

Trickle Creek sight to behold

B.C. golf course at Kimberley full of twisting fairways

BY JOHN DOWN, CALGARY HERALD JUNE 7, 2010



Trickle Creek Golf Course in Kimberley, B.C.

Photograph by: . .

Every so often you need to be reminded that this silly science of chasing a highly compressed dimpled ball around God's green earth and man's manicured fairways and greens is also about enjoying the sights and sounds, about soaking up the pleasures of the day.

Welcome to Trickle Creek at Kimberley, B.C.

What you have here is a mountain of greenery, of twisting and undulating fairways lined by tall pines and smooth greens. What you have here, most days at least, is sunshine and blue sky, curious deer and the calls of a variety of birds.

Serene, peaceful, relaxing.

Does it really matter that one or more of the 18 holes that stretch from 5,082 yards off the forward tees to 6,896 yards off the championship tees might take away a ball, might cause you to scratch a triple bogey onto your scorecard?

Of course not because, really, there's nothing that can spoil the experience.

"The golf course was designed right in the first place," submits third-year head pro Doug Schneider of the 18-year-old Les Furber layout. "At that time they were trying to make the golf course appealing to all handicappers and if you hit from the right tee boxes, you're going to enjoy it.

"It's pretty wide open and you don't have to hit driver all the time, whether you're playing from the forward tees all the way back to the black tees, which makes it a little different game, but it's a mountain course, that's the way it was designed and I think it allows all abilities to play the course and that's what people like about it."

It's also in near-perfect condition, the best Schneider has seen in his term.

And he's right. The fairways are generous, some of the vistas are hypnotic and some of the challenges are mind-bending.

Although it is considered a short test by competitive standards, you probably will put your hand on every club in your bag before you're done. There's some feel-good par-4s that barely push past 300 yards like the first and 10th holes, some nasty par-4s like the 451-yard fifth, sharp dogleg left 12th and a mess of reachable par-5s if you dare to ignore the creek at the 530-yard fourth, the 100-foot-high pines at the dogleg of the 527-yard 13th and highly intimidating rock wall 100 yards short of the 523-yard 17th.

But mostly there are challenging, eye-filling par-3s topped by the signature 174-yard 11th that sits on the shelf of a little valley below an elevated tee. The Rocky Mountain backdrop makes it the most photographed hole of the day.

"We try to make sure it's an experience more than anything else," adds Schneider. "From the time you drive into the bag drop, park your car in the large lot, hit the practice range, visit the fully stocked pro shop, try the food in our clubhouse, talk with our starters and marshals . . . we want you to enjoy the day."

There would seem to be little doubt of that, but you'll pay for the privilege.

Prime-time weekday green fees are \$109, with weekends and holidays set at \$120. Twilight fees, after 4 p.m., start at \$72.50.

As part of the Resorts of the Canadian Rockies, there's also a number of stay-and-play packages hooked in with the glamorous Trickle Creek Lodge that start as low as \$149.

Chip Shots: Wintergreen, another member of the RCR conglomerate, is offering a \$20 gas voucher per twosome when you pay for regular green fees with your ATB Financial Master-Card from Monday through Thursday at its Bragg Creek area 18-holer. Or you get a \$20 gas voucher for each foursome

without the card.

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Parade Of Aces

John Carswell scored a hole-in-one during the Henry Smith Tournament at D'Arcy Ranch, winning \$15,000 in the process.

Other holes-in-one we heard about recently include:

- Donna Egglestone on No. 12 at Canmore.
- Andy Suurallik on No. 8 at Canmore.
- Rick Innes on No. 17 at Bearspaw.
- Garth Anderson on Hawk 2 at Priddis Greens.

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