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STREET RACKET FOR ACTIVE COMMUNITIES!

PRÄVENTION, SPASS UND SPIEL:
KINDER UND JUGENDLICHE
IM FOKUS DES MONATS APRIL
PRÉVENTION, FUN ET JEU:
LES ENFANTS ET LES JEUNES AU
CENTRE DE L'ÉDITION D'AVRIL
PREVENZIONE, DIVERTIMENTO E
GIOCO: BAMBINI E GIOVANI AL
CENTRO DEL NUMERO DI APRILE

Street Racket stands for healthy kids - and an active community

Street Racket can be played both indoors and outdoors and offers an array of exciting activities, forming a diverse range of competitive games and areas of use. The association Street Racket supports communities with the introduction of Street Racket.



Real play instead of online gaming, preferably in the fresh air: The Swiss Street Racket concept is great for our health -- young and old and for the whole community! Bild: Hansjörg Egger

What do today's adults hope for the younger generations? Perhaps some of the following: healthy, active, educated, creative, committed, fair, open, self-confident, mature as well as physically and socially competent children. The children are equipped for life, motivated for the future, with intact dreams and the belief that they will hopefully come true. For the makers of Street Racket, the new Swiss movement and education concept, precisely these values are the ones that matter and are promoted on a daily basis. Street Racket contributes by developing its positive effects in a simple, playful, communal and sustainable way.

«Anyone - anytime - anywhere»

Street Racket can be played both indoors and outdoors and offers many exciting forms of play. It can be played individually, in pairs or in smaller and larger groups.

Immediate feelings of success for all ages and levels are guaranteed due to steady and rhythmic flow, which is enormously important for the motivated and sustained promotion of movement and regular activity. All coordinative skills are trained and the players become more competent, in terms of both movement sequences and body awareness. Street racket therefore also functions in a preventive manner: increased action safety, which goes far beyond playing with the ball. The playing fields are scalable and are adaptable to any available space. Apart from a hard and reasonably flat surface, no infrastructure is required. Taking into consideration all the above mentioned advantages, this is how Street Racket can quickly establish itself everywhere in the community. Be it in leisure activities, in family life, in the working world, in associations, at events, in public spaces and of course in schools.

The introduction and implementation of this diverse sport to the community often occurs through school sports and the education sector. Children and young people take the ideas and applications home with them, to their (sports) club, to their neighbourhood and of course to the playground. They can invent new forms of play and turn their immediate, familiar, safe environment into a playground. This makes Street Racket something others can see and experience. Playing can commence at the bat of an eye and you can participate without any previous knowledge. Activities for all age groups are also possible at any time. Intensity, complexity and degree of difficulty are infinitely adaptable so that everyone is encouraged and challenged to a meaningful and successful degree. Through improved degrees of movement, participation in the overall culture can be made possible. Just two main rules ensure that there are long rallies from the beginning. Hard blows and use of strength are not permitted.

Both the «Smash», i.e. the direct downplay of a ball, and the «Volley», i.e. the direct play, are not allowed. Street Racket is not about scoring fast points, but about staying in the game. This gives Street Racket its own rhythmic flow, which is ideal for mixed teams such as girls and boys, young and old, beginners and advanced players. It is often difficult putting teams together in a fair way due to the varying abilities and levels of strength.

From the Caribbean island of Dominica...

The idea for Street Racket was born abroad, during a charitable mission of the founding couple Rahel and Marcel Straub. Table tennis was being introduced, during an aid mission for the promotion of school sports on the Caribbean island of Dominica, however, there weren't any table tennis tables when they arrived. Without further hesitation, the activities were transferred to an alternative surface:

What is Street Racket?

The ball game from Bäretswil (ZH) is not a new kind of sport in the figurative sense, but a versatile, multi-award-winning movement concept for everyone that can be played anywhere and at any time. The association Street Racket is dedicated to spreading this concept around the world.

The racket sport can have an enormously positive effect on the development of motor skills in a playful way. Hardly any other discipline performs as many unique and complex actions every second. No ball has the same height, speed or position as the one before or after – the player is therefore constantly challenged to find the best solution. Body and mind work closely and quickly together. Thanks to the adapted playing speed, the player has a chance of succeeding from the beginning. And the best thing about the game is: This kind of «training» is a lot of fun.

Street Racket is supposed to be a chance for:

- more exercise and a healthier lifestyle
- a bigger sense of community
- the development of motor skills
- the development of more self-esteem and a feeling of belonging
- meaningful and active leisure activities
- more quality of life
- creativity

Street Racket is ideal for less:

- inactivity
- obesity
- diabetes
- myopia
- social isolation and exclusion
- boredom
- digital consumption

Material

The game is played with simple wooden rackets and specially developed juice balls. The balls absorb very little moisture, are hardly susceptible to wind and are very durable. They are ideal for all indoor and outdoor activities. The official game set includes 2 rackets, 2 balls, chalk and the game instructions - all packed in a practical sports bag for easy handling. For schools and clubs as well as larger groups, there are 24 and 12-piece sets in the larger sports bag.

