



This lake is alongside the 18th fairway on the Santa Cruz Municipal Golf Course, which opens next month, and the clubhouse under construction is in the background.

Golf course to open in Santa Cruz

By BOB PUTNEY

Anyone driving around in DeLaveaga Park in Santa Cruz today wouldn't believe his eyes.

There's a "new look" on a large portion—120 acres—of the park. That new look just happens to be something about which people in Santa Cruz have dreamed for several years, a municipal golf course.

It's a thing of beauty, literally, and it is scheduled to open May 16, although that date might be delayed a week.

It is a course "built for the average player," in the words of Gary Loustalot of Fresno, the course's head pro.

It is also a course which isn't anything like the traditional concept of a municipal course. Ordinarily, people think of a municipal course as being fairly flat and not too difficult to play, with few challenging holes.

Not so with this course.

Take, for example, the third hole. It's only a 165-yard, par three hole. But it's a sight to behold, because a golfer's tee shot must CARRY the entire 165 yards to the green, or it will fall into a deep, yawning canyon in front of the green.

And the 10th hole is even more difficult. It's a 582-yard, par five which some people might refer to as a "monster."

There's a narrow (about 20 yards) fairway about 150 yards out from the tee, with a row of tall trees on one side and the biggest canyon I've ever seen on any golf course on the other side. To hit anything but a straight tee shot here is inviting disaster.

The trees on the right are going to be trimmed slightly before the course opens, to give golfers a little more room with their tee shots. The narrow portion of the fairway is about 30-40 yards long, and then the fairway opens up and is as wide as any golfer would want it.

On most holes, the course offers a wide area for tee shots to land in, though, and this is why Loustalot describes the course as being "built for the average player."

"People are going to have to hit the ball very well to score here, but it's a very fair golf course, too," he said. "We think that our course here is going to be a popular one and we're proud of it."

Carl Bengston, director of the Santa Cruz City Parks and Recreation Department, which is having the course built, expressed similar sentiments.

"It's a beautiful golf course, and we can hardly wait until it opens. For a municipal course, it's pretty remarkable," he said.

I'll go along with that. It's pretty remarkable no matter what kind of label one pins on it—municipal golf course with a country club atmosphere. People will be amazed when they see it and play on it."

Work on the course itself is 99 per cent complete. The only thing that remains to be done, outside of trimming a few trees, is installation of sand in the traps. The clubhouse is still being constructed, but it is expected to be finished by the time opening

day rolls around.

Originally, the course, construction of which began last summer, was due to open in mid-July of this year. But things have gone so well that officials believe the course will be ready to open by May 16.

The greens are in excellent condition right now and people who played on them wouldn't be likely to have many complaints, if any. Loustalot noted, however, that he plans to have some final grooming done by the time the course opens.

The fairways, too, are in fine shape. Weeds have been killed and on most holes, the fairways are beginning to look lush. It'll take some time for the fairways to mature, Loustalot noted, but

right now they're at least as good as those on many well-established courses.

On two holes, the 13th and the 16th, one can stand and see most of Monterey Bay. On a clear day, it's not difficult to see all the way to Monterey.

The course is in a natural setting. The trees and terrain were already there, and didn't have to be shipped in, so the course doesn't look a bit artificial.

Because it's built in a park, the course never will have homes built right up next to it like many golf courses. This, in the mind of many people, has ruined or at least de-glamorized several golf courses.

Electric carts will be available,

and green fees won't be out of sight, either. Current plans call for a \$3 green fee for 18 holes on weekdays and \$4 on weekends.

There are lakes on a couple of holes, too, to provide an added challenge.

The course is expected to be busy as are most of the others in the county—and everywhere else, for that matter. It's getting to the point where it's difficult to get a starting time on weekends anywhere these days.

For this reason, and because it represents a challenge and is a thing of beauty, this remarkable golf course fills a very real need. A lot of people have said that they can hardly wait to play on the county's newest golf course.

Seahawks eliminated in tourney

Two straight losses dropped Cabrillo College's Seahawks from the West Valley baseball tournament in Santa Clara early last week.

The Cabrillo nine lost its first encounter to Canada College by a score of 3 to 1. Seahawk batters got only three hits off Canada's Oscar Thomas. One was a left

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