An aerial photograph of a golf course featuring rolling green fairways, numerous sand traps, and a winding path. The background shows a line of trees and distant mountains under a cloudy sky. A large white graphic element, resembling a stylized number '1', is positioned on the left side of the image.

WORLD'S 100 GREATEST
GOLF COURSES
2024-2025

OUR NEWEST
BIENNIAL RANKING
CELEBRATES
THE VIRTUES OF
SAND AND SEA
BY DEREK DUNCAN



RETURN TO THE LINKS

INSTANT IMPACT
Both the North Course and the Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw-designed South Course (*shown*) at Te Arai in New Zealand make their World 100 debut.



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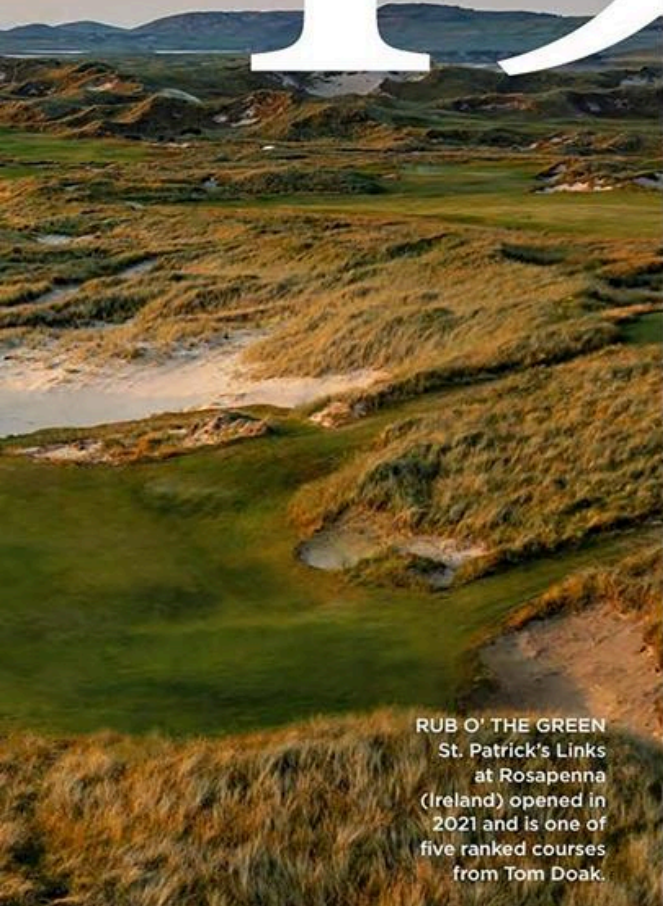
HE MOST IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT IN golf-course architecture during the past 20 years is the elevation of sand-based sites. Encouraged by the success of destinations like Bandon Dunes, developers have spent this time scouring the globe for sandy, dunes-like properties on which to construct new courses and lure golfers, several of which make their debut on the Golf Digest 2024-2025 World's 100 Greatest Courses, our ranking of courses outside the United States.

This is nothing new. The first golf courses—the links of Scotland, England, Ireland and Wales—were born from sand. Early golfers forged their way through the gorsed and grassy landscapes of dunes, kettles, eskers and seaside plains, chasing their balls while developing holes, which over time became fully realized courses. Advancements in construction methods throughout the 20th century enabled courses to be built anywhere on any type of land, negating the need for pure natural movements, but sand—near a coast or not—remains the medium that produces golf that most resembles the game as it was conceived.

This year's ranking reflects a reappraisal of the virtues of sand and, more specifically, links golf. In the 2022-2023 World's 100 Greatest Courses ranking, 40 courses that could be classified as links were represented (defined here as coastal courses built on mostly sandy linksland). This year that number is 54. This does not count the numerous inland courses built on sand, including those in the Melbourne Sand Belt region, highlighted by Royal Melbourne's West Course, ranked fifth, or the heathland courses southwest of London, topped by Sunningdale's Old Course at No. 12.

