



Hudson River Park

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WHAT'S NEXT? TRIBECA

Options for active recreation in Hudson River Park are expanding and broadening in scope. New skateparks in Tribeca and in Chelsea Cove will provide skaters and skateboarders with two distinct sporting experiences. Pier 25's town dock will increase boat access to the river and further confirm Hudson River Park's role as the premier access point for recreational maritime activities in New York City. Upon completion in 2010, Pier 25 in Tribeca will also offer:

- 18-hole miniature golf course
- beach volleyball courts
- basketball court
- synthetic turf field
- playground
- mooring area

ACTION!

Hudson River Park gets physical

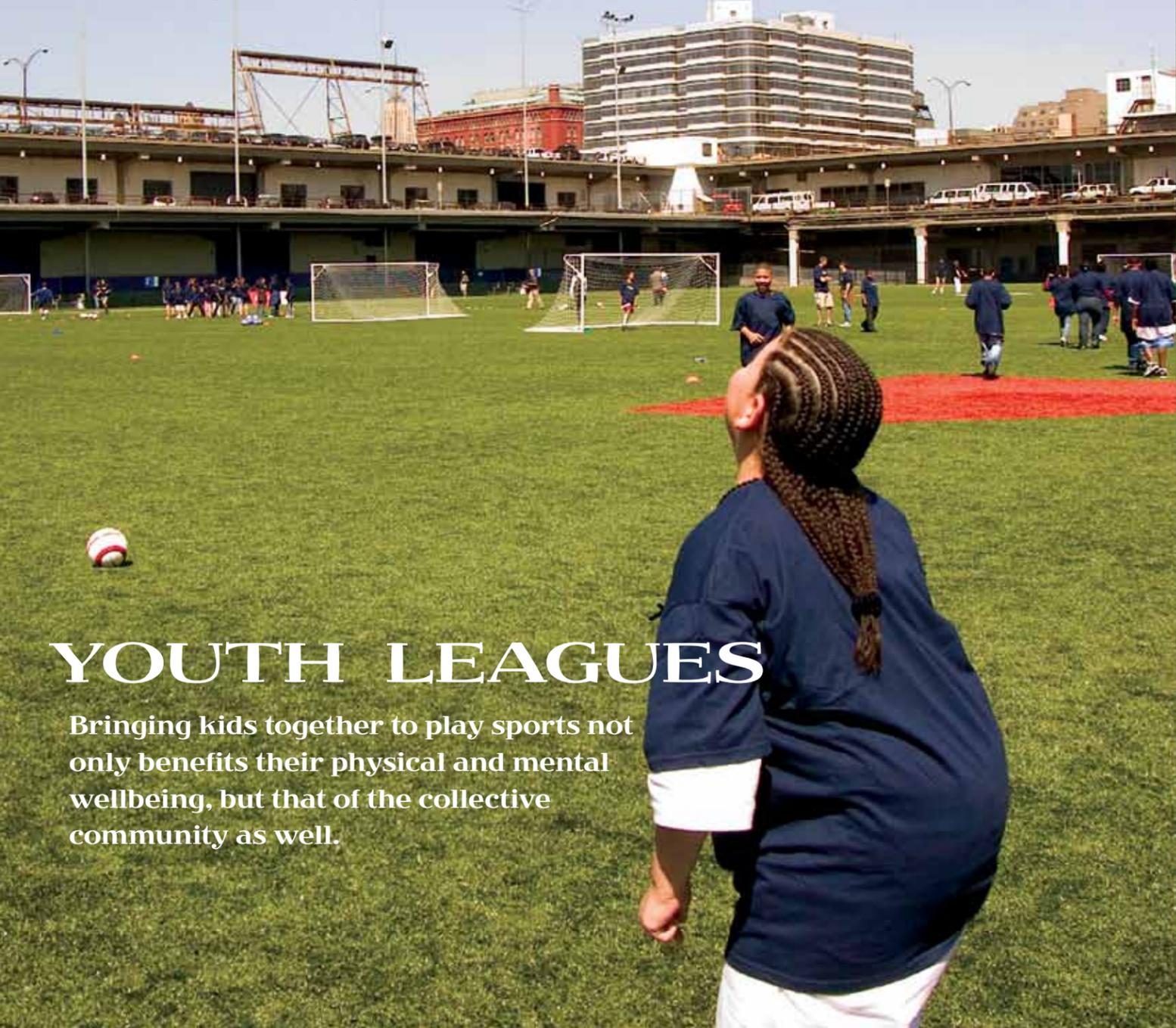
It's hard to imagine a livelier scene than the one that unfolds daily throughout Hudson River Park during the hours when youth athletic leagues enjoy use of the fields at Pier 40 and Chelsea Waterside, and when organized sports of several varieties are in full swing. The Pier Park and Playground Association (P3), Greenwich Village Little League (GVLL), and Downtown United Soccer Club (DUSC) are among the many programs that currently organize and facilitate such activities for city youth within the park.

