

Course Review: Creekside Golf Club

With Gene Autry ringing in our ears (OK, maybe not literally), Don and Pete were “Back In The Saddle Again” early spring 2017 at Creekside Golf Club in Salem. This was our first outing in almost 18 months, a “sabbatical” due to some life changes. Good changes, worry not, but things that took some time to iron out.

With a coupon from the 2017 Portland Golf Show in hand that made us “Members For A Day” at Creekside, a private course, we headed south not knowing exactly what the reception would be. But we can say we have never met a friendlier staff, nor have we ever been made to feel more welcome at a private club than we were at Creekside. Everyone there seemed legitimately happy to host us, from the pro shop to the restaurant.

There’s good reason for the general upbeat feel at Creekside. For several years the club operated under a cloud and the threat of closure. A developer had a long-standing offer to buy the course and turn it into a housing development. Happily, the homeowners association resolved all issues in late 2016 and Creekside will continue forward as a golf course for years to come.

Creekside is a scenic, beautiful layout, and indeed there is a creek running through it in play on several holes. Given the record-setting wet Oregon 2016-17 winter/spring, that little creek was running like never before! Alas, all of the water we’ve received in the form of raindrops and snowflakes the past few months created a very soggy course. We are spoiled by our home course, Chehalem Glenn, with its sand-capped fairways; it is perhaps the most playable winter course in the Willamette Valley.



No sand-capping at Creekside, this was definitely station-to-station golf. Balls plugged in the fairways, let alone the roughs, so even though we played the white tees as usual, every hole played longer than listed. While that didn’t much matter on the 105-yard par 3 No. 3, No. 13 is 492 yards long — and that’s a l-o-n-g hole when you’re getting exactly zero yards of roll per shot, even for a par 5.

The white tees measure 5939 yards and that was plenty given the conditions. The blue tees are another 500 yards and the blacks about 400 on top of that, nothing we’d want to try when it’s wet. We’re curious how many acres Creekside sits on. The course is spread out pretty good, very picturesque. There’s also an excellent variety of holes to keep your interest. Some holes require pretty exacting tee shots, others feature a little leeway if you whack it left or right, so it’s a nice mixture and you don’t feel hemmed in all round.

Nos. 12 and 13 are back-to-back par 5s; sometimes you’ve got to do what the terrain allows. In fact, the back features three each par 3s, 4s and 5s — the front a more traditional two 3s, two 5s and five 4s.

There’s water in play on maybe half the holes, although it never feels particularly threatening.

Dried out and with some roll, Creekside appears to be a place you could ring in a nice round. One other miscellaneous, positive note: there are restrooms — *real* restrooms — about halfway through each nine. A lot of courses underestimate how much of a plus that is, especially for drawing women golfers.