

invites you to discover

a selection of our

finest holes.

BY BILL VAN LIEW

There are more than 700 golf holes in the state of Vermont, and if I had the power to cut and paste terrain from the whole state and

make my own course to play on, this is what I would have picked to occupy my time this season.

As with the original eighteen chosen four years ago in our first issue, a major part of the criteria is the very word charismatic—“radiating popular appeal; mysteriously glamorous,” according to my outdated dictionary. These holes do have a glamour, sometimes mysterious, often quite obvious. Fortunately the thirty-six we have now chosen leave many more for you to pick as your favorites.

1

Hole #8, Ralph Myhre Golf Course, Middlebury

Par-4, 369 yards

A good starting hole for our course, this medium-length par-4 demands an accurate tee shot between two small ponds on the left and a fairway trap on the right side. The green is sharply elevated and guarded by bunkers front and left. Distance control on the approach shot is the key here, as an understruck shot will roll back down the hill, while a long shot leaves a delicate chip to a green which slopes sharply away from you.

2

Hole #15, St. Johnsbury Country Club

Par-3, 195 yards

This was consensus opinion of all qualifiers for the 1994 Vermont Mid Amateur as the scariest shot on the course. Part of a truly exceptional back

nine added in 1993 by Cornish and Silva with help from local player Jim Havers, this hole has two noteworthy features.

First, the view from the tee is formidable — a long drop down to a deep but narrow green, flanked by a steep hillside on the right and a swampy hazard that will catch almost all shots to the left. It leaves the faint of heart with no real bail out shot. Secondly, the severe elevation drop makes club selection difficult to gauge. Then, when the

decision is reached you'd better hit it straight or you might be looking at a five.

3

Hole #12, Lake Morey Country Club, Fairlee

Par-5, 542 yards

It takes three well-executed shots to get home on this long hole, which has out of bounds running the entire left side and climbs steeply the last 150 yards to



542-yard, par-5 twelfth at Lake Morey

David Cornwell

a slippery green.

The tee ball is played out of a narrow chute, which causes many players to leave the driver in their bag. This results in a fairly long second to the base of the hill, and if you're too cautious about the o.b. left, a collection bunker on the right side can swallow your ball. When you finally reach the green, you're rewarded with a commanding view of the course from its highest point, and tricky side hill putting.

4

Hole #13, Killington Golf Course

Par-4, 358 yards

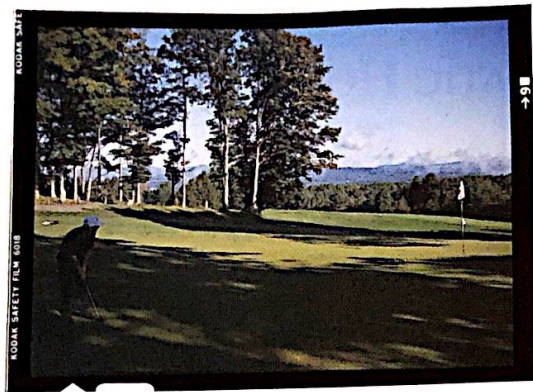
This is a very pleasing hole aesthetically, as you play from an elevated tee between two dense tree lines, then over a small chasm to a slightly elevated green. The hole plays shorter than its length, and the premium is on accuracy, especially with the tee shot. There is usually a prevailing left-to-right wind which is undetectable from the tee, but has swept many a promising tee shot into trouble. It's a very pretty hole, but is quite capable of causing damage.

5

Hole #13, Rocky Ridge Golf Club, St. George

Par-4, 377 yards

This is a challenging uphill par-4 which culminates on a small, two-tiered green. Twin shrubs on either side of



401-yard, par-4 second at Barre

the fairway serve as 150-yard markers at the base of the hill. The uphill portion of the hole is tree-lined and the fairway gets really narrow as it reaches the green, creating a bowling alley for the approach shot.

Originally, large boulders lined the upper half of the hole. These were covered over in the late 1970s, but it doesn't disguise the mountainous terrain on what most members feel is the toughest hole on the course.

