



wenty-five years ago, Charlotte public relations agency owner Bill Hensley didn't think the famous national golf publications were treating North Carolina's esteemed courses fairly. "I was ticked at how the magazines rated our courses, so I said, 'I'll get a panel together and we'll have our own damned rating," he recalls.

A gifted promoter, Hensley convened a group of 100 talented golfers, ink-stained writers and some businesspeople to travel around rating the state's best links. Early members included N.C. golfing legends such as Harvie Ward and Peggy Kirk Bell, along with some hackers whose love for the sport exceeded their skill level. Thus was born the N.C. Golf Panel, which presents its 25th annual report on the state's 100 best courses in this magazine.

The 2020 list is little changed from last year's, with the exception of Pinehurst No. 4, which returned to a top 10 rating after a 2018 redesign by architect Gil Hanse reduced its turf acreage by 40%. Its more famous sibling course, Pinehurst No. 2, claimed its traditional top spot, followed by western N.C. favorites Grandfather Golf & Country Club of Linville and Mountaintop Golf & Lake Club of Cashiers. The latter course, designed by Tom Fazio and opened in 2006, is among the state's most exclusive, with golf memberships limited to 350 property owners in the development.

Other courses that rose in this year's rankings include No. 55 Grandover Resort in Greensboro, which was 63rd last year, and No. 56 The Currituck Club in Corolla, which had been 66th previously.

Hensley, 94, says he only played one round last year, but he still enjoys talking with golf panel members about the strengths and weaknesses of the various Tar Heel State tracks. "I think the panel has turned out really well."

2020 **TOP100**

GOLF COURSES

(second number is previous year's ranking)

PINEHURST NO. 2 PINEHURST 76.5/138 7.588

> YARDAGE COURSE RATING/SLOPE

GRANDFATHER GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB LINVILLE

> 7.085 74.3/145

MOUNTAINTOP GOLF & LAKE CLUB CASHIERS

> 73.9/145 7 126

4. 4. PINE NEEDLES LODGE & GOLF CLUB **SOUTHERN PINES**

> 7.015 73 5/135

THE COUNTRY CLUB OF NORTH CAROLINA (DOGWOOD) **PINEHURST**

> 7.204 75.2/134

6. 6. **QUAIL HOLLOW CLUB** CHARLOTTE 7.396 75.0/140



Developed in 1984 by Spencer and Harry Robbins, the member-owned Elk River Club is home to six-time Masters winner Jack Nicklaus' first signature golf course in the state. The course's 35 acres of fairways integrates the region's natural topography surrounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains. "The contrasts at Elk River are amazing ... the blue hues of the mountain views, the emerald greens of the course itself, and the sparkling streams that meander throughout," says panelist Roger Krupa of Cary. "I could not wait to see what nature and [Jack] Nicklaus had provided for the next hole."

OLD NORTH STATE CLUB NEW LONDON

> 7,102 74.8/142

PINEHURST NO. 4 PINEHURST 7,227 74.9/138

10. 8. **CHARLOTTE COUNTRY CLUB CHARLOTTE**

7,335

11. 11. SEDGEFIELD COUNTRY CLUB **GREENSBORO** 7,117 72.9/130

75.9/146

PINEHURST NO. 8 PINEHURST

> 7,099 74.1/137

OLD TOWN CLUB WINSTON-SALEM

70 7.042 74 5/140

14. 13. **CAPE FEAR COUNTRY CLUB** WILMINGTON 6.856 73.4/135

15. 12. WADE HAMPTON GOLF CLUB

CASHIERS

72 7.154 74.0/144

16. 16. **EAGLE POINT GOLF CLUB** WILMINGTON

> 74.5/137 7,170

17. 15. THE COUNTRY CLUB OF NORTH CAROLINA (CARDINAL) **PINEHURST**

> 7.212 75.0/141

18. 17. MID PINES INN & GOLF CLUB **SOUTHERN PINES**

72 6.732 71 0/126

19. 18. **OLD CHATHAM GOLF CLUB** DURHAM

74.0/131

RALEIGH COUNTRY CLUB



Fans of the prominent Triangle golf course have to wait until late September before teeing off, as Raleigh Country Club is undergoing a multimillion-dollar renovation that will add 15 acres and push the total yardage from championship tees to more than 7,000 yards. For the project, owner McConnell Golf hired architect Kyle Franz, who has worked on famous courses such as Pinehurst No. 2, Mid Pines and Pacific Dunes in Bandon, Ore. The course is expected to become more challenging while maintaining Ross' designs. "Few Donald Ross courses have retained the characteristics of his design elements as truly and as beautifully as Raleigh Country Club," says panelist Henry Lister of Chapel Hill. "Mr. Ross would be proud."

