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**ALEX HAINDL /  
MARC CAYEUX /  
HEINZ WINCKLER /  
ERIK VAN ROOYEN /  
+ COURSE OF THE MONTH:  
LANGEBAAN  
COUNTRY ESTATE**

# BRANDEN GRACE

**AFRICA'S MAJOR HAS  
FINALLY COME HOME!**

**ALSO: THE LONGEST HOLE 2 MEN. 2 011KM. 80 DAYS. 20 093 STROKES**

**+ RULES  
FITNESS  
COLUMNS  
EQUIPMENT  
INSTRUCTION**

December 2017 | R34.90 | Other countries R30.61



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# WEST COAST WINNER

Situated some 130km to the north of Cape Town, this course provides an all-round enjoyable experience. By **Mark Sampson**

IMAGES: MARK SAMPSON

The 18th



The 2nd

HOLE	YARDAGE	PAR	STROKE
1	358	4	1
2	335	4	9
3	188	3	11
4	454	5	17
5	362	4	7
6	145	3	13
7	394	4	5
8	494	5	15
9	405	4	3
<b>Out</b>	<b>3 135</b>	<b>36</b>	
10	328	4	6
11	114	3	18
12	469	5	16
13	399	4	4
14	338	4	12
15	364	4	2
16	158	3	10
17	320	4	8
18	416	5	14
<b>In</b>	<b>2 906</b>	<b>36</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6 041</b>	<b>72</b>	

was out of kilter and in 2006 it was decided to commission Gary Player's Black Knight Design company to redesign it. They made numerous changes and added a number of large waste bunkers and a massive water feature in front of the clubhouse to divide the 10th and 18th holes. Most importantly, the tees and greens were upgraded and are now a feature of the course. The greens are generally large and don't have excessive slopes, which allows for golfers to manage the wind a bit better.

The course meanders through the estate with houses set well back. Only 25% of the land is allocated to plots and building is restricted to 50% of the erf.

At 6 041m, the course is no monster, but in windy conditions some of the holes can play exceptionally long. Off the back tees, for tournaments, the course stretches 6 359m.

From the start, Langebaan sets the tone with the stroke one. At 358m, it is a challenge as it is played into the teeth of the prevailing south-easter rising from tee to the green. A fairway bunker right is the main concern off the tee box, so favour the left side of the fairway. A medium- to long-iron will be left to

**he west coast of South Africa runs for about 780km - from Cape Town to the Namibian border.**

It is generally dry due to the climate controlled by the cold waters of the Atlantic Ocean, with a countryside consisting mainly of fynbos and renosterveld.

Compared to the rest of the country, it is a vastly underpopulated area with few towns. Saldanha Bay is the main city on the coastline, surrounded by numerous smaller towns like Yzerfontein, Paternoster, Velddrif, Hopefield, Vredenberg and Darling. Many of these are primarily tourist destinations with nature, wild flowers and wine being the main attractions.

Of all the West Coast getaways, Langebaan is undoubtedly the most popular, with many activities on offer, stemming from the massive lagoon favoured by boaters, kite-boarders and fishermen.

The stunning West Coast National Park is just a drive and chip down the road, while the town itself has numerous shops and restaurants. At the centre of the growing metropolis and playing a major part in its growth is the aptly named Langebaan Country Estate.