In addition to the «black collection» there is also a «classic collection». These rackets are handmade by sheltered workshops in Switzerland. The exclusive team racket is also produced by the sheltered workshops. Two players can operate this racket with two grips at the same time, a completely new and valuable experience of movement. The rackets can also be made by the players themselves, as shown in the photo below left, for example in handicraft lessons.

Courses

Street-Racket introductory courses and workshops can be adapted to the time and space available or to the interests of the specific parties. The courses range from 45 minutes game instruction to whole day seminars to the organisation of sports weeks.



the ground. There are in fact playable surfaces everywhere, so it was all a great success. Adjustments were made to the field structures, the rules of the game and finally also to the playing material, but thanks to their innovative thinking, a great idea was born.

... **Back in Bäretswil in the Zurich Oberland** In the three years following the trip, the concept gradually developed to what it is today. At the Street Racket home base, in the tranquil Bäretswil in the Zurich Oberland, almost everyone knows the game by now. The children and young people are the ambassadors; they got to know Street Racket through sports lessons. Co-founder Marcel Straub, a trained sports teacher and former top athlete, has conducted several workshops with the team of

teachers and has paid special attention to age-appropriate content.

Learning through movement

An important part of the concept is learning through movement i.e. the incorporation of movement in the learning process in order to enable the additional active units that are so important for children and young people in everyday school life. Children can find it very difficult to sit still all day. The ability to concentrate, self-motivate and above all the quality of learning are remarkably improved by regular active sequences. By incorporating the entire teaching staff as well as the representatives of care services, psychomotricity and social work, the team-oriented introductions are therefore also worked on in an interdisciplinary

Way. All this is done in harmony with the curriculum of the 21st century: mathematics, languages, general knowledge - the children can practice mental arithmetics, number series, conjugations, inventing stories, practicing vocabulary, countries, colours and shapes. The games are mostly played in pairs or small groups, accompanied by a positive and absolutely winning atmosphere and soundscape. Thanks to the incorporation of movement, the important intake of more oxygen to the bloodstream is also enabled and the kids benefit by tiring less quickly and being able to concentrate for longer periods of time. The rhythm of the ball helps accelerate thought processes and improves the flow of spoken languages. All motor skills play an important part in the Street Racket game. Street Racket is also proven to help avoid bad eyesight.

We continuously stare into digital devices at the same visual distance for longer periods of time; the change from peripheral to focused vision when tracking the ball is therefore a very welcome and necessary change. The fact that Street Racket can help correct reading difficulties has been confirmed by experts. «More and more often Street Racket is being incorporated into the classroom. With minimal effort, numerous positive effects can be achieved, which are not only a benefit for the school, but for the community as a whole», says Rolf Nussbaum, the headmaster of the school in Bäretswil

Adapting to the requests of the communities

In Bäretswil, permanent Street Racket courts adorn the schoolyards and enrich a range of activities on offer, without the need for maintenance, storage, permits, construction measures or logistics. The municipalities can either set up the courts themselves or contact the Street Racket Association. The Street Racket courts are offered at special sports promotion prices.

The colour, size and orientation can be chosen freely, and the type of courts can also be adapted to the requests of each community: Single field, cross field, wall field or other playing structures from the Street Racket palette. Children in Switzerland have to pass a bike exam. The practical part of the exam is done on permanently laid out tracks. These tracks are particularly ideal for Street Racket as they provide three circles, into which three different sized cross fields can be placed. This area is already designated for activities but is relatively rarely used.

Thanks to the new offer, an entire school class or a larger group can easily use it for Street Racket.

Unobtrusive designs and easy measurements

The playing fields are drawn with street chalk, chalk spray or adhesive tape for short term use. Fixed courts can either be created with street paint or other suitable design elements. For example, when designing public spaces with different coloured stones, the lines can be highlighted. In this way, a very discreet and at first glance hardly visible, movement-friendly living, working and educational environment is created on the village square, in the pedestrian zone, on the industrial site or in front of the community center. A standard field measures 2x6 m, each of the three characteristic squares measure 2x2 m. However, the courts are scalable and amendable to any space. Smaller courts make higher demands on fine motor skills, while larger courts mean more range of motion and intensity.

Extracurricular activities

Street Racket is also used and appreciated in many extracurricular activities. The people of Bäretswil were introduced to Street Racket for example on Health Day or at events in the public library. The public library, an important communal area in Bäretswil, stocks a wide range of street racket material - the permanent fields of the school are just next door. So apart from borrowing a DVD or book, you can also play a round of Street Racket with family and friends. Sports clubs are also involved and include Street Racket in their training concept. It helps the development of a strong team and promotes interactive communication.

