

# U. S. Clubhouses Fail to Achieve Distinction

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**W**HILE IN the U. S. I have been asked many times by members of golf clubs whether, in my opinion, we run our golf clubs in Britain more attractively than you do in America. That is not an easy question to answer; conditions and requirements vary so much.

In Britain we do not have golf clubs that are miniature hotels which rather frequently is the case at larger clubs here. No one except the staff sleeps on the premises at our clubs. But all our first class courses have what is known as a "Dormy House." These houses are where a guest of the club or members may sleep. But except so far as the balance sheet is concerned, they have nothing whatsoever to do with the golf club.

Our golf clubs are much more intimate than yours. We have libraries filled with books and pictures of historic events that have taken place there, museums in which you can find famous golf sticks, famous golf balls and antiques of value to the game of golf.

We have billiard rooms and odd as it may sound, silence rooms. These are not used chiefly (as you may imagine) by grumpy old men who may wish to be alone, but for the convenience and relaxation of competitors. Nothing is more annoying or disturbing than to be surrounded by acquaintances or strangers just before competing in a big match. These rooms serve a very useful purpose and American clubs could take a leaf out of our book and institute quiet rooms in their own clubhouses.

Whether you think the idea of libraries, museum and billiard rooms are an asset to a club or not, I would not know, but I am certain that a silence room is a first class idea.

## Women Are Out-of-Bounds

Then again we have rooms for bridge such as you do and we have rooms for men only. Women are only permitted in English golf clubs in one room and that is a room which is placed at the disposal of both sexes. I shall never forget the commotion which Walter Hagen and Denny Shute caused when they brought their respective wives into the great room at St. Andrews. This club, as you know, has stood for many years and they were the first women ever to have entered it. As it was the final of the championship and Shute was the winner, they were forgiven.

But the diehards at St. Andrews turned their heads away in consternation.

Women in this country hold a very different position to women in any other part of the world. In Britain and Europe they are rather grudgingly given an equality. But here in the U. S. A. they are put on pedestals and the men do as they are told. No European would stand for that, I am not going to be so stupid as to give my personal opinion on this matter except to say that there should be rooms in golf clubs outside the locker room which are for men only. Doubtless the women too would appreciate a room for themselves as well.

## Food Specialties Featured

Though the food in American golf clubs is excellent, it has not the uniqueness of the specialties of some of the English clubs. It is said that Hagen once went all the way to Formby from Glen Eagles not to play golf but to eat the famous Formby shrimps, which are a specialty of the equally famous Formby GC. Every well known club in Britain has a particular dish of its own. I have not found that in America. Your food is very excellent and ample but, with all politeness, dull.

So far my readers will think perhaps that I am prejudiced in my own country's favor. That is not so. If I were asked bluntly the question I would say that the American clubs are more attractive. And yet there are certain obvious things you can learn and take advantage of from our rather ancient institutions. A few of them I have stated here.

## Where U. S. Clubs Excel

Now by way of comparison let us look at the matter from your point of view. Ours are a disgrace. There are no show-ers to the best of my knowledge in any of our clubhouses. There is always a bath but the chance of getting it is remote.

Architecturally your buildings are much finer, though I must confess that I think that your architects sometimes miss the point. The idea, at least I think so, of a golf club is that it should be a friendly looking place and not as some of your architects seem to think, a terrifying building representing a monastery. I believe they really do frighten some people away.

Bellair, in Beverly Hills, Calif., has very nearly struck the right atmosphere.

*Golfdom*

They have every modern convenience such as bridges and lifts to save the players unnecessary steep hills, and yet with all their modernness they have obtained a certain remoteness and atmosphere of calm. This I find singularly lacking at most of the golf clubs in America. It is that, chiefly, I miss.

Americans are known to be the most hospitable people in the world. As I have travelled nearly all over it, I can second that statement with real facts and pleasure, and next on the list as a matter of interest, I would place the pre-war Polish nation. They were almost incredibly hospitable people.

In your golf clubs you have dances; most of the Scottish golf clubs would go up in smoke if such a thing took place. Golf clubs in Britain are golf clubs only and here they are country clubs. It is all a question of which you like best and what can be afforded.

Another interesting point is the status of the secretary of the club. In my country, with one exception, the secretary of a golf club of any note is a retired army man. But over here you do not seem to have secretaries in the same sense of the word as we do. The professional or manager is the boss. What he says usually goes. In England the secretary, even if he be a retired general with five stars, does as he is told.

I would put in all British golf clubs the modern conveniences that you have and I would try and place in yours an atmosphere, not more friendly, but one that allows each club to have its own personality. At the present moment as I see it, the golf clubs of America are mass produced and therefore lack just that distinctive something which would make them all the more enjoyable.

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## Women's Nat. Collegiate Tourney Is Resumed

★ After a wartime lapse the national collegiate golf tournament for women will be resumed at Ohio State University course, Columbus, O., July 8-13. The first of these events was a success with promise that it would become a major annual event for young women. Team and individual events are scheduled for the second annual affair. Competition will be in several flights in order to attract a large field of undergraduate girls from colleges throughout the country. Accommodations for contestants have been arranged in Neil dormitory at the university. Entrance fee is \$5.

## Jersey's Suburban GC Has Golden Anniversary

★ Suburban GC, Union, N. J. is celebrating its 50th year in flourishing condition. The club is filled up with 235 members. Its assets are in excess of \$300,000. The clubhouse was redecorated prior to the opening of this season and 4 additional rooms and another bath were added to the employees' quarters.

During Suburban's life it has had only 3 pros; Bill Gourlay, Jim Dante and Marty Wallack who is on the job now. Frank Svehla is gpkr., and R. J. Miller, mgr.

Present officials have been in office for 10 years. B. T. Smith is pres.; W. F. Hopping, vp; C. S. Stallard, sec.; M. M. Bamberger, tres.; and E. W. Newcomb, asst. treas.

The club operates all year around. Last winter 81 members were Snow Bird players. The club is owned entirely by its members. It is managed by a board consisting of 18 members. The club never has had a reorganization or assessment.

Details of the early history of Suburban GC disclose that its first annual meeting was held at Elizabeth, N. J., March 2, 1896. Dr. Aliv R. Eaton was pres.; James S. Harris vp.; James W. Hall, Jr., sec.; and R. G. Sanford, treas. The Park Villa and 16 acres of land were leased for \$400 a year and the house committee authorized to engage a steward and other help at a total cost not to exceed \$100 a month.

The initiation fee was set at \$10 and yearly dues at \$10.

The clubhouse was formally opened April 18, 1896 and on April 21st, a committee was appointed to lay out the golf course which was formally opened July 11th, 1896. The first course cost \$512.

A special Stage left the C. R. R. station at 2 and 2:45 P. M. to take them to the club at a cost of 25c per round trip.

Oct. 1st, 1896 it was reported that the club owned 7 sets of golf c'ubs and had received \$69.85 for use of the course and rental of the clubs.

Charges for golf were 10c per round and caddie fees were 5c per round.

A steward was engaged for \$60 a month from May to Oct. and \$40 a month from Nov. 1st to April 30th. He was required to feed all other help at his own expense. A waiter was engaged for \$20 a month.

April 10th, 1900 the Love Farm was leased at a rental of \$500.00 per year. This property consisting of 64 acres was purchased in 1912.

The club joined the N. J. GA in 1907; the Metropolitan and U. S. Golf Assns. in 1911.

The balance of the present property was purchased in 1919 and the present clubhouse was erected in 1922.