

TRENDS

Columbia Participation Levels - Analysis

Adult Sports

The number of adult sports participants across the board has decreased in the past 5 - 10 years. The last few years have produced relatively steady participation figures. Men's and women's participation decreased slightly, while co-rec participation increased. It is anticipated co-rec participation will continue to increase as baby-boomers loose competitive zeal and focus more on the social aspect of recreational sports. In addition to this, many adults focus their time and energy on their children's participation in sports.

Individual sports such as weight training, running, and biking are becoming increasingly popular; whereas, families are recreating more as groups.

Youth Sports

Most areas of group youth sports have increased. This is reflected by heavy use of city athletic facilities. However, there has been a surge in extreme sports in the past few years. Columbia is not immune from this trend, as evidenced by the very popular Skateboard Park.

Community Recreation

The recreation needs of the Central Columbia area are many. Access to good quality recreational programs along with collaborations with other agencies is crucial to combating the problems faced by these participants. In addition to positive recreational outlets, there is a great need for a variety of services related to improving social and economic conditions. The Douglass Athletic Association has co-sponsored several programs for the youth and is interested in offering more. The goal of the Association is to give the youth positive recreational experiences in an athletic setting. A variety of recreational programs include positive messages for the youth, such as, drug awareness and resistance, building improved peer relationships, avoiding teen pregnancy, etc.

Aquatics

The increase in participation figures reflect an on-going national trend in this area. After renovation in 1999, participation at the Oakland Family Aquatic Center doubled from 1998. Good weather was also a contributing factor to the 1999 increase. Usage remains at 33% over the pre-renovation figures since the peak in 1999. Due to its 2001 renovation, Lake of the Woods Pool experienced a 42% increase from the previous four-year average.

In general, the national trend in aquatics is toward family aquatic centers, complete with water slides, lazy rivers, water play features, comfortable locker rooms, concessions, and other amenities which cater to the family. These facilities are capable of creating positive revenue streams as their play value remains high.

Golf

Golf has been experienced a decline nationally, and the figures in Columbia reflect that trend. According to Golf DataTech, the West-North-Central Region experienced a decline of 5.1% in rounds played for the year 2001.

The National Golf Foundation has estimated the following:

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
# of Golfers	27.8 million	26.7 million
# of Golf Courses	13,951	17,108

As evidenced by the above, the number of golfers decreased during this 10-year period while the number of golf courses increased by over 22%. This translates into fewer rounds per course. At the time of this report, this has been the experience in Columbia.

Other notable figures for municipal golf courses:

National Average Green Fee with Cart	\$36.00
Columbia’s Average Green Fee with Cart	\$25.61

Senior, Adapted, and Life Enrichment Programs

These programs as a whole show continued growth. Popular activities include inter-generational programs and life enrichment classes. It is anticipated these programs will continue to grow as more baby boomers hit retirement age.