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# GOLF

## FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

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GLENN COLLETT

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**GOLF**  
**FOR YOUNG PLAYERS**







MISS GLENNA COLLETT



# GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

BY  
GLENN A. COLLETT  
WOMEN'S NATIONAL AMATEUR CHAMPION



*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS*

BOSTON  
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1926

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## FOREWORD

TEN years ago it was almost impossible for a girl to secure good coaching or help in any sport unless she lived near one of the few American country clubs of those days. Now there are many women proficient in sports — golf, tennis, swimming, hockey, basketball, and the others. Every girl, as well as boy, who believes in having a sound mind in a sound body can get help and encouragement.

I am glad that Miss Collett, whom I sincerely respect as a player, has given this excellent book about golf to girls and boys. Next to receiving a lesson from her, which is of course impossible, the best thing is to read these articles, and to resolve that you, too, will try hard to learn good games and to play them fairly and honorably.

ELEONORA RANDOLPH SEARS

[ v ]



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# GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS



## CHAPTER I

### AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER

As I travel from city to city and see so many boys and girls on the golf links and see so many others wielding homemade putter and cast-off driver, I have decided that the game which finds so much favor in my sight is fast coming to the fore and is winning a place of its own in our American homes, and that the brassies and the mashies are finding their proper place alongside the baseball bats and the hockey sticks in any convenient corner of the home.

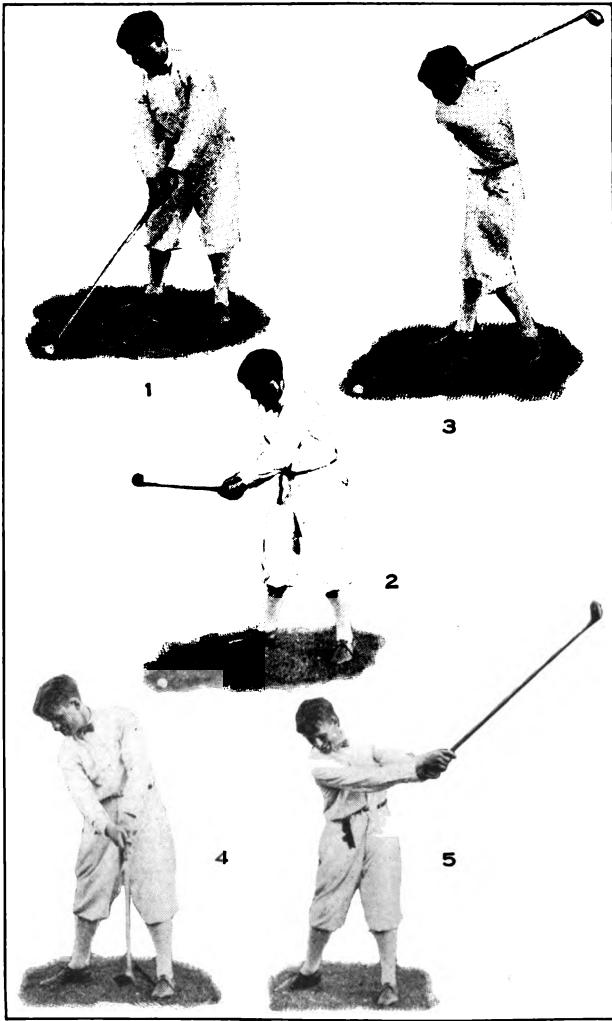
At the foot of that ladder of golf which leads to the heights of a championship, I was much like any other beginner at the game. I dreamed very little about championships and victories. There is something quite natural about a youngster taking to this game, for there is a big stick with

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which to make a lusty hit, there is a quiet, demure and rather harmless-looking ball to whack, and there is a wide expanse over which to roam. All these appealed to me, and added to that was the attraction of being with my father. He was fond of the game, and I liked to be with him; and I owe everything to his help and encouragement.

I often wished, long before I ever took up the game of golf, that I might be a caddy, principally because I could then accompany my father over the links and be a help rather than a hindrance.

Now that I am older I still might be wishing that I had begun as a caddy, for it must be a great and glorious feeling to write about how you began at the very foot of the ladder and climbed up every rung to success at the summit. But I am not in a class with bank presidents and the like who began as office boys and made great men of themselves; nor yet am I like our great Abraham Lincoln; for such men have risen to fame and prominence in a line of work while mine



### BOBBY JONES DRIVING

1. Soling the club
2. Half-way back — eyes on the ball
3. Ready to swing through — perfect balance obtained by pivoting from the hips
4. Good-bye ball!
5. Following through



## AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER

is only a line of play. Mine is for fun and pleasure, not for bread and butter, which is far more important. Mine is just a side line to make work more pleasant and sweet. When a person lets golf get hold of him in any other manner it is not so good, unless that person intends to make a business of it.

### *A Collection of Old Balls*

As a chance for collecting, my early attempts at golf were very successful, for they gave me ample opportunity to indulge my habit and craze for gathering. My natural bent for getting into the rough made my ball collection increase daily.

Since my collection was composed of humble makes and those of lowly origin, and as most of its members had been under the snow, the leaves, or the grass for unknown periods of time, I must admit that it could not boast of being lily white in color. Hence it was that I went into the painting business with avidity.

By means of a strong solution of lye and water I removed all the old paint, or as

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

much of the paint as weather and use had allowed to remain. When a new coat of paint and enamel was on and dried, proud indeed was I of my possessions in their robes of angelic whiteness. To me my success was at once apparent, and I was all for doing likewise to my father's until my mother found out that the strong solution of lye had worked havoc with the kitchen linoleum, and that her best cake-cooler was none the better for having been used as my drying-rack. However, I had learned how to make old balls look like new, and that was a bit of knowledge worth while, although I was not mentioning the painting business for some time to come.

### *Eye on the Ball — Follow Through*

I was just as good as any other beginner at the game for losing golf balls, and I had to learn by actual experience what it meant to watch the ball; but I came near losing all I owned in quite a different manner. On coming into the house one day I dropped my bag of balls on the radiator in the hall,



## AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER

and when the heat had done its work I found all my white friends sitting on flat pedestals, wholly unfitted for future use. Perhaps from that experience I learned a profitable lesson. For the young, green player, one little point in the golf game which is of the utmost importance is that the ball collapses at the moment of meeting between ball and club head. Of all the things one is supposed to know about the game that point is the least understood and worked upon, else we might all be more anxious to pay more attention to going after the ball, or, as we sometimes say, we might be more intent on throwing the club head at the ball. This would mean that we would be staying with the ball as long as possible while it is going through the collapsing process.

For wood shots and iron shots I am not averse to playing with any kind of ball, for the flight of an old ball or of a new one is secondary to the many other things to be thought of in the golf stroke. But for practising on the green I am much in

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

favor of using the best balls I can find. However, my first years at the game were not marked by any particular attention to my putting department.

For that reason I played for four years without winning anything. It always seemed such a waste of good time to me to bother about the short ones when I could get such a thrill out of hitting the good long ones. I think that now I have a better idea of the importance of all the strokes and realize that the scores of even the best performers have no room on them for the counts of the missed short ones. A putt of an inch counts in this game just as much as a drive of two hundred yards.

### *Importance of Various Strokes*

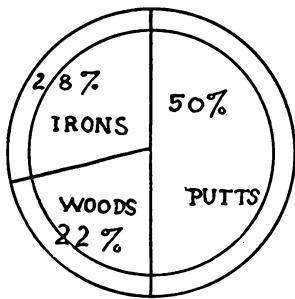
There is a circular graph to which I think every boy and girl golfer should give a bit of attention. It shows the emphasis that is put on the putting section of the game. Suppose the par of the course is seventy-two ; then exactly thirty-six strokes are allowed for putting, or just half of the circle. There

## AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER

is then only a small percentage for the woods and the irons.

This is the graph, and I am sure that, if I could have seen the true story behind it and understood it thoroughly earlier in my game, I could have saved myself many strokes.

I was so bad once that, having reached the green with a long drive and a lusty brassie, I was seven on the card before I was finished. Nowadays no boy or girl takes arithmetic or



algebra without learning graph-reading, and I know that, if I wanted golf to flourish by means of good scoring, I would have this score graph put in all the mathematics books of the land.

One of my earliest instructors was a "pro" at the Metacomet Club named John Anderson. This teacher of mine had a very fine sense of rhythm, and if I can remember him for nothing else except the fact that he in-

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

sisted that I swing with musical rhythm I am quite satisfied. He must have been very fond of "Yankee Doodle Dandy," for I remember that he used to sing to me :

"Mind your music and your step,  
And with your clubs be handy."

And true it is that, if I keep my feet doing the proper work and manage to get music and grace into my swing, then I shall be able to handle the club effectively. So, too, will all who do likewise.

### *Everybody a Dub at First*

I should like very much to state just what it was in the first four years of my golf game that contributed most to my gaining the coveted honors at the Women's National at the age of nineteen, but the truth is that I passed through many stages and that my game was constantly evolving and changing. The getting of a settled stance, of a grip that I could best and most conveniently work with, and a swing that had at least the chief elements of perfection in it, was by no means a gift.

## AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER

There are, however, a few particular characteristics which kept developing alongside my game, and which I must speak of as aiding me in the gaining of such honors as I have been fortunate enough to secure. These have materially helped me to keep on the upward grade, for having a game at one's command is not everything. Of course, I was fond of being out of doors, and all the time I could get from my studies I spent in the open. Thus it was I always had a good appetite, for my exercise made me hungry. I also got very tired and sleepy and did not have to waste much time in wooing the god of slumber. I made so many costly blunders besides, that I early learned the value of the smile; so I developed a good nature toward the game.

At the foot of the ladder, then, I was much like any one of the beginners, at the same place, with the selfsame prospects of success or failure. Once in the proverbial blue moon I got off a particularly good shot, and, urged on by its success, I kept on my way with right good cheer. I always

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seemed to keep up a fine edge for the game, took a great deal of pleasure out of playing, and at once fell into the habit of hitting them hard.

I have gone up many rungs on the ladder of success since those first days, but a few characteristics still cling to me : for instance, a little shakiness at the knees. My brother often tells me that the chief trouble he has with oral compositions is the fact that when he gets up to recite his knees shake. I am sure it must be a family characteristic, for early in the game I developed a slight shakiness there whenever I stood on the first tee. No use saying that one is quite unconscious of all that is around him when he stands up before all eyes. We are not equipped with blinders like the horse, and we all feel within us the urge to action. I know it is a great relief when that feeling of uneasiness departs, but you will have to ask someone who has been with the game longer than I have been just how long you will have to follow the game before that shakiness

## AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER

will not come to you on tee Number 1.

Up to now I have been telling some of the little things that made the first days of my golf interesting and worth while to me. I am now going to tell a few of the things that helped to build up my game and a few of its chief characteristics. I was in no way a tomboy, and yet I very soon learned the trick of giving the ball a good sound crack.

I think it is fortunate for me that I did not begin the game in that period of my life when it would seem important to me to be ladylike in all my doings, for I think it is in just that respect that girls and women fall down in their game, being too set on sending the ball on its journey with a gentle sweep. Had I begun a little later in life I suppose I should have been bothered about doing it in a ladylike manner, but as it was I had no scruples at all in the matter, and I got the most enjoyment that a lusty swing could produce. I am still anxious to hit hard and hit decisively.

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### *Match Play Useful*

To find out how you are going in this game it is quite necessary to try out your game in competition. I was only fourteen years of age when I entered tournaments, which is indeed young, but, as there was little likelihood of my winning anything but experience and still less of my setting the world on fire, I think that all the results were of an affirmative nature. Once in a while I would get a hole that would be particularly good, and that served to keep up my interest. It was a natural bent of mine to enjoy these tournaments with my elders, and I often wonder just how much their solicitude for my game added to their own scores. In one game I played with Mrs. Caleb Fox, a nationally known golfer. My score was 107. I was 'way off. I don't think I was much help to her.

I know that I was more enthusiastic then than I am now about tournaments, or at least I have learned to keep my feelings more to myself now. I was very apt in





### TOMMY TAILER

*The thirteen-year-old son of T. Suffern Tailer. He has played with the country's greatest golfers and has a real competitive temperament. Young Tailer has scored a 77 for the very difficult Ocean Links at Newport*



## AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER

those days to show just how I felt in all matters, and I often had a chance to see just how poorly I could do. Tournaments are the means of showing you that "there are others" in the game, and I was always anxious to see those others. They teach you also not to have too good an opinion of yourself, and true it is that conceit is fatal to a youngster's golf.

It is well to get into matches and competitions in order that you may see just how you stand with reference to the rest of the field. It will show your progress or your lack of it, as the case may be, for figures do not lie. There are, as you know, two ways of counting in a golf game. One is by medal play, in which all strokes are counted for the eighteen holes, and the total noted. The other is to score by holes, each hole being a separate game in itself and the player who wins the most holes being declared the winner. It is true that at first I did not fathom the difference between the two ways, but when I did fully understand I grew to recognize the delights of both.

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

For reasons that must be obvious to all who have played the game, I had all I could do to prevent the pyramiding operations of my medal score, and for the reason that I could forget the bad holes of the medal score in match play faster, I soon grew most fond of the match-play style. The two methods have a very near relation, but most golfers prefer to play against a single opponent rather than against the whole field. In the former case there is the advantage of knowing where you are standing at every shot; but in the medal play you have the solace of knowing that no news is good news and what you do not know cannot bother you.

### *Rhythm*

I was telling the advantages of tournaments and matches. I said that it showed you that there are others. More than that, it shows you who they are; and from them you can learn in what ways you are in the wrong and where your weaknesses lie. I remember once I was playing pretty good golf, for me, and then I went into a tourna-

## AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER

ment with a slice for every drive. I could not understand the reason for it at the time, but I found out why later; it was caused by the new element of striving too hard to win. This is characteristic of competitive golf, and I had not learned the ways of self-control.

There is nothing like tournaments for bringing out all your faults, but that is a splendid thing for a player, for error in an important place makes more impression than the same mistake under other circumstances. A player may go from week to week and from season to season without ever coming to a contest with his equal or his superior, but he will lose the greatest joy and the keenest pleasure of the game by so doing. He will also miss the best means of making improvement and showing advancement. Find out by tournament play all your faults and fix them before they have a chance to become so established that they will fix you.

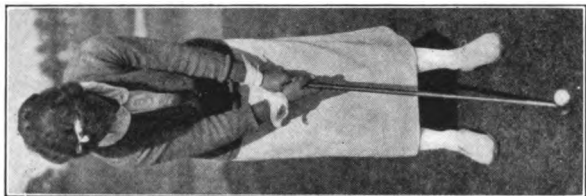
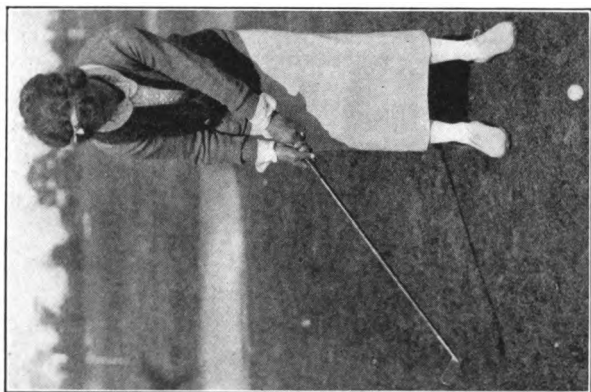
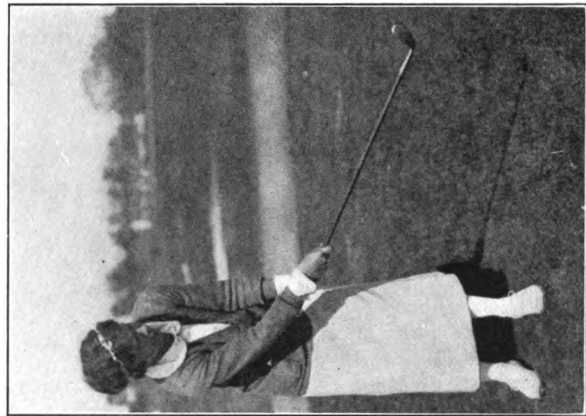
Early in the learning days be sure to bend your efforts toward getting a decided hit

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

instead of a gentle sweep ; as early as you possess a game try it out in a bit of competition, and let it show up the good along with the bad ; find out the mental picture of what you mean by rhythm from an instructor if possible, and swing with that picture in the mind. These are the things that I have found of the greatest help to me in my game, and that is the way I have been doing all my golfing career.

### *Practise — But Don't Overdo It*

This brings me to the theme of practice, and why it should be a pleasure. The attitude in which we approach our practice has much to do with its effectiveness. There is no drudgery to be thought of in connection with it. Love for the game and an abundant fund of enthusiasm will change the drab color of practice to a roseate hue. Playing the game is without doubt very good practice, but practice while playing the game is very much out of place. When the muscles are weary is not the time to practise, the weariness of the body bringing on, as it



*Photographs by Edwin Levick, N. Y.*

**SHORT APPROACH SHOT, AS PLAYED BY MISS COLLETT**





## AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER

must do, weariness of the brain. The parts may work, but they will not work at a rate that will give fitting returns. Practise, then, when fresh and in the best of spirits. Be glad to give your best efforts at the time when most improvement can be expected.

I think a player should practise a stroke, practise a club. I do not believe in practising for a match. Every shot taken should be the best effort of the player; never at any time should there be slouchy playing. The best then will be the normal, and the player at all times will be ready for the match. Practising for a tournament is a big order; it may demoralize the morale of the player. Practising a stick is a definite task. The player knows what he is doing, where he ought to send the ball, the distance the club can carry. There is nothing haphazard about the transaction. It may be he will never be master of the club; that is true, but he can save himself from being a slave to the club. An intimate acquaintance with each stick cannot be gained by absent treatment.

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The Chinese have a strange custom in their methods of divination. If about to go on a long journey, they will shake a box of arrows and cast them to the ground. If the arrows do not stick in the ground the first or even the third time, they will continue the process until they stand upright. Then it is the auspicious moment to begin. So, if when in practice you are playing a stick well, quit. If you continue long enough, you will get an error. Try another stick when success comes to the first.

Often I hear a boy or a girl complain of losing his drive. The drive is surely one of the golfer's dearest possessions, and it is a calamity of the direst sort when lost. Here is a case where it would be well to advertise, though there is no recognized "lost and found" column that would cover the article in question. The place to advertise is with yourself. Take your outfit and try out your stroke; get help if possible, but at any rate display to yourself the materials in your pack. The lost can be found, for the in-

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tangible something is still yours, but temporarily is not in working order.

