



**SOUTH AFRICA'S**  
**100**  
**GREATEST GOLF COURSES**

**The bushveld course is having its time in the sun, and Elements gives Peter Matkovich only his second top 10 appearance.**

**By Stuart McLean and Barry Havenga**

**Photos by Jamie Thom**

**I**f you're looking for a winning golf course design anywhere in the world today you must either have jaw-dropping scenery adjoining your site, a rare dunesland links property, or, here in South Africa, pristine wooded bushveld on which to develop.

The natural look is very much in vogue when it comes to creating special golfing venues, and if it's rugged, so much the better. All those attributes apply to Elements, winner of the 2006 Golf Digest Best New Course Award, which enters our rankings for the first time at No 9.

Ever since this Peter Matkovich design was opened in 2005, it has stood out as a potential future No 1, and it comes as no surprise to see it break into the top 10 at the first attempt. The last courses to do that were Pearl Valley three years ago, The Links at Fancourt in 2003, and Arabella in 2002.

We have a hunch that bushveld courses are going to dominate the top of the rankings in the years to come, because they are uniquely South African golfing experiences, and their remoteness makes them particularly appealing.

The modern bushveld layout, if it has ample water to cope with the heat and drought that comes with the territory, is also proving that it can sustain outstanding levels of conditioning. Elements, in the

**OUT OF AFRICA**  
A view of the par-4 tenth (right) and par-three 11th holes at Elements in the Waterberg. The course enters the rankings at No 9.



## GREEN FEES SOME RISE STEEPLY, BUT LOTS OF VALUE TO BE FOUND

Green fees at South African courses have risen substantially in recent years, at some courses more than others. At most top courses today the affiliated green fee is in the region of R300, and anything under R200 is unusual.

The green fee at Humewood Golf Club in Port Elizabeth has nearly doubled from five years ago, when it was R180, rising to R345, which now makes it the most expensive members' course to play in the entire Cape Province.

The biggest single increase has come at Oubaai on the Garden Route, where the fee to play the Ernie Els design has risen over 50 percent, from R495 a year ago to R750 today, making it the second most expensive public access course in South Africa, after Pearl Valley, where the green fee is now R1 095.

But there are still good deals to be found around the country, from R170 at Prince's Grant, the best value by far of any top 20 course, to R120 on weekdays at Maccauvlei, a club which has always been welcoming to visitors. And R240 for a weekday round on either the West or East courses at Royal Johannesburg & Kensington is remarkable. It's the same fee as two years ago. It has become more expensive to play there on weekends.

Three top 100 courses, Orkney, Goldfields West and Blyvooruitzicht, all in the North West, still have affiliated green fees of under R100. Goldfields is R60 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The new Garden Route resort and estate courses can be pricey, but the members' courses in the region have kept their fees competitive. George Golf Club is still R250, having been R225 two years ago, as is Goose Valley, while Plettenberg Bay has remained the same at R210, and Mossel Bay is up fractionally to R220.

The redesigned Irene Country Club course is wonderful value at R150 during the week, making it the best quality deal in Gauteng along with Maccauvlei.

Interestingly, some Cape Town clubs, which five years ago were considered expensive to play, are now better value, having hardly raised their green fees since 2004. Westlake was charging R250 in 2004; and just R255 today. Likewise, Clovelly was R280 in 2004; and R295 today. Royal Cape has risen slightly this year to R300, but five years ago they were charging R500!

Golf clubs also do have specials which golfers should look out for. Pecanwood, for instance, offers a R235 green fee on Sunday afternoons, compared to their normal R420 weekday rate. And at Roodepoort on competition days (Wednesday, Saturday) the fee is R130 in the morning and R150 in the afternoon.

— Paul Bezuidenhout

**REFURBISHED CLASSIC**  
The par-three 17th at the remodelled Victoria Country Club in Maritzburg, which re-enters the rankings at No 60.



middle of nowhere in the Waterberg bushveld, is as superbly manicured as any parkland course in Gauteng. It has been that good since respected course superintendent Mike Wallington supervised the construction process with Matkovich's team. In fact, it placed fifth in our ranking of best conditioned courses this year.

The top conditioned course for a third successive year is Leopard Creek, which after several years of uncertain quality from one season to the next, has shown that modern turfgrass practices can

provide consistent conditioning year round. Derek Muggeridge has done a fine job in a hot and humid climate.

Seven years ago there were nine bushveld courses in the Top 100, today there are 16, as both old and new claim recognition with golfers and our course evaluation panel members. And 20 years ago the only true bushveld course anyone knew about was Hans Merensky, which still continues to hang on to a high position in the rankings.

