

4* Radisson SAS Hôtel



The Radisson SAS Hotel in Sligo, formerly known as the Ballincar House Hotel, fuses together an old world charm, rugged countryside and dynamic design to create a haven of opulence and tranquility in a part of Ireland famed for its natural beauty. Located in the stunning Rosses Point area of Sligo, the hotel is just five minutes drive from Sligo Town Centre, while the area around the Radisson SAS Sligo is nothing less than a golfer's paradise with the three championships golf courses of Rosses Point, Enniscrone and Donegal all within easy reach of the hotel.

The hotel has 132 stylishly furnished deluxe guest rooms including three stunning Executive suites, seven junior suites, and 11 spacious Business Class rooms. The welcoming warm red decor of the bedrooms reflects the standard of service you will receive from the staff at the hotel. A number of the rooms offer guests stunning views of the renowned Benbulbin Mountain and Sligo Bay. Sligo itself is one of the most beautifully situated cities in Ireland, perfect for touring the varied and beautiful landscapes in both the surrounding countryside and counties. It has all the amenities and services needed by the visitor, art galleries, theatres, a museum, excellent new shops, restaurants and pubs, great traditional music and many links with the poet W.B Yeats.

DONEGAL GOLF CLUB

18 trous Par 73

Distance : **6552 m**

Création : **1959**

Architecte : **Eddie Hackett**



Donegal Golf Club was founded in 1959 and the first golf course and clubhouse was built on the edge of Donegal Town at Tullycullion. The land for this course was granted to the club for their use by the Temple family, owners of the Magee & Co. The club remained there until 1973.

In the early 70's some far-sighted members identified the links land of the Murvagh Peninsula as being more than suitable for a golf course.

The land was leased from the then Dept of Lands and Ireland's leading golf course designer at the time; Eddie Hackett (pictured right) was hired to design an 18-hole golf course on the Murvagh links. The course and new clubhouse was officially opened in 1976. Since then the course has undergone some changes with major remodelling at the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 9th, 12th, 13th, and 14th and the 4th is currently being redeveloped. Most of these changes were carried out under the direction of Mr Pat Ruddy.

In 1997 the original clubhouse was demolished and the current structure was officially opened in May 1998. The club and course has in the past hosted the Irish Ladies Close Championship in 1979 and again in 2003. More recently in 2004 the Men's Irish Close Championship was held here, won by the European Amateur Champion, Brian McElhinney

In June 2004 Donegal Golf Club had the honour of hosting the the Irish Amateur Close Championship. This is the premier amateur golf event in the country and is confined to Irish amateurs.

A testament to the challenge of Donegal Golf Club, after two qualifying medal rounds Gareth Maybin of Ballclare Golf Club led on one under par, with rounds of 72-73, for a total of 145. Playing with Michael McGeady of North -West on Sunday 13th of June, Noel Fox of Portmarnock, one of Ireland's leading amateurs carded the only sub-70 round (a superb 69) to finish on level par 146 for the two rounds. The 64 leading qualifiers took part in a matchplay event and the European Amateur Champion; Brian McElhinney (North-West Golf Club) made it through to the final and emerged victorious by one hole. Noel Fox was surprisingly beaten 7/6 in the third round by Alistair McKinley of Shandon Park Golf Club.

Noel Fox's 69 in the second qualifying round of the Irish Close Championship stands today as the course record for Donegal Golf Club and is there to be beaten.

ENNISCRONE GOLF CLUB

18 trous Par **73**

Distance : **6253 m**

Création : **1918**

Architecte : **Eddie Hackett** in **1974** and by **Donald Steel** in **2001**



Founded in 1918, redesigned by Eddie Hackett in 1974 and by Donald Steel in 2001, this championship course is one of Ireland's finest links courses.

Enniscrone Golf Club has been listed in **12th place** in Ireland in a new ranking of links courses. The latest list of Ireland's top courses features in the 2008 spring edition of Backspin magazine where Links/Shoreline courses are ranked separately to Parkland/Inland courses. This is the first time that this separation has taken place in ranking courses.

