



GARY GALYEAN'S GOLF LETTER

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Dear Subscriber:

ROYAL ST. GEORGE'S GAVE US, with civility and sunshine, all that could be expected, demanded, and accomplished in the absence of wind, which obviated the necessity for the adaptive skill that is essential to memorable links examinations.

Hard by *La Manche* Sandwich's wind rarely rose above 12 m.p.h. and the rain never fell—straight down, let alone sideways. As Henry James wrote in AN INTERNATIONAL EPISODE [1878], “Summer afternoon—summer afternoon; to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language.”

Some might prefer the two words *links golf*. Mr. James clearly never played the royal and ancient game. Even if he did, as P.G. Wodehouse speculated about Marcus Aurelius, “... all the evidence seems to indicate that he rarely went round in under a hundred and twenty. The niblick was his club.”

Brooks Koepka's benighted assessment of Sandwich went like this: “It's not my favorite venue that we have played. I think Portrush and St. Andrews are definitely the favorites. I haven't seen all 18, I'll see the back nine today. But quite a few blind tee shots, kind of hitting to nothing. Fairways are quire undulating. I don't know, it's not my favorite of the rotation, put it that way ... It doesn't matter. I've won on golf courses that I'm not a big fan of before. It has nothing to do with it. Still got to get up and go hit the shot and do what I'm supposed to do, so that doesn't bug me. I don't care whether I like the place,

don't like it. You've still got to play good and go hit the shots.”

At the other end of the spectrum, so to speak, Jordan Spieth, who won the 2017 Open at Royal Birkdale, was drawn to Sandwich's quirkiness. “It brings a lot of the feel aspect into the game ... You get less swing-focused and more shot-focused over here because the second you take your brain off the shot you're hitting, you may not find your ball. Instead of just a driving range shot in Palm Springs, there's always some shot you have to play that gives you a little bit of an advantage.”

Many thanks that neither of these men were part of Churchill's speech writing pool.

As to be expected, the Open produced an array of extraneous and memorable numbers:



ROYAL ST. GEORGE'S, THE STARTER'S HUT BY TAG GALYEAN



1 The number of times a male golfer has won two majors as a debut player in each respective championship - Collin Morikawa.

1 In 1894, Royal St. George's became the first club outside of Scotland to host the Open Championship. J.H. Taylor won with a score of 326 for 72 holes played over two days. 84-80 and 81-81. First place won £30.

2 The number of years since the rough was last mown at Royal St. George's.

2 The number of feet (slower) the Stimpmeter recorded the green speed, as compared to customary tour speeds.

2 The number of players who have won two major championships before age 25 - Mr. Morikawa & Tiger Woods.

5 The number of 31s posted for nine holes.

15 The number of times Sandwich has hosted the Open, more than any course outside Scotland. Champions here have included Harry Vardon and Walter Hagen twice each, Henry Cotton, Bobby Locke, Sandy Lyle, Greg Norman, and Darren Clarke.

58 (-12) The best ball score in the second round for the game of Louis Oosthuizen, Jon Rahm, and Shane Lowry.

129 The best ever opening 36 hole score in the Open posted by Louis Oosthuizen.

32,000 The number of daily spectators; about 130,000 total. In pre-Covid 2019, Royal Portrush welcomed 240,000, which was an Open record.

Thursday and Friday

In a proper golf championship all players begin at the 1st tee and finish at the 18th in all four rounds. That is an obvious point to make but only the Open and the Masters maintain this criterion. In the other two majors and most tour competitions, a two-tee start is used because television scheduling demands greater predictability in the ending times of sports broadcasts.

At the Open this year, of the four starting time segments of rounds one and two—two mornings and two afternoons—only the afternoon of the first round experienced a difference in weather when the wind came up a bit.

Oosthuizen	64 -65 = 129
Morikawa	67 - 64 = 131
Spieth	65 -67 = 132
Rahm	71 - 64 = 135

Beginning Thursday's round at 9:58 and finishing before the wind rose for the afternoon rounds,

it might be argued, allowed Mr. Oosthuizen to play the mid-nine holes (8 through 16) in just 29 strokes and take the first round lead with 64. However, Mr. Rahm, playing with Mr. Oosthuizen, could do no better than 71.

Collin Morikawa, starting at 1:26 with a stronger breeze, nonetheless posted a 67. Jordan Spieth, beginning at 9:25, produced a score of 65. So it was talent rather than slightly stronger wind conditions that made the difference. The wind was not appreciably worse—maybe a two stroke wind.

JOHN MONTAGU (1718-1792), 4TH EARL OF SANDWICH

To whom the invention of the sandwich was attributed in a 1765 travel book. The earl became First Lord of the Admiralty and was a substantial patron of Capt. James Cook, who named the Hawaiian Islands the Sandwich Islands in honor of his benefactor.

