

# OUTDOORS

## Eastwood Golf Course reopens after \$3.4 million makeover

**andyHALL**  
Special to Florida Weekly



Displaying an impressive new clubhouse, reconfigured fairways and nice perks including new golf carts, Eastwood Golf Course reopened this past week after a six-month, \$3.4 million renovation. One of two public courses including the Fort Myers Country Club operated by the city of Fort Myers, both cater to residents and visitors who play over 70,000 rounds of golf each year.

The course closed on April 30 for the renovation that includes a redesigned greens, 84 new bunkers and 54 new tee grounds, a new irrigation system, resurfaced cart paths and a new driving range.

"We rerouted fairways, redid the tee boxes and remade the greens," says Larry Phillips, assistant pro at Eastwood. "Players will notice we moved some bunkers to open things up, and made the greens bigger with more undulations," he continued.

Consensus among the local golfers during the first week of play is that the new improvements have made the course more open in the fairways while more challenging on the greens. The new greens are still developing, but remain very playable and golfers appear uniformly impressed with the course upgrades.

Initially opening on 28 October with only the front nine ready for play, the club placed

the entire 18 hole, Par 72, 6772-yard course in operation last Saturday. Looking to speed play on the old par-4 12th hole and long par-3 13th hole, the club reordered the back nine during the renovation.

Maintaining the original 10th and 11th holes, the order changes with holes 12 thru 15 played on what were previously holes 14 thru 17. The old 13th hole is now the 16th and the original 12th hole is now the 17th. The par-5, 598 yard 18th remains the finishing hole for the refurbished course.

Opening day saw well over a hundred anxious golfers ready to play on Eastwood's first makeover since 1977, and club operators for both courses are expecting the current membership of over 1,300 to grow. Fort Myer's residents are eligible for two types of prepaid membership plans for 9-month and year round play. Both permits offer substantial savings of at least 25 percent, but neither entitles holders to preferred tee times as both city facilities must entertain daily fee guests and members as a public course.

Course hours are 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, and tee times for all golfers are available by telephone one day in advance starting at 8 a.m. Rental clubs are available and golfers wishing to walk their round after 2 p.m. can do so for a fee.

Already having held two charity events since opening, Eastwood plays host to the final day of the Southwest Florida Men's Amateur Golf Tournament set for Nov. 10 and 11 with the first day at the Fort Myers Country Club. The 36 hole, stroke play



FLORIDA WEEKLY PHOTO ANDY HALL

Golfers putt out on the Eastwood's improved ninth hole following a six-month \$3.4 million renovation.

event is open to all amateurs. Comprised of five flights for competition among varying handicaps, the two-day event has a prize purse of \$6,000 for the first 184 entrants. The entry fee is \$90 and more information is available by calling 239-936-3128.

The city of Fort Myers and their talented crew who manage and operate both municipal courses have scored well above par with the public in their off-season renovation of Eastwood. Congratulations are in order for the Fort Myers Public Works Department

for their efficient completion of an exceptional project. ■

**If you go**

- >>What: Eastwood Country Club (Public Course)
- >>Where: 4600 Bruce Herd Lane, Fort Myers, FL
- >>Hours & Fees: 7 a.m. - 1 p.m., \$45  
1 p.m. - 3:30 p.m., \$35  
3:30 p.m. - Close, \$30
- >>Info: 239-275-4848

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