



News Update

With the election now behind us, we can get on with the serious business of enjoying life. For golfers, that means arranging travel plans and preparing to test our games on the famous links.

face the same shot as our favorite pro and, just occasionally, we might pull it off.

For many people, a trip to Scotland or Ireland is now an annual

the opening tee shot at St Andrews, or the walk across the Swilkin Bridge? Anyone who has played into (and out of) Hell Bunker or The Cardinal will remember the experience. Jean van de

Smell that sea air, feel the springy turf underfoot, admire the views and soak in the sense of history. Revel in the camaraderie, make new friends along the way and broaden the golfing experience. It's what this game is all about.



Velde will never forget the 18th at Carnoustie, nor Tommy Nakajima the 17th on the Old Course. They can take heart from Doug Sanders, however, who missed that three-footer to win the 1970 Open Championship at St Andrews. Asked some thirty years later if it still haunted him, he replied with disarming charm, that the memory was fading. In fact, he said, he sometimes went eight or ten minutes without so much as thinking about it!

Most of us never have the chance to hit a home run in the Major Leagues or to make the winning play in The Super Bowl. But we can all have the opportunity to make birdie on the 18th of a major championship course, even if the prize is just a two-dollar bet. That's what makes golf unique in the sporting world: we can

pilgrimage. There are so many superb links that, before you've played them all, you want to begin revisiting your favorites. Individual holes and shots stand out like beacons in your memory. Who could forget

One happy effect of global warming is that the season seems to be extending. Rarely do we see cold weather much before Christmas; and the new growth begins in March or early April. Last year, Turnberry had



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record levels of visitors in April to take advantage of favorable rates and mild, sunny weather. **This year, those attractive, discounted prices will be extended into early May. The Old Course Hotel in St Andrews operates a similar deal, which makes a Spring visit to Scotland a mouth-watering prospect.**

People sometimes forget that the days are longer in April than they are in September, which is why the number of sunshine hours is higher too. This year, the attractions of Spring golf in St Andrews are greater than ever due to the winter preparation of the Old Course for the Open Championship in July. This has included work on bunkers, fairways and greens, illustrating a determination to present the course next year in its best ever condition.

Remember, too, that the warming influence of the Gulf Stream brings Spring to Ireland even earlier. **The period from late April into early May witnesses a riot of color and the greens and fairways reach peak condition before the rough is fully re-established.** It's a great time to visit!



Old Course in Reverse – April 2005

Once again, the Old Course will be open for play in reverse in April. Many years ago play regularly alternated between the right hand circuit (the current layout), and the reverse left hand circuit (1st tee to 17th green, 18th tee to 16th green etc until the last hole, which played from the 2nd tee to the 18th green). **The course will be set up in reverse over three days – Friday April 1st, Saturday April 2nd, and Monday April 4th.** Rates start at £110 per person for a two round package on the Old Course and Jubilee Course. Please contact us if you would like more details.

Open Championship St Andrews 14 – 17 July 2005

Accommodation: The Sheraton Grand Hotel, Edinburgh, Scotland

Transport: Private coach or regular train service from Edinburgh to Leuchars Junction with coach transfers to St Andrews.

Golf: Pre-tournament and post-tournament options to East Coast, West Coast, Scottish Highlands (Royal Dornoch and Nairn), or Ireland.

Open Championship Royal Liverpool 20 – 23 July 2006

Accommodation: The Chester Grosvenor Hotel, Chester, England

Transport: Daily private coach transfers to Hoylake

Golf: Pre-tournament visits to Royal Lytham & St Annes, Royal Birkdale, and Formby
Post-tournament trip to St Andrews and Kingsbarns. Other courses may be included on request.

Ryder Cup Kildare Hotel & Country Club, Straffan, Ireland 22 – 24 September 2006

Accommodation: Choice of hotels in Dublin City

Transport: Regular coach transfers to and from the K Club

Golf: Pre-tournament and post-tournament trips to South West Ireland (including Ballybunion and Old Head) and to Northern Ireland (including Royal Portrush and Royal County Down).

Due to limited availability on each of these programs we strongly recommend that you register your interest now.

