

Henry Cotton on Golf



A STUDY IN EXPRESSIONS.

Cotton's finish—and his face—seem to suggest a corker.

Burton and Cotton both look rather anxious about this one.

Dog-Fight Over a Dog-Leg

TWO weeks ago I wrote about the old Prestwick course and the two camps, one for making a long modern championship course, and the other for leaving the course as it is.

Now, quite a long way from Scotland and in a vastly different setting—almost in the heart of Manchester—another golf club has its little problem, which divides the club into two friendly but resolute camps.

The club is the Reddish Vale, in Stockport, and it has a very lovely and difficult 320-yards hole, a new one for the course, about which there is a big difference of opinion.

I was very surprised to find such an interesting and undulating course right in the town, as it were, and with such clean turf and such beautiful greens. It is all the more amazing when you realise that Charles Chevalier, the professional, and only two workmen are responsible for the course.

Just two men on the course since last September, and no extra men were employed to give it a final polish before our match. I played Richard Burton over thirty-six holes, and not a fault could be found with it.

Those who dislike Reddish Vale (not many knowledgeable golfers can be counted

in this number) say that the walks between the tees are too long and the long, steep climb to the eighteenth green is bad, and that these spoil the course. Whilst long walks are always tiring and the almost mountainous climb up to the eighteenth green is exhausting if rushed, I consider the course's good points far outweigh the bad ones.

There are six one-shot holes—a finer six could hardly be imagined, the ninth (150 yards) being the worst, and the fourth (170 yards) the best—but the course, although 6200 yards on the card, is actually long because if there were three short holes less the 6200 yards would become 6800 yards at least, so the rest of the course is first-class in length as well as design.

In the particular part of England where the Reddish Vale course is situated, the Mersey, black and greasy, winds in the valley, and it is impossible to get away from the signs of industry. Some of the most beautiful golf holes have tall, belching chimneys as direction indicators, and these provide a dismal background.

The new fourteenth hole, redesigned by James Braid is one of the loveliest holes I have ever played. It has an inspiring tee shot between the river and a line of bunkers set out below the tee, which is situated very high up.

Now we come to the controversial new sixteenth which has been put in instead of the old 230-yards sixteenth, which was very uninteresting. Briefly, the new hole is a dog-leg to the right round a bend in the river with the small flat green lying in the narrow peninsula formed by the river almost doubling back in its course.

This hole of 320 yards is the best-looking, most fair, and at the same time probably the most difficult hole I have ever played. It is, as the length indicates, a drive and a "kick," but both shots have to be played.

The handicap golfer cannot play this hole; it is frankly too difficult, and as



SOME OF THE SPECTATORS who saw Cotton give a sparkling display to beat Richard Burton, the Open champion, 8 and 6 in the Red Cross match at Reddish Vale.