

Michigan designer Tom Doak is known for his minimalist, lay-of-the-land philosophy, and no course better represents it than High Pointe, his first solo design and still the truest to his art.

Few holes at High Pointe are more lay-of-the-land than the 13th, which plays off an elevated tee over a field of bracken ferns to a twisting, pitching fairway edged by a spruce forest, then downhill to a wide, two-level green fashioned from the natural contours of the land. The hole always seems to play longer than its listed length, but the firm fescue fairway and the open access to the green allow low, running shots to reach the target.

The green complex is the most interesting aspect of the hole. The right half slopes from back to front. The left half is considerably lower, and the two are separated by a dramatic slope. When the pin is on the left, the proper shot is to hit at the top of the slope and let the ball feed down to the hole. That's easier said than done. Hot approach shots often traverse the slope and finish in a deep bunker behind the green, or in a chipping area, of fairway-height cut, to the left of the putting surface.

If you play this hole often enough, sooner or later you learn how to bump-and-run approach shots. It's the way the game used to be played.