

# #1 The 5th at Anstruther

**Where is it?** Anstruther, Fife.

**Why it's so tough:** **the inside story**

You're firing blind from an elevated tee to a tiny sloping green, nearly 240 yards away, sitting next to the dark, jagged rocks of the Firth of Forth. Oh, and the fairway is pencil-slim and, like the green, falls away to the sea. There's also knee-high rough and the wind is always against you. No wonder most locals play it as a par four – bogey is a great result here.

Anstruther club captain David Boyter knows 'The Rockies' as well as anyone and says: "If you come off it with a par, you've done well, very well. Only the really good, brave or daft actually go for the green if the wind is blowing. There's trouble everywhere.

"It's a total card wrecker. And the unfortunate thing is, being a nine-hole course, you have to play it twice!"

On a calm day, good players hit a mid-iron. In the wind it's either 3-wood or driver. And that's for competent players. The only saving grace is that there are no bunkers – this hole simply doesn't need them.

A measure of The Rockies' toughness can be gauged from the fact that, some years ago, a player went on to clinch the club championship despite taking a ten at the hole. On another occasion, in a mixed foursomes event, a lady player well known for her air shots turned to her partner for advice. He advised her to miss it. She duly obliged and the man proceeded to try his luck off the tee!

The Rockies has yielded three holes in one, but most players are left either cursing their fate or admiring the views across the Firth of Forth.

Try your luck – if you dare.

## Real golfers' verdicts

We asked golfers how they fared when we visited:

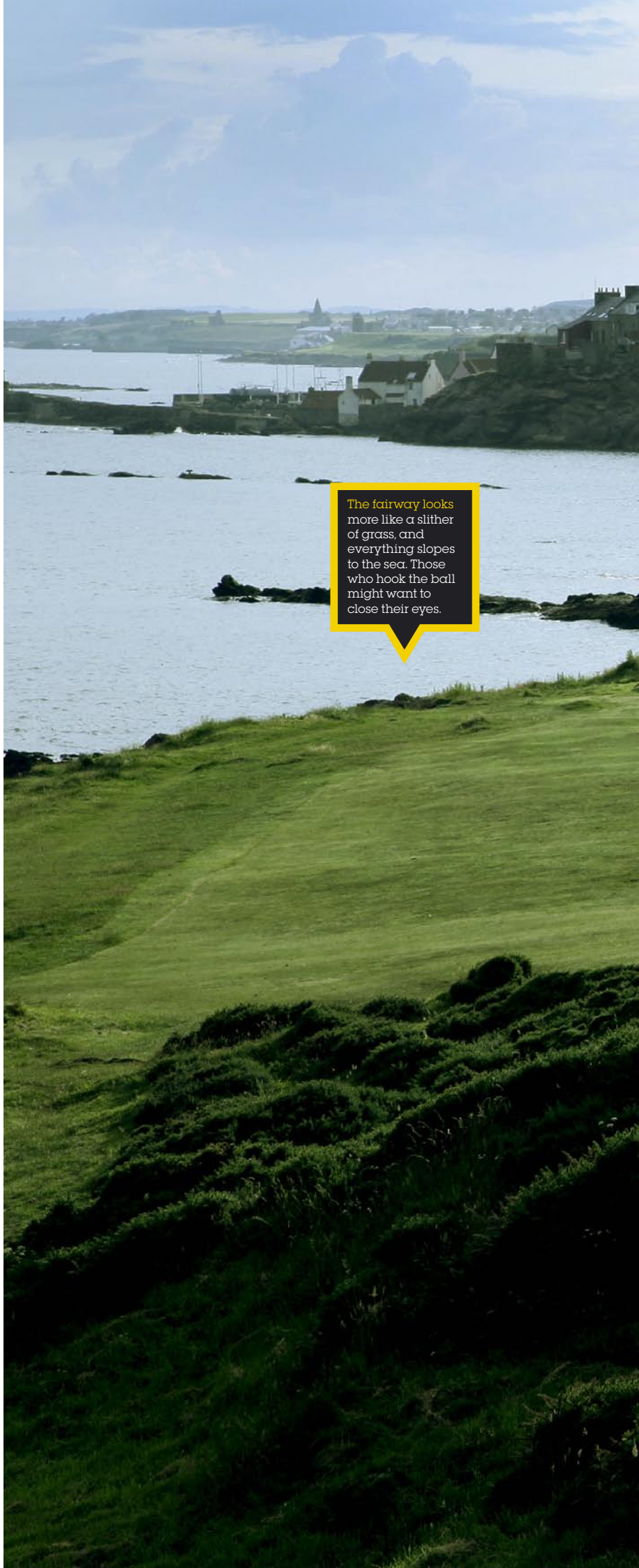
- ★ **Nicola Gemmell and Janet Thomson.** "It's a par 4 for ladies, which makes it a little easier." Scores: Four/Four.
- ★ **George Hay and Kenny Dunsire.** "Everybody dreads it. If we had £1 for every ball we've lost on that hole, we'd be rich men." Scores: Five/Four.
- ★ **Alan Berty and Stuart Muir.** "You just play it as a par four." Scores: Five/Seven.
- ★ **Don Scott.** "I'm a high handicapper, so I don't take any risks: I play it along the top level and then chip down to the green," Scores: Six.
- ★ **TG Courses Editor Kevin Brown.** "For once, I feel quite satisfied with a double bogey!" Score: Five.

## Vital statistics

**Length:** 235 yards. **Stroke index:** 2. **Location:** Nine miles south of St Andrews. **Green fee:** £14 for nine holes, £20 for 18 holes. **Contact:** 01333 310956, [www.anstruther.co.uk](http://www.anstruther.co.uk)



Many TG readers say this is the UK's toughest par 3 – we agree.



The fairway looks more like a slither of grass, and everything slopes to the sea. Those who hook the ball might want to close their eyes.

The green itself is small, and it is half-hidden from the tee. Hit it long and you'll have to pray for a kind bounce off those dark rocks.

Strong sea winds and knee-high rough add to the fun. "Only the really good, brave or daft go for the green," says club pro David Boyter.

There are no bunkers on this par 3 - it doesn't need any.