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New exercise is for 'anyone'

Silverlake center offers opportunities

By Shannon Russell
Enquirer staff writer

ERLANGER - When winter's frost supplanted fall's outdoor walking weather, Fort Wright resident Jake Wartman started looking for a new exercise regimen.

He never dreamed he'd find it on a bike. Under water.

"I was surprised at first to hear about this, but it by far is the most exhilarating exercise I've ever done," said Wartman, 62.

Silverlake Family Recreation Center offers hydroriding, exercise classes that lead riders on an imaginary bike ride - but with a twist. Set in a swimming pool, the new class invites participants clad in swimsuits and shoes to engage in 45 minutes of aqua cycling and strength training.

Aquatics director Marcie Stander said hydroriding originated in Italy and caught on in the United States three years ago. Silverlake, which has Northern Kentucky's only hydroriding program, launched classes in April.

The program is a new take on an old favorite.

Regular spinning classes invite participants to ride stationary bikes indoors, while hydroriding offers the same format under water.

Silverlake has 16 stainless steel bikes that are easily submergible, and when situated by the 4-foot markers, the water usually reaches an adult's waist.

The core of hydroriding is a 30-minute cardiovascular workout, sandwiched between 10 minutes of warm-up and five minutes of cool-down.

People of all ages, sizes and abilities can adjust the bikes' resistance for tailor-made workouts.

"What's so great about it is you have different resistance levels, so we have beginners up to triathletes. There's such a wide range for you to get a good workout," Stander said.

And unlike spinning, hydroriding works the upper body in addition to the lower body.

"Both my legs and arms get worked," said Verona resident Ann Molitor, 63, who attended a Tuesday morning class. "I like the water, but I'm not a swimmer. I used to do deep- and shallow-water aerobics because I have bad knees."

Hydroriding is easy on the joints, Wartman said.

He doesn't think he could ride a bike for 20 minutes on land, yet 45 minutes of hydroriding "doesn't hurt anything."



Hydrorider instructor Marilyn Plageman supervises stretches at the end of a class Tuesday at Silverlake Recreation Center in Erlanger.
The Enquirer/Patrick Reddy
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Stander said riders can assume a recumbent position to alleviate knee stress.

Villa Hills resident Kelly Novak, 36, takes the class to tone muscles and lose weight.

With two bad knees, she said, she "couldn't do a lot of banging around," so six months ago she enlisted in a hydroriding class. "It's fun, and it's not hard," Novak said.

From arthritis to obesity, hydroriding is a class anyone can take, Stander said. "Anyone can do it - absolutely anyone," she said.

For more information on hydroriding, call (859) 426-7777.

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