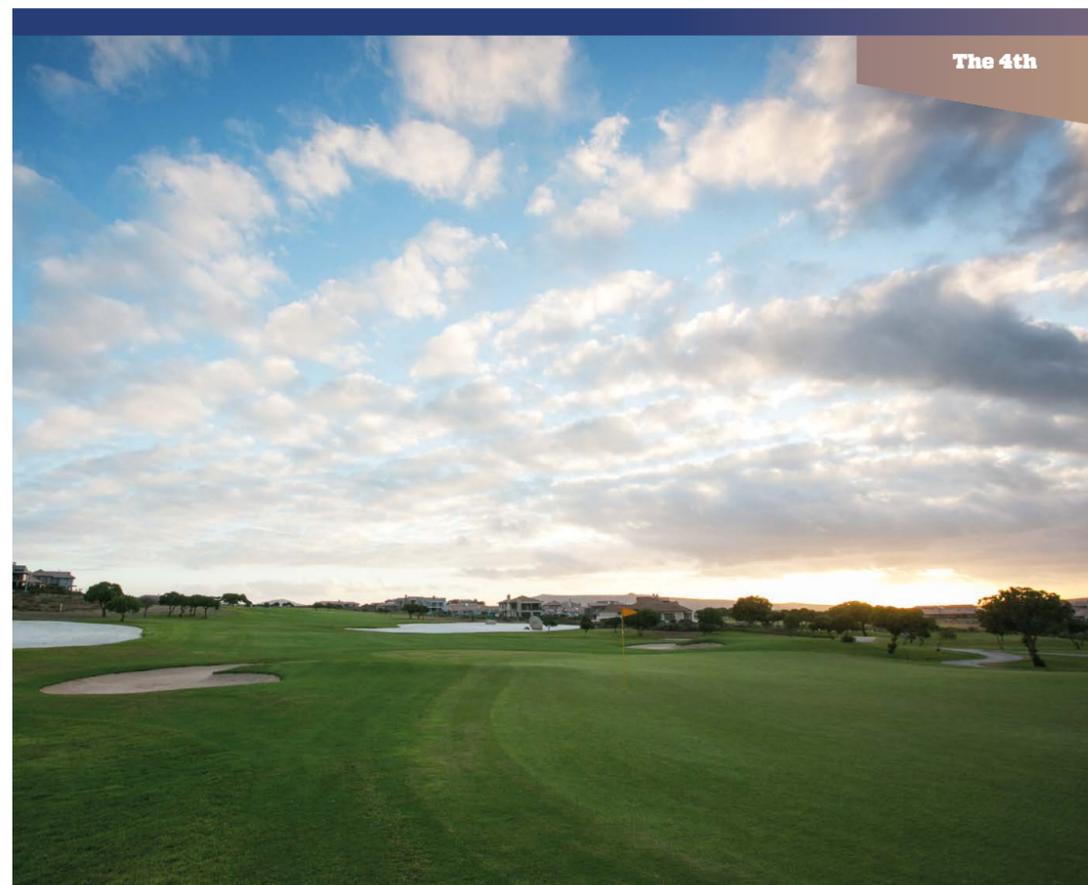
From humble beginnings, and not without some trying times along the way, this estate is going from strength to strength. It is continuously updating and upgrading its facilities, which include golf, housing and general activities.

According to the estate's CEO, Craig Scott, most of the plots have been sold and they are in discussions to open another section and add a retirement village. In terms of recreation, trail-running and mountain-biking routes have been created, not only for home owners but also for the general public. Scott emphasises that the estate and golf course welcome visitors.

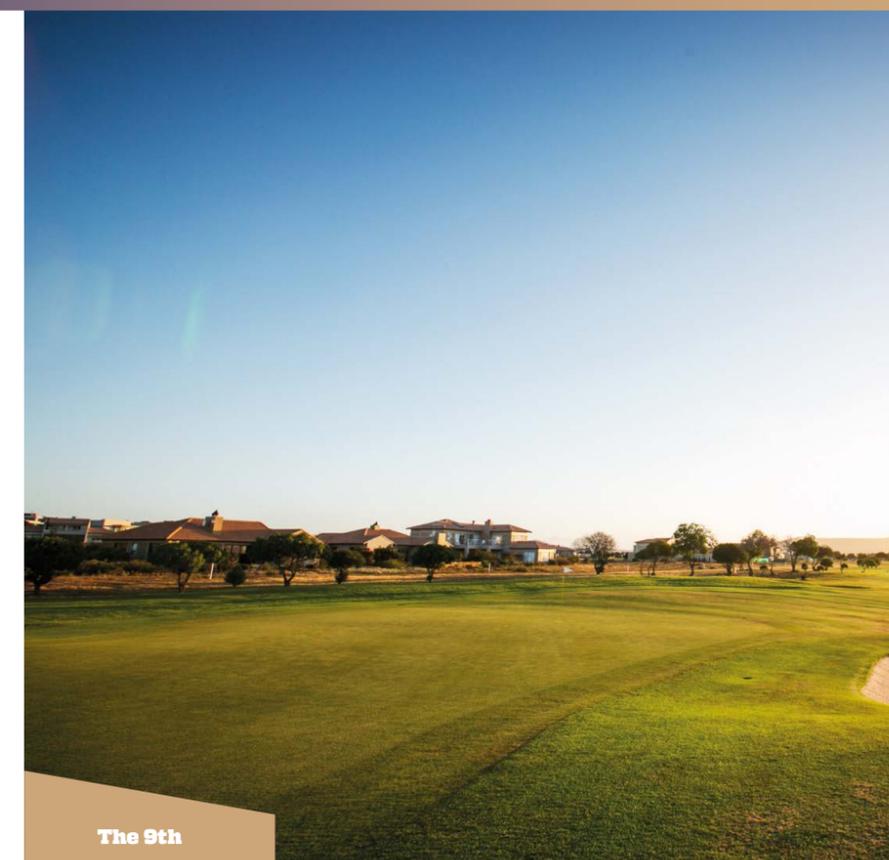
On the edge of the West Coast reserve, the estate maintains high standards on and off the course to promote local fauna and flora. There are strict guidelines for new houses when introducing plants to the garden: they have to be indigenous and endemic. The course has numerous environmentally sensitive areas - which are strictly off-limits to golfers and home owners - to help stabilise the local flora and to seed neighbouring areas.

