

# Sports



John Harvey

Aaron Bonine sizes up a shot during a round of disc golf Sunday at New Quarter Park.

## Disc golf reaches new heights

By John Harvey

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YORK — How would you like to play a round of golf in half the time and for a fraction of the price of any golf course. And here's the ultimate mulligan: you'll never lose a golf ball.

New Quarter Park gives residents another golfing option with disc golf. For \$3 a day, individuals can play from sunrise to sundown and play as many rounds of golf as they can year-round.

Disc golf was formally organized in the 1970s and has gained in popularity over the decades thanks to the growth of courses throughout the United States. According to the Professional Disc Golf Association, there are nearly 3,300 courses across the country, including 65 in Virginia.

Aaron Bonine and his wife Lauren Bonine are avid disc golfers and are members of the Newport News Disc Golf Club.

"My husband actually got me into it," Lauren said in an interview Sunday. "He's been playing a lot longer. We were looking for a good way to get outdoors and get some exercise and disc golf did just that for us."

Disc golf can be played from school age to old age, making it one lifetime fitness sport. The PDGA sanctions events for men and women of every skill level.

While the object of the game is similar to regular golf, the equipment is much different. "Your ball and



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Lauren Bonine unleashes a drive during Sunday's disc golf match played at New Quarter Park.

your club are the same thing," said Aaron Bonine, vice president of Newport News Disc Golf Club, established in 1998.

Instead of woods and hybrid irons, disc golfers carry around a variety of discs in their golf bag. The common types of discs are drivers which are lighter and can travel long distances off the tee pad. The mid-rangers, known in traditional golf as irons, allow golfers to maneuver around trees and other shrubbery to get

closer to the hole. Just like in ball golf, putters are used to finish off holes.

Aaron Bonine summed up the sport in one sentence: "The goal is to throw the disc as far as you can and get it in the basket in as few shots as you can."

One of the interesting aspects of disc golf is that it can be played all year. Whether it's in the dog days of

See *Disc golf*, page 4B

## Post 39 tourney contender

By Tanner Sheldon  
Correspondent

JAMES CITY — For nearly a decade, Williamsburg Post 39 has been a force as a perennial District 3 title contender.

Coach Tom Richardson has even bigger expectations this summer, as Post 39 has been named host of the 2013 American Legion state tournament.

When the Wildflowers take the field on Wednesday night in their season opener, it will have a totally different look. With the departure of Colonial Post 1776, Post 39 is once again the only team in town, pulling from the likes of Lafayette, Warhill, Jamestown, New Kent, West Point, Christchurch and Hampton Roads Academy.

"Our goals are to win the district and then the state. Our pitching staff will be second to none and the depth of this team is impressive. It is very exciting," Richardson said when talking about the upcoming season.

Warhill High standout Tyler Klinedinst spoke highly about the potential for the upcoming season as well.

"With the good group of guys we have this year, it definitely sets the bar high. The number one goal to start is winning that district title."

Richardson believes that a deep pitching staff anchored by former Warhill standouts Teddy West, and Trevor Otey, along with Bay Rivers District Player of the year Michael Brumfield will fit the long season perfectly.

Bay Rivers District first team utility player Blake Wills, with the help of Griffin Colorado, will man the catching duties. Warhill's Klinedinst and Clay Frost, along with New Kent's Dakota Oxendine and Dylan Walton will hold down the Post 39 outfield. Warhill's Michael Brumfield and Thomas Richardson, as well as New Kent's Mason Downer and Jake Countess, will round out the infield for Williamsburg.

Before finishing up the preview for the upcoming season, Richardson spoke about newcomer Matt Perry who had been an asset for Post 1776 for years.

"Matt Perry will play everywhere including behind the plate and his flexibility is a key to our team," said Richardson.

Finishing off the year of firsts is the fact that Williamsburg will play host to the legion state tournament for the first time. After years of bringing teams to the state tournament, Post 39 will finally have the tournament brought to them. The tournament will be held July 29-Aug. 3 in Williamsburg. As the host team, Williamsburg Post 39 is guaranteed a berth in the tournament.

The quest for winning the state tournament they will be hosting begins Wednesday night against Poquoson Post 273, in their first home game of the season. □

More — For more information about Williamsburg Post 39, visit [www.alpost39wmsbgva.com](http://www.alpost39wmsbgva.com).



