

Course Review: Forest Hills Country Club

With so many great golf courses along the Oregon coast from Florence on south, it's easy for a little 9-hole course to be overlooked. That's sort of the situation with the Forest Hills Country Club in Reedsport, a semi-private track that's open to the public in westernmost Douglas County.

Forest Hills was initially built by the International Paper Company in 1963, back in the heyday of mills and when International had a huge paper mill nearby in Gardiner. That facility has long since closed, and the golf course has long since been of out corporate hands; the current membership-ownership group has been in control since 1988. It should not, by the way, be confused with the more commonly known Forest Hills Golf Course near Cornelius.

Playing Forest Hills was part of the Golf Week 2012 agenda, so Don and Pete were joined by friends Dave Cadd and Mitch Nosack on a gorgeous August day. Golf Week 2012 included all golf courses along the southern coast from Waldport to Brookings except for the Bandon Dunes complex courses (we're not rich enough to play those in peak season). We rented a vacation home near North Bend as our headquarters that week.

You come off of Highway 101 in Reedsport and wind through some residential streets to get to Forest Hills, which sits on the edge of town. You're immediately struck by how lush the course looks as you approach. Well landscaped with lots of flowers, it's obvious the course superintendent cares about appearance.



The first tee box features a wood-sculpted Scottish-style old golfer guy, complete with knickers, atop an old tree stump. The first hole itself is an immediate challenge. No warm-up holes at Forest Hills, you begin your round with a 412-yard par 4 that features water along the left side as you approach the green.

There's a lot more "forest" than "hills" at Forest Hills, which sports plenty of beautiful, mature trees that generally frame the course without being overtly in play. Hole No. 2 (pictured below left) is the course's most scenic; indeed, it adorns the scorecard cover. A 145-yard par 3, there's a small creek cutting through the fairway, a nice wooden footbridge up to the right, and a green framed by trees guarded by a left side bunker. Hole No. 3 is a fun 477-yard, dogleg right par 5 that includes a small creek you'll need to avoid when landing your second shot. It's the last time water is truly in play on the course (unless you whack your tee shot on the 164-yard sixth hole way long). No. 8 is a big (519 yards) par 5 that doglegs right at the end, but it's imminently playable if you keep the ball on the left side of the fairway, or there's even plenty of room to bail out left off the fairway with little penalty.

One word of warning about Forest Hills: call ahead if you're hoping to play a summer round. They have a lot of club activities and it's a popular destination for local tournaments, so your first choice of tee times may not be available.