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COASTAL GOLF

WITH SOUTHERN STYLE & CHARM

North Carolina's Brunswick County – and its six barrier islands – serves up great golf and memories galore

By Steve Habel, Contributing Writer

There is really nothing like playing golf in the American South and Southeast, not just for the region's variety of great courses and locales but also for the folks you'll meet along the way.

A recent trip to Brunswick County, set in the southeastern corner of the Old North State, affirmed that notion but also placed the county on the short list for must-visit golf destinations. Also known as North Carolina's Golf Coast, the Brunswick Islands and their mainland coastal towns have a roster of more than 30 top-rated courses designed by some of the game's most notable architects – fellas like Rees Jones, Dan Maples, Willard Byrd, Tim Cate and Fred Couples, among others.

The Brunswick Islands, with beaches that face south so combers can catch both the sunrise and sunset, stretch from the Cape Fear River to the South Carolina border. Six barrier island towns – Sunset Beach, Ocean Isle Beach, Holden Beach, Oak Island, Caswell Beach and Bald Head Island – offer up secluded stretches of sand for family vacations and act as great kick-off locations for golf in just about any direction.

The region is blessed with a year-round climate for golf, no-frills access

to beaches and a varied economic base, all part of the formula for great place to visit and play golf. Time can move a little slower down here, with the draws as drawn out as the sunsets and as sugary sweet as the iced tea folks drink by the quart, but, believe me, that's a good thing.

The courses in Brunswick County run the gamut, with water, marshland, maritime forests and even the Intracoastal Waterway creating stunning backdrops and the occasional hazard, all contributing to make each track unique in its design and playability.

We played a quintet of courses this spring, which provided a good sample of what golfers can expect when the fly into Wilmington, N.C. and head south.

SAME DESIGNATION, DIFFERENT CHALLENGES

Two of the courses we played carried the "national" designation – Carolina National Golf Club in Bolivia and Cape Fear National in Leland – but they are not part of the same management group. The two tracks offer different challenges, but both require shot on execution and accuracy

because of their continual tests.

Carolina National, a 27-hole facility designed by World Golf Hall of Famer Fred Couples and his partner Gene Bates, consists of three distinct nines (Egret, Heron and Ibis), all carved out of low-country marshlands and routed along the Lockwood Folly River. Six holes on the Egret and Heron nines play with the river on their boundary, making for a watery reminder to practice course management or pay the consequences.

The course (which opened in 1999) is a true test of golf, with the longest of the two nine-hole tracks combining to stretch to 7,017 yards with a rating of 74.2 and a slope of 142

The Heron nine is the most scenic track, particularly the par-3, fifth hole, which features a green that is almost completely surrounded by the river. The longest nine at Carolina National, the Heron has three par-4s that play 400 yards or more and the par 5 ninth measures 587 yards.

The Egret is a driver's course, rewarding players that can pound the ball off the tee, while accuracy is the key on the Ibis nine, which isn't quite as long and asks the golfer to play

approaches to the proper segment of the small putting surfaces.

Carolina National's longer holes tend to have bigger greens, while Couples and Bates provide a smaller putting surface on the shorter holes. Because of the multiple pairings created by the three nine-hole courses, the facility offers golfers an endless variety of playing experiences.

Carolina National GC has been recognized by Golf Digest as one of the finest facilities on the eastern seaboard.

Also carrying the "national" moniker is Cape Fear National at Brunswick Forest, the centerpiece of a burgeoning community as well one heck of as a challenging daily-fee golf course.

Fashioned by architect Tim Cate, Cape Fear National plays to a par of 72 and stretches out 7,217 yards on tees, fairways and primary rough grassed with Tifway 419 Bermuda. Golfers know they'll be tested by its 74.5 rating and 143 slope from the tips. But there are four more sets of tees from which to play, making Cape Fear National fun for golfers of all skill levels

Cate moved more than 1.5 million cubic yards of dirt to sculpt the coastal Carolinas' newest course, which opened in 2009. Here the golfer will find numerous elevated tee boxes, dramatic berms and fairways that ramble through forests and wetlands.

