a cane . My fear of going out is due to my community . I have almost gotten hit by cars . The side walk raised tiles lead into the face into the intersection on all corners here . I live on the Minnesota side next Fargo ND the most cruel place a human can live .

I sometimes do park run, those lovely people demonstrate you don't need to be trained, it's being willing that makes the difference.

9 Interviews – Planning

INTERVIEWS

Intro Questions

- Tell me about yourself
- What types of recreational & sport activities do you like to participate in?
- What's your favorite sport to play/recreational activity to do?
 - what about the sport/recreational activity do you find engaging?
 - how often do you play?
 - what does this sport/recreational sport entail? (if it is walk, how far and how long typically etc)

Possible Core Interview Questions

- What are some of the greatest barriers you face when trying to engage in a new sport?
- Tell me about a time when you tried out a new sport? How did it go? Was it a team sport - if so, did you play with other visually impaired people or sighted people?
- How do you think sports & rec could be more inviting for visually impaired people?
- Can you recall a time where you felt included/excluded at a sporting event?
- How do you think sport and rec could be more enjoyable for visually impaired people?
- What do you think some misconceptions about being visually impaired and playing sports/recreational activities are?
- What are some tools/adaptations you use/make when participating in activities?
- Do you feel that these tools fulfill their use or do they fall short?

Sub Questions:

- When you engage in team sports do you prefer to play with other visually impaired people or fully sighted people? Why?
- If you could change something to make sport more friendly for visually impaired people what would it be?

Finalized Interview Structure:

Opening:

- Tell me about yourself - What sort of sports/physical activity do you enjoy?
- Tell me about a memorable experience or achievement related to sports or physical activity.

Core Questions:

1. Do you know of any tools people use to make it easier to play sports?
 - a. Do you feel that these tools fulfill their use or do they fall short?
2. Do you think that people make assumptions or have misconceptions about your ability playing sports?
3. How do you think sport and rec could be more enjoyable for you?
4. If I was a genie and could grant you 3 wishes relating to this what would you change?

Last Min Questions:

- Tell me about your favorite sporting memory

9 Interviews – Transcript (Robert)

TProjectsSearch and discoverUpgrade?⚙️E

Comment

robert's interview part one

22:20/52:181x🗨️📄⋮

614:0614:5115:1815:2915:5516:1917:0719:47

TranscriptWas this transcription accurate?👍🔗⋮^

S Sydney▶ 1:45

Hi, Robert. It's Sydney.

S Sydney▶ 1:47

Good. How are you?

S Sydney▶ 1:52

Yeah, I'm so glad. Do you mind if I put you on speaker?

S Sydney▶ 1:56

OK. One sec.

S Sydney▶ 2:00

OK. Hello. Hello. Hello. Hi. I'm with two other people in my group: Emma and Sophia.

E Emma▶ 2:07

Hi, Robert.

S Sophia▶ 2:08

Hello.

R Robert▶ 2:09

Hello, Emma. Hi, Sophia. How are you all going?

E Emma▶ 2:12

Good.

S Sophia▶ 2:12

How are you?

R Robert▶ 2:14

Good. It's been a busy day. This is an excellent, relaxing way to end it. I have been facilitating—would you believe 40 blind and low-vision people are learning how to utilize better guide dogs, Australia's assets across Australia?

S Sydney▶ 2:32

Oh, that's pretty cool. How did you get along with that? How did you get involved?

R Robert▶ 2:38

Well, I've got a guide dog and do quite a bit of volunteering.

E Emma▶ 2:55

That's pretty cool.

R Robert▶ 2:56

Yes, it is. So, anyway, I'm yours now for the next however long you need me.

S Sydney▶ 3:02

Thank you so, so much for the time.

R Robert▶ 3:05

No problem at all. So, yeah, please. I'm going to be led and driven by you.

S Sydney▶ 3:12

Before we start, would you mind if we recorded this?

R Robert▶ 3:14

Go for it. Also, do you mind if I put you on speaker? There is nobody else here except my dog. OK, am I coming through clear enough for you?

E Emma▶ 3:28

You're all good.

R Robert▶ 3:31

I wouldn't say I like these things next to my ear for too long.

S Sydney▶ 3:41

Alright, so we'll get started. Would you like to tell us a little bit about yourself?

R Robert▶ 2:47

Indeed, I'm 55. I have acquired vision loss, so that means I had perfect vision up until 41. I have returned from nine years of living overseas in Australia. And within the eighth month of my return, I lost 96 per cent of my eyesight over eight weeks.

E Emma▶ 4:08

I'm sorry to hear that.

R Robert▶ 4:09

No, you know what? Don't be sorry - It's opened up a different facet and aspect of my life. For the next ten years after that, I continued at the executive level at Exxonmobil, was a regional manager, stayed here in Melbourne, and travelled around the Asia Pacific. And then, after COVID, I decided it wasn't doing it for me anymore. I have officially retired and spend a lot of time volunteering as an ambassador for blind sports and recreation in Victoria. And yes, I spend a lot of time practising blind tennis, which is my passion. Then, I spent the rest of my time helping, doing things I did today, and facilitating people to hopefully better the community. So, yeah, I'm enjoying what I'm doing. I love what I did. So, hopefully, together, we can help others.

S Sydney▶ 5:17

So, how did you get into blind tennis?

R Robert▶ 5:23

I was quite a promising junior. I was ranked in Australia as a junior and then gave it away at 14 because I live in country Victoria. So, 400 kilometres east of Melbourne, I was not even in a town I was in; there were maybe eight houses over 10 square kilometres. Where I grew up, I had to ride my push bike for 30 minutes to get to a tennis court. So, to have a ranking in Australia was pretty impressive, and I'd never been coached. I did everything out of a textbook that I got from Santa as a six-year-old. And then, at 14, the crunch time came, and I

9 Interviews – Transcript (Robert)

knew that my parents, I mean, it wasn't practical for my whole family to move to Melbourne where I could get where I could access coaching. So I gave that away in pursuit of whatever other kids do at those ages, such as schooling, well schooling, and working at woollies. And then, after losing my eyesight, I decided I was spending way too much time trying to do what I did as a sighted person, as good as a sighted person. And I decided that I was neglecting a lot of my health issues, you know, blood pressure and that sort of thing. Then I took up blind tennis, lost 15 kg, and I hadn't taken blood pressure medication for three years. I was in the biggest fall category, the fall risk category, beforehand. And now I'm not even in a risk category for a fall, even as a legally blind person. So, I greatly advocate what sport can do, your balance, and what to do for your mental and physical health.

S Sydney 7:05

Yeah.

S Sydney 7:07

Since then, you've gotten more involved in the admin side of things in your position today?

R Robert 7:16

Yes, I always thought that, as an older individual, administration and management would be where I'd like to be in tennis. I always have felt that you need to get credibility on the ground before going into one of those. So this is me thinking at number three in Australia; if I can get number three as high as I get, that's OK. But if I can get any more. Well, we have four for tennis. I'm at B2, which means I am being that explaining. Number three in the B2 category, and if I can get any higher rankings than that, that's a great personal goal. But I feel the credibility from regular tennis is probably there.

S Sydney 8:06

As a sighted person, can you explain to me what goes into blind tennis? Are there any adaptations to the sport, how do you play, and how is it different from regular tennis?

R Robert 8:18

OK. So what I will tell you will be B2 through 4 categories. Um, Yeah. B1 is blind, and we have the court modification that is more noticeable in B1, probably for obvious reasons. So, B 234, the only modification to the actual court is that the baseline is moved 1.8 m, 1.7 m in labour's terms, halfway

between the service line and the traditional baseline, which becomes the blind baseline. Yeah, net height and width are the same. So, everything on the court aside from the baseline is the same. The subsequent modification is the same as before. A number ball is exceptionally spongy and would be about 50% larger than a traditional tennis ball. It has a bell (?) in the middle of it. It bounces but doesn't have near the pressurized bounce of a traditional ball.

And that's for several reasons. So, B2 players, I'll be allowed three bounces of the modified ball to keep the ball in play. B three players will have two bounces because death is out of play, and B four will have one bounce. So, for the scoring, we'll use traditional tennis scoring. We typically end the point—sorry, end a point, end a game. It plays as a sudden death versus an advantage if it gets to juice. And up very, very recently, games match, he's been decided in one set. Like all the state tournaments in Australia, they have been played as the best of six games. And so, aside from that, the rules are identical. I've modified the scoring, namely that the umpires were used mainly for nomenclature. So primarily, because of the players being essentially blind and especially B one,d B t,wo and portion be followed here, I 've come up with this system whercentimetrese will call it as being, centimetres is out, they need to call icentimetresong, Then that needs to follow by an A B or C. So, A will be up to 10 centimetres out. B will be up to 30 centimetres out, and C, greater than 30 centimetres. So if I serve it and on the server, I serve it, it goes wide, just wide. It would be, I would expect to hear out wide. A because remember, in helpful, you can't even see the net. Right. So if I'm hitting the ball and it goes over the net and I go out and someone calls out 'out', that's not helpful at all.

R Robert 11:29

Was that 2 m long? Was it because some of these balls age very quickly? So, the tournament balls are new, but if you're not, it's not practical to practice with tournament-quality balls because the balls cost \$20 each and are gone. They are no longer tournaments, and after two hours of play.

S Sydney 11:55

Wow.

E Emma 11:56

Wow.

R Robert 11:57

There's only one manufacturer worldwide, and it's in Tokyo. By the way, the balls are transported to various locations and pay import duties. Those balls are expensive. So, for example, for me to practice in suburban Melbourne, we, as a suburb club, cannot afford the new balls I have procured. So, in the week and a half leading up to a tournament, I will start playing with new balls I have procured purely to get me tournament-ready and nearly ready. Yes. So that's why even having the 'long', 'wide', 'ABC' etc doesn't matter. You hit the new balls much less. Well, you don't hit it nearly as hard, almost the same impact as you would say it is six hours old.

S Sydney 12:52

Wow. So, besides the cost of the ball, is there anything that you think falls short in adaptive tennis playing?

R Robert 13:03

No, that's it. No, OK. Sorry. Noise levels.

S Sydney 13:08

Oh, right.

E Emma 13:10

Yeah.

R Robert 13:11

So a lot of people like the tournament this weekend. There's a tournament in Melbourne: the first blind and low vision tournament for the year and the Victorian blind and low vision open championships. We will be at Melbourne Park, where they play the Australian Open in their indoor facility. They have eight indoor courts, which have been unharnessed and have been to many courts worldwide. It's probably among the best indoor facilities in the world, and they still cannot have any indoor facility for blind and low-vision tennis. So, to try and get Spectators in spectators to drum up support and interest in the sport and then tell the Spectators to be quiet is almost an oxymoron. They want to cheer the person they want to win. But by cheering them, they can't hear the balls bouncing, which means they can't get to them or even them.

S Sydney 14:12

Yeah, that's...

R Robert 14:15

9 Interviews – Transcript (Robert)

S Sydney ▶ 16:49

Yeah. Cool.

E Emma ▶ 16:51

So, to recap, the netting system is different in the courts,

R Robert ▶ 16:51

The same.

E Emma ▶ 16:58

Sorry, yes, there was also someone that will also call out whether it was long or wide when the ball goes out, and the ball was a little bit different as well.

R Robert ▶ 17:12

Yes.

S Sydney ▶ 17:12

Um, are there any other changes that you can mention?

R Robert ▶ 17:16

For the bones, we use a 25-inch racket. So a junior racket which B2 and B4 are free to use, whichever suits the individual. Yeah, I only bring that up because, as of six months ago, everyone had to use a junior racket, and that changed. I don't understand the reasoning or the politics, but I'm happy that it has because I prefer an adult 27-inch racket, 27-inches.

S Sophia ▶ 17:46

With modifications to the rules set, Robert, how does that come about? Is it very much based on the needs of the sport's players at the time, or have the rules been changed in any evident way?

R Robert ▶ 17:58

We have a body called the International Blind Tennis Association, and any of the; I'm trying to think of the right way of putting it, any of the sanctioned tennis tournaments around the world, meaning you gain points on the world rankinThebe sanctioned by the International Blind Tennis Association. So even though they don't, that organization doesn't govern what happens domestically in Australia or any other country, it would be it would ridiculous of the Australian authorities, like Tennis Australia, etc., to do anything,g other than abide by their rules because otherwise, they're not e, ever going to be

getting points internationally and or they're not preparing their players for when they play at the world championships. So historically, we've only ever had one main tournament outside internationally, and that's been the world championships this year. They're considering introducing tier two tournaments, which are international, and you gain points. They're also looking at some form of Pan Pacific-type title, which will be the first of its type outside of the world this year. So, the whole global blind tennis movement is increasing, and so is an organization that supports it. It is fantastic, and well, it just brings consistency, and they're t. They've changed the rules for racket sizing going into the Birmingham World Blind Games, which is the equivalent of the Blind Olympics, which were held in Birmingham last August. The International Blind Tennis Association changed the rules for the racket stars going into that tournament or that game. I shouldn't call it a tournament. Australia emerged from those games as the best blind tennis country in the world.

