

Blaze at Bijou doesn't hinder golfers

By Kathryn Reed

Play was not interrupted as engines rolled across the fairways of Bijou Golf Course on Thursday.

The smell of smoke drifted toward Happy Homestead Cemetery as crews about a quarter mile away on the South Lake Tahoe course put out the small fire.



CalFire Capt. Nathan Barcklay makes sure water gets to the buried hot spots.

Photos/Kathryn Reed

Although South Tahoe, Lake Valley and Forest Service personnel responded, CalFire did the bulk of the work.

Capt. Nathan Barcklay took a hoe-like hand tool to the smoldering debris as he showed firefighter Chris Perondi how to break up the wood so the water gets in deeper.

Corey Nicholson took a chain saw to some of the wood, while

Spencer Ray hosed down the 20-foot-by-20-foot area.

“There’s a bunch of willows and a downed old Jeffery. It’s snaking down in the duff,” Marty Scheuerman, South Tahoe division chief, said of the fire.

A type of biodegradable foam was used on the smoldering mess because the wood absorbs it better.

“It works great when you have duff like pine cones and with things that retain heat. It cools it better (than water),” Scheuerman said.

The crew had the scene cleared a little more than an hour after the 5:18pm call Aug. 12.

Authorities speculate a cigarette probably started the fire.

John Poell with Lake Valley Fire Department left that call to cross Al Tahoe Boulevard where U.S. Forest Service workers saw smoke in the woods by their office and behind Lake Tahoe Community College.

Tree thinning crews had been in the area all day as part of a several hundred-acre project in the city. It’s possible their equipment got hot and started the small burn.

A small plume of smoke was rising. Poell turned the scene over to South Tahoe firefighters when they arrived. Forest Service crews assisted them.

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