

A Golfing Tour of the United Kingdom

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Every year a few doughty American golfers have a go at the British golf championships. In 1952, their number soared above forty. In addition, hundreds travel abroad every year. There will be a special lure this year, the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II on June 2. The date falls conveniently between the British Amateur Championship at Hoylake, May 25-30, the British Women's Championship at Royal Porthcawl, June 22-26, and the British Open Championship at Carnoustie, July 6-11.

The ambitious pilgrim also can take in the French Amateur at Chantilly, June 4-7, or the French Women's at St. Cloud, June 12-14.

Many who go to witness the pomp and circumstance of the coronation thus can enjoy a golfing holiday.

One does not have to be a championship contender, however, to enjoy the better known courses which should be part of the itinerary of the golf lover in Great Britain.

In the London Area

In the London area there are many fine courses which are easily reached by car or suburban train. Perhaps the best known is *Sunningdale*, 22 miles from Hyde Park Corner. The Old Course, scene of Bob Jones' 66 in the qualifying rounds for the British Open of 1926, is one of the world's great inland courses and will remind Americans of Pine Valley with a touch of heather. The New Course, a little longer, has replaced the Old for tournaments. The two courses combine to challenge the tiger golfers and provide as fine a test of inland golf as can be found anywhere in the world. Other fine courses near London include *Coombe Hill*, near New Malden; *Moor Park*, at Rickmansworth, and *Wentworth*, at Vir-

ginia Water, which is to be the scene of the 1953 Ryder Cup Match, October 2 and 3.

A little more than two hours southeast of London, on the Kent coast of the English Channel, lie three of England's storied seaside courses. The golfers' bible surely must contain a verse stating that God created the East coast of Kent as a Garden of Eden for golfers. *Royal St. George's* and *Prince's*, at Sandwich, and *Royal Cinque Ports*, at Deal, are ideal seaside links. *St. George's* and Deal have been the scenes of many British Amateur and Open Championships. At *St. George's* in 1922, Hagen won his first British Open. *Prince's* has been completely rebuilt on the same ground and is said to be superior to its prewar predecessor. The Guilford Hotel at Deal is within taxi or walking distance of all three courses.

Leaving England and traveling northward along the North Sea coast, a golfer comes to the south shore of the Firth of Forth and the Scottish seaside links of *North Berwick*, *Muirfield* and *Gullane*. The first of these was put to various military uses during the war and has since been revitalized. *Gullane* has three fine, 18-hole courses. The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers, founded in 1744, has played at *Muirfield* since 1891, and this course is considered one of the grandest and most difficult tests in the British Isles. All three clubs are separated by not more than six or eight miles and can be reached by bus from Edinburgh in less than an hour.

Crossing the Firth of Forth and proceeding northeast, the golfer comes to *St. Andrews*, in Fifeshire. It is here that the *Royal and Ancient Golf Club* and its ancestor, the Society of *St. Andrews* Golfers, have existed continuously since 1754. The Old Course at *St. Andrews*

is the most famous in the world. It is here that the ruling body of British golf has sat for almost two centuries. It is here Old Tom Morris had his shop and here that Bob Jones took the first trick in his Grand Slam of 1930. From the first tee of the Old Course, Francis Ouimet drove himself in as the only American captain of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club. The very air enveloping this bit of Scotland smacks of golf. The Old Course at St. Andrews is an absolute must for a golfing pilgrim.

North of St. Andrews is *Carnoustie*, within motoring distance of Dundee. The championship course is among the most rugged tests of golf and will be the scene of this year's British Open Championship. Another course, the Burnside, while not quite so difficult, is nevertheless very fine.

If the traveler has the time, a trip to *Lossiemouth*, on the south coast of the Firth of Moray, and to *Dornoch*, far north, is worth-while. Both provide wonderful golf and picturesque scenery.

In the central highlands of Scotland is a resort hotel of international renown, *Gleneagles*. Two fine inland courses, set in the matchless highland scenery, can provide a complete golfing holiday in themselves.

Southward along the west coast of Scotland, past Glasgow and Ayr, is an area in which thousands of United States aircraft landed after ferry trips during World War II. Before the B-17s and Commodores came, there had been golf at its best on the seaside links of *Troon*, *Prestwick* and *Turnberry*. Many British championships have been played at Troon and Prestwick. In fact, the British Open was held at Prestwick from 1860 through 1872, the first twelve years of its playing. Anent Turnberry, Henry Longhurst, the British golf writer, refers to it as his favorite seaside course for a golfing holiday.

Moving southward again into Lancashire, one comes to Blackpool, the Atlantic City of England. Nearby is *Royal*

Lytham and St. Anne's, set in an unprepossessing, built-up area a few hundred yards from the Irish Sea. Don't let the setting deceive you. Here is one of the greatest golf courses of them all. Here Bob Jones won his first British Open in 1926. The iron with which he made his historic second shot of 175 yards from a bunker to the middle of the seventeenth green in the fourth round still hangs in the clubhouse.

South of Blackpool are *Formby* and *Birkdale*, two fine championship courses which can be reached easily by suburban train or bus from Liverpool. Just south of Liverpool, in Cheshire, is *Hoylake*, the course of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club. This was the home of John Ball, eight times British Amateur Champion, and Harold Hilton, the only English winner of our Amateur Championship. Here, too, Walter Hagen won his second British Open in 1924, and Jones took the second trick of his Grand Slam in 1930. The course can be reached in less than thirty minutes by train from Liverpool and ranks high in the list of famous courses.

If the golfing pilgrim contemplates a trip to Northern Ireland, he will be well repaid by playing *Portmarnock*, *Royal Portrush* and *Royal County Down*, which are quite according to British golfing tradition.

Natural Courses

Many clubs, particularly in Scotland, do not allow Sunday golf. St. Andrews, Carnoustie and certain other of the Scottish courses are open to the public, and it is well to engage your starting times well in advance.

Most of these courses have existed unchanged for more than half a century. They have about them a natural, rather than an artificial look. Climatic conditions, the roll of the ground, generous use of rough, sometimes even heather, are the chief hazards, rather than traps or trees. Few who play them escape the impression that here is golf at its best, created not by the hand of man but by the hand of God.