Even though Cape Fear National was built atop a vast marsh, the course plays firm and fast. There are plenty of wetlands and lateral ponds and more than 1,500 feet of bridges was built to carry players across environmentally sensitive areas. Limestone was dug up and piled into walls to



#18 at Farmstead Golf Links

create attractive vertical relief and provide a stark contrast to the marshes and sand.

The signature of the routing at Cape Fear National is its three holes with tee-to-green waste bunkers to the right of the fairway. But there are 47 more bunkers scattered around the track and plenty of forced carries, both off the tee and on the approach.

The course also has a rarity – both nines end with a par-3, the best of which is the ninth which requires an all-or-nothing carry over a lake bordered by a rocky edge and that protects the left two-thirds of the green.

On some holes at Cape Fear National, the fairways appear almost unreachable and on others seem to be so narrow as to be impossible to



Carolina National Golf Course

the course doesn't have a license to sell such in South Carolina.

Then there's the final hole at Farmstead – a 767-yarder par-6, that's right it's a par-6. The tee box is in South Carolina but the better half of the fairway and the putting surface and surrounds end up north of the border, crossing somewhere around the 400-yard plate up against the lake that borders the left side of the hole. The hole was selected by Golf Digest among its "Top 18 Most Fun Holes in America."

There's a lot more to Farmstead GL than its quiriness. Playing as a par-72 and at a total of 7,242 yards from the back tees, the course carries a rating of 74.5 and a slope of 135.

There's three par-3s on the back nine (to help balance the par-6) and they are among the most challenging set around these parts. The 12th hole is one of the most unique one-shotters golfers will likely ever play because, with right different tee boxes, it's never the same hole for more than a day.

The 223-yard sixth hole will require a 3-wood off the tee on days when the wind is into the player, but can completely change when the breeze is from behind.

The course layout rolls over the natural contours of the land and provides countless views of the area's native grasses and sparkling lakes. With five sets of tees and mostly wide-open, rolling fairways, it's playable for golfers of all skill levels.

TRIPLE PLAY AT THE SEA TRAILS GOLF RESORT

There are three courses for the golfers' pleasure at the Sea Trails Golf Resort in Sunset Beach, with tracks designed by Rees Jones, Dan Maples and Byrd offering different tests and flavors for the discriminating golf palate.

Our trip included rounds on the Jones course, which is considered the resort's premium track and was had conditioning to prove that claim, and the Byrd course, which is the favorite of



Cape Fear National Golf Course.
Photo: Michael Clemmer

the club's vast membership.

The Jones course is relatively straightforward, with plenty of mounded fairways bordered by scenic lakes and water hazards on 11 holes and lined by ancient oaks and towering pine trees. There are also numerous pot and large expanse bunkers along the routing, which plays at 6,761 yards and carries a rating of 73.1 and a slope of 135 from its back tees.

The par-3 fifth and par-4 sixth holes are indicative of the challenge Jones designed here, with the former featuring a wood retaining wall that frames the greens complex and the latter with water on the left perimeter and extensive mounding and bunkering along the fairway.

On the back-nine, the short par-410th presents trials in the form of fairway traps and mounding as it doglegs left to right around a lake, while the par-3 13th features palm trees planted on an island inside a large waste bunker that can obscure the putting surface.

There are some stunning views of the waterway, most notably on the 340-yard par-4 14th, which runs directly parallel.

The Jones course is likely the most challenging of the three tracks at Sea Trail and is good enough to have hosted a U.S. Open qualifying tournament in 2006, the same year it was voted one of the top 100 courses in North Carolina by Golf Digest.

The Byrd course, which plays at 6,750 yards from the back tees (where it carries a rating of 72.7 and a slope of 130) was routed to allow golfers ample opportunity to hit the driver, but it doesn't make length a requirement for success. The course has movement, with seven doglegs of varying severity rewarding shot-making and creativity while challenging players to hit a variety of shots.

