

Sitting Shotgun NEXT TO FAZIO

Mirabel sits high above the Valley of the Sun with views of Pinnacle Peak and commanding panoramas of Phoenix and its twinkling city lights.

SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA: Traveling back from Los Cabos, Tom Fazio took a detour for a round at Mirabel, considered one of his finest designs in the West.

"The day started with my typical routine and a look at the tee sheet," remembered David Engram, director of golf at Mirabel. "Penciled in under the 8:10 tee time was scribbled 'Fazio.' We have our share of established names visit our private community, but I admit my heart skipped a beat thinking I was about to have the opportunity to meet Mr. Fazio for the first time."

Engram and Fazio spent a couple of hours together driving around in a golf cart.

"Tom is polite and modest," said Engram. "His attention to detail impressed me. To create a striking look during season, we have a policy to over-seed only fairways and tees, leaving the rough to go dormant. Tom and I had a lengthy conversation discussing the impact of friction on the golf ball from our fallow waste areas."

"Mirabel is a small, intimate club with amenities that equal its larger competitors in the Scottsdale market," lauded Tom Fazio. "The private club industry will have many winners and losers in this decade. Mirabel has positioned itself to be one of those winners. Its long-range planning has created a solid financial foundation and a proud, upscale membership. I think private clubs around the world can learn from its management and operations."

FROM A DAUGHTER'S PERSPECTIVE

"We recently completed a multi-million dollar renovation with special attention paid to expand and upgrade our practice facility," said Jeff Goren, golf course superintendent.

"This will be my 17th season at Mirabel and I could clearly see the aftermath and wear and tear with increased usage," continued Goren.

"We enlarged the teeing area on both ends of the range, added an uneven lie zone for specialized chip shots, and installed outdoor speakers for music to match your taste. We even clustered sprinkler heads closer together to provide greater watering flexibility to foster quicker repair of divots."

Over the summer, fresh Augusta white sand was placed in all bunkers.

"The combination of colors is remarkable," smiled Goren. "The hues of our desert's natural vegetation, lush green fairways, and brilliant sandy bunkers moves you. I know we accomplished our job, when, on a 100+ degree afternoon, my nine-year-old daughter riding around with me inquired, 'Dad, why is there snow on the course when it's so hot out?'" ■

For more information on membership opportunities, please visit Mirabel.com.

MIRABEL IS A DEBT-FREE AND MEMBER-OWNED CLUB on 700 rolling acres of the Sonoran Desert in North Scottsdale.

Amenities include a walkable Tom Fazio golf course, a caddie program in season, the 37,000 square-foot Desert Lodge Clubhouse influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright architecture, a fitness center with modern Cybex equipment, four Har-Tru tennis courts, and an art deco resort-style pool complete with luxurious cabanas.