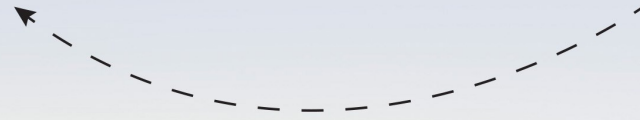


THE PLAYER JOURNEY

PATHWAY → TRAIN → PLAY (LOOP)



OVERVIEW

The Player Journey was developed to highlight areas where people can enter and travel through two identified softball pathways: the Community Pathway, and the Competitive Pathway.

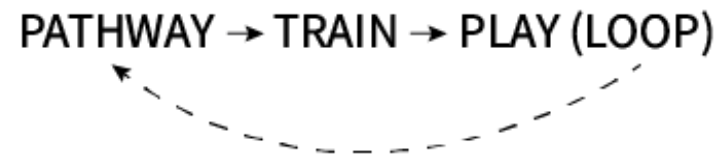
The Community Player includes the recreational and participation layer, while the Competitive Player caters for those wishing to perform and excel in softball.

The pathways are separate but connected allowing participants the ability to change paths depending on their needs and stages of life.

To gain a clearer understanding of the user experience, insights from targeted audiences were gathered and analysed.

The purpose of this document is to help arm coaches and administrators meet the needs of all participants playing on the two identified pathways.

Regardless of motivation, ability levels, or preferred pathway , players should enjoy a high-quality experience at they travel on their softball journey.



Pathway – Train – Play (Loop) is the process by which participants identify their pathway, commit to training and playing the game of softball.

Pathway = Is where the participant chooses the desired pathway and stage meeting their needs at a particular time in their life.

Train = Is where the participant is challenged allowing them to meet their softball objectives.

Play (Loop) = Is where the participant enjoys the game at their desired level. At the completion of the play cycle the participant loops back to the decision-making process of choosing the pathway that's right for them.

COMMUNITY PLAYER

The Community Player is categorised into two groups, Recreational and Participation.

Recreational

The Recreational pathway provides informal, flexible opportunities to take part in the game. It is where players may access softball for the first time, so engaging them in fun activities that ignites a passion is key at this stage. Players can learn the basics of softball here but mainly they are focused on enjoyment and providing physical exercise.

In the earlier stages, the recreational Player wants to learn the fundamental skills of softball with a focus on enjoyment and physical exercise.

The Community Player wants to challenge themselves mentally and physically, both in a team environment and as an individual.

The Community Player has a desire for high quality opportunities to play, develop and enjoy softball at any stage of life.

Participation

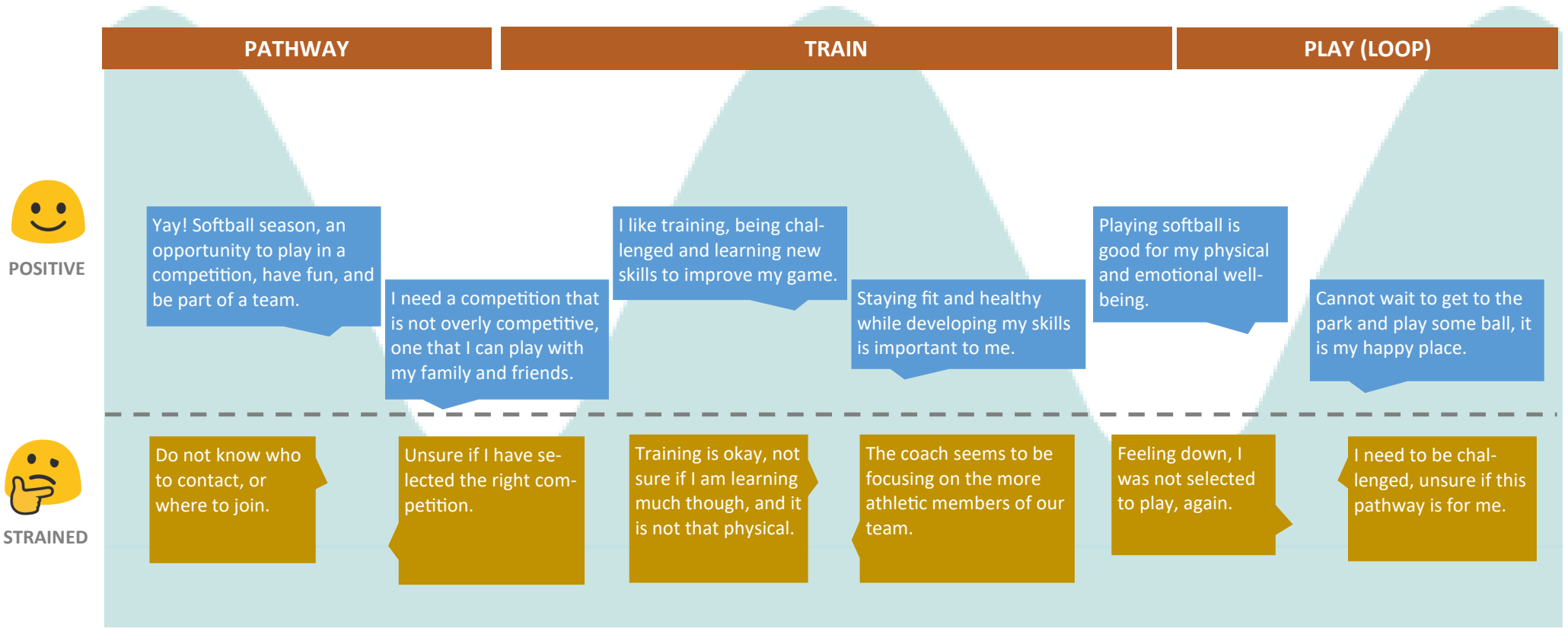
The nature of the participation player will vary and have different motives – some will want to develop to the best of their abilities while others will play for enjoyment and social reasons. Therefore, the participation player requires high quality opportunities to meet their own needs.