21. ROCK BARN COUNTRY CLUB & SPA 21. (JONES) **CONOVER**

74.4/141 7.126

BILTMORE FOREST COUNTRY CLUB 22. **ASHEVILLE** 70 6.606 71.5/127

23. RIVER LANDING (RIVER)
WALLACE

72 7,009 74.1/141

PAR YARDAGE COURSE RATING/SLOPE

24. 25. MACGREGOR DOWNS COUNTRY CLUB

72 7,003 73.4/134

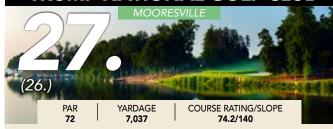
25. 28. GOVERNORS CLUB CHAPEL HILL

72 7,062 75.1/144

26. 24. **FOREST CREEK GOLF CLUB (SOUTH)** *PINEHURST*

72 7,067 74.6/143

TRUMP NATIONAL GOLF CLUB



Trump National made news last year by installing Mach 1 ultradwarf Bermudagrass on the greens of its new five-hole, Tom Fazio-designed practice facility. Mach 1, which received its plant patent last December, is lauded for its consistent smoothness and texture. The president's company bought the property from The Point Lake & Golf Club for \$3 million in 2012 and has since poured \$15 million into upgrades and additions to the club's amenities, property and equipment. "The famous Trump hospitality is evident from the moment you arrive at the pro shop," says panelist Fletcher Steele of Winston-Salem. "The course itself also lives up to your high expectations with great conditioning, a pleasant variety of holes, and some beautiful lake views and lakeside holes that are memorable."

28. 27. PRESTONWOOD COUNTRY CLUB (HIGHLANDS)

