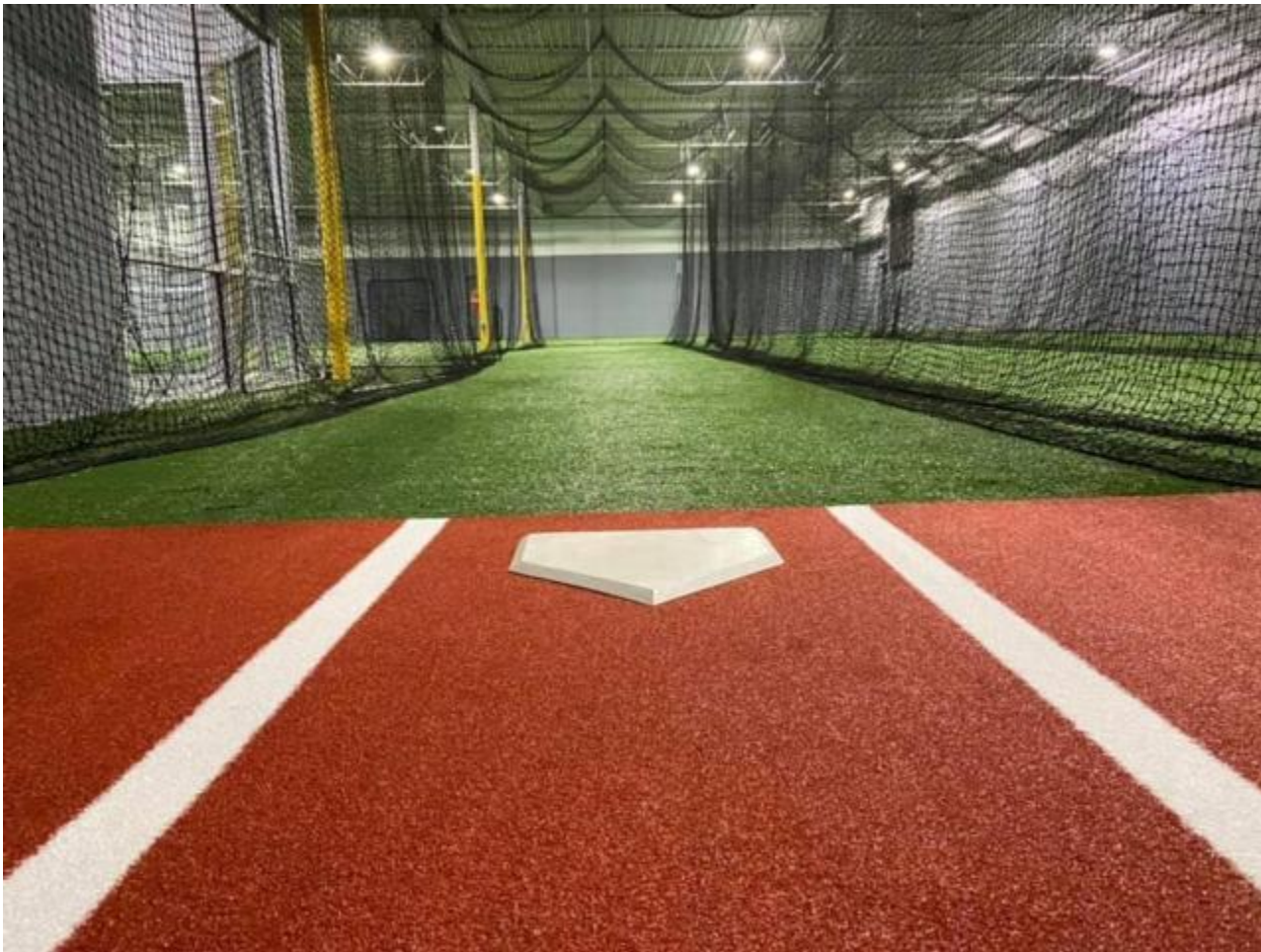


# 6-4-3 Sports Training Facility Now Open In Eastgate Plaza, Offers 10 Baseball and Softball Fields, Along With Soccer, Other Sports

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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EAST ALTON - A new indoor training facility, 6-4-3 Sports Training, opened on Nov. 1 to offer area athletes and teams indoor training on sports such as baseball, softball, soccer and other sports in a year-round venue.

The facility is owned by Doug Booten, the manager of the Alton Post 126 American Legion baseball team, and Brad Barnard, and offers 10 baseball and softball fields, along with the Happy Feet soccer program for toddlers and younger children.

"I've always wanted to do this, and a good friend, Brad Barnard, talked me into it," Booten said during a recent interview, "and we're partners. It was needed in the area, and I'm trying to start a feeder program for the Legion."

Barnard has a 13-and-under team, the Metro-East Solders, set up to be the Alton Legion's first feeder club, and they'll use the facility for year-round training.

"It's a place for all the teams in the area," Booten said, "and it gives us a chance to work with all the kids, whether it be feeder or Legion, more often."

The facility is very much baseball and softball oriented, but the Happy Feet soccer program will play an important part of the business. The bottom line is to help all athletes, no matter their chosen sport, to become better players.

"It's a business, but we want everyone to get better," Booten said, "whether it's baseball, softball, or any sport. And it gives them a chance to work out during the off-season."

The facility is in its infancy, but things are already starting to look up for 6-4-3.

"It's looking pretty good, and it's probably better than I expected," Booten said. "We're looking to add private trainers, and hopefully have camps over Thanksgiving and the Holidays."

The facility does have plans to possibly expand if things continue to go well, and more players and teams schedule workouts.

"In the long term, I hope we'll be able to expand," Booten said. "Our facility is over 9,000 square feet, and the owner of Eastgate Plaza has vacant space next to us, so it's possible we could expand if things go well."

An individual membership to 6-4-3 is \$300 per year, and \$170 for six months, with access to the facility during regular hours, which are from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily, and is also open to rentals from teams. There will always be one batting cage open to members during rentals. Open field rates will be \$10 per person, with days and times to be scheduled, and team rental rates will be \$50 per hour, with a 90-minute minimum. Weekly rental rates are also available to teams, with six months going for \$1,750, and a

full year for \$3,400, savings of \$200 and \$500 respectively. Batting cages can also be rented for \$25 for 30 minutes, with a two-player maximum, and five sessions are also available for \$100.

"We're really looking forward to working with all the athletes in the area," Booten said.

For further information on 6-4-3 Sports Training, please call (618) 977-4275.