

Michigan rinks offer high-end fun with create-your-own parties

By Dionne Obeso

Kids can be wild, parents can worry, and some activities are just not as much fun for some children, which is why Kim and Dan Brown of the Rollhaven roller skating rinks offer specially-trained party staff and customizable parties to fit the needs of any family and all of their friends.

Rollhaven is composed of three rinks. One is situated in Flint, Mich., and is the largest at 28,000 sq ft. with an 80 by 180 ft. skate floor. The other two rinks that the Browns own are in Owosso, Mich. and Flushing,

Mich., and are about 18,000 sq. ft. each, with rink floors measuring 60 by 160 ft. The Flint rink also has a permanent laser tag arena and a two-story soft play structure, while the smaller rinks have temporary laser tag arenas depending on the time of the year. Brown also rents an inflatable for special events at the two smaller rinks.

Despite the presence of colleges around all three Rollhavens, Kim Brown and her team focus on marketing to the five- to 14-year-old age group and their families. Rink activities are centered around this age group, and the party packages are set up primarily

for young skaters and their friends.

The parties that the Browns offer at their rinks are fully customizable, with parents able to pick out any combination of one, two or all three activities for their guests. Although parties must be at least 10 people to start, prices rely entirely upon the parents from that point forward. Parents can pick from any of the activities, increasing the price per guest slightly for more fun opportunities, and they can, of course, invite more guests.

"Costs can climb and become truly high-end if parents choose to add features like extra food, goody bags, or more than

the 10 guests that are required for any party. Parties can start at as little as \$120 for one activity and 10 guests, but prices will rise with each add-on or additional guest," said Kim Brown.

No matter how many or how few guests, each party at Rollhaven comes complete with a party table (which is reserved for two hours), a party coach to help keep things running smoothly, and the set-up. Parties also get a balloon centerpiece, postcard invitations for the guests, ten tokens and coupons for



Ellie, daughter of manager Kiley McCreedy, in the "Money Machine" at Rollerhaven, Flint, Mich.

each guest and a trip to the Money Machine for the lucky birthday boy or girl. The Money Machine blows coupons and cash all around a special booth while the birthday child makes wild grabs. This is extra fun to watch as well as to experience!

Parties are kept extra special by the party coaches, who are trained to anticipate the needs of the guests and especially of the parents. "We have always told our staff that the birthday party is about the birthday child, but a very close second is the birthday Mom. When we train our party coaches, we teach them some of the telltale signs that help them anticipate what the birthday Mom may want even before she knows. We spend a lot of time talking about heading off problems before they become problems, how to smooth things over themselves and when to hand it over to a manager," Brown said.

Streamlining and simplifying parties is taken a step further with specially printed wrist bands. The bands let any employee know at a glance whether a child is entitled to a given activity or not. Bands are distinguished by color as well as printing, and party guests can pay for their own bands if they want to enjoy an activity that is not on the party agenda.

A trip through the Money Machine is on the agenda for every birthday party, but only for the child who is celebrating! Parties are often booked just so that children can go through the Machine, and some parents will book their child's birthday immediately after seeing the Money Machine in action. "On average, a birthday child probably comes away with \$5 and 6 to 8 coupons. Some more, some less," said Brown. She added that children who have trouble grasping the concept may get an extra push of the button to make sure that they get the most out of the experience.



SKUBS
ALL-STAR

Spinner Skate Wheels

Wheels are...
Lighter
and Wear Longer!

\$129.95
SET OF 8



Blue with Red Rim



Black with Blue Rim



Black with Silver Rim



Red with Blue Rim

Skubs All-Star Skate Wheels come with the same high quality, polished aluminum spinner and precision spinner bearing.

STYLES AVAILABLE AS SHOWN with L.C. FIVE SPOKE and L.C. CALI SPINNERS

SKUBS SKATE WHEELS ARE MANUFACTURED AND DISTRIBUTED BY U.S.L. SKATE, VENTURA, CA.
visit: www.uslskate.com or call (661) 722-0139

photography & design by: I.G.G. Entertainment www.iggentertainment.com