

Course Review: Sunriver Meadows

We played the Sunriver Meadows course in the summer of 2011, a week or so before that year's Golf Week in and around Eugene. Don's family was vacationing at Eagle Crest, Pete was visiting family in Prineville, plus Don and Pete's pastor from Newberg, Dave Benson, was coincidentally staying at Sunriver with his family. That coalesced into a unique foursome of Don, Pete, Pastor Dave and Don's son Michael.

The Sunriver Resort boasts four courses, and this was the first of the four for our Quest, although Don had played Meadows before. It was a perfect summer day in the mid-80s, so we teed off in anticipation of a great day regardless of golf scores.

The Meadows course is one of two Sunriver layouts completely open to the public; pretty much anyone can play any time. Designed by acclaimed course architect and former U.S. Amateur Champion John Fought, the Meadows course has an impressive resume, having played host to numerous USGA and NCAA golf championships, including the NCAA Men's Division I championship tournament.

Several holes feature Mt. Bachelor as the backdrop, and you'll find two main issues at Meadows if you hit an errant shot: bunkers and trees. Meadows features a bunch of bunkers, including a goodly amount of fairway traps. You'll also encounter hundreds and



hundreds of trees — mostly pine trees, both Ponderosa and Lodge Pole. There's also water in play on maybe seven holes.

We played the white tees, usual for us, which measure 6002 yards. You begin with a modest 357-yard par 4. It's a nice opening hole, a gentle dogleg left with the trees far enough off the fairway you can hit your initial tee shot off target quite a bit and still have a clear shot to the green. Things get harder right away, as No. 2 is a long par 5 guarded by a lake on the left from about halfway up the fairway all the way to the green. Game on from there! We had our usual assortment of good and not-so-good holes, but no disasters.

The greens at Meadows, and all Sunriver courses, are what you'd expect at a high-end Central Oregon resort: hard, fast, "breaky" but consistent. Once you get the hang of the speed, your putts will roll true assuming you've read the break correctly.

One other note: If there's one thing about all of Sunriver's golf options that's overrated, it's the 9-hole putting course adjacent to Meadows. It too was designed by Fought, but John must have been between naps when he did so because it's nothing spectacular. The putting course is flat and it's just grass and holes, no other features. Compared to Eagle Crest's 18-hole putting course that includes mini-sand traps, water, boulders, trees — well, there is no comparison. Hey, we're sure it's a fun distraction for families on a Sunriver vacation, but there's just not that much to it.