Submitted photo

Jamestown High's girls tennis team celebrated its seventh Group AA state title Saturday with a 5-3 win over Western Albemarle.

## Eagles in 7th heaven

### Girls tennis claims another state title

By John Harvey  
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BLACKSBURG — Elizabeth Wallace and Kathy Sharp were sixth graders the last time Jamestown High's girls tennis team celebrated a Group AA state championship.

On Saturday the seniors left their own legacy on the program, combining for wins at singles and doubles to give the Eagles a seventh state title with a 5-3 victory over Region II champion Western Albemarle. The win matches Waynesboro for the most state crowns at the girls AA level.

"It felt amazing," said Sharp, who teamed with Wallace for the champi-

onship-clinching victory. "We have been working toward this for four years, so it makes the victory that much sweeter. I couldn't have asked for a better team to do it with."

Wallace blanked Lauren Kearns 6-0, 6-0 at No.3 singles while Sharp outlasted Claire Park 7-5, 6-1 at No.4 singles. Freshman Anna Walter defeated Maddy IX 6-1, 6-2 at No.2 singles and classmate Katie Hunt defeated Stephanie Barton 6-1, 6-4 at No.6 singles as Jamestown led 4-2 going to doubles.

Emily Kochard defeated Leah Walter 6-1, 6-2 at No.1 singles for the

See *Jamestown*, page 4B

# Rittenhouse returns to form

By Rick Platt  
Correspondent

With greater Williamsburg being both a tourist town and the host of many high-quality athletic events, you never know who might show up in town for competition.

Last Saturday at the 18th annual Bacon Street Run for Mental Health 5K at Eastern State Hospital, two women with great credentials but recent training woes — Melissa Rittenhouse and Williamsburg's Jennifer Quarles, met one ascendant runner, Mercedes Castillo-D'Amico.

That trio went 1-2-3 in the women's overall race, with Rittenhouse

prevailing by a half minute in 19:44, with six-time Colonial Road Runners Grand Prix champion Quarles at 20:17 and Virginia state 5K and 10K record-holder (women's 55-59 age group) Castillo-D'Amico at 20:24.

A three-time Olympic Trials Marathon qualifier (2004, '08 and '12), who traveled to Williamsburg to cheer on two Ragged Mountain Running training partners competing in a triathlon in Jamestown, while Rittenhouse was doing a training race at the Mental Health event.

For the men, Williamsburg's John Piggott, (17:11) and Todd Kessler (17:27) finished in the Top 2 for the 5K, held on a warm and extremely

humid morning over a mostly-flat loop course on the hospital roads. Piggott (42 points after seven races) and Kessler (38 points) are also 1-2 in the 2013 Grand Prix series.

Rittenhouse has a marathon personal best of 2:43:38 (Houston 2010), a half marathon best of 1:16:50 and a 5K top time of 17:00, but after the 2012 Olympic Trials Marathon began having troubles.

"I had been struggling with running and having difficulty breathing last year and kept going to the doctor, and they couldn't find anything wrong," Rittenhouse said. "Then last August I got sick and went to the ER and they told me I had two pulmonary embolisms and was ad-

mitted to the hospital. I have been on coumadin since then and finally just got off May 1."

"I am glad I finally know the answer and hope to return to competitive running again in the next year," she added. "I have been training again for the past six months and just ran Boston in 2:54, not quite what I wanted, but I am just glad I can still run, and appreciate it so much more now."

Quarles has also had her recent troubles, and had to take six weeks off from running due to pain from the piriformis. "Felt great to be racing, although the last mile was hard! Wish I enjoyed stretching like I enjoy running," she said.

## Jamestown wins it all

Continued from page 1B

Warriors. Fran Clifton edged Sarah Reso 6-3, 6-1 at No.5 singles, to extend the match for Western Albemarle.

The Warriors trimmed the deficit to 4-3 following Sadie Gupton and Barton's 6-4, 6-2 win over Hunt and Kristin Lilly at No.3 doubles. The comeback would be short-lived, as Wallace and Sharp defeated Clifton and Park 6-1, 6-0 at No.2 doubles to seal the win.

Walter, who finished her career ranked third on the school's all-time list for wins (139), admitted this team knew it could accomplish greatness.

