

Meeting News

CHICAGO

Innovative Sporting Venue is A Hub For Team Building

By Tracee Sioux

The Challenge: Contestants sprint down inflated bouncy runways, harnessed to bungee cords, stretching to place their Velcro beanbag furthest along the wall.

The Challenge: Contestants race canoes equipped with wheels across the floor using a plunger as an oar. Wearing life vests at all times, they must avoid hitting cones placed throughout the course. Ping-pong balls are resting on the cones and points are deducted if a team hits a cone and knocks off the ping-pong ball.

The Challenge: Two contestants wearing Velcro jumpsuits race through an inflatable 40-foot-long, 10-foot-wide dual obstacle path, over four- and six- foot-high walls around barriers and through tunnels covered in Velcro.

It may sound like an episode of "Survivor," but the point of these contests, all of which take place at Windy City Fieldhouse, is corporate team building, communication and problem solving.

The three-year-old multi-sport and entertainment complex is providing a fun and innovative meeting arena that allows attendees to hone up on communication skills or break the ice and create relationships with new co-workers.

For groups that want less physical interaction than, say passing a tennis ball from chin to chin, mental challenges and interactive activities such as charades are facilitated.

"Teambuilding is increasingly popular for merging companies forced to blend cultures," said Brian Ban, marketing director for the Fieldhouse. "What do you do when you merge a company with casual dress and a team orientated approach with business attire, strict-hierarchy company? You have to coerce them into interaction in a nonthreatening way. The Fieldhouse allows them to have fun at the same time."

The Fieldhouse can accommodate groups up to 3,500.