Losing the drive is one of the symptoms of progress. The drive is lost in the constructive stage of our game, the time in which we are building our mansion, before the mental picture of what we are planning to accomplish has achieved a fixed picture in our minds. It is the time during which no rule will hold good for all days and when every play seems to be a continuous change. The butterfly will in due time emerge from the chrysalis. My thought is that everything around us is changing all the time. It is not strange our golf game is no exception.

### *Find a Practice Place at Home*

To most of its followers golf is a seasonal pastime. Climatic conditions make it sensible to lay aside the sticks for the hibernation period. That enforces on many players a lay-off on practice. It may retard the progress in the constructive stage, but I do not think it advisable to suggest either a Southern residence or yet a trip to the Golden Gate

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— though either or both, being beneficial, might be acceptable.

I can, however, advise a boy or girl to have a practice place at home. It is dangerous to hit golf balls around the neighborhood, for they have a habit of going far when you least expect them to do so. Even if you try to hit them against a blanket hung on the clothesline, one will be sure to sky right over the top, or else slice at an exact right angle to the side. My father had a practice place in the attic. It was made of blankets and netting. The net was on both sides and on the top. The blanket was in the front. Against this blanket, hung from the top, a person might hit as hard as he wished. The ball would fall limply to the carpet. No rebound, you see. To get a rebound from rubber you must hit it against something hard.

I have seen baseball players throw balls at the pillows on the bed ; it is on the same principle. Be sure, however, not to practise where there is likelihood of doing harm.

After the seven years' vassalage that, ac-

## AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER

ording to legend, it takes to make a golfer, an occasional lay-off from play is beneficial, and does not appreciably affect the game. The sureness that comes from success does not disappear by any miracle. Practise and grow. Only remember that in whatever way we are outstandingly above our player companions, it is only as a result of giving an equally outstanding importance to it by both thought and practice.

Again I say, if you want to wake up some day a beautiful old lady, you must be every day a somewhat beautiful young lady. And if one day you hope to wake up at the top of the ladder, you cannot expect to make it by sleeping all the way.

## CHAPTER II

### STANDARD ESSENTIALS

WALKING along the streets of Rome on my first visit there, I came to the ruins of the Forum. These spoke volumes for the old-time splendor of the Eternal City and the days when Rome was the greatest city on earth. The Coliseum also caused me to gaze and wonder and to recall the mighty deeds that were seen there by the Roman throngs. In each case it only goes to show how great changes come, and so, too, in every girl golfer I see the possibility of a coming champion. There is much room at the top of the ladder, for no one yet has been so great that there was not just a little space left there for the next to climb up and stay.

In our country it is true that every American boy or girl has an equal opportunity with his neighbor for being one day the

## STANDARD ESSENTIALS

President of these United States. Only one thing must be remembered by the one who wishes to advance in the golf game, and that is that there is no person so good or so high that the youngster with perseverance cannot catch up with him.

The style of the game of that great player, Alexa Stirling, has left many marked impressions on me, and I owe much to having seen her play when I was just coming to understand golf a little. She put the kindling in the fire that was just beginning to burn, and it has been going well ever since. During the year 1917 many of the golf stars of this country did some wonderful work and aided in obtaining considerable money for the Red Cross by playing exhibition matches. Alexa Stirling (now Mrs. Fraser), Elaine Rosenthal (now Mrs. Reinhardt of Dallas), Bobby Jones, and Perry Adair, all comparative youngsters, were among those touring the United States and giving exhibitions.

Miss Stirling had just come into fame by winning the National Women's Champion-

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

ship and was reputed to be the greatest woman golfer this country had developed. Bobby Jones in this same season had made a name for himself by qualifying in the National Amateur Championship and then going to the third round. Both Miss Rosenthal and Perry Adair had done excellent work in championship tournaments.

This quartette of youngsters came to the Wannamoisett Club in Providence to give an exhibition, and I recall distinctly the excitement that prevailed at the club over their appearance there. No one in Providence had seen any of these players, whose performance on the links had elicited great praise in all the newspapers.

Naturally I was greatly curious to see these famous stars, and I awaited their arrival impatiently. For the first time I found myself taking an unusual interest in golf. Well, the four finally arrived, and I realized they were all only a few years older than I. Accordingly my interest or curiosity to see them play increased twofold.

Bobby Jones attracted the most attention





*P. & A. Photographs*

**MRS. ALEXA STIRLING FRASER**  
*"Never flustered, never hurried"*



## STANDARD ESSENTIALS

among the men, but I — and I think most of the women — watched every move Miss Stirling made. The first thing about Alexa that attracted my admiration was her wonderful poise, particularly on the links. She looked and acted like a real champion. She was never flustered, never hurried, and seemed at all times sure of herself. I guessed that she possessed a wonderful temperament, and I have learned since that she does.

Miss Rosenthal was quite as impressive. She was not so reserved or businesslike as Alexa, nor did she give the impression of being so efficient. But I remember her golf impressed me quite as much, and when she established a new women's record of eighty for the Wannamoisett course that day everybody thought that the last word in women's golf.

Except the players, I was the busiest person on the links that day. I followed eagerly on the footsteps of the girls and had a close-up of every shot played. I gazed in wonder at every kind of shot both girls

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made, but what impressed me most was their driving and their putting. I had never seen any woman play golf in the manner they played it.

After that match at Wannamoisett I was eager to play golf. The performances of both Alexa and Elaine not only had given me a great thrill but had inspired me. I could hardly wait to get out on the links.

What happened in that next game of golf I played on the following day was even more thrilling for me than the match itself. With the picture of both the great women golfers in my mind I played like a person inspired. I did not think of my hands or my feet or any part of my body in connection with the golf swing. All I did was to endeavor to hit the ball, and I must say I did so surprisingly well that day. In fact, I had such wonderful success in this respect that on the first nine I had a 49, the best score for nine holes by several strokes I had ever made. This was in fact the first time I had ever broken 50, and I was pleased beyond measure.



*Photographs by Edwin Lenick, N. Y.*

**AN EARLY PICTURE AND A RECENT ONE OF MISS COLLETT**

*Note the difference, especially in the position of the arms*



## STANDARD ESSENTIALS

Breaking the 50 mark the day after Alexa's visit to Providence made a definite place in my scheme of advancement. It meant that I was on the rungs, going up to the top. However, I was not worrying about what was at the top; I was happy in the open, hitting my ball hard, trying to keep it straight, hunting for a follow-through, enjoying tournaments here and there, picking up more occupants for my practice kit at times, and had no thought of what hands and knees and feet were doing. But the acquirement of definite stance and grip and swing was beginning to show itself as I began to get a game in hand.

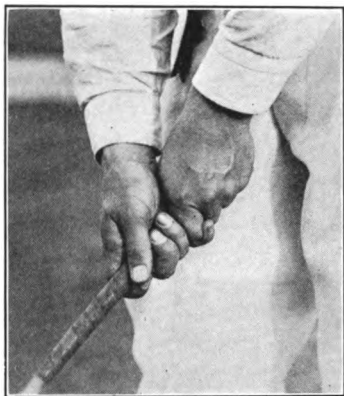
### *The Grip*

It was due to the great professional Alex Smith that I took to the overlapping grip. By means of this grip I was enabled to add perceptibly to the power I was able to get from the club and to increase in a very marked manner the length of my drives. Hitherto I had been using a grip in which I held the two hands as close as I could,

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but not with the little finger of the right riding on the forefinger of the left. I used to call it the V grip. Alex Smith, however, made me hold the club more in the fingers than in the palm.

Now I will try to explain the overlapping grip as used by me for the last five years ;



*P. & A. Photos, Copyright, 1923*

**OVERLAPPING GRIP, AS USED  
BY BOBBY JONES**

I can see no good reason for ever changing it. In the fingers of the left hand I take the club not quite at the end of the leather and hold it firmly with thumb and forefinger.

The stick does not lie across the hand at the base of the fingers. The three fingers of the right hand I place as near the fingers of the left hand as possible, and then I let my little finger of the right hand ride on the forefinger of the left, but not between



## STANDARD ESSENTIALS

the forefinger and the middle finger. The thumbs are down the shaft, though sometimes I find that I allow the right thumb to lie across the shaft. I think that the finger grip has more in it that will contribute length and speed to the stroke, and with the grip the two hands work more as one, especially in the putting section of the game. The grip, as I have tried to explain it, is another essential to a sound and good game.

### *Visualization*

It was Alex Smith also who first insisted in my visualizing strokes and reproducing the same from the picture I had in my mind. It is rather wonderful to think of everything as in the mind first. Take Brooklyn Bridge — any boy or girl can easily consider it. It spans the East River and is one of the main arteries of trade between New York and its twin city. It is a distinctive piece of work, stupendous in structure, marvelous in design, and bold in conception. But before this bridge in its entirety so majestically connected those great boroughs

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

it existed in the mind of the architect, a mere picture, yet complete in every detail. I can give no better example to back up my opinion of the necessity of visualization.

Since I was developing right along that inestimable quality, but one that is no more peculiar to me than it is to any other person who is young, I acquired the ability to duplicate the actions of my elders, to carry out another's doings, to imitate, and to mimic. Borrowed feathers and acquired ideas are the booty that the young always take from every combat and encounter. It is the power to visualize the golf shot that I so easily acquired.

