



By The Bushranger Golf Social Group

From the Carpark to the 19th

The Dunes Golf Links



Just one hour from Melbourne on Victoria's famed Mornington Peninsula, The Dunes Golf Links offers a world-class golfing experience within reach of any player. Winner of multiple awards including Best Public Access Course in Victoria (5 consecutive years), Best Course Design in Australia, and listed as one of Australia's top 25 Golf Courses, The Dunes has established itself as a "must-play" on most Australian golfers' wish lists. This month, members of the Bushranger Golf Social Club ventured to The Dunes to witness firsthand what the hype is all about.

Richard Fellner
Inside Social Golf
Handicap: 15 (and rising)

I'm always a bit hesitant when I see a golf course's logo that shows a flagstick bending heavily in a fruitless attempt to combat an apparent howling wind. In a way, I appreciate the honesty, as if the designer is saying "OK, our cards are on the table: the wind will blow...hard...and we've designed

the course accordingly...so you better bring your A-game." But on the other hand, as my game goes pear-shaped in anything other than picture-perfect conditions, the honesty falls on deaf ears.

It takes real skill to design a course that plays well in windy conditions. A few false moves in the design phase can (and often does) spell disaster for the playability of a course. Fortunately, Tony Cashmore got it right at The Dunes. While the wind can certainly knock your ball around, the thoughtful design of each hole makes the entire course playable (and fair) in even a heavy gale.

The more I play this course, the more I love it. It's hard to pick a favourite hole, as they're all top-notch. But the sheer beauty of the par 3 17th - which golfing legend Tom Watson described as an "exquisite golf hole" - makes it a real standout.

And while the golf is certainly magnificent, the pre- and post-game facilities at the Dunes can almost steal the show. The entire facility has a "Private Course" feel to it: from the relaxing restaurant & bar, to the fully-fitted practice

and teaching facilities, to the clubhouse, golf shop and club locker room, you almost forget you're at a public course. Highly recommended. Put this course on your "Must Play" list.

OVERALL RATING: 8.5/10

Scott Wilson
Bushranger Golf
Handicap: 21

We played off the blue tees in the best weather imaginable. Bright skies, no rain, little wind. Having each played the course many times before, we thought "What new challenges could await us? We know this beast" Alas, the course took its gleeful revenge.

For starters, this course plays very differently from the long markers. The extra 20-40m brings into play a variety of bunkers and natural hazards that I had outdriven in the past. The blue and black tees are a true test for low-mid handicaps and too ambitious for anyone 20+. Even in the best weather, I would strongly recommend playing the white tees. "Ah, but I can drive my titanium pro ball-spanker 260m down the guts" I hear you say. Forget it. Unless you can also hit

consistent long irons and fairway woods, chip with everything from a 6-iron to a lob wedge and putt with the sureness of a wily old pro, the Dunes off the long tees will demolish you.

Case in point, twice I hit short-mid irons high and pure to the centre of the green - only to watch the ball rocket 15 ft into the air off the glassy surface, defy any backspin and roll with a mocking cackle into a bunker behind the green.

As for the course itself, it's without question one of the top five courses down on the Mornington peninsula and a must-play for any regular visitor to the area. Favourite holes - the 208m par-3 downhill 6th and the 365m par-4 second hitting to a well-protected elevated green. I'll par them both one day.

OVERALL RATING: 8/10

Michael Mileo
Bushranger Golf
Handicap: 20

This course offers generous fairways which can seem forgiving off the tee, but at the Dunes scores are defined by your second shot

- where shapes of greens and bunkers dictate your success (or failure). Club selection is critical, even if you drive well, as this course really challenges you from 150 to 120m out. What makes club selection challenging is the constant changing from uphill, downhill, cross wind, head wind, pin placements.....need I go on?

The greens are protected by bunkers everywhere. They are ruthless. On the 11th tee, I commented to my partners that I had not seen any sand for my first 10 holes. I can now, however, give you an intimate account of the bunkers from holes 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 and 18.

The greens were fantastic....slick and true with incredible variety. I found them challenging but fair, which is probably just as well given they are protected by so many bunkers and undulating surrounds.

My favourite hole was the Par 3, 3rd hole. The course guide recommends that you "do not go left", "do not be short" and that "right is not good either". It didn't mention anything about going long.... I did, and never saw my

ball again which was my only lost ball during the round.

For a public golfing experience, I highly recommend this course. I cannot think of too many better choices when you want to put your command of the golf club and ball to the test. If you don't mind getting buffeted by the winds, play any day, otherwise I recommend you check the weather before hand.