S Sophia ▶ 19:57

Do you think that has anything to do with the program or something? Is it kind of accessibility in the sense that we have more opportunities for athletes than in other countries?

R Robert ▶ 20:09

I think that's one of the looks, having travelled around the world before I lost my eyesight, mainly for work. And then, after I lost my eyesight, I was lecturing the poor people this morning in this workshop that you need to understand the context of where blind and low-vision people are in Australia versus the rest of the world. We have many rights in Australia due to the Discrimination Act, a significant act in the country. It overrides the Health Act. It overrides almost every other act regarding harassment through our judicial system. So, in other words, there are tactile traffic lights, indicators of which are traffic lights. Every new right put into Australia legally has to be audible, and every traffic light retrofitted into an old existing intersection has to be retrofitted with audiraffic lights. We have tactile at the same intersections by law. We have ramps from the footpath down onto the roads by law for blind and low-vision people with wheelchairs to transition from a footpath to a highway. I lived in Washington DC for three years as a sighted person; my first trip, which will be my ninth or 10th, was to New York City a couple of years ago as a low-vision person. I was excited about the first trip back a few years and ran downstairs and got to the first intersection and realized that the traffic lights weren't

That doesn't mean so much. Well, it can. It can inhibit play if people aren't quiet or don't understand why they need to be calm. On the other hand, it inhibits the sport and its growth because it's not what traditional Spectators would be looking for. Yeah. Yeah. But anyway, that's our challenge. But that's one of the things in other things. So, like we, the thing about Melbourne Park, if any of you have been there, is that it is now the most significant grand slam in the world. Over a million people came through the gates for the Australian Open this year, which puts it way over any other grand slam worldwide. But the great thing about Melbourne's facilities is that all our sporting precincts are within two kilometres of the city, so you can walk to any of them. However, last year in the nation, all championships for blind tennis and monster trucks had rented out Amy Park, which is within 400 m of the tennis courts. And I don't know whether you've ever heard of Monster Truck.

E Emma

Yes, so loud.

R Robert ▶ 15:18

We could not hear, not like, could we hear the balls? We couldn't even hear each other to tell each other that we couldn't hear the balls. Anyway. Sound, you know what? Every sport has its challenges. And that was just, I mean, you can't, if you've got a 60,000 seat stadium next to you and it's private and it's not owned by the same, even if it is, they're not going to forego 60,000 seats for blind tennis with maybe 500 Spectators so you can work out the economics. But the monster trucks are going to win out every time. But that's one of our challenges.

S Sydney ▶ 15:53

Yeah, that makes sense.

R Robert ▶ 15:55

B1, the court dimensions are slightly smaller than I described to you in a B1 - but you have to have tactile lines, like think of it as a metal cable that will run underneath the tape, like gaffe tape, that will mark out the lines. So, totally blind players don't care where the lines you can see are, they can't see them at all, and even a slightly raised piece of tape doesn't cut it. So they have a cord underneath that tape to reach down with their hand or with their foot - They can feel it's raised enough that it's pretty evident and tactile, but they use the same balls, same rules, and three bounces like a B2.

9 Interviews – Transcript (Robert)

That doesn't mean so much. Well, it can. It can inhibit play if people aren't quiet or don't understand why they need to be calm. On the other hand, it inhibits the sport and its growth because it's not what traditional Spectators would be looking for. Yeah. Yeah. But anyway, that's our challenge. But that's one of the things in other things. So, like we, the thing about Melbourne Park, if any of you have been there, is that it is now the most significant grand slam in the world. Over a million people came through the gates for the Australian Open this year, which puts it way over any other grand slam worldwide. But the great thing about Melbourne's facilities is that all our sporting precincts are within two kilometres of the city, so you can walk to any of them. However, last year in the nation, all championships for blind tennis and monster trucks had rented out Amy Park, which is within 400 m of the tennis courts. And I don't know whether you've ever heard of Monster Truck.

E Emma

Yes, so loud.

R Robert 15:18

We could not hear, not like, could we hear the balls? We couldn't even hear each other to tell each other that we couldn't hear the balls. Anyway. Sound, you know what? Every sport has its challenges. And that was just, I mean, you can't, if you've got a 60,000 seat stadium next to you and it's private and it's not owned by the same, even if it is, they're not going to forego 60,000 seats for blind tennis with maybe 500 Spectators so you can work out the economics. But the monster trucks are going to win out every time. But that's one of our challenges.

S Sydney 15:53

Yeah, that makes sense.

R Robert 15:55

B1, the court dimensions are slightly smaller than I described to you in a B1 - but you have to have tactile lines, like think of it as a metal cable that will run underneath the tape, like gaffe tape, that will mark out the lines. So, totally blind players don't care where the lines you can see are, they can't see them at all, and even a slightly raised piece of tape doesn't cut it. So they have a cord underneath that tape to reach down with their hand or with their foot - They can feel it's raised enough that it's pretty evident and tactile, but they use the same balls, same rules, and three bounces like a B2.

S Sydney 16:49

Yeah. Cool.

E Emma 16:51

So, to recap, the netting system is different in the courts,

R Robert 16:51

The same.

E Emma 16:58

Sorry, yes, there was also someone that will also call out whether it was long or wide when the ball goes out, and the ball was a little bit different as well.

R Robert 17:12

Yes.

S Sydney 17:12

Um, are there any other changes that you can mention?

R Robert 17:16

For the bones, we use a 25-inch racket. So a junior racket which B2 and B4 are free to use, whichever suits the individual. Yeah, I only bring that up because, as of six months ago, everyone had to use a junior racket, and that changed. I don't understand the reasoning or the politics, but I'm happy that it has because I prefer an adult 27-inch racket, 27-inches.

S Sophia 17:46

With modifications to the rules set, Robert, how does that come about? Is it very much based on the needs of the sport's players at the time, or have the rules been changed in any evident way?

R Robert 17:58

We have a body called the International Blind Tennis Association, and any of the; I'm trying to think of the right way of putting it, any of the sanctioned tennis tournaments around the world, meaning you gain points on the world rankinThebe sanctioned by the International Blind Tennis Association. So even though they don't, that organization doesn't govern what happens domestically in Australia or any other country, it would be it would ridiculous of the Australian authorities, like Tennis Australia, etc., to do anything,g other than abide by their rules because otherwise, they're not e, ever going to be

getting points internationally and or they're not preparing their players for when they play at the world championships. So historically, we've only ever had one main tournament outside internationally, and that's been the world championships this year. They're considering introducing tier two tournaments, which are international, and you gain points. They're also looking at some form of Pan Pacific-type title, which will be the first of its type outside of the world this year. So, the whole global blind tennis movement is increasing, and so is an organization that supports it. It is fantastic, and well, it just brings consistency, and they're t. They've changed the rules for racket sizing going into the Birmingham World Blind Games, which is the equivalent of the Blind Olympics, which were held in Birmingham last August. The International Blind Tennis Association changed the rules for the racket stars going into that tournament or that game. I shouldn't call it a tournament. Australia emerged from those games as the best blind tennis country in the world.

S Sophia 19:57

Do you think that has anything to do with the program or something? Is it kind of accessibility in the sense that we have more opportunities for athletes than in other countries?

R Robert 20:09

I think that's one of the looks, having travelled around the world before I lost my eyesight, mainly for work. And then, after I lost my eyesight, I was lecturing the poor people this morning in this workshop that you need to understand the context of where blind and low-vision people are in Australia versus the rest of the world. We have many rights in Australia due to the Discrimination Act, a significant act in the country. It overrides the Health Act. It overrides almost every other act regarding harassment through our judicial system. So, in other words, there are tactile traffic lights, indicators of which are traffic lights. Every new right put into Australia legally has to be audible, and every traffic light retrofitted into an old existing intersection has to be retrofitted with audiraffic lights. We have tactile at the same intersections by law. We have ramps from the footpath down onto the roads by law for blind and low-vision people with wheelchairs to transition from a footpath to a highway. I lived in Washington DC for three years as a sighted person; my first trip, which will be my ninth or 10th, was to New York City a couple of years ago as a low-vision person. I was excited about the first trip back a few years and ran downstairs and got to the first intersection and realized that the traffic lights weren't

9 Interviews – Transcript (Robert)

someone independently doing it. It will come at an additional cost in other countries for people to be assisted to get to places.

S Sydney 2:17

Yeah, yeah, I remember. Yes. Yeah. Yesterday, we were talking just a little bit about the dependency put on blind or visually impaired people. Um, Yeah. Can you talk a little about that in terms of sports and stuff like that?

R Robert 2:31

Well, that's where we move on to the next concept in Australia, which is a fantastic idea. However, it does keep a lot of non-disabled people employed. This means there are many people out there who are working as support workers, occupational therapists, physical physiotherapists, etc. It is in the best interests of those people not to have people who are blind or have low vision, in my case, be any more independent than they have to be, right? It does all those people out of a job, and it's as simple as that. So I am a huge one for catching public transport in Melbourne. So, on an average day, I clock up maybe 22,000 steps a day, and I travel maybe 100 kilometres on public transport on an average day. However, that's because I use the time on public transport to answer my text messages and emails and make my phone calls a lot. A lot of people who are on NDIS with support workers have been quite verbally abusive to me because I don't set a good example for the community, meaning the support workers have abused me. After all, I'm trying to let my friends try and encourage them to be independent, and if that's going to force the support workers to get no work or less work, they don't like that. So I have been called with a lot of obscenities, and I've even had phone calls to my private number abusing me and threatening me because I try to make blind people who are my friends more independent.

audible, there were no tactile, and there were no ramps. You stepped straight off about a five-inch foot five-inch onto the road, and there's about a five-inch step five-inch down. Thinking about it, I just realized that I thought I'd been here many times, and I've never been notified of edits I didn't need. I asked my wife if you could tell me the next six days that we're in Manhattan and Brooklyn. Please tell me how many people you see independent in a wheelchair and independent with a guide dog and a cane. Yeah, none in six days in Manhattan and Brooklyn. No individual was independent with a cane, a guide dog, or a wheelchair on the highway in York City.

Comment

robert's interview (part two)

3:36/29:32

1x

Select text in the transcript to create and share a highlight

Transcript

Was this transcription accurate?

R Robert 0:00

We then went down to Washington, DC, where I used to live, and none anywhere again. And I happened to, I used to live in Virginia, and we went into the Center for Blind and low vision resources in Virginia because I just said, they've got to be so high tech in this country that they've got some in for whatever signal going into their ears where they know where cars are coming. We are missing something. And I went in to speak to a lady behind the counter and asked him, how do you get to work? Because she was blind? She said, I come on the metro, I said, that's ten blocks up. This is my neighbourhood. So automatically, I would like to get to my tennis courts here in Williamstown, a suburb, I don't know, eight Ks out of the city. I don't need anyone to assist me because I've got traffic lights, tactile and audible, and everything I can get there without anyone helping me. You think about the barriers that other countries will have. It doesn't stop people from different countries, so understand me. But I'm just saying it is automatically a barrier to

9 Interviews – Transcript (Robert)

R Robert ▶ 6:28

I find it difficult to comment on the other sports because I'm not part of that. So, the observations that I'm going to share with you are concerning the tennis area. Several people have become little princes and princesses who get driven everywhere on their NDIS. They will come into our tennis training squads and don't pick up balls because that's what support workers do. So, I consider that a barrier because they've become dependent and lazy by not wanting to pick up their balls. If we don't have enough volunteers, these people stand on the court and wait for someone to pick up the balls and hand them to them. Now, if you're blind, get it totally that you get a vast league pass from me on that one. However, if you've got any vision when I lead the coaching and the nights, I tell them that if they don't pick up their balls, they'll be standing there for a long time. I use several more expletives about the balls that end up where the sun doesn't shine if they don't go and pick up their balls. However, that's probably not the case for your research. So, it breeds for me in tennis, especially for people with limited or low vision. The concept of having non-disabled people involved in the sport breeds laziness and a dependency that doesn't need to be there.

S Sophia ▶ 7:59

Um, just a general question, Robert. We're just because we're also looking at being three-sighted people and learning more about making the sport more accessible. Do you think there are any assumptions or misconceptions that are pretty common about blind people's ability to play sports?

