No place to hide on mini-putting green

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On the putting green though, it's just golfer versus ball. There is no place to hide, especially when your 15-year-old partner thinks it's funny that a 12-inch gimme is no sure thing, especially when it scoots by the hole and stops rolling 36 inches away.

But mini-putt has its moments, especially on a course that offers a little something out of the ordinary.

And that's just what three York Region News Group reporters went looking for on an informal tour of a handful of York Region facilities.

I checked out some courses in the Newmarket area and found there's nothing quite like the experience of a scaled-down version of one of those target courses like they have in Arizona.

At the Phoenix Hill Golf Centre's Grand Canyon Putters Adventure Course, you'd swear you were out in the desert battling strategically placed rock formations — the craggy kind that offer no clue where the ricochets may lead.

Or, just a few kilometres away, it's Cardinal Golf Club's Northern Adventure, set in an abandoned mining camp.

Playing the clever subtle dips and dives at Phoenix Hill on holes named Buzzard's Gulch, Rattler's Run and Coyote Curve makes a fella wonder why he left the big course in the first place.

One particular eye-opener on the course is the 10th hole, aptly named Mucho Grande, a par-4 test that lives up to its name.

After a dog-leg from the tee area, players must negotiate a 45-degree elbow through a long, narrow passage to an elevated green. It's a lotta hole — easily the longest hole on the course.

At Cardinal, the contrast is vivid. The concrete-based putting surfaces are true and the course is decidedly more angular in the traditional sense of mini-putt golf.

Nevertheless, it's challenging play with its northern mining camp theme, complete with a crashed bush plane, lending itself to interesting holes such as the two-level jaunt through the Mosquito Falls Mining Company, the fifth hole.

Two levels again come into play at the 15th hole, where golfers reap the reward of a hole-in-one for hitting the right cup.

Intrepid reporter Roy Green was checking out mini-putt courses elsewhere and filed this report:

The latest thing in mini-putt is indoor glow-in-the-dark courses and York Region has not one, but two such venues — Putting Edge franchises in Richmond Hill and Vaughan.

They feature black light, psychedelic fluorescent paint and lots and lots of

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