People and Places

In preparation for the **Open Championship** in July, the Road Hole bunker on the 17th hole of the **Old Course**, is being made more difficult to avoid. Never easy to miss or escape from in the first place, the hazard is being extended westwards slightly so that it gathers more shots landing nearby. The height and steepness of the face will be unaffected and the bunker will be out of play until Spring. **Around 90 other bunkers on the course have already been returned and refaced.**



The **Royal & Ancient Golf Club** has requested that the Old Course be closed a full 3 weeks before the Open for preparation. **The last day for play will be Saturday 18 June and it will then reopen to the public on Tuesday 19 July.**

The **Old Course Hotel in St Andrews** has been bought by the Kohler Co, owners amongst other things, of The American Club in Wisconsin – the Midwest's only AAA Five Diamond Resort – and the Whistling Straits golf course that hosted the 2004 USPGA Championship.

Plans are already underway to refurbish most of the hotel's bedrooms, renovate the public areas and considerably enlarge the Spa facilities, while the resort's own golf course – The Duke's – is also in

line for a facelift by the **Pete Dye** design company.

Also in St Andrews, plans for a seventh course were passed in March 2004 and this new cliff-top layout will open in 2006. Designed by David McLay Kidd, of Bandon Dunes fame, the course is laid out south of town and enjoys spectacular views towards the town and Eden estuary. Discussions on yet another new project are still on the drawing board.

Brian Morgan, golf photographer, has acquired land close to **Machrihanish** and is building a new championship links close to Old Tom Morris' famous original. Morgan also has plans to create attractive accommodations, which will help this scenic corner of the Mull of Kintyre to reach its tourist potential. The course is due to open in Spring 2006.



The **Caledonian Hotel** in Edinburgh, or the 'Caley' as it is popularly known locally, was originally built in 1903 by the Caledonian

Railway Company but is now part of the Hilton group. It is situated in the heart of Scotland's capital city, in the main shopping district, and looks across to the ancient Edinburgh Castle. The hotel is currently undergoing a significant £8 million refurbishment, to be completed by April 2005. Over 200 bedrooms are being renovated, as well as its restaurants, bars, and health club, in order to bring it back to former glory. At one point, in the Caledonian's history, steam from the trains in the adjacent railway station was re-cycled to heat the hotel's hot water supply! Today's guests can expect more sophisticated comforts.

Opened in 2003 the **Dundonald Course** (formerly known as Southern Gailes) is a new Scottish course, designed by Kyle Phillips, the architect behind the much-admired Kingsbarns Golf Links near St Andrews. Although acquired by the exclusive Loch Lomond Golf Club it is available for play by non-members in 2005 (£95 per person per round May-October) and been talked about as a possible future venue for the Scottish Open.

The course offers some typical links features – revetted bunkers, gorse, heather, undulating fairways, rolling greens, a burn in play on 11 holes – and is situated beside Western Gailes and Kilmarnock (Barassie) on the west coast of Scotland. In style it has more in common with Carnoustie than, for example, the Ailsa Course at

Turnberry, being near the coast but without views of the sea. Prestwick, Royal Troon, and Glasgow Gailes are also only a short drive away.

Stephen Toon, known to many of you as the affable secretary of the James Braid Golfing Society, is now in charge at Sunningdale. Steve spent a few happy years looking after the Dukes Course in St Andrews, and he also retains his connections in the Dornoch area, which he still regards as home.

The Links Hotel in **Brora** is being converted to luxury apartments, but will retain function rooms for use by the residents, as well as by visitors to the neighboring Royal Marine Hotel, where the Powell family continue to be your hosts.

Morton Hotels, former owners of the Golf View Hotel in Nairn and the Royal Golf Hotel in Dornoch, have sold out to the Swallow Hotel Group. We wish the new owners well and hope they maintain the high standards set by their predecessors.

