

Pencil of the Week Chronicles 8

09/22/21 Oak Shadows



52 is Oak Shadows. It is green with silver lettering.

Not sure who found this one but it was first played on the DST. Quite a haul down 77 in New Philadelphia, we only played it a couple of times a year. As always on the DST, we played early so it was a short night and an early rise to tackle that drive.

It was interesting for sure and no pushover. #1 was a long par5 going out and then turning left with a pond guarding the left side. If you did not get out to the corner you had to hit over the pond. Ponds are always a challenge on the first hole. #2 was not easy either. Woods all along the left had most play to the right side and hope to avoid the creek. Don't remember #3 but #4 was nasty up the hill to an elevated green. #5 was a breather par 3 with a pond right. Six was another nasty long par 5 with water to the right that sucked in all my slices. I think i eventually used irons to stay dry and pars were rare. #7 had a whole raft of hazzards and i think I visited most of them and lost more golf balls than i care to remember.

#8 was a fine par 3 with a lake behind. This was the only Ace i had with a 5 iron. I laced a low line drive right at the pin. It hit short and ran up onto the green. I figured it was

long so i was looking past the green and not finding it. Figured it made the water till Neil exclaimed " Oh God no, it is in the cup". That was a pleasant surprise! #9 is uphill to the clubhouse. I want to tell you that this is one tough nine holes. Could be the toughest i have ever played.

The back nine is pretty easy. I had a rare eagle on #11 a long nasty par 5 that goes out and turns left at a creek 200+ out. I usually tried to cut the corner but it usually was wet over there. Ended up in the creek much of the time. This time i crossed the corner with my trusty 3 in 1 Ofer persimmon. One more whack and i reached the green to find a 6 footer for eagle. Drained that and celebrated!

The last glory shot goes to George. I believe it was #12 par 3 thru the woods to a narrow green all tilted right. He said it scooted up the green and dropped in. I am telling you can't put a ball on that green without it running off. The only way to keep it on there is to put it in the hole. Hats off to George on that impossible shot!

Looked back at my scores and we played 2x per year thru 2008. Scores were 94 89 99 94 89 96 89 85 x x 90. Looks like i avoided it pretty much after my 85 in 2006. Our Friday group played there for awhile too. Just don't have those scores. We haven't played it since. Long drive and difficult course.

9/29/21 Stonewater



53 is Stonewater. It is a pleasant green with gold lettering.

This is a first class course up in the Cleveland burbs. Much too steep green fees \$65 ish and much too hard for us old guys. This was one of the courses where the Angelmans set up for a shotgun start and then had dinner and fund raising auctions after. We perhaps played there two years in the fundraiser.

Nice bag drop where the attendants got your clubs ready. We still have a nice towel strapped on our bags that says Stonewater on them. I believe our team was Mel, JohnT, Dick, and I. We didn't do too bad but our 2 or 3 under was never a threat to the loaded 10-12 under teams. But we did have a good time and the food was always good. I think i picked up a shirt in the clubhouse after winning a gift certificate drawing.

The only thing i remember is that the course was very hard from the 6100+ white. There were several holes with a forced carry over waste areas that crossed the fairways. i don't think we carried all of them. Reminded me of that Gary Player course in Pinehurst. That one was really bad with those sprinkled all over the course.

Looking over the scorecard, the senior tees might be playable at 5500 or the mixed ones at 5100. Here is their website if you want to dig deeper. I would say it is a must play premium course for the area.

<https://www.stonewatgolf.com/course/>

10/06/21 Seven Lakes



54 is Seven Lakes. Isn't it the rattiest pencil you have ever seen? Looking back, we are approaching almost a full year of memories with the first email going out 10/28/2020!

This one was the warm up course for the Pinehurst Open for a couple of years. It also may have been a post tourney course as we got out of town one year. The Open started with just 4 rounds and a warm up but there were some years we played more. This one was one of them before we settled at Hyland Hills later on. The others i remember were one near WInston-Salem and another a Maples course at Groundhog Mountain, neither which i have found a pencil for. Can not remember their names though. Anyone remember? I have some ugly video of video of me on Groundhog Mountain playing with Bill and Neil. When i run out of pencils, i will try to recall some of the others I have played.

Sure don't recall much about Seven Lakes other than it was a nice course, had a lot of water on it. and was near some RR tracks on the way into Pinehurst. It was located in a community called "Seven Lakes" of all places.

<https://www.golf7lakes.com/golf/course>

10/06/21 Valleaire



55 is Valleaire Golf Club. It is a Plain Jane green with white lettering.

Wow. I don't remember this one at all. It is up in Hinkley, a little NW of Ironwood and Hinkley Hills. I had to google it to find out where it was. Google maps shows it to be a straight back and forth layout and it does not look very exciting. I played the other 2 but i don't believe i have found a pencil as of yet.

This was either played at one of the Cisco pre-picnic outings or somewhere George took us for one of the Parker tournaments. I think it was the former. Maybe George can email me a list of the funky courses he took us Parkers to up north? If it was the Cisco outing course, i remember that it wasn't worth playing, thus it was never revisited.

