

Course Review: Broadmoor Golf Course

Broadmoor Golf Course in Northeast Portland very much fits the definition of a “classic” golf course, at least for Portland. In fact, there is much there to remind you of Eastmoreland or the Heron Lakes Greenback Course, two of Portland’s longstanding municipal tracks. And, as anyone who’s ever played Colwood National knows, there are striking similarities between Broadmoor and Colwood, separated by about three miles along NE Columbia Blvd.

Broadmoor first opened in 1931, a private family-owned but public play course since its inception. The clubhouse and 1st and 10th tees are located near the intersection of NE 33rd and Columbia Blvd., but the course runs north from there over 170 acres over portions of the Columbia River Slough and out toward the airport complex. You’ll catch frequent views of Mt. Hood and Mt. St. Helens in the backdrop of your round, and on especially clear days, even a glimpse of Mt. Rainier up north.

While the course sort of sprawls about its environs, the 6500 yards from the blue tees or 6000 yards from the whites are very walkable. The course drops down to a river lowland from the clubhouse area, so while the tees on No. 1 and 10 and the greens on No. 9 and 18 are elevated, pretty much everything else is flat. Undulating terrain, tree-lined fairways, enough greenside bunkers to make things interesting and occasional battles with the Slough in play make for a well-rounded day of golf at Broadmoor.

You learn a couple of things quickly after two holes of play at Broadmoor. First, that the course features a goodly portion of beautiful-to-look-at, hard-to-play-around old-growth trees. No 1 is a short par 4 and downhill as well, but slice or hook it much and you won’t have a clear shot to the green. Most of the greens at Broadmoor are medium sized, incidentally, and roll consistently at medium speeds.



You cross one finger of the Slough and play a short par 3, then you trudge over another portion of the murky waterway and learn the second thing: hang on to your receipt. Broadmoor employs a person stationed near the 3rd tee box to make sure you’ve paid. Back in the day, when Don was a teen, it was an ancient guy who called out “Tickets, tickets” like a Grim Reaper version of a train conductor. The folks checking tickets/receipts are considerably friendlier these days, and necessary for the course as Holes 3-16 are so far from the clubhouse — and entirely out-of-view — that people could hop on the course at No. 3 and have themselves a free 14-hole round.

Trees aside, there’s nothing particularly tricky about Broadmoor. Some holes have greenside bunkers, but not all of them. There are no fairway traps. A couple of the holes bend a bit, but only two could truly be called doglegs. Otherwise, everything is fairly straight. On No. 9 and again on No. 18, you tee off over the widest expanse of the Slough to an extended fairway on the other side. It’s probably only 100 yards or so to clear the water, but it’s still a little intimidating.

Be aware there’s no range at Broadmoor, so pre-round practice is limited to putting and chipping. Out by the “Tickets” guy, near the confluence of the tee boxes for Nos. 3, 7 and 16 and the greens for Nos. 8, 12 and 15 is a real restroom facility and a unique on-course snack house that’s handy. Broadmoor also has a small restaurant aptly named “The Divot Room” for your 19th hole indulgences.