

Course Rating: Silver Lakes

Posted by [kmkasey](#) May 28, 2009 05:00AM

Breaking RTJ course can be gratifying

COURSE INFO

Address: 1 SunBelt Parkway, Glencoe

Phone: 256-892-3268

Web site: rtjgolf.com

Par: 36-36--72

Yardage: 4,870 to 7,406 yards

USGA course rating: 68.3 to 76.6

Slope rating: 122 to 148

Greens: Bentgrass

Green fee: \$61, plus tax (\$34.95 with Trail card)

Date played: May 20, 2009



Kent KaseyThe eighth hole on the Mindbreaker at Silver Lakes is a tough par-4.

THE COURSE

Silver Lakes, part of the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, features 27 holes of championship. I played the nines appropriately named Heartbreaker (carries a USGA course rating of 39.1 and a slope of 72) and Mindbreaker (37.5/76). While those numbers might strike some fear in golfers, the courses are fair provided you pick the right set of tees. The Heartbreaker starts with an interesting par-5 (431 to 568 yards) -- the fairway wraps around a small grove of trees about 165 yards from the green. Play to either side depending on where the pin is. The green is the first of many large, multi-tiered putting surfaces. The seventh (454 to 550 yards) is another good par-5. The dogleg left plays downhill to a landing area and then uphill over a creek to a green protected by two good-sized bunkers. The Mindbreaker is a solid collection of holes and closes strong with two good par-4s. The eighth (317 to 454 yards) is a slight dogleg right with a creek running along the right side of the fairway and then in front of the green. The ninth (206 to 391 yards) plays over a creek and then to a slightly elevated green. Approaches that miss right may very well find their way to the lake.

Score: 9 (out of 10)



Kent KaseyThe closing hole on the

Mindbreaker course at Silver Lakes.

SERVICE

The employees at Silver Lakes take great care of its visitors. They greet you at the curb and inside, the service in the pro shop was excellent. The grill was a little slow in getting my burger prepared. I saw a beverage cart five times during my round.

Score: 4 (out of 5)

EXTRAS

Excellent practice facilities -- large range with a big putting green and a short-game area. The pro shop is stocked with all kinds of quality apparel and equipment, with several good sale items. The grill offers a good menu and a wide variety of beverages.

Score: 5 (out of 5)

VALUE

The Trail has entered its offseason, so prices have dropped to \$61 plus tax (down from \$80 March 1-May 10). They will increase to \$68 in September. With a Trail card, the price is \$34.95, and the overall experience at Silver Lakes is well worth that.

Score: 9 (out of 10)

BOTTOM LINE

Silver Lakes is a demanding layout (the third nine carries the moniker Backbreaker) that will bring you to your knees if you're not playing well. But if you pick the right set of tees and stay out of trouble, the course can be broken and a gratifying good round can be had. The course was in great shape -- although the greens were a tick or two slow -- despite the fact the area had been pounded by recent rains.

Final score: 27 (out of 30)

Kent Kasey is a member of The Birmingham News' sports staff. Write him at kkasey@bhamnews.com.

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