6

Hole #5, Woodstock Country Club

Par-3, 151 yards

A little short iron par-3 with a very deep (45 yards) but narrow (15 yards) green that requires careful club selection. The Kedron brook crosses the fairway and borders the right side of the green, which may cause the subconscious golfing mind to hit the ball left, where the final steep embankment of Mt. Peg awaits. Although many birdies have been made from shots kicking off the embankment, there have been just as many double bogeys for the balls that were never found.

7

Hole #2, Country Club of Barre

Par-4, 401 yards

This is a demanding par-4 dogleg right to an elevated green that can play host to some of the nastiest pin posi-

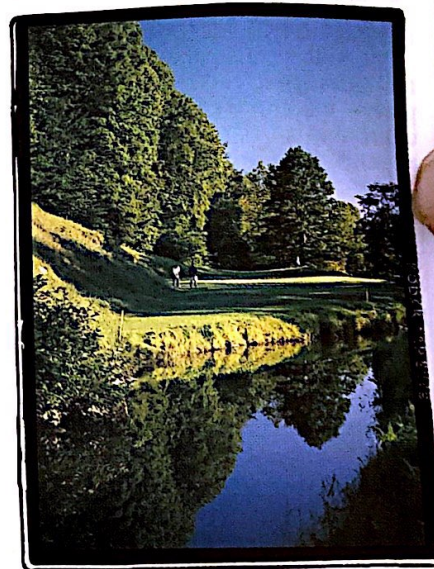
tions you'll ever see. The opening to the green is framed by two large trees that make an accurate placing of the tee shot vital.

As if it's not enough trouble getting there, a severely contoured green makes you work hard to avoid a three or even four-putt. When Barre hosted the Vermont Amateur a few years back, this hole gave the players fits. One contender remarked after making birdie he felt like he picked up two to three shots on the field.

8

Hole #5, Burlington Country Club *Par-5, 484 yards*

The wind always seems to blow at Burlington, and when it favors you on the par-5 fifth, it makes this hole a classic risk-reward par-5. A good tee shot will leave many golfers a chance to



151-yard, par-3 fifth at Woodstock

reach the green in two, but the target is very narrow and does not hold a shot from that distance readily. Instead, the play is to carry a yawning bunker that sits about 50 yards in front of the green, and let the ball run onto the slick putting surface. The risk is in missing the green either right or left, where there are bunkers and deep rough. The narrowness and speed of the green make pitching from hole high on either side tricky, and many a player has gone back and forth a couple of times before getting a ball to settle onto the carpet.



358-yard, par-4 thirteenth at Killington

9

Hole #10, Crown Point Country Club, Springfield

Par-4, 376 yards

Like the rest of this out-in-the country course, the tenth hole uses natural terrain to demand precise shotmaking. From the teebox, the hole bends ever so slightly to the right, and favors a faded shot to keep the side hill fairway from kicking your ball down to a grove of trees to the left of the landing area. The top of the knoll on the right side is out of bounds and bordered by the Crown Point Military Road, a landmark of the Revolutionary War.

The second shot, most likely launched from a side hill lie, is played to a two-tiered green, guarded on the left by a huge sand trap. The right side of the green is much higher than the lower-tiered left side, and the approach must be played to the correct portion of the green if you have any hope of one-putting.

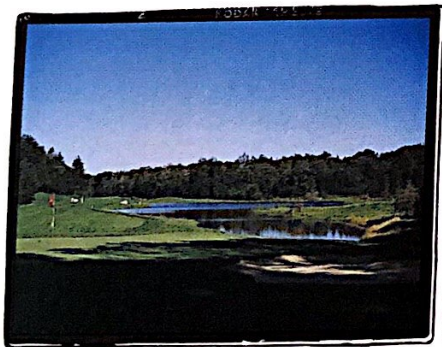
THE BACK NINE

10

Hole #10, Proctor Pittsford Country Club

Par-4, 426 yards

When Proctor Pittsford added their new nine a few years back, they made a few changes on the pretty downhill tenth that made a good hole even better. By lengthening the hole 52 yards and adding 2500 square feet to the green they put some teeth into this dogleg.



Terry Sprague

539-yard, par-5 fourteenth at Haystack

The driving area seems wide and inviting, but too far to the right will make the dogleg left play longer, and if you hit it down the left side off the tee you had better bust it to get around the corner.