A host of new bushveld layouts will

be vying for the Top 100 in the years ahead, including the already opened Koro Creek and Euphoria, and potential high entrants in The Legend, Meletse (Jack Nicklaus) and Waterberg (Gary Player).

Elements Private Reserve is only the second Matkovich course to make the top 10, although a third one is likely a year from now in Pinnacle Point. Many regard Elements as his best work to date, a demanding championship layout in rolling bushveld terrain that has its fair share of the unusual holes that are the trademark

of Matkovich's highly creative design brain. It's that ability to surprise that makes his courses a delight to play.

Elements displaces Glendower in the top 10, as that famous Gauteng parkland course has been undergoing major changes to its greens by Golf Data the last six months. The "new-look" Glendower will be opening at the end of January, and club manager Paul Leishman is excited by what will be unveiled.

There are just four new entries in the Top 100 this year, and two of those are both old classics, originally designed between

the world wars by men who had a sense for the lie of the land when it came to creating a course, Laurie Waters (Irene) and Bob Grimsdell (Victoria CC). The two clubs were similar in having courses that had really become old fashioned and to some extent rundown, which was reflected in their lowly positions in the bottom 25 percent of the rankings. Now substantially modernised, without losing their former charm and character, they return to higher places in the rankings as good examples of what quality upgrades can do for a course.



# SOUTH AFRICA'S 100 GREATEST GOLF COURSES

## ALL-TIME TOP 100 COURSES

For the roster of every course that has appeared in Golf Digest's Top 100, plus the positions of each course since the first ranking appeared 11 years ago, please visit [golfdigest.co.za](http://golfdigest.co.za)

This is the only list of the Top 100 golf courses in South Africa, ranked by our knowledgeable panel. Many of you will disagree with the decisions, and if you do, we'd like to hear from you. Tell us what you think: e-mail [smclean@touchline.co.za](mailto:smclean@touchline.co.za).

COURSE	LOCATION	SCORE	MOVE
1. Leopard Creek	Malelane, Mpumalanga	62.88	No move
2. Gary Player CC	Sun City, North West	60.75	No move
3. Fancourt Links	George, Southern Cape	59.36	No move
4. Durban CC	Durban, KZN	58.71	▲ Up 2
5. Arabella	Kleinmond, Western Cape	57.63	▼ Down 1
6. Pearl Valley	Winelands, Western Cape	57.52	▼ Down 1
7. Wild Coast	Port Edward, KZN	57.09	No move
8. Royal J&K East	Johannesburg, Gauteng	57.03	▲ Up 1
9. Elements	Waterberg, Limpopo	57.00	NEW
10. Fancourt Montagu	George, Southern Cape	56.90	No move
11. River Club	Sandton, Gauteng	56.46	No move
12. Simola	Knysna, Southern Cape	56.20	No move
13. Pecanwood	Hartbeespoort Dam	55.22	No move
14. F'court Outeniqua	George, Southern Cape	54.98	▲ Up 3
15. George	George, Southern Cape	54.90	No move
16. Humewood	Port Elizabeth, East Cape	54.88	▼ Down 2
17. Prince's Grant	KZN North Coast	54.56	▲ Up 2
18. Lost City	Sun City, North West	54.23	▲ Up 2
19. Erinvale	Somerset West, West Cape	54.07	▼ Down 1
20. Beachwood	Durban, KZN	53.93	▼ Down 4
21. CCJ Woodmead	Sandton, Gauteng	53.58	No move
22. De Zalze	Stellenbosch, West Cape	53.48	▲ Up 2
23. Oubaai	Herold's Bay, Southern Cape	53.23	▲ Up 4
24. Pezula	Knysna, Southern Cape	52.99	▼ Down 1
25. Sishen	Kathu, Northern Cape	52.90	▲ Up 18
26. Kyalami	Midrand, Gauteng	52.66	No move
27. Fish River Sun	Fish River, Eastern Cape	52.51	▲ Up 3
28. Champagne Sports	KZN Central Drakensberg	52.46	▼ Down 3
29. Steenberg	Cape Town, West Cape	52.37	▼ Down 1
30. Royal J&K West	Johannesburg, Gauteng	52.30	▲ Up 2
31. Hans Merensky	Phalaborwa, Limpopo	52.25	▼ Down 2
32. Zimbali	Ballito, KZN North Coast	52.14	▼ Down 10
33. Bryanston	Sandton, Gauteng	51.67	▼ Down 2
34. Randpark	Randburg, Gauteng	51.43	▼ Down 1
35. Zebula	Waterberg, Limpopo	50.90	▲ Up 6
36. Pretoria CC	Pretoria, Gauteng	50.83	▲ Up 4
37. Royal Cape	Cape Town, West Cape	50.73	No move
38. Maccauvlei	Vereeniging, Gauteng	50.57	▼ Down 3
39. Roodepoort	Roodepoort, Gauteng	50.51	▼ Down 3
40. Wanderers	Sandton, Gauteng	50.35	▼ Down 1
41. Selborne	Pennington, KZN	50.24	▼ Down 7
42. Parkview	Johannesburg, Gauteng	50.18	▲ Up 3
43. Clovelly	Cape Town, West Cape	50.16	▼ Down 1
44. San Lameer	KZN South Coast	50.11	▼ Down 6
45. Silver Lakes	Pretoria, Gauteng	49.90	▲ Up 3
46. Modderfontein	Johannesburg, Gauteng	49.81	▼ Down 2
47. Mt Edgecombe One	Durban, KZN	49.74	▲ Up 9
48. Stellenbosch	Stellenbosch, West Cape	49.70	▲ Up 6
49. Dainfern	Sandton, Gauteng	49.65	▼ Down 2
50. Orkney	Orkney, North West	49.63	▼ Down 4

