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Swiftwater Cellars winery overlooks the Rope Rider course. Entrances to the mines can be seen below the building.

Photo by Rob Perry

Suncadia's newest golf course built on site of three old mines

By JOURNAL STAFF

Rope Rider might seem like a strange name for a golf course, unless you know a little history behind the Suncadia resort.

Suncadia chose the name Rope Rider for its third 18-hole course as a tribute to miners who many years ago balanced themselves on roped coal cars inside the area's steep mine shafts.

The course opens next Friday at the Roslyn-area development. It was built on the site of three Roslyn mines: No. 9, No. 10 and Tipple Hill. The mines have been sealed off, but their entrances are part of the landscape below the Swiftwater Cellars winery that overlooks Rope Rider.

A pro-shop is expected to open later this month in the building.

Jacobsen Hardy Golf Course Design used a resort course layout but included back tees

that stretch the par-72 course to more than 7,300 yards for experienced golfers.

To appeal to families, youth tees are located on every hole and the course can be played in shorter three- and six-hole loops. The front nine and holes 11 and 12 were finished in 2006, and the remaining holes were done in 2010. All 18 holes will be ready for play next weekend.

Rope Rider also has a 5-acre short game area with a practice putting green and three chipping greens that can be played as a reversible three-hole course.

Suncadia is planning an Aug. 26 celebration at Rope Rider, with a charity tournament featuring people from the TV show "Deadliest Catch," a golf clinic by course designers Peter Jacobsen and Jim Hardy, a crab feed and concert.

Greens fees range from \$60 to \$100, depending on the time of day and season.