



KING

A fresh look at King Island.
Photography by Gary Lisbon

FOR A DAY

KING Island is one place where it is not advisable to follow the time-honoured golf maxim of keeping one's head down. Because do so and you'll almost surely miss much of the majesty surrounding the playing arena.

Three years have now passed since Cape Wickham Links opened for play and two since Ocean Dunes joined the party, which for many years had already included the underrated nine-hole King Island Golf & Bowling Club. Within the 45-hole feast is often a dilemma,

however. Visiting golfers are often pushed for time or Bass Strait's capricious weather curtails their stay, which makes playing the *best* of the island all the more important.

With that in mind, we began to ponder: what are the highlights of a golf tour of King Island? Which are the best holes? Elevating some holes from within such elite company might seem like a silly exercise, a little like choosing the best of the current All Blacks side. But we did it anyway, asking our Top 100 Courses panellists who have travelled there to nominate the best holes from the

three courses to come up with the island's nine most outstanding holes.

Seventeen of the 45 holes on the island received votes. Leading the way was the crescent-shaped closer at Cape Wickham, a hole that showcases the glory of the location in one epic, 395-metre sliver [*above*].

Whichever way your King Island sojourn unfolds, hopefully you'll experience every hole. And if these recent photographs don't whet your appetite to make the journey there (or to return), then nothing will.

— STEVE KEIPERT

DIVINE NINE

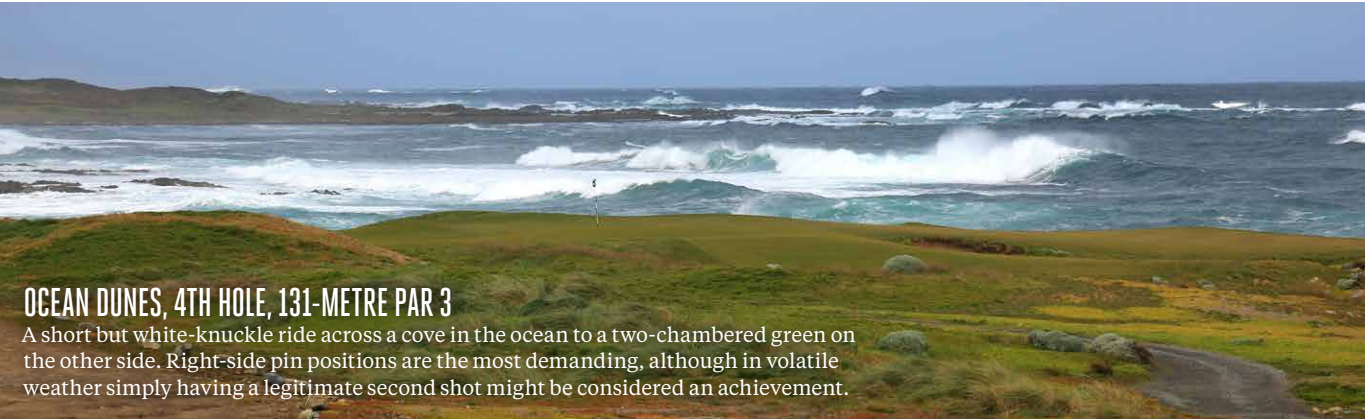
Here, in the order they fall on the respective courses, are the nine holes our judges voted as the best on King Island. Special mention goes to the short third/12th hole at King Island Golf & Bowling Club. It's a tall ask to compete with its younger siblings, but our judges didn't want the best hole at the island's original layout to be forgotten.



CAPE WICKHAM, 1ST HOLE, 340-METRE PAR 4
The opener at Cape Wickham features a craggy gorge that needs to be carried before any further progress can be made. In still weather or with a favourable breeze, the carry is a cinch; into a gusty headwind it might be the toughest shot of the round.



OCEAN DUNES, 2ND HOLE, 280-METRE PAR 4
A hole with one of the most ingenious green complexes in golf. The short second features a wide but shallow green that's hidden in a bowl between two sand dunes. Even short pitch shots might not reveal the target, unless the golfer has taken a bold play from the tee and driven all the way down to the throat of the green on its right edge.



OCEAN DUNES, 4TH HOLE, 131-METRE PAR 3
A short but white-knuckle ride across a cove in the ocean to a two-chambered green on the other side. Right-side pin positions are the most demanding, although in volatile weather simply having a legitimate second shot might be considered an achievement.



CAPE WICKHAM, 9TH HOLE, 488-METRE PAR 5
The island's best par 5 starts from an elevated tee where the wind is impossible to escape before the fairway trundles downhill towards a small green with danger on all flanks other than the open front-right corner. Most eye-catching is the sandy gulch left of the green, which is never truly out of play until your ball is safely aboard the putting surface.



CAPE WICKHAM, 10TH HOLE, 327-METRE PAR 4
A steeper version of the previous fairway, Cape Wickham's 10th falls towards a green with multiple segments and where the pin position will dictate the ideal line in. Yet the architects haven't been cruel, shaping the surrounding contours to help feed balls to any portion of the green.

OCEAN DUNES, 10TH HOLE, 204-METRE PAR 3

The 10th tee at Ocean Dunes is one piece of King Island where golf takes place literally at the shore's edge. With waves lapping at the side of the tee, golfers need a strong shot to find the green in regulation, but plenty of bail-out locations exist for a more timid play



CAPE WICKHAM, 11TH HOLE, 136-METRE PAR 3

Here's a short hole with a variety of teeing grounds, one set high above the green and others along the rocky shoreline in a similar fashion to Ocean Dunes' 10th tee. Depending on which tee you play from, you might face two entirely different shots towards the green.



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CAPE WICKHAM, 17TH HOLE, 164-METRE PAR 3

The cove-side setting is the obvious attraction of the penultimate hole at Cape Wickham, but sometimes not evident upon first viewing are the intricacies of the green, which has a pronounced hump in it that places extra incentive on accuracy when coming aboard the target and raises the difficulty level of many putts.



CAPE WICKHAM, 18TH HOLE, 395-METRE PAR 4

Arguably the best hole on King Island, the last at Cape Wickham wraps around Victoria Cove (which is an integral part of the course – you may play from its shore) and provides an easier angle to the green the closer one hugs the right edge of the fairway in what is a grandstand finish. **G**

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