

## Preschoolers, seniors trying mini-putt

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was nearby to laugh.

Soon it dawned on me: the putting greens are wavy. I mentioned to Ms Reesor if they just flattened them out a little, it would make things a lot easier.

For some reason, she got this strange look on her face and had to turn away.

Then it happened: a hole-in-one. And I was at least six feet away from the practice hole. Thus emboldened, I thought I'd do a round on the Shipwreck course, the more advanced of Timber Creek's two courses.

The kids in front of me were having no trouble getting the ball into the hole with a couple of tries before carefully writing down their scores.

After putting around the course the Reesor siblings, Lynn, Lois and Robert, started building 10 years ago, I became aware mini-golf is more than just a game. A big part of its appeal is the surroundings. The 19-hole Shipwreck course, which was completed last July, took more than three years to build. It has large, artfully arranged rocks, a

wishing well and placid ponds with bullrushes and waterfalls. There are two boats that have run aground on the rocks, a lighthouse with a putting green underneath and a waterfall splashing nearby, as well as various towers with self-emptying waterbuckets.

I saw people of all ages, from preschoolers to seniors, playing both the original Logging Camp course and the Shipwreck. The Logging Camp has been revamped recently, Lynn Reesor said. The 18-hole course has been newly carpeted and more than half the holes have been changed to make things more fun for repeat mini-golfers. The highlight of this course is a sawmill with a turning log and all kinds of interesting nooks for balls to go through.

Both of the courses are original designs developed by Robert Reesor and landscape architect Kyle Hepburn. Both courses are also wheelchair accessible.

At the first hole of the Shipwreck, it took me three tries to get the ball to its target. I had time to gaze around, seeing the blue sky with its puffy white clouds, enjoying the sound of

the splashing waterfalls, feeling the breeze on my face. I played on.

A few holes farther is a putting green on one of the shipwrecks. After taking careful aim to guide the ball through a small opening at the bottom of a rustic wooden door, I waited. The ball came right back. This happened a couple of times. Then I tried a sturdier whack. The ball disappeared, then finally plopped out the side of the small building on to the green near the hole for which I was aiming.

One green takes you over a small bridge, others are beside rushing streams. At the lighthouse hole, a youngster ahead of me putted his ball past the rocks, around a curve and right past the hole. But the ball continued around another curve and bounced off the side to go directly into the hole.

But, as far as Tiger Woods is concerned, I don't think he needs to be too worried about this mini-golfer.

*Been There, Done That is a regular feature following the exploits of staff as they try to keep up with experts in a wide variety of sports and recreational facilities.*

## Parents rely on friendships

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advance because you never know what's going to happen," says Mrs. Dungavell. "We live and die by the calendar."

Unless you are living it — the lifestyle, the commitment, the travel — it all appears crazy. It is intimidating for families who prefer to keep their kids out of rep. sports to keep their weekends to themselves.

But don't feel sorry for families whose routine revolves around a hockey puck or basketball. Just because you don't get it,

doesn't mean they don't love it. Or have, at least, become accustomed to it.

The Porter household has a system. As wife Jackie mentions one kid's game that night, Mark repeats it aloud. It is a practice that has become second nature, with one fail-safe precaution.

"If it's not on the calendar, it doesn't count," confirms Mr. Porter.

Interaction with other families involved with their children's teams is a social lifestyle. That shouldn't be surprising, given the time spent with other parents prior to and after games, at

practices and, naturally, in the stands cheering on youngsters.

"We have friends that tell us to get a life," says Mr. Porter. "The fact is, we might even have a 1-1/2 lives going on here. It becomes your whole social group. A whole new network of friends gets put together."

When it's over for the kids, sometimes the biggest impact is on parents. Some have been known to go through withdrawal, a sporting version of the empty nest syndrome. Knowing it will eventually end, many make the most of it while they can.

## Fall Registration

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