

Play It Again Sports

an answer to parents' prayers

Used athletic equipment a great deal for local kids

By Brenna Deck

Attention, moms and dads: your prayers have been answered. A store called Play It Again Sports officially opened in Berwyn on July 31 to the delight of athletes and parents alike.

To illustrate the need for a store such as Play It Again, owner Marcie Romberger of Berwyn explained, "My own two girls play ice hockey, and every year I was buying new equipment at a very high price." Funding a young athlete's hobby can become expensive, since children grow fast, both physically and in terms of their level of play.

"I just thought, 'We can't be the only ones who are looking for a place to buy used things,'" Romberger remembers thinking before opening the Berwyn branch of Play It Again, a store that buys, sells, and trades new and used athletic and fitness equipment.

And so Romberger got in touch with Sarah Mahady of Minneapolis, who works for Winmark. Winmark is a company that supports the start-up of business franchises across the nation, and Mahady was there for the ribbon-cutting ceremony in Berwyn on July 31.

"It's a lot of work to put one of these stores together," Romberger said. "We were open for six weeks just to buy [used items] so that we could be ready to open today."

In addition to over a month of pre-opening buying, employees at Berwyn's Play It Again traveled to the corporate offices in Minneapolis to learn how to advertise and price used products.

"There is a training program," said Mahady. "We wouldn't take anything that was-

n't safe and in great working order."

Within its first few minutes of opening, the store already had plenty of customers. Marian Nalitt of Berwyn said, "I think it's great, great, *great* for families with kids." Adds Devin Murphy, also of Berwyn, "I'm happy that they opened here."

Their daughter, Carly Nalitt, is 2 years old and has already developed a passion for golf. "So yes, we will be [back often]," Murphy said.

Representatives from surrounding businesses also came to the ribbon-cutting ceremony to support the new business.

"We encourage the community to support small businesses," said Eileen Connolly, executive vice president and chief operating officer of the Main Line Chamber of Commerce. "Part of our mission is to help small businesses get the word out and help them network in any way we can."

Added Kevin Nicholson, of Walsh and Nicholson Financial Group, "These [small-business owners] are putting themselves on the line... but they love their community, so it's worth it to them."

The love for their community is what motivates local businessmen and -women to provide their customers with the best products and the best service.

"I'm a firm believer in supporting small business," he said, "because it keeps the money in the community. But really, the service is better. It's more personal."

Businesses such as Play It Again — the "personal" businesses — begin when intuitive community members choose to address what the area really needs. Romberger's crucial addition of Play It Again Sports to the collection of shops lining Lancaster Avenue will leave many wondering, "Why didn't I think of that?"





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Marian Nalitt of Berwyn takes a few practice swings before purchasing a set of golf clubs at Play It Again Sports at 1004, Lancaster Ave. in Berwyn. For more information call 610-651-0202 or log on to playitagainsportsberwyn.com.