

## Pencil of the Week Chronicles 9

### 11/14/21 Gleneagles



# 59 is Gleneagles. It is blue with silver lettering.

This is a very nice and playable course just up past Twinsburg. The Monday group was the first to play here. Somehow Denny got wind of it and scheduled it several years back when the Monday group was going strong. Back when Darrell and Clyde were still alive and Bill King was a force. We ended up playing it later in the year and Denny scheduled it once a year since it was such a hike to get there.

Everyone loved it except Houle. He did not like several forced carries on a couple of holes and the back to back holes over water, both forced carries. I quickly took the Friday guys there and also played it a couple of times with George and the Buffalo contingent.

The course is owned by the city of Twinsburg and they just made positive changes to the layout and built an awesome clubhouse/banquet center. This is part of the trend of cities saving courses to keep green space. I do find it very odd they pumped so much money into this place. Makes me suspicious that one of the city's big shots have a vested interest in all the development nearby and may be lining someones pocket to make this a showplace. Naw, that couldn't happen, could it?

Take a look at the place:

<https://gleneaglesgc.com/>

I remember the first round there. After the long drive there, i was playing like crap. Something like 51 on the front nine. The back was a different story. I believe i was under 40 on the back and am guessing it was a 38. What a weird turn around. It must have been before 2013 because I found a highlight indicating I shot 78 on this course despite only 1 birdie, a penalty stroke and a couple of rim outs. Wow.

Looking back at other scores i found another 78 in 2018 and a bunch of 85 ish scores from 2014 to 2019. Got to get back there and post some more good ones.

I don't really want to go into all the holes but it is a terrific layout with #18 the crown jewel.. The finishing hole is a par 4 over a lake to a sloping green right in front of the windowed clubhouse. I would love to have a nice lunch watching the guys and gals

struggle with that one. To be fair there is a bail out area right of the green if you can't carry the lake but it is pretty small.

Don't miss playing here. This course is a real gem. One warning though; bring your own food and coffee thermos. The little kitchen that serves the golfers is a disaster. We got under cooked sausages, they are always out of coffee, the dogs aren't ready and so on. I complained via email and they sent a gift card but the following year George cashed it in but says it still sucked.

The only thing to add is that long time co-worker, golf buddy, and DST member Neil has a condo nearby. Sandi and Neil love it there and it sure is a nice area.

### **11/17/21 Candywood**



# 60 is Candywood RIP. It is green with white lettering.

This was a fun course pretty close to Avalon Lakes which i haven't gotten to yet. Played that plus the Old Avalon, No pencils from either. Candywood closed a few years back but wen i looked at it on Google maps you can still see the fairway outlines? Sits just south and east of 82 and 11 intersection.

It closed in 2016 and was being turned into a hunting preserve, I guess that did not pan out so in 2019 someone wanted to have a wine cellar with a wedding venue there. The guy sounds like a nut job to me. I see they have entertainment too in the old clubhouse/barn. What is the world coming to?

<https://candywoodwinecellar.com/about-1>

Don't remember much other that it was a long ride and dirt cheap to play. Did have some pretty open holes and some tight ones through the trees. Pretty easy course but the trees could get you. Also a couple of creeks and ponds to avoid.

This one was a Dick Lott special. Known to be frugal, Dick always loved to play there. He suggested it to the Friday guys so we trundled out there and played it a couple times a year till it was shut down for good, Did not take anyone else out there. Pretty much the boonies.

### **11/24/21 Avalon Lakes and Old Avalon**



While I remember, lets go over # 60 and # 61 neither of which I have found a pencil for. I do have a keeper golf ball from Avalon Lakes but not Old Avalon.

I believe the DST played there in the 90s at the suggestion of TK. We played it every year or two. It was very expensive back then at \$50 when most of our courses were likely in the \$25 range. In that it was an awesome course, built by Pete Dye and we always went back. That is until American Waste services bought it out and made it a resort course costing \$100+/. That was ti for us. I have read they pumped \$20 Million into the facilities there. If you got the cash, i would suggest you look into booking a \$400-\$500 package for 3 rounds and 2 nights at the resort and hopefully get a decent tee time.