CARY

72 7,082 74.4/138

29. COUNTRY CLUB OF LANDFALL (DYE)
WILMINGTON

72 7,026 74.3/132

30. 31. TREYBURN COUNTRY CLUB DURHAM

72 7,175 74.1/137

31. 32. COUNTRY CLUB OF LANDFALL (NICKLAUS) WILMINGTON

72 7,100 75.7/144

30. PINEHURST NO. 9
PINEHURST

72 7,125 75.1/143

33. 34. FOREST CREEK GOLF CLUB (NORTH)
PINEHURST

72 7,139 74.7/144

34. 33. **LINVILLE GOLF CLUB LINVILLE** 72 6.946 73.4/139

35. 37. FORSYTH COUNTRY CLUB WINSTON-SALEM

71 6,784 72.8/136

36. 35. HIGH POINT COUNTRY CLUB (WILLOW CREEK)
HIGH POINT

72 6,972 73.9/139

37. 36. **HASENTREE** WAKE FOREST 71 7,074 73.9/139

38. MYERS PARK COUNTRY CLUB CHARLOTTE

71 7,120 74.3/138

39. UNC FINLEY GOLF COURSE CHAPEL HILL
72 7.223 74.9/138

40. 41. **RIVER LANDING (LANDING)** *WALLACE*

72 7,112 74.2/134

41. 44. **DORMIE CLUB WEST END**72 6.988 74.0/140

42. 40. **GREENSBORO COUNTRY CLUB (FARM)** *GREENSBORO*

72 7,302 75.1/140

43. 42. **BALD HEAD ISLAND CLUB** *BALD HEAD ISLAND*72 6,855 73.7/143

44. 52. **MID SOUTH CLUB SOUTHERN PINES**

71 7,003 73.8/144

45. 43. **DUKE UNIVERSITY GOLF CLUB DURHAM**72 7.105 73.9/141

46. 46. **GASTON COUNTRY CLUB GASTONIA**72 7,042 74.2/135

47. 48. **COUNTRY CLUB OF ASHEVILLE** ASHEVILLE

48. 49. **SCOTCH HALL PRESERVE** *MERRY HILL*72 7.257 76.3/139

6,672

49. 47. LEOPARD'S CHASE SUNSET BEACH

72 7,055 74.3/140

50. 57. STARMOUNT FOREST COUNTRY CLUB GREENSBORO

72.3/134

71 6,518 72.0/136

51. 54. THE CARDINAL BY PETE DYE GREENSBORO
70 6.821 74.2/139

55. BALSAM MOUNTAIN PRESERVE SYLVA 70 6,859 73.0/145

2020 TOP 100 GOLF COURSES

53. 50. **HOPE VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB** DURHAM

70 6,671 73.1/133

PAR YARDAGE COURSE RATING/SLOPE

54. 51. PINEWILD COUNTRY CLUB (MAGNOLIA)
PINEHURST

72 7,446 76.4/139

55. 63. **GRANDOVER RESORT (EAST)** *GREENSBORO*

72 6,800 72.5/136

56. 66. **THE CURRITUCK CLUB** *COROLLA*

72 6,888 73.9/136

ALAMANCE COUNTRY CLUB BURLINGTON (58.) PAR 71 YARDAGE 6,900 COURSE RATING/SLOPE 72.8/128

In May, the Alamance Country Club will undergo a \$1.5 million renovation, its first major upgrade since 1999. The five- to six-month project will resurface greens, update bunkers and add about 30 new forward tees. But Alamance is bucking the trend of other premier courses, choosing to stick with bent grass on its greens to maintain Donald Ross' original design. "Alamance is a softer Ross course, challenging yet very playable," says Pinehurst panelist Betsey Mitchell. "It's a great members' course, one you can enjoy every day." The course opened in 1946, a year before Ross died at age 75.

59. PINEHURST NO. 7
PINEHURST

72 7,216 75.5/143

59. 61. **LONNIE POOLE GOLF COURSE** RALEIGH

72 7,358 74.4/142

60. 60. PRESTONWOOD COUNTRY CLUB (MEADOWS)
CARY

72 7,108 74.6/138

61. 65. **JEFFERSON LANDING JEFFERSON** 72 7,111 73.1/134

62. 45. **THE CLUB AT IRISH CREEK** *KANNAPOLIS*72 7.099 74.3/137

63. 72. **BALLANTYNE COUNTRY CLUB** CHARLOTTE

72 7.034 74.1/136

64. 64. BRYAN PARK GOLF & CONFERENCE CENTER (CHAMPIONS)

BROWNS SUMMIT

72 7,255 75.4/140

65. 53. **TIGER'S EYE**SUNSET BEACH

72 6.849 73.3/141

78. **HOUND EARS CLUB** *BLOWING ROCK*72 6.327 69.9/129

67. 56. **RIVER RUN COUNTRY CLUB** DAVIDSON

72 6,947 74.2/138

68. 62. CARMEL COUNTRY CLUB (SOUTH)
CHARLOTTE

72 7,503 76.5/142

69. 67. **PINEWOOD COUNTRY CLUB** ASHEBORO

72 6,830 73.5/134

70. 70. **CROASDAILE COUNTRY CLUB** DURHAM

72 7,068 73.4/140

71. 71. PORTERS NECK COUNTRY CLUB WILMINGTON

72 7,112 74.8/138

72. 73. **CEDARWOOD COUNTRY CLUB** *CHARLOTTE*71 6.940 73.9/137

73. 76. THE PENINSULA CLUB
CORNELIUS

72 7,014 74.9/142



The Thistle Golf Club in Sunset Beach features 27 holes with traditional Scottish designs. "It's my choice of place to play when I'm at the beach," says Steve Wrenn, a panelist from Asheboro. "It provides a challenging yet very playable layout for all skill levels no matter which of the three nines you play. And it's scenic with enough water to make you check if you have an additional sleeve of balls." Opened in 1999, the club is owned by the Davis family, which has owned mining enterprises in southern Virginia for many years.



