

GSPDP/ITF TOUR

AUSTRALIAN TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIPS U/15

COACH REPORT

VENUE: KDV SPORT, GOLD COAST

DATES: 23/06 – 30/06 (includes travel days)

PLAYERS: COLITA HAKENA (PNG)

MIA CHANG (TAHITI)

ALALILO TEPA (TUVALU)

COACH: ABIGAIL TERE-APISAH (PNG)

ACCOMMODATION: ASHMORE PALMS HOLIDAY VILLAGE

The Australian Teams Championships commenced on the 25th of June with coaches and players from Pacific Oceania team arriving between the 22nd and 24th in Australia. The U/15 girls and boys delegation managed to spend a day and a half with our U/11 & U/13 teams whom were finishing up their week of tennis. It was especially comforting to see all the players & coaches again and to meet some whom I've not met before. The atmosphere was buzzing and loud for a day before all the players and coaches from week 1 started to depart.

Majority of players and coaches arrived on the 24th, with Colita the sole player arriving on the 25th. We were met with terrible rainy weather on the Monday (24th) so the camp run by Emily Burns of Tennis Australia was pushed back to Tuesday morning.

PACIFIC WOMEN & GIRLS IN TENNIS CAMP

The morning session was focused on purpose and perception. A solid session between Alalilo and Mia. I think it was also important to have Coach Doreen and Coach Matina join the sessions and to get a glimpse into the level of the older players and how this particular camp session was adapted to cater to the older players as opposed to the U/11 & U/13 groups from the previous week. Afternoon session was purely point based, to get the girls ready for match day. It was good to see great energy and a challenging comradery amongst the girls.



AUSTRALIAN TEAMS EVENT



DAY 1

Competition started with Pacific Oceania dealt with a double header against Victoria and Tasmania. It was a tough start to the event with the girls going down in the first tie 3-0. Mia's singles at the number 2 lineup was admirable as she took her opponent to the third set tie break. With a convincing and solid start to the tie break, leading 3-0, her opponent then picked up the intensity and managed to close out the set. Colita struggled to find her rhythm on court and there was a lot of errors coming off her racquet and ultimately just could not keep up with the fast pace and intensity of the match.

Doubles was positive, despite falling short in the third set.

Results (0-3)

1. Colita vs Aurelle Kostova 1-6, 2-6
2. Mia vs Bianca Hristov 3-6, 6-4, 4-10
3. Mia & Alalilo vs Isabel & Bianca 1-6, 7-6, 3-10

The match up against Tasmania was a little more even. Trailing 1-0 with Colita going down in her singles tie, Mia lead a set and 5-3 (40-0) before the momentum quickly switched up with her opponent saving three match points and coming back to win the match. Unfortunately, the energy and attitude on court from Mia was a little disappointing, even from the start of the match. She completely closed off and it was difficult to get her out of that state. There was a lot of complaining that she was in pain, but did not want to see a physio.

Things quickly turned around with Colita and Alalilo giving our team our first win of the event with a 7-5, 6-4 win against their opponents. The energy was electric on court from both girls and you could see they were having fun competing.

Results (1-2)

1. Colita vs Escher Case-Boag 1-6, 3-6

2. Mia vs Paige Jacobson 6-2, 5-7, 1-10
3. Colita/Alalilo vs Escher/Elle Richardson 7-5, 6-4

DAY 2

Pacific Oceania vs NSW

A dominating result from the players from NSW who did not give our girls any room to breathe. Alalilo stepped in at number 2 singles while Colita remained at the number 1 lineup. Mia's injury and blisters unfortunately proved to be bothersome so the decision was made to sit her out of the singles.

Results (0-3)

1. Colita vs Pavita Pansi 0-6, 4-6
2. Alalilo vs Ami Dalla Pozza 1-6, 1-6
3. Mia & Colita vs Ami & Pavita 2-6, 1-6

DAY 3

Pacific Oceania vs New Zealand

Again, a very dominating win from our opponents with clinical wins in both singles lineups. I would like to note that despite the scoreline, many of the games from both matches were very close and the girls created lots of opportunities for themselves. Unfortunately, during pressure situations, we just could not maintain the quality and back up the good points won.

Doubles was a huge confidence booster for the team with pairing of Colita and Alalilo playing some extremely solid doubles to top their NZ opponents in the third set tie break 11-9. The energy was positive and collaborative on the court and the match was even more sweeter that they won the match.

Results

1. Colita vs Yashwitha Reddy Thummala 1-6, 1-6
2. Mia vs Una Mistic 2-6, 2-6
3. Alalilo/Colita vs Yashwitha/ Dorea Morina

DAY 4

Pacific Oceania vs Northern Territory (3-0) (9th/10th position)

A great win from our girls to finish off the event with a 3-0 win against NT. Alalilo stepped in at number 2 with a clinical win against her opponent. After a very close 1st set win, Mia was on her way to close out her number 1 singles match before her opponent retired. The dynamic duo of Colita and Alalilo finished off with a solid 6-0, 6-1 win in the doubles.

Results

1. Mia vs Christina Prete 6-4, 3-1 (ret)
2. Alalilo vs Ashlyn Grigg 6-2, 6-2
3. Alalilo/Colita vs Ashlyn/Grace Harris 6-0, 6-1

Conclusion

It was especially important that the girls finished the week on a positive with the win against Northern Territory. It was also an important week to see where our players stood against the best players in Australia & New Zealand. It was quite evident that we need to strengthen certain areas of our games to be able to compete well against these players.

Suggestions: Areas to work on

1. Individually building 1 or some weapons: The girls were solid on the baseline but don't quite have anything attacking in their game that they can be most confident on to really put pressure. Game styles are solid but **neutral**. I would have liked to have seen more proactiveness behind certain balls that were landing inside the baseline. More often than not, they would just wait on slower balls and play a neutral ball back.
2. Improving mid-court/transition game: Too often I noticed the girls were a little hesitant transitioning inside the court and it was more so because they were not fully confident with their volleys. Spending more time working on approaches, volleys & taking balls on the rise to build their confidence. I also think incorporating a lot of doubles style sessions can really be effective.
3. Serve percentage: This was a big area that let the girls down in many instances/situations. Service percentage was low across the board and variety was minimal. I think if they can allocate more time working on targets and consistency, this should give them more opportunity to be dictate the points.
4. Speed and agility: Need to work on movement to help them when they are defending. I also think having better court recovery positions and anticipation can further help them get to shots quicker.
5. Mental Competitiveness: I find this to be a big area that sets a part our pacific players and players outside of the Oceania region.

It was great to work with Coach Krishneel for the first time, the week was very collaborative and I look forward to more opportunities to work together in the future. I'm happy to share that I felt a lot more confident and comfortable on court during matches with the players this time around than I did two years ago and I strongly believe a lot of it stems from learning on these tours over the last two years.