

Indoor Play Facilities for College Women

BY GAVIN HADDEN, C.E.

“IN what order would you rate the following play facilities, with respect to their usefulness in a women’s gymnasium, disregarding the always present restrictions of cost and space?”

- Basketball
- Swimming Pool
- Squash
- Running Track
- Indoor Tennis
- Bowling
- Fencing
- Badminton
- Volley-ball
- Calisthenics and Dancing
- Apparatus Exercises
- Indoor Baseball
- Jumping, Vaulting, etc.
- Golf Net

“Would you suggest any other play facilities in preference to any of those listed above?”

In helping to determine recently the most desirable facilities to provide for in the design of a proposed gymnasium at a women’s college, the writer sent out to a number of women’s colleges a questionnaire containing these questions. Other questions were also asked, bringing many useful opinions on matters of design, involving primarily those features in which a women’s gymnasium differs from a men’s, but the questions set forth above elicited the most generally interesting and useful information of all.

It might be an interesting pastime for the reader to stop here and mark with numbers from 1 to 14 each of the activities (or facilities for them) which are included in the above list in his or her order of preference for a women’s college, and then turn for comparison to the list representing the collective opinion as obtained from the questionnaire, which is printed later in this article.

The Replies

Answers to the questionnaire were received from the following institutions: University of Michigan; Middlebury College; Mt. Holyoke College; New Jersey College for Women; New York University; Northwestern University; Pembroke College; Radcliffe College; University of Rochester; Smith College; Swarthmore College; Vassar College; Westhampton College (University of Richmond).

Of these, 12 gave answers, in whole or in part, to the question on the rating of the various facilities. The answers were tabulated, each being given a uniformly weighted score for each rating, and then these scores were summed up

for each item. The system used was to score in each case 1 for the item rated No. 1; 2 for the item rated No. 2; etc. Where two or more items had received the same rating, each was given the average score of the group; for example, if three items were rated No. 1, each of them was scored 2. The lower the score of any one of the facilities, therefore, the higher is its rating by the consensus.

The following tabulation gives the combined scores of the 14 different facilities, in the order given them by the 12 votes combined:

Rank	Facilities	Combined Score
1.	Swimming Pool	25
2.	Basketball	44.5
3.	Calisthenics and Dancing	45.5
4.	Indoor Tennis	70.5
5.	Badminton	75
6.	Squash	82.5
7.	Golf Net	86.5
8.	Bowling	94
9.	Volley-ball	96.5
10.	Indoor Baseball	110.5
11.	Fencing	116
12.	Apparatus Exercises	117.5
13.	Jumping, Vaulting, etc.	136.5
14.	Running Track	162.5
	Total score	1,263.0

(The total score for each 14 ratings should be 105 and $12 \times 105 = 1,260$; the additional 3 points in the total were caused by giving a score of 15 to each of two items which were definitely ruled out by one answer, instead of scoring them 13 and 14).

There are a number of points which are of special interest in this tabulation, expressing as it does the combined views of a number of experienced administrators of athletics for women. Before discussing them, however, it is worth while to point out the surprising unanimity of the answers, a fact which cannot be made clear from the tabulation itself.

The average difference for all the answers, between the ranking given for each item and the ranking shown by the consensus, was less than 2.2 places; the rankings given in one of the answers were so close to agreement with the consensus that the average difference was only nine-tenths of one place, with 6 of the 14 rankings coinciding exactly. Such unanimity would seem to indicate that the results may be regarded as unusually reliable for an investigation of this kind.

Some Individual Ratings

The markedly high place given to Swimming Pool should be particularly noted; seven of the twelve answers ranked this item No. 1, either alone or with one or more other items; the other five ranked it No. 2. Also, the low rankings given to Running Track and to Jumping and Vaulting are worthy of note. These were perhaps to