



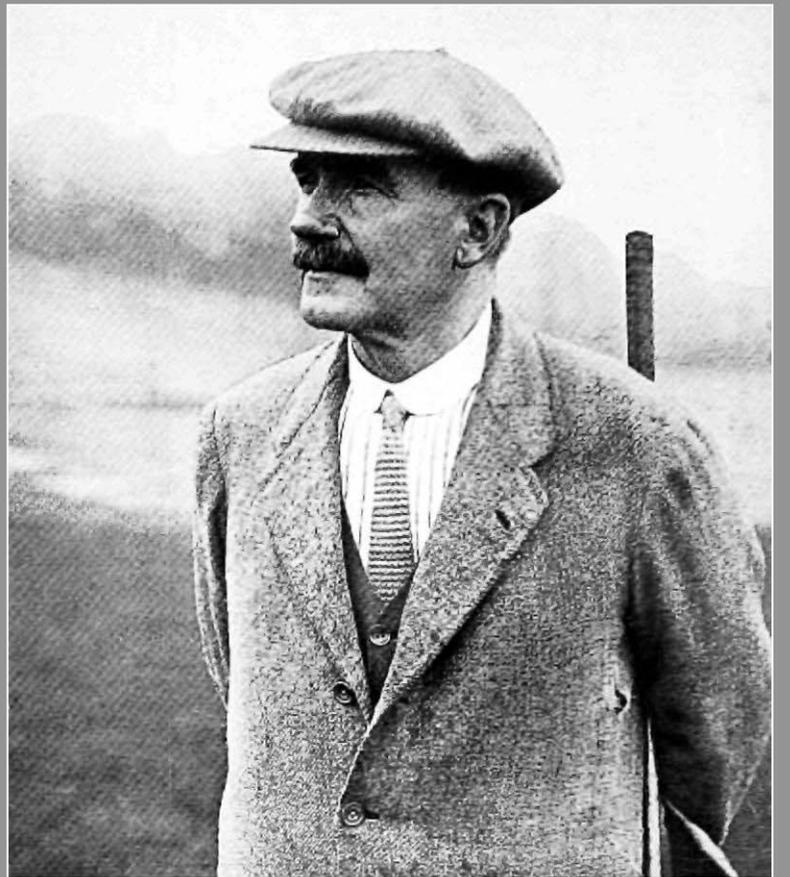
"J. H." and "Sandy"

Intimate Observations on Taylor and Herd, British Professionals Who Will Visit Us Next Summer

By J. S. Worthington



J. H. TAYLOR



SANDY HERD

Underwood & Underwood

ONCE at least during his career every notorious personage finds the prow of his throbbing ship heading West, where a sure welcome and square deal awaits him from the millions of appreciative Americans.

Whether he be famed in Peace or War, Song or Story, the result is the same. Welcoming hands are stretched out to greet him and he is showered with an abundance of hospitality and good will. More particularly in this sport-loving land does this apply to the case of men or women who may be said to have attained an international reputation in his or her particular branch of sport. So here's to J. H. Taylor and Alexander Herd, two of the world's great golfers, both ex-champions and famed in every land wherever the ancient Scottish pastime is enjoyed.

In the last two seasons we have seen some wonderful golf by great British golfers. First there was Vardon and Ray, then Dun-

can and Mitchell, and now it is to be Taylor and Herd. Still it is doubtful whether any combination that has yet visited these shores will create a greater or more widespread interest among the thousands of golfers, privileged to see them in action, than the two veteran ex-champions, whose combined ages exceed the century mark.

Both men have visited America once before. Taylor came over in 1900 to take part in the open championship at Wheaton, finishing second to Harry Vardon, the winner. But his stay was of short duration and comparatively few had the opportunity of seeing him play. "Sandy's" efforts were confined to Mexico and a few courses in Florida. In the former country, he was present at one of the sanguinary bull-fights, in Mexico City, with his old friend and body-guard, Andra Kirkaldy. After watching the tearing and ripping of many helpless horses they came away from the scene of carnage with their sporting instincts severely out of gear. Once

was enough for these two brawny Scots.

