

Northstar golf – more than a walk in the woods



Adam Rahilly of Truckee takes full advantage of his season pass at Northstar's golf course. Photo Copyright 2016 Carolyn E. Wright

By Kathryn Reed

TRUCKEE – Adam Rahilly and his friends don't need anyone to tell them the golf course at Northstar is a bargain.

Still, the 18-hole, par-72 course was rated the best course for value in the Sierra Nevada by *California Golf and Travel* magazine.

"It's nice, cheap and affordable," Rahilly told *Lake Tahoe News* on a recent Thursday as he and four buddies finished up hole 11.

On this hole they had to launch their balls over a wide expanse to get to the green. A few holes have "forced carry" features.

The Truckee residents try to play here three times a week, preferring the back nine because it is more challenging.



Marcie Bradley doesn't let the snow-covered runs at Lookout Mountain distract her. Photo Copyright 2016 Carolyn E. Wright

The back nine is more wooded and closed in. It's a definite

mountain feel, with thick Aspen groves and Martis Creek flowing in some areas.

The views on the front nine captivate Taylor Kramer. His foursome from Michigan is in town for a wedding.

“The scenery is great. And it’s not too crowded,” Kramer told *Lake Tahoe News* as he waited his turn.

The Martis Valley is what dominates the landscape on the front nine. It’s wide-open terrain, with partially snow-covered ski runs still visible.



Rich Aprile in his first year at Northstar is tasked with upgrading the level of instruction. Photo Copyright 2016 Carolyn E. Wright

In many ways Northstar feels like two distinct courses. In part, this is because of the terrain, but it also has to do with the links being built at different times. Robert Muir Graves designed the course.

Northstar is beefing up its offerings this season with the addition of Rich Aprile, who was hired to be director of

instruction. He and head pro Pete Smith are certified by the PGA as instructors.

While Aprile has everyone fill out a questionnaire to gather their past experiences and future goals, ultimately he said it's all about having fun.

"Ninety-five percent of all golf rounds are never going to break 100," he said.

Sometimes it's little tweaks like following through, hitting down on the ball to get lift, or up on the ball when driving off a tee that will improve one's game.

"What golf is really all about is being consistent," Aprile told *Lake Tahoe News*.



Taylor Kramer of Michigan hits out of the rough on his inaugural round at Northstar. Photo Copyright 2016 Carolyn E. Wright

At the recreational level he said it's not that important to have a variety of shots.

Instead of practice swings, he calls them rehearsal swings – as in, a person is rehearsing what they want to do. Ball placement is another key factor.

Putt whenever possible is Aprile's philosophy.

“It’s the most accurate club in the bag,” he said. Chipping can come later.

He’s also a proponent of losing the terms “men’s” and “women’s” tees because there are reasons one gender might prefer to start closer or farther away. Aprile prefers calling them first or second tees.

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Notes:

- A variety of season passes are available starting at \$379, with single rounds ranging from \$40 to \$90.
- For more info about Northstar’s golf course, go **online**.