

## Down The Middle

### “Albion Ridges, a West Metro Gem”

Some land owners dream of taking their land and building a golf course. Without proper planning, design and resources they can build a nightmare. Dennis and JoAnn Olson did the opposite; they built a gem.

Albion Ridges became my 171<sup>st</sup> course played this past week and the course lived up to the promise as written in the Albion Ridges website. “We wanted to provide everyone an enjoyable golf experience by providing a fun to play course with reasonable prices and friendly service.”

Dennis and JoAnn planted crops and raised pigs and cattle on the land for 15 years, but Dennis who spent quite a bit of time on the golf course in Mora, Minnesota growing up always dreamed of building and owning his own golf course. Construction started in 1990 and the first 18 holes opened in late 1991. In October of 1998 work started on an additional 9 holes. By the year 2000 Albion Ridges offered golfers three separate 9 hole golf courses, Boulder, Rock, and Granite. We played all three!

Course designer and superintendent Todd Severud designed all three courses at Albion Ridges. He also designed courses in Barron and Rice Lake, Wisconsin including highly regarded Turtleback Public Golf Course. Severud made perfect use of the natural wetland areas and the natural elevation changes the former farmland provided. With four sets of tees low handicap golfers can tackle a combination of two courses that measure nearly 6,600 yards while seniors and women can play from yardages that make it fun. We played from 6,100 yards and that was plenty of golf course for me at the ripe age of 60.

The tee boxes are spacious and well maintained, the fairways allow the ball to sit up, and the greens are spectacular. Of the 171 courses that I've played, I would rank the greens at Albion Ridges in the top 5! The bent grass putting surface was perfect and true, incoming shots held beautifully, and there is enough undulation to challenge even the best putters.

Officially the course resides in Annandale but it's actually closer to Maple Lake. If you look for Maple Lake on the map, Albion Ridges is a little southwest. When I left the golf course I dropped down to Delano and took highway 12 back to the Twin Cities. Much of the play at Albion Ridges comes from the west metro. Golfers can travel 35 to 40 minutes west and enjoy great golf at affordable prices. Make sure you check out the Thursday special, 27 holes for \$34.