J. H. Taylor is professional at my home club, Mid Surrey, and Herd at Coombe Hill, only about five miles away. I have played with them both on many occasions, have followed them in most of their Homeric struggles for championship honors and matches of great importance. I know them both well.

Taylor was born at Westward Ho! in Devonshire in 1871 and caddied on those beautiful links. His first public appearance was at Westward Ho! in 1889, where he tied with Andrew Kirkaldy for sixth place. When he was only twenty-two years old he journeyed to Scotland for his first championship venture and at once created a sensation in the first round by turning in the then astonishingly low score of 75, made in the worst of weather. He did not keep up this gait but the very next year at Sandwich he was as steady as a rock and at the end of the fourth round was declared the winner of

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"J. H." and "Sandy"

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the British Open championship.

The accuracy he displayed then and always was remarkable. He was never more than a few yards off the exact line and his mashie play was almost uncanny. When he played that 75 at Prestwick, above mentioned, the ball seemed to be endowed with the intelligence of a thing of life. Every shot flew true and every approach stopped a few feet from the pin, waiting patiently there to be holed at the next stroke.

Taylor, as everyone knows, is one of the great triumvirate, the other two being Harry Vardon and James Braid. Between them they have won sixteen British Open championships, of which "J. H." claims five. This alone stamps him as one of the world's greatest golfers. Because you can be a great golfer and yet never win a single championship. Take the case of Jim Barnes, George Duncan and Abe Mitchell, three super golfers, and yet between them they number only two open championships.

Some Other Accomplishments

THIS will give you an idea of Taylor's surpassing record. His consistency in the championships was remarkable. He won in 1894, retained his title the very next year. Tied with Harry Vardon for first place in 1896, losing in the play off. The year 1900 again saw him wearing the laurel crown and runner-up in 1906 and 1907, champion again in 1909 and lastly in 1913. He played for England against Scotland in 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1912, 1913 and 1914. He partnered Harry Vardon in the great international foursome match against James Braid and Sandy Herd. He won the "News of the World" professional tournament in 1904, the French Open championship in 1908 and 1909, and the German championship in 1912. Enough honors, medals and ribbons in fact to open a young museum and bedeck his body from top to toe.

Taylor stands about five feet nine inches and is very sturdily built with immense power in his forearms. His style is one of complete control and crisp compactness. There is an absence of pivoting from the left toe in driving, just a slight turning inwards on the inside of the left foot and a curtailment of the follow-through. It gives you more the impression of a right hand clip of concentrated power. He uses the overlapping grip and adopts a very open stance. He turns the clubhead out from the ball, in the address, and wastes no time over preliminaries. His iron play is *magnificent*. He is one of the finest cleek players in the game.

Master of Mashie Play

BUT probably the great success he has achieved and the thing that has made his name known in every land can be attributed to his remarkable and deadly work with the mashie. It is a bold statement to make, but I have no hesitation in saying that "J. H." is the *greatest mashie* player the game has yet known. He mostly adopts the cut-shot, coming down and across the ball with great firmness and crispness. The ball pitches to the left of the pin and breaks sharply to the right. I have seen him pitch a ball to a green, one hundred and twenty-five yards away, the green baked to the consistency of cement, and pull up within a yard of where it landed, due entirely to the

extraordinary amount of spin imparted to the ball. You can hear the ball sizzling or biting the burnt-up green like the noise made by scraping a piece of wood on sand paper.

Taylor's is a highly strung temperament, he thinks very quickly and plays with great determination and freedom from hesitation. He hits the ball hard and clean and with great crispness, taking very little turf with his irons. He is not one of the longest of drivers but he is as straight as any Dead-eye Dick. I recall a conversation with Taylor on his return from St. Andrews where he had just won the Open championship I said, "Well, Taylor, you must have played fine golf." "Yes" said Taylor, "I was hitting them so straight that I was afraid of striking the guide posts."

During his golfing career Taylor has produced many wonderful performances. Two of such which will bear repeating stand out in my memory. In the Open championship at Sandwich in 1904, he was faced with what looked like an absolutely forlorn hope. Jack White was leading the field with a grand total of 296 for the four rounds, the lowest score yet recorded for this event. Taylor's three rounds totaled 229 so that a little careful figuring proclaimed the fact that he wanted a 66 to win or a 67 to tie. Sixty-six at Sandwich, from the championship tees, was off the map, it was to laugh, so to speak. But sixty-seven, yes, there was a remote possibility, one chance in a thousand, and if anyone could do it, Taylor was the man.

