

# NEWS RELEASE

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:** Temple Parks and Leisure Services  
Ken Cicora, Director  
(254) 298-5690, [kcicora@ci.temple.tx.us](mailto:kcicora@ci.temple.tx.us)

### **SAMMONS GOLF LINKS ENJOYS BUSY SUMMER, PREPARING FOR IMPROVEMENTS**

(Temple) – As part of the 2007 Parks Bond election, \$350,000 of funding was identified for improvements to the golf course. The city is now in the planning phase of those improvements, which will start just after the New Year in 2011. Until then, the course this year has been in much better playing condition than last year which has been good news to everyone.

“The greens were burned really badly last year,” Golf Course Director James Roberts said. “Last year’s problems have yet to completely go away, but we are working to alleviate them.”

“When I first started at Sammons in June, there were a lot of trouble spots throughout the course,” Roberts continued. “Today, I can look out at the course and honestly say that two thirds of the course is in really good condition.”

Roberts has overseen several major projects that were designed to improve the conditions of the course.

“First and foremost, we have been utilizing some very aggressive fertilizing techniques,” Roberts said. “We are also aerating and top dressing a lot of the course in an effort to further stimulate growth. In addition, we are rolling the greens once a week to keep them as smooth as possible.”

The course also had some assistance from the weather.

“Mother nature has helped a lot, too,” Roberts said. “The rains in June and July were a real blessing.”

Roberts is quick to point out that the course is still a work in progress.

“We have had a lot of success, especially with our fairways and roughs,” Roberts said. “We are aware, though, that there is still work to be done to get some of our greens to a higher quality level.”

“Roberts and course Superintendent, Jeremy Lewis, have done a great job this year in keeping the course in good condition. It took several months to recover from last year and all that seemed to go wrong – the course conditions combined with really bad fall and winter golfing weather,” said Ken Cicora, Parks and Leisure Services Director. “Play in the last few months has been strong, but we are all anxiously awaiting the major improvements that will begin in January.”

At the forefront of many golfers’ minds are the upcoming renovations to Sammons Golf Links, done in conjunction with a major sewer project that will require the course to be temporarily closed.

“Obviously no one is excited about us having to close our doors,” Roberts said, “but they seem very excited about the work we will do to make the course better.”

“Our goal with these renovations is to take advantage of a bad situation,” Roberts said. “Our logic is that since we must close for the sewage project, we might as well make a few big changes to the course that will really have people talking when we reopen.”

As part of the renovations, which are scheduled to begin in January of 2011 and continue through June, Roberts says that all of the greens will be resurfaced and replaced with a new grass.

“The problem with the grass we have now is that it is pretty outdated,” Roberts said. “We will be bringing in a newer hybrid of Bermuda grass that will be more tolerant of drought-like conditions and diseases.”

The holes of the course are also going to be renumbered to make playing just nine hole games more convenient and to have hole number nine end closer to the clubhouse.

“We are rerouting the course to ensure that both the front and back nine holes will return near the clubhouse,” Roberts said.

Additional improvements include lengthening the course, combining two holes in to a super new par five, constructing a new par three, and adding new irrigation around the greens.

During the renovation, golfers will still be able to make use of the driving range and pro shop. And the Sammons grill will remain open to golfers, as well as the public. In the meantime, Roberts says that the key to success is welcoming the input of golfers.

“The important thing is that we are committed to staying in constant communication with our golfers, getting their input on course conditions every day,” Roberts said. “That is how we are going to continue to get better and better.”

For more information about improvements to Sammons Golf Links or to arrange an interview, please contact Marketing Coordinator James Stafford at (254) 771-4134.

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