

Course Review: Brasada Ranch

Brasada Ranch near Powell Butte is a beautiful golf course far off the beaten track. Technically a private course, there are ways to get on. You can stay at the resort there and play. There is reciprocal play with the Eagle Crest and Running Y resorts; they're owned by the same parent company. And there's a "local rate" if you can pass yourself off as such.

We played Brasada as part of Golf Week 2013, a week hitting many of the fine courses the Bend/Redmond area has to offer. Our "in" at Brasada was Pancho Hernandez, Central Oregon man-about-town and a former Newberg resident. Pancho marshals at Eagle Crest and knows everyone in the Central Oregon golf world. We were the last group on a late August afternoon, so they let us go out as a fivesome: Don, Pete, usual Golf Week suspects Dave Cadd and Mitch Nosack (Don's high school classmates) plus Pancho.

Designed by well-known Oregon golfer Peter Jacobsen and Jim Hardy, the course is generally in pristine condition. Frankly, that's partly because it simply doesn't get a lot of play due to location and price, but it makes for a great round. The greens are *fast*; in fact, when we dropped our balls onto the sloped practice green they rolled right off, a warning sign of what was to come.

The scenery is spectacular as you weave about the course, and no two holes run parallel at Brasada. You go up, down and around at Brasada, and you don't want to walk. Alas, our round was marred by a very drunk threesome that we caught up with on the 10th tee. They were obnoxious and slow. It goes without saying that *three* people shouldn't be holding up *five*, and they didn't let us play through. It was



starting to get dark, so we skipped No. 12, a short par 3, and passed them. Hustling from there, we still played No. 18 in the dark. We'd like to play Brasada again without the big rush on the back nine.

The most memorable moment came on No. 14, a long par 4. Don's approach shot was about 10 yards short. As we drove up to the ball, he commented that there was a stick next to his ball. Turns out it wasn't a stick, it was a snake. Careful examination revealed no rattle on the back end, and Pancho identified it as a bull snake. Don poked it with his driver in an attempt to move it along, but it just turned and hissed. At this point Don was more than willing to ignore the "play ball as it lies" rule, but Pancho wrapped the snake around his 7-iron and threw it off into the rough. Ugh. Between drunks, darkness and snakes, the back nine could've been better.

Finally, we *have* to say this: when you finish your round, don't eat at Brasada's Range Restaurant and Bar. We cannot emphasize enough how bad and over-priced the food was. Don and Pete both ordered a soup of the day (\$7) that was terrible, and crab cakes (\$15). The three crab cakes were each the size of a quarter. No exaggeration, \$5 each for quarter-sized portions that had so much salt in them you could barely taste the crab — not that there was much crab to be had. \$22 before tip for bad soup and horrendously small (and bad) crab cakes. Mitch spent \$14 for a meatless salad, Dave \$8 each for three "sides." We stopped at the Redmond McDonald's on the way back to Bend we were so hungry.