

Course Renovation: Bingo!

Sunday, May 1, 2011

Well they did it, and we're still trying to figure out how. On Saturday morning, April 30, exactly as promised, Peacock Gap reopened for business after a 12 day construction blitz that witnessed—

- The removal and relaying of a six-foot deep, 12-inch quarter-mile sewage pipeline cutting across the course from the 5th (forward) tee to the course's eastern boundary, two or three dozen yards short of the 15th green. All hail the San Rafael Sanitation District construction team for a remarkable job.
- The annual spring plugging and sanding of practically the entire course, tee through green—
- The recontouring and resodding of five “problem” greens: Nos. 6, 7, 11, 14, and 18.
- And several other welcome improvements, such as the repositioning of that nasty fairway bunker on No. 18 and the subtle recontouring of greenside bunkers, berms, shoulders and “collection” areas on several other holes—notably Nos. 7, 11 and 14.

The Braznells, W & J, were among the contingent of golfers on hand Saturday morning to celebrate the course's reopening-- and to inspect the renovations. Actually, *testing* the product with wedge and putter will have to wait a few weeks, as we were forewarned. The vast areas of resodded greenery need time to knit and root. Some spots are likely to remain off limits for weeks.

Nevertheless, we enjoyed playing these holes, even in their unfinished form. The challenge of pitching or bump-and-running to much diminished areas of “true” (unchanged) greenery takes a deft touch, reminiscent of pitching to those postage stamp greens at Mill Valley—or Pebble Beach! We tend to forget how enormous Peacock Gap's lot-sized greens truly are—until we see them cut down to the size we were accustomed to playing thirty or forty years ago. Note especially that little jewel of a temporary green on 14—a miniature masterpiece of greenery enfolded in a circle of approach bunkers about fifty yards short of the permanent green. Work of art!

Cheers to the construction contractor (whose name I apologize for forgetting) and his hard working crews for a remarkable accomplishment, and of course to John Rader and his gang of Peacock Gap greenskeepers for getting the rest of the course all gussied up for its spring coming out party. And finally, let's have a few hearty hip-hips for our new owners, who seem to be in the habit of following through with every promise they make--so far.

Now about that clubhouse, gentlemen. . .