The story is told that the earl so loved gambling that, once started, he never wanted to leaving the gaming table. This necessitated a meal that he could hold in his hands, without implements or mess, so that he could sustain himself through a full night of gambling.

The first written evidence of the word as a meal, not an earl, appeared in 1762: "I dined at the Cocoa Tree ...," wrote Edward Gibbons, an historian, "That respectable body affords every evening a sight truly English. Twenty or thirty of the first men in the kingdom ... supping at little tables ... upon a bit of cold meat, or a Sandwich."

Along the same naming lines as the Elgin Marbles, which were fallen from the Parthenon before being shipped to England and sheltered in the British Museum by the 7th Earl of Elgin, the HISTORY INDEX internet page, names Hillel the Elder the true creator of the sandwich. Hillel was a 1st Century B.C. rabbi who started the Passover custom of sandwiching various foods between two matzohs to eat with bitter herbs.

So, the HISTORY INDEX wisely asks, what were sandwiches called before they were Sandwiches? "Bread and meat" and/or "bread and cheese" were apparently used more than a few times in 16th century British theatre.

The starting times, as always, flipped for Friday's play, the wind was benign all day, the talent took advantage, and the scoring was breathtaking. Mr. Morikawa, in the 8:25 game, posted 64 (7 birdies/1 bogey), as did the Argentinian Emiliano Grillo (9 birdies/3 bogeys) having started at 8:47. Both finished before the afternoon rounds began.

While Friday afternoon saw Mr. Spieth start at 2:26 and post an impressive 67 (5 birdies/2 bogeys), it was the game half an hour behind his who kept the scoreboard attendants busy. Between the three of them, Messrs. Oosthuizen, Rahm and Shane Lowry accumulated 16 birdies, 1 eagle, and just 2 bogeys. The group's best ball totaled 58 strokes—12 under par. Mr. Oosthuizen's two-day total of 129 set a new record for the best ever opening 36 hole score.

"I probably played a bit better yesterday given the conditions we were playing in," Mr. Oosthuizen said after his Friday round. "The last nine holes today was as good weather as you can get playing this golf course and all of us took advantage of that.

"In our three-ball, we had a 64 and two 65s which you do not really see in links golf. It is really a good leaderboard and I will have to play good golf this weekend if I want to come out first." Among the leaders for the first two rounds, there were three 64s, two 65s, two 67s, and one 71.



With the exception of Mr. Rahm, the field was well

Saturday Morning LADBROKE Odds

Oosthuizen	5/2
Morikawa	4/1
Spieth	9/2
D. Johnson	8/1

distilled at this point to three of the four eventual leaders. Only three strokes separated Messrs. Oosthuizen, Morikawa and Spieth who were prepared with the knowledge that Sandwich could be managed and the weather would only be a factor by its absence. Mr. Rahm was six strokes back.

Mr. Spieth and Dylan Frittelli, tied at 203, played together just in front of the leaders. Mr. Spieth birdied early and often. He joined the lead after birdies at 2, 4, 6, 7 and a bogey at the 5th. Mr. Frittelli, another South African, soared

Saturday Weather

NOON

63 Degrees

10 mph NE Wind

going out and struggled coming in.

Mr. Morikawa struggled early with bogeys at the 2nd and 5th but regained his rhythm and presence with long putts to make birdies at 7th and 8th to turn in even par. Mr. Oosthuizen was a bit shaky over the early holes but covered par adeptly. The South African recovered his touch with birdies at the 7th and 9th to turn 2-under—a total of 162 for 45 holes. At the turn, he led Mr. Spieth by two and Morikawa by four.

The back produced similar results with a notable failure by Mr. Spieth, which cost him the title. He left the 16th green tied for the lead at 11-under,

but then bogeyed the 17th. At the home hole he missed a two-foot putt for second, needless bogey and all of a sudden he was two strokes out.

Regardless of Mr. Spieth's sloppy lack of focus at the end, it was a day of stunning scores. Amongst those who would contend on the final day, there were two 68s (Morikawa & Rahm) and two 69s (Oosthuizen & Spieth).

Mr. Oosthuizen made important putts at the 15th for par and the 16th for birdie to lead Mr. Morikawa by one once the day was done.

The rest of the field must have felt they were being pecked to death by a duck, but which duck?



Sunday Morning

LADBROKE Odds

Oosthuizen	6/4
Morikawa	15/8
Spieth	5/1
Rahm	16/1

Sunday Weather

NOON

79 Degrees

6 mph S Wind

Clear sky

Heat Stroke Warning!