The Byrd course is more demanding on the good golfer, while mid- to high-handicappers are fond of it because it isn't overly penal from the white tees. Regardless of the tees played, hitting shots to the proper side of the dogleg and awareness of hazards are vital to success.

A picturesque 18th hole, flawlessly placed between two ponds, finishes the course at the Jones/Byrd Clubhouse.

The Byrd course is built around seven man-made lakes and its plentiful waste areas demand that every hole be approached both differently and

strategically in order to optimize the chance for success once the player reaches the designer's undulating greens.

Among the Byrd course's many accolades are a 4-star rating by Golf Digest and a spot on Golfweek's "Best Resort Course of Distinction" list. The track also ranks high among women golfers who prefer the brains-over-brawn approach this challenging layout demands.

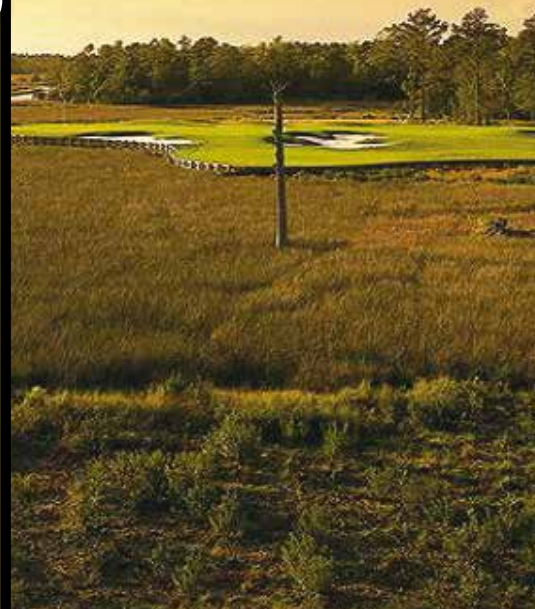
Sea Trails Golf Resort offers various amenities including driving range, large practice facilities, private streets for walking, jogging or biking, club rental, cart rental, a fully stocked pro shop and restaurants.

A trip to Brunswick County for golf is akin to a smorgasbord of great times. If you've never been, you owe it to yourself to give it a try.

TSG



Jones Course #5 at Sea Trails



Carolina National Golf Course

hit. Remember thought that there is considerably more landing area than apparent, and the distances are much shorter than the expanses of scrub and sand and rock and water imply.

Cape Fear National was recognized by both Golf and Golfweek magazines as one of the "Top Best New Courses" for 2010.

GOING DEEP (YOU'LL HAVE TO) AT FARMSTEAD

Speaking of rarities, the Farmstead Golf Links in Calabash is awash with them.

First of all, the Willard Byrd/Dave Johnson-designed course sits astride two states; there's acreage in both North and South Carolina. If golfers want a beer or other adult beverage from the cart girl, they have to buy them on the holes set in North Carolina because

RESULTS

*Manufacturers Golf & Country Club
August 17, 2013*

Manufacturers Golf & Country Club, a classic Toomey-Flynn design which dates back to 1925, hosted the GOLF WEEK Amateur Tour (Philly Metro) on August 17th, 2013. The golf course, incorporating the Sandy Run Creek, winds through lovely rolling meadows near Ft. Washington, PA. Fast greens and diabolical Par 3 holes with confounding elevation changes challenged the field of 56 members and 4 guests on a beautiful sunny and breezy summer afternoon. Par for the day was 71 (35-36).

In the Championship Flight, Gary Greenberg took the title over four other players with a brilliant round of 5-over par 76 (37-39) from "the tips". Gary nudged out visiting Charlotte member Mark Macejko (77, 37-40) by a single stroke. The CHAMP Flight played from 6,691 yards.

The A Flight victory went to Doug Hilgenberg, who returned a score of 79 (40-39) from the BLUE tees. Doug's round

included a nice birdie on the short but challenging Par 3 8th hole. One stroke back was Robert Kulbacki who went around in 80 (41-39). Another stroke back in 3rd place was Rich Passarella with an 81 (37-44). A special mention to both Jules Quinones and Rich Passarella, who had three birdies each in their rounds! The A Flight played from 6,455 yards.

