

Course Review: Cross Creek Golf Course

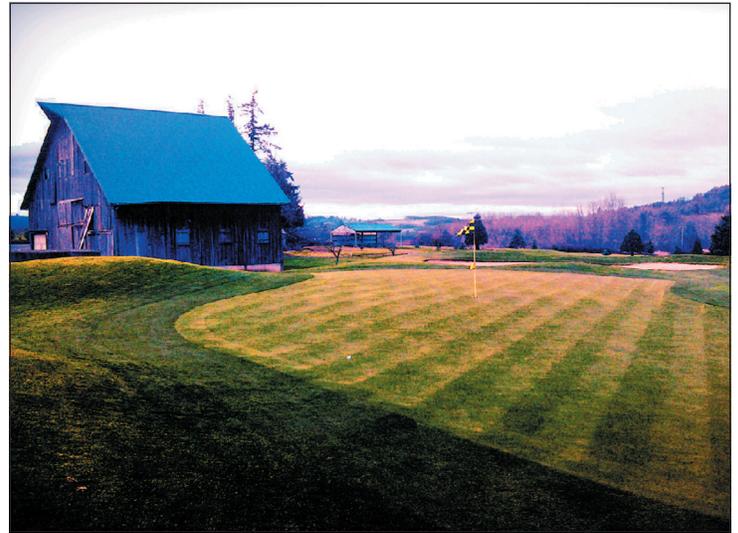
Cross Creek Golf Course has a Dallas address, though it's quite a ways from Dallas proper along the Highway 22 cutoff that runs between Salem and Highway 18 — the route Salemites take to Lincoln City. A relatively new course, Cross Creek opened in 1998, so it was less than 10 years old when Don and Pete played there in the summer of 2007. Cross Creek was just Course No. 9 on The Quest.

Designed by Bill Robinson, the architect for our home course Chehalem Glenn in Newberg, Cross Creek is an interesting combination of traditional and links style golf located in a very rural environment. Located just a couple of miles from the Bassett Slough National Wildlife Refuge, keep an eye out for any number of critters, and especially hawks trolling the skies or perched in a tree hunting those critters. Cross Creek's property combines flat farmland with occasional gentle rolling hills. There are clusters of trees here and there, but your bigger hazard is water — lots of it. There are several ponds on the course, one large lake and a creek that fingers out and comes into potential play on several holes.

You can see the bulk of Cross Creek as you pass by on Highway 22. Despite the close proximity of the busy roadway to the coast, it surprisingly doesn't detract from your laid-back, country golf experience. The bucolic setting includes a barn and other farm-related structures and equipment, and you can easily lose yourself in your round even though you're putting your golf expertise on full public display on several holes, especially Nos. 6 and 7, which both abut Highway 22. Late summer evening sunsets can be spectacular.

In an apparent nod to Oregon and Oregon State, Cross Creek features four sets of tees: yellow, green, orange and black. The green tees would be the whites at most courses; those measure 5900 yards. Play from the tips, the blacks, and you can add almost a full 1000 yards to your round, so you've got significant playing options at Cross Creek.

Despite the presence of water in some fashion on 14 of 18 holes, most holes are actually pretty wide open — typically you've got to make a significant error to bring the water into play, especially since



you can see any trouble well ahead of time. No. 1 is a perfect example. A 350-yard par 4 from the green tees, the course's meandering creek cuts across the fairway, but it's too far up for most mortals to drive into and not in play on your second shot unless you really duff it. That happens a lot with the creek. Ponds between parallel fairways are lurking and much more dangerous on Holes 3 and 4, 5 and 6 and 10 and 18. There's also a huge lake along the left side of No. 5, though you've got to hook it a Cross Creek country mile to get there.

By our count there was just one fairway bunker at Cross Creek (on No. 6); a handful of greens are protected by traps, but less than half. There are small knolls protecting several of the dance floors, however, so you've got to *hit* the green in most cases, you can't roll it on. Generally speaking the greens are generous in size and well maintained, but average in speed and break — a typical Willamette Valley course, in other words.

The amenities at Cross Creek are fairly pedestrian with the exception of the range, which features elevated grass tees. Greens fees were very reasonable. As noted, we played Cross Creek early in The Quest, so Pete had just bought into the whole logo ball idea. We hit our tee shots close together on No. 2, and when Don reached down to check which ball was which, it turned out Pete had pulled his logo ball out of his pocket and was playing it. That was the day he learned to designate a golf bag pocket for such treasures.