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COURSE REVIEW

Myrtle Beach's Pine Lakes Country Club: Making the good old days better

By Lisa Allen, Contributor



Courtesy of Burroughs & Chapin

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. - A year and \$15 million later, **Pine Lakes Country Club** is a new, old club.

The clubhouse at Pine Lakes Country Club in Myrtle Beach remains its 1927 self, only better.

Some of the "old" aspects are new, like the plus-fours and argyle socks that the bag and cart crews wear. Gone is the starter in the kilt. "We tried to simplify the uniform for the cart and bag staff," said Brad Crumling, the club's head golf professional.

The entrance from the west is new, but the name isn't. It's called Granddaddy Drive, after Pine Lakes' nickname as the oldest golf course in Myrtle Beach.

The clubhouse remains its 1927 self, only better, with restored wood floors and new decor. The original white-columned Ocean Forest Hotel and Country Club is reserved for members and includes the Snug Pub, where editors from Time brainstormed a new sports publication in 1954 - Sports Illustrated. Attached to it and open to all comers is a brand-new pro shop and the Robert White Pub. Order the signature Robert White roast beef sandwich. It's delicious.

In short, the renovations seamlessly blend the old and the new while retaining the grandeur of the pre-1929-stock-market-crash club.

Pine Lakes Country Club: The golf course



Lisa Allen/WorldGolf.com

The par-3 second hole at Pine Lakes Country Club has a water carry, then bunkers short of the green.

Semblances of the old golf course are there, such as seven of Robert White's original 18 holes, but in a different order. For example, No. 11 used to be No. 2.

The new is better than the old on the SeaDwarf paspalum greens, which are smooth as silk and nearly plastic in their perfection. The same turf is used for the tee boxes and fairways, too. The old might have been better than the new along the fairways, though. Gone are rows of mature trees crowding the fairways, replaced with baby trees planted on a carpet of wood chips, probably the remnants of their elders. The benefit is that it opens up the course.

There is plenty of course, with 6,675 yards from the tips, but its allocation is a little odd. There are some par 4s that cannot be reached in regulation, either for men going from the mid-tees at 6,305 yards or women trying from the second tees at 5,756.

The gaps between the tees are a little frustrating. Middle tees usually stretch about 6,100 yards, but here they run 6,300. There is a nearly insurmountable gap between the front tees at 4,758 yards and the 98-yard cavern to the next set. Only the front is rated for women. Some golfers will be frustrated with the odd tee lengths that are either too short or too long.

What is most challenging about the course is the



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greens. Once they are in top form, they will be like glass, surrounded by shaved sides that will send balls into catchment areas.

There is variety among the holes. Some are wide open with specific areas of trouble, like an overhanging tree by the tee or a sudden slope in the fairway to water. Others are more overt, such as water right near the tee or enormous bunkers that are impossible to overlook.



Don't be distracted by the hotels in the distance on the 14th hole at Pine Lakes Country Club in Myrtle Beach.

Pine Lakes Country Club: Holes of note

No. 9 really should be Pine Lakes Country Club's finishing hole. It's a watery dogleg left over and around water that's so short most people will find it irresistible to try to drive it.

No. 14 is a valley hole with water at the bottom and then a steep climb back up to the green that has massive, walled bunkers in front and on the sides. It's daunting and fun.

The 18th has a crescent of water on the right side that is near the tee, then again at the green. It's a subtle hole and might cause havoc if you're a little tired and inattentive.

Pine Lakes Country Club: Golfers' reaction



All of the trouble on the 18th at Myrtle Beach's Pine Lakes Country Club is on the right.

Jim Beran, of Pittsburgh, played the course before and after the renovations. "It was a pleasant surprise. The conditioning was nice, and the greens are great."

His challenge was trying to distinguish the old from the new. "I recognized only four original holes."

"We always enjoyed starting off here as a warm-up course." He figures that tradition will continue.

Lenny Dybrowski played Pine Lakes Country Club for the first time. "It's a classy course, and it's very nice inside."

Steve Bieganouski from [New Jersey](#) said the golf course was a "great improvement," especially regarding drainage and bunkers. "They really opened it up a lot. they took out a lot of trees."

October 12, 2009

Lisa Allen has been playing golf since childhood. It is her passion and she is able to play often as a resident of Beaufort, S.C. To pay for life's necessities, she is a newspaper editor and has worked for publications in [South Carolina](#), Indiana (home of Pete and Alice Dye) and Michigan.

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