

FROM THE
MAKERS OF
**GOLF
WORLD**

TOP 100 GOLF COURSES

IN BRITAIN & IRELAND 2018

The most authoritative ranking by the most widely-travelled panel

**FOUR NEW
ENTRIES
AND THREE
HUGE
CLIMBERS**

EXCLUSIVE INSIGHT: ELS / MONTGOMERIE / CASEY / MCDOWELL



59 Machrihanish Dunes (▲2)

Campbeltown, Argyll / McLay-Kidd, 2008

76.3 Design 23.4 Setting 17.6 Present'n 10.3
Playability 10.0 Holes 8.0 Consistency 7.0

IT'S LIKE Saunton, Waterville, Ballyunion

VH Altogether one of my best golf experiences.
BS Should be a real inspiration for future course developments. Built and maintained with minimal disruption to the natural environment
GW VERDICT An expert routing of a natural course that will delight any links lover.



57 Enniscrone (▼4)

Enniscrone, Sligo / Hackett, 1974, Steel, 2001

78.5 Design 24.3 Setting 17.6 Present'n 11.5
Playability 11.3 Holes 7.4 Consistency 6.4

IT'S LIKE Carne, Ballyunion, Portstewart

BB It boasts some towering dunes, and the holes hidden among these are very exciting.
ND Has some weaker holes but surely ranks among the very best courses in Ireland.
GW VERDICT Robust and punchy, the back nine has some truly great holes.



55 Sillioth-on-Solway (▼6)

Sillioth, Cumbria / Grant, 1892

78.6 Design 25.0 Setting 16.3 Present'n 11.1
Playability 11.6 Holes 6.8 Consistency 7.8

IT'S LIKE The Island, Burnham & B, Aberdovey

CB Absolutely brilliant front half and the journey home is hardly tedious; top 50 for me.
IM Great golf and great value. Only its remoteness holds back the recognition it gets.
GW VERDICT For some panelists, this could be above some Open venues.



58 County Sligo (▼3)

Rosses Point, Sligo / Colt & Campbell, 1894

76.4 Design 24.9 Setting 15.8 Present'n 10.6
Playability 11.1 Holes 7.3 Consistency 6.7

IT'S LIKE Turnberry, Rosapenna, Portsalon

MB Best holes on back nine; the 17th a stand out.
BB Boasts some fine holes, including possibly the finest par 4 in Ireland at 17.
GW VERDICT Located on the glorious Rosses Point peninsula, but as well as a majestic setting, the design also has few peers in Ireland.



56 Ballyliffin (Glashedy) (▼1)

Inishowen, Donegal / Craddock, Ruddy, 1995

78.6 Design 24.2 Setting 17.6 Present'n 11.3
Playability 11.3 Holes 7.2 Consistency 7.0

IT'S LIKE The European, Donegal

BB In the wild setting of the Inishowen peninsula, but well worth the pilgrimage.
BS A wonderful collection of quality links holes.
GW VERDICT Some serious holes among the dunes and between the evil pot bunkers. Still quite new but you would not know it.



54 The Island (▼4)

Donabate, Dub / Unknown / Hackett, Hawtree, 1890

78.6 Design 24.3 Setting 17.2 Present'n 10.7
Playability 11.2 Holes 7.7 Consistency 7.5

IT'S LIKE Portmarnock, Saunton (East), Sillioth

VH Has a most challenging narrow par-3 13th and when the wind blows beware of the beach.
CB Unheralded it may be, but is as essential as Portmarnock on a Dublin trip.
GW VERDICT Classic old links 'though only one blind drive; but your improvisation will be tested.

WHY I LOVE...

TURNBERRY'S ALL-NEW AILSA

By David Horsey



Links golf is my thing, having played all my amateur

career on them, right up to the Walker Cup on a superb course.

Royal Birkdale was always my favourite but having played the new Ailsa course at Turnberry in Ayrshire, that would now be very, very close behind if not just slightly ahead.

I didn't play the old version, but we had a great day for it when we played and it was special. I was up there with friends socially, preparing for the Scottish Open at Dundonald.

It's got the perfect blend of difficulty along with the views and even the condition was amazing. For social golf, it was immaculate.

It is a very special golf course now.

Birkdale is almost my local Open venue. The dunes at the side of the fairways mean you can't see any other holes and that makes it special. Maybe a couple of holes you'd change but on the whole an excellent course. Really, really good.

Royal County Down is not a golf course you'd design these days. All the greens sit back to front and are almost square, you can't really go past the flag anywhere, so it's a course to be sensible on really. You've just got to plot your way round and not be too aggressive. I'm not a huge fan of blind holes, such as the 9th, but on the whole I like it there.

Wilmslow and Prestbury and Mere are nice places to play locally around where I live in Manchester, although not in the class of the others I've mentioned.

■ David Horsey is a four-time European Tour winner.