

British Columbia Golf Member Newsletter

June 2010

Golf With the Legends

The Boeing Classic Pro-Am is your chance to play golf with two different Champions Tour professionals over two days at TPC Snoqualmie Ridge. A Pro-Am foursome includes:

- Four (4) Boeing Classic Pro-Am playing spots; Wednesday, August 25, and Thursday, August 26.
- One (1) tee prize package per player. A total of four (4) tee prize packages.
- One (1) tee prize package per player. A total of four (4) tee prize packages. (Value: \$500)
- Food and beverage provided on Pro-Am days
- Two (2) tickets per playing spot to the Boeing Classic Pro-Am Draw Party.
- Two (2) tickets per playing spot to the Boeing Classic Pro-Am awards party.

To reserve your place in the Boeing Classic Pro-Am, please call Michelle DeLancy at (206) 381-7830 or email Michelle@BoeingClassic.com

Single spot, one day: \$2,000 • Single spot, two days: \$4,000
Foursome, one day: \$8,000 • Foursome, two days: \$16,000

Your payment for the Boeing Classic Pro-Am will include a 50% tax-deductible contribution to Virginia Mason Medical Center for federal income tax purposes.

USGA Packages Available for Pacific Northwest Golfers

The USGA is offering an exclusive, limited-time combination ticket package for the 2010 U.S. Senior Open, the 2010 U.S. Amateur and the 2015 U.S. Open, giving golf fans in the Pacific Northwest a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience three national championships in the Seattle area.

Golf fans who purchase the USGA Ultimate Package will receive one weeklong ticket to the 2010 U.S. Senior Open at Sahalee Country Club in Sammamish, WA (July 26 – August 1), one weeklong ticket to the 2010 U.S. Amateur at Chambers Bay in Tacoma, WA (August 23 – 29), and a guaranteed advance opportunity prior to the general public, to purchase tickets to the 2015 U.S. Open at Chambers Bay (June 15-21, 2015).

“This package is very similar to the package we had last summer, the Major Offer,” said USGA director Tim Flaherty. “The response we had was tremendous and the fans have been asking about it since we ended the Major Offer last August. Ultimately we want to give the fans in the Pacific Northwest the best opportunity to experience all that the USGA has to offer, including the U.S. Open in 2015 at Chambers Bay.”

U.S. Senior Open General Chairman, Chris Falco, had this to say, “A guarantee to the U.S. Open is very special and as golf fans in the Northwest we are lucky to have that access. The U.S. Open has sold out for the past 24 years and I’m sure 2015 won’t be any different.”

The Ultimate USGA Package is priced at \$165 and includes seven individual daily tickets (Monday – Sunday) to both the 2010 U.S. Senior Open and the 2010 U.S. Amateur. This package also includes complimentary parking at both the U.S. Senior Open and the U.S. Amateur.

An upgraded version of the Ultimate USGA Package is available and is priced at \$275. This upgraded package includes seven individual daily Trophy Club tickets (Monday – Sunday) to the U.S. Senior Open, seven individual daily grounds tickets (Monday – Sunday) to the U.S. Amateur, and free parking at both events. The Trophy Club tent is located adjacent to the 18th fairway at Sahalee and provides upscale food and beverage available for purchase.

Throughout the week of both the U.S. Senior Open and the U.S. Amateur, juniors 17 and under receive free admission when accompanied by a ticketed adult.

The Ultimate USGA Packages is only available for a short time and quantities are limited. Buy online at www.2010ussenioropen.com or by phone at 877-281-OPEN only. Tickets will be fulfilled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Highland Pacific in Victoria Opens

Highland Pacific Golf Course, just on the outskirts of Victoria, is one of those “feel good” stories in the golf industry. It’s a family development, with the 190 acre property purchased in 1961 by Herb Plasterer with a view to someday making the rugged property a golf course. He started developing the course in the mid 1980’s and it took until June 2010 to complete the final 9 holes. Unfortunately, Herb did not live to see his dream of a quality course at a reasonable cost fulfilled, but his family kept the project going. Relatives helped out and long term employees became family. The family used Herb’s initials as the inspiration for the name of the course, and his signature for the course logo. The Pacific nine was opened in October, 2009 and the Highland nine this June.

One bonus to its location is that it lies in the micro-climate of the coastal areas rather than in the higher elevations of the Malahat and Sooke hills to the west. This should make for a longer season, and a drier winter in the rain shadow.

Operating as a nine hole course lead to an innovative tee time policy. Highland Pacific offers 9 hole rates, which isn’t unusual, but the rate of \$34 mid week works out well in comparison to the 18 hole rate of \$65. Carts are also available for 9 holes. The course will also change the availability of the nines, so that you can play different nines on different days. This will help with the time requirements of the game and hopefully will stimulate the development of new golfers. Juniors can play nine holes for as little as \$18.