Carton House, once home to the Earls of Kildare and Dukes of Leinster, has two championship courses with plans for a 160 bedroom luxury hotel. **This is due to open in September 2006 in**

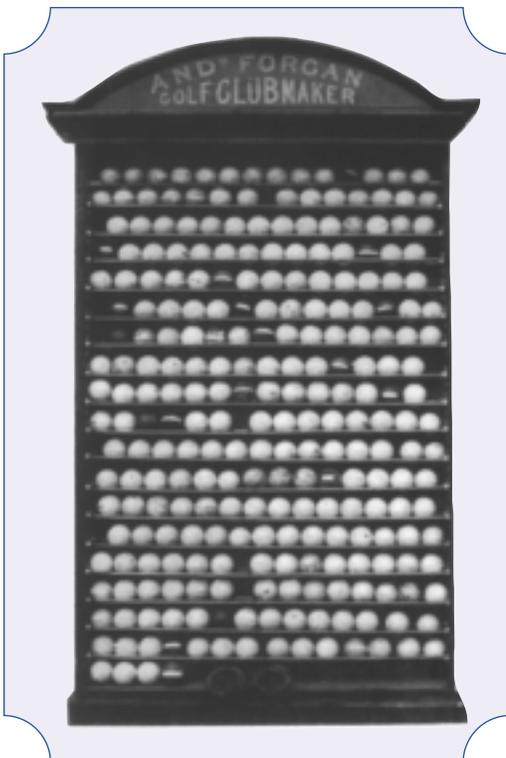
time for the Ryder Cup.

One of the courses, a delightful parkland design, bears the signature of Mark O'Meara, while the other one was laid out by Colin Montgomerie in conjunction with Stan Eby. Appropriately, Monty's creation is in the links style, with undulating greens, deep bunkers and fast-running fairways. Surrounded by magnificent old trees, the green ribbons of the links are separated by strips of rough colored by stunning fescue grasses, The River Rye flows between the two courses, as well as meandering through O'Meara's layout, and the estate is just 14 miles west of Dublin City, Ireland.



second time), the coveted AA Hotel of the Year Award for 2004. Owners Padraig and Janet Treacy do not believe in resting on their laurels, however. This winter an ambitious refurbishment program has been completed, resulting in the creation of twenty newly-designed rooms and the conversion of eight deluxe rooms to junior suites. **In addition, the Ross Hotel, the Treacys' other property in town, has been demolished, but will re-open in early 2006 as a 32 bedroom, four star boutique hotel.**

Cameron House, strategically located at the foot of Loch Lomond, **will soon have its own golf course, the Carrick Course** (designed by Doug Carrick but named for the west coast region of Carrick). Bordering its famous neighbor, the new course is intended to be more traditionally Scottish in feel and should enjoy even finer views than Weiskopf's loch-side classic.



The shortage of quality hotels in the Ballyliffin area will soon be solved when Ballyliffin Lodge opens in June. Managed by Cecil Doherty, formerly secretary/manager at the golf club, the new facility will offer 45 deluxe bedrooms, fine dining, and on-site location to the golf course.

Congratulations to the Killarney Park Hotel for winning, (for the

'Stroke of Genius', a film based on the life of Bobby Jones and starring Jim Caviezel, brought a production crew to St Andrews in August 2004, when, for a short time, the Links and the Market Place were transformed into a 1930s film set. Re-created scenes included Jones' first visit to St Andrews when he tore up his card, his return in 1927 when he won the Open Championship, his 1930 Amateur Championship victory (the first leg of his famous Grand Slam) and his return visit in 1936. Crowd scenes featured many locals as extras, so you may find your caddy this summer claiming to be a film star!

We are delighted to announce that our management team in our U.S.A. office has been strengthened by the arrival of **Christine Dobens as Administration Manager**. Christine is married, has three daughters and brings a wealth of relevant experience to her post.

Transportation

We have contracts with a number of car rental companies and coach hire firms. This gives us the flexibility to source the best value for you, regardless of the size of your party, the length of your trip, or the complexity of your itinerary. **Whether you prefer the independence of self-drive or the relaxed comfort of a luxury coach, we will be happy to accommodate your choice.** Even within vehicle categories, you have extensive options. Our coaches range from super-deluxe models equipped with captains' leather seats, videos,

fridges, air-conditioning, and toilets, to executive models with more traditional features.

