

TAKE IT FROM JOE

10 U.S. OPEN-WORTHY PUBLIC COURSES

With Chambers Bay and Erin Hills landing U.S. Opens, here are 10 more that have what it takes—but won't get the call

1 Pound Ridge, Pound Ridge, N.Y.
This brutal beauty from Pete and Perry Dye is loaded with wetlands, rock outcroppings, fescue-topped mounds and devilish greens. I played dang well from the 6,261-yard, 140-slope tees—and still lost five balls!
WHY NO OPEN: Too much regional competition from Winged Foot, Bethpage and Shinnecock.

2 French Lick Resort (Pete Dye), French Lick, Ind.
No joke: The 16th is a 300-yard par-3 with water—part of an 8,101-yard Pete Dye creation. Yanked drives leave you silly sidehill shots from the rough.
WHY NO OPEN: French Lick is too remote for the USGA's tastes.

3 Wolf Creek, Mesquite, Nev.
It serves up a 154 slope, thanks to more vertigo-inducing plunges than a Hitchcock movie. Each claustrophobic hole is hemmed in by sandstone canyon walls. A Jackson Pollock splatter of bunkers and water makes this course a wild work of art.
WHY NO OPEN: June temperatures can hit 110 degrees.

4 Ko'olau, Kaneohe, Oahu, Hawaii
Ko'olau must mean "forced carry" in Hawaiian, because you'll face an endless supply on this Dick Nugent design, which plays every inch of its 7,310 yards.
WHY NO OPEN: Jungle-filled ravines and the USGA go together like lei necklaces and blue blazers.

5 Doral (Jim McLean), Doral, Fla.
Three "USGA-friendly" (translation: spirit-crushing) par 4s open this 2009 Jim McLean redesign of the Silver course. Beware the island-green par-3 14th.
WHY NO OPEN: Miami in June. LeBron's team is called the Heat for a reason.



VIEW TO A SPILL The watery par-3 14th at Doral's McLean course.



FAST & FURIOUS Speedy greens help make Pound Ridge U.S. Open-tough.

6 Trump National Los Angeles, Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif.
The ocean views impress while Trump's 7,242-yard track brutalizes, with ball-swallowing environmental areas and smack-down par 4s.
WHY NO OPEN: If the Donald ever lands a major, it'll be his New Jersey course.

7 Grand Traverse Resort (The Bear), Acme, Mich.
Scotland meets PGA National at this Jack Nicklaus test (148 slope, 76.3 rating) featuring terraced fairways, mounds, pot bunkers and 10 holes with water.
WHY NO OPEN: Oakland Hills will nab any Open coming Michigan's way.

10 Broadmoor (Mountain), Colorado Springs, Colo.
The 7,637-yardage seems manageable at 6,000 feet—until it literally takes your breath away. This 2006 Nicklaus creation offers long carries, pinched fairways and major-caliber greens.
WHY NO OPEN: The more walkable East course would get the USGA nod.

MY TWO CENTS

HOT VALUES IN THE DESERT SOUTHWEST

Whether you're in Scottsdale, Palm Springs or Tucson, hotel rates and green fees plummet come summer. Sure, it's over 100 degrees, but the June humidity is around 10 percent, making golf, especially morning rounds, comfortable. Here's where to play—and save. At the **Fairmont Scottsdale Princess** (480-585-4848, fairmont.com/scottsdale) in Scottsdale, Ariz., the rooms that run \$49 in March can be had for \$79 in June. Golf at its TPC Scottsdale Stadium course tumbles to \$75. The **JW Marriott Desert Springs** (760-341-2211, desert Springs.resort.com) in Palm Desert, Calif., features rates of \$129, with green fees \$60 to \$100 cheaper than in high season. At The **Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain** (520-572-3000, ritzcarlton.com/dovemountain) in the Tucson area, June rates start at \$189, and green fees start at a very reasonable \$79.