PREVIOUS PAGES: NICK WALL • CLYDE JOHNSON

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RUB O' THE GREEN
St. Patrick's Links
at Rosapenna
(Ireland) opened in
2021 and is one of
five ranked courses
from Tom Doak.

Just as important as quantity in demonstrating the appreciation for sand is the upward movement of links courses in the rankings. Nine of the top 10 courses are links, up from six in 2022-2023. Links courses, in fact, jumped a collective 351 places in the poll, marked most notably by Trump International surging 33 places, followed by Cruden Bay (30 places), Prestwick (28), Portmarnock (Championship) and Royal Troon (25 each) and Kingsbarns (24). Links stalwarts like Royal Hague (No. 48), designed in 1939 by Charles Alison, Royal St. David's in Wales (No. 76), Enniscrone in Ireland (No. 87) and Paraparaumu Beach in New Zealand (No. 96) enter or reenter the ranking. "Secondary" courses at established clubs also get love, with Turnberry, Portrush, St. Andrews and several others placing two courses on the list for the first time.

WORLD'S 100 GREATEST GOLF COURSES

Golf Digest surveyed hundreds of domestic and international course-ranking panelists to determine this year's World's 100 Greatest Golf Courses outside the United States. Here are the results.

- (1) ROYAL COUNTY DOWN G.C. (CHAMPIONSHIP)**
Newcastle, Northern Ireland
Old Tom Morris (1889), Donald Steel (remodeled, 1998)
7,206 yards, par 71
- (2) ROYAL DORNOCH G.C. (CHAMPIONSHIP)**
Scotland
Old Tom Morris (1892), George Duncan (1947), Donald Steel (1993), Tom Mackenzie (2013)
6,799 yards, par 70
- (3) THE OLD COURSE AT ST. ANDREWS**
Fife, Scotland
Allan Robertson (1848), Old Tom Morris (1865-'85), Martin Hawtree (2013-'14; '20)
7,313 yards, par 72
- (4) ROYAL PORTRUSH G.C. (DUNLUCE)**
Northern Ireland
Tom Gilroy (9, 1888), Old Tom Morris (9, 1889), H.S. Colt (1933), Martin Ebert (2015)
7,317 yards, par 72
- (5) ROYAL MELBOURNE G.C. (WEST)**
Black Rock, Australia
Alistair MacKenzie, Alex Russell (1931), Tom Doak (2015-'16)
6,645 yards, par 72
- (6) MUIRFIELD**
Gullane, Scotland
Old Tom Morris (1891), H.S. Colt (1925), Martin Hawtree (2011)
7,245 yards, par 71
- (7) TARA ITI G.C.**
Mangawhai, New Zealand
Tom Doak (2015)
6,951 yards, par 71
Score: 8.63
- (8) TRUMP TURNBERRY RESORT (AILSA)**
Scotland
P.M. Ross (1951), Martin Ebert (2015)
7,489 yards, par 71
- (9) NORTH BERWICK G.C.**
Scotland
David Strath (1877), C.K. Hutchison (1935)
6,551 yards, par 71
- (10) BALLYBUNION G.C. (OLD)**
Ireland
Lionel Hewson (9, 1906), Reginald Beale (9, 1927), Tom Simpson (1937), Martin Hawtree (2011), Graeme Webster (2015)
6,802 yards, par 71
- (11) KINGSTON HEATH G.C.**
Heatherton, Australia
Des Soutar, Mick Morcom (1925), Mike Clayton (2002)
7,102 yards, par 72
- (12) SUNNINGDALE G.C. (OLD)**
England
Willie Park Jr. (1901), H.S. Colt (1922), Donald Steel (1986)
6,666 yards, par 70
- (13) CABOT CLIFFS**
Inverness, Nova Scotia, Canada
Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw (2015)
6,835 yards, par 72
- (14) CAPE WICKHAM LINKS**
King Island, Australia
Mike DeVries, Darius Oliver (2015)
6,725 yards, par 72
- (15) CAPE KIDNAPPERS G. CSE.**
Hawke's Bay, New Zealand
Tom Doak (2004)
7,143 yards, par 71
- (16) CARNOUSTIE G. LINKS (CHAMPIONSHIP)**
Scotland
Allan Robertson (1838), Old Tom Morris (1895), James Wright (1931), Martin Hawtree (2006), Martin Ebert (2016)
7,421 yards, par 71
- (17) MORFONTAINE G.C.**
France
Tom Simpson (1927), Kyle Phillips (2004)
6,584 yards, par 70
- (18) ROYAL MELBOURNE G.C. (EAST)**
Black Rock, Australia
Alex Russell (1932), Tom Doak (2012)
6,579 yards, par 71
- (19) ROYAL BIRKDALE G.C.**
Southport, England
George Lowe (1897), F.G. Hawtree, J.H. Taylor (1931), Fred W. Hawtree (1974-'85), Martin Hawtree (2010)
7,156 yards, par 70
- (20) ROYAL ST. GEORGE'S G.C.**
Sandwich, England
W. Laidlaw Purves (1887), H.S. Colt (1914), Martin Ebert (2010)
7,204 yards, par 70
- (21) CRUDEN BAY G.C.**
Scotland
Old Tom Morris, Archie Simpson (1899), Tom Simpson (1926), Tom Mackenzie (2015)
6,615 yards, par 70
- (22) KINGSBARN G. LINKS**
St. Andrews, Scotland
Kyle Phillips, Mark Parsinen (1999)
7,224 yards, par 72
- (23) NEW SOUTH WALES G.C.**
La Perouse, Australia
Des Soutar, Carnegie Clark, Alistair MacKenzie (1928), Eric Apperly (1936), Greg Norman (2010), Tom Doak (2018)
6,829 yards, par 72