COURSE	LOCATION	SCORE	MOVE
51. Goose Valley	Plettenberg Bay, S Cape	49.44	▼ Down 2
52. Plettenberg Bay	Plettenberg Bay, S Cape	49.40	▼ Down 1
53. Killarney	Johannesburg, Gauteng	49.27	▲ Up 1
54. Windsor Park	Randburg, Gauteng	48.91	▲ Up 3
55. Irene CC	Centurion, Gauteng	48.85	NEW
56. Southbroom	KZN South Coast	48.77	▲ Up 6
57. Nelspruit	Nelspruit, Mpumalanga	48.74	▼ Down 7
58. Paarl	Paarl, West Cape	48.71	No move
59. Woodhill	Pretoria, Gauteng	48.44	▲ Up 2
60. Victoria CC	Maritzburg, KZN	48.39	NEW
61. Royal Durban	Durban, KZN	48.22	▲ Up 7
62. Umdoni Park	Pennington, KZN	48.15	▲ Up 3
63. Rustenburg	Rustenburg, North West	48.13	No move
64. Leopard Park	Mafiking, North West	48.06	▲ Up 3
65. Mossel Bay	Mossel Bay, Southern Cape	47.92	▲ Up 7
66. Atlantic Beach	Cape Town, West Cape	47.84	▲ Up 3
67. Umhali	Ballito, KZN North Coast	47.80	▼ Down 1
68. Benoni CC	Benoni, Ekurhuleni	47.77	▲ Up 8
69. King David	Cape Town, West Cape	47.74	▲ Up 10
70. Blue Valley	Midrand, Gauteng	47.55	▲ Up 10
71. Goldfields West	Carletonville, North West	47.52	No move
72. Glenvista	Johannesburg, Gauteng	47.50	▲ Up 3
73. Rondebosch	Cape Town, West Cape	47.44	▼ Down 9
74. Centurion	Centurion, Gauteng	47.41	▼ Down 4
75. Krugersdorp	Krugersdorp, Gauteng	47.38	▼ Down 2
76. Wingate Park	Pretoria, Gauteng	47.35	▼ Down 24
77. Westlake	Cape Town, West Cape	47.33	▼ Down 17
78. Oppenheimer Park	Welkom, Free State	46.63	▼ Down 4
79. Mt Edgecombe Two	Durban, KZN	46.41	▲ Up 3
80. Bushman Sands	Alicedale, East Cape	46.20	▲ Up 7
81. Mowbray	Cape Town, West Cape	46.10	▼ Down 26
82. Reading	Johannesburg, Gauteng	45.90	▲ Up 2
83. Graceland	Secunda, Mpumalanga	45.84	No move
84. Royal Port Alfred	Port Alfred, East Cape	45.72	▲ Up 2
85. Milnerton	Cape Town, West Cape	45.60	▼ Down 4
86. Zwartkop	Centurion, Gauteng	45.55	▲ Up 2
87. Mogol	Lephalele, Limpopo	45.50	▼ Down 10
88. Bramble Hill	George, Southern Cape	45.39	▼ Down 3
89. Bloemfontein	Bloemfontein, Free State	45.35	▲ Up 4
90. ERPM	Boksburg, Ekurhuleni	45.30	▲ Up 2
91. Kameeldoring	Mokopane, Limpopo	45.22	▲ Up 6
92. State Mines	Brakpan, Ekurhuleni	45.09	▼ Down 3
93. Tzaneen	Tzaneen, Limpopo	45.02	▼ Down 3
94. Germiston	Germiston, Gauteng	44.88	▲ Up 4
95. PE Golf Club	Port Elizabeth, East Cape	44.80	▼ Down 17
96. Kloof CC	Durban, KZN	44.70	▼ Down 1
97. St Francis Bay	St Francis Bay, East Cape	44.65	▼ Down 6
98. Randfontein	Randfontein, Gauteng	44.62	▼ Down 2
99. Blyvooruitzicht	Carletonville, North West	44.50	No move
100. Knysna	Knysna, Southern Cape	44.29	NEW