R Robert ▶ 8:17

Oh, definitely. Yes. Yes. I mean, first, when I tell anybody that I'm, I have my racket bag that I carry

with me when I go to tennis. So it's on my back all the time. And I take three or four rackets with me just in case somebody else wants to play or have a go. I wish to ensure that anyone can come and have a go. But then I also have a guide dog. So I know out of that 4% of vision that I've got in my peripheral vision out of the corner of my eye, people are looking at my bag, my dog, and me, and it's like, no, it does not compute. So I'll often say to them, well, I say interesting, isn't it? And then I icebreaker, and they'll say, oh, you know, it doesn't matter. I explain to them. But their base assumption is that if you're blind, you can't play a ball sport. And that's just the general public opinion: How can you play a ball sport? Then they think about it and realize, oh, there must be something audible about the game, and then they, once they get catch on to that idea, they just, their next thought after that is how excellent and how cool, but it's not their initial thought for sure.

S Sophia ▶ 9:30

Yeah, for sure. Do you think that's a lack of education, or what do you think? How do you think we can better make sport or, I guess, blind sports more visible for sighted people, if that makes sense? Visible in the sense of obviously, like knowing this, like that, you know, blind people can participate and stuff like that?

R Robert ▶ 9:48

Well, if we take this question — and I've been asked it many times and tried to think about it—I think there are two aspects. If you look at wheelchair tennis, people don't have the exact conception of wheelchair tennis. The main reason is that Dylan Allcott became an Australian celebrity and won two gold grand slams. He's won more grand slam events around the world and is probably, to date, the greatest wheelchair tennis player in the world because he's won more titles and grand slams. A golden grand slam is when you win the

Now, people know that that sort of bracket is happening with the NDIS. But that's just a heads-up. It talks about wanting to make people independent. It's not making people independent; it's making them dependent on support workers.

S Sydney ▶ 4:46

OK. And can you talk about how that kind of feeds into sports? It sounds like in tennis, at least, it's pretty independent. But, um, just in doing some basic research on other blind sports, it seems like there is an overall general dependency on having a sighted buddy or worker.

R Robert ▶ 5:06

Yeah, there is, in most cases. I mean, tennis—you're right. Tennis is probably the least able and least dependent upon sighted people. Once we get people independently into a tennis centre, like we utilize Melbourne Park for most of our training, we can operate autonomously. And you think about, you think about the, you think about a tennis court, it's generally gated and, or in the case of multi courts, they've got nets between them, like high-level nets, not tennis nets to separate it. So, in the case of having some vision like me, it may take a while. I may walk around the court to find the ball at my feet on the other side. But I still can do it in our tennis game. People who are blind would not be able to do that, so they would need assistance from a sighted person. Yeah. Whereas you think about many other games, like golf? A blind person could not successfully navigate a golf course independently.

S Sydney ▶ 6:17

Yeah. So, how do you navigate that feeling of not wanting to be dependent but, in some cases, like you were talking about in golf, needing someone? How does that work?

9 Interviews – Transcript (Robert)

transitioning, probably 12 months from being fully sighted. Unfortunately, for Arato, his eye condition will mean he will be a B3 every whatever period, then eventually a B2. So, at the tender age of 12, he got the bronze medal as the third-best man in the world in the open men’s.

S Sophia ▶ 14:31

How would you say? We've also touched on this a bit: how big is Melbourne as a grand slam, just like the General Australian Open? What do they like about promoting the visibility of blind sports as well?

R Robert ▶ 14:44

OK. This year, we had a problem because I'm on the disability advisory board for tennis in Australia. So you've got someone who can speak for both things here. We have sorry, deaf and hard of hearing, tennis, intellectually disabled tennis and wheelchair tennis. And this year we had Paris standing tennis. We're all grand slam events. So, blind tennis is the only disability tennis format that has not been run as a grand slam event. The reason for that is, I suppose, the maturity of the sport. We are now the fastest-growing sport, and there are more people at a blind tennis tournament than any other format of tennis in the disability sector. So we are proliferating. But we have only become a more prominent sport in the last five years. We also have the complexity of B1 through B4, male and female. And that, for the organizers, to be fair, is logistically much more difficult because, in wheelchair tennis, it's wheelchair men's, wheelchair women's. And the part of the hearing is men's and women's.

S Sydney ▶ 17:03

Put the pressure on. Haha.

R Robert ▶ 17:05

Yeah, exactly. So we are lagging a little bit. But I would say we're in dramatic catch-up mode in Australia, and we had a lady, Danny Collins if you ever get to see that. If you Google that project episode, there's an American lady at the end, Danielle Collins, who came, played Ash Barty in the final two or three years ago at the A O. So she's a top 10 player, and she had the court book centre court at Kooyong in Melbourne. She booked it as a practice session during the AO when we were filming. She loved the concept of blind tennis because she said I've never heard of disability tennis in my whole career in the US. I've never heard of it. And, and she said, can I have a go? And we let her on the court; the project kept filming as you would, and she was missing balls left, right and centre. And anyway, this is a moment of luck for you four days later. Four days later, she announced her retirement from professional tennis and contacted the International Blind Tennis Association to say she wanted to spend the next segment of her life promoting blind tennis in the US. So watch the project. Just Google it and watch it at the very end. There's a lady, Danielle Collins; you'll see her on the court. She had an absolute ball. She did not get any practice that day because she spent the whole time not on when she wasn't getting filmed. She was throwing ao balls around the centre court for my guide dog to catch and bring back to her because she would just, and her coach said she had a whole entourage there, coach, all the entire fitness advisor, all of them, they just said she has not been so relaxed in years. She's just enjoying herself. And then, four days later, she announced her retirement. So I think she was done, and I think just seeing that there are other ways she can now spend her time promoting the disability sporting sector in the US hit home with her. It's an exciting story for you to look at, maybe. Yeah.

S Sydney ▶ 19:08

calendar grand slam and the Olympic gold medal in the same year. And he's done two of those. So he is a celebrity by far, and he's also an Australian Larrikin. So he is a bit of a rock star and a blind tennis player. So, celebrities and publicity have educated the public on how those wheelchairs are exceptionally movable and mobile around a tennis court. You could either educate from the grassroots up, which will take you longer, or you could do that, and that's education. I'm doing a lot of that personally; last year, I think I did 30 primary schools and about 50 secondary schools, as well as most of the major universities. So I'm constantly out there trying to educate people about blind tennis and the blind community on average. But I honestly think the moment we get some cute girl with a long, long ponytail that is pretty attractive - Who knows? Like Anna Kournikova of the tennis world, a rapper, or whoever. We will, and people will learn rapidly.

S Sydney ▶ 11:49

It would be best to have an icon or something like that. You have to be on the lookout when training all these kids in tennis.

R Robert ▶ 11:57

That's it. And now we currently have a junior. His name is Arato, and he is from Sydney. Arato, what's his mum's name? Japanese name and his dad's Tim Green. Arato has just turned 12 and was given a global exception to play in the world—Birmingham blind games. You must usually be 14 at the minimum age to play those world games. He was 11, and we granted, pushed, pushed, and got him a global exception to play. He was the only junior who played and came third in the open men's - B4. His eye condition is degenerative. It typically bottoms out at a B2 when he's about 16 to 18. He's on the downward slide. He's a B4, which means he gets one bounce. He's only

9 Interviews – Transcript (Robert)

ball would become more popular, Maybe it would become more cost-effective, cost-effective.

S Sydney ▶ 21:20

Yeah, that would be amazing. It would be funded by the corporation as well. Maybe. Yeah. Yeah. And perhaps the only company would not be in Japan. There is more than one.

R Robert ▶ 21:28

Well, they invented the sport, and that's the background. The whole concept of blind tennis was invented in Japan in 1982. Blind cricket was invented here in Melbourne after the First World War, so it's been around for over 100 years. However, blind tennis has only existed since 1982 when the Japanese invented it.

S Sydney ▶ 21:54

Um, and then we just wanted to talk a bit about logistics regarding surveys, more interviews, and stuff like that if you're down to talk about that for just a few minutes.

R Robert ▶ 22:07

Yes, definitely. So, um, how many surveys have you responded to?

S Sydney ▶ 22:14

Like, none. I think we've had how many?

E Emma

Three or four?

S Sydney ▶ 22:18

And I think one of those was you.

R Robert ▶ 22:21

Yeah. OK. Well, the survey was quite accessible for giving you feedback. I could do it, and it was, and my screen read it to me quite quickly. I could also

navigate using up and down keys and tab keys. So I don't know whether you did that on purpose, but the survey was very.

R Robert ▶ 22:39

So, I propose that I will get it; this is from a Victorian perspective because we don't know how it works. We have individual groups within each state that run our blind tennis organizations. So, like in Victoria, for example, our blind sports. So Morris, who most of you may have seen, his name mentioned Maurice Gleeson. He's the president of Blind Sports, and we have 2.5 1000 members in Victoria, the country's highest membership rate. And we have maybe 100 active blind tennis players each week, so the numbers aren't significant. But what I can do is get that survey. The link to that survey was sent out to the tennis group, asking if they could complete that for you within whatever period. Hopefully, you can extend it, but we can negotiate with you over any period.

R Robert ▶ 23:40

I can also confirm that the only issue we have at the moment is that it's Wednesday at the close of business. We have people flying in from around the country over the next 48 hours to play in the tournament this weekend.

R Robert ▶ 23:57

So, I don't know whether any of your sponsors can pay for one or two of you to come to the tournament with your laptops in Melbourne this weekend. And then you could be interviewing everyone in person, but that may not happen. So, in other words, all the people from the States will be here. I was in Melbourne this last weekend; it was literally. It would have been a captive audience, and you could have quickly just asked people if they minded doing the survey, and you could have hit another 40 or 50 active players. So I

Yeah. Before we wrap up the formal interview, is there anything you want to mention that we have missed or something similar?

R Robert ▶ 19:17

OK. So, these are the two big things we've already hit upon, but I'll reiterate them. It's a profile in the sport because, in today's day and age, it's either top-down or bottom-up; bottom-up is education, and it's a long slog, but you can certainly do it. But you think about the high schools and primary schools in Australia, a small populated country, to get that education. It will take generations. If you get one star, you can elevate the sport exceptionally quickly. The other thing that I've got a challenge with is the blind tennis balls that we use in our sport. I want to try and encourage Tennis, Australia to introduce yet another format of tennis, and it's going to be, I want it to be called, this is all my vision, and you don't need eyesight to have a vision. By the way, can we introduce some form of family tennis so that the ball can be used for grandma who is sighted or blind, mum and dad who are sighted or blind, even kids who are sighted or blind and even juniors who are sighted and blind? So I'm envisaging that we could encourage in the tennis world during school holidays. For example, when there is no competition, even at a local level, families could be encouraged to come and utilize the tennis assets and facilities, play a game as a family and an extended family, and use the tennis facilities for picnics. That way, the whole family can get out there and play together with a ball that won't hurt, intimidate, or do anything to anyone. And if I can get that across the line, that will show the general public what it's like to play with that ball. Even if they still have a vision, it will provide them with a familiarity with that ball to then elevate the skill levels of the people that are using that ball who can't see and then, yeah, hopefully, also that

9 Interviews – Transcript (Robert)

R Robert ▶ 27:27

But you'll probably need people from different sports in different states to do your actions.

S Sophia ▶ 27:33

It would be cool. But I also think just the scope of our task—because we have one thing due next week—it would be great to get five people who play tennis or a mix. Yeah, I'm more than appreciative of anyone willing to talk to us.

R Robert ▶ 27:50

Yes, OK. So what? OK, let me see if I can get you. Are you all together for the next? How long have you all been together for now? Like, as in right now?

S Sydney ▶ 28:01

Yeah. Yeah, we can be together for the next hour.

R Robert ▶ 28:04

OK. And Sydney, this is your number. Can I call you? Let me see if I can get you at least one or two now, and then that would get you up to three out of five.

S Sydney ▶ 28:14

Thank you so much.

R Robert ▶ 28:16

So, leave it with me. I will quickly call a couple of people, give them your number, Sydney, and ask them if they can contact you. OK?

R Robert ▶ 28:22

So I won't be so organized that I can give you names ahead of time if I can get them, and they can do the survey. I'm just going to get them to call you, and if I have time, I'll text you. But if not, if they're just random, it could be Adam, and it could be David.

S Sydney ▶ 28:38

can; what I can do, though, is get the distribution list for the Victorian players, and I can get the survey links sent to them. But I suppose my point about the tournament this weekend and people flying around is that it may be a little bit more difficult until early next week to be guaranteed to get responses in that we can get the better even if they don't have the time.

S Sophia ▶ 24:54

But if they, you know.

S Sydney ▶ 24:56

Yeah. And also, if there's, I know you're connected with many different organizations. So, even if it's not blind tennis players that you're sending our survey to, we would love to hear from anyone interested in being legally blind.

R Robert ▶ 25:14

OK. Well, I'll get back in touch with Morris. We have Morris the Grand Pooh bar in Victoria. So he can suggest or advise what to do regarding the other sports. What I can do is OK. There's a gentleman called Matt Matt Clayton Blind Sports, Australia.

S Sydney ▶ 25:39

OK.

S Sydney ▶ 25:40

Oh, yes, I've been in contact with him.

