

The British Square Prevails

American Entries Again Thwarted in Their Bid for the British Amateur Championship

By Bernard Darwin

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IT IS difficult to know how people three thousand miles and more away will be thinking of what has been passing under one's own eyes. I suppose that American golfers as a whole will have been disappointed over the show that their team made in our championship. I suppose it was disappointing and yet I am not sure. Only, I fancy, those who have tried it know just how hard it is to play your best game in the other man's country.

It is not easy for one thing to be the few against the many. There were two hundred and nine competitors all told and only eleven of the American team. And each one of the eleven that was beaten meant a greater loneliness for those that survived. Again it is not easy, save for those of a peculiarly pugnacious temperament, to play your best when you know that the onlookers, however cordial and friendly, yet want you to be beaten.

And then there is the difference of courses and the difference of climate. Our men found it as a rule something too steamy and hot in America. Yours had certainly good reason to find it too cold here. The Championship opened in blazing summer sunshine. Then suddenly the temperature dropped and the wind rose. It became very cold and there were squalls of bitter rain and hail that re-

curred during the rest of the week. It was difficult weather for anyone but certainly more difficult for our visitors than ourselves. And so I say that all things considered there was no great cause for surprise. Mr. Ouimet looked like winning. He came terribly near to doing so. If Mr. Wethered had not struck a patch of unbeatable golf, I think he would have done so, and then the rather early departure of some of the others would have been forgotten.

With that preamble I will say something of the team round by round. On the first day three went out. Mr. Lewis was beaten by a sound local player Mr. Schon, but he was not in practice. Two far more resounding and unexpected crashes were those of Mr. Gardner and Mr. Sweetser. Mr. Gardner lost to Mr. Forrester who has been Champion of India and was Captain of Oxford ten or twelve years ago. He is no mean adversary but not quite in Mr. Gardner's class and Mr. Gardner had been playing beautifully. What happened? Really I do not quite know except that Mr. Gardner never settled down. He made a bad start but got the holes back and got his nose in front. Then just as one expected him to sail away he lapsed again. His putting left him. Mr. Forrester stuck to his guns and there you are.

How Sweetser Went Down

MR. SWEETSER was beaten and badly beaten by Mr. Noel Layton, a player of brilliancy and power when on his game who played for England against Scotland in the International Match. Mr. Sweetser when he first landed played like a true champion. His golf against the Oxford and Cambridge men at Rye was as good as it could be. Then he came to Sandwich and something seemed to go wrong. He tore up his card in the St. George's Vase and played as one dissatisfied with himself and things in general. The lost composure and confidence would not come back.

He and Mr. Layton began as two players who are badly frightened of one another. They made mistakes and threw the holes at one another's heads. At the end of the fifth Mr. Sweetser was one up. At the end of the fifth also Mr. Layton discarded his frightened mood and began to play. He had been putting well, even when he was mincing other shots. Now the other shots came back and his perfect touch on the green remained. Result a very fine exhibition of golf. Mr. Sweetser tried hard enough but he was quite unlike the hero of Brookline and never really got down to it. The knockout blow came on the thirteenth when Mr. Layton holed a long putt and Mr. Sweetser missed a little tiny

one. After that the end was inevitable and came on the fifteenth green.

All of the others had got through fairly easily and some by large margins, Mr. George Rotan for instance was extraordinar-



Kadel & Herbert

Judging from this photograph Champion Jesse Sweetser, found the winds at Deal rather tempestuous.



Underwood & Underwood

Francis Ouimet consults his caddie on the proper line of approach in one of his matches.

ily brilliant in these early rounds and slaughtered his victims unmercifully. The second day however saw the number, of survivors again reduced. The victims were Mr. Harrison Johnston, and Mr. Herron. Mr. Johnston fell before a compatriot, Mr. Douglas Grant, a Californian who lives at Sandwich and learned his golf—and very fine golf too—in this country. It was a hard match with plenty of good golf, Mr. Grant winning on the seventeenth.

Mr. Herron was beaten very unexpectedly by Mr. R. V. K. Finlay, who has never played so well before but struck a vein of splendid putting in this meeting and made good use of it. He took the first four holes from Mr. Herron and utterly refused to have any of them taken away. Mr. Rotan amply revenged Mr. Lewis by defeating Mr. Schon by 7 and 6 and everyone else got through more or less comfortably.

On Wednesday in the third round there were two American victims. Mr. Wright and Mr. Marston. Mr. Wright lost by 3 and 2 to Mr. G. N. P. Humphries, a good young golfer. Captain of the Cambridge team two years since. He putted beautifully whereas Mr. Wright, though he drove like an angel, made numerous mistakes with his second shots. Mr. Marston lost to Mr. Tolley by

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a margin of 3 and 2, but the match was closer than that. In fact it was touch and go, Mr. Marston playing the better and steadier golf was two up going to the seventh. Then came a crucial moment. Mr. Tolley laid a little pitch from off the green stone dead. Mr. Marston not realizing how slow the green was, played his putt too gently down a slope and stymied himself. Mr. Tolley is just the man to rub in an advantage. Having the worst of the next hole he rammed down a long putt and Mr. Marston's ball hit the cut and stayed out. Here were two holes gone that might easily have gone the other way. From that point Mr. Tolley played his most powerful and victorious game and Mr. Marston, though he tried hard could not quite go the pace set.