I find when I am playing an opponent that I must not study too intently his method of play, else unconsciously I shall be doing in my swing the very things he is doing in his. This is owing to my natural bent for copying others. I remember when Alex Smith wished to show me anything especially important he would stand before me and make the shot as he wished to have me do it, and after I had seen him do it a

## STANDARD ESSENTIALS

few times I was able generally to reproduce it exactly as he wished to have me. This used to please my instructor very much. Thus it is that I am not greatly surprised when I hear people say I can make my shots just like a professional. I notice that Grantland Rice and other sport writers place MacDonald Smith, the brother of Alex, among the best players in the United States. As I read those two names I am led to wonder just how much Alex showed his brother Mac of the game, for, if ever he was as good to his brother as he invariably was to me, then the name of Alex Smith should have the position on that list where the name of Abou Ben Adhem is on the list of those who love their fellow men.

## CHAPTER III

### MORE STANDARD ESSENTIALS

#### *The Stance*

I HAVE no intention of being dogmatic about how a boy or girl should stand to the ball. The most essential idea is to be comfortable. Players have used three different stances since the game began and results have been good from all of them.

In the matter of the stance I have in my game taken many liberties, at one time playing the open stance, at another the closed, and still at another period using the square. It is an easy matter for a player seeking methods of this kind to watch the best players and thus find out how it is most successfully done. I now play the square stance with the ball well off the left heel. Let me tell you the make-up of these three

## MORE STANDARD ESSENTIALS

positions that I have used in the game, for when a player is watching another to see how it is done it is well to know what to look for.

When I stand with both my feet spread comfortably apart, the weight perceptibly on the two heels and the toes on a line parallel to a line running from the ball to the hole and the right foot drawn a few inches back from the left one, then it is the closed stance that I am using. When I play the ball off the left heel and both feet are on a line that is parallel to the line running through the ball to the hole, then I am in that case playing the square stance. With the feet in the same line position but with the right foot drawn a few inches in front of the left, then that is the open stance I am using.

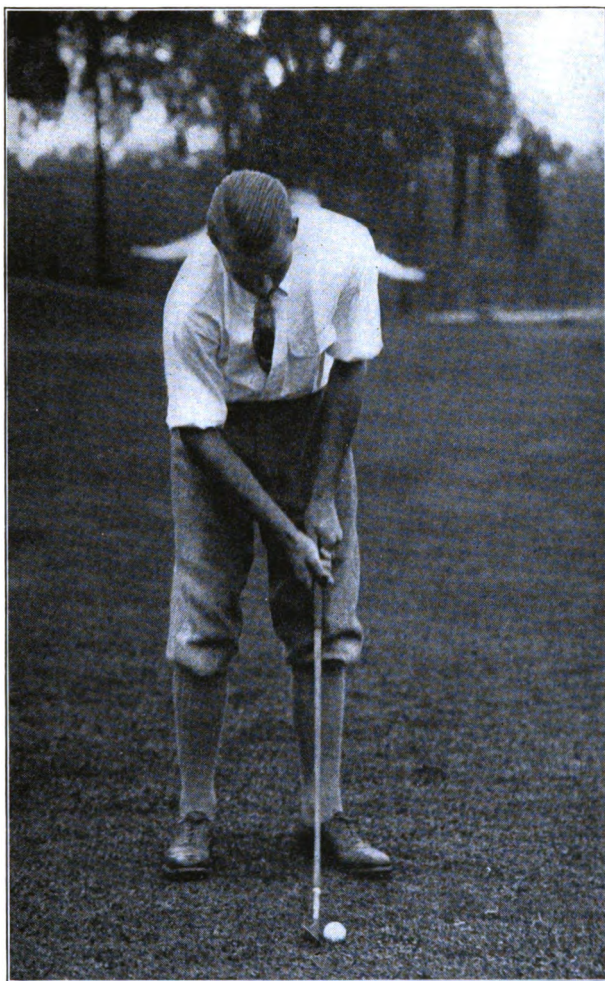
For general purposes I think that the square stance has the most advantages, and personally I prefer it to all others, for it gives a better chance to get into that position which denotes expectancy and allows for the follow-through.

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

### *Soling the Club*

I always had very definite ideas about the soling of the club. I find that many fine players have queer notions of how they wish to place the club on the ground previously to taking the swing. It seems to me that every boy and girl could see the necessity of not handicapping himself more than is really needed. Then why turn the face of the club inward when the ball is addressed? It seems to me that it is obvious that in so doing the loft of the club is completely changed, and that there is no way out of getting a shot with a beautiful smother to it. Again I query, why cock up the toe of the club? There seems in this an open invitation to heel the shot or at least to hit it so far up on the shank of the shaft as to get rather a queer hit.

Few players think of raising the heel of the club from the ground and in that manner meeting the ball; this is not commonly done on the tee shots, but it is a very common occurrence on the putting green. I



STANCE FOR MASHIE NIBLICK SHOT  
*(Jesse Sweetser, British Amateur Champion, 1926)*





## MORE STANDARD ESSENTIALS

hope all the good players of the future will be careful to place the club wholly on its sole and let it take the natural lie as provided for by the make of club. When the club is cocked up at the toe it makes the player hit with the toe of the club. I know that it is possible to strike a ball effectively in that way, but I would advise always meeting the ball with the centre of the club face for all best results.

Again, it is possible to address the ball at the toe of the club in all long shots. I will tell you why this is done by the player. You see, if I were swinging a stone attached to a string around in a circular motion, the stone would gradually go higher and higher as the speed of the swinging increased, until it would reach a level with the hand that is the centre of its circle. The force that sends that stone out farther and farther is called centrifugal force. This idea works also in the golf stroke. When the club head returns to the ball on its downward journey, the force behind the blow forces the club head out, and the result is the head

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

then meets the ball directly on the centre of its face. I can do this just as any other player who knows his game can, but I think the best plan is to address the ball in the centre of the club head exactly where you are intending to meet it at the moment of impact.

Give the club the lie intended for it by the make of the club; address the ball at the place you intend to return to it; do not try to overcome an error in the swing by an error in soling the club, for two wrongs will not make one right in the game of golf any more than it will in any other game. These are my own ways of soling the club, and I think they are the best for my game.

### *The Pivot and Balance*

I have been asked more concerning my pivot than I have been asked about any other part of my stroke. I am not aware that it differs radically from the pivot or turning that many other players make. I know that, again, it was through the influence of Alex Smith that I became accus-

## MORE STANDARD ESSENTIALS

tomed to coming up so high on the left heel.

I have a little scheme of telling you how to gauge the feeling of the pivot. If you stand as you would do in an ordinary manner and place both your hands easily on your hips, you will find nothing akin to the golf stroke in that; next, however, I want you to turn your head and look at an object directly behind you. Your hips have made a turn such as they will make in a full swing of golf. If you return the head to the front without changing the position of the hips and look at the spot where the golf ball would have been if you were playing a game, then you will find the head and the hips in the correct place for a hit and, also, the correct bend to the left knee while the right leg has the proper straightness.

I think it is a good plan to try this over in front of a mirror. The feeling of the bend to the knee, the shifting of the weight from the left leg to the right one, and the whole scheme of the balance, or equilibrium, are then felt and understood.

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

This is the first mention I have made of body balance, but it really is not so hard as some people would make it out to be. Balance means to me the keeping of myself from falling over. When I lift one foot from the sidewalk as I go along, I am not conscious of my one hundred and twenty-five pounds being on the other foot. When I go from left foot to right on the swing I am still unconscious of the shifting weight. However, I have the weight on the right foot, where I want it. For I want my weight in back of the ball, where I can make use of it in sending the ball on its journey.

To find out how far the hips can go around without making the head move, I have met in my golfing travels this scheme, and here is how I use it. If I place my forehead against a wall and bend myself at the waist as I would in addressing a golf ball on the tee, and then place again my hands on the hips, I can feel the hips moving from left to right. Thus, as I pivot, I can find out how far the hips will naturally move for me and yet maintain my head still and a perfect balance.

## MORE STANDARD ESSENTIALS

One of the most helpful thoughts to good golf is the thought of hitting with the hips. I often try to see how far I can send the ball by taking the club as I ordinarily would and, not paying any attention to pivot, just turning the club with the hip movements. It surely is a surprise to see the distance that you can get in that way. I think at times of pulling the right shoulder under on the swing-back and hitting through with the right hip. Not so strange as it sounds, if you can get what I mean.

It is not well to take too seriously all the different parts of the golf stroke. The complete whole is a happy consummation, and it comes in due time to all who will go after it willingly and with a desire for understanding. I have told you about the needed essentials, and I know they are easily followed and can be perfected by practice. The whole picture of the golf swing is put together bit by bit like the House that Jack Built. As in that story you have the house, the malt, the rat, the cat, all gathered one at a time until all the friends of Noah's Ark

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

have been accounted for, so, too, in my story all sections of the stroke go to form a perfect whole.

For there is a way to sole the club,  
And there is a stance to take,  
And there is a grip that holds the stick  
And a proper route to take ;  
There are pivots and bends and also twists  
That move the knees and hips and wrists,  
And perhaps much more, if I made two lists  
Of the things one does in a golf stroke.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FULL BAG AND ITS BEST STICK

WHEN a person looks at a clock, he sees only the time written there, and yet it is not the same with a maker of clocks when he looks at the same timepiece. This man will probably see more than hours and minutes; he could probably fathom the inside movements from that which is shown on the face. Likewise anyone may drive an automobile without ever knowing how the gears mesh as they slide from low speed into high.

