

here's nothing more fun in golf than standing on the tee box of a great par-3.

Sure, we love those risk/reward par-4s and short par-5s - that's why we dedicate a feature in every issue of Cascade Golfer to one. But for as fun as those shots can be, they rarely come without a price - sure, it's rewarding to hit the green, but even as we're lining up our shot, that risk is ever-present in the back of our mind (which, frankly, is probably why we plunk it in the water more often than not).

.A great par-3, though? Yeah, we might have some sand or water in our way, but all that stands between us and a par – or even a birdie – is one well-struck iron or wedge, and that's nothing to be afraid of.

There's also that little bit of extra adrenaline that comes from knowing that maybe - just maybe - this will be the moment that we've been waiting our whole lives for, when that perfect shot lands on the green, rolls towards the pin ... and disappears.

You certainly can't get that on a par-5.

That's why we've always said if we were to design a Cascade Golfer Golf Course, we'd have five par-3s, five par-5s, and only eight par-4s - heck, we might even go with six of each. For most amateur golfers, par-5s represent the best chance for birdie, while par-3s (typically) limit the damage to our scorecard - and offer that tantalizing tease of a hole-inone. We'll take that over another 400-yard, par-4 any day.

Great par-3s come in all shapes and sizes. Lone Fir, the 15th at Chambers Bay, is just 120 yards from the sand tees, but you'll be hard-pressed to find a player whose heart doesn't flutter every time they step on the tee. Conversely, the 12th at Gold Mountain's Olympic Course is a full 200-plus from the blues, but isn't any less spectacular for its length. There are unforgettable par-3s surrounded by water - like the 18th at Echo Falls, the third at Druids Glen, the 14th at the Home Course or the 12th at Semiahmoo — and others tucked deep in the woods, like the 7th at McCormick Woods, the 12th at Battle Creek or the 13th at Meadow Park. There are breathtaking, downhill par-3s like No. 6 at Gamble Sands, No. 9 at Chambers Bay, No. 12 at Druids Glen (yes, we're aware we already mentioned Druids - they have great par-3s!), No. 15 at Eaglemont or No. 16 at Legion Memorial, and still others that plot a direct course, or even — like the fourth at Palouse Ridge or the sixth at Port Ludlow - send your ball careening uphill to what you can only hope is a pleasant fate.

And when you combine water, a severe downhill shot and a panoramic vista - well, that's when you get cover-worthy gems like the 17th at Apple Tree and the seventh at Bear

Now, we haven't even reached the meat of this feature, and we've already named a full 18 outstanding par-3s - and those are just the ones that immediately come to mind. So, you can see the predicament we were in when we decided we wanted to try to rank Washington's best par-3s - no matter which ones we chose, we were inevitably going to leave out at least as many that were equally outstanding, unless we decided to rank 30 or more.

So, rather than try to generate our own list, we reached out to some friends in the local community to find out what their favorite par-3s are to play in Washington state. You may have heard of a few of our panelists - they include a threetime NBA All-Star, a four-time PGA TOUR winner and, oh, only the greatest American goalkeeper of all-time. There's also additional PGA and LPGA Tour players, ESPN television and radio hosts, plus a handful of local experts whose opinions we just couldn't pass up. And, since this is Cascade Golfer, after all, we asked our readers, too - check out some of your responses on page 51.

When it comes to par-3s, everyone has a favorite. Here are some (but most certainly not all) of ours.

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Kasey Keller . U.S . Soccer Legend

Twitter: @KaseyKeller18

Indian Summer No. 11

When we pick our favorite par-3s, we usually go with the ones where we make the most birdies - or at least the ones with the prettiest views. Not Kasey Keller, though. Ask him for his favorite par-3, and he comes back at you like a wounded cat ready to take on a pack of stray dogs.

"Hole 11 at Indian Summer," he says. "It's over 200 yards, with a narrow approach through old-growth timber, and a long, narrow, multi-tiered green. I've had few pars, let alone birdies." Ohhhh-kay ... sounds like a blast, Kasey. But what would you expect from the man who singlehandedly held off a Brazilian barrage in the Americans' infamous 1-0 upset of Brazil in 1998, making 13 saves? He's always up for a challenge. And 200-plus through a narrow opening to a tricky green is certainly that - and that's from the white tees. Go all the way back to the tips, and you're looking at 256, with almost no room to miss.





Brock Huard • ESPN

Twitter: @BrockESPN

Chambers Bay No. 9

"There's just something redeeming when you conquer a cliff," Huard says. No kidding - and there's no cliff quite like the one at No. 9, where the whole world appears to drop off below your feet. While the tees can be placed almost anywhere along a 100-yard strip from about 130-230



yards out, most golfers play it between 170-200 yards - though the steep drop-off and the wind that blows in off the Sound in the afternoon can wreak havoc with your club selection. Pin placement is key - if it's to the right, you can loft a shot to the center of the green or even off the back slope, where Jason Day had his famous fall, and let it run down to the front-right corner. Go too high on the slope, though, and you'll either lose it in the junk, or watch it run too far across the green and wind up in a deadly front bunker. If the pin is front-left, a knock-down shot to the apron will run right up to the hole, or run a little ways up the back slope before settling down. Take a picture and soak it all in, because birdie or bogey, it's one you'll remember.