<https://www.post-gazette.com/sports/golf/2017/07/02/Ron-klinge-avalon-lakes-golf-club-gerry-dulac-squaw-creek-buhl-park/stories/201707020090>

It was a very tough old course with huge tall standing trees. With my horrible slice back then it was a mighty struggle. The fairways were narrow for the most part giving me all kinds of fits. I don't remember many good scores there but one day back in 1998 i stood tall and shot 80. It was the trusty Mollies that got me there. Known to have minimum spin, they kept me in play that day. I do remember holding my breath as some of those shots just skirted by some of the big trees to a spot where I had a chance to par. Besides the tight fairways they had huge greens and a few ponds to navigate. That could have been the best round of my life and at age 50.

Now Old Avalon was a course Big Dick kept harping on. He had played high school golf team there and wanted to return. So we finally went there and it was a pleasant course. Don't remember much trouble there. As it was a longish ride, I don't think we played

there more than once or twice.

I did go for a weekend stay at the Lodge with Mary's church friend and husband Matt. We had gone with them before on a couple of golf trips. One to Marietta, one to Quail Hollow near Painsville, and then we went to Old Avalon. Don't remember much about the trip, but Matt was having a bad nine to start the round. I think we then played out #10 and 11, then turned back toward the clubhouse, then back away again. On this hole he was a bit short of the green on the left and began shanking chip shots around the green to the right. I was waiting patiently on him on the green as he performed his extended shank show. After reaching his 3d shank now near the back of the green, he ripped his clubs off the cart and threw them to the ground and said he was done and i should finish. He walked back to the clubhouse and i finished the round. Found him in the bar afterwards and he apologized.

Well that was our last trip together and he pretty much gave up the game. I joined him at a church scramble but he didn't hit anything till we were near the green. I figure he decided to give it up in order to keep his sanity, avoid further embarrassment, and not risk un Christian like behavior and a heart attack. I myself have always strive d for quantity vs quality. I do occasionally throw a club (mostly 3 woods) but really, it is just a game. NOT!

### **12/01/21 Vally at Eastport**

#63 is Valley at Eastport. This one is green with gold letters.



This one is a North Myrtle Beach course in Little River. It was very close to the Condo and was just a bit north of it right on the main road. I played it a few times. Nice course and the starter paired me up easily with another group so it was easy to get on it.

By no means an easy course, it had lots of trees and water to navigate. Only found 2 scores, a 95 in 2017 and an 88 in 2018. Perhaps there was a Must have had a rough time with the 95 but looks like i avoided the trouble with the 88.

You can see some of the issues here:

<https://www.valleyateastport.com/course/photo-gallery/>

I give it a thumbs up.

## 12/08/21 Pleasant View



#64 is Pleasant View. This one is green with gold letters.

This one is to my south over near Louisville area. Denny and Clyde (RIP) had played there and wanted to take the Monday group there so off we went. It is a bit of a ride but is much closer for me after my move to Jackson township. The draw was the awesome breakfast they serve there if you get there early enough. Its a sit down order of your choice and it is very good. The course has a long long driveway off the road and i don't see how 2 cars can pass each other its so narrow.

The play is off the road between cornfields. We played in June earlier this year and I paid and got out to the tee to find a cart path only sign. Not good since my sciatica was bothering me. Somehow i survived but a 91 tells the tale. Lots of rolling hills there. Saw some high 80s scores back in 2017 and 2018. Clyde was still around then.

Nothing extreme there although there is a pretty nasty par 3 over water with a long iron. Could do without that one for sure. They have a nice gallery on their site here:

<https://pleasantviewgolfclub.com/>

I also saw Joe Spatafore there enjoying breakfast with the stark county golf association. He is deeply involved it building it up. That is pretty humorous given what we all know about him from the Seven Hills days. He was such a hack and never did see a beat up golf ball he wouldn't play.

I give Pleasant View a thumbs up.

## 12/15/21 Ridge Top

#65 is Ridge Top. This one is blue with white letters.



This is aptly named and seems to be upon a ridge to the north of Wadsworth. Might be considered the Medina area. It is a decent layout but the hills present major challenges. The big worry is the greens. They are large with professional level contours and almost always steeply rising from from to back.

