

## **Disc Golf: An Activity or a Lifestyle?**

By: Eric Fenstermaker

BOALSBURG, Pa. – Some people spend \$10 on a frisbee or disc for a beach trip or an afternoon in the park.

Davis Michael has spent over \$1,000 on and dedicates 10-15 hours a week to those same pieces of plastic.

Michael is an avid disc golfer who spends the majority of his free time thinking about, planning for and participating in the sport.

He works two part-time jobs as a landscaper and a contractor in Centre County and is a former recreation, parks and tourism management student at Penn State. His love of nature and being outdoors pairs well with disc golf – a sport played primarily in the woods.

Unlike many disc golfers, Michael comes from a background without baseball, bowling or ultimate frisbee – three sports common for competitors to play before taking up disc golf.

He received a starter pack and tried out the sport in fall of 2018, when he went only a handful of times. Just a few months later, Michael found himself playing nearly every other day.

With over 500 rounds played, Michael is consumed by his love for ripping drives on fairways and hearing the sound of the disc colliding with the metal chains of the basket after sinking a putt.

“I love the challenge of it,” Michael said. “It’s so easy to get into.”

Michael has his own disc golf basket and specialty backpack designed for all his discs and equipment. At one point, Michael said he had about 100 discs in his possession, including the ones he found.

Ben Wideman, an officer for the Centre County Disc Golf Association (CCDGA), met Michael a few years ago on campus. Wideman said he is impressed with how quickly Michael came to love the sport.

“It seems like it went from a moment where I didn’t know Davis, to Davis is always around,” Wideman said.

When he’s not out playing courses, Michael is redesigning them.

He worked to redesign the Harvest Fields course in Centre County by helping craft the layout of the holes and installing equipment. Michael constantly thinks about ways to improve courses, even spending whole days revamping and renovating them.

“His appetite just seems endless,” Wideman said. “I’m always amazed at how much more he seems to have in the tank when it comes to disc golf.”

Michael is a liaison for the CCDGA where he is the primary contact for the Tri-Municipal course. Wideman said Davis completed most of the backbreaking labor to move it from a nine-hole to an 18-hole course.

Michael works to grow the disc golf community in Centre County and keep things running smoothly as the sport has rapidly grown in popularity during the pandemic.

He said he loves bringing people together to play the sport while being outdoors.

“I enjoy the community, and it’s fun to be outside in nature,” Michael said.

Michael said he’d love to travel around the country and play new courses, but he also wants to teach disc golf to different communities and groups of people. He’s also still searching for his first ace and all-birdie round at Circleville Park.