

Sport Unlimited Case Study

The concept2 engaging young people



Concept2 rowing has been set up in partnership with Northumberland Sport, The Amateur Rowing Association, Ponteland Community High School, Richard Coates Middle School and Morpeth and Ponteland School Sports Partnership (SSP) to further engage semi sporty young people.

What is concept 2 rowing?

Concept2 are manufacturers of indoor rowing machines which have proved extremely popular around the country. Concept2 machines have a built in performance monitor which allows users to accurately compare times and distances between different machines and users. This has led to the successful formation of Concept2 leagues and competitions throughout the country for adults and young people. The sessions maximise this capability and are planned in accordance with the Amateur Rowing Association coaching guide and the Concept2 league profile. Experts from the rowing clubs have also provided advice in designing the sessions and offering support.



How is concept 2 delivered

In Morpeth and Ponteland the Concept2 sessions have been held in school sports halls, fitness rooms and a school hall during the Autumn term. A typical session begins with the young people leading a warm up away from the machines. They then have a second warm up individually on the Concept2 machines before the competition begins. During the sessions, participants are able to try and improve their best performances while also engaging in relay races. The Concept2 machines also have several fun programmes which can be used for the young people to warm down at the end of the session.

Advantages of Concept 2

There are many benefits of the scheme which include improved fitness, a stronger attitude to competition, and the general enjoyment of a fun activity. Rowing is impact-free, and the intensity is completely user-controlled, meaning young people can row as hard or as easily depending on individual ability.

Sustainable activity

The schools have shown that even with a small number of machines much can be achieved. With the aim of increasing sustainability, year 12/13 level students are being trained to lead the coaching for future sessions. Participants are now also encouraged to become members at local rowing clubs such as Tyne and Cambois. Young people who show the dedication and enthusiasm for the sport are also being offered the opportunity to try out their skills on the water during the summer term. Once the young people are able performers in rowing they are invited to compete as adults in leagues and can train at the local sports centres. There is also a Distance Award Scheme which rewards participation as opposed to performance.



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Consultation and evaluation

Young people were consulted in schools to determine what activities they would like to try. A lot of young people showed an interest in competing in the virtual Concept2 competitions. The advantage of this is that young people do not even need to leave their school environment in order to compete against other schools and individuals. A large number of young people also asked for fitness related type exercise and therefore Concept2 appealed to these requests also. The sessions have also been evaluated by staff. Questionnaires were given to the pupils who took part in the first sessions to see, 'how much they enjoyed them', 'if they would like to see it run differently', and 'what they would like the next step to be'. These questionnaires will be refined in future depending upon the replies from the first set of questionnaires.

Funding

The activity has been funded by the Big lottery project in the first instance and now by the Sport Unlimited programme. With so many staff and volunteers willing to support the project the only major cost is the machines themselves. They are currently trying to raise the funds to purchase another 12 machines which would allow another two schools to take part in the project.

Success of the programme

The response to this activity from young people has been excellent with 100 pupils attending during the first ten weeks. The retention rate of 80% has also been commendable. The clubs were attended by a mix of both sexes and young people from all year groups. The vast majority of these people were semi-sporty who are now already quite active. Many of these have attended on recommendations from PE staff. James Ellison, Morpeth and Ponteland SSP PDM said: "There is no doubt that from the take up and retention that they really enjoy the sessions and the activity".

Outstanding Achievement

The high school sessions have gone from strength to strength. After just a few weeks they proved confident enough to enter the regional championships. At this event they achieved national acclaim with one year 10 boy winning his event. This was a great achievement considering that he only begun participating in Concept2 a few weeks earlier. All three schools involved in Concept2 have entered teams in the national Concept2 leagues. This resulted in them having teams finish in the top ten nationally while the vast majority finished in the top 25% nationally. James Ellison said: "I do feel the retention rate alone shows how successful this project has been, the individual successes in the regional championships has also shown that there is life outside rugby and football and many of the pupils are enjoying success they could not have achieved otherwise."



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