## BEST CONDITIONED

COURSE	SCORE
1 Leopard Creek	8.60
2 Pearl Valley	7.94
3 River Club	7.90
4 Gary Player CC	7.57
5 Elements	7.51
6 Simola	7.49
7 Royal J&K East	7.27
8 Pecanwood	7.24
9 CCJ Woodmead	7.19
10 Fancourt Links	7.12
11 Outeniqua	7.11
12 Oubaai	7.01
13 Prince's Grant	6.95
14 Royal J&K West	6.92
15 Wild Coast	6.88
16 Steenberg	6.85
17 Kyalami	6.84
18 De Zalze	6.79
19 Erinvale	6.76
20 Lost City	6.74
21 Montagu	6.77
22 Durban CC	6.74
23 Randpark	6.68
24 Parkview	6.65
25 Goose Valley	6.64
26 George	6.62
27 Bryanston	6.58
28 Southbroom	6.53
29 Silver Lakes	6.52
30 Royal Durban	6.51

THIRD IN CONDITIONING  
One of the parkland jewels in Gauteng is The River Club. This is the par-four 11th.

# SRIXON®

## Z-STAR



**SAILING ALONG**  
There's a new look to the front of the clubhouse at Randpark Club.



**PARKLAND BEAUTY**  
Water guards the green on the long downhill par-four 14th at Irene Country Club.



## Randpark renaissance

While many golf clubs are feeling the pinch of the economic downturn with fewer rounds being played and maintenance costs soaring, Randpark has bucked the trend in Gauteng, showing remarkable growth since completing a revamp of their clubhouse in September.

The two-course facility in Randburg spent R11 million on phase one of the refurbishments. They include an impressive open-air deck overlooking the Randpark course, which has softened the façade of the ugly rectangular edifice. A new players' entrance was constructed, and the pro shop is now located in a central position where the halfway house was previously.

Rounds were up at Randpark by seven percent in 2008 with the two courses combining at an average of 7 500 rounds per month. December is traditionally a quieter time in Johannesburg with many people flocking to the

coast, but the club was busy over the festive season.

"It wasn't just the upgrade of our clubhouse that has made the difference, but also the change in attitude of the staff and members at the club," says CEO Doug Bain. "We have made a big effort to make people feel welcome and the improvement in service has been immense." This is evident in the bar takings since the renovations, with revenue leaping up 45 percent from 2007. The club has also seen a rise in corporate days since the upgrading of facilities.

Despite an estimated 400 percent increase in fertiliser costs in 2008, 26-year-old senior course superintendent Roger Innes and his team were able to use less fertiliser with greater effect through better turfgrass management, thereby minimising the pressure on their maintenance budget. — **Barry Havenga**

### THE HIGHEST CLIMBERS

Sishen (25)	Up 18
King David (69)	Up 10
Blue Valley (70)	Up 10
Mt Edgecombe One (47)	Up 9
Benoni CC (68)	Up 8
Royal Durban (61)	Up 7
Mossel Bay (65)	Up 7
Bushman Sands (80)	Up 7
Zebula (35)	Up 6
Stellenbosch (48)	Up 6
Southbroom (56)	Up 6

### THE BIGGEST FALLERS

Mowbray (81)	Down 26
Wingate Park (76)	Down 24
Westlake (77)	Down 17
PE Golf Club (95)	Down 17
Zimbali (32)	Down 10
Mogol (87)	Down 10
Rondebosch (73)	Down 9
Selborne (41)	Down 7
Nelspruit (57)	Down 7

## Timeless look and natural feel at 'new' Irene

If you take an old classic car and spend time and money restoring it to its former glory, what you get is a car that turns heads, is a pleasure to drive and has vastly improved performance. This best describes the overhaul at Irene Country Club, which re-enters the rankings at No 55, 37 places higher than it was before the course's redesign by Phil Jacobs.

Much is written about modern equipment and the golf ball making older courses redundant, but little is said about the efforts of club officials and course architects who try to keep up in order to present and prepare their courses as enjoyable and challenging experiences for handicap golfers of all levels.