Editor, Denis O Donoghue assembled a panel of 52 voters, Ryder Cup, Walker Cup and Curtis Cup players, championship winners, PGA Irish region competitors, members of the Irish golfing media and other Irish golf personalities. Each nominated their 15 favourite courses in the two categories. Points were awarded in descending order from 250 for a first choice to 50 for 15th choice. Well done to Enniscrone - now ranked number 3 of the North and West Coast Links Group.

CARNE GOLF CLUB

18 trous Par 72

Distance : **5507 m**

Ouvert au jeu : **1925**

Architecte : **Eddie Hackett**



Carne Golf Links lies in magnificent unspoiled sand dunes overlooking Blacksod Bay and the wild Atlantic Ocean near Belmullet Co. Mayo in the west of Ireland. Carne was the last links course to be designed by the late Eddie Hackett and it is now believed by many who have played it to his greatest challenge.

The building of Carne has caused little disturbance to this wild and ancient landscape. Tees and greens occurred naturally and very little earth moving was involved in the course construction. There are some breathtaking views over the Atlantic and the legendary islands of Inis Glóire and Inis Géidhe.

CO SLIGO GOLF LINKS

18 trous Par **71**

Distance : **5522 m**

Ouvert au jeu : **1894**

Architecte : **George Combe (first nine) and William Campbell (last nine). In 1927 H. COLT redesigned the course**



County Sligo Golf Club is situated at Rosses Point, a seaside village eight kilometres north west of Sligo town, and is one of the oldest and best known links courses in Ireland. Founded in 1894 on land leased from Henry Middleton, an uncle of W.B Yeats the famous poet and Nobel Prize winner for literature and his brother Jack B Yeats the noted landscape painter.

The links are set out on one of the most scenic locations - bounded by the Atlantic Ocean on the west; Benbulbin dominates the view on the northern skyline and bears a striking resemblance to Cape Town's Table Mountain. To the east Glencar valley and the Dartary mountains with Lugnagall and Truskmore, while the southern vista is completed by Knocknarea topped by a large Cairn of stones reputed to be the grave of the 'Warrior Queen Meave of Connaught'.

The club owes its existence to Lieutenant Colonel James Campbell who chaired the first meeting of the club on the 18th of October 1894 and became its first captain. Harper Campbell Perry became the first Hon Secretary and with the assistance of Author Jackson, these three are regarded as the founding fathers of the club. The proposed location of the links was Henry Middleton's land at Rosses Point.



James Campbell was familiar with this piece of ground because the Sligo militia, of which he was a Lt. Col, held their annual summer camps on the flat ground of Bomore. They also practised their artillery skills against the waves of the Atlantic from gun emplacements on Bomore Point. It is generally believed that the officers played golf over a few rudimentary holes laid out by army personnel long before the formal laying out of the course. Incidentally Bomore was also the venue for Sligo Races for many years as it was a natural amphitheatre for spectators who lined the high ground along the present fifth tee.





James Campbell invited George Combe to lay out the first nine holes at Rosses Point. Combe was a scratch golfer, the first honorary secretary of the Golfing Union of Ireland of which he was a founder member in 1891, and set up the world's first handicap system in 1896. He laid out the first nine holes around the current clubhouse and Greenlands. His early association with the club has been perpetuated by his presentation of a silver cup in 1896. The Combe Cup is still played for today and is one of the oldest golf trophies in existence.

The original lease for the links was for one year, and was very close to not being renewed. Henry Middleton was a reclusive man who took exception to members playing golf in the vicinity of his house and made efforts to have them removed in 1895. Thus Co. Sligo Golf Club would have ceased to exist were it not for the persistence and the diplomacy of James Campbell and Harper Campbell Perry who between them smoothed the troubled waters and negotiated a further ten-year lease for the land. Eventually in 1912 they agreed with Henry Middleton to accept honorary membership of the club, thus ending the long running dispute and ensuring the future of the club.

In 1906 the club decided to increase the number of holes from nine to eighteen. This task was entrusted to Captain William Campbell, a step brother of James. He was a scratch golfer and a distinguished polo player, a more than useful soccer player and a member of Royal Dublin Golf Club as well as the Cambridge Golf Society. His design abandoned some of the Combe holes and explored new territory along the sand dunes out as far as the present 12th hole.



