

YOUR ETIQUETTE IS SLIPPING

by
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The slackening in attention to golf etiquette is getting so bad the Royal and Ancient and the P.G.A. are becoming worried. Clubs are being asked to bring more forcibly to players' attention those simple but sound pointers on course behaviour which precede the rules of golf.

Many of us are lucky enough to belong to good clubs and to play with civilised friends who respect golf and its manners. It comes as a rude shock to learn about thoughtless behaviour in other places. It has even been reported that players have been seen dragging trolleys through bunkers!

Of course, established golfers who should know better sometimes have lapses from grace. This past weekend playing in a club medal competition, one of my fellow-competitors managed to walk on the line of my putt four times during the round! But I think he is just getting old and absent-minded.

The new generation of golfers must rightly be blamed for the drop in standards of course behaviour. I do not mean young people, but those people who are now, for the first time, finding golf within their expanding social orbit.

In the past golf has often been accused of representing the worst in middle-class snobbery. Certainly, in pre-war days people in trade and other non-

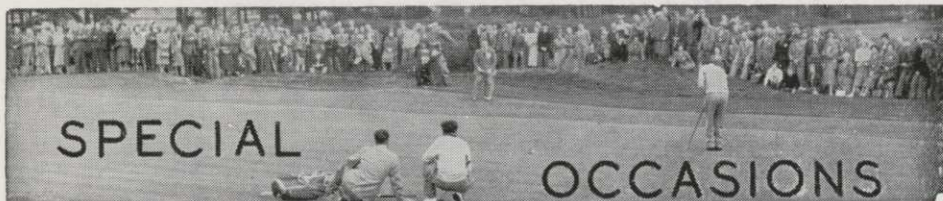
professional occupations were firmly excluded. Those of us with fairly liberal views are pleased to see the game nowadays opening its frontiers and offering its pleasures to a wider public.

Unfashionable though it may be to say so, there is a tremendous amount of good in middle-class standards — nowhere is this more evident than on the golf course. Respect for the rules, for other people's pleasure, and a gentle love for this most fascinating of games are middle-class attitudes which have held the game together.

As with most games golf is delicately and artificially structured. Remove any part of this structure and the whole thing loses pleasure and point. This must surely be self-evident to even the most unfeeling of people.

The more musty aspects of clubhouse etiquette may be open to question these days. Social behaviour has changed since the early part of the century. Some clubs are way out-of-date with their lists of domestic taboos.

But this criticism cannot be levelled at the rules and etiquette of the golf course itself. Each one is vitally necessary for the well-being of the game — even those which may seem pedantic at first glance. They have been evolved through centuries of trials and tribulations on the links.



NOV.	12th	Northern Section Lecture—Horsforth G.C.
	25th	North West Section Lecture—Brunswick Hotel, Piccadilly, Manchester.
	27th	Sheffield Section Lecture—Brunswick Hotel, Haymarket.
DEC.	3rd	Southern Section Lecture—Stirling Castle.
	9th	Midland Section Lecture—Old Crown Hotel.
	10th	Northern Section Lecture.
	16th	Northern Section Christmas Social.