At Irene, Jacobs has retained the essence of an excellent parkland layout while modernising aspects required and demanded by today's club golfer. Jacobs, who recently immigrated to Australia after more than 20 years of working here on some of our best designs, believes remodelling should result in more of a timeless look.

While he wanted to improve the bunkering and shot values at Irene, the intention was to deliver a course where the bunkering was in keeping with the traditional style. By increasing the length to 6 500 metres, adding new fairway bunkers and planting trees in strategic positions, he has more than achieved that objective.

The emphasis is still on accuracy when playing approach shots to smallish greens, many of which now have chipping areas where the ball will feed if you miss the green. This was the design philosophy of that famous Scot Donald Ross.

Irene's condition is greatly improved, and many thirsty gum trees removed, with an ongoing indigenous tree planting programme now in place. All this gives Irene a natural parkland feel. The use of natural Irene stone in the construction of new tee boxes, boundary walls and other features adds to its aesthetic appearance. — **Roy Jones**



# WHICH TYPE OF COURSE IS BEST?

Our fun contest between the four main variations we have in South Africa.

The biggest complaint we've had over the years in doing the Top 100 rankings is the fact that we lump golf courses of differing types together and rank them as one entity. Critics ask how we can compare an estate course with one in the bushveld, or differentiate a links from a parkland layout. Instead, they say, why don't we have separate rankings for the different categories?

The simple answer is that we wanted to compile a list of the best 100 courses in South Africa, and to do that you need to group every course together, whether it's a links, coastal, parkland or bushveld. It means that the Golf Digest course evaluation members have a tough task on their hands when it comes to comparing apples and pears. How do they manage to rate a modern estate layout like Centurion in Gauteng with a remote bushveld estate track such as Zebula, or a parkland course of Bryanston's calibre with a scenic coastal venue as dramatic as Pezula. We might be swayed by our personal preferences, but which is the better course?

There is such a wide diversity of golf courses in this country, and generally the bushveld and dramatic coastal layouts seem to be favoured over the rest, just as links layouts get preference in the top 100 courses of Great Britain & Ireland.

We're always going to keep the Top 100 the way it is, but we thought it would be fun to take a look at the four main categories of courses in South Africa – Coastal, Parkland, Bushveld and Golf Estate.

	COASTAL	GOLF ESTATE
	 Pezula.	 Pearl Valley.
<b>NUMBER OF COURSES IN THIS YEAR'S TOP 100</b>	We count 21 of them, including six in the top 20, and 11 in the top 50.	There are only 13 in the way we look at golf estate layouts, and six are in the top 30, and nine in the top 50.
<b>DESIGN QUALITY</b>	We view these as being rugged layouts close to the sea, with ocean views. They are the most natural in terms of their design, following the undulating flow of the land. Some of these courses are part of estates, but Pezula and Oubaai we consider to be Coastal, rather than Golf Estate. There are numerous parkland layouts at the coast which we have categorised as Parkland, such as Royal Cape and Clovelly.	These are primarily courses where the housing dominates alongside virtually every hole, and there is no clear style of design, such as at Pecanwood or Erinvale. Most follow modern design principles, have attractively shaped modern greens, a stereotypical pattern of bunkering, and the ubiquitous water hazards.
<b>THE SETTING</b>	Playing beside the sea is great for the soul, and the views are often outstanding, particularly at the Wild Coast, Pezula, Umdoni Park, Prince's Grant, Mossel Bay and Arabella. Several are within indigenous forests, notably Umdoni, or a mangrove swamp (Beachwood) which add to the beauty. And at Milnerton you have holes right on the shoreline.	You're always conscious of the houses around you, occasional architectural eyesores among them at a few Gauteng estates, regular maintenance traffic, and everyone appears to be buzzing around on golf carts. Walkers are becoming fewer.
<b>BRILLIANT AND UNUSUAL HOLES</b>	The quirkiest holes can be found on our classic coastal layouts, such as the Prince of Wales par 3 at Durban CC, the uphill Majuba par 3 at Umdoni Park, or blind tee shots at Royal Port Alfred, East London and Atlantic Beach.	Some of the most superb holes are to be found at estates, because of the need to heighten the golfing experience against a backdrop of houses. Think of Pearl Valley, and the treacherous water hazards at Silver Lakes.
<b>THE TOP COURSES IN EACH CATEGORY</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Durban CC</li> <li>2. Arabella</li> <li>3. Wild Coast</li> <li>4. Humewood</li> <li>5. Prince's Grant</li> <li>6. Beachwood</li> <li>7. Oubaai</li> <li>8. Pezula</li> <li>9. Fish River</li> <li>10. Zimbali</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pearl Valley</li> <li>2. Pecanwood</li> <li>3. Outeniqua</li> <li>4. Erinvale</li> <li>5. De Zalze</li> <li>6. Steenberg</li> <li>7. Silver Lakes</li> <li>8. Mt Edge One</li> <li>9. Dainfern</li> <li>10. Woodhill</li> </ol>