P3 specializes in baseball for 6-18 year olds, runs day camps for local kids and offers training and practice time for high school baseball teams. Likewise, Downtown United Soccer Club (DUSC) and Greenwich Village Little League (GVLL)—now in its 25th year of membership with Little League International—also afford kids from the downtown area the chance to engage in active recreation close to home.

Bringing kids together to play sports not only benefits their physical and mental wellbeing, but that of the collective community as well. DUSC organizes Sunday night "dads' nights" and Wednesday "moms' nights", providing an opportunity for parents to connect with one another while playing sports. GVLL also gets parents and community

members involved, with all of the coaches and managers volunteering their time to take part in the league's activities. According to Rich Caccapollo, the President of GVLL, "Because the Pier 40 field is so large, we can have six concurrent games on Sunday mornings." With such effective use of the fields, parents and players of different teams will undoubtedly cross paths. A similar scenario can be found among high school teams playing with P3, where students from different schools practice in the same space. "The only way they see each other is from opposite sides of the field. It's nice that they can hang out and have batting practice together," said Tobi Bergman, President of P3.

The importance of Hudson River Park's fields for West Side parents and their children does not go unrecognized. For many, in Manhattan was contingent upon the existence of such a space. Talking about the issue, Bob Russo, President of DUSC, said, "I don't think it's anecdotal for me to say that many parents would have looked for alternatives if their children weren't able to play ball. It's had a huge impact on my life and many others'."



YOUTH LEAGUES

Bringing kids together to play sports not only benefits their physical and mental wellbeing, but that of the collective community as well.

ADULT LEAGUES

"I think it's a really good outlet for people—especially those who have stressful jobs."

— Emily Flynn



Complementing the miles of unprogrammed recreation space in Hudson River Park, the fields at Pier 40 and Chelsea Waterside provide some of the most exciting opportunities for active sports and recreation in Manhattan. Recognizing the value of this prime field space, many park patrons have taken the initiative to create and develop organized sports leagues for adults. Two such leagues are the New York Gay Flag Football League and the New York Women's Field Hockey Club. Today, both leagues are highly successful, attracting many members and promoting community among participants.

The New York Gay Flag Football League (NYGFFL) was founded in the spring of 2005 and originally consisted of six teams, each with twelve players.

Since then, the league has expanded to include fourteen teams, all sponsored by a local commercial establishment. The popularity of NYGFFL is demonstrated during its registration process, where available spots tend to fill up in about a half hour. Similarly, the New York Women's Field Hockey Club has enjoyed a great deal of success since its beginnings in July of 2006. The league's founder, Emily Flynn, had recently arrived in New York and was looking for a mildly competitive women's field hockey program. At first, the players would be lucky to get a 3-on-2 game, "but within the last year it kind of exploded," she said. With a listing on the USA Field Hockey Association's website and through word of mouth, many women in New York have discovered and joined the league.

Hudson River Park has been central to the whole process. "Pier 40 has become a major staple of the league—many members live in the Lower Manhattan area," said Matthew Marrin, the Field Director of NYGFFL. According to Emily, "Hudson River Park provided a lot of stability because we've been able to acquire field space. People can show up and they know where to go."

Also common to both leagues is their success in uniting a wide range of participants. "What makes the league interesting is the comfortable, supporting environment," said Matthew about NYGFFL. Such an atmosphere is conducive to bringing together a range of players, from those who have never touched a ball to people who played football in high

school, college, and on the professional level. Similarly, the Field Hockey Club hosts members who have never played to those who were active in college.