So I am thinking that filling the bag is no mean task. You should not think of the receptacle as a junk heap. The understanding of what is put in cannot fail to have an important bearing on the understanding of what is taken out. Not to everyone is

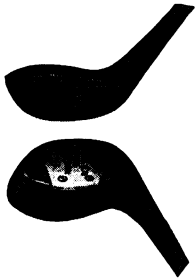
## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

given the privilege of seeing the club evolve from the crude material to the finished product — but it was my great good luck to have that opportunity in seeing the metamorphosis of my own clubs.

While in Scotland in 1925 I had the pleasant experience of being taken to a factory where iron clubs were made. Here the owner had some clubs shaped for me, everything of the whole process of head forming being shown. The loft of the club, or the angle at which it meets the ball, is the story to learn. The club head will do all the lifting that the ball needs. I know I did not always understand this very well. George Ade, the humorist, tells us that, if there is any uplifting to do, we have to get under. That, of course, is not true in the golf stroke. I hope I have made it clear that I want to have the *club* do the lifting.

I was reading just a while back that it is quite possible now to step into a professional shop and buy a shot. If a golfer comes to a short hole where the distance for him is between a midiron and a mashie, he no





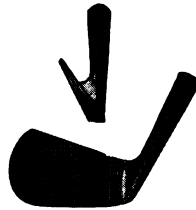
### BRASSIE

*This wooden-headed club is used for long distances through the fairway*



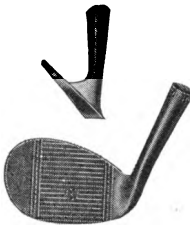
### MIDIRON

*With this iron-headed club a good player can make shots up to 150 or 160 yards. Steady practice with the midiron lowers your score*



### MASHIE

*Useful for getting out of long grass, and for approaching the green. The mashie is the hardest club for a beginner to master*



### NIBLICK

*This iron, as you can guess by the extreme angle of its face, is used almost entirely for getting out of traps and bunkers*



### PUTTER

*When you are finally on the green, you use your putter to send the ball into the hole. Putting takes less effort than any other stroke, but don't forget that about half your strokes are putts!*

## THE FIVE MOST USEFUL GOLF CLUBS



## FULL BAG AND BEST STICK

longer plays a half midiron shot but goes to the " pro " shop and buys himself a mashie iron and has the shot, whereas his predecessors had to learn to get there by playing a midiron shot with something less than his natural three-quarter swing. If this is true, then I think golf in the future will be simpler. So far as I know now, I should be shy many sticks in my bag if I did not learn how to use those I have for different shots.

In filling the bag, for the beginner the saturation point is soon reached. My father gave me five to begin with : a brassie, an iron, a mashie, a mashie-niblick and a putter. There are four sticks that would meet the requirements, and these are for the four fundamental strokes. However far you advance in the realm of mathematics, it would be impossible for you to come upon any mathematical form which has not one of the four fundamentals making it up. These four are addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

Following that analogy, I think of the

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

wood club, with its full swing, as a basal form, the midiron, with a somewhat curtailed swing, as the second fundamental stock, the mashie, whose purpose and loft are still unlike those of the previous two, as the third, while the putter takes care of the fourth. From tee to cup these are the prevailing types for use — and there is a noticeable likeness between the four, for in the final analysis a drive may be an exaggerated putt or a putt may be thought of as an abbreviated drive.

However, a boy or girl takes a fancy to one particular kind and through love for it makes it perform many labors. Then there comes a time when the one club plays him false. It is just as shortsighted for such a golfer to rely on one club as it would be for the dentist to use but one instrument in performing operations, or for the carpenter to use but one tool in all his labors.

If I wished to be facetious, I might say that a golf player is more or less like a tack, in that he can go only so far as his head allows. But I am trying to be serious.

## FULL BAG AND BEST STICK

Intelligence plays a big part in the game of life and no more can be said of its importance in one of the gamiest games in life. Not all players are brainy, but all players, to be successful, use their brains.

### *Underclubbing*

Underclubbing means using a club not powerful enough for the distance: for example, making iron shots with your mashie.

This mistake is due to an overweening sense of a player's power to force his shot by overstressing the club. It is obviously a case of mistaken judgment. It is a very common occurrence. It means short of the green; short of the carry; short of the hole; *short*. If this happened to a boy or girl once a week, it would be such a shock that he would try to overcome the error. We always notice the unusual, like grass that grows in the cracks in the sidewalk. Underclubbing makes a great impression and induces a feeling of fear. Look out for it!

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

### *Losing Strokes in Bunkers*

You must get out of a bunker as cheaply as possible. If a player concentrates on getting out, it is safe to say that he won't be out much when the score is counted at the end of the hole. Careful judgment is required as to the best thing to do, whether you make an explosion shot or a shot in which the ball is taken clean. It is shortsighted just barely to get out of the bunker when your lie is good and a midiron can make the rise. It is just as foolhardy to try a spoon or a midiron where reason says a niblick is the only stick to do the work. Here is a place where the best stick in the bag brings in low scores.

### *The Fast and the Slow*

Every player has found out that it is well to exercise care in the manœuvres on the green and in the immediate vicinity. After the grounds have been drenched with rain it is an unwise person who expects a long run to the ball. Around the cup, however,



*Photograph by Edwin Levick, N. Y.*

**MISS COLLETT PLAYING OUT OF A BUNKER**





## FULL BAG AND BEST STICK

an intelligent inspection is sure to bring wholesome returns.

### *Errors*

Happy is that people, so it is written, whose annals are brief. Troubles always fill the pages of history. Happy and care-free is the golfer when the game is going his way. In times of stress, however, errors creep in. To know how an error is made is to know how to cure it. To know how to command is only the reverse of knowing how to obey. All the powers of introspection that will rush to our assistance a few hours hence are not of help. The cure for the fault must come on the scene of its birth. Here is the prized moment, and the intelligence that can discern the wrong thing which is being done, that can concentrate enough to right the error, makes a bid for the honor of being the best stick in the bag.

### *Judging Distances*

Not to everyone is given the mathematical accuracy of gauging distances between

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

points. For a long time the race has had no occasion to use such observations as we need to follow in the golf game. Maybe the nearest approach to such an idea was in the mind of the javelin-thrower. The point is not so much to be able to tell whether the space to be covered is one hundred yards or one hundred and ten yards as it is to tell what distance can be carried with a certain club. In time we all can understand what is meant by a mashie shot. The power so to associate our stick with its distance is where the brain exhibits itself.

### *The Best Stick*

It is in the case of underclubbing, bunker shots, the slow or the fast on the green or the fairway, the ability to correct errors when they occur, and the judging of distances, that the very best friend in the bag is particularly valuable to the young player who has to buy his experience through costly mistakes. But it appeals to me because all knowledge, wherever gained, may be of definite service. Take my geom-



A FULL MASHIE, AS PLAYED BY MISS COLLETT  
1. The address 2. Ready to swing (her head has not moved)  
3. Following through 4. The finish of the stroke



## FULL BAG AND BEST STICK

etry, for instance. A few of its axioms greet me often as I wander on my way from tee to cup. It says in my book that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. That is encouraging to me when my meandering course puts me in the rough. I then try for a straight out. On the green, too, I think often of the axiom that a straight line is determined by two points. If I ever can hit upon a true putting stroke, that is the rule which will sink me in the cup every time. Perhaps that bit of knowledge of geometry will make the theorems of all my boy and girl readers sweeter to learn.

I think that in the first national tournament that I won in 1922 I could have told you that the best stick in my bag was not the driver that gave me such splendid distances nor yet any other member of the kit that was keeping it company. It was really a thought in my mind that made me keep to the same menu for the full tournament. Lamb chops, creamed potatoes, and string beans, I would have told you at that time,

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

won for me the cup and the gold medal. It was my idea of keeping fit. I also clung to the same golfing costume during the whole time. Just a little sentiment, I suppose, but then a little bit human.

The best stick in the bag is of the utmost advantage to the owner when it is a case of getting the right perspective in regard to the amount of time a boy or girl should devote to the practice of the game. I know that I was a cause of great worry to my French instructor in prep school. I took in a tournament at Pinehurst one fall, and I had to miss a few of my school sessions. My teacher was not very enthusiastic about my game — not because, as she said, it made much difference with my French, but because she thought it was such a waste of time, inasmuch as she felt that I would not amount to very much at the game. I think perhaps her idea was somewhat right; anyhow, her French instruction was a sound foundation, as I found out in 1925 in playing the game with Simone de la Chaume. I am glad that my French in-



*Keystone View Co.*

**THE FINISH OF A BRASSIE SHOT**

*Walter Hagen, whose energy and genius have long kept him to the fore among American golfers*





## FULL BAG AND BEST STICK

structor made me make up my lessons and showed me that I should need other things in golf besides a golf stroke.

### *Temperament*

No player has a more wonderful temperament for this game than the present champion of England, Joyce Wethered. I could almost wish more of us on this side of the water had the same gift. It would be a decided help to us. Other players whom I have met with the same gift are Walter Hagen and Alexa Stirling Fraser. There seems to be no difficulty that this trio could not meet, and the truth of the matter is that their way of looking at a difficulty more than half clears the trouble away. They make good use of the intelligence stick.

