

August 25, 2010

## DWIGHT MERKEL SPORTS COMPLEX IS OPEN!

**Editor's Note: A public meeting to discuss softball/baseball fees at the Merkel Complex will be held as follows: Ponderosa Room in the Woodland Center at the Arboretum  
3404 W. Woodland Blvd., Spokane, WA 99224  
Thursday, August 26, 2:30 pm**

Spokane's largest sports complex celebrated its Grand Opening on August 7, 2010 with a Ribbon-cutting Ceremony and a whole day of fun activities featuring the new Softball Complex, Soccer Complex, BMX Track, Skate Park, Trails, Neighborhood Park, Splash Pad and more.

View pictures of this event on our [Facebook](#) page.

### **Merkel Complex FAQ**

**Where is the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex?**  
5701 N. Assembly, adjacent to Joe Albi Stadium.

**How big is the complex?**  
Approximately 80 acres.

### **Who was Dwight Merkel?**

Dwight Merkel was one of Spokane's most influential figures in the development of athletic competition for children. Despite having died at the young age of 55, Merkel was the guiding force behind the Spokane Youth Sports Association, where he served for 31 years. Merkel leaves behind a legacy of commitment to community and athletic opportunity for all children.

### **What activities are available at the Merkel Complex?**

- Soccer
- Softball



- Youth Baseball
- Skate Park
- BMX Track
- Flag Football
- Ultimate Frisbee
- Neighborhood Park with Playground and Splash Pad
- Paved perimeter trail, plus an unpaved hiking trail approximately 1-mile long that leads down to Riverside State Park's trails and offers outstanding views of the Spokane River.

### **How much did the Merkel Complex cost and how was it funded?**

The Dwight Merkel Sports Complex was constructed using \$7 million from the 2007 City of Spokane Parks Improvement Bond along with \$4 million from the sale of park property that was approved by City voters in 1999 and subsequently held in reserve.

### **How much does it cost to reserve the fields at Merkel and how were these fees determined?**

We know we have to balance what our local market can bear with what it costs to operate this facility. The fees were determined by Spokane Parks and Recreation staff, the Park Board and input from user groups in the community. After researching fees at similar facilities throughout Washington and considering the operational costs of the fields, the user fees were developed and approved by the Park Board.

### **How can I find more information about reserving the facility?**

To reserve practice, game or tournament space, contact Carl Strong at [cstrong@spokanecity.org](mailto:cstrong@spokanecity.org) or 509.363.5415.

### **Who does the scheduling for City run sports?**

Adriano Eva, who can be contacted at [aeva@spokanecity.org](mailto:aeva@spokanecity.org) or 509.625.6625.

### **When can the BMX Track be used?**

Public Access to the BMX Track at Dwight Merkel Sports Complex is currently being limited to prevent over use until the dirt has further compacted.

Here is the current schedule for access:

### **BMX TRACK OPEN**

1 p.m. – 7 p.m. daily

### **Track Closed for BMX races on these Saturdays:**

August 21

September 4 & 18

October 2, 16 & 30

### **What information can you provide about the walking trail?**

The Complex features a paved trail around its perimeter, plus an unpaved hiking trail approximately 1 mile long that leads down to Riverside State Park's trails and the Spokane River. This unique trail offers outstanding views of the Spokane River.

**When are the sprinklers scheduled to go on and can that schedule be changed?**

The sprinkler system is designed to start at about 11pm and run all night, from zone to zone to zone, in order to water the entire complex during the night and early morning hours. Due to the size of the complex, the design of the irrigation system and the available water, we have limited flexibility in our watering schedule at this time. However, as time at the complex progresses and if we can adjust to water less, we will and we will try and have the watering done as early as possible.

**Who designed the artwork?**

Artist David Govedare created two sculptures 16 feet above ground, with the main body constructed of steel hoops mimicking movement. Govedare has been creating public artworks for the past 35 years, including the notable piece, *The Joy of Running Together*, located in Riverfront Park

For more information [www.spokaneparks.org](http://www.spokaneparks.org)

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