

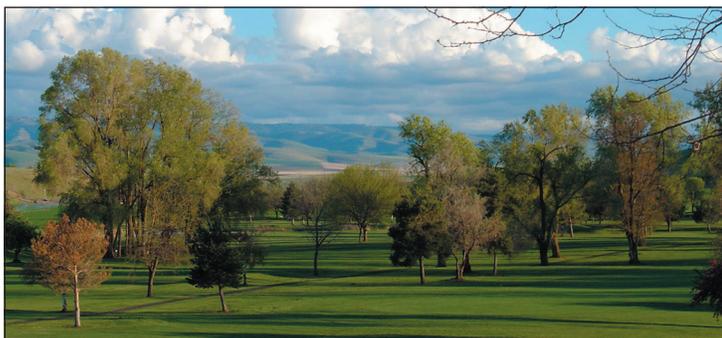
Course Review: Pendleton Country Club

The Pendleton Country Club triggered a significant shift in the Don and Pete Golf Oregon “Quest.” When we first began our adventure, the goal was to play every *public* course in Oregon. In the back of our mind, the thought about adding private courses was always there, perhaps once the public play courses were completed.

We worked through 2007 and 2008, including our Golf Weeks along the Central Coast and in Southern Oregon, then came Golf Week 2009 in “nearer” Eastern Oregon. We stayed in the second home of a friend in Pendleton, and in planning the week’s outings, Don learned that the Pendleton Country Club was actually only private if you live in Umatilla County. This fact was strongly reinforced when we pulled off of Highway 395 about seven miles south of town and into the PCC’s parking lot, greeted by a roadside entry sign noting that we had indeed arrived and declaring “Public Welcome.” At that point, The Quest changed to *every* course in Oregon, period. (On the same trip, we found the rules for playing the private La Grande Country Club are similar.)

Founded in 1929, the Pendleton Country Club is member-owned. It was originally established as a 9-hole course within the Pendleton city limits. In 1958, PCC relocated to its current location, once again starting as a 9-hole course. In 1986, the back nine opened to create one of Eastern Oregon’s best courses. We were warmly greeted by anyone we saw at PCC, a stark difference from our experience at some Portland-area private courses. The pro shop staff was interested in our Quest and quick to agree to snap the accompanying picture. We checked in quickly and were soon off to the No. 1 tee.

Pendleton Country Club is a par 72, championship



course measuring 6100 yards from the white tees, 6400 from the blues. The course is set within the scenic Birch Creek Valley. There’s a small stream that bisects the course — Birch Creek, we sort of assumed — and comes into play on five holes. A pair of ponds on the course means there’s possible water in play on about half the holes.

In addition, sand and trees were the other primary hazards we encountered. Several holes have bunkers, mostly guarding greens but there are a few scattered fairway traps. The trees are, in general, not usually in play. They frame several holes, but unless you’re way off track, you shouldn’t have a lot of tree issues. The greens at PCC were average in both size and condition. They certainly weren’t in bad shape, but they also weren’t pristine in the way one might imagine for a private course. We do say that cognizant that we’re talking about greens subjected to the blazing Eastern Oregon sun for weeks on end, and we were there in mid-August.

PCC is flat river-bottom land. We took a cart because of the heat, but otherwise the course would have been easy to walk. You start off with a tough par 4 (388 yards), followed by a short par 4 (441) that runs parallel to the creek. Then you’re over the creek for the next five holes, with the 141-yard par 3 eighth hole taking you back over the water on your tee shot. No. 10 is a big dogleg right, then you hop back over the creek for one hole, the 472-yard 11th that features the creek adjacent all the way on the left. You tee off over the water again on No. 12, putting the creek behind you for the rest of the round.