

Family Entertainment

Table Tennis, Anyone?

(NAPSA)—Once the staple of church basements and family rec rooms, table tennis has emerged as the latest craze of both the Hollywood elite and small-town America. Even the Obamas are playing the new national pastime.

Why the sudden resurgence of a game that has been around since the 1880s? For overstressed and overscheduled 21st century families, table tennis provides an opportunity to bond while getting some exercise.

For families with teenaged children, it provides an activity that transcends generational differences in tastes and interests. Actress and table tennis enthusiast Susan Sarandon was reportedly introduced to the game by her teenage son and soon became obsessed by it.

For families with young children, like the Obamas, table tennis gives kids the confidence to test their physical prowess against their parents in a venue where they can be competitive and win. And for parents concerned about their and their children's fitness, table tennis provides an activity that gets the whole family moving with health benefits that include:

- Cardio and aerobic workouts
- Enhanced reflexes
- Improved hand-eye coordination
- Low risk of injury.

According to industry experts, during the past two years, table tennis participation has grown nearly 25 percent. No doubt that growth has been helped by the game's new hip image, with its coolness factor solidified by its



Table tennis offers a fun way for families to spend quality time together while engaging in healthy cardiovascular exercise.

appearance in an episode of "Entourage." Table tennis fans in the entertainment community include George Clooney, Edward Norton, Matthew Broderick and rap star 50 Cent.

Table tennis hit a new celebrity high when it was revealed that President Obama purchased a Tournament Series Table Tennis Model from Stiga for the White House. A personal purchase by the president, it is in keeping with the Obama family focus on fitness and spending time together.

"Table tennis is the perfect way for a busy executive like the president to spend quality time with his friends and family," said Nick Martin, product manager, Stiga. "With its fast pace, the game, which is often called the 'brain game,' requires total mental concentration, and because it can be played by people of varying skill levels, it is a great family game."

So next time you hear the president shout, "Yes, we can!" he may be exhorting his table tennis partner to smash the ball.