



JUDGES' COMMENTS:

"I like the mission of 'something for everyone,' which [Pirates Cove] seems to meet well."

OVERALL COMMITMENT TO AQUATICS Class 5 (pop. 50,000 and under)

City of Englewood (Colo.) Pirates Cove

The aquatics patrons of Englewood, Colo., were losing interest. A 25-meter, Z-shaped pool with six lanes wasn't cutting it anymore. The facility had been running in the red at nearly \$20,000 for several years. At this rate, with tightening budget constraints, it wouldn't last much longer. A plan was needed. That's when aquatics officials brought in the pirates.

With \$8 million of a \$12 million city improvement bond project, the old Z-shaped community pool closed its doors in September 2003 and began construction of Pirates Cove.

The challenges were numerous. Attempting to fit the new waterpark, a 6,900-square-foot leisure pool and six-lane competitive pool into the triangular property lines was as complex a job as a contortionist attempting to fit into a box. Complicating matters even further was a 16-foot-grade land elevation. The solution was three different levels of property, filtered in a central pump room, each utilizing every inch of free space. On Memorial Day weekend in 2004, the new pirate-themed facility opened its doors.

A bronze pirate statue greets guests by growling pirate maxims and piping sea songs. The facility anticipated \$40,000 profit for its first opening season, from Memorial Day to Labor Day. It brought in \$250,000.

To continue to meet the need for a community pool, the city of Englewood's Pirates Cove provides all of its previous water fitness, safety and recreation classes in the mornings.

The work hasn't been easy. The city's park and recreation aquatic director put in 16-hour days during the first year to get things going. But once the project was up and running, the result was an innovative facility that recaptured the community's imagination and brought in the loot to boot. — *Rin-rin Yu*



FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS: The pirate-themed waterpark brought in \$250,000 in its first year, besting the \$40,000 expectation • The city continues to offer the same programming in its new facility • Creative use of space allowed numerous facilities on difficult-to-use property

FEATURES: 1 leisure pool • 4 water slides • 1 vortex pool • 1 lazy river • 1 water playground • 1 diving board

PROGRAMMING: Learn-to-swim • Diving • Lifesaving • Water aerobics • Scuba