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CATAPULT
Scotland's quirky
Cruden Bay makes
the second-biggest
jump, moving up
30 places.



24. (44) LOFOTEN LINKS

Gimsøysand, Norway
Jeremy Turner (2015)
6,687 yards, par 71

25. (39) CABOT LINKS

Inverness, Nova Scotia, Canada
Rod Whitman (2013)
6,860 yards, par 70

26. (6) HIRONO G.C.

Hyogo, Japan
C.H. Alison (1932), Martin Ebert (2018-'19)
7,169 yards, par 72

27. (41) LAHINCH G.C. (OLD)

Ireland
Old Tom Morris (1894), Alister MacKenzie (1928), Martin Hawtree (2003)
6,950 yards, par 72

28. (53) ROYAL TROON G.C. (OLD)

Scotland
Charles Hunter (1878), George Strath (1881), Willie Fernie (1909), Martin Ebert (2014)
7,385 yards, par 71

29. (29) VALDERRAMA G.C.

Sotogrande, Spain
Robert Trent Jones (1975), Kyle Phillips (2012)
6,990 yards, par 71

30. (16) BARBOUGLE DUNES

Bridport, Australia
Tom Doak, Mike Clayton (2004)
6,724 yards, par 71

31. (57) VICTORIA G.C.

Melbourne, Australia
William Meader, Oscar Damman (1927), Alister MacKenzie (1927), Mike Clayton, Geoff Ogilvy, Mike Cocking (2015)
6,888 yards, par 72

32. (25) SWINLEY FOREST G.C.

Ascot, England
H.S. Colt (1911), Frank Pont (2012)
6,431 yards, par 69

33. (48) ROYAL LYTHAM & ST. ANNES G.C.

England
George Lowe (1897), H.S. Colt (1923), Martin Ebert (2010)
7,118 yards, par 70

34. (T-67) TRUMP INTERNATIONAL G. LINKS

Balmedie, Scotland
Martin Hawtree (2011)
7,428 yards, par 72

35. (43) SUNNINGDALE G.C. (NEW)

England
H.S. Colt (1923), Martin Hawtree (2010)
6,729 yards, par 70

36. (NR) TE ARAI LINKS (NORTH)

Tomarata, New Zealand
Tom Doak (2023)
6,931 yards, par 71

37. (T-62) PORTMARNOCK G.C. (CHAMPIONSHIP)

Ireland
W.C. Pickeman, George Ross, Mungo Park (1895), Martin Hawtree (2000-'04)
7,365 yards, par 72

38. (32) ST. GEORGE'S G. AND C.C.

Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada
Stanley Thompson (1930), Tom Doak, Ian Andrew (2015)
7,014 yards, par 71

39. (37) BARBOUGLE LOST FARM

Bridport, Australia
Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw (2010)
6,849 yards, par 72

40. (NR) TE ARAI LINKS (SOUTH)

Tomarata, New Zealand
Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw (2022)
6,843 yards, par 72

41. (49) PUNTA ESPADA G. CSE.

Cap Cana, Dominican Republic
Jack Nicklaus (2006)
7,396 yards, par 72

42. (58) METROPOLITAN G.C.

Melbourne, Australia
J.B. Mackenzie (1908), Alister MacKenzie (1926), Neil Crafter, Paul Mogford (2016)
7,066 yards, par 72

43. (45) ROYAL PORTHCAWL G.C.

Wales
Ramsay Hunter (1898), H.S. Colt (1919), Martin Ebert (2011)
7,152 yards, par 72

44. (52) HAMILTON G. AND C.C. (WEST/SOUTH)

Ancaster, Ontario, Canada
H.S. Colt and Charles Alison (1915), Tom Clark (1999-2005), Martin Ebert (2021)
6,928 yards, par 70

45. (75) JASPER PARK LODGE G.C.

Jasper, Alberta, Canada
Stanley Thompson (1925), W.H. Brinkworth (1948)
6,663 yards, par 71

46. (83) MEMPHRÉMAGOG G.C.

Magog, Quebec, Canada
Thomas McBroom (2008)
7,498 yards, par 72

47. (50) DIAMANTE G.C. (DUNES)

Cabo San Lucas, Mexico
Davis Love III (2010)
7,160 yards, par 72

48. (NR) KONINKLIJKE HAAGSCHE (ROYAL HAGUE G. & C.C.)

Wassenaar, Netherlands
C.H. Alison (1939), Guy Campbell (1947), Frank Pont (2007)
6,847 yards, par 72

