

Balance and Contrast Key to University Ridge

A very rare, 4 1/2 star rating from Golf Digest's "Places to Play" in 2002, a 5 star rating from Chicagoland Golf Magazine and ranked 4th in "America's Best Daily Fee Courses in Wisconsin" by Golfweek, University Ridge is not your typical university golf course.



Robert Trent Jones Jr. designed this "thing of beauty" with an eye to the magnificent natural terrain left behind by the last ice age, an ear to those who were asking for a course that every skill level can play and his heart focused on preserving the integrity of the land to bring out its natural beauty.

The result was a truly stunning, par 72 masterpiece that will put the screws to the lowest handicapper yet lend itself accessible to the average and beginning player. With four sets of tees, you can choose to play from as far back as 6,888-yards or knock the distance down to a tamer 5,005-yards and enjoy the views as you roll along this 225-acre track.

The front nine is relatively wide open with spectacular views of the rolling, terminal moraine landscape. Stunning contrasts abound as the Penncross bent grass fairways cut through the native brown and white Wisconsin prairie grasses like a vivid green river flowing through its banks.

From a purely aesthetic standpoint, autumn has to be the most fantastic time to play this course offering the entire palate of fall colors. The views afforded by the 180 feet of elevation change can make you forget you're playing golf and consider a career as a botanist.

But we're here for golf and University Ridge offers up 18 of the best Robert Trent Jones holes you'll ever find. In typical Trent Jones style, the course takes complete advantage of what the land has to offer only touched up here and there with subtle alterations to the natural terrain to give it those special nuances that define Trent Jones Jr. golf.



So what he did was add 80 bunkers, 70% of which are nestled around the greens, which are also bent grass and average a respectable 7,000 square-feet. He threw in some Kentucky bluegrass for the roughs and let nature take care of the rest.

The result is a perfect balance of man and nature. Nowhere is this truer than on the par five, 535 yard, signature hole, number 16. The natural mounding in the landing area from the tee dictated that the hole actually have three fairways, two of which are reachable from the back tees.

The hole itself is relatively straight, but the risk and reward aspects of it make it a true challenge. Long hitters can cut the corner and try to reach the right fairway by carrying the towering grove of oak and elm trees down the right hand side. Success there means that you may be able to get home in two. But with 14 bunkers on the hole and 12 around the green, you better be sure of your yardage.



After the 16th, your home stretch doesn't get any easier or any less spectacular. Seventeen is a daunting, downhill 199-yard par 3, all carry, over a beautiful, natural pond. Hit a little timidly here, and you're hitting three in a heartbeat. The best bet is to go long where your worst result is a downhill chip to a very fast green.

Eighteen is difficult because it's long and you'll lose all that elevation you gained coming down 16 and 17. This 413-yard, dogleg left sports three deep and very steep bunkers along the left side of the fairway. Hit it there and you're facing at least bogey. Make sure you kit a little long on your approach. The green is 41 yards deep and lends itself to some long pin placements.

The finishing holes at University Ridge are among the best Trent Jones Jr. ever created simply by virtue of being exactly what the terrain called for. And they are very typical of the overall layout of the inward nine-undulating, densely wooded and varying greatly in elevation-creating a perfect blend of man-made and natural features.



University Ridge, with its variety, its view and its challenges has to be one of the country's best university golf courses. The fact that it has been host to several Big Ten championship NCAA events is testament to its challenge. The fact that Robert Trent Jones Jr. designed University Ridge specifically to appeal to all abilities is testament to its playability.

University Ridge truly is a treat for the senses as well as a challenge for the mind and body. Call the pro shop at: 608-845-7700 or 800-897-4343 to make your tee times now!