In the B Flight, Jim Boyce moved to the top of the point standings by claiming the title with a fine round of 80 (40-40) from the WHITE tees. Jim birdied both Par 5 holes on the back-nine en-route to the title. Jim Checksfield was three strokes back at 83 (42-41) in 2nd place. Kevin Martyn took 3rd on a match of cards over two other players with an 86 (43-43).

The C Flight champion was new member Sal Tomczak (89, 45-44) who went to a playoff in the dusk against Chris Wilhelm (89, 42-47). Tomczak outlasted Wilhelm on the 2nd extra hole as darkness fell.

Mark Butterfoss (91, 45-46) took 3rd



place.

In the D Flight, Sean Matthews bested the field with a round of 100 (49-51) to take the title by six strokes over Ken Wilson (106, 51-55). The B, C and D Flights played from 6,215 yards.

The event raised \$ 150.00 for the GOLF WEEK Amateur Tour's charity partner, Stand Up 2 Cancer.

We proudly welcomed Metro NY member Dave O'Hanlon and Charlotte member Mark Macejko to the event. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to play golf on such a challenging private golf course. Special mention to Head Golf Professional Bob Fritz and his staff, for treating us as "members for the day" at their private club. Our next tournament is at Woodstone Country Club, a private course located in the mountains near Danielsville, PA. The tournament is scheduled for Saturday September 7th, with a scheduled 11:00 AM 1st tee start.



2013 PPGA SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

1	Buck Jones	Linfield National GC	Even	71
2	Mike Rose	Talamore GC	+1	72
2	Bill Turner	Rancocas GC	+1	72
2	Mike Owsik	M Golf	+1	72
5	Scott Carney	Cmmnwth Ntnal GC	+2	73
6	Jim Prendergast	PPGA	+3	74
6	Thomas Mairone	PPGA	+3	74
6	Tom Faro	John F. Byrne GC	+3	74
6	Dennis Pilotti	Unaffiliated	+3	74
6	Joe Campisano	Center Square GC	+3	74
6	Chris Fieger, Sr.	Fox Hollow GC	+3	74
12	Jim Yenser	Raven's Claw GC	+4	75
12	Jeff Paige	Bellewood GC	+4	75
12	Patrick O'Brien	North Hills CC	+4	75
15	George Griffin	Town & Country GL	+5	76
15	Ansley Jessup	Rancocas GC	+5	76
17	Mike Dutil	Unaffiliated	+6	77
18	William Erskine	Walnut Lane GC	+7	78
18	Steve Kernaghan	DuPont CC	+7	78
18	Walt Humphries	Lederach GC	+7	78
18	Ed Inmon	Unaffiliated	+7	78
18	Ken Mangin	PPGA	+7	78
23	WD Horan	Middletown CC	+8	79
23	George Steinmetz	Spring-Ford CC	+8	79
25	Ken Hayman	Kimberton GC	+9	80
25	Rob Tredinnick	Meadow Brook GC	+9	80
25	Nick DiFabio	Cobbs Creek GC	+9	80
25	Glen Schreiner	PPGA	+9	80
25	Greg Gaul	Merion GC	+9	80
25	Tom Mallouk	Lookaway GC	+9	80
25	Jay Davidson	Rancocas GC	+9	80
25	Bob Wheeler	Juniata GC	+9	80

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Women's Golf Clinics in Southern New Jersey

By Helene A. Maliko-Abraham
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



Within a five mile radius of any given spot in Southern New Jersey you are sure to stumble upon more than one golf course. I am very fortunate to live where there are about 10 different courses in my local area. Not to mention that the annual Shop Rite LPGA tournament takes place literally around the corner.

Just about three years ago, Southern New Jersey became my own golf paradise. I fell so deeply and passionately in love with the sport that under the tutelage of Bruce Chelucci who is the Director of Instructor at the New Jersey Academy of Golf, we founded the Women's Golf Initiative. The Women's Golf Initiative is an organization that is dedicated to providing women golfers with the skills and knowledge needed to become golfers. Our membership is composed of all level of women golfers from the league player that is tired of the competitive environment, to the woman who always wanted to learn how to play but was either too intimidated to seek out instruction, or just simply didn't know where to go.