The second shot plays downhill to an enlarged green guarded on the left by a small pond. When the pin is placed towards the back, it takes courage to try and get close, for a shot just a bit long or right can hop into a marshy area behind the green.

11

Hole #5, Kwinlaska Golf Club, Shelburne

Par-4, 475 yards

Easily the most feared hole by players in the 1994 Vermont Amateur, the sheer length of the hole is compounded by tee to green out of bounds on the right and a water hazard that must be carried on the approach. Although the amount of roll that you'll get on a well struck tee ball makes the hole play shorter than its listed length, many golfers will choose to lay up short of the water on their second shot and hope for a one-putt par. When confronted with a stiff breeze, even the longest of hitters will think twice before attempting to get home in two.

12

Hole #13, Manchester Country Club

Par-5, 568 yards

A very demanding hole midway through one of the best back nines you'll find, this par-5 requires three well struck and accurate shots. The tee ball must avoid a stand of trees on the right, but it is the second shot that demands an even more careful placement, as the landing area is framed by a tree line to the left and a lateral hazard on the right. A less than well struck tee ball will force you to hit more club than you might care to for such a precarious second, but you can't lay back too far, as the approach is to an elevated green, guarded front left by still another water hazard.

This is a well designed Geoffrey Cornish hole whose combination of length and required accuracy make it a very difficult hole for the average golfer.

13

Hole #12, The Quechee Club (Highland Course)

Par-3, 195 yards

The most notable thing about this fine hole is an intimidating tee shot that leaves little room for error. A mid to long iron must be struck, carrying a deep stream bed to a slightly elevated green. There are bunkers and out of bounds to the left; members have learned that the slope to the right of the green often will kick the ball towards the hole, but there's no guarantee. Missing the green left can spell disaster.



Stephanie Wolff

426-yard, par-4 tenth at Proctor-Pittsford

ter: your best bet would be to land in one of the two bunkers; otherwise the terrain may send your ball out of bounds. Alas, this is just one more tough golfing exam in the superior back nine on the Highland course.

14

Hole #14, Rutland Country Club

Par-4, 366 yards

This great par-4 runs along a ridge on the highest point of the course, offering panoramic views to the east. There's no need for any bunkering or mounding here; the natural terrain sculpts out a fine golf hole completely as is.

It's a tough driving hole as out of bounds on the left tends to force drives to the right side, but too far to the right can place you behind a huge piece of ledge, and your blind shot to the green may also be obstructed by a tree limb. The last 80 yards to the green carries over a chasm which doubles as the best sledding hill in town during the winter,

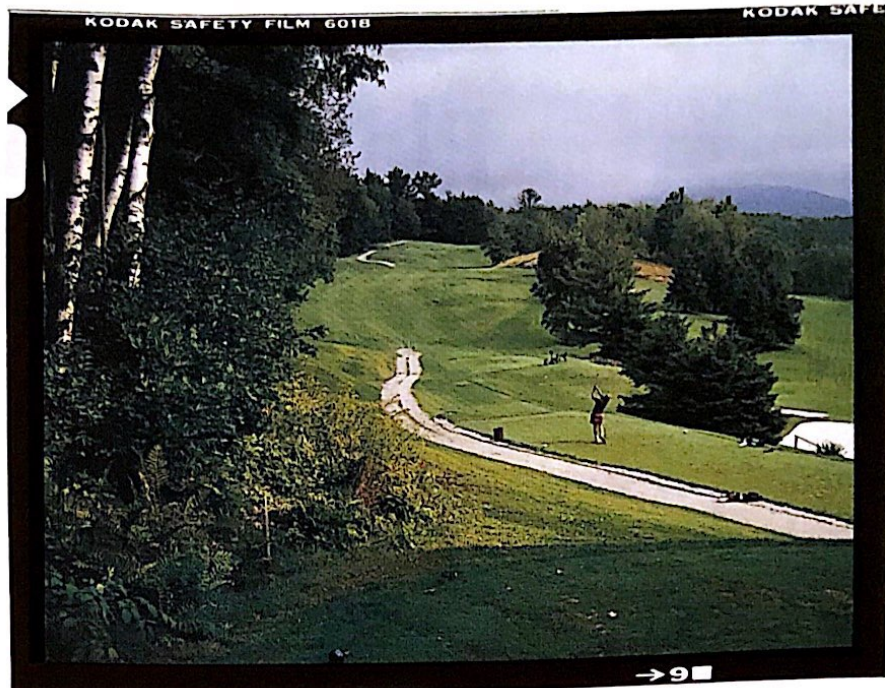
and the green gets narrower as the pin moves further back. It's an inviting target when the pin is set up front, but when it is all the way back, only a perfect shot will find the putting surface, and the sloping terrain into nearby woods makes an up and down difficult.

