

# Interviews With Great Golfers

## No. 1 Vardon and Ray

By Grantland Rice

AS brown as the drifting leaves, the calling cards of autumn, Harry Vardon and Ted Ray stopped in recently for a morning session of polite chit-chat upon the topics of the day. It was their first day off for many weeks, and since no golf course beckoned, what better place to put in a forenoon than the office of a golf magazine?

The visit was welcomed for many reasons. And not the least was the fact that we had saved up many questions which their limited time between golf matches had prohibited before.

We were anxious, for one thing, to know what golf course they liked best out of the seventy or more they had seen. So this was question number one. And they both answered together:

"Well, we haven't seen any better than Hollywood."

"In fact," continued Ray, "I reckon it is about the best golf course we have seen in America. But I might add the other two that could go with Hollywood are the Inverness course at Toledo and the Scioto course at Columbus, O."

Vardon backed up this opinion. "At least," he said, "we haven't seen any courses any better than these and not very many as good."

Hollywood is located near Deal, N. J. As a fine test of golf it came in for unlimited praise from the two English stars.

There were other courses they liked—and a great many they thought were still shy on the proper bunkering. In regard to their Southern trip, both like the Belle Meade course at Nashville, Tennessee. "I don't like the Bermuda greens," said Ray, "but this course was very good and I will say it had the best Bermuda greens we saw."

Unfortunately neither Vardon nor Ray had had a chance to see Garden City, the National, Pine Valley, Oakmont, Lido or Myopia—all among the great courses of the country—or, you might add, the world at large.

### Our Golfing Sins

"YOU two have played against most of your best professionals and most of our star amateurs," we then suggested. "Having watched their play, what criticisms or suggestions would you care to make?"

"You have any number of fine drivers and any number of fine putters," replied Vardon. "But I think too many of your amateurs and professionals make the mistake of over-playing their irons. We have seen more faulty iron play than anything else, due, I should say, to an attempt to get too much distance—to overplaying the club."

"I'll tell you how that is," cut in Ray. "In one match against one of your best amateurs we were about alike from the tee. It was a

toss-up as to who should play first. I played my shot, used a spoon, and just got hole high. My opponent used his jigger for the same distance. He got as far as I did with a spoon, but he had to hit it a mighty belt and hooked it off the line. I've seen a lot of that over here. Mighty few of your golfers are willing to play an easy shot with an iron where they can belt it with a mashie. They seem to like to hit hard and this isn't good for control or direction."

We spoke to Ray about his putting—about the sensational work he did at Toledo on the greens and the uncertain work he had done

swinging the putter I keep my body and my head still. I believe in letting the club head go on through and I also believe in going for the hole even if I am twenty yards away. I don't want to see any of them stop short and if I make any mistake it is in being over too far. If you give 'em all a chance, then a lot of them will drop. I don't believe, either, in wasting too much time over a putt. Get your line, take a stance, and then hit it."

### Vardon Gains Weight

"WOULD you mind telling us," we asked Vardon, "how a man above fifty can play thirty-six holes a day for over three months and still stand up? Especially when he spends most of his nights on a train?"

"I get tired at times," Vardon said, "and yet I've gained five pounds since I landed here in July. I don't know how to make it out. There are many days when we get sick of looking at a golf ball, but I suppose one thing that helps us is the fact that we have played golf long enough not to worry or bother about our mistakes. We do our best and when that isn't good enough to win we wait for the next day. If we worried or fretted over our missed putts or mistakes, as we have seen so many do, we would have been nervous wrecks long ago. This fretting over your mistakes can take a lot out of you. Did you ever notice how much more tired you were after playing a bad round than you were after playing a good one?"

Neither one cared to name the best golfer they had seen in America. But both were willing to say that Walter Hagen was one of the best they had seen anywhere, and both were loud in their praise of "Chick" Evans and "Bobby" Jones.

"Two grand golfers," suggested Vardon.

"I reckon they both are," nodded Ray. "I like the way they play their irons."

Getting back to the amount of ground they had covered, it ran to something like this:

Total amount of traveling involved, 40,000 miles.

Total amount of walking over courses, 1,500 miles.

Total number of holes played or to be played, over 2,900. Total number of shots played, about 11,000 each.

"Who is the best putter you have seen over here?" he asked. "Amateur or professional?"

Once again they answered in one chorus: "Chick Evans."

This will come as a surprise to many who have been led to believe that "Chick" is lost on the greens.



Harry Vardon and Ted Ray, whose extensive tour of the States has enabled them to make some very interesting observations on courses and players

a day or two before in a practice round.

"I'll tell you about that," he answered.

"At Toledo I was keen for it. When I am putting well I see my putter hit the ball. Yes, I mean I actually see the club head of the putter all the way. But I haven't seen my club hit the ball now for a week. I reckon it must be my eyes. They have been feeling tired, what with thirty-six holes a day and riding all the time on trains. I think when you get tired out it hits your eyes and your putting first. It won't bother the long game much. But it will the other."

"What is your system of putting?" we asked.

"No particular system," he said. "I take a little hunch with my right leg or hip just before I start the swing, but when I am