75. 69. LAKE TOXAWAY COUNTRY CLUB

LAKE TOXAWAY

71 6,500 70.9/134

PAR YARDAGE COURSE RATING/SLOPE

76. 75. **ST. JAMES PLANTATION (RESERVE)**SOUTHPORT

72 7,212 75.4/146

77. 79. MIMOSA HILLS GOLF CLUB MORGANTON

72 6,750 72.8/137

78. 83. **KILMARLIC GOLF CLUB** POWELLS POINT

72 6,560 72.2/144

79. - PROVIDENCE COUNTRY CLUB CHARLOTTE

72 7.021 74.6/141

80. 77. TOURNAMENT PLAYERS CLUB AT WAKEFIELD PLANTATION

RALEIGH

72 7,257 75.2/137

81. 74. **LINVILLE RIDGE** *LINVILLE*

72 6.775 72.8/136

82. -- TANGLEWOOD PARK GOLF COURSE (CHAMPIONSHIP)

CLEMMONS

70 7,101 74.6/140

THE NEW COURSE AT TALAMORE



The New Course at Talamore Golf Resort was named "Course of the Year 2018" by the Village of Pinehurst Area Chapter of the National Golf Course Owners Association following a major restoration in 2016 to celebrate Talamore's 25th aniversary. The upgrades provided better course conditions and more playable layouts, removed 75 bunkers and re-contoured the areas and added landing zones and signature sod wall bunkers around the greens. "Talamore's recent redesign of its greens and some of its bunkers gives you the modern look at firm, breaking greens and pot bunkers while also giving you a Scottish feel," says panelist David Boger of Greensboro. The New Course is located directly across from Talamore's Mid South Club and offers players an affordable yet fun playing experience. Newland panelist Dwight Butner calls it "one of the best values in Pinehurst." The course is owned by Philadelphia-area businessman Bob Levy.

84.	82.	GRANDOVER RESORT (WEST)
		GREENSBORO

72 6,800 74.3/140

85. 80. WILSON COUNTRY CLUB WILSON

72 6,851 73.1/136

86. 84. BERMUDA RUN COUNTRY CLUB (EAST)
BERMUDA RUN

72 7,045 74.3/139

87. 81. CAPE FEAR NATIONAL GOLF CLUB

72 7,217 74.5/143

88. BRIER CREEK COUNTRY CLUB

72 6,885 73.6/139

89. 86. BENVENUE COUNTRY CLUB ROCKY MOUNT

72 6,525 71.3/134

90. 87. ROCKY RIVER GOLF CLUB

CONCORD

72 6,970 73.5/137

91. 89. COMPASS POINTE GOLF CLUB

LELAND

72 7,228 74.6/138

92. 88. MILL CREEK GOLF CLUB

MEBANE

72 7,004 73.5/144

93. 90. NORTH RIDGE COUNTRY CLUB (LAKES)

RALEIGH

72 6.880 73.8/136

94. 93. CROW CREEK GOLF CLUB

CALABASH

72 7,101 73.9/130

95. 94. CAROLINA GOLF CLUB

CHARLOTTE

71 7.011 73.2/138

96. 96. BROOK VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB

GREENVILLE

72 6,836 73.8/141

97. - PRESTONWOOD COUNTRY CLUB

(FAIRWAYS)

CARY

70 6,475 71.2/134

98. 100. BLOWING ROCK COUNTRY CLUB

BLOWING ROCK

72 6,162 69.9/130

99. 97. STONEY CREEK GOLF CLUB

WHITSETT

71 7,016 73.8/139

100. - NAGS HEAD GOLF LINKS

NAGS HEAD

71 6,126 70.2/138

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FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE COAST

- 1 | Raleigh Country Club
- 2 Treyburn Country Club
- 3 Country Club at Wakefield Plantation
- 4 Old North State Club
- 5 | The Reserve Golf Club
- 6 The Cardinal by Pete Dye
- 7 Sedgefield Country Club
- 8 Musgrove Mill Golf Club
- 9 Grande Dunes*
- 10 | Porters Neck Country Club*
- 1 Brook Valley Country Club
- 12 Country Club of Asheville
- 12 Country Club of Ashevine
- 13 Holston Hills Country Club 14 Providence Country Club

