

Course Review: Crestview Golf Club

(Note: This review has been updated to reflect our 2012 return to the course.)

The golf course in Waldport is one of the few that we've played twice since the Don and Pete Golf Oregon "Quest" began. That's due to circumstances, not because it's a Top 5 course. We played what was Crestview Hills Golf Course in 2007 as part of our first-ever Golf Week, which included Central Oregon Coast courses from Tillamook to Waldport.

During Golf Week 2011 in greater Eugene, we couldn't help but notice several billboards scattered about Eugene and Springfield encouraging golfers to come to Waldport and try out the "new" Waldport Golf Club. Yep, they took out "Hills" and swapped "Club" for "Course." But, as we planned Golf Week 2012, which was to include courses long the south coast, replaying Waldport seemed an excellent first stop of the day after departing Newberg. So, Don and Pete (and Golf Week accomplices Dave Cadd and Mitch Nosack) arrived about 9 a.m. on Day 1 of Golf Week 2012 anxious to see what had changed.

We can describe the changes to the course in one word: water. Not water hazards, mind you, simply water. As in irrigation.

Crestview Hills was bone dry in 2007. The only things green were the greens. Fairways were brown and rock hard; you'd hit a drive and it'd roll for miles, though not necessarily in the right direction. That indicated a serious lack of irrigating in the summer of 2007, because even summers are frequently damp along the coast — Don lived in Newport for three years and can attest to that.

Crestview Golf Club was "remodeled" in 2009 by noted course architect Dan Hixson, who designed Bandon Crossings further down the coast around the same time. But truly, the course remains much the same from a play standpoint. There are two sets of tees, but the difference is only about 100 yards, 2500 or 2600. Par is 34; there are three par 3s and only one par 5.

You begin with a 355-yard par 4 that's slightly up-



hill. Trees are in play if you push it too far right, and there's a fairway bunker about 50 yards short of the green on the left. The course only features nine sand traps, and this one's pretty easy to avoid. Trap 2 is a huge greenside bunker alongside the left side of Green No. 2, the only trouble on the short par 4 second hole. The only par 5 you encounter comes next. It's a sprawling hole that bends left; it features few trouble spots and offers birdie opportunities.

No. 4 is a par 3 guarded by a large pond on the left. No. 5 is an intriguing hole. There's a huge expanse on the left that's quarry-like, whack it over there and you're in some trouble — just for kicks, there's a small pond involved as well. It's not all that hard a hole as long as you hit it straight off the tee, but it seems to invite trouble. No. 6 is a short par 3, No. 7 abuts a fence line and some course-side homes, so you can't go right. You eventually drop down to a green below the fairway. The eighth hole is a gentle dogleg left that includes trees on both sides of the tee box chute. You finish with a tough par 3 that's 218 yards from the short (blue) tees — it's a monster 3 measuring 245 yards from the longer gold tees.

The Crestview Golf Club pro shop is small, but includes a decent snack bar. Bottom line: the "new" Waldport course is much better than its predecessor, but for all the to-do about a remodel, it's water that's made the biggest difference.