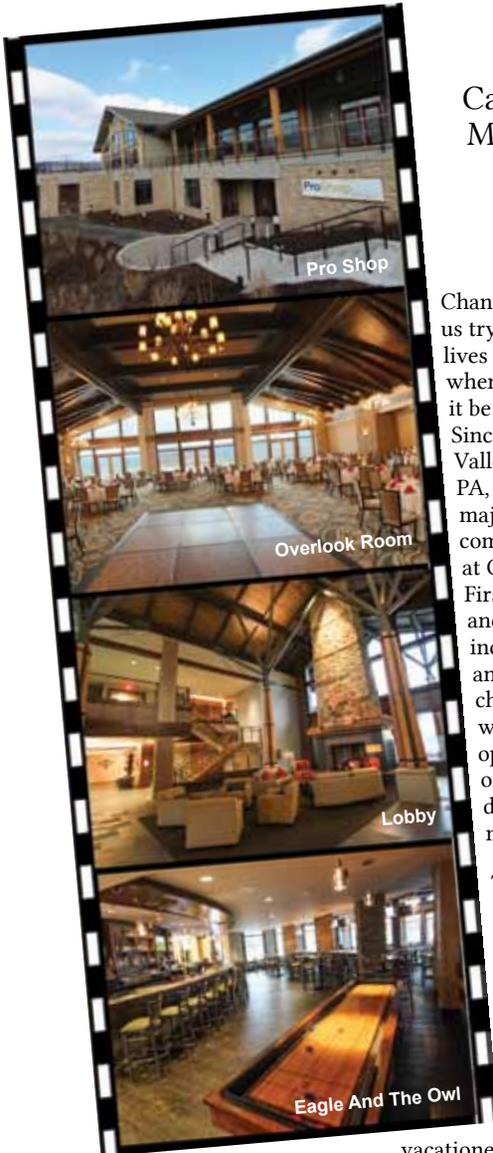




Carroll Valley Golf at Liberty Mountain Resort ~ From the Ground Up

Nick Ciattei



Change is never very easy to accept. Most of us try to avoid confronting adjustments in our lives at all costs. But there always comes a time when change is necessary and critical whether it be a personal one or a business matter. Since Snow Time Inc. purchased the Carroll Valley Golf Course and Resort in Fairfield, PA, several years ago, they vowed that some major changes and improvements would come. They have not let us down. Yes, changes at Carroll Valley have occurred everywhere. First they updated the irrigation system and enhanced the golf course cosmetically, including rebuilding several new tee boxes and bunkers. The crème de la crème of the changes that have taken place transpired when the brand new Highland Lodge opened. Built from the ground up in the original resort building's location, the new digs serve as the cornerstone of the \$20 million multi-year master plan.

This writer thought from the get-go that the resort would experience some growing pains when Snow Time arrived on scene. After all, you have to go back to the early 1970s to find both ski and golf operations run by the same company. Needless to say, Carroll Valley Golf can expect 2016 to be a special year. Much transition took place last year during construction, but from all accounts, golfers and vacationers got around without missing a beat.

This year, travelers to the resort and daily fee golfers will finally see the finished product. The Highland Lodge benefits and embellishes the key aspects of Liberty Mountain Resort that includes golf, winter sports, meetings and conferences, and a wedding destination. The lodge performs as the focal point of this year-round retreat.

Strolling through the Highland Lodge for the first time I was impressed by the wood and stone work as well as the use of large open areas. Ensuring that they shared all of God's natural gifts, massive windows showcase views of the golf course and Liberty Mountain. Seating and lounge space surround the main feature



of the lobby area, a towering stone fireplace. The lobby at the Highland Lodge now serves as the central check-in location for the entire resort. The addition of 17 hotel rooms and suites located here brings the total lodging number to 114 rooms. With a huge wedding business at Liberty Mountain, the Overlook Room provides a great addition to the existing matrimonial day settings. The expansive outdoor terrace off the ballroom features a large fire pit. A couple of restaurants also premiered with the new lodge. Perfect for after round drinks and bet settling, The Eagle and the Owl Public House sports a pub menu and craft beers. At Ike's Chophouse you'll experience hand-cut meats in a comfortable dining environment. The lower level features an indoor saltwater pool and a spacious hot tub area along with the Laventide Salon & Spa. Those who remember the golf pro shop in the old building might not recognize the new quarters with two state-of-the-art golf simulators having been added so that on those rainy days, you can still get in 18 and stay dry.



Let's face it golfers, the real reason you come to Carroll Valley at Liberty Mountain is to play the course. And what a great course it is. Not much has changed on this Pennsylvania gem since the Ed Ault design opened in 1968 other than some trees matured and Tom's Creek maybe widened a bit. The par 71 tips out at 6700 yards from the blues and shortens to a very comfortable 4900 yards from the red tees. I particularly

love the five par 5s and six par 3s in this layout that allow for numerous scoring opportunities during your round. One of those par 5s kick things off at Carroll Valley. An elevated tee box provides golfers that most welcome downhill opening tee shot. The first of the par 3s, the third, was actually designed following the twelfth hole's configuration at Augusta National. All you have to do is change Rae's to Tom's Creek to see the definite resemblance. Many consider, and rightfully so, the fourth hole to be one of the more beautiful and difficult par 5s you will play. Long, 584 yards from the tips, and dangerous, the creek, a formidable obstacle, must be cleared to get to the green. The closing hole on the outward nine, another par 5, plays around and over a large lake. This demanding hole runs uphill after the tee shot that plays to a green perched between several bunkers at the top of the property.





Hole 9 Par 5



Hole 10 Par 4

That same lake from the previous hole plays a major role on the back nine opener at Carroll Valley. This par 4 evokes fear on your tee ball because of shots missed to the right end up wet. Keep those sweaty palms dry because you must cross the lake to get to the putting surface. The par 5 twelfth stretches straight downhill in splendor where a solid drive can lead to a “go for it” decision from the fairway. Buyer Beware! That menacing creek must be crossed again just short of the green. Several hard hitting par 4s make up the meat of the back nine, most notably the sixteenth that is rated the toughest hole on this side. Seventeen is the final of the 5 pars, and it is only fitting that eighteen is a par 3. This good hole plays to a green nestled next to some of the lodging. Don't be surprised if you hear some chirping from the balconies as you line up that last birdie putt.



Hole 16 Par 4



Hole 17 Par 5

Familiar faces still abound at Carroll Valley at Liberty Mountain. And still more changes will come. The exposed wood and stone architecture that we spoke of will be the tone for the future renovation of existing resort buildings. This year the pedestrian Plaza Circle will be created to serve as a multi-season village center where you'll find everything from wedding ceremonies to ice skating taking place. Liberty Mountain has also acquired the Fairway Springs historic home that is so recognizable at the resort's entrance. Plans call for this 1840 stone manor house to be fully renovated and ready for use by 2017. “Stay and Play” golf packages with excellent seasonal specials are featured at the Carroll Valley Golf Course at Liberty Mountain Resort and with the wonderful upgrades, expect this admired retreat near the Mason-Dixon Line to be as popular as ever. 🍷

For more information visit libertymountainresort.com

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