*McConnell Golf managed property

OLD NORTH STATE CLUB NEW LONDON, NC



West

- 1. Grandfather Golf & Country Club, Linville
- 2. Mountaintop Golf & Lake Club, Cashiers
- 3. Elk River Club, Banner Elk
- 4. Wade Hampton Country Club, Cashiers
- 5. Rock Barn Country Club (Jones), Conover

Charlotte

- 1. Quail Hollow Club, Charlotte
- 2. Charlotte Country Club, Charlotte
- 3. Trump National Golf Club, Mooresville
- 4. Myers Park Country Club, Charlotte
- 5. Gaston Country Club, Gastonia

Triad

- 1. Old North State Club, New London
- 2. Sedgefield Country Club, Greensboro
- 3. Old Town Club, Winston-Salem
- 4. Forsyth Country Club, Winston-Salem
- 5. High Point Country Club (Willow Creek), High Point

Triangle

- 1. Old Chatham Golf Club, Durham
- 2. Raleigh Country Club, Raleigh
- 3. MacGregor Downs Country Club, Cary
- 4. Governors Club, Chapel Hill
- 5. Prestonwood Country Club (Highlands), Cary

Sandhills

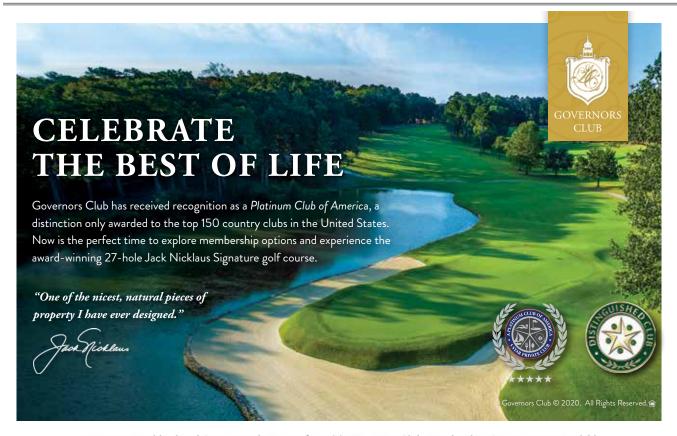
- 1. Pinehurst No. 2, Pinehurst
- 2. Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club, Southern Pines
- 3. The Country Club of North Carolina (Dogwood), Pinehurst
- 4. Pinehurst No. 4, Pinehurst
- 5. Pinehurst No. 8, Pinehurst

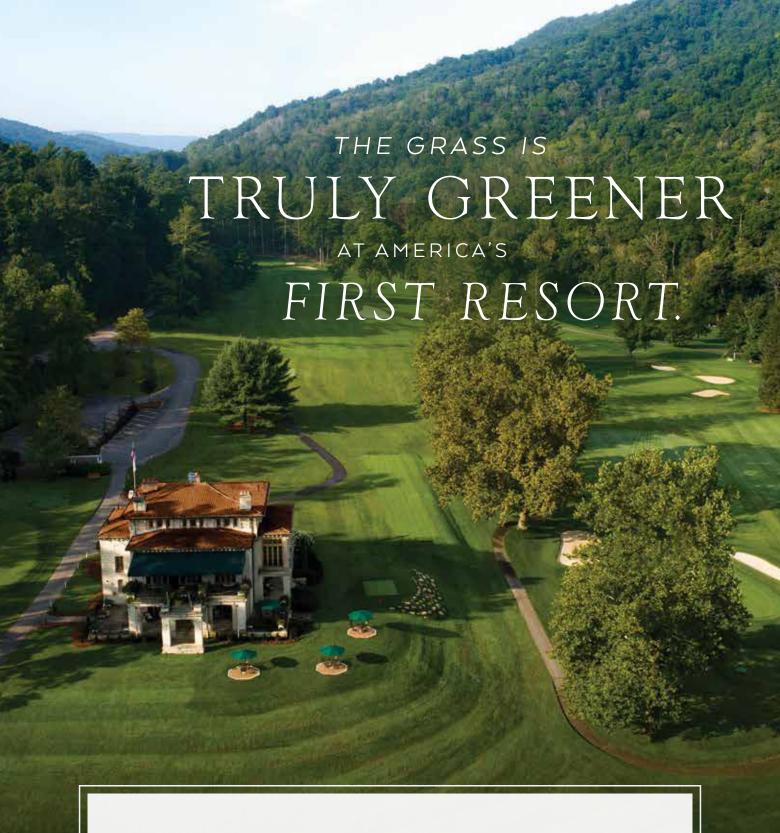
East

- 1. River Landing (River), Wallace
- 2. River Landing (Landing), Wallace
- 3. Scotch Hall Preserve, Merry Hill
- 4. Wilson Country Club, Wilson
- 5. Benvenue Country Club, Rocky Mount