R Robert ▶ 25:42

He's based here in Melbourne. I was speaking to him this afternoon. Suppose you want to reach a wider audience faster than going to individual states. In that case, I don't think his database will be as extensive as the combined database of the individual states. But if you want to hit a database that may have 200 people across all of Australia, you could do it with him very quickly.

S Sydney ▶ 26:11

Yes, I contacted him last week and then sent him the form. He responded to me today and will post it on his social media, which I think is what he said he'd do for us.

R Robert ▶ 26:22

OK. Well, I can guarantee he was in the office today because I was speaking with and annoying him.

R Robert ▶ 26:29

He's not always in the office. He spends a lot of time travelling and participating in different sporting organizations. If he's committed to doing that for you today, that will be your biggest quick hit.

R Robert ▶ 26:40

Ok.

R Robert ▶ 26:42

Yeah. However, I'll ask for the survey link to be sent out to a broader audience in Victoria.

R Robert ▶ 26:50

Oh, you know, what did you ask Matt about the survey link and the interviews?

S Sydney ▶ 26:54

Yes, I sent him the surveys, and then I said I sent him the link to the study. I also told him we're looking for interview people, so we only need 55 more. Um, so if he knows of anyone or if you know of anyone who would be available for an interview specifically, that would also be amazing.

R Robert ▶ 27:15

OK, I can get your numbers out of blind tennis in Victoria. But is that? I mean, how's your representative sampling going? It probably is not going to be that.

9 Interviews – Transcript (Robert)

OK, that's right.

S Sydney ▶ 28:39

We'll be ready.

R Robert ▶ 28:41

So. OK, I'll get off the phone now, but good luck with everything, and you can call me back if you think if you think you're not going to get enough surveys. I can distribute the survey link in Victoria. Matt Clayton will get you if he puts it out in the socials today; I think that will get you what you need regarding survey responses.

R Robert ▶ 29:05

But let's see if we can help you with another couple of interviews in the next hour.

S Sydney ▶ 29:09

Thank you so so much. You're welcome.

R Robert ▶ 29:12

Let me see what I can do for you before you. Thank you very much.

R Robert ▶ 29:17

I'll get off the phone now, but good luck, and I'll get on and see if I can get people calling you.

R Robert ▶ 29:24

You're welcome. OK, take care. Thank you, too.

S Sydney ▶ 29:27

Bye bye.

9 Interviews – Modifying Interview After First Conducted

Robert Fletcher Notes from Call on Mar 12, 2024

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On steering committee for Blind tennis in VIC

- Has access to 30-40 blind tennis players
 - Age ranges: kids to 70s
 - Has lots of connections, asked us to think about any demographics we want

Blind sports levels:

- V1 - totally blind
- V2 - Robert
- V3 - where legally blind stops
- V4 - not legally blind but can see a screen only if magnified

Also on committee for Guide dogs Australia, could access non-sport players this way

Interview: Mar 13, 2024 4pm - 5:30, give a call. Before/after discuss how to access more participants through his connections

Mentioned: Sighted people profiting off of blind people by making them dependent.

Facebook Groups Reached out to:

- Technology for blind and visually impaired - 12k members
- Blind and Vision Impaired Community - 6.8k members
- Visually Impaired and Blind Athletes, Runners & Guides - 1.2k members
- Surveys and Research Opportunities for the Blind and Visually Impaired - 530 members
- Blind Sport SA - 308 members
- Blind and visually impaired friends - 6.3k members
- Australia & nz only - blind and vision impaired social & support group - 1.1k members
- Survey sharing 2024 - 36.3k members
- Blind and Visually Impaired Tips, Tricks & How-To's - 4.8k members
- Blind & Vision Impaired Support Network - 11.7k members

Reddit:

- Adaptive Sports - 584 members
- Blind -

Finalized Interview Structure (pivoting more towards blind tennis after talking with Robert):

Opening:

- Tell me about yourself - What sort of sports/physical activity do you enjoy?
- Tell me about a memorable experience or achievement related to sports or physical activity.

Core Questions:

5. Do you think that people make assumptions or have misconceptions about your ability playing sports?
6. How do you think sport and rec could be more enjoyable for you?

New

- How long have you been playing x sport?
- How often do you get to play per week?
- "Different brackets equal different rules", do you mind telling us what bracket you fall under?
- We wish to understand the sort of structure of the sport and experience of actually playing, do you mind telling us about that?
- Is there anything about blind tennis that you wish you could change?

"Seems like the sport has a super positive impact, great idea for coaching and spreading this love for sport and positivity for kids

Any further notes or things to say before we end the interview today?"

Conversation with robert fletcher - there is forced dependency on sighted people by blind people due to the NDIS. Do you find this to be true?

Last Min Questions:

- Tell me about your favorite sporting memory

9 Interviews – Transcript (Adam)

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S

Sydney

▶

0:02

Hello.

S

Sydney

▶

0:04

Hello. Is this Sydney? Yes, this is Sydney. Hi.

A

Adam

▶

0:07

Hi, Sydney. This is Adam Fay from Victoria. How are you?

S

Sydney

▶

0:10

Good. How are you? I'm good.

A

Adam

▶

0:13

I'm one of those people that you need to.

S

Sydney

▶

0:15

Amazing. Yes, we've been awaiting your call. No, that's fine.

A

Adam

▶

0:20

That's fine. You've caught me on a good time. So amazing. I'm able to spare some for you guys.

S

 Sydney ▶ 0:27

Thank you.

E

 Emma ▶ 0:28

Thank you so much.

E

 Emma ▶ 0:29

By the way, my name is Emma. I'm also sitting here. Um, I was also going to ask very quickly. Are you OK if we record this?

A

 Adam ▶ 0:37

Of course, you could.

E

 Emma ▶ 0:38

OK. Beautiful.

S

 Sydney ▶ 0:40

Can you tell us a little about yourself and your background so we can get into it?

A

 Adam ▶ 0:45

Um, well, myself, I'm 49 years old. My background, as in my nationality or?

S

 Sydney ▶ 0:54

Just about kind of your hobbies. What do you like to do?

A

 Adam ▶ 0:58

I grew up and lived in Sydney, but I'm originally from Combe Park, which is in the Bankstown area, west of Sydney.

A

 Adam ▶ 1:09

So, anyway, yeah, my hobby is tennis. I used to play tennis as a young kid, and I've got a condition called Stargardts, which I can spell for you.

A

 Adam ▶ 1:25

Yeah, it's star as in star and G as in G for goat, A, R for Robert, D for delta, T for Tom, and S for Sam. Stargardts and that's degenerative, and the central vision loss is similar to what Robert's got because he doesn't have the central vision. I've got the same sort of thing, but it's a different type of symptom, in a way.

E

 Emma ▶ 1:55

OK. OK.

S

 Sydney ▶ 1:55

OK. Thank you.

A

 Adam ▶ 2:06

Tennis is a great hobby. I studied human resources and hospitality. I worked at the Sydney Hilton, the one on Pitt Street, back in the day.

A

 Adam ▶ 2:13

When we moved back to Melbourne, I performed security operations. I worked for a security firm and handled the unset control and event mode regarding MP. T, called the Melbourne Olympic Park Trust. So, all those venues, like Rob LA and Amy Park, sporting events, music events, etc.

A

 Adam ▶ 2:44

So that's my little background in a nutshell.

A

 Adam ▶ 2:49

Where I come from, I have six brothers and three sisters. This is a fun fact: I was born in the same hospital as Keanu Reeves.

E

 Emma ▶ 3:00

Oh, wow.

A

 Adam ▶ 3:09

9 Interviews – Transcript (Adam)

My dad's Lebanese is Saudi Arabian, and my mum's is French Canadian. And, yeah, I have a cousin called Sydney, by the way. She studied, but I think she studied at Western University. She's doing psychology.

S Sydney ▶ 3:28

Wow. I have to say that ever since I arrived, I've had so many jokes every time I introduce myself from the USA.

A Adam ▶ 35:56

Where are you initially from?

S Sydney ▶ 3:37

I'm from Boston.

A Adam ▶ 3:38

Oh, OK. Yes, I still haven't gone to Boston. I've lived in New York for six months, two years in a row. I was treated by Dr Nolan, who's in Connecticut and called Farmington in Connecticut. I don't know, school in Connecticut.

S Sydney ▶ 4:00

I'm about, like, 30 minutes north of Yale.

A Adam ▶ 4:03

Well, that's not far. Farmington is not far from Yale at all. Wow. OK. You know, you've got the train station, and I think Yale is not far from the train station.

S Sydney ▶ 4:14

Yeah. No, not at all. Yeah.

A Adam ▶ 4:15

Yeah. And I've got an auntie in San Diego who lives with my sister.

S Sydney ▶ 4:20

Have you visited her?

A Adam ▶ 4:23

So, yeah, I did visit her in 2008 and 2000. She used to lecture at UCLA back in the day.

A Adam ▶ 4:29

Yeah. She's number one in geography, you know. But she used to study and taught at the American University of Beirut. Then, her daughter married an American man, and unfortunately, it didn't work out. I had the child, and things were happening crazy. So, my auntie ended up coming back to America. We were in San Mateo. Back then and ever since she came, she stayed there and taught there, and now she's finished, and she's not thinking anymore. So I've got a lot of stories, but I don't think you want to hear it all.

S Sydney ▶ 5:11

That's all right. So, going back to tennis, can you tell me a little about it? I'm guessing you transitioned from traditional tennis into blind tennis.

A Adam ▶ 5:23

Yes. Yes. So, um, as I said, when I was a young kid, I was around 11. I had to stop playing tennis as soon as I got to 12 because this condition starts to deteriorate when you're around that age. So I wasn't able to see correctly when I said that. In other words, the central vision started, and I began to lose it bit by bit. So even when I'd read in front of the class, the teacher would say, Adam, can you read the following two pages? So I read it and remembered some of my friends laughing because I was missing the letters. So if it were 'good', I'd pronounce it as 'God', and it would not make sense. And that's why, as you know, we used to copy, and then I could not see that. So I moved from the back to the front of the class. I would sit opposite the teacher's right, opposite her on the desk, to copy the blackboard. So she noticed, and my parents didn't

know, my parents, like, when I'd sit and watch TV, I'd sort of like, I think I'm older than you guys by a lot - we used to have the old wooden leg TV's, and used to press the buttons, like big fat buttons that used to come out of the wooden box. And so I used to sit in front of the TV with my hands on my chin like face to face. So they'll yell at me and say if you keep on going, you know, watching it like that, you'll get sore eyes. So they didn't think I had that vision.

A Adam ▶ 7:06

Yeah. Right. The teacher didn't notice that she spoke to the principal, so the principal called my parents and immediately went to a specialist. After a few tests over a few weeks, I was diagnosed with stars.

S Sydney ▶ 7:22

I see something you're born with.

S Sydney ▶ 7:27

Um, And so then when did you kind of start to transition back into playing?

A Adam ▶ 7:32

So when did I return to tennis in my older years, in 2010? OK. OK. So, I was losing my vision from 1987 to 2010. And how I got to that is I was doing, I was at Guide Dogs, Victoria, and I was getting trained to be with my guide dog at the time. And one of the occupational therapists mentioned that he knows that I like sports. He said a tennis program happens every Friday at the Melbourne Tennis Center.

A Adam ▶ 8:11

So he got, he gave me the details, and I never looked back after contacting Maurice Gleeson, the president.

A Adam ▶ 8:19

So, in 2010, we are in 2024. So I've been playing for 14 years. I went as high as number four in the World in

9 Interviews – Transcript (Adam)

October and played five internationals. I hear the background here, and I'm also ranked number one in the bubbles in Australia. So, but I am semi-retired. So, I'm no longer participating in the Victorian tournaments but just focusing on the international scale. I'm given it one more year. So this will be my last year.

A Adam ▶ 8:56

Yeah, this will be my last year. And I'm still the Australian representative for the International Blind Tennis Association.

A Adam ▶ 9:06

And the president who was our coach has gone back—he's American, he's gone back to America at Sacramento. And we—I'm working with the US T, a vast, as you know, America, the biggest tennis organized federation in the World. They've got—I don't know if you know—they've got in Florida, like, is it Florida? Not Florida?

A Adam ▶ 9:32

Oh, I forgot where it was; it was around that area. Yeah.

A Adam ▶ 9:36

One hundred forty tennis courts and outdoor.

E Emma ▶ 9:40

Wow, it's humongous.

A Adam ▶ 9:44

I've been doing that. So, tennis, I've been doing that. It's changed. First of all, it was a social sport that played in Melbourne. At that time, we were the only states playing blind tennis as a social hit with blind spots for graduate Victoria. OK. Then, we had the opportunity in 2017. It was the first-ever world championship held in Spain. I was lucky to be one of

the five. They were from Victoria because, as I said, no other state was playing blind tennis. From five Victorian players to today, we have registered over 95 players Australia-wide.