I don't remember who set up times there. I think it was the Lockheed guys. The first couple are hard pars. #1 is not too long but the green is well guarded by a slope on the left side, woods behind and a dip in front. Then it is an uphill par 3 to a very narrow green. Later there is an extreme dogleg right where you can go thru the fairway or if

short or you slice, you don't make the corner. Very hard to plan your attack if you haven't played here often enough.

The course maintenance here is some of the best i have ever seen. I do dread scheduling it because of the greens slope. Seems like you are always banging the crap out of your putts trying to get them up the hill. One time we played there with the Lockheed guys, we were just ahead of the USGA ratings crew. There were about 8 people all walking the course and rating the holes for handicapping purposes right behind us. It was funny. On one of the holes, i hit the front of the green in two and had a long uphill putt. I was lucky enough to guess right and got it pretty close and tapped it in. The USGA crew watching from the fairway, gave me a round of applause! I talked to one of them after the round and he told me that the greens were a professional level of difficulty with the slopes and such. Now that I remember this i will have to schedule it next year.

I did take the Friday guys there and remember scheduling a round there while i was away. I recall JohnT complaining about the greens. They are difficult. Quite long from the Whites at 5800, and quite short from the golds 4700, it is difficult to get the tees right. We would need to play the whites and back off to the golds on certain tee boxes.

### **12/22/22 Little Mountain**



#66 is Little Mountain. This one is black with silver letters. Sorry for the crappy picture but after i took it, the pencil went back in the box and is in with many hundreds of others, unlikely to be seen again.

This is one of my favorites, a long ride to the north in Painsville just off of route 90. My memory is a bit foggy on the first round there but i believe TK and the remains of the DST group played there. I remember TK, Dave Lawrence, and Captain Kirk, and perhaps Rick but there must have been a couple more cause we had 2 groups. It opened in 2000, about 10 years before i retired, so i was in my 50s.

What i do recall is the countless bunkers all over the course and i do mean all over. There are small ones, large ones, deep ones and the kinds nightmares are made of. I remember asking them how many there were. My guess of a of hundred was way low but i don't recall what i was told.

You can see some of those monsters here: <http://www.littlemountaincc.com/gallery/>

Turns out i had the lowest score for the day in the high 80s; as i was adept or just plain lucky to avoid most of the bunkers. I did not miss them all as i remember being in one green side with an 8 foot wall of sand i had to clear. Of course i did no such thing on the first try and took 3 to get out. While we were discussing the course after the round, i asked if anyone had seen a house they could afford situated around the course perimeter. Kirk noted that the brick restrooms located out there might be affordable. I wasn't sure.

Since then, I have only been back a few times. It is an exclusive course but they do have reasonable prices for seniors if you play Monday thru Thursday. I took the Friday group there a couple of times but moved it to Thursday to keep the cost down. I have a couple of odd memories of those rounds. First up is the second time the Friday Group played there. Dick Lott told us he had never played there before when both Mel and I remember playing with him there the first time.

Second up is the round played there when Brother in law Dennis was visiting. We had an opening so he went with us. Dennis is a high handicapper and was off his game. I remember riding with him for the round and if he missed a bunker it was unusual. Remember him just missing one, coming up short and to the left of a fairway bunker. We were celebrating till he chunked it right into the one he just missed. It was painful to watch.

Almost played it this year late in the season. Had a tee time but the weather was iffy so i cancelled to avoid a long ride. Maybe next year! If you have not played it, put it on your bucket list. It's a good one.

### **12/29/22 Tobacco Road**



#67 is Tobacco Road. This one is black with silver letters. Looks like i did not attach last week's so i also added that one in.

This is one of our favorites for the Pinehurst Open. Not sure when we added it but suspect it was after it was ID'd as one of the best courses down there. There is no way i can describe this course. I recommend you go here:

<https://tobaccoroadgolf.com/course/> and do the flyover.

If you have never played it, you will not believe what you are seeing. There are indeed 18 holes, most will just scare the crap out of you. I can assure you 1) most of them you can par, and 2) most of them you can score 10 or higher on. I have had 10 or higher on several of them.

