

Course Review: Bend Golf & Country Club

One of the top highlights of Golf Week 2013 in Central Oregon was the opportunity to play the private Bend Golf & Country Club. Established in 1925 as a 9-hole golf course in what was then a small lumber town, the Bend Country Club is the only member-owned private 18-hole golf course amongst the several high-end private courses in the region — though the second nine didn't come until 1974.

Fortunately for Don and Pete, our Chehalem Glenn pro (Branden Thompson) knows the pro at Bend Country Club and was able to arrange a round for us during our week. Don and Pete were joined by usual recent Golf Week participants Dave Cadd and Mitch Nosack (high school classmates of Don); we landed a great vacation rental in a new neighborhood in the northern end of town. If the folks at Bend Country Club didn't really appreciate such riff-raff from Newberg and Forest Grove parading across their private grounds, they didn't show it. We were greeted warmly by the staff, who were in the midst of a busy day hosting a major junior tournament.

The Bend Country Club is a traditional, championship-caliber course located on 230 treed acres in south Bend. The course winds through hundreds of majestic Ponderosa pines and demands accurate tee shots on most holes to set up approaches to pristine and very quick medium-sized greens. By-and-large the course is flat, so you can walk and enjoy the spectacular scenery if you so desire.

The Bend Country Club is what you'd expect a nice private course to be in terms of beautiful landscaping and exceptionally manicured greens and fairways. The course plays much differently depending on which set of tees you choose. We understand our limitations and traditionally play white tees. At



the Bend Country Club, that translates to an 18-hole round of 5800 yards. Jump back one set of tees to the blues and you'll play almost 6600 yards. Play the tips from the black tees and you're over 7000.

No. 1 is a medium length par 4 that gets you started without a ton of trouble. But things pick up quickly. No. 2 is a par 5 that snakes left then right, with trees everywhere and bunkers to meet you at the green. No. 3 (pictured left) is a 160-yard par 3, but there's a large pond lapping up to the green, so short = wet. The next four holes are pretty straight-forward and, relatively speaking, easier. No. 8 is tough, a long par 4, dogleg left, a pond on the corner to catch potential shortcut balls that fall short. The 9th is a long par 5 that opens up after you tee off through a narrow chute of trees.

The back is similar. No. 11 is a short par 3 but you have to carry water the entire shot. No. 13 is a par 5 that bends left with a pond protecting the left side of the green. There's some relief on No. 16, a medium par 3 with no trouble unless you hit directly into a bunker over the green.

Bend Golf & Country Club also includes indoor and outdoor tennis, an indoor salt water pool and spa, fitness center and restaurants. We're not the country club set, but if we lived in Bend, we'd like to be!