A huge crowd was away with him from the first tee, some of them to see miracles, if there were any about, others to follow far enough to see just one mistake, which would be quite enough to destroy any remaining chance. They little dreamt how far they would have to travel. Taylor set his teeth and went after that 67 with desperate determination, reeling off pars and birdies with machine-like skill and accuracy. His play was absolutely flawless until he arrived at the sixteenth tee, a short hole about 216 yards. He now wanted par for the last three holes to tie Jack White's great score. So beautifully was he playing that it looked an absolute certainty of his tying, with possibilities of even heating it.

His First Mistake

AT the sixteenth however, Taylor made his first mistake, he pulled his tee shot to the rushes and the hole cost him a four, instead of a par three. He played the seventeenth perfectly. His second shot left him a putt of about twelve feet. He had to play above the hole to allow for the slope of the green. I was standing almost behind him and saw the putt all the way. It was struck perfectly and the curve allowance was judged to a hair. When the ball was about eight inches from the hole it was in, nothing could prevent it finding the bottom of the tin. But to the amazement of everyone, it took a quick turn up-hill, due to a tiny piece of sea-shell imbedded in the turf.

Taylor was terribly disappointed and rightly so. However there was one more chance. Bang went the ball from the eighteenth tee, straight down the fairway. It was a magnificent drive and left him a chip shot over a bunker guarding the green. (We are speaking of the course as it was then.) It was now only a question

of how long a putt he would leave himself. The stroke was perfectly played but a slight rise in the ground turned the ball to the right leaving a nasty ten-footer, down hill. There was a vast crowd surrounding the green and the excitement was intense. Taylor had to hole that putt for his 67 and tie for the blue ribbon of golf. Again the putt was hit clean and true, straight as an arrow for the middle of the hole. Perhaps it was a shade too bold or perhaps it jumped slightly a few inches short; at any rate the ball did *not* drop and his magnificent effort left him one stroke short of what would have ranked as one of the greatest performances ever recorded.

His Triumph at Hoylake

THE scene of another of his great exploits was Hoylake in 1913. I was playing with Taylor at Mid Surrey one Sunday, about two weeks before the championship. He was very despondent about his game, particularly in regard to his mashie play. He was off his mashie and it got on his nerves. I told him to go up to London and see a doctor friend of mine and take his treatment for this particular malady. This he did, although the time was somewhat short to obtain results. Now in any championship it was about a thousand to one that Taylor would qualify in the first sixty-four. On this occasion, however, when he arrived on the last green at the end of the fourth round, he was left with an eight-footer for sixty-fourth place. The ball wobbled, hesitated and eventually fell in. This did not augur well for Taylor's chances on the morrow, but it gave him a new lease of life, and moreover Doctor Strode's treatment was beginning to work.

He played well for the first three rounds placing him fourth or fifth from the top and then came the nerve racking final eighteen holes. The weather had been bad but now it was terrible. Torrents of rain with a nasty cold driving wind, such weather in fact that makes Hoylake easily eight or ten strokes harder. But the greater the tempest, the better for Taylor. The blustering gales of Hoylake had nothing on Westward Ho! where Taylor had so frequently defeated old Jupiter Pluvius and old Father Boreas, raged he ever so wildly. It was *Taylor's day* and he made the most of it, turning in the magnificent tally of 77 under the most appalling of weather conditions. Again the proud position of British Open champion fell to the lot of the plucky Devonian.

Taylor is without doubt the Dean of British professional golf, respected and beloved by all who know him. He is perhaps the busiest of all golf professionals. When he is not engaged in giving lessons or playing exhibition matches, he has his club factory and exporting business to look after. His advice is constantly sought on all important matters affecting the game and he is ever mindful of the interests of his brother professionals. No one is keener to uphold the traditions of the ancient pastime, and he always *plays the game*. Taylor is the champion spokesman of all British professionals and should the occasion merit it, he will no doubt be pleased to give an example of his oratorical powers when visiting here next summer.

