



GARY GALYEAN'S GOLF LETTER

THE INSIDE REPORT ON WORLD GOLF

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Dear Subscriber:

EYAM
... by fleas on sailing ships ...

PLAGUE ARRIVED FROM CENTRAL ASIA in the 14th century, having traveled along the Silk Road to Crimea, and then, by fleas on sailing ships, to the ports of Italy, as well as other major and minor European ports. It is estimated to have killed nearly half of Europe's population.

Black Death, as it came to be known in the European social media of the time, arrived in England in the mid 1300s – about a century before the word *golf* was first mentioned in writing in Scotland. Through the many plague years, the English came to prefer the name *Great Pestilence*.

During the course of three pandemics, plague reoccurred almost every year somewhere in Europe, Great Britain, Ireland, Northern Africa, or the Middle East until the mid 17th century. The third plague pandemic originated in China in the 19th century, spread to all continents, and killed 10 million people in India alone.

Notably, during the 1665 outbreak, a small village located in the charming, rolling hills of Derbyshire—not far from Sheffield—distinguished itself by stopping the spread of plague to neighboring villages through their self-imposed, Christian-based decision to self quarantine.

Eyam, or Plague Village, as it has come to be known, was brought to our attention by a long time

subscriber from England. The BBC and various print outlets including *atlasobscura.com* have been retelling the brave tale of Eyam, as it relates to our current pandemic behavior. We have relied upon these reports for this piece.

The Great Pestilence was reportedly transported to Eyam in cloth that was ordered by the local tailor, George Vicars, and sent to him from London. Mr. Vicars died within a week of receiving the cloth shipment. After other villagers died, the local rector, the Rev. William Mompesson, assumed leadership and convinced his village to take steps needed to stop the illness from spreading outside Eyam.

Fewer than a quarter of Eyam's villagers survived. It is estimated that approximately 260 died, but the plague was indeed stopped in this corner of England in these ways:

- No one was allowed in or out of Eyam for 14 months.
- Families were required to bury their own dead members.
- Mompesson's Well was a site established for the purchase of food and medicine in exchange for money. The coin money was disinfected with vinegar diluted with water.
- A boundary stone was set between Eyam and Stoney Middleton, a nearby village, where supplies could be left at a safe distance from Eyam.

Riley Graves, now a National Trust Monument just outside of Eyam, is a small graveyard on

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A GREAT PESTILENCE DOCTOR

a hill overlooking the Peak District, which is now a national park. Elizabeth Hancock buried her husband and six of her seven children here during a period of eight days in August 1666.

Today, on Plague Sunday—the last Sunday in August—an annual memorial service is “held in the nearby hollow of Cucklett Delf, site of the outdoor services held by the Rev. Mompesson during the plague years”.

Follow this link to a short piece about Eyam by the BBC: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-51981858/how-britain-s-plague-village-is-coming-together>

Chatsworth House & Chatsworth Golf Club

Because this is England, there is, of course, a beautiful little golf course located about six miles from Eyam on the grounds of Chatsworth House, the seat of the Duke of Devonshire.

Chatsworth has been the ancestral home to the Cavendish family since 1549—more than a century before the plague’s attack on Eyam. The house stands on the bank of the River Derwent (about nine miles from Chesterfield) and looks across the river to the Derwent and Wye valleys.

More than once Chatsworth has received the National Heritage Award as Britain’s favorite country house. The house is the hub of a 35,000 acre agricultural estate.

Chatsworth Golf Club is set in the extensive parkland of the estate and surrounded ultimately by “wooded, rocky hills rising to heather moorland”. The course is comprised of nine holes and 18 tees. The scorecard shows there to be 11 par 4s, 5 par 3s, and 2 par 5s reaching a total of 5,301 yards – par 69. “To further add to the experience of playing a unique course,” their website declares, “the views of the Estate, House and surrounding countryside are stunning.”