"At the beginning of every season, our team's goal is to win states," she said. "But this year, we really meant it."

With four experienced seniors returning to the fold and a pair of talented newcomers, like Anna Walter and Katie Hunt, Walter said all the ingredients were there for the Eagles to make a deep run.

"Our team was so used to just getting to the state semifinals," she said. For three years, we lost in the first round, but when we beat Hidden Valley (in the semifinals), that's when I truly believed we could win it."

Prior to Saturday's championship match, coach Karen Johnson let her

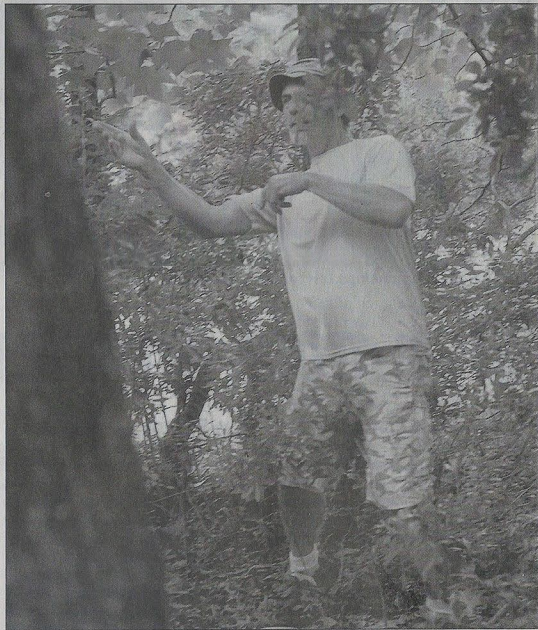
husband, T.J. address the team on the bus ride to the Virginia Tech Tennis Center. "The only thing between us and a state title is five individual wins," T.J. told the team. "So let's go get them."

Walter said the support was overwhelming, from the other members of the team and the coaches, to all the family members. "Our parents, including the dads and T.J. even painted their nails lime green for us," she said. "They promised that if we won states, they would leave it on for the entire sports awards night on Monday."

Shortly after the state tournament final, Leah and her sister, Anna, were back in action in the state doubles finals. The Jamestown High duo lost to defending champs Kathryn Bock and Jessie Nolan of John Handley High 6-2, 6-2 in the finals.

Despite the loss, Walter said the trip to Blacksburg is something she won't soon forget. "It was the perfect ending to an amazing season," she said. "I couldn't have asked for a better way to end my years of tennis at Jamestown. We are a very close knit team, so I will really miss the girls, and my coach."

Sharp, who will attend Virginia Tech next fall, agreed. "It's going to feel great to walk by the tennis center and remember what we did this year."



John Harvey

Newport News Disc Golf president John Ray throws a disc out of the trees during Sunday's tournament.

## Disc golf for all ages

Continued from page 1B

summer, or in the midst of a blizzard, golfers can take to the links under just about any circumstance.

"I just think it's a great sport," Lauren Bonine said. "It's inexpensive to play. You can go out in any type of weather. It's really low key and it's great exercise."

Aaron Bonine said that he plays roughly three times a week and 12 times a month at a variety of courses in Hampton Roads. Newport News Disc Golf Club hosts a Tuesday night weekly series for golfers. On Thursday nights they offer a Women's League. The group also meets again on Sunday mornings at New Quarter Park in Williamsburg to take part in a pair of tournaments.

Daily and annual passes (\$25) are available at New Quarter Park to players interested in the sport. Fees are similar at Newport News Park. Since its establishment in 1998,

Newport News Disc Golf Club has hosted more than 40 PDGA sanctioned events, more than 20 charity tournaments and in excess of 5,000 weekly series players in seven years.

Lauren Bonine admits that the sport has grown on her over the years. "It was a little frustrating at first," she said. "You see all the guys throwing really far and it didn't come naturally to me at first. But I really got into it this time around."

She has fond memories of New Quarter Park's Disc Golf course. "I actually got my first ace here, on Hole No. 10," she recalled. "It was really awesome. It's like no other feeling, to put it right in the basket off the tee pad."

More — Newport News Disc Golf Club offers memberships ranging from \$10-\$30. For more information on tournaments or to join, visit [www.nndgc.com](http://www.nndgc.com) or follow them on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/nndgc](http://www.Facebook.com/nndgc).

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