

“Yuru Sports” Trial Event

- ◆Date
Sunday, December 8th
- ◆Venue
West Sports Center
(Hiroshima Univ.)
- ◆Department in charge
Research Center for Diversity and Inclusion
- ◆Number of participants
40 people
- ◆Purpose and Overview

This event was organized as part of the “Research Project on the Inclusiveness of Sports through the Lens of Yuru Sports.”*

The project aims to address the issue of exclusivity in sports and explore their potential for inclusivity by drawing inspiration from Yuru Sports.

One of its key objectives is to enhance the inclusiveness of university sports classes and to foster stronger connections among individuals in local communities and workplaces through the implementation of inclusive sports events.

In 2024, a preliminary study was conducted via a Yuru Sports trial session held on campus. University students, faculty, staff, and their families participated as monitors. A total of 40 participants engaged in eight different games across morning and afternoon sessions. To examine the concept of inclusiveness, pre- and post-event questionnaires and interviews were administered.

*“Yuru Sports” is a novel category of sports developed by the World Yuru Sports Association. These activities are designed to be enjoyable for all individuals—regardless of age, gender, or athletic ability (as described on the association’s website)

◆Report

Among the 40 participants, 20 were in their 20s, with the overall age range spanning from their teens to their 50s. Of the 29 respondents to the pre-event questionnaire, 22 indicated that they “like” or “somewhat like” sports, while 7 stated they “dislike” or “somewhat dislike” sports. This suggests that the event successfully attracted individuals who are not typically enthusiastic about sports.

Interviews with participants who expressed a dislike for sports revealed comments such as:

- “I saw the name Yuru Sports on the flyer and couldn’t imagine what kind of sport it was, but it sounded interesting and approachable, so I felt comfortable signing up.”
- “A senior invited me, and since it said Yuru Sports, I thought I’d give it a try.”

These responses indicate that the event lowered the psychological barrier to participation compared to conventional



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sports activities. In the questionnaire section on “Reasons for participating” (multiple answers allowed), the most common response was “It sounded fun” (16 responses). Additionally, 9 participants selected “I believed in the idea of inclusive sports,” demonstrating interest in the inclusive philosophy behind Yuru Sports.

In the post-event questionnaire, participants shared the following impressions:

- “It was great that everyone could start on equal footing regardless of athletic ability, and everyone had a chance to shine.”
- “Even though we didn’t know each other, we gradually became friends through sports and felt a sense of team—it was a lot of fun.”
- “We weren’t just playing for fun; we competed seriously, which created team unity even among people who had just met.”
- “Some games had strong elements of play and didn’t require much physical strength or stamina, so strategy played a key role.”
- “It was wonderful to see people of all ages and genders enjoying the same sport together in the same space.”
- “The event had a fun and welcoming atmosphere. I enjoyed both the thrill of competition and the joy of sports itself! The tools were also cute and intriguing—they made me want to participate!”

Interviews highlighted several factors that contributed to the enjoyment of Yuru Sports: everyone was new to the games, so skill gaps were less noticeable; strategizing together to win was engaging; and the lively atmosphere, filled with laughter and cheers, enhanced the overall experience.

Overall, the event enabled individuals of varying ages and athletic abilities—many of whom had never met before—to engage in friendly competition under shared rules. This fostered both mental and physical engagement, as well as a strong sense of camaraderie. Notably, 24 respondents agreed to participate in post-event interviews, indicating a high level of interest and engagement.

Looking ahead, a pilot study is scheduled for 2025, followed by a main study in 2026. The results of these analyses will be compiled in 2027 to further investigate the inclusiveness of sports. In practical terms, inclusive sports will be integrated into Hiroshima University’s curriculum, and inclusive sports events will be held in communities and workplaces to help build a society where everyone can participate.