15

Hole #2, Stratton Mountain Country Club (Lake Nine)

Par-4, 418 yards

The start of a grueling finish to our course, this dogleg left is annually one of the tougher holes used in the McCall's LPGA tournament. The tee ball needs to either carry or bend around a sand trap at the corner of the dogleg or you'll be left with a long iron that must carry a stream 20 yards short of the putting surface. There is also a large bunker fronting the left side of the green, when they tuck the pin behind it on the final day of the tournament, there are few if any birdies to be made.



366-yard, par-4 fourteenth at Rutland

18

Hole #13, Gleneagles Golf Course, Manchester

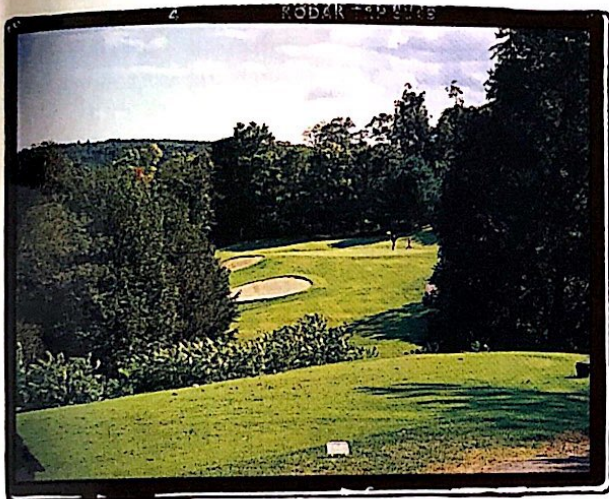
Par-4, 423 yards

A great finishing hole for our charismatic course, as this hole has one of the more outstanding features you'll see on a golf hole. You tee off out of a chute into a wide fairway that slopes from left to right, and the length of the hole requires a good drive. Now comes the real fun: the second is played to a very elevated green, guarded on the left by a sand trap and guarded on the right by... well, players in last summer's VGA four-ball referred to it as "the volcano" — the largest grass bunker you may ever encounter. It's such an awesome feature that even though you know it's bad for your score, it's tempting to hit into it for the experience.

The green is very contoured as well, so even if you get home in two, there still may be plenty of work left before you head to the clubhouse.

So there you have it — eighteen holes worth remembering, and even more worthy of playing. Strung together, they stretch out to 6845 yards and play to a par of 72. Best of all, if you play enough golf in the Green Mountain State this summer, I'll bet you can find eighteen others that are just as memorable. ●

Bill Van Liew scoops ice cream at his two Ben & Jerry's shops, owns Morgan Tile, referees basketball, coaches Little League, is a substitute mail carrier, and writes about golf in his spare time.



195-yard, par 3 twelfth at Quechee Highlands

16

Hole #14, Haystack Golf Club, Wilmington

Par-5, 539 yards

Members affectionately refer to it as "the hole from hell," but there are beautiful views of wetlands and mountains from tee to green on this testing hole. A big tee shot is a must, because the landing area for the second shot is very narrow around the 150-yard mark, with a pond on the left and a marsh on the right. Although the hole is very tight, the landing area for your second shot gets wider as you get closer to the

Hole #11, Sugarbush Golf Course, Warren

Par-3, 182 yards

Similar to the fifteenth at St. Johnsbury (our second hole), this par-3 has a huge vertical drop, must carry a pond that runs the entire width of the hole and find a surface less than 20 yards deep! There is plenty of left and right leeway, as the green is quite wide, but distance control on this shot has very little tolerance. A very steep embankment will stop any long shots from bounding any further, but leave you with a lie that demands a world class up and down. The short ball has a slim chance of catching the single sand bunker, but more than likely it will quickly find the bottom of the pond.

17