S Sydney ▶ 10:28

Wow, that's cool.

A Adam ▶ 10:30

There are seven state tournaments in Australia now. OK, I filled you in on that, but seven are the first this weekend.

A Adam ▶ 10:44

That's the first one. Then it goes off to Brisbane in May and Sydney in June, and it's played at Home Bush at the sports hall.

A Adam ▶ 10:54

Um, and then it goes back to the nationals in Melbourne. That's the nationals. It is the big one. Do we get more rating points when you play the nationals?

A Adam ▶ 11:06

And then we're playing in Darwin for the first time? Wow. Oh, cool.

S Sydney ▶ 11:10

Oh, my God. And then you've got Adelaide being the last one. Wow. Yeah. Yeah, Robert was telling us that blind tennis has taken off in the previous five years.

A Adam ▶ 11:22

And it was a, you know, we saw, I was with the coach at that time. So in America, we started having meetings with tennis, Australia, and we began to do this pathway, like what they've done to the wheelchair. And like I said, we've developed it, gone to different states and do a lot of, you know, room sort of style,

tennis camps and so on. And many of them, including many juniors, have started now, which is fantastic. A lot of teenagers and a lot of them play cricket, you know, for representing Australia, the A FL, you know, we've got a few, number one world championships that live in Sydney like Courtney Webb is the number one B three player in Australia, sorry B two player.

A Adam ▶ 12:13

And we've got Mick Lee, the number one male B three, which is in my category about singles here. Sorry, I should have said.

A Adam ▶ 12:23

We've got the world junior champion, whom I worked so hard last year to get to play in Birmingham because he is underage. So we gave him an exception to play at the World.

S Sydney ▶ 12:35

Yes, we heard about that, and he won—and he's only 12 years old.

E Emma ▶ 12:40

Yeah, he sounds as well.

A Adam ▶ 12:44

Grace Hobbs and a B four.

A Adam ▶ 12:47

There's a B four world champion from New South Wales as well. So, we've got them spread everywhere. We have Ross Patterson, a B-four male from Victoria, as a partner in doubles.

A Adam ▶ 12:59

So, yeah, it's grown. It's incredible how much it's grown and is the biggest in disability sports. Believe it or not, it tops wheelchair tennis.

E Emma ▶ 13:11

9 Interviews – Transcript (Adam)

And then, I just had a quick question, hopping back on to the type of education piece. And your PR work, did you find when you were doing that education that there were any misconceptions about disability in sport or, more specifically, blind tennis?

A Adam 16:41

Well, you know, when I first got into blind tennis, I thought I couldn't do it; I couldn't play it because of my vision. But when, you know, I was educated, they sat me down, and the coach there at the time, who is a volunteer, the coach explained to me how it works. And that goes, I was scared, but then I got comfortable like, you know, with these two bouncers that you're entitled to, and it's a softball and, you know, it's not going to hurt me and, you know, I'm not going to get embarrassed if I miss it and so on.

A Adam 17:16

But yeah, with education, people need to understand that we are different when I say we are different. When it comes to sports, you know, we need that extra time; we need things to be a bit more silent than other sports. For instance, you know, we need to focus on our hearing, you know, if we're in a tennis base and there's so much people noise, people can't hear the ball, you know, and especially when the opponent is saying ready, and you have to say yes. And then they say play, sometimes you can't hear all that.

A Adam 17:52

They need to understand that hearing is crucial. That's why we have a bell in the ball, especially for the B-one players who have no sight and must be blindfolded. So, they rely on hearing as much as possible.

A Adam 18:07

But yeah, so, and with education, I think it's essential whether you're a junior or an adult, a parent, a

And two, there is a lot of education involved in it. What is blind tennis? You know, what's the ball like? You know, how do you hit the ball? Do you know what the different classifications are for blind tennis? You know, from B one to B four, B one being blind? How do you coach a blind blind tennis player? Yeah. Yeah, there are different ways of coaching, and as a player, there are other ways you have to do things than a regular big and impaired player. You know, there's a lot of education, and we did that. Like I said, we did juniors. We've had a lot of, you know, speeches, whether in high schools or universities. Sporting organizations like SL and soccer, and you name it, nearly all sports. Really?

A Adam 15:21

So, yeah, that's the kind of thing that we've done. We also do these come-and-try days in different regions of Victoria to give people who live in rural Victoria a chance to come and have a go. We've done a few of them in the Gippsland region in the past, and we've done it in the Murray River area side of things like Bendigo and so on, which is out, further out, give them a go, you know, let them know that it's available. And we try. Unfortunately, we're still working on resources, funding, etc. It's pretty hard to start a program in those areas. If you don't have the funding and if you don't have the number of people, the only place that they can do it is at Melbourne Tennis Center, where we do Friday nights because, you know, it's a big turnout. We have over 30 people that come on Friday nights to play tennis.

A Adam 16:13

Yeah. Yeah. Out of those 30, we've got 12 players who play tournaments interstate or in Victoria.

S Sydney 16:25

Wow, that's cool.

E Emma 13:13

Yeah, it does.

S Sydney 13:14

Yeah. What do you like? How can you pinpoint how the sport blew up in the past five years? Was it education for the public? Was it getting kids into the sport? Um, yeah, it was. First of all, it was getting kids into the sport.

A Adam 13:32

Um, Rob worked with that. I worked many years ago. We started doing the kid's education, going out to schools and doing sort of a, you know, a test run, pilot run if you want to put it that way with the PE studies and so on; there was a lot of that happening. We did a lot of work with the media as well. You know, radio TV, like we did one, maybe around two months ago, we brought him and I did the project on channel 10.

E Emma 14:05

Yeah, we heard about this. Have you seen it? If you put it in, you can find it on YouTube.

A Adam 14:11

If you put blind tennis, just put down blind tennis. Adam Fate or Robert Fletcher. And you'll see Daniel Collins was with us at the moment as well.

S Sydney 14:19

Right.

S Sydney 14:20

We looked it up perfectly.

A Adam 14:22

So, we strive to do this and promote it as one.

A Adam 14:27

9 Interviews – Transcript (Adam)

supporter, or a volunteer. Everyone needs, I believe, an excellent induction of what is blind, how it's played, and show them the actual ball itself. We've got videos that we've done with tennis, Australia in bodies, blind tennis and how to assist a blind tennis player towards the court and on the court, which's also very important. Sometimes, many of us don't know where we are on the court, so we need to be guided. Oh, it is essential.

A Adam ▶ 18:51

That needs to be. Most of us play in different States at different venues, and we're not familiar with those venues.

A Adam ▶ 19:00

I think there should be a lot of information going out there to the players, and they've been doing that through trial and error. I've got to give them the fair go here because they've been playing excellent tennis in Australia in terms of education and all that stuff. So, yeah.

S Sydney ▶ 19:21

Yeah, it was interesting. You mentioned needing some support to be guided around the court, especially for V-1 players, which makes sense. It was interesting when we were talking with Robert. He had this discussion about the forced dependency on sighted people by blind people due to the NDIS. Uh, how do you feel about that? Can you talk about that a little bit? We were super interested.

A Adam ▶ 19:51

I think, I think, I think a lot of people. Are you referring to the people who do play tennis as being on the NBI S?

A Adam ▶ 20:00

Sorry, I didn't get the whole question. Sorry.

E Emma ▶ 20:03

Not necessarily, no, no. Um, just in general, there is a forced dependency on sighted people because of systems in place with the NDIS.

A Adam ▶ 20:15

Yes. Like they think that the N DS does everything for us. Is that what you're referring to? Um, unfortunately, that doesn't. That's not always the case if I answer it right here, but I'm not sure. Still, with that question, the NDIS helps people, people who play blind tennis, to allow them to purchase balls, for instance. We call them consumables, as you know, and they will also help with some travel to the venue, whether interstate or locally.

A Adam ▶ 21:00

A lot of people rely on them because, you know, they don't have anyone else except for their plan or so on, but I can't help you more than that because I'm not sure about that field of things. So.

S Sydney ▶ 21:20

So, um, sorry, I, I'm not sure that.

A Adam ▶ 21:28

No.

S Sydney ▶ 21:29

Yeah. No, sorry. That question stemmed from before we were talking about it. Um, in our initial research, we noted that just in blind sports in general, people feel upset that they have to be dependent on sighted people to participate in sports. Um, And so we were just kind of like asking Robert about that and, and maybe we can ask you about that interesting question, that one because I can tell you from experience as a country representative of Australia when we went to

the World Games last year, a lot of a lot of people who are vision impaired, get told things.

A Adam ▶ 22:11

And for instance, this is what happened. Tennis Australia had a meeting. I was present as the country rep, and they told the selected people that our duty of care was a priority and everyone would be taken care of.

A Adam ▶ 22:26

So, Summer, who studies at the University of Sydney, I don't know if he's mentioned her name to you. She's lovely, but she's got so many different conditions apart from her vision loss. So she travelled as part of the team and wasn't cared for by any individual, even the team manager or the coach. She was going up and down stairs on her bottom.

A Adam ▶ 22:55

It was very. I was in tears when I heard that, and we're not talking about one, you know, five steps; we're talking about six levels. So, six or eight flights of stairs, and she was not taken care of at all.

A Adam ▶ 23:12

Many of us rely on whether they're volunteers or staff members, but you don't always get that.

A Adam ▶ 23:21

You don't always get that. But when, you know, I think it needs any tennis, well, any sport, you've got to make sure there are volunteers to help people who obviously cannot do it alone.

A Adam ▶ 23:36

There is a lot that you can do on your own. I'm one of them. I'm very independent. You know, I lost my guide dog three years ago. He passed away, and I promised myself I would never get a guide dog because I went

9 Interviews – Transcript (Adam)

through a big heartache with Ivory and, you know, I'm still affected by his loss, but I thought I would never get one anymore, but Robert's pushing me to get another one. So I might take his OK info and go ahead and get another one. But yeah, I guess I believe that it is essential to have help. You know, sometimes we say, oh, we don't need it, but sometimes you get caught up where I wish I had that person helping me. You know, I think the help should always be there regardless.

A Adam 24:27

Well, your vision level, that's what I think.

S Sydney 24:30

And even if the help is there, you don't necessarily need to take it. Is it better to be there and not need it than to need it?

A Adam 24:37

Right. That's right. And everything is smooth, and it's calmer when there are volunteers and help, and I can pick up the ball. For instance, if the ball is on the floor, I can pick it up. Many of them can do it, but they choose not to and manipulate the system by, oh, we've got volunteers. Let them pick it up. Yes.

S Sydney 24:59

That's so interesting. Robert was saying the same thing. He was talking about this kind of dependency. That's like a dual dependency in that. Through the system, blind people are forced to be dependent on sighted people. But then you also get used to it. Right. And so then that's right.

A Adam 25:17

Yeah, they get used to it, and then it's like, that's not the way to live. You know, it's because someday they might not be there, and you'll be stranded. You'll have to pick up those balls because you can pick up those

balls. But, you know, it's just, yeah, a sad thing, I think, for me anyway, when people do that stuff.

A Adam 25:39

But apart from that, I think that's all I have to say about that one.

S Sydney 25:44

No, thank you so much.

S Sydney 25:47

You want to go.

E Emma 25:48

Yeah, that's some excellent input there. Your experience with tennis seems to mean a lot to you, which is fantastic. Um, I guess I have one last question before we wrap up. Is there anything that you would change about blind tennis? Can I tell you anything to ensure you have the right coach?

A Adam 26:15

No, I think, I think what, I don't think there's anything to change with the sport.

A Adam 26:22

And I don't think any, I think there could be some rules to be changed.

A Adam 26:29

And I'm talking about at a professional level here, like the number of games in a set, for instance, four games is not enough in one sport because it gets, you know, it could be more. But in general, I think, I think it would be great if they could have a speaker system, a microphone system as they do with the regular tournaments that, you know, on TV, because this way we have a lot of players that also have a hearing impairment that plays. They're vision impaired at the same time.

A Adam 27:03

But even for the vision impaired, it's great that you can hear the umpire, you know, with the scores because sometimes I would go up and say, can you tell me what the score is, you know, and that sort of gives a delay in the game, and then someone would say, you know, how much is it out by is it light, is it long? And I worked with Robert to create a new system of calling the ball if it was out, you know, you could say ABC A being less than 10 centimetres and so on. And we did that as a trial, but for some reason, they've stopped that down the track, and I think we could bring that back up because it was helping a lot of the players, you know, to picture how long it was in their head. So they can sort of either go slower in their heads.

A Adam 27:54

Anything that could help is not a bad thing.

A Adam 27:58

Yeah, exactly.

A Adam 28:00

That's the only thing I would change. I think nothing else. Everything is OK. I mean, that's why it's so successful here in Australia: people are loving it. You know, we've got 36 players registered for this weekend, and usually, in Adelaide last year, it was the highest—it was like 45 players registered in the previous year.