I have stated that four sticks are imperative to a golfer, while five are about right to ensure a good game. After all, there may be much in the idea that it is the man behind the clubs that counts most. The membership of the bag changes from time to

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

time, but the changes need not come too often. It may be interesting to know that I have not changed my woods for three years, and I am not even thinking of so doing, barring accidents and unforeseen events. At present, it is true that I have twice as many sticks in the bag as I once had, and I find as I grow more proficient as a shot-maker that I have a use for all of them.

There may be ways in which a man is superior to a woman, or a boy to a girl, in the game of golf, but when it comes to filling the bag the weaker sex has the same privileges as the stronger. And when it comes to the use of the intelligence, a girl has the same advantage as her brother. Once upon a time there was a little girl who came home from Sunday school to tell her mother that she had just learned how Adam had fallen asleep one day and how the Lord came along and took away his brains and made a woman. If that is true, then I think I may see a little advantage on the side of all my younger sisters.

## CHAPTER V

### SEVEN CARDINAL VIRTUES IN GOLF

PERHAPS you are extremely anxious to play the game of golf. The game itself requires action, and, if there is anything that appeals more to the American boy or girl than action, then I don't know it.

To play golf is splendid fun, and all who indulge can vouch for the truth of what I say. But, next to having many of our boys and girls play the game, I am interested in trying to put across the idea of having the many who play know the things that will make their game happy and successful — such things as the why of the stroke, the how of the grip, the question of the stance, the where of the follow-through, the when of the punch. And all these I have been discussing in previous chapters.

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## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

No matter how experienced or how inexperienced a golfer you are, I am sure that adhering to the following seven ideas will give you a thorough grounding in basal knowledge of the game. I will call my seven ideas the Seven Cardinal Virtues of golf. For every virtue there may be two vices, but I am here concerned only with the affirmative aspect. Let us first interest ourselves in the blessing we can most easily acquire.

### *Virtue I: Have a Firm Foundation*

Nothing could be simpler. Place the two feet well apart on the ground — not daintily, as if to do the stately minuet, but with a feeling of firm decision. Feel the heels pressing against the ground. This is to counteract the tendency we all have to fall forward when we bend at the waist. If we were windmills, then all would be well; our arms could move cheerily without aid from the feet, and our foundation would be firm enough. However, we are not able to turn our hips without moving the feet,

## SEVEN CARDINAL VIRTUES IN GOLF

so we must be chary of false foot-movements. From first to last do nothing in excess, keep a good base, never be foot-loose.

### *Virtue II: Keep the Head Still*

I doubt if I could make a long drive and keep a glass of water intact on my head while doing it, yet I know I must keep my head steady in one place to get the best results. It amounts to seeing to it that I do not turn my head toward the right in unison with the backward movement of the club. That would change the radius of the arc of the swing and hence would render difficult the connection to be made with the ball on the downward journey. Neither must I be too anxious to see the glorious flight of my ball and hence look up before I have done the hitting, for in making my eyes behave in such a manner I have to move my head up with them, the head and the eyes being like thumb and finger in their near relationship. And that which was intended to be a glorious sight may well be a piteous spectacle.

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

### *Virtue III: "Slow Back" with Your Club Before You Hit the Ball*

Slow, to be sure, is a word which involves a comparison. In 1492 it took Columbus from August until October to find these shores. That might have been fast traveling in those days, but to-day it is slow. So, too, the "slow back" has the same reservation in golf.

There is no set speed for the golf swing, but it is certain that the maximum speed should come at the end and not at the beginning. If you want the maximum speed out of your motor boat, you do not push home the gas all at once. It is done gradually. The way to take the club back is to begin with a slow motion and to increase with regular acceleration all along the route.

Keep the crescendo for the ball and its immediate after. In no other way can that musical rhythm which makes for a perfect swing be secured than by making use of the "slow back" virtue.



© Longmans, Green & Co.

**MISS JOYCE WETHERED, OF ENGLAND, DEMONSTRATES CARDINAL VIRTUE NO. IV — AND SEVERAL OTHERS TOO**





## SEVEN CARDINAL VIRTUES IN GOLF

### *Virtue IV: Keep Your Left Arm Straight*

The boys and girls of to-day are going to play better golf in the near to-morrow than did the boys and girls of the last generation, and all because of the idea of the "straight left" arm. Stretch the left arm out on the way up, keep it straight like the radius of the arc that goes from its centre to its circumference, and do not crumple it up at the elbow on the backward or the forward path, until when duly done it must carry the club to rest over the left shoulder. More good things come from the straightness of the left arm than are at first seen. It is the best way to prevent overswinging; it gives direction to the flight of the ball; it is conducive to length; and it keeps the boy and girl who possess it in the narrow path that leads to success. Cultivate it until it is your very own.

### *Virtue V: Hit at the Right Time*

Long years ago there was a king who tried all his life to make his subjects all think alike and act as one great whole. But,

## GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

failing utterly, he abdicated his throne. He even found it futile to try to get the four clocks in his castle to keep the same time. Now, this body of ours is not exactly a mechanical affair, and for that reason it is not easy to keep all its parts working in harmonious unity; but it is not an impossibility. Correct timing is perhaps the secret of the long hits that young boys and girls, and small people of small stature, are able to produce. If any virtue is to be sought after, timing is *it*.

### *Virtue VI: Hit Through the Ball*

Some players call it "following through," others describe it by telling you to "*throw your club head at the ball.*" It is noted often that many players consider their work done when the ball has been hit. I know well that whatever a player does to himself or his club after the ball has been struck can have no effect on the fate of the ball, but the hitting *through* the ball ensures the big truth that a correct swing and hit shall have been accomplished. It is indicative of the

## SEVEN CARDINAL VIRTUES IN GOLF

entirety of the affair, the idea of finishing a task that has been begun ; and no boy or girl golfer will be successful in that game or in any other unless each task, however well begun, has been well and thoroughly concluded.

### *Virtue VII*

I doubt if you could guess what this virtue is to be, for its very obviousness conceals it. I am referring to the proper use of your fingers and thumbs. Nearest to the golf club they are, these little friends of yours. Recall the activity and nimbleness of the fingers of the practised surgeon. In golf they are our most helpful friends. They hold the club ; they transmit to the club head the power to do, and they give that sense of touch which is the true sign of finesse ; and of all the virtues — those ten fingers are pretty useful, are n't they !

If a young player can get his feet to help him balance ; if he can keep his head from changing the radius of his swing ; if he can keep his left arm straight going up *and coming down* ; if his skill can give him a true

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sense of timing ; and if his fingers tell the right story — then that young player is far above the first rung on the ladder that leads to breaking par. But there is a heap more than just knowing the virtues ; they must be made our own through practice.

We can never learn to speak Chinese by wishing we could. Wishing brings no results. To get any result, we must think and wish and then *act*.

## CHAPTER VI

### “WHEN A FELLER NEEDS A FRIEND”

THE story of the mother who sent the nurse upstairs to find out what the family's young hopeful was doing, “and whatever it is,” she said, “have him stop it at once,” seems to be quite in keeping with the feeling we have toward our golf game. The sunshiny days of success may be coming at the expected and frequent intervals, but the feeling that everything we are doing must be wrong stays with us on more occasions than the mental state of satisfaction.

#### *Errors*

Errors suggest penalties — and payments must be exacted for all encroachment on the correct way of playing, — but I am not thinking of penalties exacted for breach of rules. I am referring to the troubles we bring on

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ourselves by errors of stroke manipulation. Thinking of the science of physics in connection with the golf stroke, we see that force, in order to secure its maximum effect, must be delivered in a straight line, that is, in the line of direction to the hole. When off that line, the only result (in golf) will be an error, intentional or accidental. The ball will go off the toe of the club; off the heel; off any part except the dead centre. Hence it is — the title of this chapter, “When a feller needs a friend.”

The phrase may appear to be rather a large order, for it would not be far from the right reply if it were said that he needed a friend at all times. However, it is most suggestive of trouble, for it is in times of distress that the need is most keenly experienced; and any boy or girl who has had any hopes of growing from a mere player into a golfer knows all too well that there is a goodly share of dark clouds — with the customary silver lining — in even a short day’s journey on the links, although the sun may be shining high above in the heavens.

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The troubles of the golfer differ widely from the pitfalls and snares of any other sport in that they are all self-gotten; the wounds are all self-inflicted; the pains all self-bought. In baseball there stands the pitcher, whose only desire is to see to it that you do not connect with the ball, and even if he makes an error and you get a hit, there are the rest of the nine on their toes to throw you out. In tennis your opponent has but one objective and that is to place the ball just where you are not. In football there is a repetition of the same story. In golf everything is set for your perfect shot. How much indeed a fellow needs a friend if he cannot make use of this advantage! The very fact of his being but of singular number emphasizes his loneliness and urges him to double up.

