

WRAP Website Activity Idea

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Hi Everyone!!

Have you ever been asked to do something, that you have been doing for so long, that you don't know where to start? As an Activity Director I have been playing "Dartball" with our residents for over 20 years. Now to be honest with you, 20 years ago I did not know what Dartball was. But I sure do now, so please be patient with me as I try to explain this popular and fun sport, that you can enjoy doing with the people that you care for.

Simply put, Dartball is baseball played with darts. The person throwing the darts is the batter, and the target is a 4 foot square board in the shape of a baseball diamond.

I need to tell you that I work in a skilled care nursing home. Most of the people that I work with are between 70 and 100 years old! So the idea of an activity of throwing at a target that is 4 feet wide, is a good one! Also, a wooden dart is used. It is larger than a graphite dart that you may use at a bar. The wooden dart is easy for our residents to grasp and throw.

If you go to the "Wikipedia" encyclopedia on the internet, and read the history of Dartball, it will tell you that the game has been around since 1923! It will also tell you that Wisconsin has a State Dartball Committee that helps to set rules and standards for the game. Please go to www.widartball.com for a lot of general information.

One of the benefits of being a member of the Central Wisconsin Activity Association (CWAA) is that your facility can put together a team and compete each year in our Summer Dartball League. As an organization the CWAA has taken the basic rules of Dartball and adjusted them to be more appropriate for the people that we work with.

The biggest example of this is that we allow the batter to be only 6 feet from the dartboard. When you read the Wisconsin State rules, you will see that they shoot from a distance of 20 feet! Most of my residents would be lucky to throw the dart 10 or 15 feet (they don't have a lot of upper body strength). Other changes that CWAA has made include playing just 7 innings instead of 9 (our older residents get tired more easily). We also play with 5 players per team instead of the 9 players that are allowed in the Wisconsin State rules.

All members of CWAA agree to the "adopted rules" that we use. So if you plan to start a league with your activity association, read the Wisconsin State Dartball rules, and decide if you want to use them as is, or make changes that will make the game more fun for the teams playing.

Boards and darts are available. The price of this equipment is fairly reasonable, there is a link to the Wisconsin company that makes the boards on the Wisconsin State Dartball website. But if you don't want to purchase a board, find a nice high school art class to make them for you! I say them, because we usually use 2 boards each year, one for practice, and one for games. Darts can still be purchased from Apex. Yes, the company that invented the game in 1923, is still around today, making darts!

Have Fun! Often when teams play they have cheer leaders, pom-poms and all! This is an activity that you can play year round with practice times in the winter months, and games all summer long. The teams in CWAA play one game a month in the Summer. The schedule is equally divided so that teams that have to travel one month, can have a home game another month. Feel free to contact me if you have other questions at michael_a_boucher@yahoo.com.

The two pictures are of the dartboard, and the darts that we use.