10/13/21 Meadowlands



56 is Meadowlands Golf Club. It is a ratty blue one with silver lettering. #57 is Carolina Shores but i have no pencil for that one.

This is a very nice course in Calabash NC with a sister course Farmstead. Played this one in February 2018, the last time we spent February in Myrtle Beach.

Some of our earlier trips there, I played with Denny, who usually spent several months there before changing it to Panama City Beach. Denny and I mostly played pretty close to the Condo in previous years but i have no pencils from them for some reason. Denny must have hogged all those pencils.

I believe sister Catherine was there with us, so Mary and sister dropped me off at Carolina Shores. I was the only one on the course as it was wet and threatening rain. Put on my rain gear and got a little wet, but i did shoot 88. This course was a real dog! The week after that I played Meadowlands and it was a winner. Shot 88 but a much nicer

course. I will go back in the next year or two and play it again. They have some nice photos on their website.

<https://meadowlandsgolf.com/>

10/27/21 Holiday Golf and Signal Hill



57 is Holiday Golf Club. It is blue one with white lettering. # 58 is Signal hill which i have no pencil for.

They were both nice courses in Panama City Beach.

I played Holiday often with Denny when we chose to go there for February 2019. Denny and Carol had been going there for a couple of winters. Our timing was lousy as a Hurricane Michael had come thru there in October 2018 and completely leveled Mexico City a few miles east of there, did considerable damage to Panama City, but left Panama City Beach with less damage.

It was a fun course and one of the few in the area that was open. There were some just plain wiped out. We played several rounds there and i shot 92 90 85 85 43 and 87. I had hurt my left wrist at the Y before going down there. Denny helped me out with a wrist strap. I remember taking the club back several times and stopping cause it hurt. It gradually got better over the month but continued to plague me all through 2019 and most of 2020. Doc said it was arthritis with some injury evidence,

To take some pressure off that wrist i changed my swing a bit to snap the club with my right hand. That helped add power to the swing but there was a lot of pushes and pulls with it. This year when sciatica was raging I reverted to that swing and it really helped take pressure off my lower back.

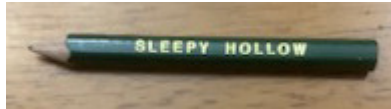
The course has a lot of water and we did see a gator a couple of times. The senior tees were too long for the wet conditions so we moved up on the long ones. They have a nice course flyover on their website if you want to look.

<https://holidaygolfclub.com/course-flyover>

Signal Hill was the other course there we played. Denny liked it but i was a bit worried about playing there after the first round. I saw lots of hanging branches from the storm

in the trees and was worried about them falling. Might have knocked some sense into me. Couldn't have that! Can't believe they let them open like that with so many safety hazards. As those two courses were the only close ones open it was tough to get a tee time on either of them.

11/04/21 Sleepy Hollow



58 is Sleepy Hollow. It is green with gold lettering.

This is the gem of the Cleveland Metroparks courses and is up on route 21 between Fairlawn and Cleveland. This one always reminds me of my Uncle Frank, RIP, who, when you mentioned the Sheridan Golf Course back in Buffalo, would just let out a long groan. "Ooooooooooooo" while grimacing. This is one tough mother. The greens give you the hebee gebees. And if you are a slicer, take extra golf balls and don't plan on breaking 90.

As this was their gem, Cleveland hired Charlie Sifford as the pro after his playing days were waning. Heard stories about him ripping into you good if you were not on your best behavior. There is a nice story about him here:

https://www.cleveland.com/golf/2015/02/charlie_sifford_funeral_mixes_golf_stories_with_history_tears_and_appreciation.html

I believe Bagger Mel might have introduced us to play there. A Cleveland native he got us to play several of their courses after he abandoned all of us at Loral when those scumbags were cleaning house. Imagine beginners Mel and Smitty playing with JohnT and I there. There are several holes where there is a waste area just in front of the tee. I would bet Mel was in them half the time and Smitty every time. Gawd they lost a ton of balls in there.

It was hard to get a tee time there as they kept them open until a certain day. Then you had to call and try to get a time before they were all swooped up. You had to pay for a full cart. If you had 3 the single had to pay double cart fees.

On to the course description. You started on a long par 5 that was pretty open but narrowed to nothing up by the green. The green fell away from the front so it was hard to get on in 3. The #2 was an impossible par 3. Very long and nasty right for the slicers. Go right and count on a double. Par was very difficult and 6 was easy. #3 was another

long par 4 and the green was uphill guarded by woods on the left. Five was good there. I think you went out to the course boundary on a long par 5 next before turning back and playing all the rest of the front nine with trees and a ravine along the right side. Slicers nightmare. The greens were lightening fast and had many contours. I recall many many 3 putts going out. I recall the next nasty par 3 being a 6 or 7 iron over a ravine. If you were short you were in it and had to climb like a goat to play your second shot.

The back nine wasn't easy either. I don't remember how long #10 par 4 was but my third shot was often a full 100 yd wedge. After that it was back to crossing the ravines and avoiding the trees on the right. The back had exactly zero easy holes on it. "Oooooooooo, i remember the course well.

Maybe we should go back and give it a go from the Senior tees. The slope backs off to 115 from 125 on the whites.