




Powered by  Clickability

 Click to Print

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Playing DragonRidge a peek at perfection

Let's talk about perfection. Yeah, I know that a lot of you are thinking I'm referring to your golf swing or that tap-in eagle on the par-5, 575-yard hole at your local club. But I said perfection, not luck.

The genesis of this perfection began the day I was invited to play in the North Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce golf tournament that was held last month. I know that tournaments are great fun, but this one, in particular, was a special eye-opener.

The tournament was played at the DragonRidge Country Club in Henderson, and what great planning on the part of the chamber to choose that course.

"DragonRidge is a member of the North Las Vegas Chamber," said Vanessa Vazquez, program and events coordinator for the North Las Vegas Chamber. "Each year, the spring tournament is held at a member's private club. And this year, we were glad to have DragonRidge. We wanted exclusivity for the event, and DragonRidge was perfect."

I'll say.

Originally opened in 2001 as a public course, homeowners in the MacDonald Highlands community pressed course owner Richard C. MacDonald to consider taking the golf club private. Finally, in November 2006, the facility went private, denying us golf enthusiasts the opportunity to play perfection.

Now you see where I was coming from.

Today, the only way to play the course is by being a member, a guest or by participating in a tournament like the chamber's. Luckily, these are readily available.

Such tournament events are held on Tuesdays, when the club is closed to membership and is officially designated as a Maintenance Day.

During its early years, DragonRidge was voted Best of Las Vegas Golf Course in 2004 by the Las Vegas Review-Journal. It also has hosted two Tiger Jams, III and IV, and the Wendy's Three Tour Challenge in 2002. Also in 2002, the Nevada Business Journal listed DragonRidge as the No. 1 country club in the state. After turning private, DragonRidge garnered the 2007 Best Golf Club in a Luxury Community by Vegas Golfer Magazine.

DragonRidge was the first collaboration of golf architects Jay Morrish and David Druzisky. They're also responsible for such noted courses as Troon North and the Tournament Players Club Stadium courses in Scottsdale, Ariz., and the noted Reserve in Palm Springs, Calif. At DragonRidge, they designed a winner.

The first things that strike you are the courtesy of the staff and the pristine condition of the course. But don't relax because of the excellent course conditions. DragonRidge plays more than 7,000 yards from the tips, with a 72.9 rating and a slope of 143. Each hole is separated from the rest, a nicety that allows one to think that they're the only one playing on the course.

There are virtually postcard-perfect views everywhere on the course during the round of play. Dramatic city views abound, framed by the desert terrain of the McCullough Mountains. The tee of No. 2, a par-3, 229-yard hole, is the highest elevation on the golf course and provides the most dramatic views of Las Vegas in the distance. The tee is elevated, making it easy to reach with a long iron.

The hardest hole on the course is the par-4 7th hole, basically because of the water hazard that runs the length of the hole.

One nice course management strategy is the use of split fairways that challenge you to either gamble or play it safe. No. 10 is one of them. To gamble, you need to carry the tee shot over a rugged ravine, being careful not to drive your shot through the fairway. Play it safe to the left by laying up, but at the price of playing a little longer approach shot to the green.

Adding to the magnificence of the course is the real estate tour you're taken on through the round of golf. There are some really spectacular homes in the neighborhood that take advantage of the elevation and course views.

At the end of play, my team settled in the 42,000-square-foot clubhouse for a buffet lunch and awards ceremony. We finished at 5 under par, a mere 15 strokes off the lead. None of us felt badly, having experienced golf perfection and a delicious lunch.

I asked about playing DragonRidge again.

Ryan Morris, membership director at DragonRidge, explained, "You can. The membership initiation fee is \$65,000. In addition, there's a \$695 monthly dues payment and a \$200 monthly food and beverage charge. But you're getting a premier golf course, a 42,000-square-foot clubhouse with elegant banquet facilities and all the other amenities."

So, how many other courses are there in Las Vegas denying us our right to play?

Just to name a few, how about a round at the SouthShore Golf Club in Lake Las Vegas? The Cascata Golf Club near Boulder City would be nice to challenge. Wynn Las Vegas would be a wonderful afternoon on the Strip. Spanish Trail Golf and Country Club could take up a morning. And, what about Shadow Creek and its exclusivity to MGM Mirage high-roller guests?

I propose a Gold Amnesty Day, or GAD for short. Open up these courses for play one day a year, for FREE. Let us enjoy perfection, even if our handicaps aren't up to the task.

Let me know if you want to join the movement.

John Asay is a longtime golfer and local freelance writer. Contact him at jasay@reviewjournal.com.

Find this article at:

<http://www.viewnews.com/2008/VIEW-Jul-08-Tue-2008/North/22539468.html>

 **Click to Print**

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.