

BUSINESS, NEWS, SPORTS

SIMULATED SPORTS COME TO LIFE IN LYNN

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Lynn Mayor-elect Jared Nicholson kicks a soccer ball at a giant inflatable velcro target, testing out one of the many sports stations at Lynn Sim on Monday. (Jakob Menendez)

LYNN — If you don't think you have time to play 18 holes in your lunch hour, think again.

Lynn Sim, a new sports practice center located on Broad Street just before the Lynnway, features three screens for simulated sports, including golf. Players can bring their clubs, choose from 80 courses, and play a simulated round that is about as close to the real thing as one could imagine.

The ball is hit into an oversized video screen and the player immediately learns how far it traveled, where it landed and how far from the hole. The simulator shows the angle of the clubface at impact, which could explain shots not traveling exactly where you intended.

"You can play 18 holes in an hour," said Mark Ciolo, who opened Lynn Sim in late November.

The simulator can also be used for hockey, soccer, baseball, bowling and disc golf. Ciolo will also offer private and group lessons.

A golf and tennis professional who has been teaching both sports for more than 25 years, Ciolo was also a standout baseball player growing up in Woburn. Lynn Sim gives him the opportunity to bring those sports and more under one roof.

"I've been wanting to do something like this for a long time," he said. "I like all sports. This allows me to offer them in the same location."

Lynn Sim offers memberships, including a 50-percent membership discount until Dec. 31, as well as hourly rates to use the facility, which also includes a mini-soccer field, synthetic ice to work on stickhandling and shooting, a JUGS machine, artificial turf, putting green, basketball hoop and a pro shop. Ciolo is expecting it to be popular among students after school and on weekends and adults at night.

"There's something for everyone," said Ciolo, who is a former tennis director at Boston Sports Clubs and Northeast Tennis Center. "It's a family-oriented place."

Ciolo, who lives in Nahant, obtained a loan from the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation of Lynn (EDIC/Lynn), which he used for equipment and other improvements to the 7,500-square-foot space.

“EDIC has been great to work with,” he said. “I went to them with my business plan and they have been very helpful and accessible.”

EDIC/Lynn Executive Director James Cowdell said a recreational facility that caters to all ages is a welcomed addition to the city.

“EDIC was glad to work with Mark in making his dream become a reality,” Cowdell said.

Lynn Sim will eventually be open seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Hours may be limited until Jan. 1. For more information visit www.lynnsim.com or contact Ciolo at 978-857-5261.



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