



THE MAGAZINE WITH IDEAS & SOLUTIONS FOR RECREATION, SPORTS & FITNESS FACILITIES MANAGERS

Creating the Ideal Climbing Wall

Climbing is an increasingly popular sport and recreational activity. Whether you want to attract diehard enthusiasts to your club or you'd like to teach inexperienced climbers about the sport, finding the right climbing wall is a key to success.

Q: We'd like to add a climbing wall to our facility that is beautiful and will draw in both experienced and beginner climbers. What should we look for?

A: Both experienced and beginner climbers will be delighted if you can closely replicate the "real thing." Look for a climbing wall solution that will allow you to maximize your programming opportunities and revenue while giving climbers the experience they're seeking.

You can find hybrid climbing walls that provide the best of both worlds. Look for a solution that allows you to mix a rock realistic glass fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC) with a highly functional cementitious texture applied over a wood substrate. The combination will give your facility the aesthetics and "wow" factor of real rock while maximizing flexibility in routesetting. What's more, a climbing wall like this can act as a centerpiece for your facility. Your wall can be customized to suit your facility and your needs. It can include such features as arches, overhangs, cracks and pinnacles, or simply a wide expanse of "rock" that showcases a variety of routes.

If you place it where passersby can view it from the outside, it will serve as a natural draw, bringing even more people into your facility.

Q: How can we keep climbers interested in the wall once it's built?

A: The key to maintaining excitement and interest is to continually offer new challenges to your climbers. You can do this by constantly setting creative new routes. Look for a wall that offers both modular handholds as well as built-in climbing holds and natural relief. Then, be sure to train your staff on route setting, so they will be able to change things up for your experienced users from time to time. Climbing wall operators should follow the 80/20 philosophy of route setting. Set 20 percent of your routes at a 5.10 level of difficulty or higher, and set 80 percent of your routes at less than a 5.10 level of difficulty. This will allow you to draw a larger audience of climbers.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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