A Adam 28:26

So, you know we're doing something right.

A Adam 28:30

And yeah, we're doing something right. Like I said, I think coaches need to be coached properly with tennis because everyone has different requirements, different ways of movement, and other ways of hitting the ball,

9 Interviews – Transcript (Adam)

especially when dealing with B One. I still don't think Australia has a proper coach for B One S.

A Adam ▶ 28:57

We don't have a proper coach for B, and we're searching for one. That's why we've actually—I don't know if Robert mentioned this at the weekend—done a coaching foundation course with Tennis Australia.

A Adam ▶ 29:11

Yeah. Has he told you that? Yeah.

A Adam ▶ 29:13

So Robert and I and two other visions from Victoria are coaches now. Tennis.

A Adam ▶ 29:20

So, yeah, we've done our first foundation course. The next one is in May. So now we can; many of us have tried and trained hotshots, for instance, or the junior blind program at Melbourne Park. You see, we train them. So we're getting that experience, and I think nothing is better than a person playing the sport to coach as well.

A Adam ▶ 29:48

Not just a normal, you know, able-to-play tennis player, but I think impaired because what I expect from a coach this way I pass it on to, you know, to the kids because I know how they'll feel and it's always important to talk to them as well. You know, what do you see? What can you see? Would you prefer the ball to go soft or hard or faster or slower or, you know, get them in that comfortable zone at the start? Hit the ball on them, and then many kids will get scared. Yeah, even adults get afraid of it, you know. So you've got to make them feel comfortable, and it's meant to be fun. It is a fun sport.

A Adam ▶ 30:33

At the end of the day, what I say to the Australian players who represent Australia when I talk is to be kind to yourself. That's all you have to do: enjoy yourself and be kind to yourself. Yeah.

S Sydney ▶ 30:45

Yeah. And then, sorry, I realized I had one more question as you talked. Do you have time for that? Of course, I have time. OK. Amazing. Um, I was wondering, could you talk a little bit about the resources or funding that go into blind tennis? Like, how is that? Is it hard to get financing? Are you well-funded? Where does the funding come from?

A Adam ▶ 31:07

Well, sorry, I can only tell you about our state and blind sports and recreation in Victoria. We work with tennis, Victoria. We've been working with Turns of Victoria for nearly 20 years. So they fund our Friday Night program. When I say that, that means the court hires equipment, such as tennis rackets and balls.

A Adam ▶ 31:34

So they fund us. They've been so generous, and if it weren't for them, there wouldn't be any number one championships, you know, champions that'd be playing. So we get funding from them.

A Adam ▶ 31:46

I'm talking about the tennis program, but not in blind spots because they get state funding, grants, and other sports and recreation activities. But we rely on it; we get individual funding from the Australian Institute of Sport or certain competing players. That happens once a year; you can get some funding or even get it from your council. It's an individual sporting grant. So it's for people who do go, whether you're a junior or an adult, and you go to compete in the tournament, which consists of travel.

A Adam ▶ 32:28

But yeah, so our Friday nights get, but when it comes to international, it's the same process. So we may call the Australian Institute of Sports Grants with the council, but your pocket pays for everything else. So now we're going to Italy; many players will be going to Italy in September for the World Championships.

A Adam ▶ 32:51

That's going to cost around \$5000 per person.

A Adam ▶ 32:57

You're looking at 3000, including the insurance and registration for the hotel, and to enter the tournament, you're looking at 1500, but that's all the board costs of the board. So all the meals and it could be, I think it's like six days. So you're looking at close to 5000 per player.

S Sydney ▶ 33:18

So, is that out-of-pocket per player? Yes, tennis Australia won the World Games last year because we can only have two people from, sorry, two people from each category, a male and a female from B one to B four.

A Adam ▶ 33:35

So that's eight players that Tennis Australia funded to go to Birmingham.

A Adam ▶ 33:43

That was roughly around that price as well, between five and 6000. And they did provide uniforms. I did not pass the selection criteria because I'm a number one B three-double player. I didn't pass through because I'm not playing singles, but the IPSO World Games invited me to play.

A Adam ▶ 34:04

9 Interviews – Transcript (Adam)

They invited 56 individual players, including me. I covered my costs.

A Adam ▶ 34:13

But Tennis Australia provided me with the uniforms.

S Sydney ▶ 34:17

So then, is that kind of a barrier in some ways? Do some people not pay that because that's a lot of money?

A Adam ▶ 34:28

And I think many people don't attend the internationals because of that cost. Unfortunately, as you know, where we are in Australia or whether you're in the US or in the Asia Pacific to go to a tournament in Europe, it's always going to be more expensive for us, you know, whereas in Europe, they catch a plane from London to Rome, it costs them like 80 bucks one way by plane, you know, and for us, unfortunately, it's a high cost, It's a long travel time as well, and a lot of them cannot afford it. A lot of these people, like I said, are juniors or students, and some people who cannot be independent will have to have someone to travel with them. And that's another 5000.

A Adam ▶ 35:14

So it is pretty expensive for people that live further out.

S Sydney ▶ 35:19

And so, is that kind of something being worked on in blind tennis? No?

A Adam ▶ 35:27

No, no. Well, what we've been doing now in Victoria and Rob, and me and another two people are on the steering committee. We're working on some funding, and some grants that we can try to sort of obtain to

whether it's tennis or disability tennis. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

S Sydney ▶ 37:36

Well, that was all we had. So, if you have anything else to add, that would be great. Thank you so much for your time. No, no problem.

A Adam ▶ 37:45

I hope I was a bit helpful.

A Adam ▶ 37:47

I had a long day today. I was on the phone meetings, and we've got the world meeting tomorrow morning. So I've got to be on, and I've got to get up at seven in the morning.

A Adam ▶ 37:59

That's all, it's late in London. They're doing it late in London. But, for us, seven is better than two in the morning. I said you two in the morning.

A Adam ▶ 38:12

I wish you all luck in your research and work. It was nice talking to you both, Emma and Sydney. Yes, thank you.

A Adam ▶ 38:24

If you need anything else, don't hesitate to call. Thank you so much. OK, good luck with everything. Thank you so much.

9 Interviews – Transcript (Michelle)

W

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Select text in the transcript to create and share a highlight

Transcript

Was this transcription accurate?

S

Sydney

▶

0:06

I'll make you the email.

M

Michele

▶

0:08

Do this Michelle speaking?

S

Sydney

▶

0:12

Hi, Michelle. This is Sydney. Is this a good time?

S

Sydney

▶

0:15

Good. How are you?

S

Sydney

▶

0:17

Hi. So again, so sorry about our miscommunication yesterday.

M

Michele

▶

0:21

I get that.

S

Sydney

▶

0:26

Yeah. Ok. No worries.

S

Sydney

▶

0:28

Um, do you mind if I record our interview?

S

Sydney

▶

0:32

Ok, perfect. And then uh my friend Emma is here. Hi. Hello. Hello.

E

Emma

▶

0:37

How are you?

S

Sydney

▶

0:39

Thank you. That's good.

E

Emma

▶

0:47

Well, um I'm studying a Bachelor of Design at the moment and this is one of our classes about uh user experience. So um learning more about, you know, like users and their experience with a product like finding like problems and then finding the solutions, say for example.

E

Emma

▶

1:05

Yeah. No, it's a Yeah. And you're on a no, no, not necessarily.

S

Sydney

▶

1:12

Yeah. Yeah. No, I'm also, I am doing design and then also major in computer science back home in the States.

E

Emma

▶

1:23

I am. Have you told her that you're on exchange? I am.

S

Sydney

▶

1:25

No, I'm on exchange here just this semester. Yeah, I have to go.

S

Sydney

▶

1:33

Where did they go?

M

Michele

▶

1:35

Um, my older one went to Sheffield. That was all she could get. They were, they were arts law students. And Sheffield in UK, but spent a lot of

9 Interviews – Transcript (Michelle)

time zipping around Europe like you do during, in top. And the young one?

M Michele ▶ 1:53

Oh, actually, yeah, that was UNI, and the younger one went to Bogota in Col in, um, because she had some Spanish, she, she had to study in Spanish.

S Sydney ▶ 2:06

I'm not good at languages.

S Sydney ▶ 2:08

I studied Mandarin in high school. I went to China. I couldn't say anything. All I could say was like, I need the bathroom and my stomach hurts was about it.

M Michele ▶ 2:18

And are you, is that an American or a Canadian accent?

S Sydney ▶ 2:20

American? I'm from Boston, Boston.

M Michele ▶ 2:24

Just to get the picture then to, um, yeah.

S Sydney ▶ 2:31

Ok. Can I ask how you heard about our survey? Well, when you're in this low vision and blind world, you get emails from the various bodies that support us.

M Michele ▶ 2:45

Um, and I'm pretty sure it came through blind citizens, Australia.

S Sydney ▶ 2:51

Very cool. Very cool. Um, yeah, I think I've been in contact with them with them. Um, yeah, a couple of weeks. Ok. Glad to hear it. Um, so, um, can you tell me a little about yourself, um, specifically about what sports you play if you play any? Um, yeah.

M Michele ▶ 3:08

Um, yes, I suppose my number one sport is golf. Um, and I played golf. I've played golf for many years and I played golf with vision. Um, and so it's actually a good game to, um, continue to play with low vision because the ball is stationary.

M Michele ▶ 3:36

So I was a tennis player as well and that was the first sport to go because the ball comes at you too fast and can't see it sort of thing. So, um, so I've entered into the blind golf world quite a lot. Um, and that's, you know, I can do many stories about that and then my other physical exercise, I guess is, um, yoga and Pilates because obviously that's really good for low vision because they're audibly describing what, what you're doing. You can sort of more or less do it with your eyes closed, really?

M Michele ▶ 4:17

And walking and swimming. Um That's probably the main thing, thinking about thinking about bowls going forward, but haven't done anything about it as in like lawn balls.

M Michele ▶ 4:35

Yeah, there's a similar concept to putting on a golfing in golf because somehow your brain translates the distance without necessarily being able to see the goal.

S Sydney ▶ 4:52

So can you tell me a little bit about the transition between, um, golfing when you had vision and golfing, uh when you didn't?

M Michele ▶ 5:00

Yeah. Um So I was playing at a course near here called Chatswood. It's not open at the moment and there was a lady there who had fairly um high level of macula immaculate and everyone used to help her. Um So because macula, you lose your central vision, um so you can sort of walk around without bumping into things, but you don't. So consequently of that, you don't have any idea where your ball goes when you're playing golf. So everyone used to sort of help her a bit. And I also knew she

9 Interviews – Transcript (Michelle)

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9 Interviews – Transcript (Michelle)

played blind golf on Saturdays. She had her other life. And I always thought when I gave up work, I would probably, um, become a volunteer golf caddy because when you play blind golf, you work as a team with a caddy and the caddy acts as your eyes.

M Michele ▶ 5:55

So they help line you up, maybe describe what the hole is like. Um, tell you that there's a couple of bunkers in front of the green. Tell you it's right. It raises, um, we all have our own distance things. So we're sort of aware of how far it is, but we just need to know what you would see if you could see, I suppose. And, um, and then they obviously, once you've hit the ball, um, tell you where it's gone and then you walk to the ball with the caddy. So I, and so in order to play blind golf, you have to have a caddy and that's why it becomes so much of a team event with your caddy. And it can be either either extremely exciting if you do what the caddy tells you to do or it can be, um, humiliating if you, in fact, don't. Um, so, um, so what actually happened was my eyesight went down unexpectedly and I never got to be a volunteer caddy. And I, but because I knew about blind golf, I joined the Blind golf circuit in sort of the end of 2017. And so I do still continue to play with, with the help of friends in mainstream golf. But, um, I can, I can't compete at the higher level because you don't necessarily always have a caddy. I mean, you can, but it's more difficult. So I then have joined the blind golf and that's meant that the blind golf sort of group, there is a, each state has their own and so each state holds a, a state competition once each year.

M Michele ▶ 7:43

And then there is also an Australian Open and that's held that rotates around the States once each year. And then there is also, um, you can actually go to other countries and compete in their blind golf and they have a world championship blunk off sort of thing. So, um, where all the different countries get to send a bit like a, you know, you get an allocation of how many players you can send according to how many might be in the state. Oh, sorry, however, might be players proportionately. So the United States sends quite a lot of players because they have a lot of enrolled blind golfers and it's a bigger country.

M Michele ▶ 8:33

So that's the circuit. So I for instance, went to Tasmania at the beginning of February because there has been a new blind golf, Tasmania formed by a guy who coincidentally has my eye condition and he has lost his, he's been a golfer for a long time and he's suddenly lost his vision. And so he started blind golf as Tasmania and everybody went down there or those that wanted to and competed in the inaugural Blind Golf Tasmania event.

