

Course Review: King City Golf Course

We got a good chuckle as we prepared to play the 9-hole King City Golf Course. King City, located immediately southwest of Tigard along Highway 99-W, began its life as an unincorporated 55-and-over retirement community. It's an official city these days and can't discriminate based on age, but people still think of it as a retirement community. That's why we got such a kick out of our hometown Attrell's Funeral Home being the scorecard's primary sponsor, with significant ads in both the middle and on the back. Nice recruiting tool! ☺

The King City Golf Course opened in 1958. It measures about 2300 yards from the white tees, another 100-plus from the blues. It's a short course but not technically an executive course, given its one par 5 — albeit a 352-yard one from the whites. Par is 34. One interesting aspect of King City Golf Course is the kikuyu grass fairways. Kikuyu is a larger-bladed grass species not seen much in Oregon; it pulls harder on your club as you swing through it. The greens are typical Oregon bent grass.

There's a tendency to think of King City as being a bunch of old geezers on a wide open, flat course. It is flat, but it's far from wide open. There are three main obstacles at King City: traps, trees and houses. On most holes, if you stray too far off course, both figuratively and literally, you'll hit one or the other of the latter two. The bunkers are more scattered.

With par 4s that measure 289, 249, 277, 284 and 292 — plus the previously mentioned 352-yard par 5 — an interesting aspect of playing King City is that the longest approach shots you'll hit to the greens all day come off of the par 3 tees. All three are legit:



No. 2 is 178 yards (215 from the blues), No. 4 is 196 (208) and No. 5 checks in at 167 (188). On the other holes, a modest 200-yard drive nets you a wedge on all of the par 4s and maybe a 7-iron on No. 7, the par 5. Again, that's assuming you hit it straight, and avoid trees and houses. Obviously, you can hit 3-wood, 5-wood or even a long hybrid off the King City tees if your driver is not dependable.

The greens at King City putt pretty slow, and by-and-large there's not a lot of break. But they are well maintained, as is the rest of the course, for that matter. The greens are good, the tee boxes are good and the fairways are good.

Our most memorable moment at King City came courtesy of Don on the eighth tee. No. 8 is the 284-yard par 4, perfectly straight, set adjacent to a city street that runs parallel on the left. Don tagged his tee shot decently, but pulled it left and high. It kept fading back, however, and eventually hit the street, took a big bounce, hit the sidewalk, took another big bounce and landed on the fairway just short of the green. Just as he planned it, of course!

The amenities at King City Golf Course aren't much. The pro shop pretty much sells balls, tees, gloves and candy bars; they did have course logo balls, always a bonus to us. There's a nice practice green but no range, although there is a one-person-at-a-time driving net. Set as it is in the Southwest Portland suburbs, it can get crowded with the "Let's play nine after work" crowd on long summer evenings.