

## Bracken Ghyll Golf Club – Hole Tips by Mark Tyler

### **1st Hole, ‘Thwaites Gate’, 322 yards (white), Par 4**

The first hole at Bracken Ghyll is a short uphill par 4, blind tee shot onto a generous landing area. For most players this is a driver hole leaving a short second shot into a large green.

My preference is to finish slightly left of the marker post off the tee. From here the golfer has a much better view of the green, and depending on the flag position, the bunker short right of the green and the two green side bunkers on the right can be avoided.

The large putting surface slopes back to front making for some fast putts in summer if you finish beyond the hole.

### **2nd Hole, ‘Bulls End’, 355 yards (white), Par 4**

Hole 2 at Bracken Ghyll is a par 4 playing downhill. The fairway is generous in width but anything finishing right of the fairway leaves a difficult second shot due to the trees on the right and the loan bunker.

A driver/3-wood hole for most, the ideal tee shot would finish left of centre but the sloped fairway can make for a difficult stance for your second shot.

The main feature of this hole is the small sloping two tiered green from front to back. Depending on the flag position, your ball needs to land short of the green to allow for the bounce and roll. A downhill putt here is definitely a knee trembler!

### **3rd Hole, ‘Fothering ‘Ole’, 390 yards (white), Par 4**

A tough par 4 requiring an accurate up-hill tee shot. The further right on the fairway you can finish the easier your second shot will be as the hole dog legs to the left. Anything left of centre requires a more lofted club to clear the trees and the likelihood you’ll be short.

For the shorter hitter three shots will be required to reach the green, but beware of the ditch running across the fairway ready to catch the second shot, making club selection vital.

Many will bale out to the right but the trees and green side bunker are ready and waiting! A smallish green make par on here a real bonus!

### **4th Hole, ‘Wharfedale’, 296 yards (white), Par 4**

A great ‘risk and reward’ dog leg left par 4. The sensible play is to hit an iron or hybrid off the tee to finish short of the ditch running across the fairway. Those that choose this option will then be left with a short iron to a long and relatively narrow putting surface. Depending on the flag position, the bunker left of the green won’t necessarily come into play.

The long hitters could take on the green, hitting driver or 3-wood over the copse of trees on the left. Choose this line and anything hit other than perfect will finish in the trees or bunker making par difficult. Get the tee shot right and this is a great birdie opportunity!

### **5th Hole, 'Moorside', 193 yards (white), Par 3**

The first par 3 at Bracken Ghyll. A straight forward downhill hole to a decent sized green which slopes uphill from front to back. Bunkers guard the green left and right.

Club selection can vary considerably on this hole depending on the strength and direction of the wind.

My advice is to club up and swing easier to try and keep the ball flight slightly lower than normal. Anything landing short will have a good chance of finishing on the green due to the downslope.

### **6th Hole, 'Beeches', 288 yards (white), Par 4**

An uphill par 4 with a dog leg fairway to the left. The ideal shape off the tee is a draw, but over do this and the trees lining the fairway up the left hand side will be ready to grab your ball!

Many will choose to hit a hybrid or iron off the tee for position, still leaving a short second shot into a heart shaped green. Bunkers positioned left and right of the green, can make for a tricky second depending on the flag location.

Position your ball well off the tee and this hole offers a great birdie opportunity!

### **7th Hole, 'Curlew', 342 yards (white), Par 4**

One of my favourite driving holes on the course. A lovely straight, slightly uphill par 4 onto a generously sized green, with bunkers left and right.

The tee shot is extremely intimidating as trees line both sides of the fairway, along with a fairway bunker positioned on the left, acting like a magnet!

This hole requires a long accurate tee shot, leaving a mid to short iron to the green. Always club up on the second shot as the upslope adds at least another 10 yards to the distance.

The sloped green from back to front can leave some very fast putts if you finish above the hole - Par here always feels great!

### **8th Hole, 'Turn Round', 324 yards (white), Par 4**

A superb par 4 playing downhill with a slight dogleg right. The sloping fairway, left to right, requires a tee shot to the left to allow for the bounce and roll. Overdo it though and two fairway bunkers await!

Sensible play here is to use an iron or hybrid off the tee. Anything right of centre or too long will leave the second shot blocked out by a large tree or possibly in the water short right of the green!

The second shot usually only requires a short iron, but the raised plateau green demands accurate club selection to set-up a birdie chance.

### **9th Hole, 'Highfield', 176 yards (white), Par 3**

A tricky uphill par 3 to a small target which isn't clearly visible from the tee!

This hole plays much longer than the yardage suggests due to the terrain. It's quite rare a ball finishes over the back of this green!

Miss the green left and the sloped banking will stop the ball in its tracks leaving you with an awkward chip up onto the green. Anything finishing right leaves a slightly easier shot, but again you'll need a decent short game in order to save par.

Select your club carefully and a ball finishing on this relatively flat green will set you up with a great chance of making a three.

### **10th Hole, 'Chelker', 144 yards (white), Par 3**

Lovely par 3 played from a tee box surrounded by trees behind and to the sides. A short hole but nonetheless one that requires accurate club selection and a confident strike.

The dry stone wall running all the way up the right hand side and behind the green, is a great feature and helps to focus your mind on the job in hand.

Two bunkers strategically positioned on the left of the green are ready and waiting for a ball 'steered' away from the wall.

The green is quite generous in size, narrower at the front but long and opening up as you move towards the back.