### *Overswinging*

Let the distress signal be put out when a fellow tries to put on too much steam. As our own poet Longfellow tells us, “The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts,”

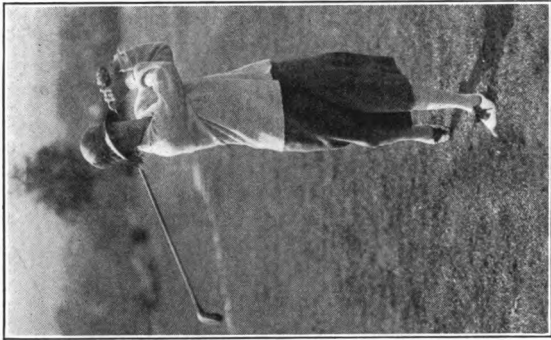
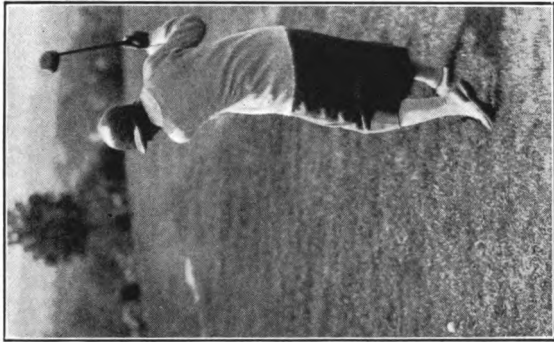
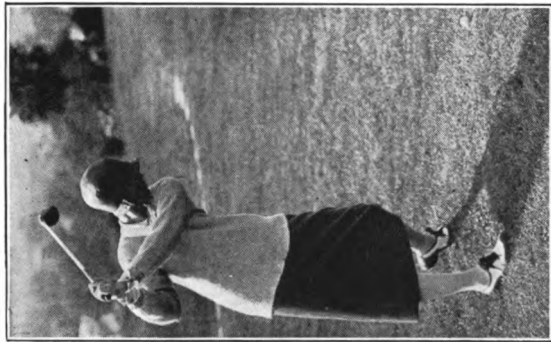
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but I fear the good writer did not refer to tee shots. Length is not everything, and the desire to acquire it emphasizes many faults. First of all, there is over-swinging. It is like going beyond the right corner, which necessitates a backing up, and gives loss of time and loss of control. It causes the club to force the fingers of the right hand open and hence to wander to the palm, making it difficult to steer its course. It interferes considerably with keeping the balance, and it crumples the left arm at the elbow. Those are severe enough indictments of the overswing.

### *Getting into the Rough*

Getting into the rough is never intentional and so is considered a hardship, but the fighting spirit of the youth comes as his chief rescuer. The rough is only the "happy hunting ground" where the spirit of the warrior comes forth to recover from his errors. What would be the use of the heavy mashies and the firm wrists if there were no difficulties along the line of march?





*Photographs by Edwin Levick, N. Y.*

**DON'T OVERSWING!**

*Two views of Miss Collett at the top of the swing on a full shot, and one showing the finish*



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There must be something for them to do to find excuse for lodging in the bag, otherwise they would feel unhappy like Alexander the Great a long time ago, when, while playing with his youthful companions, word was brought to him of his father's victories. “Boys,” said he, “my father will leave nothing for us to do.”

### *Concentration*

Someone to cause him to minimize his self-consciousness does a fellow need when he gets finicky about people moving or making sounds while he is in the process of shot-producing. Let that be the legacy that the boy and girl can pass onward to their elders, some of whom dislike to hear anyone even so much as change his mind while they are winding up for action. It seems to me it would be just as likely to expect a typist to quit her machine just because there was other business going on in the office. Here is a fine opportunity to attend strictly to the business in hand, and each boy and girl I know can well learn

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that much for future profit. Grown-ups call it concentration.

A whole corps of friends would be needed for the fellow who is enjoying a rather poor game of golf, for the faults of golf are many. As you run over the list it is a pleasure to consider how many of them you could happily dispense with. There are hooking and slicing; also dropping the left shoulder; there is the fault of breaking the left wrist and of raising the right elbow too much; there is the trouble of no follow-through; or again there is the swing that is too fast; there is the no-pivot and again the faulty weight-shifting; and it cannot be denied that the head is not to be moved nor yet is the eye to leave the ball. All of these affect the stroke manipulation and make it impossible to send the ball off the centre of the club head. I will take up a few of these faults and tell you what I think of them.

### *Slicing*

After the strenuous summer and fall of this year, I laid aside my sticks for a period

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of six weeks. I think I needed a change. One day recently I went down country and took some old balls with me. I tried out my stroke, sending all the balls into Narragansett Bay, each one with a beautiful slice. So I think I am well fitted to give a description of the trouble. The ball shoots off in a dead straight line from the tee, and as you come up to gaze at your best shot you are astounded to see your ball curving decidedly to the right of the course, where at last it lands safely in the rough. Rather discouraging.

I find the chief cause of slicing is allowing my arms to swing too loosely from my body; hence on the downward swing they have to come to the ball from the outside in, thus causing the club head to cut across the ball. The best thing to do in that case is to take pains with the right elbow.

*The Right Elbow*

There is one thing that all good golfers seem to have in common and that is the use of the elbows. They may have upright

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swings or flat swings, open stances or closed stances, but they are all alike in the treatment of the elbow. When I take the club head in my hands to address the ball, I allow the arms to hang rather loosely and near the body. Sometimes I have kept a handkerchief under my right arm, to see if I could swing back without letting it drop.

My idea is this: The right arm must not be allowed by me to wander too far away from the body. If I do that, I shall raise it on high, and all I can think of then is that I must look like a young chicken with wings outstretched ready to fly. What shall I look for to correct this? I will see to it that at the top of my swing the right elbow shall be pointing to the ground. I will endeavor to keep it as close to the body on the down swing as I can comfortably. I will be thinking that I have the club head there in my right hand, and that I am sending the club head just as I would be sending an in-shoot to the catcher. It is a great feeling to make the right elbow work just in that manner.

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Golf has many secrets and many of them she has not let me in on yet. She is very sphinxlike in her attitude toward her followers. It is true that you have to find out things for yourself. But one secret I have wrested from her is this: If I come down to the ball with my right elbow doing as I have just said it was doing, I can get a great punch into the ball with that right hand of mine, while at the same time my straight left is going out as far as I can make it toward the right, after the ball. That is worth remembering. I almost think the ball is going clear over to the right, but it will not do so. I avoid the slice as much as possible by hitting from the inside, out, and not from the outside, in.

### *Topping*

I think approach shots are topped the most, but it is depressing to flub a shot from the tee. Just a little thought will help to explain what topping is caused by. If the club head meets the ball in the centre it goes well; if way above the centre it will

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be topped — that is, I must have raised my body, shortened the arc of my swing, pulled up my head, or taken my eye off the ball. They all amount to the same thing. For this I say to myself, “Stay down to the ball.” I endeavor to keep my two shoulders in the same plane throughout the back and forward swing. No jerking. No lurching. I aim at making the whole thing as smooth as I can get it. It always seems to me that if I know what causes an error I can then find out how best to get rid of it. Maybe I commune with myself like this as I address the ball: “Slow back; follow through; hit both hands.” Half the time we are committing faults because we do not give that brain of ours the correct orders. We cannot be unconscious and play good golf.

I have noticed that many players, after they have addressed the ball, go through a waggle in which, every time they do it, they raise their shoulders and thus invite disaster. When I take my stance, I try very hard not to move up and down like a Jack-in-the-box. I find this very helpful; but,



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I did not come to know this until I had topped many shots and found how costly the error was.

Topping shots near the green, as I said before, is very common, for the nearer we get to the hole the more anxious we are to see where the ball is going and so the head is very apt to be raised. Scooping shots is also common as we near the green. I think it is the action of the wrists that are used too loosely at this point. There is one thing about a topped shot, it can run and keep on its line; but it is sure to fall into any dent or trap on the way to the green.

### *Hooking*

As the slice sends the ball to the right, the top scurrying along the ground, so does the hook send the ball to the left. This is wicked when it sends the ball into a clump of bushes just at the left of the tee. The chief reason for the hook, I take it, is putting too much right hand into the shot, or keeping the right hand too far under the club

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handle. Sometimes, too, I find I am standing for a hook. Because of my flat swing I think I am more liable to hook than those players who use a more upright swing.

However, hooking can be guarded against by not allowing the face of the club to be inward when it comes to the ball ; by taking a stance that is more open ; or by not allowing the right hand to predominate in the swing at the expense of the left. Punch hard with the right and hit through with the left. Then — no slice, no hook, just a beautiful long drive.

These errors of stroke-making I have taken up in detail. There are other types of error that I think are quite as important. For instance, it seems wrong to me to practise while playing the game. It can only retard the progress. It seems to me also an error to treat the ball as if you had a grudge against it. Neither the ball nor the club does anything of its own accord. They are really willing servants and gladly obey. The ball goes into the rough not because it

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prefers the long grass and the tree stumps, but because it is sent there.

Another error I find myself falling into is picking the club up too soon on the back swing. I do not know what verb to use to describe the backward movement. Do I drag it back, lever it up, or swing it up? Whatever one I do may be correct, but to pick it up too quickly with the right hand will make me get a good chop instead of a good hit. I find also that I sometimes have one eye for the ball and the other for the hole. Bad policy. To be sure, I think it is best to have a point at which we take aim, but it must be fixed in the mind — not in one eye.