Despite the wide variation in experience (or perhaps because of it), the players in both leagues enjoy being involved. Close friendships have been formed between members of Women's Field Hockey where the air is "unpretentious and casual" and mistakes are forgiven. In NYGFFL, members are "supportive when it's time to play," and weekly league socials also contribute to the sense of community -- one that is inclusive of all genders, races, and sexual orientations. Field Hockey has also promoted a healthy camaraderie among participants. "We play and we laugh," Emily said.



TRAPEZE SCHOOL NEW YORK

Perhaps the most unique sports program in Hudson River Park is the Trapeze School New York. Appropriately located high above ground level on the roof of Pier 40, the school offers classes in the exhilarating sport of trapeze, where according to their website, flyers can enjoy “a beautiful view of the Statue of Liberty and show-stopping nightscapes.” The school allows participants to hone their skills in flying trapeze, aerial “silks,” static trapeze, and trampoline (among others), with classes ranging from the most basic to the advanced and performance levels. If trapeze lessons seem more appealing with a few friends—or with a lot of friends for that matter—you can even bring your own party (BYOP).

Jonathon Conant, a co-founder of Trapeze School New York, has been working in the city since 2002 when the school moved to Hudson River Park. His experience working with New Yorkers has made him quite familiar with what appeals to people here. “[New Yorkers] are interested in the health aspect of trapeze; it’s an alternative to a health club or yoga class. It’s also just a lot of fun to fly on a flying trapeze.”

Elaborating on the trapeze experience, Jonathan commented that “There’s also a spiritual aspect. People push themselves beyond what they believe they’re capable of. They think, ‘If that was possible, then what else is?’” Jonathon summed up the necessary

mindset for trapeze-ing as perfect for people in New York. He described it as “rigid and strong, but permeable,” referring to the courage that it takes to partake in the activity while being “open to possibilities.”

The combined health and entertainment value of the sport highlights the appropriateness of the school’s location in Hudson River Park. “But”, according to Connie Fishman, Hudson River Park’s President, “it’s the uniqueness and excitement generated by the sport that has attracted the most attention, both for the Park and the Trapeze School.”

“If that was possible, then what else is?”

— Jonathon Conant, co-founder

BIKE & ROLL

For travel, leisure, exercise or a combination of all three, bicycling is an effective and environmentally sensitive way to travel. In New York City, there’s nowhere better to bike than along Hudson River Park’s dedicated five-mile greenway. To help people take advantage of this wonderful asset, the Hudson River Park Trust included a bike rental concession at Pier 84 during the project’s design phase.

Now in its third season, Bike & Roll, a rental and tour company on Hudson River Park’s Pier 84, organizes and facilitates two-wheeled journeys that emphasize the use of city greenways and water taxis. Bike & Roll currently offers guided and self-guided tours from Pier 84 to such destinations as Central Park and the Brooklyn Bridge with the goal of promoting connectivity by bicycle to

various New York City attractions and parks. “Hop-on hop-off” rental bicycles are also available and can be rented or returned at any of Bike & Roll’s locations: in Hudson River Park, Battery Park, South Street Seaport, Brooklyn Bridge Park, or on Governor’s Island.

Patrons can easily travel between Manhattan locations in city parks, and can even access Brooklyn Bridge Park’s promenade via water taxi from Pier 84 or the East River bridges. Leisure and exercise-oriented bikers have the option of taking the Water Taxi to the Bike & Roll location there, where they can enjoy a less urban setting. Although it might seem that Bike & Roll caters primarily to tourists without bicycles of their own, local residents constitute a large component of Bike & Roll’s renters. Many have found convenience in the

company’s ‘season pass’ option which comes with a summer-long rental and no need to store one’s own bicycle in cramped Manhattan living spaces.

In discussing Bike & Roll’s appeal, Darryll White, President, affirmed that “people have become more aware of personal health and the carbon footprint which has led to more interest in biking.” He further attributed the company’s success to enthusiastic collaboration. “The people I’ve worked with at the park level have been energetic. The goal of creating a more livable city has been a fantastic experience. So far, we’ve exceeded expectations and I’m excited about the future.”

“The goal of creating a more livable city has been a fantastic experience.”