This summer I spent some time visiting several Women's Golf Clinics that were offered at different golf courses in my area. What I discovered was that no two clinics are alike. What was common to all of the clinics is that they offer group instruction. Most offered 9 holes of golf, and some even included dinner in the price of the clinic. The New Jersey Academy of Golf's Wednesday Women's Golf Clinic consists of a half an hour of clinic instruction followed by 9 holes. Instructors accompany participants out on to the course for a hole or two. After their round, participants convene to the course restaurant where a made to order dinner is included in the cost of the clinic.

No matter where you start, or which clinic you decide to attend, there are a few

simple tips that I would like to share with you that will hopefully guide you in making your own personal golf journey a success.

First and foremost, in order to provide for an optimal learning environment, you must be comfortable in your surroundings. If you feel intimidated, afraid to ask for clearer instruction, or for a technique to be demonstrated again, then you are in the wrong place. Instruction, especially with adult learners is a two way street. You should feel comfortable to ask any and all questions that come to mind during the conduct of the clinic. At the Academy, one of the first things we do before the start of clinic is to ask if anyone has any questions regarding the last session, or any questions that may have arisen during the past week while they were either practicing or playing. We have found that this sets the tone for the session and encourages an open and inviting atmosphere.

Second, clinic lessons should be adapted to individual abilities and skill levels. Have you ever decided to get back into an exercise routine and joined an exercise class to get started? You attend the class and discover that everyone else is at full throttle and the instructors are not advising you on how to dial it down a little in order to not get frustrated, or worse hurt. The same things holds true for golf. Not everyone is at the same fitness level, motivation or emotional level. As golfers we are all different, and as such, we bring different trials and tribulations to the course each week. A good clinic instructor knows this and will have the expertise and experience to push those that want to be pushed, and to help coach those along that may need a little extra help.

Third, when you attend a clinic lesson, every golfer should proceed onto the course upon completion of the clinic portion of the evening. Even if you had never held a club in your hands prior to the clinic that evening, an astute clinic instructor should always offer to pair you up with more experienced golfers that will help guide you on the course. In the two

years that the Women's Golf Initiative has been in existence, I have yet to meet a new golfer that can't hit a ball off a tee. In my experience, the greatest way to build up anxiety over getting out on to the course is to not actually go out on the course. By getting out there your first time, you are setting yourself up for future success.

Finally, when you find a clinic that suits your needs, your clinic instructors should take a personal interest in your golf practice/playing schedule. After a few weeks of attendance, you should be asked what your typical practice/playing regimen is. By knowing this information, your instructor can better tailor your clinic experience. If the only time you have to devote to your game is your weekly clinic outing, let your instructor know that. We all have busy schedules, and if you can only fit in golf once a week, it's better than not at all. The coach/student relationship works best when you are able to have open communication regarding your golf goals.

My best advice is to check the web sites of golf courses in your area. Most courses offer Women's Golf Clinics, and the information can usually be found in the golf instruction section of the web site. It's been my experience that the pro shop at golf courses can also be a great source of information. I hope my tips provide you with helpful information when seeking out a Women's Golf Clinic that is just right for you.

Helene Maliko-Abraham is the Executive Director of the Women's Golf Initiative. Contact her at golfingjerseygirl@comcast.net or 609-941-9134. Read her blog at www.golfingjerseygirl.com.

Bruce Chelucci is the Director of Instructor at the New Jersey Academy of Golf, which is located at Blue Heron Pines Golf Club, in Egg Harbor City, NJ. Contact him at chelucci@comcast.net or 609-703-4658.



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Streamsong- Unexpected, Enjoyable, Memorable

By Ed Travis
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Photos by Larry Lambrecht

A recent addition to the Florida golf scene is the Streamsong Resort south of Orlando and east of Tampa-St. Petersburg and though the location is off the beaten path, the two golf courses are certainly worth the drive.