In one tournament I played I found the braid down my back began to attract my attention. Bobbed hair was all the style, but even at that I kept my long tresses. However, early one morning I arose, fixed the braid carefully, and clipped it off with the shears. My mother found rather a ragged head when she appeared, but the braid bothered me no longer. Long ties

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and ribbons dangling around are of no use and much detriment. But good shoes and comfortable clothes help in a striking manner to good golf. I do not think being "dressed up" ever makes for good golf, but being properly dressed is of much importance. You have to feel right, and a girl cannot feel right unless she knows she is looking all right. But then we all know what mirrors are used for.

### *On Your Honor*

I always think of West Point in connection with one thing about golf. At that Academy, the place where officers for the Army of the United States are trained, the cadets are brought up to learn that honor governs all that they do. This is my attitude toward my favorite game. I have its honor to support. So has each one who enters its fold. An error in count, an error that moves the ball, an error that in any way makes you take improper advantage over your opponent, seen or unseen, is the worst error in the whole game. We begin

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with the question, “ Who has the honor? ”  
Slice, hook, pull, top, flub, dig, even miss  
one altogether, but play always on your  
honor. In that way there are no serious  
regrets and no feller will need a friend.

## CHAPTER VII

### HOW TO PLAY THE WOODEN CLUBS

LOOK at any well-filled golf bag and notice what three sticks show their heads high above all the others. I refer to the wooden clubs — the driver, the brassie, the spoon. In all golf, no shot gives you such supreme joy as the perfect drive. It reflects the best that is in the player ; it gives you a feeling of well-being and confidence ; it means a good beginning. It is an omen of good things to come.

I was playing the first hole at the Shennecossett Club one day before a gallery far more numerous than I had been accustomed to. I was just a little nervous ! Under such circumstances one is likely to lose confidence and decision, consequently spoiling the distance and direction of one's drive.

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Yet that day, to my surprise, I got off one of the best drives I have ever had the joy of making. It started off the tee low to the ground, and like a bird on the wing it gradually rose to a long low trajectory. After it had gone fully two hundred yards down the fairway straight as an arrow, it ran just enough to come to rest upon a nice bit of turf, and there lay peacefully awaiting my arrival.

A little while back I stated that fifty per cent of the shots in golf were putts, but so far as sheer thrill is concerned, there is no shot like the drive.

I have lost many matches by missing putts, but it will be a long time before I am willing to consider the putt on the same plane with the drive and the brassie shot.

### *Important Details*

You would think that if a player knew how to use one of the three wooden clubs he would know how to use them all; but this does not always follow. Little details creep into the technique of the drive and the

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brassie shot and the spoon shot, which make each of them differ, more or less, from the others. Nevertheless I am going to attempt to describe roughly a technique that will cover them all.

One of the best ways to learn how to swing properly is to notice the styles of good players in action. Watch for them as you play around your local course. If you go to the movies, watch for them in the weekly news reels. More than once I have discovered an error in my style by studying moving pictures of myself.

Before you can drive well you must learn a correct stance. Personally, as I have already said, I favor the open stance for the feeling of comfort it gives me in the follow-through. When you use the open stance you face slightly more toward the direction that the ball will take than you do when you use the so-called square stance. As in all golf strokes, care should be taken to have the feet a comfortable distance apart, and far enough away from the ball to allow free action of the arms, the shoulders, and the





*Photograph by Edwin Levick, N. Y.*

ROLAND MACKENZIE

*Open stance for full brassie shot*



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body itself. Also be sure to keep the weight on your heels, thus counteracting the tendency to fall forward as you swing through.

### *The Swing-Back*

One of the most difficult parts of the direct drive is swinging a club back and up. Young players always seem to have a tendency to snatch the club back, and hence to produce a hurried, hasty, inaccurate stroke. If the player swings his club back too much with the right hand, the club will be moved upward too vertically, and the resulting drive will be a chop rather than a long, full, easy stroke. Flatten out the arc of the swing-back as much as possible. This will tend to give you smoothness and rhythm. Draw the club head back with *both* hands. If you must favor one hand, use the left more than the right. Draw the club head back along the ground in a direct straight line from the ball for at least a foot before you let it rise from the ground. There is always a desire to shorten that part of a swing-back where the club head clings to the

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ground. Don't begin to raise the club head too soon.

### *Watch Your Grip*

For my part, I often find that I am gripping the club too tightly with my left hand. With the overlapping grip the power in the fingers of my right hand is less than in the left, because the forefinger of my right hand is not used to grip the club. If you are in doubt about how strongly you grip with either hand, notice the marks that the stick leaves on your hands after you have made the stroke, and remember that beginners always hold the club too tightly.

### *The Arms*

Another important point to remember in the backward swing is to keep your left arm straight. Naturally it tends to break on the swing-back in sympathy with the right arm. Don't let it! One advantage of keeping the left arm straight is that it tends to prevent overreaching.

When the club has been raised to a height at a level with the right shoulder, the club

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will then take a position that is horizontal. In this horizontal position the club is often in a line which is across the line of flight to the hole. This is the case with all players who have a full pivot and who work on the theory of hitting from the inside, out — about which I have more to say. Don't forget, too, that on the swing-back the right elbow should point toward the ground. If you allow it to point up in the air at the beginning of the stroke, your whole stroke will be wrong from start to finish.

### *The Knees*

Now as to your left knee on the swing-back. When your body pivots, your left knee will naturally bend toward the ball. Don't overdo this bend. The only point of bending it at all is to allow the body a natural pivot and to prevent any awkward rigidity. When you swing back you naturally tend to throw your weight on the right foot. Therefore be sure to keep the right leg perfectly straight at the top of the swing, but not rigid. At least half the

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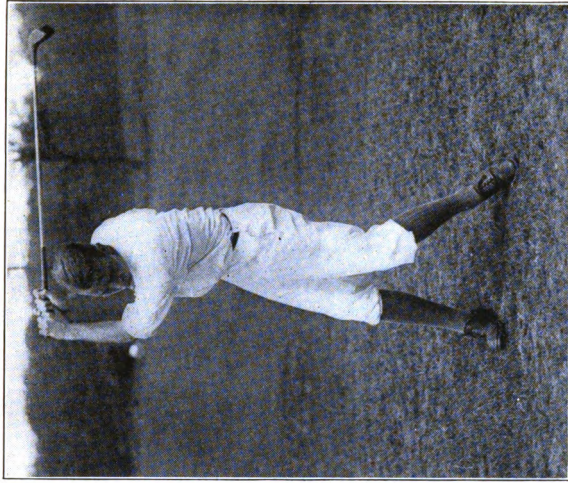
success of a good drive is due to correct balance.

Where are the hands at the top of the swing? For a long time I made the error of allowing the face of my club to point upward. The correct way is to have the face of the club perpendicular to the ground. To do this you must bring the hands *under* the shaft at the top of the swing. It is a good plan to have the knuckles of both hands turned toward the sky.

There is not much to be said concerning the action of the hips on the up-swing. If the left knee bends, naturally the left hip must come around through an arc of at least ninety degrees. All this sounds very complicated, but once you have mastered the fundamental idea of the drive, and after you have watched a few good players execute it, the thing will all seem very simple.

### *The Swing-Through*

Now for the swing-through. As in everything else, the downward pass is speedier than the upward. The control of the club



*Photographs by Edam Lewick, N. Y.*

**ROLAND MACKENZIE AND JESSE SWEETSER AT THE TOP OF THE SWING**

*The right leg straight and the face of the club perpendicular to the ground*





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should be felt in the forefingers and in the grip of the thumb. Don't try to knock the ball out of the lot on your first try. If you swing at it easily the ball will probably go farther. On the down-swing keep the elbows close together. Also, the left arm in the down-swing is kept just as straight as on the up-swing. I do not mean that you should lock your arm at the elbow, for anything that stiffens your muscles should be avoided. The right hand is the controlling factor in the downward stroke, and when the right hand has come to about the level of the waistline it comes in with a definite, decisive, smartly applied punch. If you want a good axiom for the use of the hands on the downward swing, consider this: "Hit *down* with the left hand and hit *out* with the right hand."

The idea of punching with the right hand gives me a feeling of having the club head itself in my hand; it is the only means by which I have ever been able to understand the idea of throwing the club head at the ball.

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### *The Heels*

As to the action of the left heel: At the top of the back-swing the balance was being squarely held by the left foot with the heel raised from the ground. Now when the down-swing has started I find that my left heel comes down to the ground at once with firmness and precision. I think that the most effective blow can be given to the ball when both feet are firmly planted on the ground.

Here is a summary of the points I have tried to make clear to you in this lesson:

(1) Take the club head back along the ground in a straight line from the ball for a foot or more. Do not let any idea of lifting the club head enter your mind. Let the arms go out away from the body to get as flat an arc as possible. Let the left knee bend as the swing starts back, and see that the right straightens as the left bends. Keep right elbow pointed to the ground.

(2) Start the club head back by unbending the wrists as the thumbs and forefingers

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put their power into the club. Don't hit hard at it from the top, but save the punch for that portion of the swing which begins at the level of the hips. On the downward stroke you should try to hit the ball slightly across the line of the flight of the ball, or, as I have put it before, *hit the ball from the inside, out*. This will help to keep the slice out of the stroke.

Above all, when you are trying to make a good stroke please don't try to think of everything I have told you in this little book. Experiment beforehand with some of the motions I have described to you, if you like, but when you are actually playing it is always safer not to worry about more than one thing at a time.

No golfer is ever perfect. That is part of the fascination of the game. Nearing the goal of perfection is the best we can hope for or expect.

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