

Indoor FITNESS

Keep
swimming
and playing
tennis this
winter



By Lesa Knollenberg

As the days get shorter and the leaves start to fall, so can your fitness resolve. After a cardio-rich summer of activities such as tennis and swimming, it's easy to grab a blanket and hang up your racket. Or goggles.

So with winter approaching, how can you continue with summer sports?

According to **Elizabeth Barnhill**, past president and board member of the Wisconsin Tennis Association (and creator of tennis programs for underprivileged youth and state-wide athletic initiatives through the **Wisconsin Tennis Association**), it takes discipline. She should know. While most tennis aficionados play tennis five to six times per week, Barnhill plays daily. To keep up fitness during winter months, she suggests

players "sign up for a weekly drill. Find a good, active program that keeps everybody running, like the Sweet Swingers program at the Powless Center."

The John Powless Tennis Center also offers open court times for members and non-members. Joining an association with other tennis enthusiasts provides even more court time. **The Greater Madison Tennis Association (GMTA)** offers winter tennis parties and tennis

nights; both are opportunities to play indoor tennis without belonging to a private club.

If swimming is your forté, paddle on. **Madison School & Community Recreation (MSCR)**, which provides public recreation for area residents, offers adult swim times at local high schools during evenings and weekends. Purchasing a pass from MSCR gains you entrance to any lap or open swim.

The **YMCA** also offers lap and open swim times, swimming lessons and a Masters Adult Swim Program. Check their web site for schedules. For those who miss their summer water adventures, try a log-rolling class at the Y.

Many area high school pools have open lap times in the early morning. If your swimming strokes aren't perfect, don't worry. "Our lap swim variety is amazing. Male and female, all ages," encourages **Katie Heiser**, director of **McFarland's Spartan Aquatic Center**. "It's better to come toward the end of a lap swim in the mornings. It's less crowded. We also have lap lanes available during open pool. If you're uncomfortable sharing a lane with somebody, the pool staff can accommodate you. Just ask."

Getting started

Tennis improves flexibility, stamina, strength and hand-eye coordination. If you are a beginner, try classes. Learning the mechanics and proper stance is important and will help your enjoyment of the game. The John Powless Tennis Center offers classes for beginners of all ages and will schedule individual lessons for one or two players.

Swimming is an efficient way to cross-train overworked or injured muscles. It is low-impact, involving major muscle groups

McFarland Aquatic Center's mural has frequently appeared in national swim magazines.

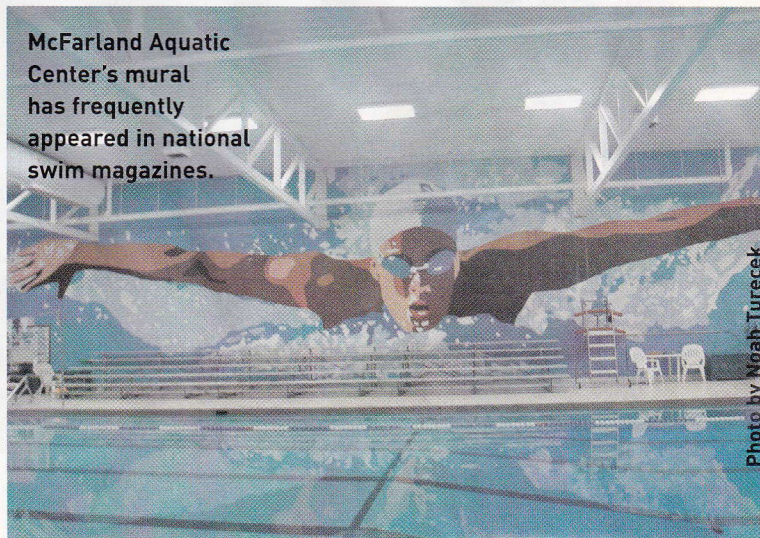


Photo by Noah Turecek

while supporting joints tenderly. Beginning swimmers also are encouraged to take lessons to learn properly and safely.

Swimming lessons are not just for children anymore. **Dianne Lahey**, aquatic specialist for MSCR, suggests that beginners take advantage of adult swim lessons through MSCR. "This class attracts adults for many different reasons and we work towards each individual's goals. Group or private lessons are also a great way to learn better techniques to make strokes more efficient."

Non-swimmers who want to take advantage of the water's benefits can sign up for water aerobic classes or deep water running, which uses the resistance of water and floatation belts to provide an excellent cardiovascular workout.

Whatever your sport, maintaining your fitness during the dreary months will help you welcome the warmer months to come. It's more difficult to play tennis and swim as the weather gets colder, but if you start your exercise routines now, the discipline will serve you well.



Lesa Knollenberg is an area freelance writer who enjoys an occasional early morning swim.

Indoor fitness info

GMTA: 442-8456 or
www.gmatennis.org

John Powless Tennis Center:
274-6262

**University of Wisconsin Nielsen
Tennis Stadium:** 262-0410

Madison Area Swimming Club:
Dick Pitman at 770-2307 or 242-8125

**Madison School and Community
Recreation (MSCR):** 204-3000 or
www.msqr.org

Lussier Family YMCA East: 221-1571
Lussier Family YMCA West:
276-6606
www.ymcadaneconomy.org

Spartan Aquatic Center: 838-3168 or
www.mcfarlandcommunitypool.com

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