

DC

iGen sports

Game for new-age fun

From cardio tennis to freestyle football and pickleball, new and exhilarating off-beat sports thrill young sports enthusiasts and fitness buffs in Chennai even as they bring on the adrenaline rush...



Striking a balance

Adrian Beschi spends hours in his room, balancing a football on his eyes, nose, cheeks, chest and just about wherever else he can. This 18-year-old marine engineering student isn't just killing time. He's practising for his favourite sport: Freestyle football. "It's a performance sport, a one-man show — and it's my fitness workout," says Adrian, who came first in the South India-level freestyle football competition held recently in Bengaluru.

"A lot of youngsters in Chennai are taking to this sport of late. The best part is that there are no rules. But individuals show off their tricks. Some of the basic moves include around the world, crossover, head stall, neck stall etc..

Freestylers benefit a lot — they gain control, creativity and quickness while playing football," says Adrian who is planning to start the city's first freestyle football club, Urban Stylers, sometime soon.

Adrian Beschi during a recent performance

Reach for the skies

To quench the young Chennaiite's thirst for adventure, Satish Kumar G.V. started The Wild Tribe Ranch, an adventure sports company, which also provides outbound training to corporates. Among several other daredevil activities, he introduced Geronimo, which is the tribal name of Trampoline Jump and a variation of bungee jumping. It has become an instant hit with youngsters in Chennai.

Satish says, "The activity ensures that any individual experiences anti-gravity and gravity in quick succession. There have been numerous instances when guests were not willing to try it out of fear, but after trying once, they have not passed up any opportunity to repeat the thrill."

Another popular activity is 'Bullie The Bull' which is inspired by the traditional sport, *Jallikattu*. It is a competitive bull ride in which one has to try sitting in the bull machine for the longest time.



Trampoline Jump is an instant hit with daredevils in the city

BACK TO ROOTS

Bringing the past into play

It was not the X-box but traditional games like *Kattam Villayattu* and *Parmapadam* which have caught the fancy of several game enthusiasts of late, thanks to their novelty factor. Vinita Siddhartha, founder of

Kreedra, a Chennai-based organisation which promotes traditional games says, "A lot of people are taking to traditional games as they are not only eco-friendly but also connect us with our roots. Recently we have done a lot of events and corporate workshops involving traditional games and the response has been tremendous." They've dusted off games such as *Pallanguzhi*, *Aadu Puli Aatam* and *Gilli Danda* and researched and repackaged them for youngsters and children.



SS Music VJs enjoy a *Parmapadam* game