

Stuart's passion for basketball began in 1979 when he spent a year as an AFS Exchange Student at a high school in Minnesota, USA.

There, he had the privilege of playing under an inspiring coach who led his team to third place in the Minnesota State Championships—a remarkable achievement for his school.

Upon returning to New Zealand, he continued to play competitively in Feilding and Palmerston North. When his daughters began playing basketball in primary school around 2000, he took on the role of coaching their school team, finding that his USA playbook proved quite useful.

Stuart's first representative role came as assistant coach and manager for the U20 men's team under Kevin Smith, around 2005. They attended a tournament in Auckland, and while the toughest challenge was keeping the team out of the bottle store, they made it to the court ready to play.

Later, he coached the U16 women's representative team for two years, followed by the U12 boys' team for another two years. The first boys' team he coached was talented and performed well, though the next year presented some challenges.

These experiences eventually led to roles with BBNZ national teams. Stuart served as team manager on three Koru Tours and continued to various Australian tournaments with the NZ U16 and U17 men's teams, and the U20 women's team coached by Tania Hunter. Tania was initially concerned about his cooking skills, but the team enjoyed his lasagne enough to request it again!

Throughout these years, Stuart also served as treasurer for Basketball Manawatu. As is often the case, they faced challenges with fundraising and financial goals, but they achieved success in growing participation, competitions, events, and representative team accomplishments.

Since stepping down from the board, Stuart has continued assisting with the association's end-of-year reports and is happy to continue as long as he is needed.

Basketball has been his chosen sport, and he has enjoyed every role he has had. While Stuart may not have been an elite player, coach, or administrator, it's been a lot of fun.