

Course Review: Gresham Golf Course

Don and Pete started 2014 with a Jan. 3 outing to the Gresham Golf Course — the third consecutive year we've managed to get in a round on Jan. 3.

The Gresham course today is a distinctly urban layout, though not so much when it opened in 1965. It's been a family designed and owned/operated course its entire existence. There's a certain socioeconomic nuance to the course. Gresham Golf Course is entirely surrounded by housing. On the front nine, it's apartments and other multi-family housing units that just feel so, well, Gresham. On the turn, you're mostly greeted by small but well-appointed single family residences throughout the back nine. There must be a pretty distinct neighborhood dividing line out there near 242nd and Division.

As to the course itself, let's start with the good: greens and pricing. The greens were in fantastic condition. They rolled smooth and true and were just in great shape considering the time of year; kudos to the course maintenance staff for protecting any course's most valuable asset. And you can't beat the Gresham Golf Course's winter pricing policy: \$1 per hole, so our round of 18 was just 18 bucks.

The rest of the course was in pretty decent shape as well, helped immensely by the relatively dry winter we've had thus far. GGC has a small creek running through it — Kelly Creek, perhaps, as it's the Kelly Creek Pub & Grill adjacent to the clubhouse? No more than 3-4 feet wide, you don't need Sherlock Holmes to tell you it frequently floods — the apartment buildings surrounding the first few holes have sandbags stacked along the creekside. As Pete, the environmental earth sciences teacher noted, the course has a very low water table and simply can't absorb much moisture. The first mild rain in a week occurred overnight before our visit, and even that left a few mushy spots. Again, it was in great shape for being Jan. 3, but in the midst of a typical Oregon winter, this simply isn't going to be a course that drains well.

As per usual, we played the white tees, which total about 5,900 yards. The first par 3 is an 89-yard shorty over a pond. The other holes are average



holes of average length, and we don't mean that to sound too negative, it just is what it is. The front side has some nice trees on several holes, both evergreen and deciduous; the back nine is relatively open. The longest par 4 is about 375, and the par 5s check in at the 450 range, so it's a course you could score on in good weather. It was wet enough on our visit that you got very little roll, so it wasn't just drive and pitch.

The woman attending the pro shop desk was friendly and quick to agree to take our requisite picture, but as veteran readers know, we always harp on this: no logo balls. "Yeah, we really should have those," she said a couple of times. Yes you should!

Finally, a shout out to the aforementioned Kelly Creek Pub & Grill, where we ate a late lunch following our round. The restaurant leases its space from the golf course but otherwise has no official connection, but certainly it's the place to go after a round at GGC. Homemade soups, very generous portions, very reasonable prices, very friendly wait staff. Loved it!