

Local golf course review:

Springfield Golf Club in Ft. Mill

Located on a heavily wooded and hilly site just over the South Carolina border is the Springfield Golf Club. Golfers will find a combination of rolling hills that give you a feel of some mountain golf courses, yet you are playing in Ft. Mill. Springfield's park-like setting features four holes that flank Sugar Creek and the challenge is increased by 13 holes that play across and along perennial streams that feed into the Catawba River.



Enhanced by the rolling terrain water features, Springfield Golf Club is a traditional style of golf course designed with shot-making requirements. Not long, based on most courses built in the 2000's, this par-72 layout is 6,906-yard from back tees to just under 4,800 for the front tees. With five sets of tees, Springfield truly can fit any level of golf.

The Clyde Johnston design harkens back to the traditional schemes of the Donald Ross 1920's and the Golden Age of Architecture in golf and Springfield Golf Club has quickly made a name for itself among Charlotte golf courses since opening in 2001.

"The graceful folds and contours that define the land near Fort Mill provide the perfect setting for a golf course whose design is timeless," proclaimed Johnston shortly after the opening. "The golf experience at Springfield will be as memorable as it is strategic and demanding."

Johnston has provided very generous landing areas in the tree-lined Bermuda fairways, with medium size undulating greens, converted to ultradwarf MiniVerde Bermuda greens in the summer of 2010. The greens have matured to perfection and are protected by fewer than 50 bunkers filled with consistent sand. Your putts will run true, but may be tricky until you get the feel of the rolling terrain that controls the break of your putt. The green complexes are surrounded

with Zoysia and Tif-dwarf turf that helps greatly in getting up and down a little easier.

"The course wintered over very well", stated Gene Roper, Director of Golf Operations for Leroy Springs and Company. "Play has been steady and the players have been very compliment of the mature greens and general course conditions, which makes us very happy."

Another feature that adds to your trip around Springfield Golf Club is the concentrated effort to preserve wildlife and the environmentally sensitive areas. With all of the lateral water hazards lining many fairways, the protected areas will snag a ball occasionally but has helped define the neighborhood park like setting. If your ball goes into one of these areas, "let the turtles have it!"

On the front side at Springfield you will find only two traditional dog-leg holes, one of which is the par-4 400-yard 5th hole, requiring a tee shot up the left side of the fairway and then over one of the sensitive areas to an uphill undulating green. Like the front side, on the back nine, a majority of the tee shots are made without seeing the green due to the rolling hills and trees. But hey, what would a park be without hills and trees?

The finishing 18th hole along with the 6th hole, are both long par-5's measuring over 525 yards from the back tees. Even from the regular tees you need two or three solid hits to reach the green in regulation and that means covering over nearly 1000 yards collectively of real estate. That's the long of the Springfield story, the short comes in heavier dosages with very manageable par-3's and comfortable par-4's to complete your round.





For those that like to warm-up or just practice, Springfield Golf Club includes a one-acre grass tee practice area that has space for 25 hitting stations and six target greens with a putting green nearby. Head pro Bud Welch and his staff are available to assist all players with the development of their golf game at this excellent practice facility.

The First Tee of Charlotte, a youth development organization that helps

build character and promotes healthy choices through the game of golf will also be using these practice facilities. Springfield expanded the program into South Carolina last year.

“We’re delighted to join forces with First Tee of Charlotte to help elevate the lives of the next generation,” said Bud Welch, Springfield Head PGA Professional. “First Tee teaches strong life skills and gets kids outside for fresh air and fellowship and helps renew the growth of golf.”

Springfield is one of four Leroy Springs & Company courses in upstate South Carolina designed by such architects as Donald Ross, George Cobb, Russell Breeden and Clyde Johnston. Chester Golf Club, Lancaster Golf Club and Fort Mill Golf Clubs are the other three in addition to Springfield. All four clubs offer membership packages that have no initiation fee with monthly dues that feature unlimited green fees. Special membership discounts are offered to students and seniors.

So make your plans to “walk in the park” at Springfield Golf Club. Contact the pro shop for tee-times, lessons, clinics, membership information or to book a golf tournament. Call 803-548-3318 or visit www.leroysprings.com.

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