



Section 3.11 Fundraising Ideas

CALCUTTAS - What is a Calcutta?

In a *Calcutta* participants bid, auction style, on the team who they think will win the tournament (you can bid on your own team or yourself). All the money raised through the auction goes into an auction pool. At the end of the tournament, those who bet on the teams who reach the finals (or possibly the semi-finals) of the tournament receive a pre-determined payout from the auction pool. For example the owner of the winning team could receive 35% of the pool, the owner of the finalist 20% and the owner of the semi-finalists 10%, leaving 25% of the pool for as the balance. The balance of the pool goes to the cause for which the funds are being raised.

Using the Calcutta as a tennis fundraiser

To use the calcutta idea for a fundraiser a tournament would be organized, usually it would use a single elimination draw format with 16 doubles teams. In order to raise as much money as possible, it is important to have the doubles teams be as equal as possible – this could be achieved by pairing the strongest player with the weakest and so on – or it could be done by a draw of some kind and even a handicap of some kind could be given to teams. Also in order to raise the probability of all teams having a chance of coming through and thus having a good auction value, the draw should be completely random with no seeding – thus the two theoretically strongest teams might meet in the first round opening up the draw for all teams to have a better chance of being in the winning.

The auction takes place after the teams have been put together but before the tournament draw is made.

Players in the tournament should be asked to pay an entry fee which would go to the fundraising cause.

In order to get the players and supporters to loosen their purse strings, the auction should be held at some social event with refreshments the evening before the tournament is played. If possible players should be encouraged to talk up their chances of winning.

The players might receive prizes or a trophy for winning the event. A raffle or silent auction might also be held at the social event to generate more funds.

At a calcutta held to raise money for a school tennis team the players were auctioned off as partners for club players. There was a high demand among club members for the opportunity to play with the young and talented athletes and so the player auction generated more than the calcutta auction.



Pro-Ams/Celebrity Tournament

In a pro am or celebrity tournament the participants pay to play with the pro or celebrity. This can be a specific amount, can be by auction or can be according to the sponsorship dollars pledged.

In the case of a pro-am a round robin or compass format will probably be used so that people keep playing but still there will be a winner.

Money can be raised from spectators or other activities – dinners, auctions, raffles, sponsorship etc. as well.

Exhibition Matches

Exhibition matches can be used as another way of bringing together a crowd of spectators, either for a fee or with an expectation that they will “spend” on other fundraising efforts taking place at the same time. Of course in the best exhibition matches the players will make the play as entertaining as they can, interacting with the crowd, playing trick shots and players can even wear microphones and amuse the crowd with their comments.

MARATHONS

A relatively new way of fundraising for tennis is to have a marathon. One professional, Stan Palmateer of Mimico tennis club has been successfully running a 24 hour tennis marathon for more than 10 years in aid of Cancer Research.

Basically he undertakes to play tennis for 24 hours. He gets people to simply sponsor him, he gets people to “sponsor” him and play with him for a period of time. He encourages people to come along and encourage him – provide refreshments, sing along to a guitar etc. and generally have a good time while supporting his efforts. Of course this marathon requires that the club lights be on all night so he makes sure the neighbours understand what, when and why this will take place.

Another kind of marathon could be to have “teams” of players undertake to play 100 games of tennis. This could be run as a round robin and the teams could switch players in and out. To play 100 games would take between 8 and 10 hours. Again team would get sponsorships and the organizers would provide refreshments and watching space etc.

Of course with marathons, as any other fundraising event, the marathon is the excuse to get people together and raise money in other more traditional ways – bake sales, raffles, garage sale, silent auction etc.