

The Story of Golf

Ye mecht hae wondered why golf coorses has echteen holes eenstid of ten or fufeen, or sum' ither number. There's a verra guid reason for the echteen—there is. An' I'll tell ye hoo it cam' aboot. Back in 1858 whin ma granfaythir was knocking' the gutta-percha aboot at dear ould St. Andra', there cam' a day whin the mair serious minded o' the club decided that the number o' holes shud be standardized. There was seven hole coorses, sum' o' thirteen, sum' o' fufteen, an' St. Simon had 22, it did. The committee chosen tae determine the standard number o' holes to be used henceforth couldna' cum tae a meetin'o' minds, an' ievery mon had a dufferent idea, nane based on reason—nane, that is, save ma great granfaythir who was aie wise as he was practical. Whane it cam' his turn, he said: "As ye ken, the winds are offen raw an' cauld hereaboot, an' we mecht a' times e'en play in chillin' rain. As ye nae doot do, I carry wi' me a fufth o' whiskey ta waarm ma achin' bones, an' ta waard auf the ague. I use a sma' glass which fuull ta the brim huds exactly an oonce and a haff o' the medicinal beverage. As lang as the fufth lasts, I find it pleasant ta continue ma gam' o' golf. When the bottul's empty, it wud be foo'hardy indeed ta face the rigors o' the windswept coorse. I hae fund that a bottul will full ma wee glas jist echteen times.

So I play 18 holes a day — nae mair, nae less. An' the size o' the bottuls canna' be changed for they are a'ready sandardized. Therefur, I say, let's maach oor coorses fit a fufth." There was reason in wha' the ould mon said, an' the cummittee, afther appropriate an' exhaustive testin', cam' to fuull agreement. An' that's hoo it cam' aboot. Will ye hit furst, while I hae ma' nip?