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GOLF NOTES

(Continued from July)

Simple Ideas for Improving One's Golf

by A WELL-KNOWN PLAYER

Who gives ideas which are likely to be of special assistance to the player who wants to improve his short game. In his opinion five or ten minutes' putting practice on most days should be sufficient to maintain a state of good judgment and good touch.

The Choice and Use of Golf Balls

THE golf ball is a never-ending topic of conversation, and there are many players who think they know all about the choice and use of the golf ball. Nevertheless, it is quite evident that there are a considerable number of golfers who have something to learn about this subject. I, therefore, propose to present a few points for the consideration of the reader, which may assist him to improve his play. The golfer who plays several rounds a week, and always likes to have a nice white ball to look at, spends untold wealth on his golf balls in the course of a year. Unfortunately, we are not all able to do this, and it is thus my intention to deal with the economical aspect, as well as giving some hints on how to use a ball to the best advantage.

What we all want is a ball that will wear well, stand punishment, travel as far as possible, leave the club sweetly, and behave itself on and around the greens. Any make of ball answering to these somewhat searching conditions is assured of a good run of popularity. A few years ago the golfer had to use a good deal of care and discretion in choosing his ball. If he was what I will describe as an average hitter a hard ball had to be avoided, because he was not strong enough to get the best out of it. The hard hitter, on the other hand, found he could obtain greater distance with the tightly wound ball. Another point the average player had to consider was the ability of the ball to withstand topping. Then, of course, there was the everlasting question of steadiness in the short game; and to add to one's difficulties the hard balls, which behaved best in approaching and putting, were the very ones that did not take kindly to punishment.

During the last couple of years, however, there has been such a great advance in the construction of the ball that some of the best makes now combine the qualities of long driving without undue effort on the part of the player, steadiness in the short game, and durability. The manufacturers are to be congratulated on having arrived at the present standard of excellence. Nevertheless, the playing qualities of the different makes of modern balls vary considerably, especially in approaching and putting, and on this point I want to warn all players against the practice of chopping and changing.

Find a make of ball that suits you and stick to it is the best possible advice to those who play the game at all seriously. If you make changes in the same round, or every few rounds, you do not give your short game a chance. You are constantly in a dilemma to know how hard to hit the ball. You lose your touch, and you lose confidence in yourself. An occasional change may be necessary in order to move with the times, but I strongly urge you not to alter your ball in the middle of a busy season.

Does the Ball Lose Some of its Driving Power with Use?

Now, whatever the makers may tell us, there is not really any doubt about the fact that new balls travel further than ones with which a few rounds have been played. In the case of very old balls most people know that there is a serious loss of length, and I believe the manufacturers explain that this is due to the surface having lost its polish. Then apparently all you have to do is to have your balls repainted! This, in fact, is largely done. Only recently I was talking to the professional at a fairly well-known club, and he told me that nearly half the balls he sells are repaints. That, however, is by the way. While the effect of repainting a ball which has become shabby may in some instances partially restore it to a state of normal flight, if it is carefully done, the fact remains that the majority of repaints are far from satisfactory. The constant hitting may have flattened the marking, causing the ball to duck and swerve; or the cover may have come away slightly from the core, which gives the effect of hitting a cushion. Both of these things tend to considerably reduce the distance the ball can be struck, and the latter is also detrimental to good putting.

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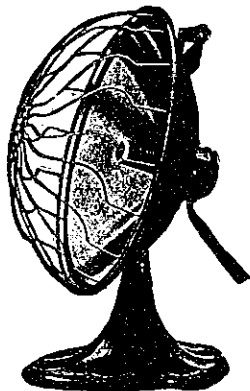
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