

Course Review: Running Y Ranch Golf Course

The Running Y Ranch was home base for Golf Week 2014, so we'd likely be a little biased in favor of it under any circumstance. Fortunately, we can report objectively that, along with the private Reames Golf & Country Club, the Running Y boasts the best golf course in greater Klamath Falls.

The Running Y makes great hay out of the fact it is the only Arnold Palmer-designed course in Oregon. So how involved was "The King" in laying out the course really? Who knows. Arnie is an empire in his own right with plenty of minions, both in the course design world and the PR world. At one point Palmer (and/or his PR minions) put out a list that became known as "Arnie's Sweet 16" — his 16 favorite courses that's he's designed. The Running Y made that list. Here is Palmer's own synopsis:

"The Running Y Ranch Golf Course showcases the spectacular natural landscape of Oregon's beautiful unspoiled outback. Ambling along meadows and through restored wetlands on the front nine; you will play besides lakes, woodlands and into Payne Canyon on the back. The vision of 'leave the land as it lies' played out well in the course design, and I consider it one of my best tracks. If you're in the area, it's well worth the visit."

Whether those are Arnie's own words or not is irrelevant; it's an accurate description. This is a course rated as one of Palmer's Top 10 by *Sports Illustrated*, Top 10 in Oregon by *Golf Week*, Top 100 Public Courses in the U.S. by *Golf Digest* and, importantly



Part of the spacious front nine at the Running Y Ranch Golf Course near Klamath Falls.



Posing at the Running Y (top); below is a shot of the 18-hole putting course that is quite the challenge.

for the ladies, one of the Top 5 courses in the U.S. for women, also according to *Golf Digest*.

Our private townhouse for the week had a nice view overlooking the eighth green, so we were chomping at the bit by the time we finally played the Running Y mid-week. Surprisingly, the course looks far more difficult than it plays. We all had good rounds and enjoyed the course immensely. There are four sets of men's tees, we played the whites as usual without scoping out the scorecard, they check in a hair under 6,000 yards. We could have played the green tees at 6,600 yards. The "Palmer" tees are 7,100.

A quick note here that the Running Y also includes a great 18-hole natural grass putting course. It's not on par with the one at Eagle Crest (bad pun, sorry) and the holes could be a better marked, but it's still loads of fun and not to be missed if you're there.