



(<http://www.bendbulletin.com/slideShows?layout=2&storyId=4239036>)

Kevin Duke / The Bulletin

Crosswater member Charley Griswold drains a downhill, right-to-left putt for par on the par-3 7th hole at Eagle Crest's Resort Course on Saturday during the Central Oregon Shootout.

[Click here to enlarge image \(http://www.bendbulletin.com/slideShows?layout=2&storyId=4239036\)](http://www.bendbulletin.com/slideShows?layout=2&storyId=4239036)

TEE TO GREEN

CO Shootout draws visitors, locals for competition, fun

More than 350 golfers take over three area courses

By Kevin Duke (<http://www.bendbulletin.com/NewsroomStaffList/?person=154>) / The Bulletin

Published Apr 25, 2016 at 12:11AM

Participants in this year's 14th annual Central Oregon Shootout caught a break over the weekend.

The forecast for rain and cold did not quite come to pass, with a little rain toward the end of the round Sunday the worst of it. So unlike previous years, the three-day amateur golf tournament at Black Butte Ranch, Eagle Crest and Aspen Lakes was played in fairly good weather.

Visitors from all across the Northwest and from as far away as Hawaii, along with several two-person teams from here in Central Oregon, enjoyed the relatively decent conditions and fierce competition at one of the largest amateur tournaments in the region.

More than 350 players teed off Friday in five different flights, playing three different formats in three days, and vying for prizes that approached \$800 in shop credits for first in each flight.

Washington brothers

Matt and Tom Wolf made the long drive from Spokane, Washington, to play in this year's event, their second trip to Central Oregon for the Shootout.

Tom, 29, was particularly pleased that the weather stayed away, at least on Saturday, which dawned a little cool but with blue skies at Eagle Crest's Resort Course.

"Thank God it hasn't rained," he laughed, while waiting to warm up on the driving range prior to his round. "I forgot my rain jacket."

The brothers, both single-digit handicaps, were enjoying the variety — and difficulty — of Central Oregon golf, finding the courses here a little more challenging than the tracks around Spokane.

"The courses we play at home are a lot easier than these," said Matt, 31. "There are no trees, it's more wide open and there's not a lot of out of bounds.

"The courses here are a little bit tight."

The trip was for more than just the golf: the Wolfs rented a house at Eagle Crest to stay with four other players for a vacation.

"We've got six guys in the house," Matt laughed. "We have to leave the windows open when we leave to let the place air out."

The brothers said it is unusual for them to play three straight days of golf, and Tom was already feeling the effects on the second day of the Shootout, his first tournament of the year.

"I'm a little sore," he said. "I have no idea what I'm going to shoot today."

Playing in the first flight, which featured many teams that were single-digit handicappers like themselves, allowed the Wolfs to test their games against pretty good amateur competition.

"We used to come down here and just play the courses," Matt said. "But tournaments make it more fun ... playing when there is something on the line."

Longtime buddies

Bret Mackay has been playing in the Shootout since its inception, driving up from Southern California with his teammate, Dave Clement, again this year. The two have been friends for more than 30 years.

Mackay, 57, retired to Sunriver last year ... and Clement made the trip from Valencia, California, to play in this year's event.

"Now it's just a little closer drive for me to get here," Mackay laughed. "I think this is the best tournament out there. We've got good players from all over here, so the competitive part of it makes it a really fun tournament."

Mackay, a 4-handicap, takes golf pretty seriously in his retirement, playing in Oregon Golf Association events, with the men's club in Sunriver and pretty much anywhere he can find tournaments to test his game.

"The competition is what I thrive on," he said.

Mackay and Clement have had success in the Shootout over the past 14 years, and they have made just about every one.

"I think we've only missed one or two years," said Clement, 63. He said his friendship with Mackay, and the quality of the tournament and courses in the rotation, keep him coming back, although winning it "a few times" probably has something to do with it too.

"The golf courses up here are so nice and the value for the tournament is great," Clement said. "The people that run it are fantastic to deal with and run a great event."

Clement, a 9-handicap, acknowledges his partner's superior skill on the golf course.

"I just worry I might get a little heavy for him sometimes," he laughed. "But any chance to come play with Bret, I'm going to drop what I'm doing and go."

In addition to playing in the Shootout, the pair have tee times for a couple of other rounds while Clement is in Central Oregon.

"We'll play every day except Tuesday, the day that I leave," Clement said. "It's tough on the body; I guess I'm showing my age."

The local

Mackay informed another accomplished amateur in the area about the tournament, Crosswater member Charley Griswold, who after looking into it decided to sign up and play for the first time this year.

Griswold is a scratch golfer and also regularly plays in OGA events and many of the top amateur tournaments in the state.

"It seemed like a pretty good deal, and when my partner agreed to do it, we paid our ante and we were off," Griswold said.

He and his partner, Michael Jackson (from Redmond) were playing in the gross division at the tournament, and had noticed the level of competition from players in that division.

"Friday we were constantly turning around because some ball was rolling up behind us, you know, 320 yards from off the tee," he said. "There's some good players out here and that increases the excitement."

Griswold was playing for that level of competition, and to try and get his game in shape for the upcoming tournament season.

"I'm trying to get my season started," he said. "I'm signed up to play in OGA, PNGA and section events, so this sort of gets the juices going ... you've got to get your competitive golf game into shape."

Final winners in all flights were not available by Bulletin deadline Sunday night.

— Reporter: 541-617-7868, kduke@bendbulletin.com (<mailto:kduke@bendbulletin.com>)

13419933

Get Central Oregon's top headlines delivered to your inbox every morning

GO