Our car rental fleet includes sedans, estate cars, and luxury vans in both automatic and stick-shift options. **When comparing rates using the internet, we would simply caution you to ensure you are comparing like with like as many companies choose to advertise low-cost rates without drawing attention to the fact that these may not include mandatory insurance coverage, airport pick-up/drop charges, one way penalties, or local taxes.**



Book Review

St Andrews - Portrait of a city

Peter Adamson & Lorn Macintyre
Alvie Publications, St Andrews, 2004

Peter Adamson has been the highly respected photographer to St Andrews University for over thirty years. This new work contains scores of wonderful photographs, which capture the auld grey toon and its

people in all their moods. Rich in history, the town is known the world over for the academic prowess of its ancient university, and for its lofty place in golfing circles as the Home of Golf.

Lorn Macintyre's well-researched text accompanies Adamson's evocative images, which bring to life the history of the town in all its facets: castle and cathedral, university, golf courses, and architecture. Despite the growth in population of the town – student numbers have trebled in the last thirty years – the heart and soul of the place remain unaltered through time. This delightful volume bears elegant witness to all of this.

Scottish Golf Links - A Photographer's Journey

Iain Macfarlane Lowe, with
David Joy and Kyle Phillips
Clock Tower Press, LLC,
2004

Open this book halfway through its pages and the eyes fall upon the wintry sight of Slains Castle, viewed from the side of the 15th green at Cruden Bay.

The early morning sun lends a warm hue to the rich stonework of the castle, and lights up the barren headland on which it stands. A pale, calm sea fills the bay and the depression of the bunker in front of the green is discernible in the morning light. Snow covers the green, but the tee markers are just visible and the light plays on the yardage post. So sharp is the image, and so evocative the mood, you feel as if you are there, but the vista makes you want to visit, to

enjoy the sensation and command the view for yourself.

Besides a collection of wonderful images of Scotland's famous courses, Lowe's photographs capture the romance of its hidden gems and show glimpses of its spectacular scenery and visitor attractions. The narrative is in the safe hands of actor and historian David Joy, while golf course architect, Kyle Phillips, provides insight and comment on some of the greatest holes in golf. This is a book you will read over and over again!

A History of The Royal Dornoch Golf Club 1877 –1999

John Macleod

Royal Dornoch Golf Club, 2000

The late John Macleod took up golf at the advanced age of 14 and joined the Club three years later, in 1949. Returning to Dornoch as a qualified doctor, he became the local General Medical Practitioner and served for many years on the Club's Council of Management. He was Club Captain from 1978 to 1981 and Vice President for a number of years thereafter. **This delightful work is the result of his life-long interest in the Club, and of his involvement with the Club's archives during his retirement.**

Macleod traces the origins of the Club, as it evolved from the Sutherland Golfing Society, to its formation in 1877 and the appointment of John Sutherland as Secretary in 1883, a position he would hold for fifty-eight years. It was Sutherland who brought Old Tom Morris to

Dornoch in 1886 to extend the course to eighteen holes. He was also the man who encouraged the young Donald Ross to apprentice in St Andrews with Old Tom Morris, during which time Ross learned the principles of golf course architecture, traveling with his boss to projects all over Britain. Leaving St Andrews, he returned to Dornoch to become green-keeper and the Club's first professional, but in 1899, at the age of 25, he emigrated to America. Within a couple of decades, he had three thousand men working on his countrywide projects and would leave



his imprint on over five hundred courses. Donald's brother, Alec, followed him to the States and won the US Open in 1907.

The author reveals some fascinating details of the Club's history: alterations and modifications to the links, battles over access with the Town

Council (since Sutherland was also Town Clerk he signed letters both from and to the Club), and famous golfing personalities associated with the Club. **It is interesting to reflect that J H Taylor in his prime took an annual vacation in Dornoch, bringing Vardon and Braid with him for an exhibition match in August 1906.** Braid won the match with scores of 75 and 75 (150) against Vardon's scores of 75 and 79 (154). Vardon later wrote to the Club, **"You have indeed got a fine Course up there at Dornoch. I should think that it is the best in Scotland"**.

Earnest Holderness and Roger Wethered had summer homes here. Joyce Wethered, Roger's sister and described by Bobby Jones as the best golfer, man or woman, he ever played with, honed her skills on the links. She would win the British Ladies Amateur title four times in the 1920s.

