

## SPORTS

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## Disc golf course brings together students, athletes and faculty



Nate Secrest '15, founder of the disc golf club, practices on the course located in The Meadows and is open to the local community to use.

“...I would definitely say (disc golf) helps out in getting a good mix of people from different backgrounds together.”

DANIEL MCFADDIN, SENIOR

BY THOR TOBIASSEN  
STAFF WRITER

A disc golf course that started as a passion project for one Guilford College student has steadily grown to become a thriving part of the campus community.

Senior Nate Secrest is the founder of the disc golf club and the designer of the course that runs alongside the cross-country track.

Secrest hit upon the idea of building a disc golf course on campus when he was a first-year.

“At the time, I went to (former Student Affairs Vice President) Aaron Fetrow and said ‘Hey, I have this really cool idea: I really want to make a disc golf course,’” said Secrest. “Fetrow was totally on board and was really excited that someone, as an underclassman, wanted to start this thing.”

Once Secrest had the support of the administration, he consulted the school’s engineering and landscaping departments as well as an experienced disc golf course designer. From there, Secrest and his friends began installing the chain baskets, tee signs, mats and gravel areas to facilitate play during wet weather to create the course in the Meadows.

Disc golf, invented by the Disc Golf Association in 1976, has a concept similar to classic golf. Players throw specially designed flying discs into chain baskets attached to steel poles, trying to get the disc into the basket with as few throws as possible. According to the DGA’s website, there are over 2,500 disc golf courses in the U.S. today, and over 7 million people have played the sport at one time or another since its invention.

The Meadows course is open to the public and has seen its popularity rise

year after year.

“Every Saturday or Sunday, you’ll go out there and see 20 people on the course at a time,” said Secrest.

“(Disc golf is) something that engages students and faculty, and anybody in the community,” said Assistant Study Abroad Director Daniel Diaz. “You don’t have to be somebody here at Guilford; you can be living here in the neighborhood as well.”

“It’s an outdoor activity that creates a therapeutic space in your life.”

Senior Daniel McFaddin agrees and says the game is particularly good for bridging the gap between athletes and non-athletes.

“I met a bunch of friends who play disc golf here on the course,” said McFaddin. “We still hit each other up and play now.”

“They’re not athletes, and I was an athlete at the time, so I would definitely say that helps out in getting a good mix of people from different backgrounds together.”

Secrest agrees that the course has made positive contributions to Guilford’s sense of community.

“It’s really been interesting for me to see the connection that I make between my friends, who are non-athletes, and this athletic connection,” said Secrest. “It’s a chill sport in that it can be competitive among your friends if you want it to be, but there’s no benchmark for doing well.”

“It’s just getting out there, enjoying the meadows, having fun and playing with your friends.”

Future plans for the course include the continued maintenance of the course’s landscaping by the Disc Golf Club, as well as exciting special events such as LED-lit night play and a tournament to be held some time this spring.

## Tennis teams eager to prove themselves

MEN’S AND WOMEN’S TEAMS PUSH TOWARDS FINALS

BY BANNING WATSON  
STAFF WRITER

“This is one of the best teams I’ve seen since I’ve been here at Guilford,” said senior tennis player and team captain Blake Brown. “We’re really pushing each other to get better, and we have a lot of guys who are willing to do what it takes to win.”

“I think we can definitely make a push to get into the finals this year.”

Last season, the men’s tennis team was narrowly defeated in the Old Dominion Athletic Conference semifinals by Virginia Wesleyan, ending the season with a record of 7-11 and ranked sixth out of eight teams in the conference with a record of 5-5.

“Both the guys’ and girls’ teams did exceptionally last season, despite tournament losses,” said head men’s and women’s coach Dave McCain. “For the men’s team, I hope we can finish in the top four in general and top two in conference. For the women’s team, I hope we can finish in the top eight.”

The team has somewhat hedged their bets this season.

“I think we have a shot at first, but we’ll probably be the second in the conference behind Washington & Lee,” said senior tennis player and Fellowship of Christian Athletes president Turner Votipka. “I’m not going to lie to myself, but we’re going to play our best.”

Washington & Lee’s reign as champs extends to the Guilford women’s tennis team, as they eliminated Guilford in the quarterfinals of the ODAC conference last season, ending the women’s season on an overall record of 6-11, with a conference record 4-7.

“I’m really optimistic for this season because I feel like we have finally created a good group through recruiting and first-years,” said sophomore tennis player Nora Prokosch. “But, I think this season, for the girls’ team, there’s going to be a little more insider competition because we’re closer in the rankings than we have been previously.”

“We do play very aggressively, but there isn’t as much inner conflict as reflected in the guy’s team.”

Inner conflict challenges the men’s team, but Brown suggests that it is important for team growth.

“I think keeping focused is always hard, and being competitive within your own team is a great way to keep everyone at their top, but it also creates a lot of pressure within the team dynamic,” said Brown. “So, it’s important to remind everyone that we are a team, that we’re in this together and we have to keep pushing and working hard.”

Among the competitors on the men’s team are junior Erik Meiler and Votipka who were a second team All-ODAC choice in #1 doubles last season. Votipka also holds a 10-7 record in #1 singles. Senior Trevor Cox ended last season with a singles record of 9-7.

Meanwhile, for the women, seniors Haley Andrews and Allison Hewitt led the team last season, with both making great contributions to the team and hoping to carry that momentum into this season.

The women’s team’s opening games of the season have been postponed due to weather, so there is currently no way of telling how this season will shape up for them.

## Upcoming matches

Saturday Feb. 28  
@Averett University 2.00pm

Sunday March 1  
@Lynchburg College 2.00pm

Saturday March 7  
@Guilford 2.00pm

Friday March 6 (women’s team)  
@Guilford 2.00pm