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Glaze Meadow golf course re-opens as a Black Butte beauty

BLACK BUTTE RANCH | JULY 11, 2012 | BY: STEVE PIKE

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Playing John Fought's terrific renovation of Glaze Meadow golf course at Black Butte Ranch (www.blackbutteranch.com) can be best described as an eye-opening experience. That holds true for first-time visitors to the 1,800-acre resort community in Central Oregon, about 40 minutes from Bend, as well as long-time members. By removing as many as 4,000 trees, installing 18 new tee and green complexes as well as a new irrigation

system, and re-designing the bunkers to a classic grass-face look, Fought has lifted the veil on a Glaze Meadow course some people didn't know was there.

For example, the residents of the home located near the green on the first hole (a 395-yard, par-four), now can see seven of nine holes on the front side of Glaze Meadow. Before the renovation, the residents couldn't see to the other side of the fairway.

Glaze Meadow, which opened this month, takes its place alongside some of Fought's best work, including the renovation of Pine Needles Golf Club in Southern Pines, N.C; the Gallery near Tucson; Sand Hollow in Hurricane, Utah; and Crosswater at Sunriver (Ore.) Resort.

The new-look Glaze Meadow (7,007 yards, par 72 from the tips), renovated at a cost \$3.5 million, is a perfect complement to Big Meadow, Black Butte Ranch's other golf course, which was renovated in 2008 by Damian Pascuzzo. Glaze Meadow and Big Meadow give the Black Butte Ranch property a solid one-two punch of golf to go along with its other outdoor activities that includes biking (the ranch has 18 miles of bike trails), hiking, fishing, swimming, fishing and horseback riding.

Black Butte Ranch sits in the Cascade Mountain range, with views of Three Sisters, Mount Washington, Black Butte, Broken Top, Three Fingered Jack and Mount Jefferson.

"We could all see there was tremendous potential because it's a beautiful piece of property," said Fought, the 1977 U.S. Amateur champion and former PGA Tour player. "But there were 40-inch trees 15 feet from the greens on some holes. It was just out of scale.

"The ranch had a policy of never removing a tree, but that doesn't work for golf. You have to grow grass. It was obvious that once we got the trees out of the way, it could be a lot better."

Fought brought Glaze Meadow back to scale and opened up the fairway corridors to not only give players a chance to hit a fairway without having to move his or her ball, but to see the greens from the tee boxes, something players couldn't do on some holes of the original design.

"It had a few funky holes that didn't make sense," said Fought, whose brother Jeff is BBR's director of golf.

The original third hole, for example, was a short par four that boomeranged along a lake. Most players ran out fairway room and ended up in the lake. Now the hole is a drivable par four, only 319 yards from the tips.

The first hole gives a player a good opportunity to get off to a fast start. It's a sweeping downhill dogleg to the right that plays only 395 yards from the tips, but requires a solid tee shot to the left-center of the fairway.

The second hole, a 538-yard, par five, is a good example of Fought's sense of classic course architecture, particularly his admiration for Donald Ross. The elevated green on the third hole has falloffs that can deflect shots away, making for

a delicate up and down. Fought comes back with another sloped green on the fifth hole, a 164-yard, par three.

The green complexes aren't as shaved down as they are at Ross's classic Pinehurst #2, but each requires solid shot-making to have a chance at birdie.

The par-five, 549-10th hole is another example of how Fought opened up Glaze Meadow. Tree along the right side of the tee box had grown out so far that only half the fairway was in play.

Fought removed trees and opened up right side of the fairway to allow players to better shape their tee shots right to left. Again, an elevated green protects the hole from long hitter who might want to take a shot in two, as does the deep bunker on the green's left side.

The 11th hole, a 196-yard, par three, is one of the tougher holes on Glaze Meadow because it requires a long carry to an elevated green that is guarded by two bunkers on the left side. Players can opt to go right, but if they miss, the green slopes severely away, creating a difficult recovery shot.

Glaze Meadow has three par fours, three par fours and three par fives on the back side, so a player has scoring opportunities. He or she, of course, has to choose the correct tees. Glaze Meadow has five tee boxes as well as a hybrid set of tees set from the scorecard.

"This is a beautiful place, but the course was 35 years old," Fought said. "We knew we could do something cool with it and I think we did."

I think he's correct.

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Report



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