The course was built in the 19th century

for the exclusive use of the Devonshire family. During World War II, the course was plowed up so that ground could be used for producing food. Golf re-surfaced in the 1960s as a nine hole experience. Nine additional tees were added in the late ‘70s to provide 18 different holes. No bunkers are incorporated, and there are “small greens, tight fairways, and penal rough”. It seems fair to suggest that a modern driver—and perhaps several other clubs— should be removed from your bag to fully enjoy Chatsworth.

The stated policy is that it is only possible to play here as the guest of a member. However, outsiders are invited to enter one of the Club’s open competitions “to experience the course and the friendly club spirit”.

Accommodations can be found in surrounding villages, as well as Edensor, Chesterfield, Sheffield, or Derby.

The R&A Updates

If the 149th Open Championship is postponed for 2020, the 150th will obviously not be played at St. Andrews next year. We anticipate that the rota would simply slide forward so that the 149th will still be played at Sandwich but in 2021, and the 150th in

St. Andrews but in 2022. We cannot imagine the 150th being played anywhere other than St. Andrews.

The 151st Open is scheduled for Royal Liverpool; the 152nd for Royal Troon.

• 18 MARCH 2020, ST. ANDREWS, SCOTLAND AND LIBERTY CORNER, N.J., USA: On February

4, The R&A and the USGA committed to releasing research topics related to the next phase of our Distance Insights work within 45 days. At this time, the golf industry needs to focus on its response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, we have decided to delay this announcement until a more suitable time. This will obviously extend the deadline for the research. We will share more information in due course.

CHATSWORTH HOUSE



• 19 MARCH 2020, ST ANDREWS, SCOTLAND: We are closely monitoring the constantly-moving situation in the COVID-19 pandemic and carefully following the



advice issued to us by the UK Government, relevant health authorities and our medical consultants.

We have decided to cancel two of our international amateur events – The R&A Student Tour Series Final at St Andrews and Carnoustie and The R&A Girls' U16 Amateur Championship at Fulford, which were both due to take place next month. We have contacted all those involved. We will keep the status of the rest of the amateur championship season under review.

Looking to our professional events this summer, we are undertaking a comprehensive evaluation of our plans to stage The 149th Open at Royal St George's and the AIG Women's British Open at Royal Troon, which are four and five months away respectively. This includes examining a range of scenarios for staging the championships, with our focus on proceeding as planned, as well as considering other contingency options available to us.

Martin Slumbers, Chief Executive of The R&A, said, "Our absolute priority is to ensure the safety of players, fans, officials, staff and all involved in our championships and that will be at the forefront of our thinking as we monitor developments.

"We have some time before we start building the infrastructure at both venues and so we are keeping the scheduled dates in place for The Open and AIG Women's British Open at this point. We recognise that this is a rapidly changing situation and we will keep everyone informed of any changes to our plans. These are difficult times but we are bearing in mind our responsibility for what's right for golf and most importantly for society."

U.S.G.A. Updates

MARCH 17, 2020, LIBERTY CORNER, N.J.: Given the recent CDC guidance and the evolving dynamics of the Coronavirus pandemic, the USGA announced today that it has canceled its first two 2020 championships, the U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball, originally scheduled for April 25-29 at Quail Creek Country Club in Naples,



Fla., and the U.S. Amateur Four-Ball, originally

scheduled for May 23-27 at Philadelphia (Pa.) Cricket Club. These championships will not be rescheduled in 2020.

In addition, the USGA has canceled local (first stage) qualifying for the 2020 U.S. Open and qualifying for the 2020 U.S. Women's Open in their current forms, and in conjunction with our Allied Golf Association (AGA) partners and International Federations, will look to redesign qualifying going forward as events unfold. We will continue to hold the dates for the 2020 U.S. Women's Open at Champions Golf Club and the 2020 U.S. Open at Winged Foot Golf Club.

At this time, it is premature to speculate what might occur with other 2020 USGA championships. We will continue to monitor all available guidance and regulations from the CDC, WHO and other federal, state and local authorities to do what is in the best interests of our community. We appreciate everyone's understanding and support during these unprecedented times.