OVERALL RATING: 8/10

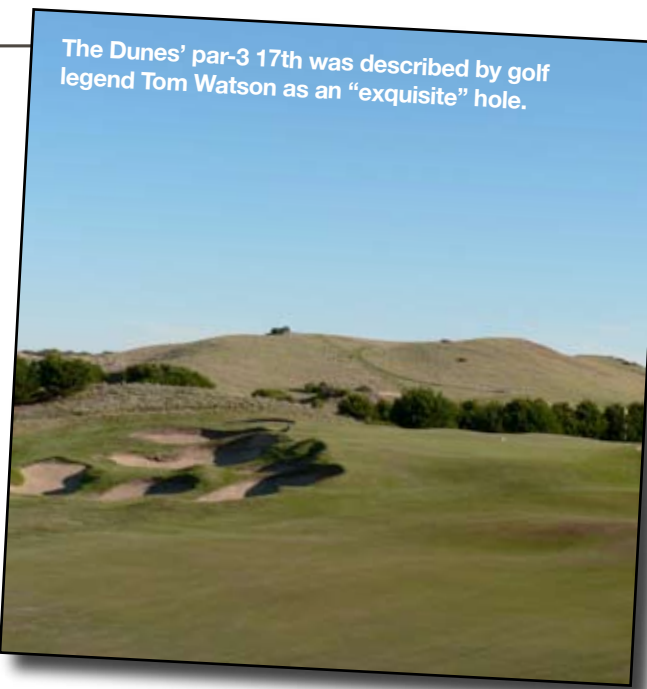
Mick Van Raay
Bushranger Golf
Handicap: High (but not high enough this time)

I've been fortunate enough to play The Dunes three times now, and it has slaughtered me every time! OK, to be honest, the first 2 times it was blowing a gale, and as true a links course as you'll find in Australia, but on this outing it was as nice a day as you could get, and

I thought "this time I'll do better". Bap boooooow! How wrong I was! This is not a course the high handicapper can expect a day out on, but you'll have some fun regardless of your skill level. Extremely well manicured, and as long as you like, they've really made use of the beautiful Peninsula dunes, cups and swales, leaving you with some breathtaking holes to look at and some ball busting holes to play.

Being a sucker for an elevated tee, my favourite hole is a toss up between the Par-4 2nd (complete with a 150-year-old Lime Kiln near the tee) and the 305m Par-4 4th ("I'm on top of the world"), where cracking one of your better drives can put you pin high (although with acres of bunkers to deal with). But, being so elevated, even on a relatively calm day it can blow such a gale on this tee that you'll do well to hold your footing as you address the ball! Overall, I love to look at and traverse The Dunes, but I am yet to walk away with a half decent score ... then again, I can't blame a great golf course for my hackish game.

OVERALL RATING: 7.5/10



ENTRÉE - The Cups

This is normally the space we reserve to revise the food in this feature but The Dunes has an entree of such a different kind we thought we'd break with tradition this month. For the less adventurous social golfer, or for those who simply want an appetiser prior to tackling the main course, the 9-hole "Cups" course is a real treat. With a Par of 33, and a challenging mixture of holes, The Cups offers a bit of something for everyone. A step above the average "executive style" course, The Cups was designed specifically to cater to social groups and casual players. While much more forgiving than its counterpart, The Cups still maintains the high standards of The Dunes; with firm and fast greens, deep bunkers, pesky trees and a variety of hazards & obstacles to challenge golfers of every level. We all agreed that The Cups is one of the more challenging executive-style courses around, and a real treat to play.

NEED TO KNOW: The Dunes Golf Links

Length: Black: 6,409. Blue: 6206. Red: 5166
Green Fees (18 & 9 holes): Weekends and Pub Hols: Championship Course: \$65/\$35. Cups Course: \$30/\$18. Weekday: Champ: \$44/\$30, Cups: \$24/\$15, Twilight rates available, carts \$38 each.
Par: Championship: 72. Cups: 33
Designer: Tony Cashmore
Address: Browns Road, Rye 3941, Victoria
Phone: (03) 5985 1334 **Web:** www.thedunes.com.au

HOW TO GET THERE

Follow the Frankston Fwy/Moorooduc Hwy. Take Mornington Peninsula Hwy until it ends, turn left onto Boneo Road. On the next roundabout, turn right on Brown's Road. Turn right at tee intersection onto Trueman's Road, travel for 400m and then turn left onto Brown's Road. After 2kms turn left into The Dunes Golf Links. Melways: Page 168, Reference G11

Hole Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	OUT	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	IN	OUT	TOTAL
Medal Course - Metres	409	365	135	310	473	208	477	392	376	3061	340	300	502	160	354	455	401	179	370	3145	3061	6206
Par - Men	4	4	3	4	5	3	5	4	4	36	4	4	5	3	4	5	4	3	4	36	36	72
Player																						
Par - Ladies	5	4	3	4	5	3	5	4	4	37	4	4	5	3	4	5	4	3	4	36	37	73
Ladies Course - Metres	382	310	112	270	366	168	435	341	316	2700	271	262	409	119	284	397	333	106	285	2466	2700	5166

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