M Michele ▶ 9:13

Yeah. So it's sort of quite good because it gives you a little, sort of a holiday in a different place with something to do. And, and then obviously over time you, um, connect with all these golfers and you have golf and low vision in common, but I probably would never have met many of them because they're probably very different characters than I would normally come across.

S Sydney ▶ 9:47

So, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, definitely. Um, sport is amazing as like a social bonding kind of meeting new people that you wouldn't have anyway.

S Sydney ▶ 9:56

Yeah.

S Sydney ▶ 9:57

Yeah.

E Emma ▶ 9:59

Yeah, I imagine it must be a very sociable sport. Do you play with friends a lot?

M Michele ▶ 10:03

Um, yeah. Yeah, I, I had nine holes, in fact, this morning with the guy from my gym, um, because he's, he's very fit and can hit the ball a long way and he can see, but he's just starting out. So when you start golf, you gotta put, submit a number of cards in order for them to work out

9 Interviews – Transcript (Michelle)

Yes. Cool. Because I do know, you mentioned a few other things that you do, like yoga and swimming and running and, uh, yeah, I guess yoga.

M Michele ▶ 12:21

Oh, sorry. Golf.

M Michele ▶ 12:24

Yeah, it probably is because it offers the whole social side as well. And, um, and, you know, take, gets you a nice big walk outside in the fresh air.

M Michele ▶ 12:41

Some people say it ruins a good walk and some days and some days I'd agree with him, but generally, generally it's meant to be a pleasurable experience.

S Sydney ▶ 12:53

Yeah. Yeah. So, um, besides, um, the handicaps which are already in kind of like traditional golf, um, and the caddy as kind of like your eyes. Do you have any other rule changes to golf?

M Michele ▶ 13:08

Uh, yes. In blind golf, the players are allowed to, um, uh, ground your club in a bunker.

M Michele ▶ 13:16

Do you understand what that term?

S Sydney ▶ 13:19

I understand all those words separately.

E Emma ▶ 13:21

So if the ball goes in the bunker, you have to hit it out of the bunker, obviously, um, to wherever you're supposed to be going continually, usually they're around the green.

M Michele ▶ 13:34

So it's a tricky shot because you don't want to hit it. They, you know, they're right beside the green. So you've got to get it up and land on the green without going for miles. So, um, and that is a hard shot the bunker.

what your handicap is or will be. And so he needs someone to, to do that for him and I can do that for him and coincidentally he can spot my ball for me.

M Michele ▶ 10:39

We had nine holes social this morning and so everyone was a winner out of that.

E Emma ▶ 10:48

Yeah. When you say you had to, like, fill out cards that they can sort of, is it sort of like, they put you into like a, a bracket in a sense where you have like a different golf, like, range or different, like series of ho, yeah.

M Michele ▶ 11:00

So, my, everyone in golf, that's why it's a very good leveling sport. Everyone has a handicap in golf. And that means, um, that it's whatever, however many shots over what the par is of a course and that's really what a professional would play it in. Um, you need that or you're allowed to have, um, and you need to sort of probably play to that. So, roughly if there are 18 holes and you're on a handicap of 36 that would mean that you would be able to have two shots more than the published power of each hole.

E Emma ▶ 11:45

Ok. Yeah. Cool. Yeah, I get you.

M Michele ▶ 11:47

And so by him putting a card in or six cards, he's got to put in, um, they average out how many holes, how many extra shots he's had over the pa and that would be the handicap that they will give him.

E Emma ▶ 12:05

Ok. Yeah, I get that. I get that.

E Emma ▶ 12:07

I was gonna say, um, is golf your favorite sport then?

E Emma ▶ 12:12

9 Interviews – Transcript (Michelle)

Um, so anyway, um, the rule for all golf is that when you're about to hit the ball, you're not allowed to put the bottom of the club on the sand. Sighted people not allowed to do that. Um, but blind people are because we have difficulty in determining, um, you know, I guess where the, where the ground is sort of thing, we can't see that. So that's why we have difficulty going downstairs sort of thing because we can't see that change in elevation.

M Michele ▶ 14:29

Then it used to be that we were able to also ground our club in hazards. That means when they decide that the side of a fairway is a hazard, um, like bushy or, or something, but everyone can do that now. So it's a, that's changed. But I guess the other thing is that the caddy can help us line up to make sure our feet are pointing in the right direction and everything. So other people can't have someone telling them, you know, whether they're lined up correctly with where we want to go, where you want to go.

M Michele ▶ 15:06

So that's realistically, the only difference, obviously, the caddy is marking the card because we can't see it and, and those sorts of things. But, but in the actual playing of the golf, that's, they're the only differences like the clubs and everything are all the same and the clubs and there are various levels of blind golfer like I'm B three, which means in the, in the competitive blind golf world. I in theory can see more than B two and B two can see more than B one because everyone has to do an eye test before at vision Australia. Their sport person tests your eyes to see what you can see and everything and we're all legally blind. It's just a level of what that is and be one, be one um, of, uh, can virtually see nothing. Um, they might have some light perception but because they can see nothing.

M Michele ▶ 16:14

Um, and to keep it as a, um, a sort of an even playing field for B ones, they all have to wear blackout glasses when they play because they might say they can see nothing but some might be, I don't know, that's the way it is the B one. But so the B ones need much, much more help

from their caddies because they have these blackout glasses on. And so the caddy more or less leads them to the tea and chooses the club for them based on the distance and puts it in their hand and, you know, lines them up and then helps them back to the cart or if you're walking, you know, walking it. So, um, yeah, it's a bar. They're amazing. They line them up, put the club beside the ball, they hit a full shot and they connect and that's with no vision.

S Sydney ▶ 17:17

Yeah.

S Sydney ▶ 17:18

Um, and so do you think that these, um, the caddies and then also, um, kind of the slight other changes or modifications of the sport? Do you think they're useful, um, like to their full potential? Is there anything else you would change? Do they fall short in any way?

S Sydney ▶ 17:36

The caddies? Uh, just the, the alterations to the game as a whole? Um, uh, yeah.

M Michele ▶ 17:44

No, that's that. Yeah, that's, there's probably enough of that. Yeah, because, yeah, it's, um, I think, I think some, definitely, some courses are more blind friendly than others.

S Sydney ▶ 18:04

Yes. But as a whole you think that it, it definitely fulfills kind of it, the, the caddy working with you, um, means that it becomes an accessible sport.

M Michele ▶ 18:17

Yeah.

E Emma ▶ 18:17

Nice. Very cool.

S Sydney ▶ 18:19

Ok, beautiful.

9 Interviews – Transcript (Michelle)

E Emma ▶ 18:20

Ok.

E Emma ▶ 18:21

Um I guess our last sort of question is, um, just do you think that people make assumptions or have misconceptions about your ability within playing golf or any other sport that you do just in general?

M Michele ▶ 18:35

Um, misconceptions. Um Well, in the sense that I can't do it, uh not necessarily just like, uh your abilities within like playing golf.

E Emma ▶ 18:51

So say, for example, if someone tries to, you know, like guide you in a, in something that you already know, I guess. Um Oh, yes, I mean, you know, sometimes when I play with people that don't know, they know that I'm um blind but they don't understand what I can see.

M Michele ▶ 19:11

So their language to me that's if I'm just playing with socially, with people, their language and description to help me is um, can be annoying and substandard, but that's through their ignorance, possibly. Um, you know, like it doesn't help to say it's over there.

M Michele ▶ 19:34

So that sort of, you know, needs training or I have to step up and get out of my, trying to be nice zone and say it's more helpful to tell me that it's at 11 o'clock or one o'clock or on the side of the fairway or something like that.

E Emma ▶ 19:55

All right. No. Yeah. Yeah, that's great. That's great.

E Emma ▶ 19:58

Ok. And I guess, uh, last sort of question is, uh, what do you like most about golf or the, any other sport that you play?

M Michele ▶ 20:06

Um, well, I like the exercise. It's a really good thing. Um, and, um, certainly with golf it's the challenge because there is no day that all shots work. Um, and so you're continually being challenged to see if you can do what you did last time or, or improve or, you know, every, every single shot is a challenge.

S Sydney ▶ 20:39

Yeah.

S Sydney ▶ 20:40

Yeah. Yeah. Cool.

M Michele ▶ 20:42

It's not that easy.

E Emma ▶ 20:45

No, but it sounds like you're, you're very cautious about it, which is good. Yeah.

S Sydney ▶ 20:49

Um, do you have any other comments or anything you want to add? That was all from us.

S Sydney ▶ 20:56

Uh, no, because I'm not quite sure what, what your ulterior big motive is.

M Michele ▶ 21:02

So, I don't know, I really just finding out all about the different sort of like sports that are popular within the blind community just how they're playing right now.

S Sydney ▶ 21:12

We're just kind of, in our research phase. We don't have, we're trying to, our researchers hope hopefully will guide us. Yeah. We're really just trying to get more familiar with, like, the sports that are played with the sort of experience of playing because when, if you seems like if you're blind from younger age you might come across a few specific sports to

9 Interviews – Transcript (Michelle)

blindness, like gold ball, the other one and that sort of thing, which I haven't ever come across that one.

M Michele ▶ 21:40

Well, I have come across it but I've not played it and, um, I'm a bit hesitant to go back to tennis with a, a ball that makes a noise somehow. I don't know, we interviewed a few blind tennis stars.

S Sydney ▶ 21:56

They were, they were very into their game. I will say they were very blind tennis.

M Michele ▶ 22:01

Had they played tennis, had they only played blind tennis or they played other tennis and then gone to blind tennis. One of them had played it before.

S Sydney ▶ 22:10

Yeah, one of them had, yeah, definitely. One of them at least had played it before and then took a break for a while. Thought he could play tennis. Um, and then someone sat him down and was like, you can play tennis and he was like, ok. And then he never looked back.

M Michele ▶ 22:23

Oh, interesting.

M Michele ▶ 22:26

One of the blind golfers does both, actually, you know, he's sort of zipping around competing in the blind tennis and then, yeah. Oh, well, that's, that's a good project. I hope it, I hope it achieves what it needs to achieve.

S Sydney ▶ 22:44

Thank you so much. Thank you so much for your time. No problem.

S Sydney ▶ 22:51

See you.

S Sydney ▶ 22:53

Cool.

M Michele ▶ 22:56

That's good.

10 Detailed Affinity Diagram (2/2)



11 Persona 1 Michael (1/2)

Basic information



Michael

"Archetype"

- 22
- Student
- Sydney, Australia
- Visually Impaired Since Birth

Bio

Michael is a student who enjoys playing blind tennis on the weekends. He has played since he was 10 and has become a regular face in the blind tennis community. He enjoys the social aspect but also likes the competitive side, wanting to play overseas in the IBSA (International Blind Sport Association) games.

Addressing assumptions surrounding the abilities of blind individuals is integral in popularising blind sport. Increasing public awareness of the sport, through education and exposure, these sports can become more accessible to blind individuals.

Systemic financial and infrastructural challenges hamper blind peoples' ability to fully participate and access sport.

11 Persona 1 Michael (1/2)

More about Michael

Interests

Playing blind tennis

Helping his blind tennis team to publicize and do outreach for the sport in order to gather more athletes to the team

Hanging out with teammates on the weekends

Influences

Has a visually impaired coach who he finds extremely inspiring and helpful

Finds the blind tennis club great for socialising

Michael's mum, who also was born blind, is always his greatest supporter

Goals

Representing Australia in Blind Tennis for IBSA

Making blind tennis more popular in mainstream media

To become good enough to gain a sponsor for himself to play blind tennis as tournaments and equipment are expensive

Needs and Tools

Needs assistance from family or a carer to get to the court

Uses blind tennis equipment like special ball and tactile floor lines.

Pain points and Frustrations

His club only gets a small amount of funding from the government which is not enough to support his own tennis journey.

Doesn't know how he is going to pay/get funding for his IBSA trip


Annoyed that blind sports aren't as publicized like mainstream sports and hence there are usually only a few spectators at his games

He can't practice every week because he relies on a family member to take him to the court.

Frustrated that sighted people assume he can't play tennis/be active

11 Persona 2 Anna(1/2)

Basic information



Anna

"Archetype"

- 54
- Office Worker
- Sydney Australia
- Recently Visually Impaired

Bio

Anna is a business worker, mother, and recently blind individual. Before she went blind she enjoyed running, cycling, yoga, and walking her dog. Due to a degenerative condition however, Anna is now transitioning to learning how to do these activities with impaired vision. She is having a hard time adjusting and feels somewhat isolated and saddened by the loss of her vision. She has also just gotten a carer through the NDIS who assists with relearning daily activities and transportation.

The interplay between sports and the emotions it elicits for blind individuals, is influential in motivating or discouraging their participation in sporting activities.

Blind individuals often need specific assistance and adaptations to engage with sports. This degree of assistance varies for each individual, and can either enable participation or can lead to over dependency.

