

# British Columbia Golf Member Newsletter

## August 2009

### Our Readers Write - Gorge Vale Golf Club

I have been amazed by the lack of recognition/ publicity for my club- Gorge Vale Golf Club in Victoria. It's the only course I've played that I would play several times a week and find interesting. I've played every serious course on Van. Island except for Storey Creek, which I look forward to playing.

From a design, variety, and challenge perspective Gorge Vale is a strong track. Now that we're into our second year with our remarkable superintendent Scott Wheeler, our course has the conditioning we expect from Uplands, Victoria, and Crown Isle. We members think it's the best layout on Van. Island, and now the conditioning is first-rate as well.

I have heard that the attitude toward the Gorge is 'political'. Maybe it's seen as a blue-collar, military, "public " course . Maybe we don't have high-profile owners like Len Barrie. Maybe the course disappointed raters the last time they looked at it. Maybe it's not political. What I know is that the Canadian Tour players like it a lot, and when they play here our 12th hole is the toughest hole they play all year.

What are your comments?

Peter Clugston

Hello Peter, good to hear from you.

I have played Gorge Vale a few times and have always found it to be an interesting course to play. It is a bit like an urban oasis with a convenient location and the design works well, with good connections between holes and the conditioning has been good when I've played it. Its great that Gorge Vale members are happy with the course, as this speaks well to continuing to grow the game of golf overall.

I can't really comment on the "political" nature of the attitude towards Gorge Vale. I live in Victoria and am not a member at any of the courses, but have played them all. I think there is an element of the old Rodney Dangerfield line "I don't get no respect" in the views of the course. The other 3 private courses have been around a long time and reputation builds over time. Part of the reputation comes from exclusivity and cost, from clubhouse design, and from scenic values. From a playability perspective though, I would rate Uplands, Victoria and Gorge Vale very closely. However I think Royal Colwood is a better course, and this is reflected in the high national rankings it receives almost every year.

I've been privileged to play a lot of golf courses across Canada and its always interesting to consider each of the courses in comparison to others, and how they would rank. Each person's opinion, and likes and dislikes are different. I know that part of how golfers perceive of a course often depends on how well they played the course. This is all part of what makes the game so interesting – its all the same game, but the locations can vary tremendously!

I hope I can use your email in the next newsletter?

Cheers

Jim Lee

Thanks, Jim. By all means use my email.

I have to say I have played Royal Colwood several times with a dear friend who was a member there for many years, and I consider our course to be 2- 2 1/2 shots tougher. I do agree that history and exclusivity play a part, and that what you say about reputation makes sense. For me it's the quality of the track, and I'd love to see raters from elsewhere do all the Victoria courses again and see the results. My theme is "take a look at us now!"

Thanks for your prompt response.

## **Amen Corner – Rivershore Golf Links, Kamloops**

Rivershore, just east of Kamloops, was designed by Robert Trent Jones, and is one of the first "signature" golf courses in BC. With the South Thompson River in the foreground, and desert-like hills and canyons of the Kamloops region in the background, the course is one of the more scenic in the province. However, its also known for its challenging design.

No three-hole stretch of golf makes the heart rate rise like holes number nine through 11 at Rivershore Golf Links.

The ninth hole measures 443 yards from the championship tees, often plays into the wind, features a classic elevated and well bunkered Rivershore green and a narrow fairway.

The shorter tenth makes up for the lack of length by having a fairway that wraps itself around a pond from tee to green.

The signature par three eleventh, again with water all along the left side and a series of yawning bunkers to the right of the green plays more like a short par 4 than a par three.

It is little wonder that upon completing this series of holes players of all abilities occasionally mutter to the Lord and gather in the Clubhouse afterwards to talk of what might have been.

## **BCGA Partners with Flight Centre**

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The Account Manager for the BCGA Travel Club is Lyle Truden who can be reached at 778 370 0423 in Vancouver or at 866 514 3710 and at [lyle.truden@flightcentre.ca](mailto:lyle.truden@flightcentre.ca)

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