



A VIEW OF THE SIXTH HOLE OF THE IFIELD GOLF LINKS, NEAR CRAWLEY, SUSSEX

Ifield probably is one of the most beautiful golf courses in the whole of the South of England, and is set in idyllic surroundings. At the moment, the whole course is carpeted with primroses and violets, and even if your golf is bad, there is this ever-present solace of natural loveliness. The Clubhouse itself is first-class and the Club most admirably run by the Secretary, Lt.-Col. R. J. Colson, who has everything in absolutely apple-pie order

THE English Golf Union's championship was, on the whole, somewhat lacking in interest this year. Of course, there was the usual crop of "shocks" and "sensations," most of them artificially manufactured for a public whose desire for them I am more and more inclined to doubt. The rest were of a nature to be deplored rather than enthused upon. So many of the players who deserved to do well were the victims of sheer bad luck—which is always to be regretted when so much is at stake—and the golf, especially in the final, was of a much lower order than might reasonably have been anticipated.

Alan Newey, whose star, if I may say so, has been inclined to wane during the past year, redeemed himself by being no less than seven under fours when he won his match, but it proved, as well it might, to be a flash in the pan and he was well beaten by the ultimate winner in the next round. It was particularly unfortunate for S. Roper, an artisan player who, contrary to general belief, has not yet turned professional, that he should have been the victim of this amazing performance.

We all know the golfer who has always been unlucky when he has lost—"three putts on ten greens and four stymies"—but, really, it seemed as if Roper might legitimately complain of ill-fortune. There were nearly 160 matches played during the course of the championship, and his golf was good enough to win by a large margin in all but one of them. When he walked off the sixteenth green against Newey, he required a 3 and a 4, the par figures, for a score of 68, and yet he had lost by 3 and 2.

Talking of ill-luck reminds me of Sydney Banks, of the Hallamshire Club, Sheffield, who was defeated by Bourn in the semi-final by 2 and 1. At least twice the fates were cruelly unkind to him. If the "breaks" had not run against

him as they did, I cannot help believing that the final would have been altogether another story. I remarked last week, with somewhat laborious wit, that I should hope to be recounting to-day the various features to which I attributed my own astonishing success in the final. I can only say that I had the pleasure of losing to Banks in the first round, and no amount of false modesty will make me admit that he is anything but a very good player indeed.

Banks, who is now twenty-eight, is a good example of the obscurity in which a man may linger if he has not the leisure to enter the succession of tournaments from which alone the glare of publicity comes. The calm, unhurried way in which he plays inspires the utmost confidence. He walks with long, slow paces, his arms folded and his head bent, as if lost in thought, and nothing will induce him to go faster. Actually, although he moves in such a leisurely fashion, he is anything but a slow player.

This, I regret to say, is more than can be said of the genial Bill Stout, who, these days, would be out of breath to keep up with a tortoise. Whether it was a natural transformation in his golf, or the presence of a large and extremely sympathetic crowd of fellow-Yorkshiremen that caused him to crawl round the course as he did, I do not know. When I made a small reference to this matter last week in connection with the County Championship, I was still venturing to hope that it was only the strain of medal play that had brought about the change in him, but alas! it was not.

The name of the winner, John Woollam, is one of which most southern golfers have probably never heard. He has for some years been well known in Cheshire golf, and has been a member of the Hooton Club since its inauguration eight years ago. By trade he is a builder. Why he gave his age to

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