Coastal

- 1. Cape Fear Country Club, Wilmington
- 2. Eagle Point Golf Club, Wilmington
- 3. Country Club of Landfall (Dye), Wilmington
- 4. Country Club of Landfall (Nicklaus), Wilmington
- 5. Bald Head Island Club, Bald Head Island

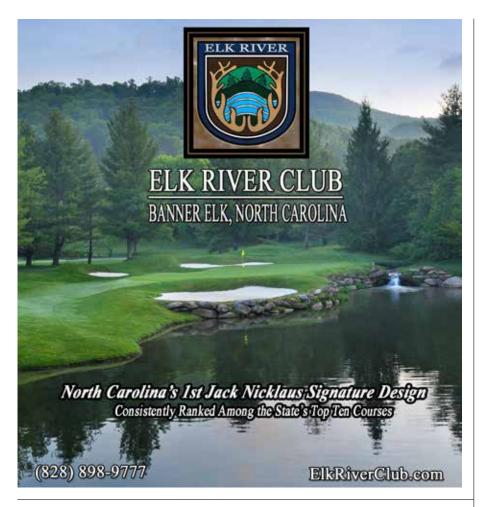




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Best GreensComplexes

Which courses in the state have the best greens complexes? Factors include design, variety, condition and bunkering.

West

- 1. Mountaintop Golf & Lake Club, Cashiers
- 2. Grandfather Golf & Country Club, Linville
- 3. Elk River Club. Banner Elk
- 4. Biltmore Forest Country Club, Asheville
- 5. Lake Toxaway Country Club, Lake Toxaway

Charlotte

- 1. Quail Hollow Club, Charlotte
- 2. Charlotte Country Club, Charlotte
- 3. The Peninsula Club, Cornelius
- 4. Trump National Golf Club, Mooresville
- 5. Ballantyne Country Club, Charlotte

Triad

- 1. Sedgefield Country Club, Greensboro
- 2. Old Town Club, Winston-Salem
- 3. Forsyth Country Club, Winston-Salem
- 4. Greensboro Country Club (Farm), Greensboro
- 5. Starmount Forest Country Club, Greensboro

Triangle

- 1. Raleigh Country Club, Raleigh
- 2. Old Chatham Golf Club, Durham
- 3. MacGregor Downs Country Club, Cary
- 4. Prestonwood Country Club (Highlands), Carv
- 5. Hope Valley Country Club, Durham



▲ Mid Pines Inn & Golf Club, Southern Pines



Sandhills

- 1. Pinehurst No. 2. Pinehurst
- 2. Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club, Southern Pines
- 3. Pinehurst No. 4, Pinehurst
- 4. The Country Club of North Carolina (Cardinal), Pinehurst
- 5. Mid Pines Inn & Golf Club, Southern Pines