The ones that are easiest to blow up on are the par 5's of course. I am sure i have done that on them all. The other that comes to mind is #9. On 9 you have to place a good drive in the fairway (have done that) to get perhaps a long iron to an elevated green guarded by a 1/4 acre bunker on the entire right side of the green on the entire slope up to the green, perhaps 150 feet above the ground level. I have been in it in 2 several times and taken big scores, even picking up after i got close to our limit of 10 strokes per hole.

You need to play it several times before settling on a game plan, although i have seen lucky newbies play well there. Looking back at my scores i found 93 91 97 93 101 102. Lol, looks like i got a worse score as time went on. Good thing i stopped playing there

before i hit 110.

The spring and summer rates are anywhere between 150 and 225 a round these days so i doubt you would play there very often.

### **1/5/22 Indigo Creek**



#68 is Indigo Creek. This one is red with some color letters.

I played this one in Myrtle Beach in 2017 one time and scored 103. Surprised i have a pencil from it.

Can't say much as only one time played and played poorly. Looks like i had a a slow start cause all my scores down there were 89 and above that February..

<https://www.indigocreekgolfclub.com/>

I hope everyone has a good 2022. Bill and I tried to play New Years Eve at Wilkshire but for some reason they were closed. The course did change hands last year and i have to guess the new owners gave the crew the day off. There were about 20 others standing around scratching their heads too. I am glad the new owners saved it from being another park.

### **1/5/2022 Tot Hill Farm**

Wow. I am going to call Tot Hill Farm #69 even though i have no pencil. Thank you Bill. Good to see I am not the only one to absolutely hate that course. Couldn't have said the negative things better BUT disavow there is anything good to be said. I think the author was just trying to soften the blow.

I remember the frustration there. Standing out most in my mind is missing the green by a yard or two and seeing the ball bound off the rocks surrounding said green in unpredictable directions to who knows where. Very unpleasant indeed. I also recall hitting the ball off side hill lies with the ball at knee level. What a nightmare. I think we played it (inexplicably) two years in a row before ditching it. I found my score in 2001 there. It was 115. One hundred and fifteen strokes. 43 over par. An average of 2.4 over every stinking hole. Holy Crap.

On 1/5/2022 7:04 AM, Bill Hudgins wrote:

To supplement Bob's, uh, *brief* report this week, here's a scathing review of



Tott Hill Farm. I think Tom Kimberly scheduled it one year for the Pinehurst Open, since Tobacco Road was so awesome. I think Bob has written about it also.

<https://www.lyingfour.com/conversations-blog/2021/11/23/tot-hill-farm>

## 1/12/22 Fowlers Mill



#70 is Fowlers Mill. This one is green with silver letters.

This one was brought up to the Friday group by Bagger Mel a long time ago, so off we went. It is quite a bit north of me and close to where George lives in the snow belt. It was quite the prestigious golf course having been designed by Pete Dye as a corporate golf course for Cleveland's TRW company. That was back in the day where companies paid up big for playgrounds for their execs, Firestone built one, and so did many others.

From their website, TRW sold it off in 1986 and now us riff raff can play there, albeit at a steep price. There was a course in Buffalo that was built by one of the steel companies that we played after it sold off but it has since bit the dust. It's right out near the Bills stadium but i can't recall the name. Longaberger did that in Ohio too. That course is still around and Longaberger baskets are long gone.

Anyway, i remember it being a good layout but was surprised it was in need of repair. The kind of things you wouldn't expect at a premier course like rotting timbers on the tee box, cart paths in disrepair, and so on. I remember it was not cheap to play there so that was the one and only time we played.

I did go back to play nine one summer with my brother Jim, Jim Jr, and George, but we could only play the 3d nine which was less desirable, It was a scorcher and i was toast after our earlier 18 hole round. After a couple of bad holes i think i packed it in and just tried to survive to play another day. If i didn't have heat stroke, I was very very close that day.

Once again i remember very little about the course so i do not have much to say. I believe the maintenance issues were taken care of and I would say this is a must play course if your not on a fixed income:-)

Nice photo gallery here:

<http://www.fowlersmillgc.com/gallery/>