



# Wild Wild West

Try Roman Nose for canyon golf

BY KEN MACLEOD

PHOTOS BY THOMAS WELBORNE

*Use the natural landforms, but don't lose your footing when playing Roman Nose.*

Rattlesnakes sunning themselves on a rock. Turkey vultures soaring over deep canyons. Long views of gypsum cliff walls with a green perched precariously in the midst. Fairways that rise, plunge, or bend gently off the natural landforms.

Roman Nose Golf Course near Watonga is not your parkland golf course. It's Wild West canyon golf at its finest.

Tripp Davis was charged with adding nine holes to the original Floyd Farley design back in 1999. It was a tough job finding room for nine additional golf holes in the wild and he's got the scars to prove it.

"We were going from 13 tee down to 13 fairway (a steep vertical drop) and I started sliding," Davis said. "I've still got a scar from the cactus barb I caught in my thumb. I'm telling you, building that course was dangerous."

The result, however, is one of the most fun and unique tests of golf in the state.

A recent visit showed the course to be in excellent condition from tee to green. The course is in Oklahoma's State Park system and there is a completely rebuilt and renovated lodge on site that had its grand opening last fall. Stay and play packages start as

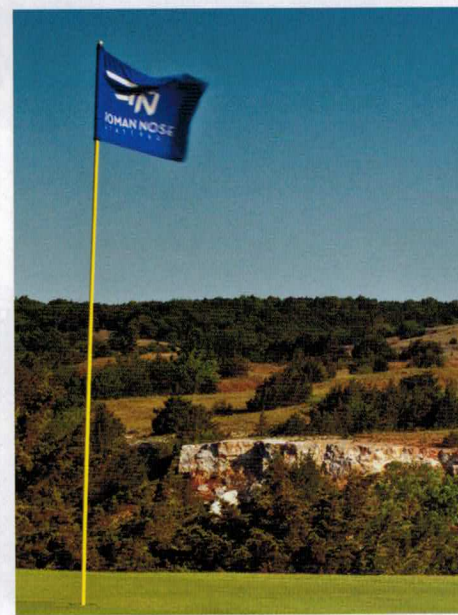
low as \$50.

Roman Nose has many memorable holes including a couple that are a bit controversial. The first of those, the par-4 fourth hole, requires a drive over a chasm to a landing area, then a second shot uphill over a second chasm to a green perched high on the hill. It requires two good shots, but is fair.

The toughest hole on the course is the par-4 11th, a blind tee shot in which golfers are encouraged to cut off as much as they dare over the trees to a narrow fairway canted right to left that sends even shots that land in the fairway back into the woods or into tall grass. There is no way to tell where your drive will wind up. Only the removal of about 500 trees could fix this hole and that's unlikely.

The rest of the course, however, is a delight. There are elevated tees, fairways sloping both directions in which you can use the the landforms to aid your shot, greens perched high on cliffs that provide stunning views of the country.

The holes designed by Davis are noted easily as the greens are much more complex than those on Farley's original nine. New holes include #3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15,



16, 17 and 18.

"It was a lot about connecting the dots out there," Davis said. "There wasn't always a lot of land that you could use. But it was fun to build."

Davis is partial to holes 14 through 16, a solid stretch of scenic, playable holes with a nice western feel.

## For More Information

[www.oklahomaparks.com](http://www.oklahomaparks.com)

Course - (580) 623-7989

Lodge - (800) 892-8690