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Goat caddies, a license to cheat and trash-talking rakes. It's all about fun at Silvies.

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By Chadd Cripe

SILVIES, ORE.

The reversible golf course at The Retreat and Links at Silvies Valley Ranch is far from the only quirk guests will experience. In fact, it's not even the resort's most talked-about feature. Here are several ways that a round of golf at Silvies will be different than most anywhere else, starting with the already-famous goat caddies:

Goat caddies: [McVeigh's Gauntlet](#) is a seven-hole challenge course of par-4s and par-3s and a bonus par-2 (putting only). The idea was to create fantasy holes that you might see on a video game or a calendar — running along a set of ridges that were too extreme for the championship course. It's too steep for carts, so Silvies Valley Ranch will offer [goat caddies](#) instead.

The caddies don't begin work until July 10, when the course is scheduled to open, but they've already generated national attention from outlets like "Good Morning America," CNN and Golf Digest. The goats, selected from the herd of 2,600 meat goats on the ranch, will carry up to six clubs each for two golfers, up to six beverages, golf balls and the peanuts players will use to tip them for their services. There's a whole host of bad jokes associated with the goats, including this: They asked for more career opportunities because they currently have dead-end jobs.

The goats' backpacks were custom made by [Seamus Golf](#).

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The original idea was to train the goats to carry supplies for hikers on the ranch. That grew into the caddie idea.

"We talked to some of the goats and they said, 'For a few peanuts, I'll do that,' " Silvies owner Scott Campbell said.

Among the quirks you'll encounter on the challenge course: If you par the par-2, you get to move your ball 7.7 inches anytime you want the rest of the round — legalized cheating!

"The McVeigh Gauntlet is about having fun," Superintendent Sean Hoolehan said. "Whatever it takes to get people to come out. They're not going to be disappointed."

Golfers will pay a \$77 donation to play the course. They can choose among three recipients, including the [Oregon Natural Desert Association](#), nature projects on the ranch and a youth sports organization.



The Links at Silvie's Valley Ranch has custom-made, trash-talking rakes.

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Trash-talking rakes: Metal art is omnipresent at Silvie's Valley Ranch, crafted by the owners' son, Tygh. His creations include rakes in the bunkers with sayings like, "Take more lessons," "You failed" and "Sh--ty shot."



The 18th hole on the Hankins course offers every opportunity to hit the longest drive of your life. Or to lie about it.

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In the high desert west of Boise, a unique golf resort emerges with 'a story to tell'

Your longest drive ... or biggest lie: The 18th tee on the Hankins course tells golfers that they've been set up to hit the longest drive of their lives. It's downhill and usually downwind. The fairway is forgiving. The grass is short and the ground is firm. Each member of the group estimates the length of the tee shot, the lowest number is thrown out, the other three are averaged and that's your measurement. This is not the time for modesty, or the truth. The lowest number is thrown out because there's always one member of a group who won't lie. Take the card to the clubhouse for a reward after the round — the signature Horseshoe Nail drink.

An important putt: Any golfer who one-putts the 18th green on the Craddock course gets a Horseshoe Nail. If a player one-putts the last four greens, the whole group gets the drink.

"A lot of the courses that have been built are not as fun as they should be, so we're doing everything we can to make it fun," Scott Campbell said.



Goats will serve as caddies on the McVeigh's Gauntlet course, which is scheduled to open in July. **Courtesy of Silvie's Valley Ranch**