



#GOLF

AND THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION

Blue Sky

GOLF CLUB



A roadside sign at the entrance of the bustling Blue Sky Golf Club in Jacksonville, FL reads “Everyone is Welcome.” That’s no hokey marketing ploy... they really mean it.

Formerly Mill Cove Golf Club, Blue Sky reopened an entirely new golf course that caters to golfers of all ages and skill levels, but the course has become especially popular among young adults looking for a comfortable and relaxed place to play the game.

The traditional pro shop has been replaced with a restaurant and bar with 22 televisions, music that is pumped out to the driving range and a laid back atmosphere that millennials are embracing. Golfers now check in at the bar and restaurant, where the real energy of the club flows. If you’re looking for a dress code, don’t bother, that went away with the name Mill Cove.

Additional changes were made to the course to make it more playable for all skill levels. Eleven of the course’s 22 bunkers were removed, a significant amount of underbrush was cleared, and other more subtle changes were made to make the course more operationally efficient.

“For a lot of younger players, the traditional golf environment isn’t comfortable,” said Travis

Norman, executive vice president of Hampton Golf. “It can be a little intimidating. At Blue Sky, we’re like the rock and roll of golf, and the response has been really positive.”

Blue Sky has seen a dramatic increase in millennial play compared to other Hampton Golf-managed facilities. Since it opened, 70% of its play has come from golfers 40 years old or younger, and 50% of total play is from golfers 35 or younger, according to Norman.

But what about the course’s longer-tenured clients that knew cutting-edge Blue Sky as the more traditional Mill Cove for decades? Norman said many have come to embrace the change around the club, including the relaxed dress code, layout changes and the bar-side check in. Acceptance comes at different speeds, he said, but the majority is taking it in stride.

“We still deal with some of the baggage from the change,” Norman said. “But golfers can be faster to adapt than a lot of people think. Eventually most get past the little things and see that the facility is so much better.”



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