The Participation player often requires informal and flexible opportunities.

The Participation player may also wish to change pathways and move to the competitive pathway.



THE COMMUNITY PATHWAY



PATHWAY OPPORTUNITIES

- ◆ Softball provides a pathway for life. One that evolves as it needs to, is enjoyed by all those who connect with the game in any capacity.
- ◆ Softball is a team and family game, a sport for both genders where young people can learn new skills and have fun.
- ◆ Quality coaches focus on developing individuals to realise their potential, provide a quality user experience.
- ◆ Quality coaches provide programmes that offer learning and development opportunities.
- ◆ Softball aligns to the Balance is Better movement and supports fair and equal opportunities.
- ◆ Softball offers a pathway for those that wish to play at a community or competitive level. Players can interchange as they need.

COMPETITIVE PLAYER

The Competitive Player is categorised into two groups, Perform and Excel.

Perform

The Competitive Player seeks a higher level of competition, one that focuses on developing softball-specific skills, is fun but includes more competitive aspects of the game.

The competitive environment can include individualised training and performance competitions.

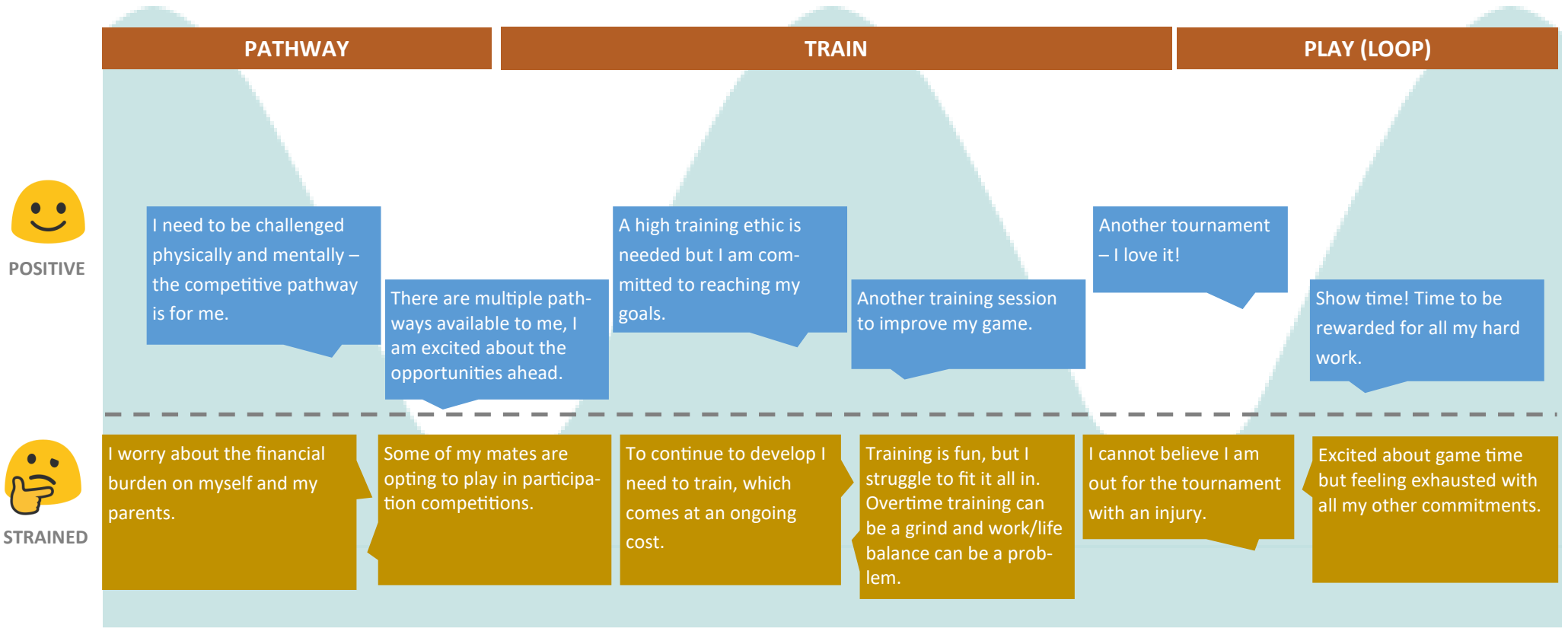
Competitive Players need challenged, enhancing their opportunity of further development. Players in this realm require environments where they can physically, technically, and mentally develop, increasing their decision-making. Players operating within this pathway should accumulate higher quality, purposeful practice environments.

