

ISLAND LIFE

DISC IN ONE

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It's golf played with a frisbee. But they're not called frisbees, they're called discs.

Seasoned disc golf players like Ridgeway's Richard Sampson carry a backpack that fits around 25 of the brightly coloured flying machines.

The discs have fast-flying names like firebirds, eagles, wasps and panthers and sit side-by-side in the backpack like plates in a dish rack.

"The challenge is to fly the discs through narrow fairways of trees," Sampson says.

"There's a great amount of skill in pulling off a good shot and landing a long putt into a basket."

The 48-year-old first played the game in Texas 25 years ago and is the president of the newly formed Hobart Disc Golf Club.

Despite disc golf existing in Hobart since 1985, he says the club only just formed because the interest in the sport here is continuously increasing.

The number of courses nationally has doubled in the past three years to 65 and there is also an 18-basket course in Burnie and a private course in Judbury.

The aim of the game is to fly a disc into an elevated metal basket made up of heavy chains.

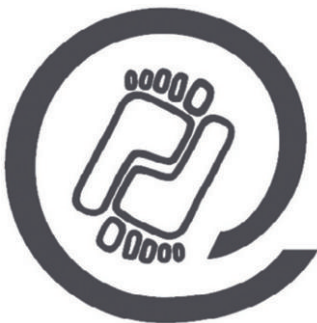
The further away you are from the basket when the disc gets in, he says, the greater the excitement.

Sampson's best hole in one was 137m.

"It's a great sport because it's free, anyone can play, you don't have to book the course and it's open 365 days a year, and you can play alongside mates so it's a social game with lots of time to chat," Sampson says.

"And then you've also got this competitive element so there's a great spirit to the game."

The picturesque 8ha Poimena Reserve course at Austins Ferry has a view of Mt Wellington and the River Derwent with lots of gullies and sloping fairways. After the end of the 18 baskets, players have usually walked at least 5km.



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