Several 'green' corridors have also been established to allow springbok, bontebok and other small mammals freedom of movement.

Since the estate opened its doors in 2003, it has matched and influenced the growth of the Langebaan area. The golf course, initially designed by Bill Kerr,



The 4th



The 9th

The 13th



the green with its surface protected by a bunker left and right. A par here signifies a solid start.

The signature hole is the 7th. Check out the pro tip (on page 67) on how to walk away unscathed from this 394m par four.

The 13th is a typical risk-and-reward hole into which Black Knight put a lot of thought. Totalling 399m in length, it is long, but played with the wind it is manageable. A strong dogleg right to left, it can be shortened over the corner, but a waste bunker and several trees await a mis-hit shot. Go too long and two fairway bunkers on the right side will make for a tough par. A medium-iron should be left to the gently sloping green protected by a bunker front left and back right. It's a great hole, all things considered.

The 18th is a grand finish to the round with water left of the fairway. At 416m, it is a rather tame par five, hence its stroke rating of 14. Water is a danger off the tee box, so keeping the ball on the right of the fairway is advisable, leaving a lay-up for most. The lay-up area is not the widest, so check the yardage and keep in mind what your favourite approach distance is before going for it.

Greenside, a bunker between the green and water is the only protection if you go left, with

another bunker on the right. The green slopes from back to front, but shouldn't present any major challenges. It's a definite birdie opportunity for the longer hitters.

Aside from fun and enjoyment being the priority of the estate, its slogan of 'Live It, Love It' rings true throughout. Scott is adamant that while maintaining high standards, the estate opens its arms to all visitors, across all its facilities.

From a golfing perspective these include the new mashie course, which is fast proving a hit with the casual player who may be intimidated by the main course. A state-of-the-art driving range can accommodate 60 players at all levels. For those looking to learn the game, or the serious golfer wanting to improve, two indoor bays with a FlightScope meter are available. This enables the teaching staff, led by head professional Max Birkenhead, to analyse swings and illustrate what changes are needed. The estate also has a gym, conference facilities, bar and restaurant equipped to handle any occasion.

In terms of golf courses on the West Coast, outside Cape Town, the course at Langebaan Country Estate is without doubt the best along the entire stretch of coastline. ○

The 17th



## GREENFEES

**Members:**

**18 holes R135**

**9 holes R80**

**Affiliated:**

**18 holes R335**

**9 holes R210**

**Non-affiliated:**

**18 holes R495**

**9 holes R300**

**Students:**

**18 holes R160**

**Affiliated juniors (U18):**

**18 holes R125**

**Cart rental (visitors):**

**18 holes: R290**

**9 holes: R175**

## ROAD DISTANCES

(FROM, ESTIMATED)

**Cape Town: 132km**

**Port Elizabeth: 855km**

**Bloemfontein: 1 112km**

**Kimberley: 1 005km**

**East London: 1 092km**

**Johannesburg: 1 448km**

**Pretoria: 1 512km**

**Durban: 1 685km**

## RETURN FLIGHT PRICES

(ESTIMATES ONLY, TO CAPE TOWN INTL)

**Durban: R1 648**

**Johannesburg: R1 678**

**Bloemfontein: R1 878**

**East London: R2 478**

**Port Elizabeth: R2 818**

## GETTING THERE

**(From Cape Town): Take the N1 north. Turn left on to the R27 (Paarden Eiland turnoff). Continue along the R27 (West Coast Road) for approximately 100km until you reach the West Coast 1-Stop petrol station. Turn left towards Langebaan. Continue for 8km. The entrance is on your left.**

## ADDRESS

**1 Oostwal Road**

**Langebaan**

**7357**

**S33 04 20 E18 03 18**

## CONTACT DETAILS

**Golf lodges: (022) 772 2112**

**Clubhouse: (022) 772 2112**

**Pro shop: (022) 772 2498**

## WEBSITE

**langebaanestate.co.za**