



CLUB OF THE MONTH ›

Cammeray Golf Club

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A LOT more than just the layout has been 'refreshed' at Cammeray Golf Club.

Blessed with an exciting new layout, admittedly forced on them by proposed changes to the Warringah Freeway road system approaching the Sydney Harbour Bridge and tunnel, Cammeray has taken a leap into the future with the opening of their new nine-holer.

Already rated as among the best of Sydney's short courses, the club decided the time was right to embrace what it felt were more - much-needed - changes to the game.

And top of that list is encouraging a more relaxed attitude to those considering ducking in for a quick nine at a club that has been an integral part of the Sydney golf scene for 117 years.

Now consisting of nine par threes, the club is intent on attracting a new clientele to the game.

So, the Cammeray club has thrown that conventional, and many would suggest 'old-fashioned', guide book out the window.

Sure, you still have to keep up with the group in front of you and you're always urged to get excited and celebrate your successes on the course.

Yet the club is keen to encourage more social golf and suggests scorecards can be optional and you might only want to count the swings that actually make contact with the ball.

And here's an innovation that many will love . . . if you have trouble getting out of a bunker, you can throw the ball out if your first attempt fails.

Kids are also encouraged to play and it's also OK to wear activewear and even sneakers.



If that doesn't push anyone to bring their spouse or children for a game, then here's the final catalyst: you can move your ball away from trees, rocks or hilly lies before you hit – if you wish.

"We're really keen to make Cammeray a social course," said Cammeray Golf Club General Manager Layton Gould.

"And that also requires some changes to tradition.

"A public golf course like ours needs to be accessible to everyone.

"And the nice thing about that is we have had members of some of the private clubs nearby also keen to join so they can relax with family members and enjoy a friendly game of golf.

"These people have applauded our changes to tradition.

"After all, golf is a difficult enough game to learn and master as it is.

"We're just trying to make it easier for everyone."

Gould has just been through two of the busiest years of his life watching the course being pulled apart and reconstructed.

Not one hole remains from the original layout.

Yet the feedback since the new-look club was launched has been fabulous.

Since opening in August, Cammeray has about 40 holes-in-one recorded by members and social golfers.

And the nice thing is, they all get to appear permanently on the club's rolling video honour board.

Indeed Cammeray could become the site of every golfer's dream – to score an ace on a fully-sanctioned Golf Australia-rated course.

It may yet finish up in the Guinness Book of Records for recording the most aces.

Gould explained that a lot of loyal members had stuck by Cammeray when the course was closed and the re-design was taking place – which took almost 18 months.

"We're now back to about 450 members, many of them who are also members of other courses north of the Harbour Bridge," he said.

Nine-hole competitions are a daily occurrence with even their Saturday competition open to visitors with a golf handicap.

Most of the holes measure between 100 and 120m.

"Some of the stories coming back about holes-in-one have been quite amazing," said Gould.

"One lady had her first game in 10 years and scored a hole-in-one on her birthday!

"At one stage we also had three aces in 24 hours.

"One of our youngest with an ace was just eight-years-old, which may be some sort of a record as well.

"And one lady has actually had two aces – both in competitions here since we re-opened."

Gould's golfing philosophy is one that should probably be adapted by a lot more golf clubs in this country.

"We just want players to walk off the course feeling encouraged as golfers," he said.

"When it all comes down to scoring at golf, it's the short game that counts.

"And Cammeray is the place where you can improve that aspect of your game . . . and have a lot of fun along the way."

And Gould has his way, there will be more innovations in future.

We're talking music, food, outdoor bars . . . anything is possible.

"We just have such a great product here and the possibilities are endless," he said.



MUCH has changed at Cammeray Golf Club in 117 years.

Amazingly, golf has been played on this location in Cammeray Park since 1906.

A group of golfers from the Neutral Bay Tennis Club established the Cammeray Golf Club and secured a lease for land in Cammeray Park.

In those early years, Cammeray Park was a wilderness of bush and rocks looking down on Middle Harbour.

A lot of clearing and landscaping was required to create a golf course and fences were needed to protect the greens from army horses and dairy cattle which grazed on the course.

A six-hole golf course was ready for play in 1906, which makes Cammeray Golf Club one of the oldest golf clubs in New South Wales.

The original clubhouse was on the corner of Sutherland Street and Park Avenue and was relocated to its present location in 1938.

In the 1960s, Warringah Freeway extensions cut the golf course in two and resulted in a new nine-hole layout.

Some of Cammeray's longer-standing members fondly recall the course in the 1960s:

* Hitting shots over the then Cammeray Road on the first and eighth holes;

* The seventh green was across the road from the North Sydney Anzac Memorial Club (now Anzac Park Public School);

* A skate park now occupies the site of the ninth green.

The club survived this disruption in the 1960s and flourished with the reconfigured course.

That same layout remained until 2021.

In 2019 the club learned that the golf course would again be impacted by Warringah Freeway upgrades.

About 40 per cent of the golf course would be resumed for this project and a reconfigured golf course would be constructed on the balance of the land.

In June 2021, the club lost its popular 'finishing' ninth hole for a construction compound and eight or 17-hole rounds of golf began at Cammeray.

By August 2021, the eighth green and the entire ninth hole were out of action and temporary greens were in play on the fifth, seventh and eighth fairways.

As one wag pointed out: Cammeray became the busiest eight-hole course in Sydney during the Covid-19 lockdown!

The course was still operating, now as a six-hole course, until March, 2022 with construction due to begin on the reconfigured golf course in August, 2022.

And so to today . . . the new layout at Cammeray golf course is designed to be an inclusive and welcoming environment for all players, while still providing a challenge for accomplished golfers.

The new, nine-hole course offers more friendly tee options for golfers looking to learn and improve.

It also delivers a faster pace of play and anyone can come and learn the game and play a quick holes in just over an hour.

Welcome to the new world of golf.

CAMMERAY Golf Club offers a variety of membership options.

Full membership is available for \$1,945, which includes a \$500 Joining Fee.

There's also a Casual Lifestyle playing membership for \$750 (plus \$500 joining fee);

There's also a Junior membership (age 6-18) pay just \$370 (no joining fee);

The Junior Membership is particularly attractive, because the kids play free Monday to Friday (\$10 at weekends) get a GA handicap and can play in all of the 18 holes events and championships.

Cammeray has found quite a few parent-children memberships have been sold (especially for members of some top clubs where children are not as welcome).

Other interesting memberships enquiries have come from local residents who are members of Royal Sydney, The Lakes and Terrey Hills, but play at Cammeray as an ideal convenient short course practice venue.



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