Local Hockey clubs use Street Racket on the ice, and local ski clubs can also apply the concept on the snow.

Street Racket is suitable for youth work, as the Bäretswiler example of MOJUGA (mobile youth work) shows. Youth worker Pasqual Zurbuchen: «The introduction by the Street Racket team was great fun and the kids were very enthusiastic. We are happy to take advantage of the offer, in the sports hall as well as in other projects such as the «Spielmobil» and other meeting places for young people. The creative approach fits in beautifully with our goals, which include the development of self-confidence».

Examples from other communities

The municipality of Uzwil, winner of the Coop Gemeindeduell 2018, has invested its prize money in the promotion of physical activity: All schools benefited from a Street Racket introduction including a class set of game materials. Communities with little or no funds for sports infrastructure and exercise space can apply for a holistic, free Street Racket implementation from the makers of Street Racket personally.

Workshops for the authorities and teachers, a donation for playing material and permanent playing fields at a location of your choice, are donated by the Rotary Club of Küssnacht in cooperation with the International Children and Youth Aid AG Frauenfeld. Orders for 2020 may still be placed. Several cantons, for example Graubünden and Baselland, have even used Street Racket introductions as prizes on various occasions.





The founding couple

Rahel and Marcel Straub gave up their respective management positions for their dream of moving the world with their own ideas. In addition to looking after their four children, they have been devoting all their time to their «fifth» child with the Street Racket club for a good three years.

Motivated partners

With its focus on education, movement and community, Street Racket is used extensively in school sports. But the innovative and user-friendly concept is also finding increasing acceptance on other levels. The concept's broad range of implementation and communication partners includes organisations and decision-makers in almost all areas of society. These include the Swiss Association for Sport in Schools SVSS, Pro Senectute, Plusport, the Swiss Gymnastics Federation STV, the Swiss Paraplegic Foundation SPV, prisons, refugee organisations such as the AÖZ, the Institute for Spatial Development IRAP, therapy centres and almost all Swiss universities as part of their further education programmes. As you can see, there are many possible approaches for municipalities to not only support the

healthy development of the younger generation with a comparatively small effort, but to also reach out to all the inhabitants with a sustainable and fun project. Very important: keep up the instinct to play! Unfortunately, adults in particular, all too often lose this urge to integrate play in their daily routine. Fortunately, it is still slumbering in almost all of us, and reviving it is not all that difficult. Hermann Schumacher, Head of the Sports Facilities Department of the City of Zurich, says: «The promotion of sport is prescribed by our constitution, which means that promoting sports in our city takes on an important role. The aim is to encourage as many people as possible from all groups and in all age categories. Street Racket is perfect for this, it is very low-threshold and appeals to everyone. All it needs is an open space of modest size. This can be found on sports fields, in retirement homes, on playgrounds and also at home with the family. We are convinced that this is the ideal way to reach even the least athletic people, because Street Racket is great fun and needs virtually no preparation. But there are also great applications for top athletes. The city of Zurich thinks that Street Racket is an ideal instrument to achieve various goals, also because of the optimal price-performance ratio. We can generate a sports offer for everyone that is extremely cost-effective - that is definitely very well invested money».

Also internationally in use

The now international Street Racket team with instructors in various countries contributes in many places to a better, more social and healthier world. The aim everywhere is to increase the proportion of the active population: refugee camps in Serbia, rehabilitation centers for mine victims in Cambodia, Reintegration camps for young victims of human trafficking in Thailand, high-security

The Street-Racket-App

The Street-Racket team has developed a free app, supported by regional Rotary clubs. Leading character and mascot Ronnie Racket guides you through the levels. He uses a smartphone to encourage people to put the device aside and start interacting properly again, not just digitally. And last but not least to revive the former street game culture. From very simple ball exercises to versatile group challenges, numerous street racket applications invite users to be active together.
www.streetracket.app

prisons and townships in South Africa, the Swiss Week in Mauritius in cooperation with the FDFA, school sports conferences in Taiwan. Street Racket is rapidly growing in popularity and school tours are planned in Holland, Spain and England. There is also increasing interest in the USA and plans are being made for the introduction of Street Racket.

*Marcel Straub
Founder of the association
Street Racket*

Information:

www.streetracket.com
www.streetracket.net/shop
www.rock-the-school.com
www.streetracket.net/einfuehrungskurs
(Online introduction course), half price until the end of April 2020

Street Racket enables movement for all generations. It can be played individually, on ice and snow, in kindergartens, on playgrounds and also indoors at school, where it can help with mental arithmetic (from left).

Bilder:zvg

