

Top Golf drives the party

BY TRAVIS DAVID V WHITTAKER

Golf is mostly known as a high class sport around the world. Many people typically play a nine or 18-hole round. Some just hit balls at the range for practice.

But back in 2000, two brothers thought of a way to make a driving range the life of a party. Their game would become known as Top Golf.

Top Golf exploded, creating tons of fun all across the country. In the U.S., there are a total of 34 locations, most notably in Las Vegas, Tampa Bay, Nashville, Houston and Scottsdale.

In August 2016, Hillsboro got the chance to experience the game.

"Hillsboro was the first location in the Pacific Northwest," said Top Golf Hillsboro's marketing manager Ariel Kessler.

Top Golf Hillsboro is located at 5505 NW Huffman St. near Ron Tonkin Stadium off of Highway 26.

"The atmosphere is a mix of golf and a watered-down Dave & Buster's," said Joseph Tassin, who goes to Portland State University. "It takes the driving range into this century."

When you walk into the Hillsboro building you can tell that it's a party.

Top Golf has clubs that you can use if you don't have your own. Every ball has a special chip inside of it to track your

overall distance and score based on what mini-game you are playing.

Top Golf has a total of eight mini-games to play.

When you play, you pay for a bay at a per-hour rate. The rates go up in increments of \$10, ranging from \$25 to \$45 depending on time of the day you play. Up to six people can play in a bay at a time.

"We initially set a time for one hour," said Tassin. "We went at night, and this was the highest price tier due to popularity. The system is very user-friendly in terms of offering many options to add time, and more importantly split it among your party members. We added another half hour later because we were having such fun."

With Top Golf becoming more and more popular, Kessler added that there can be some misconceptions that come along with Top Golf.

"A lot of people think you have to be a golfer in order to golf at Top Golf, or that it's like a regular golf course," said Kessler.

Top Golf is strictly a driving range. There is no golf course at any of the locations nationwide. Eighty-five percent of Top Golf guests are known as non-golfers and 40 percent of those are women, according to their website.

Steve Lisac, who owns Sah-Ha-Lee golf

course in Clackamas, described it as an arcade-like atmosphere.

Lisac feels that Top Golf will help the game of golf in the long run and is a super fun introduction to the game.

"The state of golf needs a little injection and excitement," Lisac said.

The Hillsboro location hosts many events and leagues. Kids of all ages are welcome to play. One of the upcoming events is a kids' spring break camp which will run from Mar. 27-30 and costs \$99. They will also start a social league in April.

photos by David Avis



Patrons enjoy their turn playing Top Golf.



Top Golf opened in Hillsboro in August.

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