Herd's Record

ALEXANDER HERD, invariably called "Sandy" although not so well-known in America is one of Scotland's great golfers. He was born in 1868 and won the British Open in 1902 and was runner-up in 1895. He tied for second place in

1892, third 1893, and runner-up in 1910. He won the "News of the World" professional tournament in 1906 and was second in 1909. In partnership with the great James Braid, he represented Scotland against England in the historical international foursome, their opponents being Vardon and Taylor.

Herd ran Duncan a very close race for the Open championship at Deal in 1920. In fact at the end of the third round he was leading the field, eventually losing out by only two strokes. A seven at the seventeenth hole cost him the championship. Again at St. Andrews last summer "Sandy" was tied with Jim Barnes in the lead at the end of the third round with 222 strokes each. But Jock o' the Hutch came along with one of his brilliant dashes to tie with Roger Wethered for first place and win on the play off.

These are a few of Herd's records and he appears to be playing as well as he ever did. "Sandy" is one of the finest match players in the game. Even when Vardon was carrying everything before him, Herd was the man he mostly feared in match play. It required everything that was in him to shake off "Sandy," who was never beaten until the last putt was holed. If there is such a thing as bad luck in golf, then "Sandy" has had his share of it. Always, too, on occasions of great importance.

There is one memorable occasion which stands out above all others as a specimen of the ill fortune that so often dogged his footsteps. It was at St. Andrews during the Open championship in 1895 when he was just twenty-seven years old. It has always remained to him a haunting memory of his golfing career. He was partnered with Andrew Kirkaldy, and with a brilliant 77 for his second round, he had a five strokes lead of J. H. Taylor, the eventual winner, and the whole field.

In the third round, when playing the famous Eden hole, the eleventh, a question arose as to whether he should have grounded his club for his second stroke. Nobody seemed capable of settling this knotty point so that he had to play his final round with this "under protest" bug-bear hanging over his head.

More Trouble Ahead

BUT worse was to befall him. When he started out on his fourth round, Herd was still leading the field by three strokes, Taylor being second. "Sandy" got away to a splendid start, with a 4-4-4-5, absolutely perfect golf. He was playing like a master and had the ball under perfect control. Unless that "under protest" bogey could beat him, nothing else could. But there was still another enemy to reckon with, lurking and unseen. For suddenly, with out any warning, the heavens broke in two and a deluge of rain and hail descended on "Sandy's" hapless head, covering the greens with a coating of melting slush. The storm lasted half an hour, just long enough to utterly destroy his chances of winning. Herd battled bravely against the elements, only losing by two strokes, and he has never forgiven fate for the trick played him.

Herd's methods of play resemble those of Taylor not at all. He adopts the bold dashing St. Andrews style with a fine follow-through. He uses an overlap grip with the right hand turned well under. He stands square to the ball and uses very heavy clubs with thick grips. "Sandy" is a fine sportsman and a splendid golfer, loving the game for the game's sake. He delights in going after what looks like a forlorn hope; playing his best the more that

is demanded of him. He is one of the most popular pros in England and American golfers will be delighted to meet him.

Taylor and Herd will both play in the Open championship here in July and are sure to render a good account of themselves. So, too, will they in their exhibition matches. Summer R. Hollander, president of Holmac. Inc, through whom all bookings must be made, informs me that they will limit themselves to three or four matches a week, at the most, so that golf and country clubs desirous of securing their services will probably see fit to make early application.

Their first engagement will be at the Westchester-Biltmore course at Rye, where a splendid welcome and important send-off awaits these two grand golfers, the heroes of many a classic struggle.

Taylor and Herd excel in foursome play, as opposed to fourball foursome play. It would be a splendid idea if clubs when arranging their exhibition matches with Taylor and Herd would specify that eighteen holes consist of foursome play and eighteen holes of four-ball foursome. Foursome play, in the opinion of most of the best judges of the game, is far and away a better and more severe test than any other form of golf. Until comparatively recent times, the four-ball foursome was unknown.

Moreover, it would be a fine thing for the game if the genuine foursome were more often exploited, and now a real opportunity presents itself of seeing two of the greatest exponents at this particular form of golf exhibiting the combination and team work which it calls for in a high degree.