



Golf's Ultimate Eighteen

Steve Eubanks

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Most golfers have a favorite course that holds a special attraction or place in their memory. Perhaps it's been the site of a frustratingly dismal morning or a spectacular once-in-a-lifetime round. But what if a golfer had to choose one hole that was tops on his list? That is exactly the question Steve Eubanks put to some of the most famous professional golfers such as Arnold Palmer, Amy Alcott, and Jack Nicklaus. The result is *Golf's Ultimate Eighteen*, a collection of eighteen professional golfers' choices for the supreme individual holes on courses around the world.

Palmer selected Hole One at Cherry Hills Country Club as his favorite opening hole, while other courses featured include Oakmont (Hole Three), Pinehurst (Hole Five), Royal Troon (Hole Eight), Augusta (Holes Twelve and Fifteen) and Pebble Beach (Hole Eighteen). The contributors, of course, have played the best courses in the world, so when they pick a hole as one that is especially noteworthy, it must be truly exceptional.

Eubanks, who has penned over thirty books and written for publications such as *Sports Illustrated*, *Golf World*, and *Golf Magazine*, doesn't simply provide a list of interesting holes. He starts each chapter with a brief introduction of the featured golfer and then lets the player explain why he or she chose that hole as a favorite. Often it was the spot of a turning point in a major tournament that led to a trophy, or perhaps where a heartbreaking defeat resulted. Either way, the stories are engaging and share the pros' insights on how to approach shots on difficult courses. Many of the tips and inside pointers can be used by any golfer at any level.

For each hole, Eubanks relates historical tidbits on the course and examples of how the hole factored into exciting past tournaments. He generally uses tournament references within the last thirty years, but he does sprinkle in stories of earlier players like Ben Hogan and Bobby Jones. Precise diagrams of each hole are very helpful for visualizing the setting. The lavish color photography is not merely illustrative, but also artistic with excellent views from different spots on the course.

Golf's Ultimate Eighteen accomplishes the difficult task of combining interesting stories, useful information, and top-quality photography to create a treat for both the mind and the eyes. Perhaps this is a book best kept for those moments when one wonders why one bothers to play golf. Sometimes it's refreshing to put aside the instructional books and just enjoy the beauty and lore of a great game.

JEFF FRIEND (August 26, 2010)

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