

WHAT A MESS!

Golf World®

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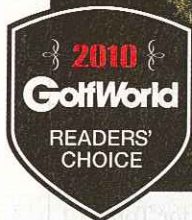
Tiger Woods turns in a career-worst performance at Firestone. What does it mean for his Ryder Cup chances?



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GIVES PAVIN HOPE**

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READY FOR ITS
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The 10th hole at True Blue Plantation.

WHERE WE PLAY

True Blue Plantation

It's been said many times that width is necessary to have abundant strategies on any golf hole. The wider the fairway, the more varied the angles of attack. But there is such a thing as too much width, and I think a prime example is True Blue Plantation, a sprawling companion course to the tight, tree-dominated Caledonia Golf & Fish Club (*Travel*, Aug. 9).

True Blue is a fabulously artistic design by Mike Strantz (who built Caledonia four years earlier), with wide expanses filled by freeform waste bunkers, wandering water hazards and acres of putting surfaces. But what is pretty is not necessarily strategic, and that's the flaw I detect in True Blue's design. Fairways are so wide, more than 80 yards wide on the first, ninth, 10th and 15th (all par 5s), there's very little reason to play to a certain spot

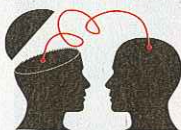
in any fairway. In fact, I found myself losing focus on such extremely wide fairways. It was like hitting into driving ranges. (For the ninth, the yardage book reads, "This hole can appear confusing from the tee.")

The short par-4 sixth has two different greens, tiny ones separated by at least 100 yards. You'd think this would be the perfect hole to have a gigantic fairway, so you could play up one side for the perfect angle into one green and up the other side for the opposite. But, no, Strantz gave us the skinniest fairway on the course. It's a wishbone hole. You're driving to the same spot for either green.

Most of the greens are so deep, the goal is simply to get the ball to the hole. The one exception is the 158-yard par-3 14th, with a rolling 60-yard-wide green set below an arc of elevated tee boxes, so some days you're trying to hit a backboard and feed it down to the pin and other days you're aiming for a sideslope, hoping for a proper kick to the hole.

I still recommend True Blue for its panoramic pleasures. But good players seeking a test of driving skill would do better at Caledonia. —Ron Whitten

NOW YOU KNOW



In an impromptu ceremony on True Blue's 14th green in 1998, *Golf World* presented Mike Strantz with a medallion honoring our Architect of the Year. Sadly two years later, he was diagnosed with cancer. He died at age 50 in 2005.

900 Blue Stem Drive
Pawleys Island, SC
29585 888-483-6800
truebluegolf.com

Drive time from Myrtle Beach
Airport: 35 minutes

COURSE INFO: True Blue Plantation (Mike Strantz), 7,126 yds., 74.3/145

PEAK GREEN FEES: \$149 (\$399 through Sept. 8)

Readers' Choice Awards ranking: No. 26 (Public)

Deals of THE WEEK

SHAWNEE INN & GOLF RESORT
Shawnee on Delaware, Pa.
Midweek stay-and-play package includes hotel accommodations and a round on the A.W. Tillinghast course that hosted the 1938 PGA Championship. Access to nine-hole, par-3 Tillinghast Approach Course also available.
PRICE \$99 per person per night (based on double occupancy); available Monday through Thursday)
shawneeinn.com
800-SHAWNEE

STOWE MOUNTAIN LODGE
Stowe, Vt.
Tea-It-Up package provides room accommodations and unlimited golf for two people at Stowe CC, plus breakfast for two and \$150 in Stowe Points to be used at resort.
PRICE Starting at \$280 (double occupancy; two-night minimum); \$75 upgrade charge to play Stowe Mountain GC
stowemountainlodge.com
888-4STOWE-VT



ANGEL PARK GC/THE LEGACY GC
Las Vegas
Double Play package, available through Sept. 12, covers green fees and cart expenses for a round of golf at both facilities
PRICE \$89 per person
thelegacygc.com/doubleplay
888-4-GOLFLV

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