

Built on a 340-acre site in the heart of the wine country of Hunter Valley in New South Wales, Australia—60 miles north of Sydney—this 7,032-yard, par-72 golf course is endowed with some of the most glorious scenery to be found on any golf course in the world. It begins on the rocky slopes of a primeval volcano, traverses rugged foothills covered with pine and Australian cypress trees, then flows out into the idyllic vineyards and lakes which have made this region famous.

The golf course winds through the valley between the jagged ridges of Mount Sugarloaf and the gentle curves of Brokenback Ridge. Home to more than forty working vineyards, Hunter Valley is forever changing with the wind and weather.

Dr. Peter Neustadt, the visionary who first conceived building a world-class golf resort on this dramatic stage, was charged with the task of creating a course which would be enjoyable to members and resort guests of all skill levels, while presenting a challenge to the finest amateurs and professionals. The course is made to order for televised golf championships. While the dramatic changes in elevation—nearly 450 feet between the highest and lowest points on the site—would facilitate spectacular television imagery, it also posed numerous technical challenges which were met successfully during the design and construction of the course.

To accommodate all levels of skill and daring, Smyers designed Cypress

Lakes with four sets of tees with as much as 150 yards between the front and rear teeing areas. Greens and fairways are large and receptive to accommodate the effect of the strong winds characteristic of Australia. Huge fairway and greenside bunkers—some more for definition than penal in function—were designed to complement the scenery and fit the heroic scale of Cypress Lakes.

The first ten holes play over forested mountain slopes, with the tees carefully placed to take full advantage of the spectacular vistas. From the tee of the 484-yard, par-4 third hole, one can see for more than 60 miles and experience one of the greatest thrills in golf—the exhilaration of driving from a great height to a beckoning target far below.

The eighth hole is a model of strategic design with a double fairway, separated by a series of threatening bunkers—creating two distinct playing options from the tee. The safer drive to the wide, right fairway leaves the player a medium iron shot from a downhill lie, over a pond to a narrow, partially obscured green. The more daring player may fly the daunting fairway bunkers to the narrow, left fairway and be rewarded with a short iron, from a level lie, without the threat of water.

To compliment Cypress Lakes' splendid setting, Smyers fashioned a thoughtful, well-balanced golf course, rich with temptations and strategic options, that would be outstanding whatever its backdrop. 🍷

Cypress Lakes

Hunter Valley, New South Wales

Australia

Architect: Steve Smyers

“I believe golf courses should be designed to make every golfer who plays it a better player by giving him options that require strategy, creativity and imagination.”

—Steve Smyers

