

# Course Review: Michelbook Country Club

First things first — it's Michel-*book*, not Michel-*brook*. It seems as though every other person that speaks of Michelbook Country Club in McMinnville wants to put that "r" in there and make it a brook, even people who live in Yamhill County and should know better. There *is* some water at Michelbook, but there is no brook; the name comes from the local Michelbook family, whose 114 acres provided the bulk of the land for course in the early 1960s.

McMinnville residents had been longing for a private course since the 1930s, when the Yamhill County Golf and Country Club, located between McMinnville and Lafayette, was abandoned as a result of the Great Depression. Michelbook filled that void when it opened as a 9-hole course in 1964; the second nine opened 20 years later.

Michaelbook is a private course; we played courtesy of friend David Ulbricht, a financial services guy who has the Chehalem Park & Recreation District as a client. Don has been a member of the CPRD Board of Directors since 1992, and Pete joined the board in 2013, the same year we played Michelbook. Filling out the foursome was CPRD Superintendent Don Clements.

Michelbook's layout is a little quirky in that the front side has two par 3s but three par 5s, so the front nine par is 37, not something you see every day. The back nine has two par 5s but three par 3s, so when all is said and done, you have a "normal" par 72 for 18 holes — you just don't quite get to 72 in the normal way.

As you would expect from a private course, Michelbook at first glance appears very well groomed, and it is. Playing at a little over 6500 yards, the course features many tree-lined fairways. Trees, bunkers and some water are your three main hazards at Mi-



chelbook, but trees are Enemy No. 1. Both Don and Pete made No. 1, a short and straight 346-yard par 4, harder than the start needed to be by whacking tees shots left into said trees and leaving difficult recovery shots. We both bogeyed.

Michelbook's par 3s — remember, there are five — are relatively lengthy, ranging from 154 at the shortest to 204 at the longest. The par 4s are, however, pretty short when taken collectively. Not a single one measures 400 yards; the longest par 4 is 381 on No. 10, leading off the back nine. The par 5s — again, there are five of those, too — are a hair on the short side. You get the impression they sort of ran out of room when designing the back nine. On the front side, the three par 5s measure 497 yards (No. 5), 491 (No. 7) and then No. 9 is a big one at 571. The back two, though, are just 458 (No. 11) and 467 (No. 18). The back nine, in fact, comes in some 300 yards shorter overall than the front.

The greens at Michelbook were excellent. Well maintained, they ran fast and true with break here and there, but nothing unreadable. We had a great time at Michelbook and look forward to visiting again.

