



Experiential Learning on Tour

Creating authentic learning experiences at benchmark events

Women in High Performance Coaching



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AIS HP Coach Development ELP Grant \$8k



8-month learning program



**Dedicated Mentor Funding
Two 1-day workshops**



**3 Cohorts conducted
26 Women, 6 Men**

Aim and Objectives

The Experiential Learning Program (ELP) was designed as an initiative (within the Women in High Performance Coaching Project) to facilitating an authentic, workplace-based experiential learning experience during international benchmark tournaments.

The aims of the ELP were to support coaches to:

- Identify roles and responsibilities on tour,
- Identify bespoke learning needs and develop a learning plan,
- Utilise mentorship to enhance learning,
- Enhance communication and confidence and,
- Develop and enhance reflective practices to make sense of the learning experience.

Description

Softball Australia nominated Amanda “Reggie” Fairley to apply for the ELP, as part of her selection to lead the Australian U15 Girls team to compete at the WBSC World Cup.

The lead-up involved a structured three-month program with weekly state-based HP Hub trainings. Because the athletes did not meet as a full team until flying out of Sydney, connection was intentionally built online through culture work, standards education, interviews, and shared activities. At the event, Australia finished 8th overall, showing resilience and growth. Highlights included taking the USA to seven innings and closing with a strong win over Italy for a total of four wins from eight games.



Program Format

Selection:

- EOI application by the NSO/D on behalf of a coach.

Format:

- 1-day pre-tour workshop
- Dedicated Tour Plan, reflective skills
- Tour Mentor
- 1-day post-tour workshop

Facilitators:

- AIS HP Coach Development Team and support coaches
- Individual Mentor

Evaluation:

- Survey post workshop 2
- Individual story graphic

Coach Outcomes and Impact

In the second workshop, Reggie reported back to the group on three key areas:

1. Learning outcomes from observing other coaches on tour,
2. The outcome of reflective mentor conversations, and
3. The impact her coaching philosophy and values.

She shared reflections on how the tour strengthened her belief in long-term athlete development, the importance of teaching standards, and the role of calm, adaptable leadership. She highlighted how culture is built daily, how preparation reduces emotion, and how athlete care is central to performance. She also emphasized the impact of staff collaboration and the power of ongoing reflection throughout a campaign.



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Recommendations

- Provide opportunities to gain experience at international benchmark events, with planned opportunities and clear learning outcomes.
- Design a clear tour plan with goals, success measures and debrief points to support coaches make sense of the experience and relate this to past experiences.
- Build reflective skills to support coaches to reflect before, during and after the event.
- Fund access and equip mentors to support women coaches on tour.
- A strong connection between the coach and a long term learning plan optimises the experience.

Application for others

Providing opportunities for international tour experience works best when event access is paired with deliberate learning design.

Tour plans, mentor guidance and peer reflection help coaches convert experience into action.

A strong connection between the coach, mentor and organisational support optimises the impact upon coach progression.

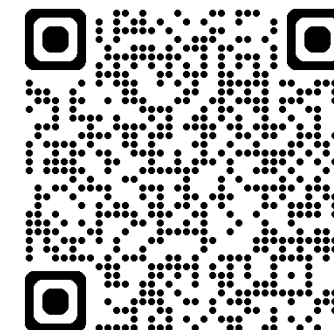
The “rich picture story” captures the 8-month journey and becomes a reusable reflection tool.



Reggie's Tour Story

VIDEO from Tour

<https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1DBCD8DuE5/>





Reggie's Journey



Teacher / Coach

Coaching Pathway
and SA Athletes

2019

ELP Workshop 1

Selected to U15
WSBC Coaching Team

June '25

U/15 World Cup, Milan

Head Coach

June '25

ELP Workshop 2

Head Coach U16
Team

Mar '26

2026

U15 Girls World Cup

Head Coach, Oceania Qualifier in
American Samoa





This tour reinforced the value of process-driven coaching, clear preparation, and calm leadership in international environments. Observing global best practice highlighted the impact of clarity, consistency, and strong staff collaboration on athlete performance and behaviour. The experience strengthened my commitment to long-term athlete development, role clarity, and building resilient, values-led teams that can adapt and compete under pressure.