On a still day this hole is fair and will reward a good iron shot. Play when it's windy and the open nature of this hole means par is certainly not guaranteed!

### **11th Hole, 'Cow and Calf', 381 yards (white), Par 4**

A slight draw off the tee on this hole is the ideal shot, due to the out of bounds fence running parallel with the fairway down the right. Over do the draw though, and the sloped fairway feeds the ball left and down into the rough. You'll have a shot but the longer grass can make reaching the green in two much harder.

Find the fairway and most will be left with a mid iron into this green. There are no bunkers to contend with but miss left and you'll have a difficult pitch shot back up the banking to this raised green. A ball landing short but central on the fairway will generally run on nicely towards the putting surface.

The green is fairly flat so pick your line and trust your putting stroke!

### **12th Hole, 'Abbey', 421 yards (white), Par 4**

A great hole to 'open the shoulders' with the driver and take advantage of the sloped fairway, hopefully sending your ball bounding down the middle!

There's a fairway bunker on the right which will catch anything hit with a weak slice. The fairway runs off to the left, so if you find the rough here then getting up in two won't be easy, made more difficult by the likely hood of an awkwardly sloping lie.

A second fairway bunker located short right of the green is ready and waiting to stop your ball reaching the green.

The green is fairly decent in size but the sloped sides to the left and over the back, will mean a misjudged second or third shot leaves a tricky up and down.

Most golfers walking off this green with no more than a five will be secretly quite happy!

### **13th Hole, 'Nook Bit', 142 yards (white), Par 3**

A lovely par 3 played from a raised tee to a sloped green from right to left.

A large bunker on the left and a smaller one to the right of this green demand an accurate shot.

Although only requiring a short iron for most, a ball finishing on the middle to left side of the green will generally leave an easier putt, increasing your chance of making a birdie.

### **14th Hole, 'Sulky Trot', 538 yards (white), Par 5**

A long and difficult par 5 playing downhill.

Trees run down the left hand side with the fairway opening slightly more to the right.

If the tee shot wasn't hard enough, now the golfer is faced with two large trees in the fairway! Longer hitters will have a chance of reaching in two but most will require three well hit shots.

The green is small and a ball will need to land short of the green to allow for the extra run off the downslope. Be too bold and you'll more than likely be pitching your ball back up the steep banking from behind the green!

### **15th Hole, 'Meadowlands', 345 yards (white), Par 4**

An uphill par 4 which on first glance doesn't appear too difficult, but always plays harder than expected for several reasons. Firstly the slope which makes the modest 345 yards play much longer, then factor in trees lining almost the entire length of the fairway on either side, and finally a fairly small raised green guarded by two bunkers!

The key to scoring well on this hole is largely down to where your tee shot finishes. The ideal line is left of centre which will leave you with a clear shot to the green. Anything hit with more than a fade will usually finish in the trees on the right due to the sloped fairway. If you're lucky you'll have a clear swing but still a blind shot over the trees, played from the semi rough.

If you find the green and finish below the hole, you'll have a steady uphill putt. Anything beyond the hole will require great touch and feel to avoid the dreaded 3-putt!

### **16th Hole, 'Walker Acre', 561 yards (white), Par 4**

The longest hole on the course, a straight downhill par 5, with out of bounds bordering the fairway to the left for the entire distance.

From the tee, the trees on the left protrude a short distance towards the edge of the fairway, tightening the initial landing area for the drive. Beyond this point the sloped fairway widens more to the left and continues downwards onto the next level. The final 180 yards or so is down a fairly steep slope, eventually arriving at the green.

This hole requires a good drive and then a well hit second with a fairway wood or hybrid, to leave the green in range for three, although long hitters can get up in two during the summer months.

The green is large but slopes from front to back, so depending on the pin position, setting yourself up for a birdie can be tricky. You definitely don't want to leave yourself a downhill putt here in summer!

### **17th Hole, 'Quarry', 144 yards (white), Par 3**

An absolute gem of a par 3 and Bracken Ghyll's signature hole. The 17th only plays 144 yards from the back tee, but the raised plateau green firstly requires the correct club selection and then a well executed shot.

From the tee, the large trees which surround the green can be quite intimidating to the golfer, as they reinforce the message that it's 'hit the green or nothing'!

If you land short you'll have an extremely difficult pitch shot from the steep banking with just the top of the flagstick visible. The same applies if you pull your ball left. Anything to the right or long will more than likely mean your ball is lost.

My advice is to select your club carefully, give the hole your full attention and commit to your swing. If doubt creeps in here you'll be writing a bogey down on your card (or worse)!

### **18th Hole, 'Over Ghyll', 273 yards (white), Par 4**

A lovely short par 4 to finish, a hole which you'll remember - hopefully for good reasons!

The first challenge is to drive your ball over the 'Ghyll' (stream) which is at the bottom of a steep wooded ravine. If you manage this your ball will hopefully find the sloped uphill fairway. A ball hooked left from the tee will either be lost in the trees or finish out of bounds. There is more space to the right but trees are strategically placed all the way up the fairway.

There is a lone fairway bunker on the left and two further greenside bunkers, one left and one to the right. The raised green is much wider than it is deep and anything long here leaves an extremely difficult chip shot down the banking onto the green which slopes to the front.

The long hitters can reach the green from the tee but most golfers will be left with a relatively short pitch shot. Depending on the flag position it's usually advisable to play for the green opposed to the hole to increase your odds of finishing with a par. Go for the flag and your bravery may be rewarded with a birdie - the