	PARKLAND	BUSHVELD
	 Modderfontein.	 Mogol.
	The most common category with 45, including 20 in the top 50.	There are surprisingly only 16, headed by the two best courses in the country, but only seven are in the top 50.
	Generally open, often flattish, with plenty of trees and water hazards. Parkland courses are often regarded as inferior from a design perspective, but we do have some magnificent examples in Gauteng that rate highly.	Natural courses built among indigenous vegetation with lots of space, thus nearly always situated in rural parts of the country. Some blend in harmoniously with their surroundings, but others have unnatural design elements which can jar, as at Bushman Sands in the Eastern Cape. Nelspruit and Mogol are unusual in being bushveld courses in the suburbs of a city/town.
	The natural beauty of these courses makes for a pleasant stroll, particularly in Gauteng during the summer. The lush, green conditioning of the courses enhances their attractiveness. Unfortunately, the water hazards that are features of these courses also attract pesky Egyptian geese, which love the Parkland manicuring.	They have an African look and feel to them, and the sound of wildlife and birdlife dominates, not that of passing traffic. The unbelievable desert silence at Sishen is part of that course's charm. Often situated in hotter parts of the country, and dusty off the fairway, there's always a bonus of spotting wild game on some. There's nothing more exciting than encountering a giraffe at Hans Merensky, or a herd of buck sprinting across a fairway at Zebula.
	Many of the greatest and most creative par 4 holes in South Africa can be found among the Gauteng parkland layouts, particularly the likes of Royal Johannesburg, but there are also some superb parkland experiences at the coast, George and Simola leading the way. Water hazards and tree-lined fairways make for exciting play.	Big trees are often a strategic feature at bushveld courses, such as those at Mogol and Elements, while an avenue of thorn trees on a fairway makes for great golfing theatre, such as at Kameeldoring. The emptiness of the landscape can make for dramatic holes, as at Lost City, while Leopard Creek and the Gary Player CC have two of the best island green par 5s in the land.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Royal East</li> <li>2. Montagu</li> <li>3. River Club</li> <li>4. Simola</li> <li>5. George</li> <li>6. Woodmead</li> <li>7. Kyalami</li> <li>8. Royal West</li> <li>9. Bryanston</li> <li>10. Randpark</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Leopard Creek</li> <li>2. Gary Player CC</li> <li>3. Elements</li> <li>4. Lost City</li> <li>5. Sishen</li> <li>6. Hans Merensky</li> <li>7. Zebula</li> <li>8. Nelspruit</li> <li>9. Rustenburg</li> <li>10. Leopard Park</li> </ol>

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## HOW OUR PANEL RATES THE COURSES

The Golf Digest course rating panel, of 100 men and women based throughout South Africa, evaluates courses on seven criteria, each on a scale of 1 (Unacceptable) to 10 (Perfect). The categories are as follows:

### 1 / SHOT VALUES (OUT OF 20 POINTS)

How well does the course pose risks and rewards, and equally test length, accuracy and finesse?

### 2 / PLAYABILITY (10 POINTS)

How well does the course challenge low-handicap golfers while still providing enjoyable options for high-handicaps?

### 3 / RESISTANCE TO SCORING (10 POINTS)

How difficult, while still being fair, is the course for a scratch player from the back tees?

### 4 / DESIGN VARIETY (10 POINTS)

How varied are the golf course's holes in differing lengths, configurations, hazard placements, green shapes and green contours?

### 5 / AESTHETICS (10 POINTS)

How well do the scenic values of the course (including landscaping, vegetation, water features and backdrops) add to the pleasure of a round?

### 6 / MEMORABILITY (10 POINTS)

How well do the design features (tees, fairways, greens, hazards, vegetation and terrain) provide individuality to each hole, yet a collective continuity to the entire 18?

### 7 / CONDITIONING (10 POINTS)

How would you rate the playing quality of tees, fairways and greens when you last played the course?

To arrive at the final score for each course, we average the scores it gets in the seven categories (the scores in the Shot Values category count double).



East London will return to the rankings next year.