More about Anna

Interests

Physical activity
like yoga and
walking

Learning and
engaging more
with the blind
community in her
town

Experimenting
with new tools for
the blind like her
new white cane
and audio
feedback
software

Influences

Her family has
tried to be super
supportive
through out
Anna's journey.
They encourage
her to continue to
do the things she
loves.

Her NDIS carer
has been helpful
in assisting Anna
in her transition

Petra, who Anna
met the first time
she attend her
blind walking
group, has been
helping to
educate Anna on
navigating the
city with her
cane.

Goals

To be able
continue being
physically active
like she was as a
sighted person

To find enjoyment
in physical
activity now as a
blind person

To feel confident
in doing daily
activities
independently

To learn more
about blind
sports and see
what other
options and
adjustments
there are

Needs and Tools

Uses audio assist
on phone to
navigate public
transport
schedule +
google maps

Access to online
visual impairment
communities to
assist in any
questions or
thoughts she has

Currently needs
more emotional
support and
education to help
adjust her
lifestyle

Relies heavily on
NDIS carer
currently as
everything is so
new

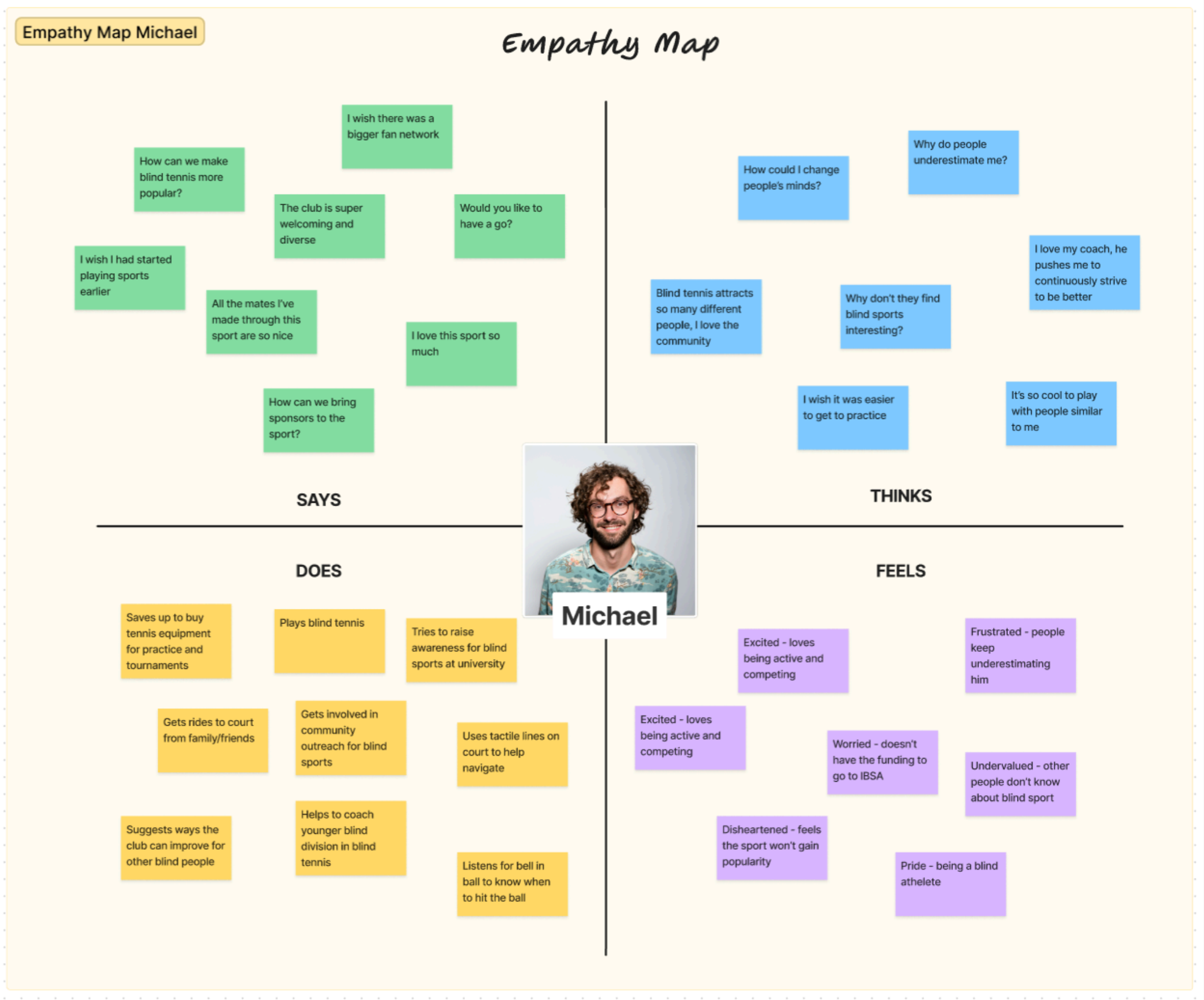
Pain points and Frustrations

Anna is anxious
about starting
new sports,
specifically she
feels as though
she'll embarrass
or injure herself

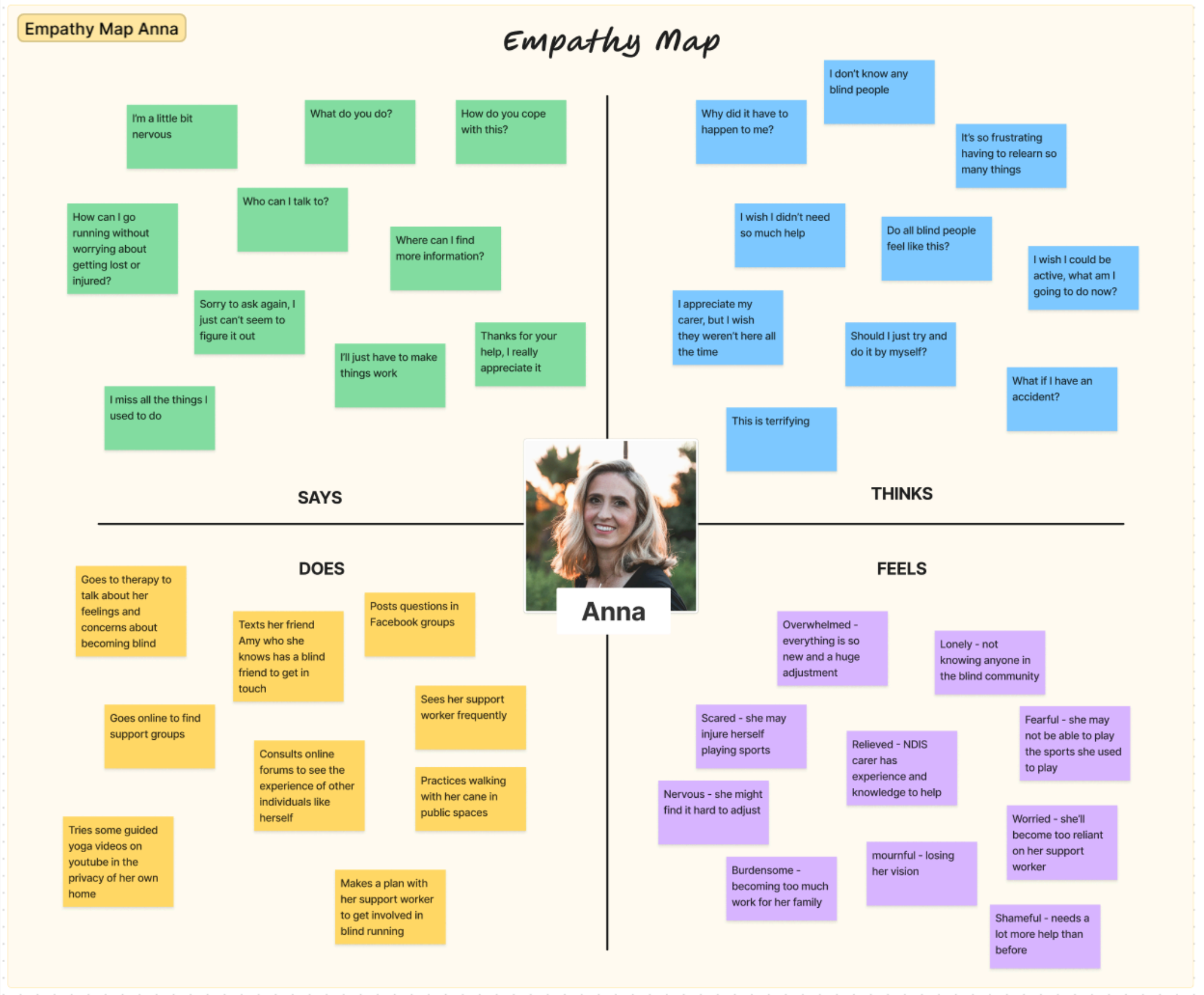
Anna is scared
that she may
become too
reliant on her
NDIS support
worker, and feels
she may get
stuck without
them

Anxious that
since she is new
to being blind and
the blind
community she
will have a hard
time fitting in

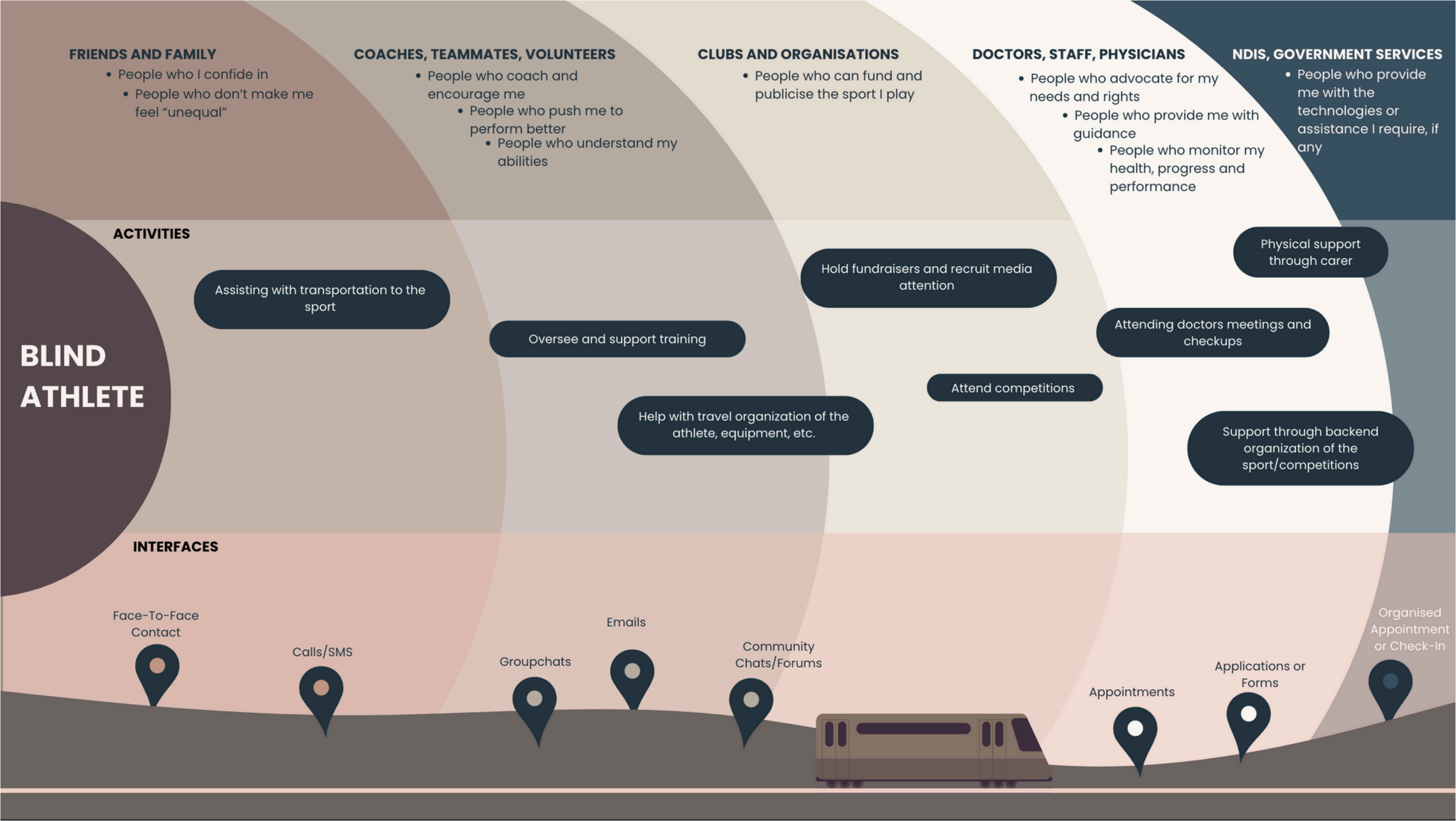
12 Empathy Map - Michael



12 Empathy Map - Anna



13 Detail of Network Map



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