

Making It My Golf Course

by Skip Taylor, Resident Member of IRCC
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Having played golf since I was 5, I have played a lot of courses around the world. I am not a "natural" and have worked hard to cut strokes and make putts. I avidly read the 3 most popular Golf magazines, buy the latest golf gimmicks, new clubs, (I can boast of a collection of 35 putters, all but 2 in the attic), GPS, Laser, and still play in the 90's. Now that I am approaching 70, I see my dream of being a scratch golfer a fading myth.

Having retired and moved from Miami to IRCC in 2008, I began playing more golf. I was humbled by the Indian River Colony Club (IRCC) course. I went from a sleeve of good balls to buying them in 48 ball bags at WalMart. As Wally Bandura, Director of Recreation says "We have 29 holes worth of water on 18, but only 7 bunkers are in play".

Needless to say, I was struggling. A copy of Butch Harmon's book "Playing Lessons" did provide some help, but the biggest help was Alistair Risk from Brora, Scotland.

Two years ago Alistair came to IRCC to be the Master of Ceremony at the "Burns Night", (Robert Burns, and the Poet of Scotland). Alistair Risk is a scratch golfer and an artful one at that. He is the President of his club in Brora, Scotland in the Highlands. Significant to our age, he has played with all the great names we grew up with including Jack and Arny. He now owns a B&B in Brora. Prior to his retirement, he ran hotels at St Andrew, Muirfield, Carnoustie, and Turnberry among others.



I recall the first time he played IRCC and shot an 82. He was not happy and the next day shot a 72. He called IRCC a parks course and a target course, as opposed to the Links course we always hear about in Scotland. During his stay, he also played "The Majors" and "The Blue Monster" at Doral and he tamed them both. I remember his remarks on "The Blue Monster" - "All the pro courses in the world are the same - wide, long with an eye toward making the pros' look good. (He shot a 73 having never played the course before.) IRCC's course on the other hand is a great test of a golfer. You must know your clubs pick the target and hit to it. Your room for error is small. Your mental game must be sharp and you must concentrate on every

shot. In other words, you must play the game as the game was designed to be played." What else would you expect a traditional Scotsman to say?

With some other pointers from Alistair, I improved my game. I find that concentrating on each and every shot still eludes me. I find the real difference in the course at IRCC is that you never get tired of playing it. Each and every hole is distinctive and challenging day after day, I will never get tired of trying to master it and I have made it my course for the rest of my life!

IRCC golf course is available for tournaments. Call Wally Bandura, Recreation Director at 321-255-6050 x 224