

Green Lane Disc Golf Course History

In 2019, Green Lane Park was approached by a friend of the Kelly family about installing a disc golf course in honor of Ryan C. Kelly, a local resident who loved the park and had passed away. The staff thought it would be a great activity to add to the park's recreation opportunities. Kevin McAndrew & Jeff Scholl were brought in as the course designers.

Many hours were spent walking through the woods looking at possible holes. Months later a tentative layout was proposed. A final design (the third attempt) was approved in the winter of 2020. Good things come to those who wait. A beautiful piece of land was chosen, a hillside overlooking Deep Creek Lake. What a beautiful setting.

The Ryan C. Kelly Disc Golf Course at Green Lane Park was about to become a reality. It was designed to be one of the longest courses in the state with one of the highest pars in the country. It deserves its nickname "The Green Monster."

Things were moving along thanks to the hard work of the park staff and volunteers. Then one day we showed up to work on the course and were informed by the park that it was closing due to the Coronavirus, and all work came to a screeching halt. That was a time of great uncertainty. What would happen to the course? What about all the countless hours spent in preparation? Would it all be for nothing?

A short time after, park staff invited Kevin and Jeff back to continue the work in the spring of 2020. From March to June, the crew hacked and slashed through 2.7 miles of fairway to advance the project along. There were many days of sweat and Chario's sandwiches, "fivers", and "ranger" rides as the course began to take shape.

The park reopened just weeks after the Pandemic broke. Who would have thought that out of something so terrible as the virus would come an amazing disc golf course? As the warm days of spring gave way to the heat of summer, a different problem arose. How do you keep up with the new growth on a course this big? The fairways were growing in faster than we could trim them down.

Mid-summer of 2020 was the low point for the group. Tired and feeling overwhelmed by the immensity of the work ahead, we agreed that the only thing we could do was wait for fall and the end of the growing season. It was then that reinforcements arrived in the form of additional volunteers. Words cannot express how much it lifted our spirits to have new energy and excitement. Rex Saul, a park maintenance worker, began to mow the fairways in the fields, and the course started to (for the first time) look like we had envisioned. As fall arrived, we gave the course one last cut and turned our attention to the hardest part of the project, tee pads. We had decided to go with turf tees knowing that they were the best. Turf is also labor intensive. Installing thirty-one pads over such a distance on a hillside was a daunting task. Each one needed to have a flat spot excavated, and then a stone base put down. Following that, wooden 4x4 frames were built and filled with stone and then screenings. Kevin used his 'Dingo' to level the tee areas and afterwards had to replace the engine at his own expense.

The question remained hanging over our heads. How were we going to move that much material over that much distance on that hillside? Park maintenance worker Paul Green to the rescue. He moved all the material by tractor and, over the course of a few months, the tee pads were completed. Hole two required a deck to be built over boulders next to the lake to create the beautiful over-the-water tee shot. During the months of construction, hundreds of Belgian blocks were carried to the location of the signature kidney-shaped island green, and were used to build a knee-high wall to contain the discs that fly into it. The result was one of the most scenic and challenging finishing holes in disc golf.

As we moved toward Thanksgiving, we felt good about our progress. Our goal was to complete the pads by winter and drop the baskets in the spring. We decided to drop the baskets before winter and to soft open the course. This would bring the necessary foot traffic to help keep down the inevitable spring growth. The baskets went in quickly and the course was born.

The first official round was played the week of Thanksgiving 2020. It was a moment I will never forget as long as I live. I shot nine over par. Building a course of this magnitude is not easy and it takes a good team of people. I was incredibly

blessed to work alongside so many great individuals. There are far too many to mention here, but to those who shared this journey with us, we will always be grateful. We are encouraged by the thought of all the people who will enjoy this course long after we are too old to play it. It was a labor of love.

Pastor Jeff Scholl, Green Monster Co-Designer