



Adapting Your Aquatic Sport Pool into a 'Pool' of Fun

Six ways to get creative with your pool programs.

In the world of campus recreation, there's often a need to utilize water spaces that were originally intended for athletics. These pools are commonly rectangular bodies of water that may have water depths not ideal for floor-based activities so commonly done by campus recreation aquatic users. However, a little ingenuity combined with creative programming can easily turn your competitive pool into a pool of fun.

DIVING BOARDS AND JUMPING PLATFORMS

While many facilities are removing their diving boards, we encourage you to keep them or perhaps even re-install them – this assumes your pool depth and shape meets the applicable code requirements. Diving springboards and platforms offer a lot of recreational value, as well as a different experience for each swimmer, depending on their ability. Most patrons are not competitive divers, but many will welcome the opportunity to experience a little “cliff” diving. A jumping platform can be different than the platforms used for competitive diving. There are no specific

dimensional requirements, but the pool depths must be appropriate for the equivalent height of the diving platform.

ZIP LINES Speaking of features that can share the three-meter diving platform, zip lines can add a lot to your facility. Other than a secure place to anchor the cable and a tall platform – approximately six to 10 feet – a zip line doesn't require much equipment. They don't require a large footprint of deck or pool space, nor do they obscure sightlines as do some of the larger pool features.

CLIMBING WALLS Climbing walls also come with a water depth and clear space requirement, but if you have the space, go big. Climbing walls offer a fun experience across a wide range of ages. Consider installing two climbing walls to add a competitive aspect to your facility, with climbers racing one another to the top.

INFLATABLE OBSTACLE COURSES Not every pool has enough space to contain this much excitement, but your 50-meter pools do, and in some cases a short

course fits in a 25-meter or yard pool as well. Inflatable obstacle courses offer the experience of climbing, running and jumping, all while racing friends along the way. Obstacle courses also lend themselves well to tournaments or obstacle course “Olympics.”

WATER BASKETBALL AND VOLLEYBALL

Water basketball and volleyball are classic swimming pool activities. Either is a low-cost addition that can be provided at almost any pool. Swimmers will enjoy playing games or just shooting hoops.

RECREATIONAL AQUATIC SPORTS LEAGUES AND TOURNAMENTS

Many of the above activities can be transformed into a league, tournament or even a one-day event. Cannonball contests, climbing wall races, obstacle course tournaments, basketball and volleyball tournaments, or water polo or underwater hockey can all be established activities. Whether you create a regular league, or promote and host a one-day event, these events can draw in new swimmers of all types. Offering small prizes throughout the summer will keep them coming back for more. However, bragging rights may be the best prize of all.

So, there you have it. Utilize some of these ideas that can adapt your traditional aquatic sport pool into a 'pool' of fun.

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