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UREC Check-in: Something for Everyone

Qasim Ali, Sports & Opinion Editor

A new year at Seattle University means students, staff and alumni will be returning to the Eisiminger Fitness Center under the stewardship of University Recreation (UREC).

UREC features programs like themed cycle classes and outdoor treks, but also ventures into non-physical activities like trivia nights and esports competitions. Thanks to their diverse slate of programs, UREC has a broad variety of activities for the Seattle U community.

In terms of group activities, intramural sports at UREC tend to be a favorite across campus, and they will be returning after being virtual or non-existent since the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided. As a more casual alternative to club sports lacking both traveling and coaching, intramurals at UREC can be a way to enjoy team sports with less of a commitment.

Jacob Parker, a graduate assistant of competitive sports at UREC, shares how intramural sports are characterized by community and recreation rather than pure competition and performance.

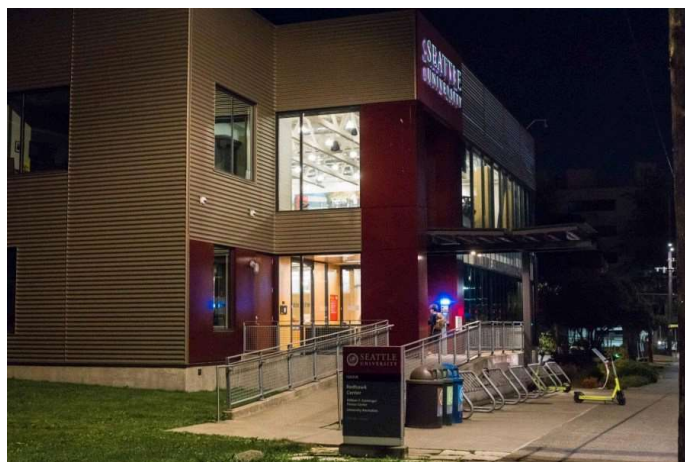
"It's just a great way to get outside, meet new people and join a community... it's a great space to be active," Parker said. "It's only an hour a day—it's super non-committal."

New intramural sports like cornhole and pickleball are debuting this fall in a series of single-day tournaments. They are accompanied by the usual sports such as outdoor soccer, basketball, volleyball and flag football; all of which have season formats and multiple divisions that convene at different times.

Registrations for intramurals can be found on UREC's IMLeagues page. Players can sign up as members of a team, or simply walk on as a free agent.

UREC Outdoor is also back with a slate of group trail trips, service trips, climbing trips and clinics. There will be eight group trail excursions this quarter, varying from no experience required to a moderate skill level — all the expeditions sit within a range of four to seven and a half miles round-trip.

The popular 'Scenic Hot Springs' hike is scheduled for Nov. 13. Assistant Director of UREC Outdoor Kevin Sutton says there will be four more additional trips to the location this winter. Each hike will include transportation to the location along with guidance through the hike from UREC Outdoor staff. Winter trips may require snowshoeing equipment, which will also be provided.



Adeline Ong

Exterior of Seattle University recreation center

Each event allows for five to ten members with sign-ups opening three weeks prior to the trip. Most trips incur a one-time \$10 fee upon signing up while a few trips are priced from \$25-\$50 per member.

“It gets you off campus, and gets you out of the city,” Sutton said. “But not necessarily, we do a lot of city trips so you don’t even have to go off pavement.”

Sutton went on to explain that his team is planning on adding more trips within walking distance from Seattle U to remove reliance on vans and carpooling. Additional group trips may be added to places within the city limits.

Back in the fitness center, the UREC team is planning on getting back to normal as COVID-19 restrictions wind down. Like Seattle U’s COVID-19 policies on campus, masks are optional at UREC, and some marquee programs can make a return thanks to the lessened protocols.

Namely, group classes like yoga have returned after a year’s absence and personal training appointments at UREC are currently at capacity — marking a milestone in a return to normalcy, and a headache for those stuck on the waiting list. New programs like a Lizzo-themed specialty class and Lady Gaga cycling class will headline their first attempts at what UREC Director Kirsten Schumacher calls ‘one-offs’ this quarter.



Treadmills at Seattle University Recreation center (Adeline Ong)

The UREC team is also dabbling in the esports arena starting Oct. 14, when they plan to open their esports center in the Student Center in room 330.

“I want UREC to be something for anyone who wants UREC to be something for [them],” Schumacher said. “Recreation is truly about however you want to escape the stresses that school puts on you, and we want to offer that to you.”

With a wide variety of programs, both new and returning, UREC is on its way to realizing that vision this year.