Jim Moore • ESPN Radio

Twitter: @CougsGo

Gold Mountain (Olympic)

No. 12

Sure, we all figured Washington's proudest Coug would go for one of the outstanding par-3s at Palouse Ridge, like the uphill 11th or the treacherous 13th. Instead, he showed that while his heart still lies east of the mountains, the mountains in question — at least in this case — are the Olympics,

not the Cascades. He also certainly didn't back down from a challenge - the 12th is easily Gold Mountain's toughest par-3, measuring 175 from the white tees and an absurd 251 from the tips, which at nearly 7,200 yards, we assume only the college teams and pros that come to Gold Mountain for championships and qualifiers ever dare attempt. Its saving grace is a significant downhill slope, which makes the hole play a club or two shorter than the scorecard indicates. Don't take too much off, though, or you'll find yourself in one of two deadly front bunkers, while players who go long run the risk of hacking out of some tall grass towards those very same traps. Just don't Coug it.



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Ryan Moore • PGA Tour Twitter: @ryanmoorepga

The Classic No. 8

This is one course Ryan Moore knows like the back of his hand. The son of Classic owner Mike Moore, Ryan honed his game among The Classic's towering pines — a game that has carried him to four PGA

TOUR wins and a consistent top-50 world ranking. So it's no surprise that he'd pick a hole from his home course, and of The Classic's par-3s, none leaves a more lasting memory than No. 8. From an elevated tee box anywhere from 100-150 yards from the hole, golfers play across water for the only time during their round, to a well-guarded green. As Ryan notes, there's no truly safe play — other than a good shot: "No. 8 is a great, short-to-mid-range par-3. A pond guards the front, but if you try to play safely long of a front pin, the bunkers behind leave a scary next shot." Short, scary sweet — and loads of fun.





Detlef Schrempf • NBA All-Star Twitter: @Dschrempf Chambers Bay No. 15

Chambers Bay No. 15

Yes, Chambers Bay has two holes on this list. And you know what? They might not even be the best two par-3s at the course. The third hole, with its Redan-style green just begging you to miss right, is a dream for slicers everywhere, while the 17th and its seemingly never-ending green is one of the most photographed holes on the course. While our former NFL quarterback

preferred lobbing bombs into the green at No. 9, our former Supersonic favors the sublime beauty of Lone Fir, where the best strategy is usually to aim for the backboard, and let your shot fall down to the rim ... of the cup. If you can avoid the pot bunker to the left, the sand on three sides, and the distracting beauty of the sun glistening off the Sound behind Lone Fir itself, it's usually not too tough of a par — or better. And the only thing sweeter than the sound of a basketball swishing through the net, is your birdie putt dropping into the bottom of the cup.



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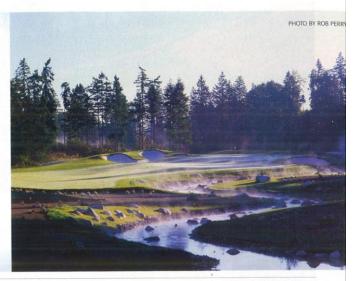


Paige Mackenzie • Golf Channel Twitter: @Paige_Mackenzie Washington National No. 16

"Sixteen is really, really tough," says Mackenzie, who should know — as an All-American golfer at Washington before launching her LPGA TOUR career, she's played it plenty of times in competition. "It kicks off a perfect finishing stretch

for a golf course - hard par-3, hard par-5, then you get to

18 and you get to take it easy, with the widest fairway on the golf course," she says. "That's how I like to finish a round." Sixteen may not look like much on the scorecard, at just 146 yards from the blue tees — but until you've found yourself hunting for your ball among the rocks that line the creek running down the right side, or hacking out of one of the steeply faced bunkers, you can't entirely appreciate its challenge. The back-to-front slope of the green, too, makes staying below the pin key to any serious birdie attempt — an extra-challenging task when coming in with a long iron from the 198-yard tips. And of course, there's always the looming vision of 17 — one of the state's most bedeviling holes — in the background.





John Fought • Golf Architect Trophy Lake No. 17

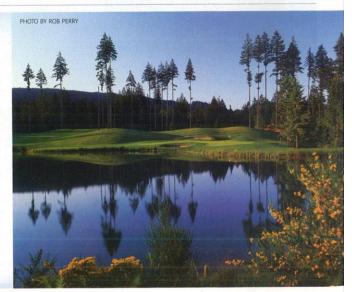
You may not realize it, but John Fought has two holes on this list — this one, and the 16th at Washington National, a hole he designed in 2000. Fought's name is on some of the most famous courses in America — Indian Wells, Sand Hollow, Crosswater and Windsong among them — but the Oregon native has always had a fondness for the



Northwest, and especially the two courses he designed here, Washington National and Trophy Lake. So, asking him to pick his favorite par-3 in Washington is like asking him to pick a favorite child. Fortunately, golf holes can't read, so he did it for us anyway: "I suppose my favorite is the 17th at Trophy Lake. While being a short hole (118-155 yards), it can be quite challenging. The setting is beautiful, tucked into the trees with wetlands and water areas that surround. What I like about this hole is that if someone is brave and precise with their tee shot, it will provide a reward. But errant shots are punished."



Compared to many of the names on this list, you're probably not all that familiar with Rob Perry. But if you've read a golf magazine, or walked into a pro shop, or visited a golf course website in this state at any time in the last 20 years, you've almost certainly enjoyed a Rob Perry photograph. The state's pre-eminent golf course photographer, Perry's shots are ubiquitous in the Washington golf scene — if you've ever seen a photo of a local course, and thought, "Wow, that's a great shot," odds are good it was a Rob Perry. So, we naturally included the man with the golden eye on our panel (even if he prefers to stay behind the camera, hence the lack of a headshot above), knowing he'd pick a beauty — and did he ever. Seemingly all of Gold Mountain's par-3s could make the list, but none are prettier than 16, which usually plays about 150 yards, entirely over a water to a green backdropped by lodgepole pine. Provided you get it there, it's not a particularly tough par, which makes the scenery all the more memorable. That image you have in your mind? Credit Rob Perry.



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