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Par For The Course

Lewis & Clark
Disc Golf Course
Expanding To 18
Holes, Offering
More Challenges

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE
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Lewis and Clark Recreation Area is expanding its disc golf course to 18 holes in the hopes of getting kids outside.

Lewis and Clark district supervisor Shane Bertsch said luring kids away from the TV and getting them outside has been a part of Lewis and Clark's mission statement for the last few years. He is even hoping to host more tournaments in Yankton because of the expansion.

"Disc golf is a good way to get outside," he said. "It's exercise — you get to go out, walk around and the whole family can play. With regular golf, it's kind of hard to take a five year old, but they can throw a Frisbee. That's what we're looking for."

"We've had the disc golf trilogy tournament at the Memorial course, our Gavin's course and the Corps of Engineers one, but we looked at the possibility of hosting tournaments down the road, maybe even the state tournament."

The Lewis and Clark disc golf course has been in Yankton since 2004, and Bertsch said when the expansion is complete it will be one of the nicest 18-hole courses in the state.

"You've got one half that's wide open, and the next nine we're adding is going to have a few more obstacles — a lot more trees, narrow fairways — so you might have to do a little searching if you throw your disc off the main fairway," he said.

Yankton Parks and Recreation Director Todd Larson has been involved with the Memorial Park disc course, and said the obstacles will be a good addition to the Lewis and Clark course.

"When regular golf courses are designed, they have an open fairway and the obstacles go around the fairway. With the new course expansion out at Lewis and Clark, the trees will become an obstacle in the middle of the fairway," he said. "That will be a challenge for people, and it will be fun to see if they can get around those obstacles by curving the discs or not curving them. It'll be a whole different dynamic."

Bertsch hopes the expansion will be finished by June.

After clearing the brush from the new course area, he and his crew cleaned the area, ground down the tree stumps and prepared the ground to plant grass seed.

The grass is now coming in, and Bertsch is waiting for the rain to help the grass grow. Two basket locations will then be added to each new hole so the distances can be altered for each hole, and cement tee pads will be put down. A few existing holes will also be redesigned during the process, Bertsch said.

Larson said the Memorial disc course expanded to 18 holes three years ago, and the expansion was well received. Larson also said he sees the same future for the Lewis and Clark course.

"A lot of people have enjoyed it," he said. "With the campgrounds out at Lewis and Clark, it will be a nice addition. This new course will keep the people who already play disc golf, and whether people head out to Lewis and Clark for biking, camping or fishing, they'll attract some new people to the sport."

Bertsch believes the new addition will bring people in from surrounding areas.

"If you're really into a sport or an activity, you're going to drive an hour or so to partake in it," he said. "This is going to be a really nice course when it's done. People will be really happy with it. I can see people coming from an hour away to play the course."

You can follow Emily Niebrugge on Twitter at twitter.com/ENiebrugge



COURTESY PHOTO

The disc golf course at the Lewis and Clark Lake Recreation Area is currently being expanded to an 18-hole course. The nine new holes cut into wooded areas, adding more challenge to the sport. LEFT: Construction crews are shown clearing away brush and other debris



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

as the new fairways are carved out near the Gavins Point Area at the west end of the Recreation Area. RIGHT: The new fairways will be more challenging to disc golfers, who will need more accuracy as they navigate the course.

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