

Courting success

By KYRA HOGGAN Calgary Sun

Greater strides are taken every year in taking the indoors outside to make your backyard a functional part of your household.

Brent Marinos is the owner of Calgary's Sport Court, and he says one of the best ways to get optimum use of the backyard is with his modular suspended floor system.

Ideal for a deck or backyard tennis, basketball or volleyball court, the floor is simple enough for the do-it-yourselfer and promises very little maintenance in the years to come.

"It's a self-draining deck tile that can breathe," he says. "You'll never have to paint or stain again."

The surface can be flooded in the winter for skating, and Marinos says the year-round enjoyment includes esthetic appeal.

"It comes in 12 colour choices, and the before and after is night and day," he says. "It's really attractive, and the life expectancy is 35 years, meaning you don't have to worry about staining or fading, either."

At \$3.50/square foot, the system is also affordable.

Another backyard or balcony option is your very own putting green.

Scott Bergmann, director of A Putt Above, says the latest craze is really taking off, with golfers all over the city never having to leave the house.

"We're now the official turf of the PGA tour," he says. "What makes us different is that we're completely environmentally friendly — the grass is made from recycled running shoes."

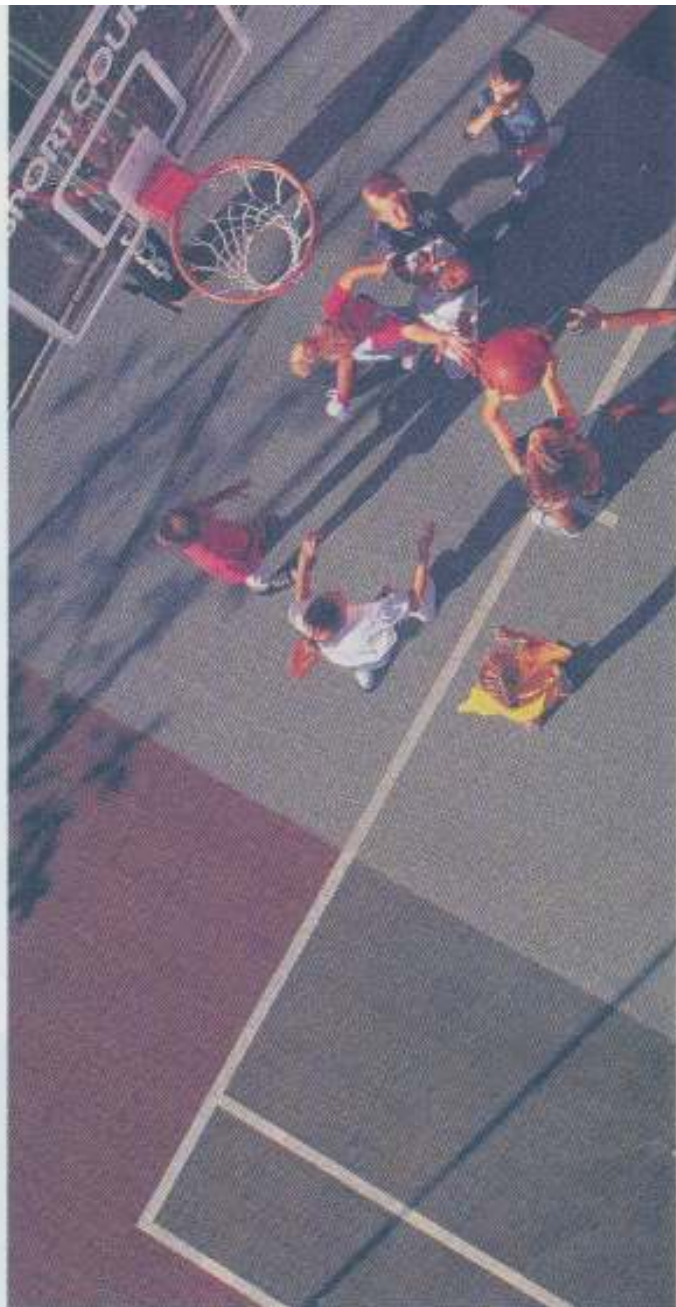
And don't think of the Astroturf of the '70s — Bergmann says this product looks and feels very much like real grass.

"Except that it never wears, never fades, never has to be cut, and can be washed off with a hose," he says. "It doesn't retain water, and it doesn't need to be moved or watered, either."

It can be tiered, built around trees — Bergmann says it's versatile enough to work virtually anywhere.

"We can install a putting green in your basement, if you want one," he says. "We also do complete lawns — scape turf — tee turf and chipping turf."

"Turf really has come a long, long way," he adds. "Except for the fact it stays green, you'd never know it's fake, even when you're walking on it."



— Photos courtesy Sport Court



Backyard tennis or basketball courts, turf and other surfaces are functional alternatives to grass in a backyard.