### DEPARTURES FROM THE TOP 100 (2008 RANKINGS IN PARENTHESES)

Polokwane GC, Polokwane, Limpopo (94)  
West Bank GC, East London, East Cape (100)

### THE FOUR ARRIVALS TO SOUTH AFRICA'S GREATEST 100

- 9. Elements, Waterberg, Limpopo
- 55. Irene CC, Centurion, Gauteng
- 60. Victoria CC, Maritzburg, KZN
- 100. Knysna GC, Knysna, Southern Cape

Irene and Victoria both last appeared in the rankings in 2006, when they were much lower. Irene was at No 92 that year, and Victoria No 75. Knysna last featured in 2004, when it was at No 83.

### TEMPORARY ABSENCE

Missing from the rankings this year are East London Golf Club, which opened its remodelled greens in 2008, but has not yet had sufficient ratings to be accurately ranked, Glendower Golf Club, which will open its new greens early in 2009, and the Woodlands course at Country Club Johannesburg, which is currently closed while being given a major overhaul and redesign.



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**1-10**

COURSE	CONTACT NO.	AFFILIATED	DESIGNER
1. Leopard Creek	013 791 2000	R1 750	Gary Player
2. Gary Player CC	014 557 1245	R655	Gary Player
3. Fancourt Links	044 804 0183	R1 500	Gary Player
4. Durban CC	031 313 1777	R400	Waters/Waterman
5. Arabella	028 284 0000	R615	Peter Matkovich
6. Pearl Valley	021 867 8000	R1 095	Jack Nicklaus
7. Wild Coast	039 305 9111	R220 / R250	Trent Jones Jr
8. Royal J&K East	011 640 3021	R240 / R360	Bob Grimsdell
9. Elements	082 490 4735	R250 / R300	Peter Matkovich
10. Fancourt Montagu	044 804 0183	R690	G Player/McLay Kidd

Durban CC.



**11-20**

COURSE	CONTACT NO.	AFFILIATED	DESIGNER
11. River Club	011 783 1166	Private	Bob Grimsdell
12. Simola	044 382 0944	R590	Jack Nicklaus
13. Pecanwood	012 244 8000	R420 / R495	Jack Nicklaus
14. Fancourt Outeniqua	044 804 0183	R690	Gary Player
15. George	044 873 6116	R250	C M Murray
16. Humewood	041 583 2137	R345	Col S V Hotchklin
17. Prince's Grant	032 482 0041	R170	Peter Matkovich
18. Lost City	014 557 3722	R545	Gary Player
19. Erinvale	021 847 1906	R395	Gary Player
20. Beachwood	031 313 1777	R300	Sid Brews


Fancourt Outeniqua.



**21-30**

COURSE	CONTACT NO.	AFFILIATED	DESIGNER
21. CCI Woodmead	011 202 1620	R240 / R270	Fred Hawtree
22. De Zalze	021 880 7300	R330	Peter Matkovich
23. Oubaai	044 851 0131	R750	Ernie Els
24. Pezula	044 302 5300	R650	Ronald Fream
25. Sishen	071 222 2214	R120	Bob Grimsdell
26. Kyalami	011 468 1610	R240	Tomsett/De Beer
27. Fish River	040 676 1002	R190	Gary Player
28. Champagne Sports	036 468 1088	R195 / R295	Hugh Baiocchi
29. Steenberg	021 713 1632	R550	Peter Matkovich
30. Royal J&K West	011 640 3021	R240 / R360	Laurie Waters

Kyalami.



**31-40**

COURSE	CONTACT NO.	AFFILIATED	DESIGNER
31. Hans Merensky	015 781 3931	R295	Bob Grimsdell
32. Zimbali	032 538 1041	R265	Tom Weiskopf
33. Bryanston	011 706 1361	R330	C H Alison
34. Randpark	0861 101 928	R225 / R250	S Brews/De Beer
35. Zebula	014 734 7700	R250	Peter Matkovich
36. Pretoria CC	012 460 3372	R245	Grimsdell/Jacobs
37. Royal Cape	021 761 6552	R300	C M Murray
38. Maccavlei	016 422 1263	R120 / R180	Peck/Hotchklin
39. Roodepoort	011 958 1204	R240 / R265	Gary Player
40. Wanderers	011 880 9682	R277	Bob Grimsdell


Zebula.



**41-50**

COURSE	CONTACT NO.	AFFILIATED	DESIGNER
41. Selborne	039 975 1133	R295	Denis Barker
42. Parkview	011 646 5400	R250	Laurie Waters
43. Clovelly	021 782 6410	R295	Murray/Grimsdell
44. San Lameer	039 313 5141	R280	Peter Matkovich
45. Silver Lakes	012 809 2110	R250 / R320	Peter Matkovich
46. Modderfontein	011 608 2033	R200	Arthur Tomsett
47. Mt Edgecombe One	031 502 1010	R238	Brews/Baiocchi
48. Stellenbosch	021 880 0244	R235	Ken Elkin
49. Dainfern	011 875 0400	R190 / R230	Gary Player
50. Orkney	018 478 2899	R95	Bob Grimsdell


Dainfern.



