

# Happy Birthday Sport Court of Austin

## Celebrating 25 years of dedication to Austin recreation

Story by Julie Taylor

Photos by Stephanie Thompson

In its 25th year of business, Sport Court of Austin is providing Central Texas families with a safe, fun way to play sports.

Sport Court of Austin is one of several dealers throughout the country affiliated with Sport Court, Inc., in Salt Lake City, Utah. Sport Court of Austin CEO Greg Dettman said he first heard about Sport Court 25 years ago when he read an article about a new fitness idea.

"I read an article about a company building sport courts," Dettman said. "Immediately I was interested in it. I inquired about a court and they said they needed people to license the business around the country."

"What began as an inquiry about a court for myself, turned into a business opportunity in

Central Texas."

Dettman said at the beginning of the business, he began drawing diagrams of sport courts and running advertisements.

"We hoped the tennis boom of the 1970s would get people to call, and it did," he said. "We built a lot of major tennis courts in town. The idea was getting a small to medium size court in the backyard."

The business started out offering mini tennis courts for backyards and grew to a family, fitness court for multiple sports.

Today, Sport Court builds residential courts and golf greens, as well as commercial sports flooring. Dettman said 60 percent of his business is building residential courts and golf greens and 40 percent is building commercial

flooring.

For the past seven years, Sport Court has offered golfing greens with high grade synthetic putting turf, Dettman said.

The residential courts feature a suspended modular surface that is more comfortable and durable. The surface has holes in it allowing the rain to drain off and is suspended over a square foot block.

"Schools were noticing kids were cracking their bones on the cement floor," he said. "This surface allows a fall to be distributed over the entire area, instead of in just one spot."

Dettman said the floor's surface interlocks and can be taken up if needed. He said Sport Court has installed gym floors in several schools throughout Central Texas, including schools in Austin, Round Rock, Georgetown and Hutto.

Sport Court has also installed floors at area colleges and universities, sports and recreation centers and churches from San Marcos to Waco.

"The last 14 NCAA basketball championships have been played on sport courts," he said.

He said the indoor sport courts are more comfortable to play on, have a lower rate of injuries and a lower noise volume.

The residential sport courts start at 20-by-20 square feet and go up. The average size of a sport court is 30-by-60 square feet. He said the courts can be used for a variety of sports including basketball, volleyball, badminton, tennis and racquetball and baseball practice. The courts may also

be used for biking, roller hockey and roller blading.

Recently, courts have been built for extreme sports with ramps and rails for skateboarding and inline skating, Dettman said.

"The courts are designed to be created to play just about any sport," he said. "The goals and nets are adjustable."

He said the courts also include a fence around the court



and a light pole.

"It's a simple thing to have in the backyard," he said. "There's no maintenance. You just turn on the light."

Dettman said the idea behind the sport court is family fun and safety — providing a way for parents to play sports with their kids in a safe atmosphere.

"As kids get older, parents know who their kids are and who their kids are playing with, because they're playing in their backyard," he said. "Fun and safety — that's our key points."

Courts are also popular with parents of young children. Dettman said since the court is fenced, children can play in the court and parents can be assured they won't wander off. Dettman said his children learned how to ride their bikes on his sport court.

"By the time they were 4, they were asking me to take the training wheels off," he said. "When they went to school, they had no trouble riding their bikes, but many of their friends were having to dodge obstacles as they learned to ride in the street."

"My kids learned by riding in circles on the court. It was a safe environment for them to learn and we didn't have to worry about cars."

The courts come in a variety of colors and can be personalized with logos painted on the court.

He said the sport courts are used for a variety of family events including birthday parties, teen parties, family reunions and church youth groups.

"As long as the world doesn't become sedentary and as long as parents want to get their kids out from behind the Gameboy, the future looks great," he said. "Sport courts give parents a chance to play with their kids."

"Kids learn to ride bikes, rollerblades... it's keeping kids in a safe environment — anything that helps families have fun."



Above, (from left), General Manager Vic Sanchez, Sales Representative Chris Halley and CEO Greg Dettman.



Above, a practice net with ball return.



Above, a sport court remains in top condition from Texas weather after two and one-half years after installation. Left, Sport Court flooring is made of a durable, weather-resistant, flexible grid that is easy to install and safe on joints during recreational play.



Above, most courts have the option of an adjustable full-court net used for volleyball, tennis and racquetball. Below, a wide selection of golf turfs for any size putting greens are also available.