Actions & Reactions

• On Sunday, March 5, NBC left live coverage of a White House press conference concerning the pandemic to go back to a repeat transmission of The Players Championship from a previous year.

"They are pathetic," a subscriber wrote to us. "It's really a failure. They should pull their license. We haven't had as large a crisis as this for years, and [NBC] leaves the [press conference] for a repeat of the Players? Why have a news division?"

• Postponement of the Masters Tournament was considered by some to be a lost opportunity for a stunning, patron-less broadcast that would be remembered for years. Others were certain all along that the peer pressure of conforming with the tour would rule the day.

• Postponement of the P.G.A. Championship seemed an appropriate action to many of you before social distancing to defend against the COVID-19 was put into place. Hope for San Francisco is waning in light of so many social and health issues.

• March 16 - Tiger Woods - "There are a lot more important things in life than a golf tournament right now."

• March 18 - Brooks Koepka - Responding to a player's indignation after being denied the opportunity to compete in the U.S. Amateur Four Ball due to its cancellation, Koepka tweeted: "Life's not fair chief. People are losing their jobs and so much more, but sure go ahead and worry about a weekend of playing golf."

Golf Within the Beltway “It ain’t good with me Mr. President”

The magnetic spell golf has held over those considered to be the most powerful men in the world may seem incidental or innane, but the game has been a part of the American presidency for the past century. Since Howard Taft entered office in 1909, 16 of the 20 sitting presidents have played the game with varying degrees of dogged enthusiasm.

Perhaps apocryphal, the story is told that Ulysses S. Grant was the first of our presidents to see golf played. It was during a visit to England following his retirement from office that Mr. Grant’s carriage came upon some golfers playing on the outskirts of London. “That looks like good exercise,” Mr. Grant commented, “but what’s the little white ball for?”

Despite this early viewing, Mr. Grant did not take up the game. Golf did not truly arrive on American soil for another decade or so. By the time Mr. Taft reached the White House in 1909, however, golf was in American bloom and everyone was playing.

While Robert Trent Jones (RTJ) Golf Club near Manassas, Virginia, is now the politically correct golf club for politicians and pundits within and without the District of Columbia’s beltway, that has not always been the case. From 1924 until about 20 years ago, Burning Tree Club was the golf center for the nation’s capital’s politicians and military elite. Indeed, a presidential club case hangs on a Burning Tree wall displaying wooden clubs used by Presidents Taft, Wilson, Harding, Roosevelt, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford and Bush (41).

If there has been a president more enthusiastic about golf than Dwight Eisenhower, there has not been one



For perspective:

*All St. Andrews Links courses are operating as normal.
Click the link for information on operational updates
and more...*

St. Andrews Links Trust Website [Mar 23]
STANDREWS.COM

who revealed it. It has been said by those reputed to know, that every day President Eisenhower was in Washington and the weather permitted, he played at Burning Tree. The Club’s great draws are that it lies just 10 miles from the White House, is uncrowded, extremely private, and boasts a Colt and Alison course, which is perfectly kept, strategically interesting, but not too demanding.

Stories about the caddies at Burning Tree are legend because of the normal treatment they afford the most powerful men in the world. When a game is on the course, the attending caddies sometimes wager among themselves on the play of their employers. The intensity of the caddies’ wagers can be more severe than those of the golfers.

President Eisenhower was not acclaimed for his putting and often, when left with a difficult five footer, a general, admiral, or cabinet member might concede, “That’s good with me, Mr. President.”

During a close match that had come to the 17th hole, one of the President’s opponents repeated the concession of a missable putt using just those words. Before Mr. Eisenhower could pick up his ball, an opposing caddie, standing at the edge of the green, and with a wager riding on the other side of the match, countered, “It ain’t good with me Mr. President.”

One of President Eisenhower’s favorite golf jokes involved two relatively unskilled golfers who were arguing over which of them was the poorer player. In order to settle the argument, they decided to match scorecards for their round that had just ended.

“What did you have on the first hole?” asked the first player.

“An X,” came the reply.

“Then you’re one up,” he was answered.

Yours vry truly,

Gary A. Galyean

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