— Darryll White, President



HOOPS ON THE RIVER

Several years ago, feeling that Hudson River Park's Harrison Street basketball courts were underused, Rock Bunce decided to start the Hoops on the River Youth Basketball League, a "community-based basketball enrichment program for young men of downtown New York." Rock assessed the demand for such a league by talking to people in the neighborhood, and in the first year he started a fourteen-and-under league consisting of ten teams. Employing his knowledge of the sport from previous experience as a referee, Rock was able to train others to officiate.

With the opening of Hudson River Park's new courts at Canal Street in 2008, Rock was able to expand the program to include 12-and-under, 14-and-under, and high school divisions. He is more than pleased and even surprised at times by the robustness of the competition. "They come from all boroughs. We even have a team from Jersey. That's what I'm talking about when I say that I'm surprised by the competition." He also noted his emphasis and support for well rounded participants. In the mission statement for Hoops on the River, the league cites the physical fitness, discipline, teamwork, and

confidence that result from participation in organized sports. With respect to the league's goals, Rock added that they "provide a stable and supporting atmosphere and encourage good grades. We want players to be rewarded for their scholastic achievements as well." Experiencing growth every year, the league also seems to be attracting fans. "We get great responses from passers-by. They come out and cheer, stand around, and give [the kids] a nice crowd. It's a good situation."

...they "provide a stable and supporting atmosphere and encourage good grades. We want players to be rewarded for their scholastic achievements as well."

— Rock Bunce, Founder & Executive Director

STUYVESANT HIGH SCHOOL

Hudson River Park is an urban oasis for New York residents and visitors alike. It also serves as an important resource for another well known city inhabitant: Stuyvesant High School. Located in Lower Manhattan where space is at a premium, Stuyvesant benefits from its proximity to the large and well maintained fields at Pier 40. "We're fortunate that the Hudson River Park Trust has allowed us to schedule home games [at Pier 40]. It's easy and convenient for students to enjoy the games there instead of going to

Brooklyn or the Bronx," said Martha Singer, an Assistant Principal and the Athletic Director at Stuyvesant.

The athletes also seem to benefit from Pier 40's convenient location in relation to the school. "Jogging down to be ready for practice is a great warm-up. Three-quarters of a mile is not a lot for athletes," Martha added. The students that generally use the field include baseball, softball, soccer, and football players. Another benefit

of hosting games in Hudson River Park is its accessibility for the fans. Because the field is so close to the school, a home football game on a Friday night can attract hundreds of spectators.

With regard to the student athletes' feelings about the park, Martha said that "they can't believe something like [that field] is in Lower Manhattan. They enjoy it totally."

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— Martha Singer, Assistant Principal & Athletic Director



HUDSON RIVER COMMUNITY SAILING

When thinking about typical urban sports, sailing may not immediately come to mind. For Bill Bahen, the founder of Hudson River Community Sailing, that was one of the motivations behind starting his organization. "I noticed that in the city there was no access point for community kids to reach the water. Our goal is to make sailing available to city youth by taking a piece of public land and returning it to the community." Having worked at sailing centers in other cities, Bill understood the "teamwork, craftsmanship, and self reliance that sailing teaches," and felt it was necessary to introduce such a program in New York.

Hudson River Community Sailing, located on Hudson River Park's Pier 66, is one of several

water-based components of New York River Sports, the operator of the Pier 66 boathouse and sailing slips. A primary goal is to run summer and high school programs for kids of all ages. Along with developing personal skills, the sailing programs are also effective for teaching about the natural habitat of the Hudson River and helping participants gain a bit of perspective on our city. "Manhattan is an island; everyone came here on a boat," Bill said, stressing the important role of maritime activity in New York's history. Another impressive benefit of the program is its educational value. As part of an approved program by the New York City Board of Education, high school students can actually earn credit while discovering the mathematical principles behind

sailing. For example, students can apply trigonometric functions like sine and cosine to decipher their boat's position.

Responding to demand, Hudson River Community Sailing will also offer adult lessons and evening sails starting this summer. Even without advertising, the program has received many phone calls from city residents looking for classes. "We have a large constituency of supporters. I've gone out into the community of sailors," Bill said, referring to growing support for expanding the program. "It's exciting to be on the vanguard of reclaiming the waterfront. The main goal is to provide access to this area."

"Manhattan is an island; everyone came here on a boat,"

— Bill Bahen, Founder & Executive Director