In the same round Mr. Holderness, the title holder, got his quietus at the hand of Mr. Douglas Grant. He was rather ragged and shaky and could not putt so that Mr. Grant won without having to play his best.

Willing vs Blackwell

A MORE interesting match was between Dr. Willing and that wonderful veteran Mr. Edward Blackwell who is fifty-nine years old. Nineteen years ago Mr. Blackwell was Mr. Travis's opponent in the final at Sandwich and one was forcibly reminded of that historic match. Mr. Blackwell looked much the same as he did then and hit the ball with the same dash and abandon. Dr. Willing though he has not that ominous black cigar, has a touch of Mr. Travis. There is the same clean straight driving not vastly long, yet always just long enough, the same infinite painstaking, the same or almost the same deadly putting. The Doctor was always just a little too accurate: he was three up at the turn and taking life easily afterwards won by 3 and 2.

Now for Thursday and the fourth and fifth rounds. By the end of the day only Mr. Ouimet remained. In the morning by ill luck he and Mr. Neville had to cut one another's throats. They both played very well and it was one of the most delightful

and friendly matches that I ever watched. Mr. Ouimet was palpably just the stronger, but for once he was outputted. It was not that he putted ill but that Mr. Neville putted brilliantly. It was a bitter cold windy day but his touch was as fine as his courage and time and again he saved himself by putts of twelve to twenty feet. He made Mr. Ouimet go all the way and lost only on the last green.

Mr. Rotan found the weather painfully unlike that of Texas and lost to one of the very best of the young Scottish golfers, Mr. W. L. Hope. It was a fine match with a crisis at the thirteenth. All square with six to go and a good long two-shot hole, Mr. Rotan played a beautiful second to within twelve feet. Mr. Hope went one better and was within three feet. After that Mr. Rotan missed a putt or two and lost the sixteenth.

Dr. Willing still survived but he met his fate in the afternoon at Mr. Wethered's hands by 2 and 1. It was not a great match, as regards the quality of the golf but it was a terribly close and anxious one and with the Doctor even more careful than usual. It took a long time in the playing. Dr. Willing was getting rather left behind at some of the long holes but Mr. Wethered hardly took advantage of his superior length and moreover Dr. Willing saved himself by some gallant putting. When he holed a fine putt for a two on the eleventh to square the match, British heads began to shake, but the unexpected happened. It was the apparently remorseless and imperturbable Doctor who made the slips and Mr. Wethered, palpably tired and anxious, who rose to the occasion and played two perfect fours. He did indeed relent at the seventeenth and hit a mashie-niblick shot off the shank but the Doctor's bolt was shot and he could not take his chance.

Neither could Mr. Bretherton who was playing Mr. Ouimet. He had the chance of a lifetime for Mr. Ouimet began right down badly and was three down in six holes. Two of the three remained with seven

to play and then Mr. Bretherton, usually most tenacious and reliable, lapsed badly. Mr. Ouimet became dormie and, though he in turn tried to hurl away the match, he just failed and won at the last gasp.

The Last Eight

NOW there were only eight men left. Mr. Ouimet had to play Mr. Tolley in the morning. If he beat him he would probably meet Mr. Wethered in the afternoon. It was a hard day's work but he faced it like a hero. Indeed it was only on this day that we, who knew his American game saw the real Francis. Against Mr. Tolley he was superb. He had a little the best of it with all the shots and a great deal the best of it on the green. Mr. Tolley has some tremendous shots but somehow he was the spasmodic and amateurish against the methodical and ruthless. Moreover he never looked as if he were going to hole the doubtful putts.

Mr. Ouimet was only one up at the turn but even so I never esteemed his enemy's chances very highly. And then Mr. Ouimet played a series of long holes in a big wind in 4, 4, 4, 4, 3, 4. To play against this sort of thing was like battering your head against a stone wall and Mr. Tolley departed on the fifteenth green.

Mr. Ouimet was, I think, prepared to play just about as well again against Mr. Wethered, provided he was allowed to do so, but a man cannot play better than he is allowed and Mr. Wethered was not in a permissive mood. His game was in the most vivid possible contrast to the rather wild golf that he has exhibited in America. He was as firm as a rock, played with the utmost steadiness and control and neither a Travis nor a Travers could have improved on his putting. Mr. Ouimet was hanging on for dear life. He did it most gallantly but he was just in the least bit in the world outplayed. He did not die, however, without a supreme effort.

He was four down with five to go and off the green at the fourteenth,
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whereas his enemy was on it. However, he laid a pitch stone dead and Mr. Wethered, a little startled, perhaps, took three putts. At the fifteenth Mr. Wethered was bunkered in his second and took two to get out: Mr. Ouimet had a "birdie" three. From a British point of view this was getting ghastly, but Mr. Wethered stood the strain nobly. Both nearly holed long putts on the sixteenth, Mr. Ouimet horribly nearly, but neither dropped. That was dormie two and Mr. Wethered playing the seventeenth perfectly got his half and the match. His play considering the worse weather, had been

just as good as Mr. Ouimet's in the morning and both deserved all the cheers they received. Mr. Ouimet has always been extremely popular here and his fine golf and his fine sportsmanship, alike in defeat as in victory, have made him more so than ever.

I have neither time nor space here to write of the finals. Mr. Harris played very well indeed against Mr. Wethered but he was overwhelmed by 7 up and 6 to play and a display of golf that no living golfer could have improved upon. Perhaps I may be allowed to say something more of our new champion in another article.



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