Sport at TAS
Sport at TAS is about commitment, teamwork and enjoyment at all levels of competition. It’s not about whether we win or lose but how we play the game. While the thrill of competition and victory is an important part of playing any sport, our goal is to encourage within students a life-long interest in sport and fitness activities and pride in having done their best. Lessons learnt in sport (both good and bad) are transferable to other aspects of life and help to develop the crucial attribute of resilience. Whilst in sport it may seem at times as though the stakes are high, they are not that high in comparison to other important parts of our lives and sport is thereby the perfect vehicle to learn about ourselves. Sport teaches us to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat.

Sport is a major component of student life at TAS. At the primary school ages of 5-12 the main goals of the TAS Sport Programme are fun and enjoyment, skill development, commitment to the team and sportsmanship. The focus on competition and performance increases as students enter secondary school. An expectation of full participation in sport at TAS permeates all year levels, with the majority of our school sport carnivals attracting over 95% student participation.

TAS endeavours to provide students with a diverse range of sporting opportunities and offers a similar number of sporting teams overall to bigger schools (67 sport teams in 2014), which translates to more involvement and participation in sport by all students.

Some of the critical aspects of the sport programme which will be further explained herein include the range of world-class sporting facilities at the school, involvement in community sport and events, coaching expertise, hosting and participating in domestic and international sport tours and the hybrid school/community sport model that TAS implements.

The values, skills and habits learnt from a long school sport career at TAS can often be the beginning of something big – in both sport and life. Current and past TAS students have gone on to succeed in a range of sporting endeavours including being a water ski world champion, cycling in the Tour De France and representing Australia in BMX, motor racing, swimming, rugby and triathlon. A range of structured support programmes are also implemented to assist athletes in their pursuit of sporting excellence.
The major sports at TAS are hockey, rugby, swimming, football (soccer), netball, basketball and chess. Additional opportunities exist in the sports of track and field, cross-country, triathlon and aquathon, sailing, touch football, tennis, AFL, volleyball, golf and futsal. A range of other activities, including all those falling under the School Sport Australia umbrella, are offered as opportunities arise.
To provide our students with quality, consistent and year-round sporting opportunities, TAS enters sporting teams in local club competition. This hybrid, community sport model for school sport has many benefits for our students, including providing additional opportunities to represent the school and to interact with others from the school community. Many TAS students begin playing club sport for TAS at age 5 in kindergarten and continue until Year 12 in the U18 or open age group. Many of our clubs are also affiliated with senior clubs to afford a life-long sporting pathway. The school’s major sporting clubs include swimming, netball, hockey, rugby, football and triathlon.
The School’s pastoral care system is built around a vertical structure instead of a year-level-only format. Students becoming involved in house activities from kindergarten age and interhouse carnivals are viewed as a major component of school life and the sporting calendar by students, parents and staff. Primary students complete interhouse swimming, cross-country, athletics and aquathon events. Secondary students also compete against other houses in triathlon, debating, public speaking, cheering and singing. Participation is key and many of these large events attract a participation rate of close to 100%, which is the expectation.
Notwithstanding smaller student numbers than other schools, TAS consistently achieves high results in major sporting events. Since winning all major interschool sporting carnivals in 2008, TAS is consistently in the top two places in interschool swimming, cross-country and athletics. TAS prides itself again on having full participation in all of these carnivals, with many students achieving personal best performances at interschool events.

School pride is in plentiful supply at these events, with performances of the school war cry and team song and some additional motivation by the School’s sporting mascot, the TAS Titan.

Major interschool carnivals include swimming, athletics and cross-country for secondary students and athletics and cross country for primary students. Secondary interschool sport includes the JSS competition for years 7-9 and the CISSA competition for years 10-12. Both of these competitions are for boys and girls football, touch football, basketball and volleyball, girls’ netball and boys AFL. Several other opportunities exist to represent the school in sport, including Bill Turner Cup Football, Vicki Wilson and Fowler’s Cup Netball, Statewide knockout tennis, cricket and hockey competitions and primary gala days.
Representative Sport

TAS is heavily involved in representative sport at many levels. From hosting the State Cross Country Championships to convening the local district primary and secondary sport associations, TAS provides every opportunity for students to excel at their chosen sport. Students from TAS have represented at both state and national level in sports including swimming, rugby, hockey, netball, football, basketball, triathlon, athletics and cross-country.

Sport Tours

In recent years TAS teams have toured both New Zealand and Japan for Hockey, Rugby and Netball. Primary students have also participated in tours for hockey, football, netball and rugby. Many travelling teams choose to play games against TAS to experience the wonderful facilities (including a post-game swim in the middle of winter in our heated pool). Several teams visit each year to compete in rugby, netball and hockey matches.
World Class Facilities and Coaching

Sporting facilities across our two spacious, tropical campuses include a world-class aquatic centre with heated 50m x 25m pool, air-conditioned indoor sports stadium and fully-equipped gymnasium. Sporting fields and open spaces on the school grounds are numerous, with three outdoor netball and basketball courts, two tennis courts and a range of rugby, football and hockey fields. Our facilities are often used out of hours by a range of high-performance sporting teams, including the Australian Swimming Team and the Australian Rugby Union’s Junior Academy Programme.

Major sports are overseen by head coaches, with their role being to facilitate the development of all players and coaches. Our head coaches each have many years of playing and coaching experience, most having played at national or international level. Amongst our many coaching staff are several former Olympians and members of the Australian Wallabies and New Zealand Silver Ferns.
Community Involvement and Events

The TAS Sport Programme is heavily linked with the local community. Our major sporting clubs are open to all, not just TAS students, and results in participants experiencing myriad benefits. The School hosts and convenes several district and regional sporting events and has hosted prestigious state championship events such as cross-country. Staff are committed to assisting with district, regional and state level teams, with these teams often containing many of our students. School staff and parents also sit on various local sporting boards and committees.

The TAS Sport name, logo and colours are recognised widely in the community, with the TAS Sport facebook page attracting broad-ranging interest. Teams of students, parents and staff from TAS are seen regularly at events including the Cardiac Challenge Cairns to Cooktown Bike Ride, Great Wheelbarrow Race, Cairns Ironman Triathlon Festival, Run for Cairns, Great Pyramid Race and the Coral Coast Triathlon.
A major goal of the Sporting Programme at TAS is to foster a life-long interest in sport, fitness and physical activity. Activities programmes exist in both middle-years primary and all secondary year levels, whereby students must participate in a sport or activity each term. Students are therefore exposed to a range of opportunities that can be continued through an entire lifespan. These include triathlon, orienteering, dance, gym training, golf, sailing and mountain-biking. Several examples exist of past students who have taken up these sports more seriously during university and adult life, where the seed was initially planted during their time as a TAS student.
Athlete Development, Student Coaching and Officiating

To assist with athlete development, several additional sport clinics and holiday programmes are conducted each year. These intensive skill development sessions have been conducted in recent times for football, netball, hockey, rugby, swimming and triathlon. The demanding training schedule of elite athletes in the secondary school is factored into the athlete’s academic programme where possible.

Participation in sport is not just encouraged through actual playing, but also through coaching and officiating. Several high-level players in team sports such as football, hockey, touch-football, rugby, netball and basketball also enjoy officiated in their sport. These students get great satisfaction out of this and often find that their own performance in that sport increases due to a deeper understanding of the game. Several secondary students are also involved in coaching of a primary sport team. Often doing this in pairs and with an adult mentor close by, these students enjoy the chance to “give back” to their sport, which in many cases they began at age 5 at TAS.