

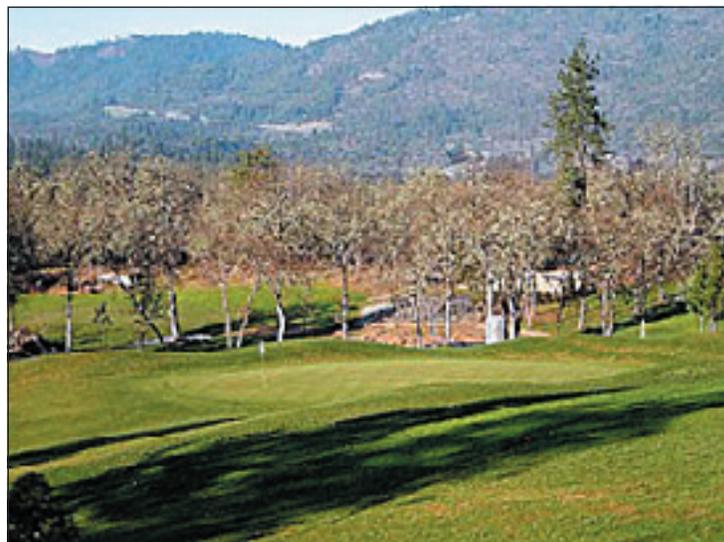
# Course Review: Red Mountain Golf Course

It's not every round of golf you play where you have to shoo a group of wild turkeys off a green before you putt. But that's exactly what happened at Red Mountain Golf Course near Grants Pass, one of our favorite memories of both the course and Golf Week 2008. (If you wish, you can join the raging debate online as to whether the proper term for a group of wild turkeys is a *flock*, a *gaggle* or a *rafter*.)

Golf Week 2008 was based at Don's cousin's home in Grants Pass. We played Southern Oregon courses in a blazing heat, one day as high as 113. It was "only" in the high 90s the *morning* we teed off at Red Mountain, a 9-hole executive course located adjacent to I-5 (on the east side of the freeway) about seven miles or so north of the first Grants Pass exit. In fact, even though you can see it shrouded in the trees from the freeway, especially northbound, getting there is a bit of a challenge. You have to take the Merlin exit and backtrack — use your GPS!

For unknown reasons, there's a lot of misinformation online about Red Mountain. One website says it's a par 3 course — it's not, it's an executive course with five par 4s and four par 3s. Another (usually) reputable site says the course is only 1100 yards long. That's not right, either — Red Mountain measures 1519 from the white tees and 1773 from the blues. (The whites and blues are set up as "front" and "back" tees, with slightly different yardages.) Even the address is wrong on several online sites, though the street address is consistent, so we assume the road the course sits on underwent a name change at some point in time.

Here's what we can tell you about Red Mountain: it's a small family-run affair that caters to families, which we applaud. We were very warmly greeted by the owners and had a nice discussion about our



Quest. The course opened in 1988 under the guidance of original course owner/designer Bob Snook and under the odd name Shoestring Golf Course.

You can walk Red Mountain fairly easily, but that doesn't mean there aren't elevation changes. In fact, there are a lot of them — some hills and valleys, even some flat-out ravines. Many greens are elevated to the point where if you hit long and roll off you're not just off the green, you're down a hillside. Red Mountain also has a lot of trees. How in play the trees are varies greatly by hole. You'll encounter some blind shots, and also some water. There are three large ponds on the course, although none of them are greatly in play. It's an entertaining, challenging little layout. By and large we found the course in good shape. It's not a "manicured" course; it's purposefully left in its natural state on several holes. We did encounter a few extra-dry spots here and there, but were mindful that it was a hot Aug. 10 day in Southern Oregon.

At was the fourth hole where we crossed paths with the turkeys. A short, 210-yard par 4 that's pretty open (trees guard the right side of the fairway, but are in play only if you're way right), the hole runs uphill to a green that's adjacent to a hillside bordering the course. Neither of us hit a decent tee shot, but when we got up to the green, we were greeted by the gobblers. They reluctantly shuffled off to the edge of the hillside, seemingly none too happy that we disturbed them. We're not quite sure what the attraction was, and suspect they came right back.