Excel

Excel provides a number of committed and talented players specialised development programmes. Personal development is central but excellence in the form of high level performance, with the ultimate goal of “Winning at Worlds Cups” is the driving force. Players selected to partake in this pathway will aim to achieve national representative honours. The pathway is centred on the concept of “best with best” where the goal is to ensure that our best players are always playing with and against the best players. The quality of provision is of the highest standard, with quality coaches providing the quality environments to play in.



THE COMPETITIVE PATHWAY



PATHWAY OPPORTUNITIES

- ◆ US Scholarships can provide an exceptional education and life opportunity for young women.
- ◆ The pathway provides inspiration and a goal for those that aspire to play at a higher level.
- ◆ Pay to play can be difficult in many ways. However, it provides athletes with an appreciation for money and ability to manage their finances.
- ◆ Education on life balance is important for players, parents, and coaches.
- ◆ Being talented provides opportunities to play for various teams, and travel domestically and internationally.
- ◆ A strong work ethic is a positive reflection on the athlete and the sport.



COMMUNITY & COMPETITIVE COMPETITIONS

COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL Local Competition	COMMUNITY PARTICAPTION Association Competition
Adult Arena Evergreens Slow-Pitch	SENIOR (Adult) Club Leagues FASTBALL 45
13-18 years Arena Over The Line Softball Slow-Pitch *FASTBALL 45	YOUTH (13-18 years) Club & College Leagues Softball *FASTBALL 45
9-12 years Arena Play Ball Intermediate SlowPitch45 Intermediate FASTBALL45	ROOKIE SOX (9-12 years) Club & School Teams *Softball *FASTBALL 45
5-8 years Arena	TEE SOX (5-8 years) Club & School Teams Skills Development (TBC) Recommended Games (TBC)
0-4 years N/A	SMALL SOX (0-4 years) Skills Development (TBC) Recommended Games (TBC)

*Or version/s of – TBC.

COMPETITIVE PERFORM National Competition	COMPETITIVE EXCEL International Competition
SENIOR National Fastpitch Championship Open Men’s Clubs Open Women’s Clubs FASTBALL 45	SENIOR Black Sox White Sox U23 Major Sox Men’s
YOUTH U19 National Boys U19 National Girls U17 National Boys Little League New Zealand U17 Girls National Secondary Schools	YOUTH NCAA (US College) U18 Junior Black Sox U18 Junior White Sox U15 Developing Sox Boys U15 Developing Sox Girls

SOFTBALL NZ PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

HIGH PERFORMANCE	EXCEL Player autonomy is refined	MASTERY Morals and ethics are of the highest stand	
PERFORMANCE 19+ Years	ENHANCE Learning, competing	PERFORM Socially motivated, develop player autonomy	
DEVELOPMENT 13-18 Years	PARTICIPATE, COMPETE & DEVELOP Fun, Participation, Learning & Competing		
FOUNDATION 0-4, 5-8, 9-12 Years	PLAY Fun & Active	DISCOVER Fun & participation	LEARN Fun & Mastery of Basic Softball Skills