

The Difference between the Walker Cup Teams

C. Campbell Patterson and Charles L. Pierson, of the Kittansett Club, Marion, Mass., have analyzed the hole-by-hole scores made by the Walker Cup Teams there last summer and have developed the following most interesting conclusions regarding the two teams in particular and good amateur play in general:

The totals show that, by the members of both Walker Cup Teams at the Kittansett Club, 11 per cent of all the holes played were scored in birdies, 60 per cent in pars, 26 per cent in one over par and 3 per cent in two over par. One rather surprising result was that only one eagle was scored. The fact that so few holes were recorded in two over par may be partly due to the fact that the scorer usually gave the player the putt or even a short chip after the opponent had holed out for a win. Actually, some pars were recorded in this manner which probably would not have been pars in stroke play.

Jones' Theory

When Bob Jones was asked by two British players what, in general, he thought was wrong with their Team's game and why they had been defeated so soundly, one of his comments was that, from what he had seen at Kittansett, he thought that, although the British appeared to play shots as well as the Americans, they missed many more. He thought that a player of championship calibre can't expect to play as many poor shots not of a difficult nature as the British did in total and win.

The figures seem to bear out this keen observation. The United States Team scored only nine more birdies than the British. In view of the fact that United States as a Team led by a net margin of forty-seven holes, this birdie superiority by the United States does not appear large nor should it have prevented a closer match. However, the major difference shows up when the number of holes over par are compared. The British had

126 holes over par or 33 per cent of the total holes played, and the United States Team had only 92, or 24 per cent of the total holes played.

The Teams and The Wind

It has often been said that it was too bad that it did not blow hard during the matches because the British are used to the wind and would have had an advantage. It is true that the wind did not affect play much, but it did pick up a little several times and it was somewhat of a factor in the type of shot played on the more exposed holes, such as the thirteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth. It is of some interest to note that on these holes the Americans scored twenty-six pars and six birdies whereas the British scored fifteen pars and five birdies. This is not conclusive because the wind never was normal for Kittansett, but, as it is, the evidence does not support the claim that British play in the wind is superior.

One final remark might be made in reference to the ball as standardized by the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, Scotland, as compared to the larger ball played in the United States. The Rules of Golf provide, in international team competition, either ball may be used. Throughout the two days play, for the most part, the British stuck to the smaller ball whereas the Americans played the larger ball. It is probably fair to say that weather conditions experienced during the matches were about the average which might be expected at most inland courses in this country. Under such conditions, contrary to ideas of many of our golfers, the Americans did not appear to be at any marked disadvantage off the tees, and on approaches and around the green seemed to have the ball under better control. This of course is merely a general observation. It was unfortunate that we did not have our usually reliable winds which might have given a more interesting comparison of the two balls.