



Whiskey Creek Golf Course ~ A Round of Great Shots

Nick Ciattei

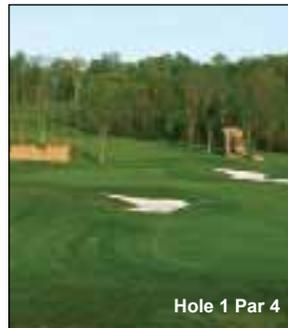
It seems like only yesterday that we were introduced to Whiskey Creek Golf Club. Since its heralded arrival in 2000, this outstanding facility in Ijamsville, MD, continues to be recognized as one of the premiere golf courses in the mid-Atlantic. The layout is a routine “top ten” course in the Free State. Much like a fine spirit ages and gets better with time, the same can be said about this tasty romp across picturesque Maryland countryside. I recall much of the excitement in anticipation of its opening was that the course was being co-designed by two-time U.S. Open Champion Ernie Els. The Big Easy helped lay out this 7001-yard track along with architect J. Michael Poellot on a secluded piece of property near Frederick, and the end result is a golf course that is both bold and demanding.



Whiskey Creek was designed to be a world-class golf course, taking advantage of Els’ globe-trotting experiences in the game. With views of the Catoctin Mountains, broad meadows, streams of fresh water, stone walls, rock outcroppings and plenty of hardwoods, Els and Poellot have accomplished just that. Two things will stand out to players visiting Whiskey for the first time. The first is the

mile-long drive to the property off the main highway that translates into a feeling of seclusion and privacy that is very attractive to most golfers. The second is the clubhouse setting which is surrounded by several exciting holes, none more talked about than the closing par 5. More on that later, but c’mon man, it’s your shot on the first tee!

Whiskey Creek is a golf course that requires strategy by using the old thinking cap at times, but it still doesn’t beat up the average golfer as long as the correct tee box from four different options is selected. The fairways are generous, but this is not a traditional public course where you can just bang driver off the tee on each hole. Sure, there are a couple of short and possibly drivable par 4s, but miss with the driver and the consequences can be costly. Once on the course, players will find Whiskey Creek to be an honest test of golf. All of the hazards and danger zones are out in front of you, with no tricks or blind round-robbing gimmicks hiding around the corner. The 410-yard par 4 first has a feel of the British links with bunkers and gorse dominating the eye. A wide landing area makes the relatively straight par 4 second a realistic birdie hole. The first in a terrific set of par 3s is number three on your scorecard. Add a good ten yards to your shot which plays slightly uphill to a



Hole 1 Par 4

green framed by rock outcroppings. A parkland-style feel comes into play early and often at the 565-yard par 5 fourth, beginning a stretch of holes that cut through mature hardwoods. The fairway at the fourth is ample at 70 yards across and this hole also plays slightly uphill. The next two holes, both par 4s, show the distinctive array of shots you find at Whiskey. The tee on the fifth is elevated some 100 feet above the fairway. The views are intoxicating, so concentrate on the task at hand. In contrast, the sixth is the shortest par 4 on the course and plays uphill to a green protected by a deep bunker. This hole, along with the final three holes on the front side, represents the best scoring stretch on the golf course. Number nine is a par 5 where a risky play from the tee can reward the golfer with a chance to get home in two.

One of the more charming clubhouses you’ll find anywhere is a welcome sight recharging your batteries before taking on the challenging back nine. Whiskey Creek’s digs remind this writer of an old secluded lodge with its towering beamed ceilings and Shaker shingles. The rye theme is prevalent throughout with memorable artifacts displayed everywhere.

The folks at Whiskey will tell you the back nine plays two to three shots harder than the front. Take advantage of a good scoring opportunity on the inward nine’s opening shot, the par 4 tenth. The par 3 eleventh, seen on the club’s long



Hole 8 Par 4



Hole 11 Par 3

entryway, is a striking hole causing most to rubber neck in awe of its beauty. The long and narrow green is protected to the right by a deep rock-walled bunker. Many would choose the 445-yard, par 4 twelfth as the most demanding at Whiskey Creek. Playing from an elevated tee, you must find the sculpted fairway that will leave you a long- to mid-iron downhill shot to a receptive green. The thirteenth, a par 4, is most noted for the fifteen foot high mounds that frame the right side of this gentle dogleg. Yet another elevated tee shot awaits players on the par 4 fourteenth with water looming down the left side of the fairway and near the green. Fifteen is the longest par 3 on the course and requires a forced carry over a pond. Fairway bunkers guard both sides of the fairway on sixteen, a three-shot par 5. Try to get a wedge in your hand for your third attempt, because the well bunkered green is best suited for high, lofted shots. The last par 4, seventeen, offers up a wide fairway and a two-tiered putting surface. The aforementioned 550-yard par 5 eighteenth is a breathtaking finish to the round and the most photographed hole on the property. The closer at Whiskey Creek is also unique with the ruins of a 19th century stone house sitting directly in the middle of the landing area off the tee. At 275 yards from the back tees, the house is reachable and can leave golfers muttering to themselves. The smart tee shot is to the right of the house, usually leaving a lay-up shot in front of a small pond that protects the long and shallow green. Those who boldly go left of the ruins off the tee could go for the green in two. Take a shot of courage at the tee and your reward may be a winning toast after your round.



Hole 14 Par 4

Folklore about the land on which Whiskey Creek now sits is as rich as the course itself. The farm that was here was not just handling normal green-acre duties. During the prohibition, moonshiners floated whiskey kegs down Bush Creek to Ijamsville Road. From there, it wasn't long before the bootlegged spirits were delivered to parched Maryland and Washington, D.C., residents. Tucked in the corner of thriving Frederick County, the course is perfectly positioned for convenient access from both metro beltways. The recognized management team at KemperSports has operated the facility since opening day. So if you are thirsty for some of the best golf our area has to offer, step up to the tee, and enjoy a round of great shots at Whiskey!



Hole 18 Par 4

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