49. (NR) ST. PATRICK'S LINKS

Rosapenna, Ireland
Tom Doak (2021)
6,930 yards, par 71

50. (42) **KAWANA HOTEL G. CSE. (FUJI)**
Shizuoka, Japan
C.H. Alison (1936)
6,691 yards, par 72
51. (72) **CASTLE STUART G. LINKS**
Inverness, Scotland
Gil Hanse, Mark Parsinen (2009)
7,009 yards, par 72
52. (64) **MACHRIHANISH G.C.**
Campbeltown, Scotland
Charles Hunter (1876),
Sir Guy Campbell (1948)
6,462 yards, par 70
53. (60) **WATERVILLE G. LINKS**
Ireland
Eddie Hackett (1972), Tom Fazio (2003)
7,355 yards, par 72
54. (20) **CASA DE CAMPO (TEETH OF THE DOG)**
La Romana, Dominican Republic
Pete Dye (1971)
7,471 yards, par 72
55. (26) **KAURI CLIFFS**
Matauri Bay, New Zealand
David Harman (2000)
7,151 yards, par 72
56. (59) **ROYAL ABERDEEN G.C. (BALGOWNIE)**
Scotland
Robert Simpson and Archie Simpson (1888), James Braid (1925), Martin Hawtree (2011)
6,916 yards, par 71
57. (T-67) **WOODHALL SPA G.C. (HOTCHKIN)**
Lincolnshire, England
Harry Vardon (9, 1905), H.S. Colt (9, 1912), S.V. Hotchkin, Sir Guy Campbell (1926), Tom Doak (2018)
7,080 yards, par 73
58. (76) **CAPILANO G. & C.C.**
West Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
Stanley Thompson (1937), Doug Carrick (2016)
6,706 yards, par 70
59. (40) **UTRECHT GOLFCLUB DE PAN**
Utrecht, Netherlands
H.S. Colt (1929 first nine, 1932 second nine)
6,668 yards, par 72
60. (88) **BANFF SPRINGS G. CSE. (THOMPSON)**
Banff, Alberta, Canada
Stanley Thompson (1929), Les Furber (1999)
6,938 yards, par 71
61. (89) **PRESTWICK G.C.**
Ayrshire, Scotland
Old Tom Morris (12, 1851), Charles Hunter (6, 1883)
6,908 yards, par 71
62. (38) **SHANQIN BAY G.C.**
Hainan Island, China
Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw (2012)
6,882 yards, par 71
63. (T-77) **ROYAL LIVERPOOL G.C.**
Hoylake, England
Robert Chambers, George Morris (1871), H.S. Colt (1920), Martin Hawtree (2010), Martin Ebert (2020)
7,383 yards, par 72
64. (33) **MID OCEAN CLUB**
Tucker's Town, Bermuda
C.B. Macdonald, Seth Raynor (1923), Tom Doak (2014-'15)
6,548 yards, par 71
65. (47) **LEOPARD CREEK C.C.**
Malelane, South Africa
Gary Player, Phil Jacobs (1997), Ernie Els, Greg Letsche (2007)
7,288 yards, par 72
66. (27) **MONTE REI G. & C.C.**
Vila Nova de Cacela, Portugal
Jack Nicklaus (2007)
7,182 yards, par 72
67. (56) **LOCH LOMOND G.C.**
Luss, Scotland
Jay Morrish, Tom Weiskopf (1992)
7,100 yards, par 71
68. (65) **THE BLUFFS HO TRAM STRIP**
Ho Tram, Vietnam
Greg Norman (2014)
7,007 yards, par 71
69. (NR) **WALTON HEATH G.C. (OLD)**
Walton-on-the-Hill, England
Herbert Fowler (1904)
7,406 yards, par 72
70. (82) **ST. ENODOC G.C. (CHURCH)**
North Cornwall, England
James Braid (1907 and 1937), Tom Simpson (1930), Peter McEvoy (2004)
6,557 yards, par 69
71. (34) **YAS LINKS, ABU DHABI**
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Kyle Phillips (2010)
7,414 yards, par 72
72. (NR) **SOUTH CAPE OWNERS CLUB**
Gyeongsangnam-do, South Korea
Kyle Phillips (2013)
6,685 yards, par 72
73. (T-62) **JACK'S POINT G. CSE**
Queenstown, New Zealand
John Darby (2008)
6,986 yards, par 72
74. (NR) **REAL CLUB DE GOLF SOTOGRANDE**
Spain
Robert Trent Jones (1964), Roger Rulewich (2016)
7,591 yards, par 72
75. (84) **JACK NICKLAUS G.C.**
Incheon City, South Korea
Jack Nicklaus (2009)
7,470 yards, par 72

TEMPTATION ISLAND

This year's ranking celebrates sublime coastal courses like Cape Wickham on Australia's King Island.





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KEVIN MAZUR



SLOW COOKING
Wales' Royal
St. David's,
130 years in the
making, debuts
on the World's
100 Greatest.

76. (NR) ROYAL ST. DAVID'S G.C.

Harlech, Wales
William More and Harold Finch-Hatton
(1894), Fred Hawtree (1960), Martin Ebert
and Tom Mackenzie (2008)
6,629 yards, par 69

77. (85) OLD HEAD OF KINSALE

County Cork, Ireland
Ron Kirby, Eddie Hackett, Paddy Merrigan,
Joe Carr (1996), Ron Kirby (2013)
7,159 yards, par 72

78. (98) WESTERN GAILES G.C.

Scotland
Willie Fernie (1897),
Fred W. Hawtree (1975)
7,014 yards, par 71

79. (81) ROYAL CINQUE PORTS G.C.