The terrain of the property is unlike any other Florida golf course and both the Red and Blue layouts may truly be called “inland links.” By definition links are on linksland, the area between the sea and arable, crop growing land however Streamsong is 50 miles from the Gulf of Mexico.

What makes Streamsong so unexpected is the same as what makes it enjoyable and certainly memorable are the deep pit clear lakes, open stretches of sand, towering dunes and scrub growth similar to what is found on true linksland. For 60 years the property was mined for phosphate by the Mosaic Company and when the phosphate was removed what was left might be described as a moonscape.

Then they had a brilliant idea. To recover the land and rather than bulldozing it flat, why not take advantage of the terrain and build a golf course?



Number one on the Blue is a short par-4 with its tee atop one of Streamsong’s many large dunes. The approach and the green slope to the left making it a challenge to stop the ball near a middle or right pin. Photo credit: Larry Lambrecht

Streamsong’s Blue course is the work of Tom Doak well known for courses around the world including Pacific Dunes and Old MacDonald at Bandon Dunes in Oregon and Ballyneal Golf Club in Colorado. Doak builds courses by letting the land dictate the layout and by moving as little dirt as possible. The Blue is a wonderful example of his work and he has kept the properties character perfectly.

The partnership of Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw were responsible for the Red course and they had lots of room

to build as Streamsong is part of several thousand acres owned by Mosaic. Coore and Crenshaw have also worked together at the Bandon Trails course at Bandon Dunes plus a rejuvenation that has received a lot of attention, the reworking of one of America’s most famous courses, Donald Ross’ Pinehurst No. 2.

Steve Kurtz, Streamsong’s head professional, told me the story of how the courses were named. Early in the design process Doak, Coore and Crenshaw were looking at a site map



The tee shot on the Red Course’s opening par-4 is intimidating. The middle of the fairway takes both the right side bunker and the water you can’t see beyond out of play. The second shot is long, uphill and tough to get close. Photo credit: Larry Lambrecht



A shortish par-5 is always fun and the Number 2 on the Red Course gives players with average length tee shots a chance to be on or near the green in two. Laying up though must keep the ball clear of the little pit of sand 50-yards from the putting surface. Photo credit: Larry Lambrecht

for a rough outline of the hole routing. As the story goes Doak was using a blue marker and the others using a red marker, hence the names Red and Blue.

Don’t look for homes lining the fairways. There are none and there won’t be any says Mosaic, there’s just golf. The nearby 216-room resort hotel is scheduled to open soon but until then accommodations are available in the 12 rooms on the second floor of the clubhouse which offer views of the dunes in every direction and there’s an excellent restaurant that overlooks the putting green and a 19th hole that’s great for settling bets.

Both Streamsong courses are walking with caddies required. Carts are available though for those not feeling up to the challenge of Florida’s heat and humidity or the wind and rain sculpted landscape. Whether riding or walking the elevation changes of 100 feet plus are a big part of how the courses play and its

is easy to become a little disorientated since signage is at a minimum and the dunes and scrubland are not.

Landing zones on the Red and Blue are immense, some over 125-yards wide, and there are however some fairly long carries over the mining pit lakes but in the way of compensation there is no rough. In other words, hit the fairway or expect a chancy lie in one of the fairway bunkers or the bordering un-maintained sand-dunes-scrub-etc. In perfect keeping with Streamsong’s character, cart paths are unpaved trails of “reject rock”.

Further evidence of Streamsong’s version of what golf should be is Course Superintendent Rusty Mercer’s philosophy. Keep the tees immaculate, the fairways pristine and the greens silky but if your ball strays anywhere else, good luck. The Red and Blue were built with a minimalist idea and outside the grassed areas the same idea is true. The

bunkers, as an example, only see a power rake once per week.

It’s fair to say with the wide fairways both courses are second shot courses for the holes become narrower and more testing as one nears the greens which have slopes and terraces with each having several good pin locations.

Most golfers when they walk off the 18th on either course will want to play it again.