The area is very rugged, unlike the coastal areas in Greater Victoria. Rock dominates the viewscape, with fir, pine and some Arbutus providing character and delineating fairways. There are elevation changes on nearly every hole, yet with some exceptions, lies are generally good on the fairways. The course is designed to be walkable, with holes relating well to each other green to tee, but with the constant changes in elevation, would take a well conditioned individual to do so. First time, take a cart.

The clubhouse design fits well into the landscape. I particularly liked the integrated two level driving range. You can take a break from practice and walk just a few yards to get a coffee in the restaurant. The driving range is

central to the course design, but this does mean that the range and the netting predominates the view, and the first tee is of both nines is somewhat distant.

Like any course, there are some good holes and some poor holes, but the Highland nine is definitely the better of the two. The Highland nine reflects the involvement of architect Chris Young, who helped with the design. About the only strange element on the Highland nine is the bunker on number 1, placed across most of the width of the fairway 215 yards out. It forces a lay-up, but the hole is short enough at 315 yards to do so. Visually, though, the bunker takes away the hole. Luckily, there are few fairway bunkers on the course, and are placed strategically where you would expect them. Numbers 4 and 5 holes are the most visually interesting with a waterfall feature and an island tee box.

The two nines play to 4996 from the red tees, 5861 from the white tees and 6603 from the blues. Although this may seem short in today's course design world, the course is challenging and from the blues will make good golfers play to their handicap. It should make for shorter rounds though, particularly when the rough is kept low and the underbrush cleaned out. Rounds under 4 hours may be achievable.

Highland Pacific is a great addition to the courses in the Greater Victoria area. Increased competition is good for golfers and the price point is very competitive. Local golfers will enjoy the course being the closest of the major public courses to the central urban area, and the setting makes for a much more interesting round than courses in the flatter areas. If you are in Victoria visiting, put it on your list of courses to play.

What's Your Favorite BC Golf Hole?

We all have our favorite golf holes. It might be the hole we aced (eagled or birdied) or one we find a special challenge, or one that is simply so spectacular that it stays in our minds, regardless of how we fared. BC has so many great courses, so it stands to reason that there will be those special holes that are among the best in the world. We would like to hear about your favorite golf hole in BC but to start the discussion off, here are some of my favorites, not in any particular order.

The 12th hole at Olympic View in Victoria is a short, but very challenging par 4. From an elevated tee, a pond dominates the right side of a small valley along the entire length of the landing area. On the right, a nearly vertical cliff face, and towering fir trees limit your options in that direction, although the occasional shot will bounce off the rocks and onto the fairway. The primary landing area, about 170 yards out, is about 75 yards wide, so is certainly playable. However, you certainly benefit from pushing your drive out further to about 200 yards, although the fairway here shrinks rapidly as the pond bends to the left. The challenge is in the second shot to an elevated green. The green drops off rapidly from the front face around to the back right, while forest awaits the long errant shot. A bunker on the left guards that side of the green. A longer drive means you are hitting 7 or 8 iron, giving you a chance to have your shot stick on the green. However if you opted for the shorter, safer shot off the tee, you'll be hitting a longer iron, making it more difficult to stop your ball. This is a very pretty hole, but offers equal challenge and strategy.

Number 6 at Greywolf – Cliffhanger – has to be one of the most scenic and photographed holes in Canada. Greywolf is one of the best mountain courses you can play, and Cliffhanger is one of the most representative mountain holes you'll find.

There isn't much elevation change tee to green, but a lot of it in between on this 175 yard (black) par 3. Its naturally all carry over Toby Creek Canyon to a promontory with a vertical drop on the front. The Purcell Mountains in the background provide a sense of perspective that is very stunning visually. The shot to the green is relatively straightforward, if you can ignore the canyon, but the tendency is usually to swing a little harder or use more club, which usually doesn't have good results. In addition, the wind is often swirling over the canyon, which can't be felt on the protected tee boxes. Thankfully, the green is large and a par here is a good result. This hole has a sense of drama that is felt on only a few golf holes.

Number 14 at Furry Creek is similar in some respects – a par 3 requiring a perfect shot over unforgiving territory – in this case the ocean. Called "Tee to Sea", usually playing at 184 yards, Howe Sound guards the left side, but unlike Cliffhanger, there is fairway to the right side for those less daring. What sets off this hole is the ocean and mountain backdrop. On most summer days, there is a haze over the mountains on the far side of the sound which provides an almost mystical view. Like Pebble Beach though, the afternoon winds which often come roaring up Howe Sound on warm days change the nature of the hole completely. On the green, the views to the south are great over the ocean, while the mountain views to the north towards Whistler are equally spectacular. Its even worth a stop to have a look from along the Sea to Sky Highway if you have time.

So here's a few of my favorite golf holes in BC. I'm sure other golfers would like to hear about yours. Send me a description of what makes a golf hole in BC your favorite and we'll publish the news in future articles. Just to encourage you, all responses will be entered in a draw for a \$100 prize package.