



The Gauntlet Golf Club~New Direction for The G

Nick Ciattai



Hole 4 Par 4

I've known Michael Byrd for almost as long as I've been in the golf business. He has always been a great proponent of the sport and travels to golf shows across the east coast and beyond pitching the game and the region. After 12 long, and hard working years as General Manager of The Gauntlet Golf Club (The G) in Fredericksburg, Virginia, Byrd decided it was time to create his own company and buy out the old company. Byrd is now the new owner of The G!

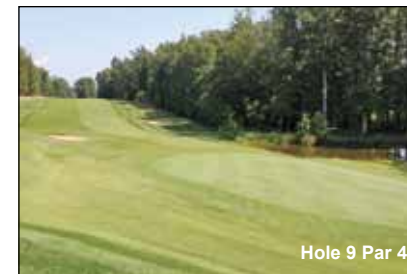
"My plans all along were to purchase. New Direction Golf Management was formed in 2010, however the stars didn't align, and my partners and I didn't feel as though it was a good time," Byrd said. In June 2017 the old regime approached Michael, and a deal was completed to take over The G's lease. In December the Stafford County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the lease reassignment to New Direction Golf Management (NDGM).



Hole at The G." Byrd said part of the renewed start required turning over the staff and not looking back.

The Gauntlet Golf Club has always been one of the more exciting courses in Virginia. Architect P.B. Dye is known for his creativity and the challenge he puts into his designs. A lot of earth was moved to build The G, but Curtis Lake was used brilliantly with seven holes playing either alongside or over parts of the course's main feature. Much recognition followed the 1995 opening including a "Top 10

New Course to Play in the US" from *Golf Digest*. Four sets of tees provide comfortable ranges for players with the front tees a tick over 4800 yards and the back measuring 6723. The Zoysia grass fairways are fun to play on, and the Bentgrass greens are some of the smoothest in the Northern Virginia area. I never have found length to be an issue here. This layout requires precision over power. Three of the first five holes bring Lake Curtis into play and fall into the "target" golf category. The par 5 second hole has the lake running down the entire left side and a wetland area crossing the fairway at the 150-yard mark. If you are laying up over the marsh, your landing area is more ample than it appears. The tee shot on the par 4 fourth, which is definitely the signature hole, must carry over marsh to a very narrow strip of fairway. Any approach must encounter three tiers of putting surface, the lake on the left and back, and bunkers on the right. The par 5 fifth, a natural three shot hole, features water again to your left off the tee and across the fairway. Both of the closing par 4s on the front nine play downhill after your drive.



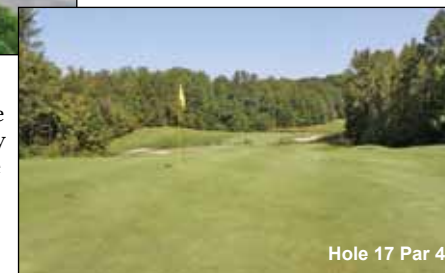
Hole 9 Par 4



Hole 13 Par 5

I've always thought the inward nine at The Gauntlet offers a little more breathing room, especially holes eleven through fifteen, which gives you the chance to get back a couple of those shots lost on the front. The straight, short par 5 tenth plays longer than advertised. It offers a

decent chance at birdie in contrast to the thirteenth, the longest hole at The G tipping the scales at 560 yards. Play a long iron or fairway wood from the tee on the par 3 fifteenth to achieve par, which is gold. The closing three par 4s on the back nine play through a wooded, parkland setting. Seventeen's dogleg left requires an uphill shot to one of Dye's most intimidating greens. The second shot on the beautiful eighteenth plays uphill so take an extra stick to reach the green.



Hole 17 Par 4

The Gauntlet Golf Club has an extensive practice facility with a large grass driving range, practice bunker, and chipping and putting greens. Lessons are always available, and don't be surprised if you see Admiral Byrd out there running some youth golf camps this summer. I'm sure he will be providing us with more news of the new directions he will be bringing to The G to suit the modern golfer while maintaining the core traditions in which he has always believed.

For more information visit golfgauntlet.com