Deal, Kent, England
Tom Dunn (1895), Sir Guy Campbell (1949),
Martin Ebert (2007)
7,367 yards, par 72

80. (97) THE DURBAN C.C.

South Africa
Laurie Waters and George Waterman
(1920), S.V. Hotchkin (1928),
Bob Grimsdell (1959)
7,064 yards, par 72

81. (54) RYE G.C. (OLD)

England
Douglas Rolland, H.S. Colt (1894),
Sir Guy Campbell (1959)
6,308 yards, par 68

82. (NR) ROYAL PORTRUSH G.C. (VALLEY)

Northern Ireland
H.S. Colt (1929), Martin Ebert and
Tom Mackenzie (2015)
6,346 yards, par 70

83. (35) NARUO G.C.

Inagawa, Hyogo, Japan
Rokuro Akaboshi, Shiro Akaboshi (1929),
C.H. Alison (1930), Harry C. Crane (1948)
6,564 yards, par 70

84. (22) NATIONAL G.C. OF CANADA

Woodbridge, Ontario
George Fazio, Tom Fazio (1974),
Tom Fazio (2005)
7,235 yards, par 72

85. (71) GANTON G.C.

Yorkshire, England
Tom Chisholm, Robert Bird (1891)
7,055 yards, par 71

86. (94) CAPE BRETON HIGHLANDS LINKS

Ingonish Beach, Nova Scotia, Canada
Stanley Thompson (1941),
Ian Andrew (2011)
6,592 yards, par 72

87. (NR) ENNISCRONE G.C. (THE DUNES)

Ireland
Eddie Hackett (1970), Donald Steel (2001)
7,029 yards, par 73

**88. (91) COUNTY SLIGO G.C.—ROSSES
POINT (COLT COURSE)**

Ireland
H.S. Colt (1927), Eddie Hackett (1983),
Pat Ruddy (2014)
7,259 yards, par 71

89. (NR) TRALEE G.C.

Barrow, Ireland
Arnold Palmer and Ed Seay (1984)
6,975 yards, par 72

90. (93) THE EUROPEAN CLUB

Brittas Bay, County Wicklow, Ireland
Pat Ruddy (1992, 2000-'11)
7,377 yards, par 71

91. (NR) ST. ANDREWS LINKS (NEW)

Scotland
Tom Morris (1895), Martin Ebert and
Tom Mackenzie (2016)
6,517 yards, par 71

92. (NR) PORTSTEWART G.C. (STRAND)

Northern Ireland
Willie Park, Jr. (1920), Des Giffin (1988)
7,030 yards, par 71

93. (NR) WALTON HEATH G.C. (NEW)

Walton-on-the-Hill, England
Herbert Fowler (1913)
7,199 yards, par 72

**94. (NR) TRUMP TURNBERRY RESORT
(KING ROBERT THE BRUCE)**

Scotland
Willie Fernie (1901), P.M. Ross (1951),
Donald Steel (2001), Martin Ebert (2017)
7,203 yards, par 72

95. (NR) THE NAIRN G.C. (CHAMPIONSHIP)

Scotland
Archie Simpson (1887), Tom Morris (1889),
James Braid (1926), Martin Ebert and
Tom Mackenzie (2019)
6,832 yards, par 71

96. (NR) PARAPARAUMU BEACH G.C.

New Zealand
Alex Russell (1949)
6,640 yards, par 71

97. (74) SHESHAN INTERNATIONAL G.C.

Shanghai, China
Neil Haworth, Robin Nelson (2004)
7,199 yards, par 72

98. (NR) AMATA SPRING C.C.

Chon Buri, Thailand
Lee Schmidt (2005)
7,505 yards, par 72

99. (61) TOKYO G.C.

Sayama City, Saitama Prefecture, Japan
Komei Ohtani (1939), Gil Hanse (2010-'18)
6,915 yards, par 72

**100. (NR) CABO DEL SOL (COVE CLUB,
formerly OCEAN COURSE)**

Mexico
Jack Nicklaus (1994)
7,157 yards, par 72

GOLF DIGEST

July/August 2024



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