Sunday's competition broke quickly as Mr. Koepka turned in 31 with birdies at the 6th and 9th, and an eagle at 7th. He found only one more birdie, at the 12th, to finish with 65—his low round of the Open and the low round for the day



CAMPBELL'S TABLE AT ROYAL ST. GEORGE'S 5TH BY TAG GALYEAN

For the 149th Open, the 5th hole ranked sixth most difficult (4.14). It was Bobby Jones' favorite hole at Sandwich, and he included it in his world's best 18 holes. Two notable, competitive moments took place here:

1967

William C. Campbell, Amateur Championship Runner-up (1954), U.S. Amateur Champion (1964), future President of the U.S.G.A., and future Captain of the Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, swept both his Walker Cup foursomes matches and both his singles matches in this year with accomplished driving accuracy at the 5th.

In each match, Mr. Campbell drove his ball, or his foursome team's ball, to a plateau that hugs the left side of the fairway and dangerously close to the Sahara bunker. "From the plateau," Gordon G. Simmonds, the Walker Cup history author and leading authority, told us, "it is possible to see the green, which makes the second shot a lot easier to judge. Certainly, it was a hole he played well each time (he hit the tee shot for both foursomes in company of young Jack Lewis) and, in his final singles against Ronnie Shade, he birdied it, the first of five consecutive 3s on his way to a 3&2 win."

For his bold and accomplished play that small plateau at the 5th is, to this day, referred to at the Club as *Campbell's Table*.

1949

An odd Rules situation at the 5th cost **Harry Bradshaw**, the well-known Irish professional and multiple Irish Open Champion, the Open Championship in this year. During the second round, Mr. Bradshaw's drive came to rest on the 5th fairway next to a broken beer bottle. Rather than taking relief or removing the glass, both of which he was unsure that he was entitled to do, but certainly would have been, he played the ball as it lay. He was only able to move it slightly forward—essentially costing him a shot. This ultimately resulted in a tie with Bobby Locke and a championship playoff, which Mr. Bradshaw lost.

among the contenders. The importance of Mr. Koepka's round was that it demonstrated such a score was possible with the holes cut where they were and the conditions benign. It was too late for Mr. Koepka, however, he finished at 272—seven shots out of the lead.

Also fading out of contention were: Corey Conners who bogeyed the first two holes while paired in the penultimate game; Scottie Scheffler who went out in 37 strokes; Mr. Rahm who went out with an eagle and two bogeys; Mr. Spieth who combined an eagle with two bogeys and a birdie; and, most notably, bogey from Mr. Oosthuizen at the 7th.

The South African's second shot finished in the greenside bunker; he thinned his third over the green into the opposite greenside bunker where it buried; was forced to play out sideways to 50 ft. from the hole; and two-putted for bogey. Mr. Morikawa's second was just short of the green; he chipped to 6 inches; and tapped in for birdie. Two shot swing.

Having begun the day with a single shot lead, Mr. Oosthuizen was fighting a light fade and had already bogeyed the 5th resulting in a tie with Mr. Morikawa. The two shots at the 7th—now a two shot lead for the American—were too great to overcome even for some as accomplished as Mr. Oosthuizen.

"The seventh hole was definitely the turning point," Mr. Morikawa commented later. "Just to have that little switch of a two-shot swing kind of got that round started and into another gear in a sense."



For C.M.:

But oh! shipmates! on the starboard hand of every woe, there is a sure delight; and higher the top of that delight, than the bottom of the woe is deep.

Herman Melville
MOBY DICK

Mr. Spieth, who played the final 12 holes in 6-under on his way to a closing 66 and runner-up honors, demonstrated his tenacity and the achieved reality of what he feared Saturday evening—his bogeys at the 17th and 18th that evening cost him a place in the final game of the day and a better run at the eventual champion.

"I am proud of going six under in the last 12 holes," he commented after finishing. "I really felt like I played well enough to win and made a couple of really dumb mistakes."

Also fading back in was Mr. Rahm who also posted a 66 to tie for third with Mr. Oosthuizen. Mr. Frittelli posted a 68, after birdies at the 15th and 16th, that moved him into a solo fifth place finish.

Morikawa	67 - 64 - 68 - 66 = 265
Spieth	65 - 67 - 69 - 66 = 267
Oosthuizen	64 - 65 - 69 - 71 = 269
Rahm	71 - 64 - 68 - 66 = 269
Frittelli	66 - 67 - 70 - 68 = 271

When asked on Saturday night if, in light of his multiple runner-up finishes in major championships, the golf gods owed him one, Mr. Oosthuizen offered a small, wry smile and shake of his head, and softly said, "No. It's just golf."

Mr. Morikawa's only regret, looking back, will be that no one reminded him to remove his hat as he crossed the final spectator crossing path and entered the perimeter of the massive stands on his final walk to the 18th green to receive golf's greatest ovation and its greatest prize.

It's just golf.

Yours vry truly,

Gary A. Galyean
Editor & Publisher

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