

STOP HITTING THOSE TOPPED SHOTS

# GOLFTIPS

THE GAME'S IN-DEPTH INSTRUCTION & EQUIPMENT MAGAZINE

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■ 'CLOCK IN' TO  
WORK THE BALL

■ 3 CRUCIAL  
GOLF MOVES



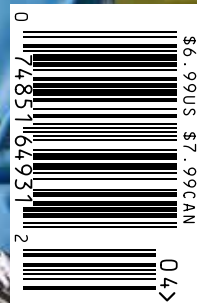
## SPRING SWING

3 Extra Tips To Start  
Your Season Right

■ WHY TOUR PROS PREFER  
TO HIT THE BUNKER SHOT

■ PLAY TO YOUR  
STRENGTHS BY  
RECOGNIZING  
WHERE YOU'RE AT

■ THE REHEARSAL SWING:  
A TRIBUTE TO PHIL RODGERS



MARCH/APRIL 2022



# QUICK TIPS & MORE >>>

Silvies Ranch sports four courses, each one designed and built by Dan Hixson, an Oregonian whose breakout project came in 2005 with Bandon Crossings Golf Course. **Read more on page 44.**





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# REFUGE

## On The Range

A retired animal doctor returns home to create a luxurious frontier getaway for modern-day pioneers

BY ROBERT KAUFMAN

**SILVIES VALLEY RANCH IS LOCATED IN** such a remote corner of eastern Oregon, your GPS may pop an alert asking, “are you sure this is the right way?”

Pay no attention. It does exist. Presuming you don’t zoom past the property’s lonesome wooden signboard indicating the turnoff to the destination, you’ll soon realize why Bruce, one of the ranch’s most revered employees, is living the dream. »



Champing at the bit to understand his seductive lifestyle, I became instant friends with him while playing the retreat's 9-hole, 875-yard Chief Egan Course, where Bruce has always been quite content working for peanuts—literally—as a caddy. Let's face it, if you were a goat feasting on a favorite snack, you'd be a happy hired hand, too.

Bruce LeGoat heads a foursome of goat caddies including Mike LeChevon, Peanut LeGoat and Roundabout LaDoe, all equipped with specially designed golf bags and, as proud ambassadors for Silvie Valley Ranch, representing more than 2,500 American Range goats calling this 140,000-acre working cattle and hay ranch their home-sweet-home. But were it not for the vision of retired veterinarian Scott Campbell and his wife, Sandy, they'd all be searching for new grazing pastures.

With family genealogy dating back to 19<sup>th</sup>-century pioneer days in the Beaver State, the Campbells returned from Portland, Oregon, to their native roots after amassing a fortune operating pet hospitals and began investing their financial resources toward developing and promoting this undiscovered region onto the tourism



radar. After purchasing the land in 2007, they used ambitious efforts to fuel the creation of Silvie Ranch, equidistant between Bend, Oregon, and Boise, Idaho. Since the gates opened in 2017, this eco-resort has established itself as a quintessential getaway for guests in search of a frontier experience, complete with 52 holes of golf on an authentic Western cattle ranch.

“We bought the land as a real estate investment since there wasn't anyone exposing the beauty of this part of the state, and I wanted to be an economic driver here,” said Scott Campbell about his acquisition of the expansive, high-desert landscape where beavers were once the dominant inhabitant. “What we're attempting is to not only build out this resort with very high-end





experiences but keep it very boutique and exclusive.”

I encountered my initial dose of the Campbells’ objectives upon driving past the stone-column entry gate onto an unpaved road toward the main lodge where I traded in my Honda for a battery-powered Polaris RZR as my personal on-site transport, including a two-way radio to communicate throughout my time bunking on the ranch. With no cell service, I was certainly OK not conversing with anyone beyond the ranch boundary. Within less than 24 hours of my first daybreak on the ranch, any concerns of isolation from the outside world vanished when seated on the deck of my lakeside log cabin (one of eight, in addition to 18 ranch house rooms) watching antelope wander throughout an unobstructed playground as I was mesmerized by the coffee steam rising in sync with the mist escaping the adjacent Otters Pond. Time to unplug!

At Silvies, there is no shortage of experiences to fill every waking hour. Chances are,

you won’t get to them all, such as fishing, biking, hiking, a ranch tour, wagon rides, horseback riding, Rocking Heart Spa or even firing a collection of guns at the shooting range, including those reminiscent of the Civil War era, to role-play “Dirty Harry” while trying to maintain balance pulling the trigger on a Smith & Wesson 500 Magnum revolver.

But if it’s golf you’re after, there’s plenty, with four courses, each one designed and built by Dan Hixson, an Oregonian whose breakout project came in 2005 with Bandon Crossings Golf Course. Silvies, however, presented unfamiliar challenges, most notably a plan incorporating a concept dating back nearly 450 years, when St. Andrews’ Old Course was built as a reversible golf course.

Two of only three such courses in the country (along with The Loop at Forest Dunes), the Hankins Course (7,075 yards) and Craddock Course (7,035 yards) offer golfers a chance to play the layout clockwise on odd-numbered days and the other

direction on even days. As such, these reversible 18-holers create a different experience with a variety of pin placements and tee box options. Though the links-style layout is free of water hazards, there are over 100 bunkers, regardless of direction.

For a shorter golf fix, take a stroll around the seven-hole McVeigh’s Gauntlet (1,177 yards) for a challenging test of accuracy or the nine-hole, par-3 Chief Egan (875 yards). Either present a chance to play alongside one of the ranch’s pampered star attractions (escorted by its personal trainer), happy to backpack a handful of clubs, beverage cans and, of course, their favorite treats in a custom-made goat golf bag. Just don’t request any swing tips or course knowledge.

This frontier landscape is sure to be around till the cows come home but, in the meantime, whether you’re a goat or human guest, the Campbells’ “build it and they will come” strategy with the Links at Silvies Valley Ranch is filling a niche for contemporary explorers to lasso the Western mystique on a five-star scale. Set it on your radar. **GT**