Until this time the committee met in a room rented in Thomas Ewing's Hotel situated along side the links. By 1912 it was deemed appropriate to build a new clubhouse to compliment the revised eighteen hole layout. The services of George O'Connor, the noted Dublin architect were engaged and he designed a pavilion type clubhouse on the Tudor style and this distinctive facade is a feature of the clubhouse to this day.



In 1923 the club inaugurated the West of Ireland Championship. The first winner was Larry Vernon, husband of Amy Ormsby the most celebrated Co. Sligo lady golfer who won the Irish and South African ladies championships. The West of Ireland brought top golfers from Ireland and overseas to the club to compete for the championship. It was considered that

the links did not offer a stern enough challenge to these top players, so in 1927 the committee decided to upgrade the course. The services of the renowned golf course architect Harry S Colt, whose repertoire included the design of courses such as Sunningdale, Wentworth, Royal Lytham & St Annes, St Andrews Eden and Pine Valley in the US was recommended.

Shortly afterwards the club received an offer from the course design company 'Hawtree & Taylor' quoting a lower design fee and the committee offered them the commission stressing that an early start date was essential. When 'Hawtree & Taylor' were unable to meet the requirements, the firms of 'Colt, MacKenzie, and Allison & Morrison' were appointed. Harry Colt started work in June of 1927 when he pegged out the location of tees and greens. Work started immediately on the construction of the new course. He proposed a radical change from the Campbell course favouring an anti clockwise layout similar to his designs at Royal Lytham and St Andrews Eden course. He is reputed to have been influenced by the layout of St Andrews Old course and his design at Co. Sligo is uncannily similar.

Colt was a strategic designer who used the natural contours of the ground rather than move large amounts of earth. He had an artistic flair, had an aversion to straight lines and abhorred blind shots. He also favoured subtle changes in direction so that as you leave a green the next hole takes you on a different orientation. These design characteristics are subtly incorporated into the design at Co. Sligo. Colt's greens were contoured to facilitate natural drainage, a feature that caused much concern for the members of the time when first introduced. Not being accustomed to putting on undulating surfaces the members lobbied the links committee to reduce the contours to more manageable proportions. The seventeenth green presented special problems due to the large amount of excavation needed in the days prior to mechanical excavation. So what we now know as the treacherous seventeenth green did not come into play until 1931.

Thus the development of the new course was completed (in 1931) and at this time Harry Colt was contacted to provide a bunkering plan. Having agreed the fee the committee was surprised when Captain Hugh Allison arrived with a letter from Colt stating that as he had no engagements in Ireland at that time he was sending his assistant to carry out the work. This created a unique design situation with Colt responsible for the course layout and Allison taking credit for the bunkering arrangement. Allison was noted for his deeper bunkers and with a high ridge line to be negotiated for a successful exit. Colt on the other hand favoured shallow bunkers. Hence Allison was known as "humps and bumps" by his colleagues for his tendency to incorporate mounds in the centre of greens he designed.

County Sligo's most outstanding golfer was the late Cecil Ewing. Winner of the West of Ireland on ten occasions, twice winner of the Irish Close and Irish Open Amateur Championship, runner up in the British Amateur Championship, six times selected for the Walker Cup team - a member of the winning team in 1938 and he also represented Ireland on sixteen occasions. When taking into account the fact that there were no international events between 1939 and 1946 this is a remarkable achievement. He was captain of County Sligo in 1950 and again in 1961 but he also represented Portmarnock G.C. with whom he won three Barton Shields and five Senior Cup medals. He was Captain of the Irish team on ten occasions and an Irish International and Walker Cup selector for many years. He also achieved honour of being selected as the President of the Golfing Union of Ireland in 1970. His untimely death in 1973 was mourned by the entire golfing community and non-golfers alike. Cecil Ewing's legacy is unparalleled and is unlikely to be equalled.



The club has hosted many prestigious events over the years. It is home to the West of Ireland Championship which is held each Easter. The club has hosted the Irish Close Championship as well as the Interprovincial and the Home International Championships which were staged here in 1991 when Ireland won the Raymond Trophy.

It's now over 100 years since the club's inception and Harry Shapland Colt's classic course design has stood the test of time, so that even with today's advances in golf technology and coaching, it still offers a stern test for even the most accomplished golfer.