Earlier, five of the Club's finest took part in the "Invasion of Muirfield", venue for the Amateur Championship of 1909. Sutherland himself took some notable scalps, including those of Harry Colt and Harold Hilton. Young Tommy Grant caused a sensation when accounting for former champion, John Ball. In 1913, one of the five, Donald Grant, set a new course record at Dornoch of 71, a record which Roger Wethered would reduce to 69 in 1923 when winning the Silver Medal. And, incredibly from 1903, Dornoch won the Northern Counties Cup ten times in a row.

Although the early years are often the most fascinating in a club's history,

there is also much of interest to report from more recent times. This little book, scarcely more than one hundred pages long, packs in so much information that one finishes the read with a feeling of great respect for the research put in by its author, as well as a deeper understanding of the Club's affairs. Some great old photographs illustrate the text.

We are indebted to the late Dr. Macleod's widow for permission to utilize material from his book.

The Royal Dublin Golf Club, an historical note.

At a meeting arranged, by Scottish banker John Lumsden, and held in Number 19 Grafton Street in **May 1885**, this famous club first came into being. **It is Ireland's second oldest.**

First located near the Magazine Fort in Phoenix Park, the club moved after a year to Sutton and then, in 1889, to its present home on Bull Island. **The island is, in fact, a sand spit formed by ocean currents moving sand against the 1.75 mile-long sea wall,** which was master-minded by Captain William Bligh (of Mutiny on the Bounty) and others in the early 1800s to provide safe passage for ships into Dublin harbor. Today, a splendid wooden bridge gives access to the clubhouse, and a causeway further out allows crowd access for tournaments.

The 'island' is approximately three miles long and covers 160 acres. Designated as a site of scientific

interest, the area provides important habitat for a variety of flora and fauna and is particularly noted for its hares. It also affords fine views of Howth, Dublin Bay, and the distant Wicklow Hills.

The early years of the club were relatively uneventful, but, after extensive damage to the clubhouse and course during the First World War, a



restoration program was required in the 1920s. This was undertaken by Harry Colt with the aid of £10,000 in government compensation. It was a busy period for Colt as he also re-designed Muirfield, Royal Portrush, and Sunningdale during these years.

Numerous championship events have been staged at the club over the years, including the Carrolls Irish Opens of 1983 and 1985, won by Seve Ballesteros, and that of 1984 in which Bernhard Langer triumphed.

In 1959 Christy O'Connor was appointed Club Professional and he celebrated with nine Irish Open victories. In the 1966 event, played over these links, "Himself", as he is

known to members, stood on the 16th tee in the final round needing three birdies to tie Eric Brown. He finished eagle, birdie, eagle to claim the title once more. The great man represented Ireland in fifteen World Cups and featured in ten consecutive Ryder Cup teams from 1955 to 1973. Christy continues to be an excellent ambassador for the club and for Irish golf.

Called "Dollymount" by the locals, the club has one of the very few links courses to be located inside a city boundary. The shorter outward half is where your score must be made so long as the wind is not in your face. Only two of the five par 4's exceed 400 yards and the par 5, 8th, is reachable in two by good players. The two short holes on the outward half are the 4th and the 9th,

each measuring a shade over 160 yards and therefore neither is daunting on the grounds of length.

Turning for home, the 10th can be a testing par 4 but the long 11th, with out-of-bounds up the right, can be a fearsome prospect into a stiff breeze and introduces a run of difficult holes, which can make or break a score. At 188 yards, the 12th can be a brute of a short hole into wind, before Dardenelles and Morans, 425 yards and 455 yards, respectively, will make you grateful for the advances made in modern golf equipment. The 16th is drivable in the right conditions, as O'Connor proved in 1966, but few will match the maestro's closing eagle now that it is a tough par 4 rather than a short par 5.





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We are one of the few tour operators who can offer unparalleled access to St Andrews Old Course (as well as to many other famous courses, such as Ballybunion, Royal County Down, Old Head, and Royal Troon). To further enhance your St Andrews experience, a member of our Scottish staff will meet you at the Old Course with your personal caddy, and our local staff will be ready to assist you throughout your stay.

As your advisor, we will guide you through each stage of your trip. Determining the most appropriate accommodations, formulating the best transportation options and, best of all, securing tee times on the famous courses and hidden gems of your choice! As you might expect, we also assist you in the finer details, such as dinner reservations, sight-seeing, fishing, shopping, and any other guidance you may need, making your experience that much more memorable.

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