**51-60**

COURSE	CONTACT NO.	AFFILIATED	DESIGNER
51. Goose Valley	044 533 5082	R250	Gary Player
52. Plettenberg Bay	044 533 2132	R210	Fred Hawtree
53. Killarney	011 442 3880	R200	Robert Trent Jones
54. Windsor Park	011 476 1682	R225 / R250	Bob Grimsdell
55. Irene	012 667 1829	R150 / R220	Waters/Jacobs
56. Southbroom	039 316 6051	R210	AL Mandy
57. Nelspruit	013 744 0952	R220	Bob Grimsdell
58. Paarl	021 863 1140	R220	Elkin/Obermeyer
59. Woodhill	012 998 0021	R200 / R230	Peter Matkovich
60. Victoria CC	033 347 1394	R225	Grimsdell/Golf Data

Southbroom.



**61-70**

COURSE	CONTACT NO.	AFFILIATED	DESIGNER
61. Royal Durban	031 309 1530	R220	Bob Grimsdell
62. Umdoni Park	039 975 1615	R195	Sid Brews
63. Rustenburg	014 597 1249	R170	Members/Golf Data
64. Leopard Park	018 386 1780	R160	Peter Matkovich
65. Mossel Bay	044 691 2379	R220	Bob Grimsdell
66. Atlantic Beach	021 553 2223	R220 / R300	Golf Data
67. Umhlali	032 947 1181	R150 / R210	Peter Matkovich
68. Benoni CC	011 849 8821	R230	Unknown/Robinson
69. King David	021 934 0365	R225 / R260	Bob Grimsdell
70. Blue Valley	011 318 3410	R190 / R210	Gary Player

King David.



**71-80**

COURSE	CONTACT NO.	AFFILIATED	DESIGNER
71. Goldfields West	018 781 1570	R75 / R160	Bob Grimsdell
72. Glenvista	011 432 3150	R210	Sid Brews
73. Rondebosch	021 689 4176	R220	Bob Grimsdell
74. Centurion	012 665 0515	R220 / R240	Peter Matkovich
75. Krugersdorp	011 660 4365	R170	Bob Grimsdell
76. Wingate Park	012 997 1547	R190 / R250	Tomsett/Alison
77. Westlake	021 788 2020	R255	Tosh/Logan
78. Oppenheimer Park	057 353 2131	R130	Bob Grimsdell
79. Mt Edgecombe Two	031 502 1010	R238	Douw vd Merwe
80. Bushman Sands	042 231 8000	R135	Gary Player


Bushman Sands.



**81-90**

COURSE	CONTACT NO.	AFFILIATED	DESIGNER
81. Mowbray	021 685 3018	R230	S V Hotchklin
82. Reading	011 907 3666	R205	Sid Brews/Golf Data
83. Graceland	017 620 1188	R150	Gary Player
84. Royal Port Alfred	046 624 4796	R200	Unknown
85. Milnerton	021 552 3108	R230	A Tosh/Golf Data
86. Zwartkop	012 654 2111	R190 / R240	Bob Grimsdell
87. Mogol	014 763 4948	R100	Bob Grimsdell
88. Bramble Hill	044 804 0183	R200	Gary Player
89. Bloemfontein	051 447 0906	R150/R165	Bob Grimsdell
90. ERPM	011 826 2466	R225	Unknown/Golf Data


Royal Port Alfred.



**91-100**

COURSE	CONTACT NO.	AFFILIATED	DESIGNER
91. Kameeldoring	015 491 5563	R140	Members/K Brummer
92. State Mines	011 740 9962	R110 / R180	Unknown/O'Friel
93. Tzaneen	015 305 3102	R110	Members
94. Germiston	011 418 3900	R200	Unknown
95. PE Golf Club	041 374 3140	R210 / R310	Bob Grimsdell
96. Kloof	031 764 1492	R260	Bob Grimsdell
97. St Francis Bay	042 294 0467	R195	Golfscape
98. Randfontein	011 693 5414	R150 / R190	Bob Grimsdell
99. Blyvooruitzicht	018 789 8286	R80	Bob Grimsdell
100. Knysna	044 384 1150	R220	Phillip Basson

PE Golf Club.



\* SAGA affiliated rates, subject to change. Where there are two prices; weekday and weekend rates.