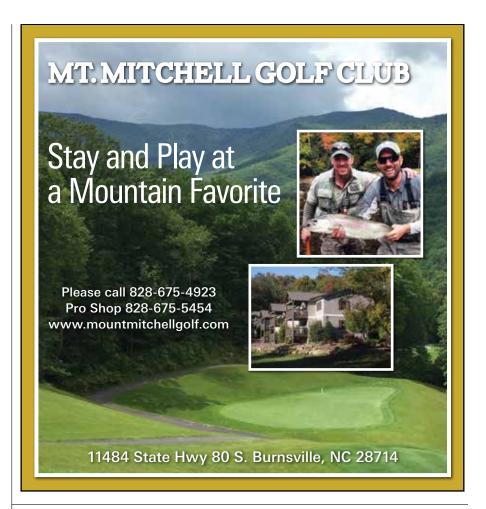
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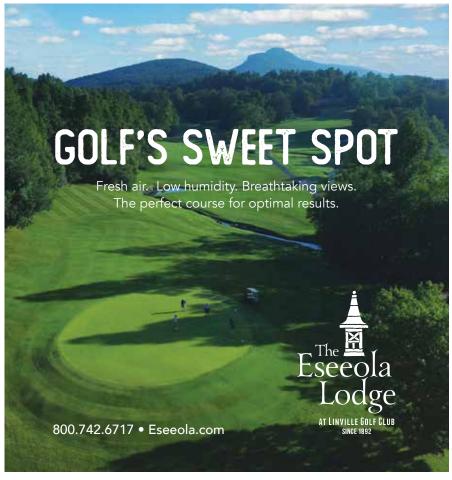
- 1. River Landing (River), Wallace
- 2. Cutter Creek Golf Club, Snow Hill
- 3. River Landing (Landing), Wallace
- 5. Benvenue Country Club, Rocky Mount
- 4. Greenville Country Club, Greenville

Coastal

- 1. Eagle Point Golf Club, Wilmington
- 2. Country Club of Landfall (Nicklaus), Wilmington
- 3. Cape Fear Country Club, Wilmington
- 4. Country Club of Landfall (Dye), Wilmington
- 5. Bald Head Island Club, Bald Head Island









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TOP 50 Courses you can play

you can play 🔪			Oglete 76 5/138
Panelists' top picks for the best public and	•	4ARDACH	, RELEVE
semi-private courses in the state.	PAR	16gg	O, O,
1. Pinehurst No. 2, Pinehurst	72	7,588	76.5/138
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19. Bryan Park Golf & Conference Center (Champions), Browns Summit	72	7,255	75.4/140
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21. Thistle Golf Club, Sunset Beach	71	6,898	74.1/135
22. Mimosa Hills Golf Club, Morganton	72	6,750	72.8/137
23. Kilmarlic Golf Club, Powells Point	72	6,560	72.2/144
24. Tanglewood Park Golf Course (Championship), Clemmons	70	7,101	74.6/140
25. The New Course at Talamore, Southern Pines	71	6,840	73.2/140
26. Grandover Resort (West), Greensboro	72	6,800	72.7/137
27. Cape Fear National Golf Club, Leland	72	7,217	74.5/143
28. Rocky River Golf Club, Concord	72	6,970	73.5/137
29. Compass Pointe Golf Club, Leland	72 72	7,228	74.6/138
30. Mill Creek Golf Club, Mebane 31. Crow Creek Golf Club, Calabash	72	7,004	73.5/144
32. Stoney Creek Golf Club, Whitsett	71	7,101 7,016	73.8/139
33. Nags Head Golf Links, Nags Head	71	6,126	70.2/138
34. Southern Pines Golf Club, Southern Pines	71	6,268	70.2/130
35. Pinehurst No. 6, Pinehurst	72	7,053	74.7/139
36. Cutter Creek Golf Club, Snow Hill	72	7,033	75.3/144
37. Forest Oaks Country Club, Greensboro	72	7,212	74.7/141
38. Legacy Golf Links, Aberdeen	72	7,004	73.9/133
39. Heritage Club, Wake Forest	72	7,016	73.1/133
40. Tobacco Road Golf Club, Sanford	71	6,554	73.2/150
41. Longleaf Golf & Family Club, Southern Pines	72	6,709	72.4/132
42. Carolina Colours Golf Club, New Bern	72	7,008	72.9/132
43. Magnolia Greens Golf Plantation, Leland	72	7,031	74.7/140
44. The Challenge Golf Club, Graham	72	6,828	73.7/139
45. Greensboro National Golf Club, Summerfield	72	6,806	72.1/135
46. Boone Golf Club, Boone	71	6,686	71.3/128
47. Oak Island Golf Club, Caswell Beach	72	6,720	73.1/131
48. Mount Mitchell Golf Club, Burnsville	72	6,495	70.0/131
49. Hyland Golf Club, Southern Pines	72	6,823	72.1/141
50. Wilmington Municipal Golf Course, Wilmington	71	6,564	71.2/128



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