Both courses have are fun to play with their own uniqueness and definitely are unlike any other Florida golf.

Streamsong is most assuredly unexpected, enjoyable and memorable.

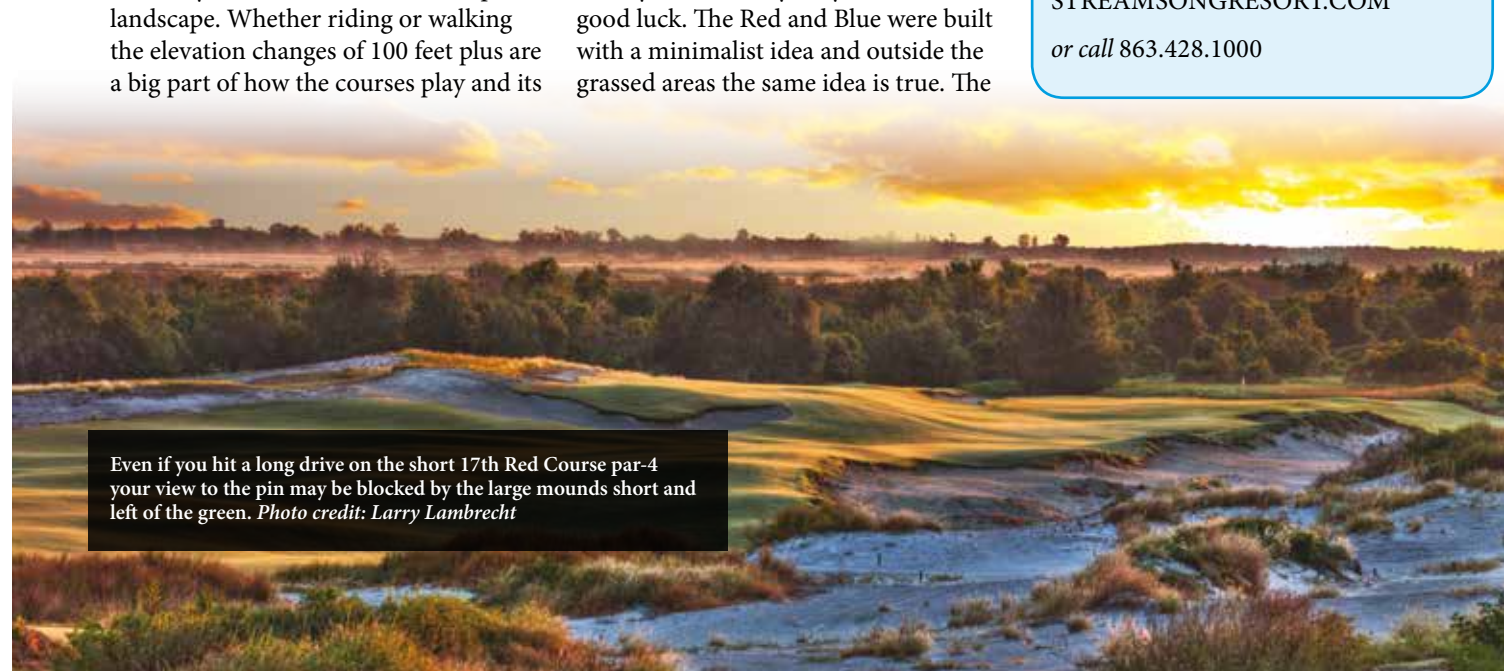
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The mounding and slopes in the fairway of 12th on the Blue Course make a level lie for the second shot unlikely. Just make sure you look at which side of the green the pin is located so that your second shot is from the easiest angle. Photo credit: Larry Lambrecht



The “moonscape” terrain at Streamsong is clearly in view on Number 7 on the Blue Course. This mid-length par-3 has a water carry to an immense green with several levels. Photo credit: Larry Lambrecht



Even if you hit a long drive on the short 17th Red Course par-4 your view to the pin may be blocked by the large mounds short and left of the green. Photo credit: Larry Lambrecht



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