

Local Delaware County golf course garners national recognition

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With over a dozen golf courses, Delaware County is a great place to putt around. One course in particular ranks in the Top 100 nationally. Rolling Green Golf Club is ranked #93 in GOLF WEEK's "America's 100 Best Classical Courses." (Classic golf courses are those designed pre WWII.)

Designed by renowned golf architect William S. Flynn and opened in 1926, Rolling Green features 6628 yards of rolling hills, tight and undulating fairways, fast greens and plenty of oak trees. The course has one downhill hole and the rest play uphill. Water hazards come into play on holes #7 and #8 and also on holes #13 through #16. The course is a par 71.

Membership at Rolling Green is at maximum. "We have a lot of new members this year. The golf course is definitely attracting people," says Charlie Carr, Golf Course Superintendent. "The lay-out is one of the best in Philly. With its unique undulations and naturals, uphill and downhill lies and speed of the greens, it's a strategical course. You have to know where to place the ball."

Carr says the course is "maintained at a championship level on a daily basis."

The club hosted the USGA Women's Open in 1976 and has been approached to host other USGA events. This is indicative of a great golf course. "The slope of the course, the design, the conditions and the facility itself like the Clubhouse and the Pro shop are what makes a great golf course," Carr says.

Club pro Mike Rugg says the course is challenging. "It tests all areas of your game. It's not called Rolling Green for nothing. It's demanding." Like all golf pros, Rugg suggests lessons. "Take lessons before you develop bad habits. Learn the fundamen-

tals," he says.

"Practice is important and remember, it's a game of a lifetime."

The "game of a lifetime" takes hours off many a golfer's weekend. Golfing is a yin and yang sport. For as many taking up the clubs, that number also throw them away in frustration.

"The average golfer is a poor golfer. Although they're passionate, most golfers don't shoot under 120," says Alan Martin, the inventor of the Thumbs Down Virtual Golf Lesson. The Princeton, New Jersey area man who considers himself "a good recreational amateur," says the average golfer needs most improvement in ball striking.

"Most golfers are over-concerned with the perfect swing," Martin says. "What's most important is to square the club face as you're hitting the golf ball."

Martin says most golfers hit the links for the fun of it. "Golf is a very complex game involving lots of situations and lots of shots," he says. "Most golfers go out to have fun. The score card is not a factor."

Mike Rugg says there is no typical day for golf. "July and August are hot and people still golf. This time of year as the temperature drops and the trees change color is a popular time to golf," says Rugg.

"Regardless of the weather, this is all golf, not a country club. If you're coming to Rolling Green, you're playing golf."

Wikipedia defines golf as a "game in which individual players or teams of players strike a ball into a hole using several types of clubs." If only it was that simple.

Then again, in the world of Charlie Carr, Alan Martin, Mike Rugg and thousands of Delaware County duffers, it's all about getting a dimpled, 1.6-ounce ball into a 4.5-inch hole. It isn't rocket science...or is it?